

Pandora

Lifting the lid off

Volume Six, Number Three

June, 1991

Halifax, Nova Scotia

INSIDE!

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Pandora calls her sisters (again)

by an insecure writer

Some of the events we don't have in this issue of Pandora (and wish we did!)

WHEN (Women's Health Education Network) Conference
WAC (Women's Action Coalition) Annual General Meeting
Prince Edward Island Women's Festival
Heather Bishop Concert
Odetta Concert
Company of Sirens performance

Some of the stories we don't have in Pandora (and wish we did!)

art/book/movie/theatre/concert reviews
stories by lesbians
stories by women of colour
Dalmy's clothing policy
definitions of a feminist
comparison of benefits for single mothers on assistance with
benefits for spouses of people sent to the Gulf war
stories of rural women's life

Why don't more women write for Pandora? Why don't more women write for any other newspaper, newsletter, or anything else to be published?

There are a number of possible reasons for this. While many women would say they don't have the time (and this may, in fact, be true), women are particularly good at juggling their schedules. I suspect the most basic reason women don't write is fear: Fear of making a fool of oneself; fear of looking stupid; fear of revealing yourself; fear of trying something different.

Related to these fears is insecurity. Many women feel that what they have to say isn't important. Women have been brought up in our society to believe their viewpoints, experiences, and thoughts are not valid or

not worth listening to. They start to silence themselves. The silencing becomes so ingrained that women begin to believe their lives are not worth talking about and other people aren't interested.

Yes, writing can be scary, especially if you are doing it for marks at school, for a promotion at work, or for some other outside-directed cause. However, you probably don't find writing so hard when you are doing it for yourself — writing in a diary, writing a letter to a friend, writing a note to your kids. When you do this kind of writing, you're not thinking of sentence structure, punctuation, or spelling. All you're trying to do is relay a message.

When Pandora asks you to write for us, what we care about is your message — your story.

EDITING

If your fear is about not being grammatically correct, we can easily fix up your writing. That's what editors are for. However, we have a conflict about editing without the writer's permission. While we always correct mis-spelled words, and do a small amount of grammar correction and newspaper-style corrections, we hesitate

to do much more than that.

We feel it is important not to change the "voice" of our writers. We, at Pandora, are all (at the moment) white women, mostly middle-class. Some of us have learned our school lessons and know how to do things "properly." But the "properly" that we learned is a white, middle-class way of writing. Not all our writers want their words filtered through this white, middle-class bias. Nor do we necessarily want this myopic style reflected in Pandora.

Sometimes we want to make changes to make the writing easier to understand (at least to our minds), or to clear up ambiguities, or to make the story clearer in some way or another. And sometimes the story is too long for the amount of space we have. If we make any major changes to the articles we receive, we try to contact the writer (unless she tells us in advance that it's OK to edit.) So, if you write for us, please make sure your name, address and phone number are on your story.

Sometimes we have to edit to avoid a lawsuit. Even if your story is absolutely true and you can prove it, we cannot afford the legal fees of a lawsuit. We have to take offending passages out or change the story (as little as possible) to avoid any potential legal conflict.

STYLE

There is some writing that we have more trouble with. This writing is difficult for one or more of several reasons. Sometimes it is because the story isn't personal. It may read like a press release or an academic paper; sometimes because it's not clear what the article is trying to say (and once in a while it doesn't seem to say anything); and sometimes because it doesn't logically say what it's trying to say.

We are more concerned with what you write than how you write. We at Pandora recommend to our writers that you write about something you are familiar with, usually something that has happened to you or something that you feel passionate about. If you find it important or in-

teresting, chances are others will find it important or interesting also. If something makes you angry, or sad, or excited, it will probably make others feel the same way.

If you write about your own experiences, observations and analyses, it doesn't matter if someone else has written about the same thing. They won't write about it the way you have because they haven't experienced it the way you have. Your experiences are unique.

Don't think of yourself as writing an article; you're writing a story, one you know well, because it happened to you or is something you are interested in or concerned about.

HOW TO DO IT

How do you start? If necessary, start out with the words: I want to tell you about something that happened to me. Then tell about what happened to you. Try to be logical. Ask yourself: What happened next? Then tell us what happened next. Ask yourself: How did I feel about it? Then tell us how you felt about it. Remember, the readers will have to guess your meaning if you don't explain it and they may misunderstand. Ask yourself some of these questions: Did you feel differently about your experience after some time had passed. Have you found other women with similar experiences? Did you get a group together? Did you solve a problem? How?

We recommend that you pretend you are writing a letter to a dear friend who hasn't seen you for a while. We like you to use the word "I". Personal stories are the most interesting of stories because they are real.

Words are important, often for what they imply as well as what they say. You have to watch out for sexist and racist words and phrases. Try to become aware of the words you are using and how someone of a different background from yours might interpret them. Don't presume everyone reading your story is heterosexual, white, or has lots of education. Don't presume they know the things you do. If you refer to a group by its initials, for example, spell them out for those readers who aren't familiar with

that group.

Now, length is a hard one. Most people write on and on and on, saying more than they need to. Once you have written about something once, you don't need to write it again (contrary to academic-paper style.) Usually we suggest two to three double-spaced typed pages.

WHEN YOU ARE DONE

When you're finished your story, put it away for a week. Then take it out again, re-read it, and make any changes you want to make. (Often you find your story is longer than it needs to be and you can shorten it without losing any of the essentials.)

Remember to put your name, address, and phone number on it so we can contact you if we have any questions. We will send you a copy of the issue it is printed in. If you want your name printed in a particular way, or to use a false name or be anonymous, please write these instructions clearly at the top of your story. If you have any photos or graphics (taken or drawn by a woman) that could be used to illustrate your story, please send them along, along with the name and address of the illustrator or photographer. Photos need to be clear. (Hint: photocopy them to see how clear they really are, especially if they are in colour but send us the original print.) Graphics need to be drawn in black on a plain

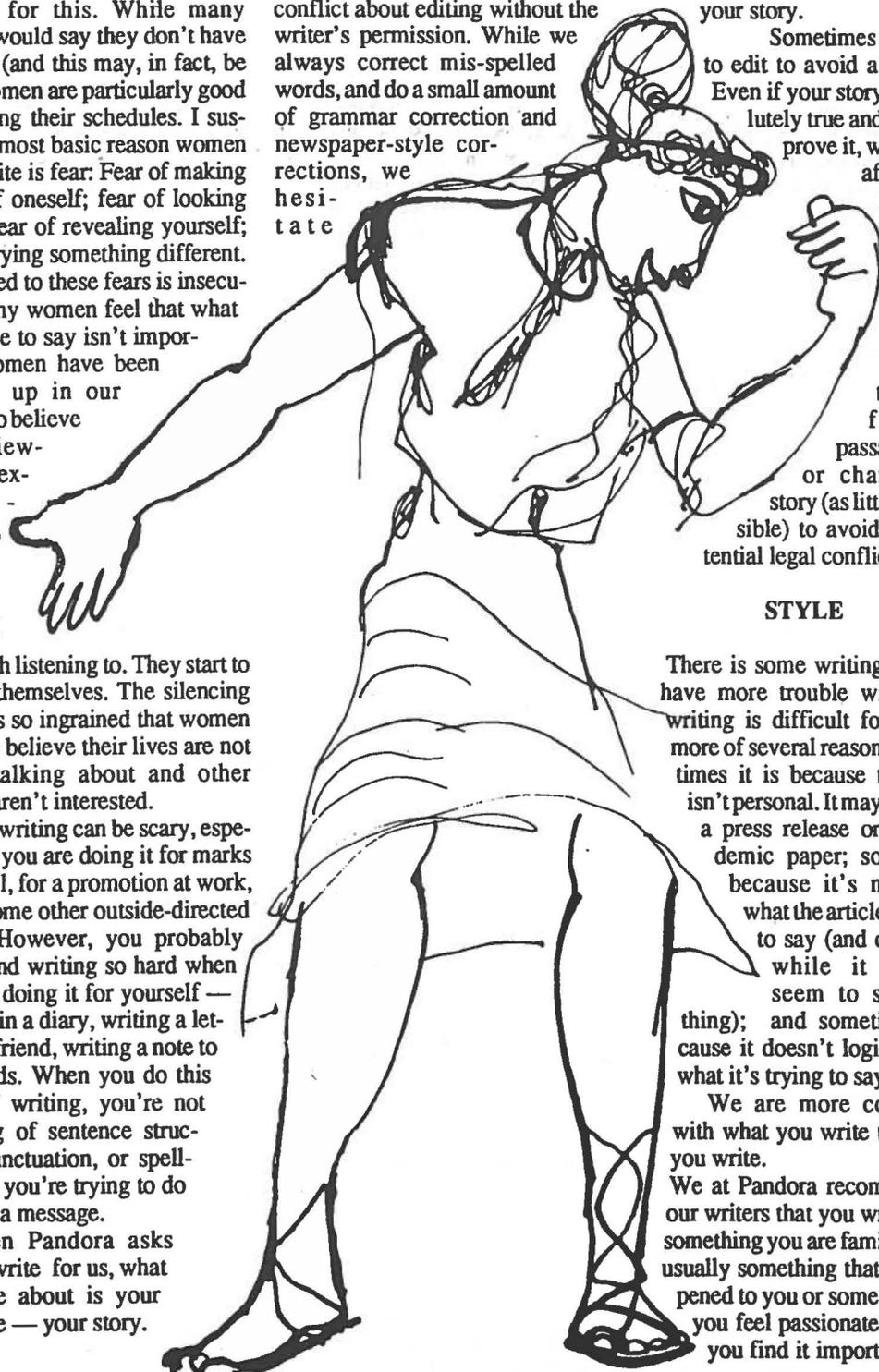
Women can use this space to speak of their experience. They can speak of the connections they have begun to make between that experience and the experience of other women. They can speak of the analysis that grows out of making connections, the vision that expands that analysis and the strategies that further the vision.

—Betty-Ann Lloyd, on Pandora, *Hearing Women into Speech: The Feminist Community and the Women's Community, Canadian Woman Studies, Vol 8 # 1.*

white background. Don't send your only copy of a story, photo or graphic. We sometimes aren't as efficient as we should be and may misplace it.

We like to get photos, graphics, and stories we haven't asked for, especially from women in the Atlantic provinces. If you have promised to write for Pandora, please remember we are counting on you to submit it on time!

Best of all you don't have to prove anything to us. You don't even get marked or critiqued on it. You can do it just for fun.



Racism alive and well in Nova Scotia

Address given by Mayann Francis on International Women's Day, March 9, 1991, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

I am a woman, I understand your concerns of homophobia;
I am a woman, I share your concerns about yet another woman raped;
I am a woman, I share your concerns about yet another woman physically abused;

I am a woman, I cry with you and share your pain when yet another woman is murdered;

I am a woman of colour. Can you understand the pain that has been placed on me because I am a woman and a woman of colour?

Will you share my tears and the tears of my brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, babies and children who because of our colour carry a heavier burden?

I want to read to you a letter to God written several months ago. It is a letter of confession. It is the story of a child and of her transformation into a woman of colour, proud to be what she is and who she is. I read this letter to you in hope that you will have an idea of what oppression, omission, patriarchy and discrimination can do to a woman of colour who grew up in Nova Scotia.

Dear God:

I used to hate You because You made me black. I asked You to make me white. I wanted to have thin lips and long silky straight hair. I told You my hips were too big and You did nothing to help me. You see God, I was not pretty because I was black. I was so afraid. Sometimes I even asked You to let me die.

I told You I wanted a white mother. Remember when she came to see me

when I was in grade school? It was raining outside, and I did not have a hat. She left home to make sure that I would not get wet. I did not want anyone to see her because she was black. I was angry she came, and I was angry with You for letting her come. Didn't You know that being black would cause me to be insecure, sad and angry? Why did You do this to me? Little white kids called me "nigger." White girls did not want to hold my hand because they believed that my blackness would dirty them. I remember standing at the front of the

White girls did not want to hold my hand because they believed that my blackness would dirty them.

line in grade school and the teacher telling me to stand at the back of the line. She put two little white girls up front. One had blonde hair. Her name was Paula. The other one had brown hair. Her name was Donna. When I was in grade six a white boy told me he did not like my girlfriend because her face was black. I was confused because my face was also black. I ran home, looked into the mirror and saw me, still black. Why did he say that to me? Why did You try to fool me?

In all my school books I did not see anyone who looked like me. All the pictures were of little white kids, white mothers and fathers. All my teachers were white. That's why I knew that black was different and ugly.

When I was sixteen I worked in a store for Christmas holidays. I packed bags at the cash register. That was nice. One afternoon a man said "hey,

nigger." I cried when I got home. I was so hurt. It was supposed to be Christmas. Did I do something wrong? Maybe I was supposed to keep my head down and not look at anyone. That's it, maybe I can hide my black skin. What do You think, God?

We often went to the movies in our area where most blacks lived. The area was called the "subway." Whenever we went into "town," people always stared at us. I hate that. I had fun sitting on the steps with my black friends. I did not need to go into town. Some white boys came around, but people said they did not mean black women any good. White girls came around. They wanted the black guys. The white girls' parents were upset. They did not want their daughters with black guys.

I remember going to college. It was my first year. There were very few blacks; maybe two, maybe three. I did not like that experience. My grades were fine. It was just that I wanted to be white. I thought if I used plenty of make-up I could pretend. It did not work.

After my first year was over, I moved away to study x-ray technology. I do not remember my training too well. I was the only black in my class. It was lonely but I did have fun. When I finished x-ray school, I tried to find an apartment. I had trouble because I was black. This damn skin—look at all the problems. What was I to do? Going shopping was not any fun. Someone was always watching. They thought I was going to steal. They did not know that my father was a respected school-teacher and I would never steal. They thought all blacks were thieves.

I needed something in my life. I went to university. I met my husband.



(Photo by Beverley Rach)

Mayann Francis speaks at IWD rally

We moved from Nova Scotia to the United States. Later we divorced. Times were hard. I moved to New York, armed with my Bachelor's degree and determination. I could not find a job. I decided to volunteer my time as an X-ray technologist. A doctor felt sorry for me and found me two part-time jobs working in ghetto clinics. I was grateful. I X-rayed all types of people. They were nice to me.

After working there I earned a paralegal certificate. After many attempts, I

found a job on Wall Street as a corporate paralegal. You know, God, if I were not black I would have found a job much sooner than I did. I did well as a paralegal, both on Wall Street and in mid-town. I had to show them that black people are capable.

I suppose You know that I earned my Master's degree while living in New York. As time went on, I somehow was getting used to my blackness. I began to like myself. There were so many other blacks all working as doctors, lawyers, judges, actors and actresses, nurses, oh, so many. All beautiful people. I joined black women's groups. I went to dances and saw beautiful black faces. I had long hair, short hair, braids, red hair, blonde hair, blue eyes, anything I wanted. You can do that in New York. I had fun. You do know that I always prayed to You. I did not stop. I felt that I needed your Presence. You helped me through good times and bad times.

Now You brought me back to Nova Scotia. Did You send me to the United States to find myself? Did You believe that I would not have grown if I stayed in Nova Scotia? When I came home, I went to look for an apartment. God, my blackness still was a problem. Guess what? It did not make me hate myself. You see, I can now face racism. Isn't it sad? God, Nova Scotia still has some problems.

Dear God, I now pray to You and ask that You make peace in the world. I ask that You create a world where the colour of a person's skin is unimportant... a world where there is no drug abuse, no battered women, no sexism, no racism; oh God, I know You can do this... You made me love me... so I know you can make everyone love everyone.

Oh yes, dear God, I am not afraid of my blackness. I don't hate you any more. I love you. It took me 16 years to find myself. God, can You forgive me, please, and thanks. I will write soon.

Sincerely,
Tera

P.S. I do not hate anyone. I am no longer angry. Hatred and anger are negative forces. We all need love and acceptance.



Women's Night at Rumours

2nd & 4th Tuesdays



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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.

Articles in Pandora do not necessarily reflect the views of the advertisers.

This issue was produced by: Sara avMaat, Inez Caldwell, Judith Davies, Yvonne Manzer, Jocelyne Marchand, Debbie Mathers, Megan McConnell, Debbie McDougall, Krista McRoberts, Carrie Melsom, Beverley Rach, Sharon Rose, Elaine Sharpe, Tracy Smith, Sandee Thompson, Amani Wassef

Advertising by: Nadine McNamara

Photo/graphics contributed by: Dawna Gallagher, Debbie Mathers, Krista McRoberts, Sue Pitman, Beverley Rach, Annette Reynolds, Sara Shields, Noreen Stevens, Kathleen Tetlock

Distribution: Nancy Wright (Guysborough), Cheryl AuCoin (Sydney), Oona Landry (Antigonish), Alex Keir (Pictou County), Debbie Trask (Bridgewater), Dianne Crowell (Yarmouth), Carolyn Emerson (Newfoundland), Debra Westerborg (Debec, N.B.), Louise Flemming (PEI), Amanda LeRougetel (Winnipeg), Joan Baccardax (Port Hawkesbury), Toronto Women's Bookstore, Ottawa Women's Bookstore, and many, many, others. Co-ordinators are Sara avMatt and Elaine Sharpe.

Contributors: Myrna Carlson, Jill Davey, Dian Day, Hannah Edemikpong, Mayann Francis, Penelope Hutchinson, J.J., Dawn Leavitt, Lorene, Yhani M., Jocelyne Marchand, Marion Mathieson, Carol McLeod, Carrie Melsom, Miriam, Joan Newman, Betty Peterson, Donna Smyth, Brenda Thompson, Sandee Thompson, Amani Wassef, Joanne Wright

Thank you, one and all!

Correspondence and Subscriptions:
Please note Pandora's mailing address:
Pandora Publishing Assoc.
Box 1209, North,
Halifax, N.S. B3K 5H4
messages: 902-454-4977
Second Class Mail Registration No. 7122
ISSN 0836-723X

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS:

Pandora is distributed to various locations throughout the province and the country. The editorial committee felt this distribution would allow us to make the paper available in outlets such as libraries, health clinics, etc. (If any of you women out there would be willing to do distribution in your areas, please let us know.) This is in no way a statement that Pandora has so much money that it no longer needs to charge for the paper. We are, in fact, hoping to get more subscribers this way. If you want the paper mailed to you, subscriptions are \$5.00 for four issues. There is a sliding scale. Women on limited income, send what you can. We ask women who can afford more to provide a contributing or sustaining subscription to help support the paper.

Cover photo by Sara Shields

Presswork by Daily News

Correction: In our last issue we failed to acknowledge the following people who worked on the organizing committee for the Art Against Violence Against Women project: Anita Martinez, Susan McEachern, Kathleen Tetlock, Noreen Batlaglia, Anne Verrall. We apologize for this oversight.

Pandora challenges sex discrimination complaint

By Amani Wassef

In June 1990, a complaint was filed with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission against Pandora Publishing. The complaint was brought about by a man who claimed he was the subject of sex discrimination. His desire to print a letter was prompted by an article we had printed which angered him. Concurrent with this complaint, he phoned several of our advertisers to encourage them to withdraw all subsequent funding to our paper.

Pandora is a newspaper produced by, for and about women, thus, we do not accept writing, graphics or photographs by men. We discussed various possible solutions to this problem and unanimously agreed that based on our policy, we would not print his letter.

At this point, we at Pandora did not take the case very seriously, as we often anger men (and sometimes women) through our women-only policy. We were, however, confident that the organizations which advertised in Pandora would not be co-opted by the tirades of an angry man. In this presumption, we were correct.

We proceeded with our daily business of producing a newspaper...that is, until we received a letter from the Human Rights Commission stating that the complaint against Pandora would be investigated (as are all complaints). We didn't think the complaint had sufficient content to warrant an investigation, but as all complaints must be investigated, we then presumed it would be dismissed.

It was then requested that Pandora visit the Human Rights office to discuss the editorial policy and position of Pandora. We agreed to this and at this meeting we presented a two-fold position as to what the purpose of Pandora was. We said:

- that Pandora is a newspaper which informs and provides a voice to women by supporting a woman-only policy; and
- that Pandora exists to assist women in obtaining skills in writing and producing a newspaper.

We argued that Pandora was an alternative to mainstream media by making vocal and visible the presence of women, unlike mainstream culture which almost invariably promotes sexist and derogatory representations of women. To give up our woman-only policy, even if it was only to allow 'one small letter' from a man, would be counter to the purposes of our existence. After this meeting we hoped that our position would be supported by the commission and the case would be dismissed.

Unfortunately, the investigator for the commission found sufficient evidence to support the complainant's position and subsequently a conciliation meeting was scheduled for the following December. A conciliation is simply a meeting set up between the complainant and the respondents to meet and try to find an agreeable solution for both sides.

According to Nova Scotia Human Rights regulations, any information regarding the process of conciliation, or the outcome of it, is deemed confidential. Thus, we are not able to discuss what happened within this meeting with our readers. What we can tell you, however, is that the conciliation process ultimately did not produce a successful resolution. This process took us up to April 1991.

Pandora discussed the possibility of applying for an exemption through the affirmative action program of the Human Rights Commission. This means that if we were awarded an exemption, Pandora

would be recognized as an equality-promoting organization and legally be entitled to be a "women-only newspaper." However, we decided not to pursue this avenue on the grounds that Pandora is an organization which already promotes sex equality. We do not consider, nor do we want to be considered, a 'special interest' group which needs permission to promote equality, when in fact we promote equality by virtue of our existence. We take the position that where a single-sex organization of women is an equality-promoting organization, there is no violation to the right to equality because of our woman-only policy. Successful male challenges to female single-sex organizations merely perpetuates existing inequities, since equal treatment of unequal groups would undermine the goal of equality. This decision reaffirmed for us that we had, in no way, discriminated against the man who filed the complaint.

In April 1991, this case was presented to the Human Rights Commission for decision. Up until this point, the case had been investigated by various levels within the Human Rights Commission, but not by the commission itself. We have not yet heard what happened at this meeting.

The Human Rights Commission does not have the power in itself to rule on this case; however, it does refer the matter to the Minister responsible for the Human Rights Commission with recommendation. If the Commission finds the case against Pandora to be valid, we could be faced with a public board of inquiry. On the other hand, the Commission could recommend that the case be dismissed.

Pandora is angry! First of all, a man has taken up so much of our precious time, energy and MONEY. We already are overworked, over-harassed, underpaid and unrecognized. We have had to delay our publication in order to deal with all the complexities accompanying this case (which is partly why this issue is so late).

In a time when sexism against women

is so visible and rampant, we feel it is important to recognize the vital contributions that women-only organizations have towards reversing the disadvantaged position of women.

It is not only for Pandora that we have refused to apply for an exemption. There are many women's organizations in Nova Scotia, and the Maritimes, which should not have to apply for an exemption to ensure a woman-only policy. If Pandora sought an exemption, it would leave every other women's organization in a position of vulnerability. If Pandora did apply for and receive an exemption, it would set a precedent requiring a similar exemption every time a woman-only event, publication, meeting... anything, was scheduled.

If, on the other hand, Pandora was not granted an exemption, the consequences would be grave as we would have no protection against claims of sex discrimination. All other women's groups would be similarly unprotected.

We can not allow an angry man to initiate a human rights case each time he feels violated. Pandora has decided to take a stand against this type of harassment by maintaining who we are and what we are: strong, proud women committed to feminism, working towards a better world for women.

Women are abused, sexually assaulted, beaten, murdered, and laughed at by a society which accepts this as normal male behaviour.

How can we possibly be accused of discrimination when the quality of women's lives is secondary to male privilege. Our rights are secondary to men's, and our voices are undermined by a legal system which claims equality. This Human Rights case is yet another form of misogyny and harassment against women.

We can accept that some men will become angry with who we are and what we stand for (and some women too). If no one ever complained about us, then we probably wouldn't be doing our job effectively. But to drag us through this process is tiresome. We are sick of it!

Pandora \$\$ Needs Your Help \$\$

This case has seriously hurt our small budget. We are non-profit and manage to exist on funds generated from subscriptions, advertisements, and donations. Pandora's future depends on your financial assistance. This case not only affects Pandora, but also has profound implications for all women's organizations. Please help support our right to be women-only. Any donation is appreciated. Please fill in the form so we can acknowledge your contribution. We are non-charitable and thus cannot send a tax receipt.

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Pride Week derives from Stonewall riots

Pandora:

On Friday, June 27, 1969, Manhattan's 6th Precinct set off to raid the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Greenwich Village. Patrons of the bar tended to be young non-whites. Many were drag queens, and many came from the ghetto across town in the East Village. A "routine" raid was to become the first gay riot in (U.S.) history.

As police slowly brought out patrons, a crowd was accumulating on the streets. A few minutes later, an officer tried to steer the last of the patrons, a lesbian, through the bystanders to a nearby patrol car. "She put up a struggle from car to door to car again," reported the Village Voice. At that moment the scene became explosive. Beer cans and bottles were thrown, and a rain of coins descended on the cops. From nowhere came an uprooted parking meter, used as a battering ram on the Stonewall door. A blaze of flame soon appeared in the window of the Stonewall Inn.

Rioting continued far into the night, with Puerto Rican transvestites and young people leading charges against rows of uniformed police and then withdrawing to regroup in village alleys and side streets.

By the following night, graffiti calling for "Gay Power" had appeared. Young Gays — effeminate, according to most reports — gathered on corners, angry and restless. For the next few hours, trash fires blazed, bottles and stones flew through the air, and cries of "Gay Power" rang through the streets as police, numbering over 400, did battle with more than 2,000!

Before the end of July, women and men in New York had the Gay Liberation Front, a self-proclaimed revolu-

tionary organization in the style of the New Left. Word of the riot and GLF spread rapidly among the networks of radicals scattered across the country, and within a year, gay liberation groups had sprung up in universities and cities around the nation.

The reason for this brief history lesson is to remind you all where Pride Day originated. Officially June 27th is Pride Day, although each city celebrates on different dates in June. In Halifax, we celebrate with pride for a week, from June 21st to June 30th.

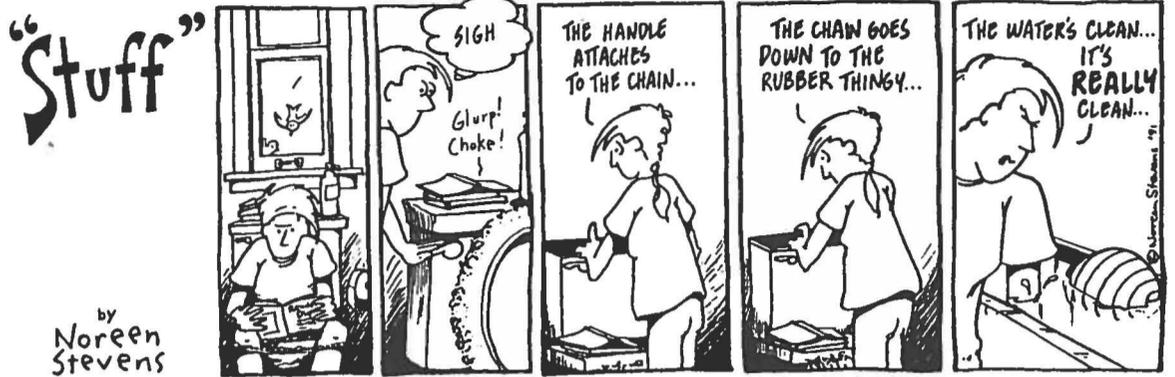
This year's theme is "Growing Out Of Bounds," and we are inviting all groups and/or individuals to come celebrate with us.

At 2 pm on June 15th at Rumours, there will be an opportunity to make signs for the Parade. The Parade is on June 22nd, beginning and ending at Rumours. There will be a reception, Info-Fair, and Artisan Market after the Parade. The Artisan is open to anyone who would like to sell craft work. Tables will be \$5.00 each.

For more information on all events, call me at the GALA office (423-2292) Tuesday, Wednesday, or Friday, or call the Lavender Connection at 454-2564. For the second year, we will be having Lesbian Culture Day and dance on June 23rd. During the week there will be events and workshops. The Artisan Market will be repeated on June 29. On June 30th, we will be wrapping up the week with a "Coming Out Gala" where we will present Community Awards.

Pride Week is a time to put away our differences and stand strong as a community. Only by standing together with our feet firmly planted can we prepare for "Growing Out Of Bounds." Cathy McDougall, Halifax

THE CHOSEN FAMILY



Are there any non-lesbian women's groups out there?

Pandora:

I have attended several meetings of feminist-oriented concerns in different groups. These groups have received me indifferently at best, and with frosty suspicion at worst.

Even after offering to contribute my time and effort, I do not feel welcome or wanted. Nor am I a lesbian. Some of my heterosexual acquaintances have suggested that therein lies my "problem."

Are there any local non-lesbian groups I can connect with? Please don't suggest REAL WOMEN. I ardently believe in all women's issues.

SHY OF REJECTION, Halifax
Pandora's Note:

No, there is no such a thing as a non-lesbian women's group. There may be groups where lesbians are not obvious at first sight. There may be groups where lesbians are closeted. (The only group that certainly has no lesbians is a men's group.)

Lesbians have been rendered invisible by our culture for thousands of years. Stereotypes are not only misleading but dangerous, because they provide society with a very limited understanding of reality. Lesbians come in every shape, size, and colour you can imagine a woman to come in. Lesbians are your neighbours, teachers, bosses, lawyers and mothers, sisters, grandmothers and daughters. To attempt to walk into a room and point out the lesbians by some special mark is impossible. It would be the same as attempting to walk into a room and point out heterosexuals.

When you realize that (statistically) 10% of all women are lesbians, you can be fairly sure there are lesbians, closeted or not, in almost any group you may find yourself in.

Women-Loving-Women, Women-Loving-Men and Women-Loving-Women and Men need to learn to work together. Lesbianism is a women's issue.

However, it can be difficult to get

involved in women's groups. Part of this is due to the process of entering a new group — choice of group, choice of task, getting to know other group members, discovering similarities and differences in opinion and life experiences.

A major aspect in enjoying the group you work with is to make sure you are clear about your motives in joining the group. Both the individual and the group must benefit by the individual being part of the group, and both must be clear about their expectations.

What issue are you concerned about? What approach, theoretical, applied, academic, local, global, etc., of this issue do you want to affect? Does the group deal with the same aspect of the issue with which you are concerned? What skills, life experiences, goals, personal level of commitment, and time constraints will affect your future involvement?

What are the expectations of the group in terms of work on the issue and work done by members, and do these expectations match your own? If the match looks good, then both you and the group may work.

When you enter a new group, chances are you are going to feel unknown and possibly a bit rejected. The other group members have known each other for a while, had defeats, successes, worked hard together and played together. You are the "new kid" in this block.

In addition, women, because they juggle so many roles and responsibilities in so few hours, may not have the energy on a given day to give the grandstand welcome. But it will come. The woman next to you with the glazed look in her eyes may be mentally calculating her babysitter's availability this week, not determining her feelings about you.

Time and effort are usually the answer to feelings of newness. Get in there and work. It can be intimidating to be with better informed members,

but you can take a task within your scope, do it, ask questions, and before you know it, you'll become better informed, and suddenly, it's your group.

If you are feeling rejected and not part of a group, often there is a tendency to pick out an attribute of the group and say that the group is at fault.

Groups are made up of people, and women's groups especially are made up of an especially broad range of individuals. Women make up roughly half the population, and feminist groups, because they reflect the concerns of women, can have a diverse range of personalities.

This, however, rather than being a negative attribute, adds the accumulated knowledge, strengths, carings, and concerns to the group to better aid it in helping women.

All this is to say that finding a non-lesbian group would probably not solve your problem. You may find that by improving your own involvement with a group, you can help women as you get to know some fascinating and concerned women of all persuasions.

Lesbian-abuse workshop held on Culture Day

Pandora:

The media, although widely featuring woman abuse, has not educated us about abuse in lesbian relationships.

Within many loving relationships, physical, verbal, and mental abuse exists.

To raise public awareness on this issue, there will be a workshop on June 23rd, Lesbian Culture Day, at Rumours.

For more information, call 454-2564.

It's time to end woman abuse!
Krista J. MacRoberts, Halifax

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Some funding for women's centres reinstated, more needed

Pandora:

February 22 marked the one year anniversary of the announcement of funding cuts to Secretary of State's Women's Program. This year also marked the beginning of a two day conference of women's centres in Nova Scotia. Over the weekend we took time to reflect upon the past year's struggles over funding. In doing so, we realized a formal thank you to the

feminist community in the city was long overdue. On behalf of all the centres in the province, I would therefore like to take this opportunity to extend our appreciation.

The Halifax-based direct action was crucial in the campaign around funding. To co-opt a headline from Pandora (June 1990) you were "giving it all to the cause," through the Secretary of State occupation, the guerrilla

theatre, Weiner roasts, graffiti art, the Lipsticked Lady Terrorists, and more. These demonstrations were critical in drawing media attention to the issue and sustaining overall momentum across the country. They reinforced what a flood of more than 11,000 letters were saying to Secretary of State Gerry Weiner: Women's centres are vital community resources, and women are willing to fight to ensure their survival.

This direct action combined with letter-writing campaigns and well-thought-out meetings with politicians to leave an indelible mark on both the government's and our own awareness of women's collective strength.

As you are probably aware, in January of this year, Secretary of State reinstated the concept of operational funding for centres previously eligible. However, centres in this country re-

main seriously underfunded. The reinstatement was set at 1989 levels and excluded the approximately 50% of the country's centres not receiving operational funds. (It also did not address the financial situation of national women's groups, whose work feeds integrally into that of the centres.)

There is obviously much more work to be done. But in continuing, we remember the creativity, the tenacity, and the solidarity that was displayed this past year. Those remembrances will serve us in good stead as we tackle not only the issue of funding for women's services but all the issues that impact on the achievement of women's equality in our society.

Phyllis Price, for Women's Centres **CONNECT!**

Feminist reality doesn't match expectations

Pandora:

It was almost an accident that I picked up the January 1991 copy of Pandora at the Entitlement Bookstore in Halifax. I knew it was a Nova Scotian publication, but that's about it. If I'd known it was a 'feminist' paper, I wouldn't have touched it.

However, upon browsing through the paper, I found myself intrigued with each article. I read the paper from cover to cover.

I have always thought of 'feminists' as burly, abrasive dyke-types who had nothing better to do with their time than bitch about life and hate men. But the articles I read in Pandora weren't written by women who fit my stereotype, or, if they were, the stereotype didn't show through in their stories. Instead what I found was sometimes humorous, sometimes fun, but, for the most part, thought-provoking articles on real issues, issues that affect all women in some way or another. I was surprised, pleasantly surprised.

I have never considered myself a feminist. In fact, I have shunned the term for the very reason I stated above, because there is an unpleasant, uncomfortable stereotype that is attached to

being a feminist. However, I do believe in equal pay for equal work, the right for a woman to choose what is best for her own body and mind, and the essential right for women to stand up for themselves in a world run by men, dictated by men, and controlled by men.

A little over a year ago, I also left the Roman Catholic faith, disgusted and disillusioned by its hypocrisy towards women and its patriarchal foundation.

After surviving a violence-filled

and turbulent young childhood, and, after the age of five, being raised by my single mother who has, to this day, not healed from the experiences of her married life, independence and aggressiveness became a way of life... no labels attached.

I'm sorry and ashamed for being so shallow as to put down and block out a portion of my own sex for standing up for their rights. After all, if we don't stand up for ourselves, who will?

I'm not sure I will ever become a

die-hard feminist, but it's suddenly reassuring to see other people, other women, with the same concerns as mine, who will not label — pardon the stereotype — a person a heretic for having ideas of equality which are still considered radical and, to some extent, heretical, in Nova Scotia.

Bravo Pandora for bringing women together and bringing issues out in the open that have always been quieted by a patriarchal society!

Sarah Eaton, Halifax

Lots of activities planned for Pride Week

Pandora:

Hello there, my name is Cathy McDougall, and I am the Chair of the Pride Week '91 Committee for Halifax, N.S.

I welcome you to celebrate with us "Growing out of Bounds," this year's theme for Pride Week '91. We would like to see all individuals and/or groups represented in the parade, by float, banner, or your own presence. On June 15, 1991 at 2 pm we will be at Rumours

preparing signs and banners. Your group is welcome to use this space.

The times we are living in need us to show our strength in numbers and celebrate with PRIDE in 1991. The tentative date for the parade is June 22, 1991, (Saturday).

Our events are still in the planning stage, but there is a parade. After the parade, there will be an "Info-Fair," where groups can set up their booths. If your group is interested, please inform

me by contacting the GALA office. On June 30, 1991 we will be hosting a "Coming out Gala" and presenting community awards for 1991.

Please forward your reply, inquiry, or suggestions to:

Pride Week '91, P.O. Box 7126, Halifax N.S. B3K 5J5, or you can call me at the GALA office (423-2292) Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday.

Cathy McDougall
Chair/Pride Week '91

(See also article in this issue about Pride Week activities.)

I look forward to, and enjoy receiving issues of Pandora. Please use the extra money towards ensuring that others who perhaps cannot afford to subscribe continue to receive Pandora. Keep up the good work!

—Carolyn Hiltz, Halifax

The last issue of Pandora was particularly fine. I'm impressed by the way in which your publication is becoming even more thoughtful and diverse.

—M.K. Louis, Victoria, BC

I admire you all tremendously. It's a good and important paper. Want any rural contributors?

—Kay Tudor, Shelburne Co., NS
(Editor's note: Yes! Yes! Yes! We recognize that we are far too city-oriented. We would love to have more stories about rural women's lives.)

Keep up the excellent work. I have enjoyed Pandora from the beginning and continue to enjoy it today!

—Janis M. Leone, Halifax

I enclose a cheque for a subscription (plus a small donation.) I saw your Pandora Vol6 #2 issue at Frog Hollow Books and am very much impressed with its sense and literacy—to say nothing of agreeing with almost all of your views.

I especially enjoyed your editorial; and also the Gynogame. Although I love jigsaw puzzles, word problems like this have always scared me rigid, but Dian Day's helpful instructions made it all look feasible, and I solved it very quickly with no stress at all. Thank you for an intellectual boost!

—Alice Braybrooke, Halifax

Keep up the great work! Thank you.

—Maura Donovan, Wolfville, NS

I am interested in receiving Pandora as I believe it is an excellent publication. But I also believe it is being discriminatory in not publishing men's work. I do know some very caring, loving, supportive men that I do not discriminate against because they are males. And if we women don't take the time to try to change male attitudes, who will? Is an abused male child less deserving of comfort and support because he is male?

—Pat Weaver, Parrsboro, NS

Pandora gives women food for thought

Pandora:

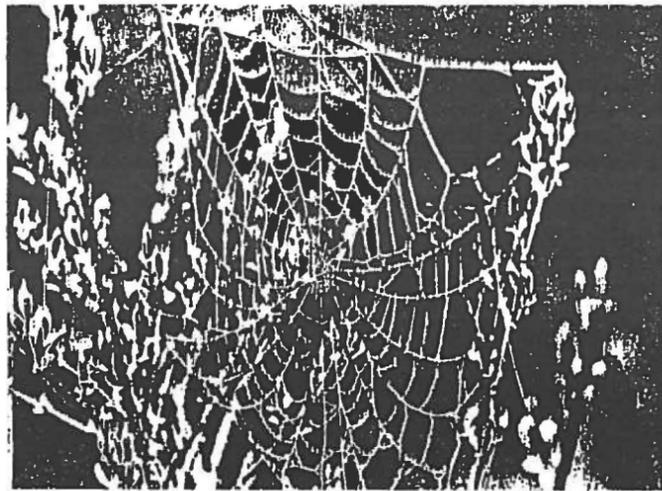
I am an eighteen year-old high school student and I am female. The greatest question, I think, that women (if we may be called that yet) my age face is this: What does it mean to us to be a woman. We are faced with a barrage of media daily, hourly, that tells us to be a woman is to be thin, have silky legs, and wear clothes that attract men. But we are of the age where we are beginning to be able to see through the haze of hormones and see what we really want to be. We don't have to live like our mothers and grandmothers did, and we have choices to make.

I struggle with myself every time a teacher or a friend makes a sexist remark or innuendo because it is so easy to be labelled "feminist bitch" or "dyke." But the fact remains that I think I know who I am, I think I know where I'm going, I know what I like and what I don't.

I just want to say that it's publications like yours that really give those of us who are struggling to emerge, as women, food for thought. I think it's women like those who write, edit and believe in the ideals behind Pandora, those women who lead, those who teach, those who help, who should be role models for young people, male and female. Thank you for your voice.

Angela
Dartmouth, N.S.

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

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

Starhawk fundraiser a major success

Pandora:

The Maritimes Full Circle Fundraiser was a wonderful, wonderful day. On February 10 more than 200 women and children attended the ritual workshop with Starhawk in the afternoon, and approximately 550 (many of the same group) came to the evening event.

We were able to gather at a terrible time in our world and both give and receive strength, courage, caring, and laughter. We were also able to raise more than \$7,000 clear to give to the production of Donna Read's third film, Full Circle. Isn't that great! A fabulous achievement that really demonstrates the Maritime community's support.

The Full Circle Collective would like to thank every person who participated in any way. You helped envision this film as a real possibility. You gave your hearts and your talents and your hands and your money. Your presence made gathering together again a joy.

We are delighted to tell you: Of three Canadian fundraisers held so far, our community travelled the farthest, raised the most, and thanks to the magical musicality of Silver Frith and the super "shameless" songstering of the Secret Furies, our voices rang the loudest, too.

See you at the WHEN conference in May!
Full Circle Collective

He threatened to kill me... but I survived!

J. J.

Living with an abuser would be better termed as "existing," for it is not a normal life but a day to day, hour to hour existence with the fear of being beaten, berated or both.

During the 8 1/2 years I was married to an abusive partner, I existed with the fear that he was going to come home drunk and abusive again.

The first time was two months into the marriage and was totally unexpected. The sweet, loving, caring person I had married would never be like this — would he? As I was to find out in the course of my marriage, not only would he repeat this first act of violence against me, but it would get worse and recur more often, until I literally feared for my life. At the end, when I finally escaped, (which would be the proper terminology since I was leaving a hell worse than prison) I had reached the point of either being killed or of killing myself.

It started out with a few bruises once in awhile when he drank, then progressed to my being threatened with a butcher knife and having to run from my home with my infant daughter. My crime was that a strange man at a dance had said hello to me.

At first any violence used against me was done in the privacy of our home when no one else was around. Whenever I tried to tell anyone what was happening in my home, I was believed to be lying, since the only side of my husband anyone seen was his public face, which was that of "Good Time Charlie."

When I finally let my parents know what was going on, they were upset and had a few things to say to my husband. After that I was not allowed to visit my parents' home, and they couldn't visit mine, by order of my Lord and Master. In the past, if I expressed the wish to terminate our marriage, I was told he would find me wherever I went and kill

me and my parents. Also, he would threaten that if I left, I would never get my children, as he would go into court and claim I was an unfit mother, even if it meant perjuring himself and getting people to lie for him on the stand.

On one occasion when he tried to strangle me and damaged part of my windpipe, I told my family doctor what was going on in my home. His attitude was that of the male chauvinist — "What did I do to provoke him" and whatever it was "I deserved it!"

Finally the true side of my husband began to appear before our friends, and soon hardly anyone would come to our home when he was present and we were hardly ever invited out, since he didn't know how to behave even in other people's homes. A card game would turn into my having to endure abusive name-calling, hitting, kicking, getting poked with a paring knife. Once he set my hair on fire because he was losing the game.

When he was drinking he would urinate anywhere in our home — under the kitchen cupboards, carpets, couch, bed, etc., and if I asked him to stop I was beaten, as it was his home and he could do whatever he wanted in it. Whenever he would come home with liquor on his breath, even the family cat would automatically disappear in fright.

Our oldest daughter, unfortunately, had to witness this behaviour, because when he got the gun out, threatening to shoot me, I had to bar her and me in her bedroom and push the bunk beds, bureau, etc., against the door and sleep on the floor for protection.

Finally he progressed to being abusive when he was not drinking. My back is permanently damaged from being jumped on by him, and all my toes have been broken by him, for his sheer enjoyment of torturing me.

He grabbed a friend's 14 year-old son by the throat, in his own home, and threatened to kill him, then sneaked

home and got out his 30-30 to lie in ambush for me to come home. If it hadn't been for our oldest daughter running to her grandmother's home in terror that night and her warning me, I may have been killed that time.

As it was, the gun was taken from our home that night by my mother-in-law before she allowed friends to bring me home — where he threw me to the floor, beat me and tried to strangle me, with our oldest daughter standing there watching. If it hadn't been for our friends being there and helping me, I'm quite sure the outcome would have been death.

The night of my escape started out with my husband getting drunk and arguing with our company. Then he turned his anger on me, and that insane look came over his face that I had grown to recognize. He went to get his 30-30 and told me in no uncertain terms he was going to kill me. While our company wrestled the gun from him, I managed to put a call through to the police but was connected with the wrong police department. Since my husband was slowly making his way towards me, I gave my name and location to the officer I was speaking to and informed him my husband had a gun and was going to shoot me. The officer kept repeating, "What does he have and what is he going to do with it?"

At this point, my husband broke loose from the people who were holding him, grabbed the phone receiver and started to beat me on the head with it, then broke the connection. He then grabbed my hair, threw me to the floor and kept pulling my hair with one hand and pounding me with his fist with the other hand.

While this was happening, my oldest daughter ran out the house, hysterical, to her grandmother's house to try to get me help, because no one else seemed to be helping at the time she left. When he was finally pulled off me, our company held him while I got the kids together and drove to my parents' home.

My call to the wrong police department was never reported that night to the proper police department by the officer I had spoken to. The call was probably assumed to be "just another hysterical female" calling.



The next day I went to the hospital, where I was told my entire head was almost completely bruised and my scalp was torn from the skull bone, ear to ear. The doctor on call that day advised me not to go back home because by the looks of things my husband would probably kill me the next time.

I had to leave my parents' home and go to a transition house because my husband kept parking at the end of my parents' driveway and sitting there watching for me. While I was still at the transition house, my husband went to a psychiatrist three times and was told he did not have a psychological problem — THAT I DID!

I am now divorced, and have custody of our two children. My ex-husband has remarried, and, from descriptions of his wedding, he has not

changed. Since he has never received proper psychiatric treatment, it will not be long before he reverts back to his old ways of treating his wife — if he hasn't already!

I pray to God, that when he does, she can get out before he kills her, because I am certain he would have ended up murdering me if I had not been able to escape when I did.

To sum it all up, the professional people who could have helped me all turned their backs on a progressively-violent situation.

The only help and support I did receive was through family, close friends and the transition house staff. Last, but not least, the one who could have helped my ex-husband made a diagnosis without further investigating the circumstances. I consider myself one of the lucky ones — I'M ALIVE.



Amber Brundin, CMA

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Tickets for this event are on a sliding scale of \$135 - \$173 for 4 days and

will entitle you to three meals a day with a comfortable, dorm-style cabin located in a beautiful private camp, with sports fields, lakeside beach, nature trails, lakeside dining rooms, and indoor theatres.

There will be fine entertainment provided with videos, concerts, a dance each evening, as well as craft booths and Artists' Gallery filled with the best of lesbian arts and crafts. In addition to the fine entertainment, lesbian writers,

artists and organizers will participate in workshops and forums. Workshop subjects will range from sexuality to spirituality, from politics to fiction.

The Lesbians' Festival in Quebec is committed to being accessible to all lesbians who would like to attend. It is for this reason that it is held in a wheelchair accessible camp. English translation will be available for most activities, as well as LSQ interpreters and Braille programs.

Join us for this herstoric, Quebecois lesbian celebration! If you are interested in having a craft booth or in showing your work in the Gallery, please contact us as soon as possible. If you would like to attend the Festival, tickets on a sliding scale of \$135-\$175 for 4 days, will be available before July 15th.

For brochure and more information, please write to: PRODUCTIONS PARTICULIERES, C.P. 261, Succ. de Lormier, Montreal, Quebec H2H 2N6 (514) 597-0858. Please include self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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Group helps kids make sense of their lives

Joan Newman

Since the inception of Youth in Transition, I've often struggled as to how best describe the group to people who are unfamiliar with us. Perhaps it's best to begin with how we started.

The community is well aware of the existing services for battered women and batterers. But people such as those at Bryony House were often concerned by the absence of services for the children once they left the sanctuary of the transition house. We were set up to deal with children who are living with the different aftermaths of violence towards their mothers.

The Youth in Transition program is funded by a Health and Welfare grant that the Institute for the Study of Women at Mount Saint Vincent University applied for. We are now in our second year of operation and are optimistic that we will be busy well into our third and final year. The group therapy program was designed and is being run by its two therapists, Joan Newman and Patrick Mabey, while Martha McGinn co-ordinates the program at the Mount.

We began by setting up a group therapy room at Veith House in September 1989, and found that by January 1990 our referrals had grown to such a point that we could finally begin six therapy groups. We are now running our second round of six-month-long therapy groups. The children we service are between the ages of eight and sixteen. When they come together in a group, they are with children of the same sex and similar ages.

If you were to walk into our group room, you could feel the heartbeat of the program. At the time of writing this article, the room seems bare in comparison to the life and art it accumulated over the first series of groups. But in a familiar way it is filling up again with the "art," "clutter" and "belong-

ings" that best express the range of emotion these children and teens move through. I fondly recall a paper, life-sized child's body, mini parachute attached, that hung from our ceiling - a symbol and a reminder of how this room comes to be owned by its participants.

We still have our "love is hard" graffiti and our collection of well-armed animals drawn on poster-sized paper throughout the room. There is the self-portrait of the beautiful woman with fanged teeth, and the hanging,

out as clearly as they do on this paper, either. Sometimes they surface during a dispute with another child or with us.

The process is different for each child. Some children are not yet aware they are angry over the change in their lives, while others can easily express their sadness over family changes. It can be a relief to have a name put to some of the confusing or hostile feelings a child may be having. These children are reminders to each other what they are struggling with. They can learn from each other or find direction from us.

The growing of a group brings uncertainty for all of us, because we are never sure what will sprout up. Every group comes to have its own identity. Some groups have pet names, fond names or sarcastic names. "Welcome to the schizo group" graffiti

was an expression of how our first teenagers felt others saw them: strange and misunderstood. Other groups have dreamed up new first names for each member. A new identity can leave so much to the imagination.

These groups allow the participants to try on new identities. Some want desperately to be living in different circumstances. In the end, the group allows them to learn new ways of coping by trying on different behaviours in the group.

The goals of our program are numerous:

- to identify and express feelings around life changes,
- to learn better ways to deal with anger and aggression,
- to improve self-esteem and build a better self-concept,
- to learn children are not responsible for family violence,
- to explore how children define their future based on models they may have been exposed to in the home.

Our groups have never been so formal that we've named these goals to the participants. Instead, we often ask them to answer some of the questions we pose on the front of our children's pamphlet advertising the program. Questions like:

Check which of the following sounds like you or someone you know:

- I worry about how much my parents fight
- I'm afraid of other's anger
- Sometimes I can't control my temper
- I don't trust a lot of people

The check list goes on and pinpoints only some of the common thoughts and

feelings children may have when they come to see us.

Many people stiffen at the thought of such serious content being discussed in a group, but relax when they realize that the groups also offer the chance to get away from such seriousness. Some weeks we're serious, some weeks silly. Some weeks we're arm-deep in clay and paint, and other weeks we're glued to our chairs while we share experiences.

Picture one of my favourite paintings on a six-foot roll of brown paper: Five feet of it is candyland, fantasyland, full of castles and treats; -but- at the other edge of the painting there lurks the wicked witch.

It's wonderful to realize that for all

of us there exists a special place where the harsh realities of the world don't touch you. The group is in place to help the children master some of their fears and anxieties that are portrayed by the monsters or wicked witches that do enter on the edge of the painting.

(Pandora's Note: Children's images of wicked witches as evil fantasy figures are all too common in our society. It is a sad occurrence that male violence against women and children is being transposed into negative depictions of women, such as witches, in these children's drawings.)

Pandora feels it is time to begin the work of reclaiming the positive aspects of spirituality and witchcraft for ourselves and our children.)

Some children are not yet aware they are angry over the changes in their lives.

stuffed duffle bag that has been used and abused, painted, autographed, and sorely missed when it falls from its perch.

From all of this, many people (often adults) pull away when they come into the room because it can scream out at you the way graffiti does in a subway station. Yet it never ceases to amaze us how the children and the teens that come to be assessed for our program are often drawn to some piece of the room as if it is also a piece of them. They seem to understand it.

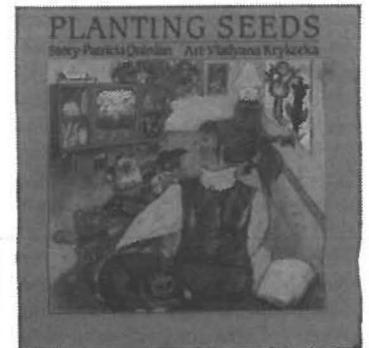
These children have much in common, despite their uniqueness as individuals. They share the fact that they have experienced much CHANGE. Things such as moves, family separations, and sometimes divorces, bring new homes, strange environments, and much readjusting despite a parent's best intentions. With all these changes come the accompanying emotions of confusion, fear, sadness, anger, and guilt. These thoughts and feelings get shared over hot cocoa or during a basketball game. They don't always come

Some children's books you may enjoy reading

Carrie Melsom

I love books, especially children's books. As a teacher of young children I go through a lot of picture books. Most children's books do nothing to challenge the status quo: They are frequently sexist, there is still an absence of minority faces, and almost no recognition of alternate family structures. Every so often I come across a book that breaks the pattern. These are some of those books. As I come across more I'll pass the titles on to you, along with

short descriptions. Most of the books I mention are available in Halifax libraries, some, such as Asha's Moms can be purchased at the Red Herring.



Planting Seeds
Patricia Quinlan
illustration Vadyana Krykorka

A young girl's exposure to war, bombs and hunger in the media leaves her struggling with her fear and confusion. She begins to gain some basic understanding about conflict when her parents help her to see it in her own life. She still doesn't understand about bombs, but she does learn about planting seeds and people taking care of each other. A picture book for ages 4 to 8. A bibliography of other books about conflict resolution is included.

Annick Press Ltd.



Just Us Women
Jeannette Caines
illustration Pat Cummings

"No boys and no men - just us women." A young girl and her aunt drive to North Carolina. They plan the trip, pack maps and a lunch, and enjoy their freedom to stop at roadside markets and to walk in the rain without anyone hurrying them along. A picture book for ages 4 to 8. The soft illustrations and gentle rhythms set the scene perfectly for a carefree, cross-country drive with "just us women."

Harper and Row



Asha's Moms
Rosamund Elwin and Michele Paule
illustration Dawn Lee

Asha returns a field trip form signed by her two moms. Her teacher wants it filled out correctly and tells Asha she can't go unless it is. Asha relies on her moms to talk to the teacher, but has to deal with the curiosity of her classmates when she paints a picture of her family. Asha knows that living together and loving each other is what makes a family. A picture book for ages 4 to 8.

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(also to be held September 7-8, 1991 in Halifax, NS)

War costs once again take priority

Marion Mathieson

A wonderful song by Judy Small chronicles the brainwashing of successive generations in *Mothers, Daughters, Wives* and ends derisively with "And we believed them!" Canadians in the '90s seem to decide more carefully what they will believe.

The departures of naval vessels from Halifax elicited very interesting responses and attitudes. For example, one male veteran abhorred what he called "the display of snivelling young wives."

If there were any, it was not evident. Indeed, one furious wife told a reporter that she knew when she married a sailor that he could go to war at any time, but she was not prepared to see him enter a dangerous situation for the sake of politics.

She should be commended for criticizing the government's motives and having the courage to voice an opinion undoubtedly shared by many.

We were asked to believe that the Canadian Navy was ready. For whom? For what? When George Bush's former friend Saddam Hussein committed the unpardonable sin of interfering with the U.S. gas-guzzling life-style, the President commanded support of his friend (read "interest") Brian Mulroney in pursuit of what was called "a great and noble undertaking." The Canadian Navy hastily updated the firepower of three ships before they sailed, their purpose and orders unclear.

Canada's reputation as peace-maker has been deeply compromised by the P.M.'s hasty ordering-up of troops at President Bush's request.

Were we protecting the "free world?" Were we making a better world, or just a better world for some?

Saudi Arabia, an undemocratic tribal monarchy, has been described as one of the more progressive of Arab states. Saddam Hussein is by no means a savory character. His record on human rights is appalling. He used poison gas against civilians in his country. It is a little ironic, however, that we only recently discovered Saddam to be a uniquely evil leader. He has been president of Iraq for 14 years, and the Americans were inclined to favour him when he was fighting Iran. Today, Saudi Arabia is a friend of the U.S., Iraq a foe.

Brian Mulroney seemed bent on entangling Canada in a war about money, greed, profits, and the macho flexing of muscle. It was about a "new international order," with the U.S. in control of the oil-fields of the Middle East.

Were we being asked to destroy our environment to protect a lifestyle? If so, whose? Canada could have done the entire a world a service by not encouraging this folly of consumerism.

Before we continue to expand our highway systems, destroy more agricultural land and become increasingly dependent on non-renewable resources, we should consider the Seventh Generation Law of the League of the Iroquois whereby no important decision is made by tribal members without considering its future effect on the seventh generation later. We will have to do a lot of soul-searching in the next few years.



(Photo by Sara Shields)

Citizens take to Halifax streets to support a peaceful resolution to the Gulf war.

Who armed the "criminal of historic proportions"?

The forces in Saudi Arabia faced a powerful Iraqi army that owed much of its strength to the complicity of western arms suppliers. During the Iran-Iraq war, the U.S. provided Iraq with intelligence information and turned a blind eye to arms sales from the Soviets and other Europeans. The U.S. also quietly permitted Saddam to buy computers and other high-technology items for its

defence industries. Using western mercenary expertise, he was able to improve the range of Soviet-provided SCUD missiles and may have developed chemical warheads for them. Saddam is also believed to be well along in developing nuclear weapons.

The multiple-launch rocket systems and surface-to-surface missiles are made in Brazil. Other weaponry originated in Czechoslovakia, Egypt and South Africa. Saudi Arabia has F-15 fighter planes, tanks, anti-tank missiles and air-to-air missiles from the U.S. The British sold the Saudis another \$2.3 billion (US) worth of weapons: more F-14s and tanks, as well as Stifer anti-aircraft missiles and depleted-uranium anti-armour rounds.

The Iran-Iraq war, fuelled and encouraged by unscrupulous arms traders, aided and abetted by governments, resulted in a massive Iraqi debt, prompting the invasion of Kuwait to acquire its oil and wealth. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia's \$46 billion purchase of arms last year (making it the largest arms importer in 1989), apparently did not lessen the fear of an Iraqi invasion. Massive expenditures on weapons have certainly not helped the peace and security of people in the Middle East, especially the poor. This business could make some people very rich in both the U.S. and Canada.

Not in Canada, you say?

Between 1981-87 Swiss Pilatus PC7 trainers, which are easily converted to attack-aircraft, were sold by Switzerland to both Iran and Iraq — 37 of them to Iraq. They are powered by Pratt and Whitney Canada engines. In October 1988, the Swiss section of Amnesty International reported on arms exports to human rights violators, including Iraqi use of PC7 aircraft to bombard Kurdish villages with toxic gases (chemical weapons). Sales such as these are not considered "direct," and are, therefore, very hard to trace. They are not reported by the Canadian government. This situation emphasizes the disclosure problems that those concerned about Canada's involvement in the arms race have complained about for years.

It must be repeated over and over again that this arms build-up — a legacy of the international arms trade, and weaponry that poured into the middle-east, notably Iraq and Saudi Arabia — was aimed across their common border in

an international crisis as disastrous as anything in the now-diffused Cold War.

Canada must now attempt to redeem itself in the eyes of citizens and the whole international community by using its seat on the Security Council to find a peaceful solution to this stand-off, by insisting that all troops in the Gulf are under the United Nations flag, and by ceasing to contribute to a rising war mentality which will surely bring disaster.

Should Canadians be successful in persuading the government to shift spending tax dollars to people-oriented areas, then:

- A 50% reduction in military spending would easily pay for a national childcare program.
- Just a 5% cut in military budget could have saved VIA rail.
- Even one-tenth of one per cent of military spending would re-open all the shelters, women's support and rape crisis centres that were cut in the last federal budget. The people of Canada must question our government's priorities.

Sending peace-keeping and surveillance personnel and equipment into a potential war zone is an irresponsible use of Canada's human, military and diplomatic resources. One woman wrote to the departing sailors and soldiers, "I have been through two world wars; please try not to make this a third."

Judy Small's song holds out some hope for the future: Women are seeing their role in society differently.

The women of Canada must call this government to account, and let the Prime Minister know that they deplore the provocative action he has taken, unauthorized by Parliament, of following the United States to the brink in the Persian Gulf; that they are ashamed that our involvement in the global arms race has made this "dead end" situation possible. Canada has endangered her reputation as peace-maker by exacerbating tensions and endangering lives.

Acknowledgements: Richard Sanders: Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade; Project Ploughshares.

Marion Mathieson is a vice-president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women and chair of the Survival of the Planet Committee. She lives in Sydney, Cape Breton, N.S.

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(Photo by Sara Shields)

Anti-war demonstrators vividly illustrate their opinions by writing on the sides of a tank.

In search of the peaceful lightbulb

Donna Smyth *

Anyone who plans to avoid economic collusion with the corporations who design, test, sell and profit from the weapons of mass destruction is likely to spend a long and perplexing time at the supermarket.

What could be more innocent than a package of salt—the subject of a hundred proverbs coupled with bread as the most ancient symbol of hospitality and welcome?

Chances are, however, that the salt is produced by Morton Thiokol or one of its Canadian subsidiaries such as The Canadian Salt Company.

A few aisles away there are a few more Morton Thiokol products—Spray'n Wash, Fantastic Spray Cleaner and Glass Plus. None of them, perhaps, are the choice of the environmentally-conscious shopper, but they are not especially sinister in themselves.

Morton Thiokol's other products are less benign. The company makes the propulsion systems for a whole range of nuclear and other missiles—these include the MX, Trident and Poseidon, as well as the smaller Maverick, Hellfire, HARM, Sidewinder and Patriot. There's nothing unusual about Morton Thiokol's production of weaponry right alongside everyday kitchen products. In fact, the vast majority of arms-making is done by companies which are familiar to every consumer.

The largest of these is General Electric, but a host of familiar household brands originate with companies which are heavily involved in the weapons business. It would be hard to find a middle-class household in North America which didn't contain some products whose purchase benefitted companies with a major stake in the arms trade.

For those who'd like to limit that collusion, see the box on the centre of this page for a brief list of some of the products to avoid along with some alternative brands from companies with little or no participation in weapons production.

And the peaceful lightbulb? Well, we're still looking. Right now the choice in nearly every store is between General Electric and GTE (Sylvania). GTE isn't quite as large as General Electric, but is still among the major weapons-making military contractors.

While the weapons companies have

thoroughly infiltrated our everyday lives, we also are capable of using everyday choices to limit their influence:

- 1) Making a conscious choice in buying a lightbulb is a small first step.
- 2) Some of us may have pension funds or an insurance policy which investigation will show to be invested in General Electric. Others may have ac-

counts in banks who are major General Electric shareholders.

- 3) Our doctors make decisions about buying expensive medical equipment, some of which is made by General Electric

- 4) A vital part in any of these actions is to notify the corporations involved about the reason for the choice.



(Photo by Sara Shields)

Protest becomes ec

Betty Peterson

The drums of war began beating last August, faintly and far away at first, and barely heard amid the rumble of tanks at Kahnawake and Kanetsatake. But as the Universal Soldiers massed together in the Gulf, the flags and cheering crowds emerged once more, and momentum began to build.

What can any woman do to speak out, to protest, to make a witness, to call for another way than war? Mount a vigil in a public place and face the crowds.

The Voice of Women took up the cause and rallied round, not the flag, but round the banner saying "Peace in the Gulf. Miracles do happen." Others joined, mostly women, and we soon turned from protest to public education. An ingenious VOW production line sprang into action, from researcher, writer and printer to numbers of secret photocopiers in the recesses of august conservative institutions, and hand-outs miraculously emerged at the daily rallies.

After January 15, the leaflets were changed weekly with new facts, figures and calls for action. "Hot off the press! What CNN doesn't tell you!" Some passersby eagerly sought them, one asking for back copies to send to a CNN friend in the Middle East! A few recoiled as if from a disease. Careful, folks, peace might be catching!

Supporters made a special effort to join us on Christmas Day, bringing children, edible goodies and hot coffee! "Peace on Earth," and what a peace lesson for kids! We turned the nerve-racking deadline of January 15th into a high celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday, honoring his practice of nonviolent direct action.

But the miracle didn't happen; the artificial deadline soon led to an aerial war. The daily emotional see-saw continued with grownup war toys in action over Iraq for all to see, prime-time and in living colour. Nauseous dread turned to mounting suspense over the Russian

compromise. Failed. Ceasefire. Failed. Ground war, the ultimate failure, became a "Glorious victory."

Through it all, we vigiled — snow, sleet, rain. Banners were buffeted by high winds and we were buffeted by hecklers and worse. "Tell it to that madman, Hussein." "Nuke 'em all. It's all they understand!" "I LIKE war." "You traitors, you should be ashamed of yourselves!" Yes, and we got the finger, pointed up like a gun. Who could miss the connection? But the catcalls were not all from men.

It was not always easy to smile into oncoming eyes, sometimes hostile or averted. One came to anticipate the ramrod strides, the scornful looks from a distance, and to save one's energy. Hardest to take were the pitying looks at the 'Bleeding Hearts.' "Wake up, use your heads, face the facts, you silly ninnies!" And we wanted to say, "OK, Buster, you face the facts, read our hand-outs, if you dare!" But with difficulty we smiled, shrugged and faced the next on-comer. An actual scuffle broke out between two men, one belligerent, the other protective of the vigil.

But, truth to tell (surprisingly), the majority of passersby reached out their hands as the days went on, began to smile in greeting, and said "Right on." "I don't agree with you but I admire your courage and fortitude." Most moving vignette: a mother signing the

What you to suppo

BRANDS MADE BY ARMS MAKERS:
SMOKE DETECTORS
General Electric (Home Sentry)
Honeywell

AUTO PARTS AND SUPPLIES
Allied Signal (Fram)
GTE (Sylvania Sealed-Beam Headlights)
Tenneco (Speedy Muffler)

BATTERIES
General Electric

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COMPUTERS
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ITT (Qume)
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General Electric (Hotpoint)
Raytheon (Amana, Caloric, Modern Maid)
Litton

GARDEN EQUIPMENT
Tenneco (Case mowers & Tractors)
Textron (Homelite mowers, Trimmers)
Chainsaws)

POWER TOOLS & HARDWARE SUPPLIES
Dupont (Tedlar Adhesives)
Sears Craftsman Power Tools

Emerson Electric (Skilsaw)

The television war

Donna Smyth *

In 1986, GE bought the RCA Corporation, the largest TV manufacturer in the U. S. and owner of the NBC radio and TV networks. In this one move, GE fused information and entertainment, high tech communications and a built-in audience, with a right-wing political and military agenda.

All that was missing was a war—the proper kind of war.

The crisis in the Gulf couldn't have come at a better time. As the Cold War was ending, defence spending in the U.S. was in a slump. And, as it turned out, it couldn't have come in a better package. A high tech war fought in prime time somewhere in the Middle East, not threatening the American homeland. An enemy easily demonized. Little visible blood and gore. Much glitz and glitter and "gee whizzing" at the weapons systems display.

NBC even boasted that it would have the cutting edge of coverage: mini-cameras attached to the warheads of the warheads of the missiles designed by GE.

education during 82-day vigil

petition while a clear little voice at her knee piped up, "Mommy, what's a war?" And the military wife drawing aside, "I believe in what you're doing, but I have to be loyal to my husband in the Gulf," or "Thank you for your efforts, but I'm not allowed to talk with you people."

Older women responded to grey hair, and we commiserated over past wars and this one. Another said, "My husband was a POW in a Japanese prison and I say 'Gas 'em all.'" Memories run deep. A young Kurd supported our peace efforts, though he told us that 5000 Kurds were gassed by Hussein only an hour from his home in Iraq in 1988. Changing faces, changing reactions, day after day.

Months passed. Though one struggled alone from the car each day with awkward bundles of petitions and pens, emergency string, huge banners, hand-outs and placards to respond to the news of the day, weariness was temporary.

Wonderful friends joined the vigil, exchanging news and views, raising morale and strengthening each other during grey and grim times. There were always helping hands at hour's end to load things for the next day. Most frustrating were the many parking tickets from only a few minutes over time. Looney time in more ways than one. But we maintained our sanity and con-

viction and affirmation.

Media were sympathetic and covered us well, locally, regionally, and nationally. As usual, hours of interviews resulted in fleeting replays and only scanty quotes. As news of the vigil and rallies spread, phone calls of encouragement flooded in with news of kindred vigils in Bridgewater, Wolfville, Antigonish and rallies in New Glasgow and Church Point as well as peace fasts in Port Hawkesbury, organized by women, bless 'em!

Our most powerful exposure from months on the street was the mingling with the poor, the homeless, the beggars, personified in smiling Louise who falls between the cracks in our society. "I can't read," said a few others returning our leaflets. What a criminal waste of money on war in the face of such need in the world. Famine, refugees, Tomahawk Missiles... Why do we tolerate this?

The steadfastness of the vigil was punctuated by weekly rallies, with rage-ins, speakers, the Secret Furies, candle-light vigils, protests at the US Embassy, calls for uncensored news coverage at CBC and the Chronically Horrid, a Trial of the Tory Party and the witness against Blacks, Natives and Arabs.

Open mikes were held beneath old Churchill's scowl, where people vented their feelings for the first time. And those times of camaraderie in the Casino, singing and cheering and laughing. Thousands were protesting all over the world. Was anyone listening? Certainly not the leaders who were deafened by their own rhetoric. Meanwhile there was the yawning abyss of war.

Too late came the cease-fire, after the incineration of nearly 100,000 fleeing soldiers. Will we ever be allowed to know the human cost, let alone the environmental and financial? When will we ever learn? And, yes, grieving, yet relieved, we ended our vigil.

Eighty-two days to stand up and be counted. Was it worth it? Yes! 5000 petition names, 20,000 leaflets, uncounted Haligonians seeing, reading, hearing "Peace is the way" in the most militarized city in Canada.

More important, women came to realize their power. They know that war is an extension of violence against women and against society. As has been said, "The clamour for war in the Persian Gulf rings with the counterfeit courage of middle-aged men discussing abortion." We know that there are other ways of solving conflict. We know we are all held hostage to outmoded thinking and knee-jerk reactions.

Once again we are left to pick up the pieces from children's play and men's destruction and bind up the wounds as always. Are we ready to put those pieces together in a new way so they spell PEACE and JUSTICE? Refuse to pay war taxes; prevent profits from arms and use arms only for hugging; outlaw war toys; work for peace education in homes and in schools; extend women's values and process; and support each other.

The struggle goes on... for a New World Community. We can make it if we try, sisters. Miracles do happen!



(Photo by Sara Shields)

you can do to support peace*

MAKERS:

ALTERNATIVES
Radio Shack (Archer)
Sunbeam (Centurion)

lights)

ALTERNATIVES
Champion (sparkplugs)
Midas Mufflers
Canadian Tire house
brands

ALTERNATIVES
Duracell
Ray-O-Vac

ALTERNATIVES

Emerson
Matsushita (Panasonic)
Sanyo
Sony

ALTERNATIVES
Apple
Commodore
Compaq
Radio Shack

rn Maid)

ALTERNATIVES
Maytag
Sears
Tappan
Whirlpool

s)
ners

ALTERNATIVES
Honda

Yard-Man
Ariens

SUPPLIES

ALTERNATIVES
Borden (Elmer's Glue-All)
Black & Decker
(made by Singer)
Stihl Power Tools



(Photo by Beverly Rach)

Peace Centre now open in Halifax

Joanne Wright

The peace centre is now open. We're at 2164 Gottingen Street, and our hours are 1:00-4:00 pm, Tuesday to Saturday and 1:00-7:00 pm on Thursday.

The peace centre is a community based, non-profit resource and support facility for local peace organizations and all individuals concerned with peace. Our goals are to:

1. Help facilitate and coordinate local peace initiatives with much-needed office space and personnel, and up to date information on organizations and events.
2. Provide a space to hold meetings, and
3. Service the need of the general public for information and support with a growing resource library, events calendar, workshops and discussion groups, a children's area, a place to relax and talk (with coffee!) and opportunity to become involved.

The issues which deny us the real and lasting peace for which the world's citizens so hunger are as vital and immediate as ever. They are also diverse, far-reaching, compli-

cated and overwhelming, and begin in our own communities with the attitudes and awareness of each and every individual. The peace centre has been established to help maintain a public focus on the relevant peace-related issues and to serve as a catalyst for understanding and action with respect to these issues.

Our resource area includes sections on war toys and cooperative play, violence against women, peace taxes and Conscience Canada (research centre and trust fund for war tax resisters), nuclear vessels in our harbour, women's peace organizations, militarization, and so on.

It is only through the collective effort of all human beings as equals that peace shall ever be realized. The Peace Centre has come into being entirely through a wonderful collaboration of committed individuals and volunteer contributions of time, resources, equipment, supplies and money. We invite everyone to come and see what we have to offer, and perhaps what you have to offer as well, to the process of building peace.

Take action against war profiteering

Donna Smyth *

VOW members have been researching the weapons industry for several years and, more recently, have been investigating the ways the arms trade has contributed to the Gulf war.

General Electric makes your lightbulbs, fridge, stove, freezer, microwave, washing machine, dishwasher, and clothesdryer. The brand names are familiar: "GE" and "Hotpoint".

GE has been around for years. The company boasts that it "pioneered selling whole ways of life".

It is also the third largest Pentagon contractor. During the 1980's, selling whole ways of death became GE's

major source of profit.

We endorse the boycott of General Electric initiated by the InFact Organization and now underway in 40 countries. InFact began the successful Nestle boycott in 1977 to prevent the thousands of infant deaths resulting from aggressive marketing of infant formula in the Third World.

A consumer boycott is the citizen equivalent of sanctions. As has been shown in the U. S., it can have a real impact. It raises public consciousness about the economic generators of war. It sends a message to our own government: We do not want this kind of high-tech mal-development in Canada. The

boycott is a small but powerful refusal to be co-opted into the war mentality and "effort." If we want to, we can still say NO!

So why single out GE?

General Electric is the supreme example of a successful weapons manufacturer with tremendous political clout in the U. S. There's a branch plant head office in Canada and we've all bought GE consumer products. In Canada too, GE exerts political influence. Its directors sit on the Business Council on National Issues and the Conference Board. GE was one of the big corporate promoters of Free Trade.

General Electric makes all or part of

many weapons that were used in the Gulf War. Examples are:
Tomahawk Cruise Missile
F-111 Fighter Aircraft
A-6 Intruder Attack Aircraft
and all F404 fighter engines.
F-14 and F-16 Fighter Aircraft
F-18 and CF 18 Fighter Aircraft

General Electric makes a host of avionics and military data systems as well as a vast range of weapons systems and radars. It has been involved in developing the "Stealth" technology which allows aircraft to evade radar detection.

(* Reprinted from Voice of Women Newsletter)

All white individuals in society are racist

Jill Davey

"All white individuals in our society are racists. Even if whites are totally free from all conscious racial prejudices, they remain racists, for they receive benefits distributed by a white racist society through its institutions. Our institutional and cultural processes are arranged to automatically benefit whites, just because they are white. It is essential for whites to recognize that they receive most of these benefits automatically, unconsciously and unintentionally." Education and Racism, National Education Association.

These words are difficult to read. We, as progressive women, like to believe that we are beyond racism. We know that it's "wrong," and we hope that we have graduated to another level of understanding. When I think of a racist, images of white men with potbellies and crew cuts waving confederate flags come to mind — certainly not me — or my community.

What is racism? The US Commission on Civil Rights defines it as: "Any attitude, action or institutional structure which subordinates a person or group because of their color...Racism is not just a matter of attitudes; actions and institutional structures can also be a form of racism."

Racism is inherent in our culture. As whites, our first reaction is usually one of guilt, anger, helplessness or sadness. The realization that we are racists immobilizes us to do anything about it. But we must do something about it... for our society, our culture and for ourselves.

At the AWMAC (Association of Women's Music & Culture) Conference last June, we began to take the first steps toward addressing this issue. We scheduled a three-hour workshop on Unlearning Racism for Friday morning. This workshop was the only AWMAC event scheduled during

those three hours to encourage maximum participation. It was designed as an introductory workshop to give us a good base from which to build in years to come.

The workshop was divided into two sessions. The first session was led by two women of colour from Indiana University: Fran Raines, a Native American/Japanese woman who supervises student teachers in the Latino Project and the Indian Summer Volunteers' Program at the IU School of Education, and Georgia Burgenio, a Chicana woman from the Department of Minority Affairs. This session began by focusing on language, the subtle and blatant racism in phrases we use everyday. Phrases like "black sheep", "Indian giver", "Black humour", help us understand the depth of racism within our society.

We then broke into small, mixed-racial groups where we worked on a more personal level, aided by two exercises designed to help us pinpoint racist teachings in our own background.

These groups were very successful and prepared us for the second half of the workshop.

In the second session, Mary Cross, a black woman from the University of Oklahoma, and Lynne Gelzer, a white woman from Washington, D.C., both experienced in working with Roadwork and Sisterfire on Unlearning Racism, separated us into groups of white women and women of colour. We again broke into small groups and continued the discussions begun in the first session.

The separation by race helped women to feel safe in expressing their anger, frustrations, uncertainties and fear. These discussions brought many of us to a deeper personal understanding of the problem and empowered us to believe we could do something about it.

This workshop was only a beginning of a much longer process. We were not able to focus specifically on AWMAC or the industry, but it is our intention to get more concrete in future workshops.

The process of unlearning racism is a long one, both societally and personally. It is our commitment in AWMAC to make this work a priority within the organization and the industry.

We encourage you to continue this work in your community. It is some of the most valuable work you will ever do.

To find experienced facilitators in your area we suggest contacting your local college or university Sociology or Minority Studies departments. If they don't have someone on staff, chances are they will know of someone who does this work.

We are also in the process of compiling a list of people involved in unlearning racism and of resources available. If you have any suggestions please send them to us at the address listed below.

We invite your input, comments and concerns. Please write to the AWMAC Newsletter, 2124 Kittredge St. #104, Berkeley, CA 94704.

Good luck in your work of unlearning racism. It's a process in which you have nothing to lose, and everything to gain.

She

Lorene

She is an awakening feminist
faced with a new consciousness about women;
about oppression; about theory;
about emotion; about experience

She takes it all in — in a short period of time

She begins to feel again —

She feels anger

She joins protests

She marches

She feels anger

She finds a voice

She joins a movement

She feels anger

She screams at systems, at government, at men

She feels anger

She feels anger

She feels anger

She stops

She is a spiritual woman — budding witch or whatever —

She remembers her solitary

childhood of flying; of dreaming; of symbols; of laughter — the adult

spiritual woman — budding witch or whatever spends time

remembering — invoking those times

She misses marches

it just feels too good to leave the bathtub

She misses protests

She denies issues

She denies pain

She misses women

She misses women

She misses women

She stops

over time the feminist and spiritual woman — budding witch or whatever

— within her meat — they create a vision — they begin to act

they find peace through balance

creativity through balance

justice through balance

She no longer believes in cancer

Photo by Beverly Rach

Canadian lesbian voices echoed in collection

Book Review on *Lesbians in Canada*, by Sharon Dale Stone, Between the Lines, Toronto, 1990

I thoroughly enjoyed reading *Lesbians in Canada*, edited by Sharon Dale Stone. The book offers a diverse collection of lesbian experiences and issues. The articles are divided into three sections, beginning with experiences of lesbians such as mothers, teachers or disabled. The second section describes specific issues lesbians face in a "lesbophobic" society, and the third section discusses how different lesbians have organized to support lesbian culture and lifestyle. The writing style is not heavily theoretical, but instead offers personal accounts based on interviews conducted and collaborated by a writer.

In reading this book specifically about Lesbian Canadians, I realized that there is limited information available on this topic. The lack of readily-

present material contributes to the continued oppression and silencing of lesbians. This silencing was prevalent in the low number of survey participants who represented different types of lesbians in the various articles.

The common theme in the book was how lesbians are discriminated against. For example: Girls growing up receive either little information or negative comments about lesbianism. As was humorously described in the "Lesbians and Aging" article by Jeanette Auger, lesbians who are growing older are looked down upon as devalued spinsters. The second section discusses how people's reality to history are dominated by heterosexism, and this (generally) negates lesbian rights for employment, parental custody and legal rights. "Mind Drifting Islands" compared the similarities of the exile of Sappho and the Acadian deportation in terms of losing one's culture, community connections, values, and self-

identification. The continued lack of full human rights for lesbians keeps our culture underground, and exiled.

The third section offers example of how lesbians are organizing for each other. Carmen Paquette of Ottawa talks about how lesbians have been invisible to the feminist movement because of the many issues and limited time and energy both lesbian and straight feminists can expend. Paquette also states that lesbophobia prevents some women from recognizing that lesbian issues are pertinent to advance women's equality and choice, and that lesbophobia is also internalized by lesbians. From my experience in organizing for IWD in Halifax, lesbianism and lesbian issues often fall last on the issues to be actively addressed.

The book is limited both by its size and its lack of representation of certain groups. In the introduction, the editor states that volumes would have to be collaborated in order to portray the diversity of lesbians in Canada adequately. The book attempts to cover different minorities and classes but the predominate participation is white, middle class lesbians. I would have preferred to have information about lesbians involved in sports, non-traditional work and religion, as well as further information about western Canadians, different multicultural and ethnic groups. Overall, I applaud the beginnings that this collection has made in breaking new ground, and I look forward to potential sequels and volumes.

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Lesbian art show sparks comment

Yhani M and Miriam

(Editor's Note: Lori Meserve's coming-out graduation art show was shown at Anna Leonowens Galley One from April 8-13. This show received a number of bomb threats throughout the week it was on display. Ironically, these threats only served to increase awareness of the show and to demonstrate the continuing discrimination against lesbians.)

Lori invited the women's community to paint, draw, write on the walls on the Sunday before the show began. The walls became lesbian voices — voices that had been silenced, providing an extension of graffiti in a context taken more seriously.)

In October 1990, Lori Meserve, a graduating senior of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, responded to heterosexist bigotry coming from Joe Antunes of Joe's Cafe in Vancouver through a performance piece at the Anna Leonowens Gallery in Halifax.

Meserve had reconstructed Josephine's, a cafe similar to that of Joe's, complete with tables, waiters, and, like Joe's, many lesbian patrons. An article from The Globe and Mail, detailing the events at Joe's where two lesbians were evicted from his cafe for kissing, was enlarged and distributed to passersby, including patrons of a neighbouring "het" bar. Reactions, ranging from stares to verbal assaults, were videotaped from within Josephine's. The article was also displayed in the window of the mock cafe where comments were encouraged through a microphone.

"Feeling enraged by the increase of discrimination against lesbians, I felt compelled to react to the incident at Joe's cafe by exaggerating the hypocrisy which allows heterosexuals to be affectionate in public while the same culture incriminates homosexuals for showing harmless loving affection in discrimination against lesbians, I felt compelled to react to the incident at Joe's cafe by exaggerating the hypocrisy which allows heterosexuals to be affectionate in public while the same culture incriminates homosexuals for showing harmless loving affection in public."

Performance has provided Meserve with a venue allowing her to express her politics through her art. "In a time of social, political, and economic unrest, many people view sexual politics

as frivolous," says Meserve. "I believe that all global problems are connected and that we can't ignore one to repair the other. In my art, I am attempting to deconstruct such hierarchal notions."

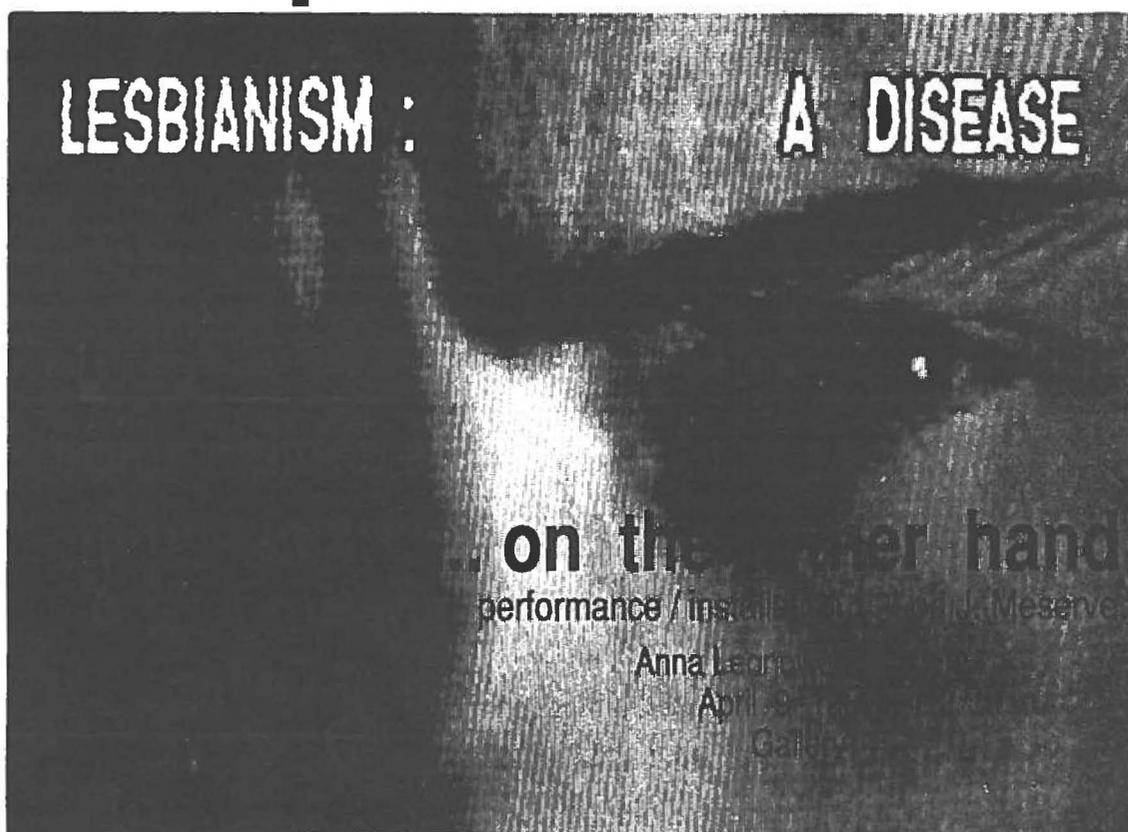
Lori Meserve was back at the Anna Leonowens Gallery April 8 - 13, 1991 with more fun and insight into heterosexual culture. The piece was entitled *on the other hand* and was born from the personal perspective of a lesbian in a non-accepting, ungratuitous, heterosexually- and heterosexist-dominated world.

on the other hand took a complex look at the infrastructure comprising the heterosexual myopic society. "Through education, the media, and other like institutions, heterosexual culture breeds thoughts and attitudes of intolerance of difference. While the white male legal system incarcerates lesbians and prohibits them from guardianship of their children and their lovers, police brutality against homosexual activists accelerates. Television producers attempting to include homosexuality in their programming have come face-to-face with public disapproval wherein shows have been censored due to the controversy.

"In this installation, I am mocking the dominant culture's anthropological arrogance; through inversion, I locate heterosexuality as the observed 'other,'" says Meserve.

As we entered the gallery we found ourselves walking through what seemed to be a retrospective of museum archives, filled with relics of heterosexual culture. Displays such as Meserve's *preservation of the family unit* set the flavour of this installation where it portrayed in a ridiculous fashion the way in which a paranoid heterosexual culture attempts to preserve heterosexual coupling, families, and parenting. Here, the characters from the Simpson's cartoon, in doll form, were suspended in a jar of formaldehyde where it portrayed in a ridiculous fashion the way in which a paranoid heterosexual culture attempts to preserve heterosexual coupling, families, and parenting. Here, the characters from the Simpson's cartoon, in doll form, were suspended in a jar of formaldehyde. The caption reads "most politically correct family of the 90s."

Suspended in the center of the gallery were a couple of blow-up sex dolls engaging in the ancient form of heterosexual intercourse. Here, Meserve took



from a dictionary the definitions of "sex," "doll," and "inflame." Their juxtaposition was a further indication of Meserve's wry humour. Text accompanying most of the displays helped form a deconstruction of the ever-so-popular heterosexual culture that had forced itself upon the world and insidiously created a society that had deemed itself "right, white, conveniently wealthy, heterosexual, and correct." It would seem that no one else, especially, of course, lesbians, had ever existed.

This is not a far-fetched perception. It is an unfortunate fact that our world is run and destroyed by such bigotries as heterosexism along with many other forms of racism inherent in the world cially, of course, lesbians, had ever existed.

This is not a far-fetched perception. It is an unfortunate fact that our world is run and destroyed by such bigotries as heterosexism along with many other forms of racism inherent in the world today. It is often too easy for non-lesbians to keep us in a place of complete invisibility.

Meserve has asked her audience why and for how long people will continue to comply with the whitewash

of patriarchally-defined rules and regulations of the het culture.

Stanchions and roping found around displays in museums were also present in Meserve's installation. She replaced the cabled roping with blue clothesline wiring from which she had hung a 'whitewash' of underwear and linen. In her performance, Meserve tied back the wash by placing lavender arm bands on the clothing. "Metaphorically, I am talking about how radical lesbians constantly put themselves on the line to advocate change by challenging hypocrisies and destructive attitudes of the status-quo."

For the heterosexuals viewing this piece, Lori Meserve had no apologies, but provided a mirror in which the pain lesbians constantly put themselves on the line to advocate change by challenging hypocrisies and destructive attitudes of the status-quo."

For the heterosexuals viewing this piece, Lori Meserve had no apologies, but provided a mirror in which the pain and harm inflicted on lesbians, whether intentional or not, must be examined. If offended, one must examine the reasons why, and look again at the intention of this installation, so eloquently entitled *on the other hand*. Perhaps, as

Lori Meserve has done through her art, one day the ideology of the heterosexist monoculture will only remain in museums for the study of archaic cultures.

In the front window was a projection of two lesbians. The fact that these lesbians didn't "come out" (become visible) until dark signifies our visibility — we feel safer "out" at night in alternative spaces provided for us. The window provided the public with an entrance to the lesbian world, an opportunity to see lesbians as they see themselves.

We're on the line: bashed, raped, and suffering from discrimination daily, due to a lack of acceptance and our invisibility. Lori's show was well attended, with over 1,000 visitors. tunity to see lesbians as they see themselves.

We're on the line: bashed, raped, and suffering from discrimination daily, due to a lack of acceptance and our invisibility. Lori's show was well attended, with over 1,000 visitors. Ironically, many of them were drawn in by the bomb threats, which made people aware of the show and discrimination against lesbians and their presence. They are now unable to deny our existence and our voice.

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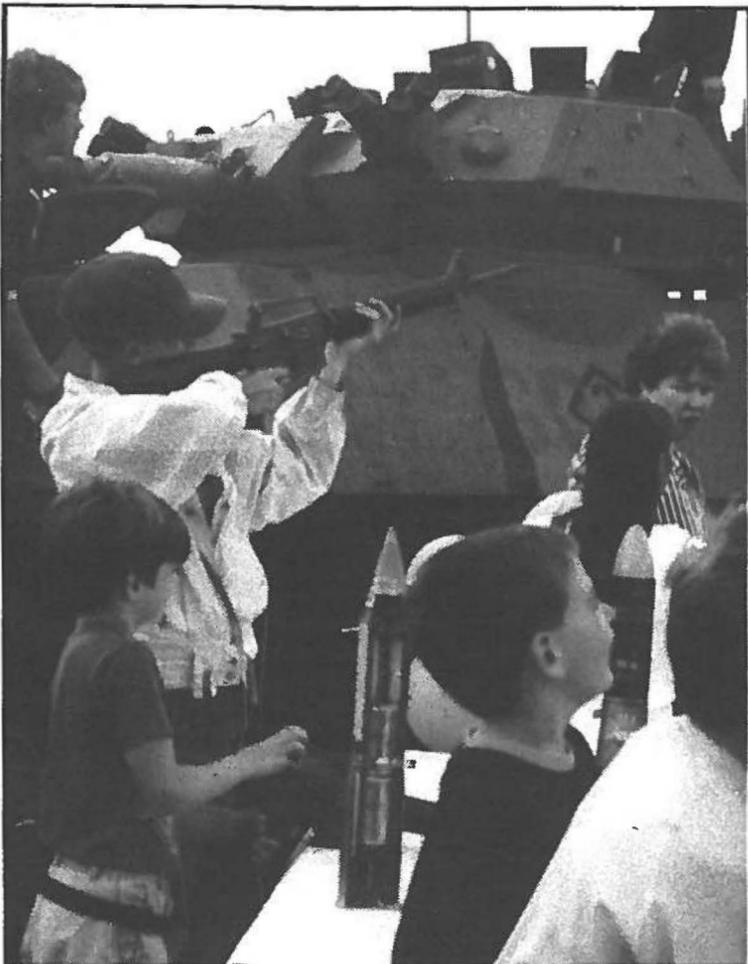


Photo by Sue Pitman

War "toys"

Sandee Thompson

September is a busy time for members of the Sussex, New Brunswick community. Not only does school begin, but it's also the month the town hosts the Atlantic Balloon fiesta.

As hot air balloons float across the countryside (weather permitting) local merchants set up displays and booths to sell their wares and inform the public of their organizations' goals.

What was the armed forces trying to sell with their "free ride" sign beside their tanks? As children clambered all over them and pretended to be shooting "the enemy" with the display guns made available to them, I had to wonder what the purpose of their display was... to entertain children or show war toys being used in safe play.

Maintenance enforcement a step in reducing poverty

Myrna Carlson

For women in Nova Scotia, as elsewhere in the world, poverty has increasingly become a political issue. More and more people have gradually become aware that to be a woman with children, and without a man, is to be poor.

This social reality should come as no surprise, considering the devaluing of women's traditional work, the clerical and service sector job ghettos which entrap women, and the continuing myths which encourage young women to depend on men.

While women's poverty is a complex problem which will require no less than a revolution, social activists can begin to make small changes. Maintenance enforcement has become one area where change is possible. Women in Metro Halifax have begun to develop strategies to effect this change.

Nowhere does the notion of "men taking care of women and children" become more obviously ludicrous than when court-ordered child support payments from fathers to their children are examined. Canadian studies have shown that default of such payments may be as high as 85 per cent at any given time. Correspondingly, about half of all single mothers in Nova Scotia live below the poverty line.

While maintenance enforcement is not the solution to ending women's poverty, it is one small step toward relieving the financial burden some women carry when they raise children

alone.

The reality for a woman with children after the end of a marriage is that she will be forced to apply for child support payments from her former husband. This is a requirement for receiving social assistance. Even if the woman has a paid job, it is unlikely she will earn enough to support herself and her children adequately. Unfortunately, it is also highly unlikely she will

Often, women must go back to court each time there is a default. This sometimes means legal costs and always means frustration for women.

In one woman's case, she left her abusive mate whom she suspected of sexually abusing her children. At first the court ordered a payment of \$25 per month from the man. After three separate appeals, the maintenance was raised to \$500 per month (for two children). At this point, the woman went back to work and off social assistance. The maintenance was paid for two months. When the cheque did not arrive the third month, the woman

While maintenance enforcement is not the solution to ending women's poverty, it is one small step toward relieving the financial burden...

receive child support payments on a regular basis, even if a court has ordered the children's father to pay.

In an attempt to address women's concerns about maintenance enforcement, the Social Action Committee of Bryony House formed a sub-committee to develop strategies on the issue. The group is made up of women who have experienced problems getting their maintenance orders enforced, women who have worked in transition houses, and women who have an interest in women's issues generally and in making positive social changes around the issue of maintenance enforcement, specifically.

Louise MacPherson chairs this sub-committee. She says that in doing research on this subject and through talking with women, she has become aware of many examples of how the system fails. Men have quit their jobs to avoid having their wages garnished. Men have left the province, or claimed an inability to pay, yet still demanded visitation privileges with children.

registered the default with the enforcement officer at Family Court. She was told to wait 30 days. She then found out her former husband had left the province without a forwarding address.

Two years, and many debts and frustrations later, the enforcement office traced the man's whereabouts. This does not mean the woman has received any of the money owed to her, but she now has the right to begin court proceedings in the province where he is living. However she will once again have to confront an abusive man, in a judicial system which has not benefited her in the past.

This is but one example of women's struggles around the issue of maintenance enforcement. If you are a woman who is currently facing this type of struggle, or a woman who wants to get involved in social action, you can contact the Social Action Committee through Bryony House (423-7183) or by telephoning Rusty Neal (Chair of the Social Action Committee) at 454-9636.

Starhawk energizes women with witchcraft, spirituality

Penelope Hutchison

More than 250 faces whisked by as women danced in a spiral through the hall of the North Street Church. Hands clasped together, their voices rising above the drone of the traffic outside, their bodies moved to the beat of a Middle Eastern drum played by Starhawk, a well-known leader in the women's spirituality movement. The women sang to each other of the power of the earth and of their own rebirth, and the walls around them reverberated with the energy they built. Through all the dancing and chanting, a young boy slept soundly in the center of the room, not an inch of his body stirring while the women sang to the Goddess. His sleeping body was a little bit of the magic happening that day, striking a chord in the hearts and minds of every woman there.

Women came from all over Nova Scotia to listen to the words and share in the wisdom that Starhawk had to offer them. Packed into the small hall, the women gathered closely together, and a hush fell over the crowd as Starhawk began to speak. She told the women of a Goddess who is our first mother, who is alive in every woman as the women are alive in her. Starhawk spoke of women's spirituality as a world view of the earth as being alive, a view whose origins come from native traditions. She spoke of power, a power

that comes from within ourselves, rather than a power of domination over others.

Starhawk's interest in women's spirituality and wicca began when she was 16 years old. She has been practising witchcraft for more than 20 years. For her, the goddess tradition is about empowerment, about each of us taking on a personal responsibility to shape the world into a more positive image. Her goal is to educate people about what the word "witch" means, that it is someone who is a healer, a shaper. The word comes from the Anglo-Saxon root that means to bend or shape, she says.

"The stereotypes about devil worship and black magic are part of a propaganda campaign that was waged by the churches in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to try to convince people that any kind of power that didn't come from the church was suspect," she says.

According to Starhawk, the goddess tradition was never destroyed but went underground when fear about women's power arose during the witchburnings. Women are now beginning to regain the power that they lost through the onset of the industrial revolution, and goddess-centred spirituality groups are cropping up all over the world, she says. It's a tradition that values women and women's eroticism,

that sees human beings and the earth as sacred.

"We can no longer say it's all right to pollute the harbour," she says. "It's like saying it's okay to dump radioactive material into my veins. The earth's body becomes our body. We must feel about the earth as we feel about ourselves."

It's a radical act to talk about the earth as a living being and to name it as sacred, she says. By doing so, human beings are forced to redetermine their values and the four elements of the world, earth, air, fire and water, become the standards on how we live in the world.

For the women sitting snugly together on the floor of the North Street Church, Starhawk's words hit home, especially after many of us had spent the last few weeks watching coverage of the war on television. She helped us to remember that we are not powerless and that we each need to take responsibility for what is happening to the earth. She helped us to touch the magic deeply embedded in all of us, to change our consciousnesses at will. While our daily lives may still be surrounded by people who fear the "w" word—witch—or fear of the "f" word—feminist, we know that there is a powerful woman speaking out and calling down the Goddess, and we know that in all of us there is a goddess waiting to be let out.

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Female judges fight sexist system

Carol McLeod

Sexism on the bench is still a problem in Canada, despite the fact that since 1984 fifteen percent of new federally-appointed judges and 24 percent of all judges promoted have been women.

"That's largely due to the fact that many male judges are either insensitive to women's issues or are unaware of the realities women face in society," says Christie Jefferson, Executive Director of the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF). The only difference between now and 50 years ago is that when sexism on the bench raises its head today, women lawyers are there in droves to clobber it.

Certainly they've had their share of cranium-clubbing recently, as one male judge after another has handed down decisions or made comments that feminists view as inflammatory.

In Quebec, Judge Denys Dionne was suspended for four months after women's groups protested his comment that "Rules, like women, they are meant to be violated."

In other incidents:

- A judicial council investigation was ordered after Northwest Territories Judge Michel Bourassa said rapes in the north differ from those in the rest of the country because most occur when the woman is drunk and has passed out. "The man comes along, sees a pair of hips and helps himself," Bourassa reportedly said.

- Manitoba Judge Ken Peters was cleared by a judicial council of conduct unbecoming a member of the bench for saying "sometimes a slap in the face" is all a woman needs, and "might not be such unreasonable force after all." Peters made the comment in fining a man \$300 for striking his wife.

- In British Columbia, both the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court have come under fire by feminist groups for blaming a woman for her sexual exploitation by a doctor who supplied her with prescription drugs.

Amid the protests against sexist behaviour in the judiciary, there is at least one voice speaking out in defense of male judges. According to Frederic-

ton criminal lawyer Daniel Watters, judges are being caught in what he calls "the backlash of the feminist movement—a movement that is causing over-reaction against males and male rights. Men are being emasculated by feminism and are increasingly afraid to speak out..."

Recently, however, Supreme Court Justice Bertha Wilson said some aspects of Canadian law are so biased in favor of men, they are "little short of ludicrous." Ironically, her attempts to bring a feminist perspective to the law have drawn criticism from a Canadian women's organization.

After Wilson made the comment, the right-wing group R.E.A.L. (an acronym for Realistic, Equal, Active for Life) Women complained to the Canadian Judicial Council that Wilson is biased in favor of feminism. The council concluded, however, that there were no grounds for a complaint and that an investigation of Wilson was unwarranted.

Since then, the council has announced plans to include issues of gender bias in seminars for judges. In Ottawa, the Canadian Judicial Centre has developed a 30-minute video dealing with rape, spousal assault and cus-

tody matters, and has also drawn up a program dealing with the importance of using gender neutral language in the courtroom.

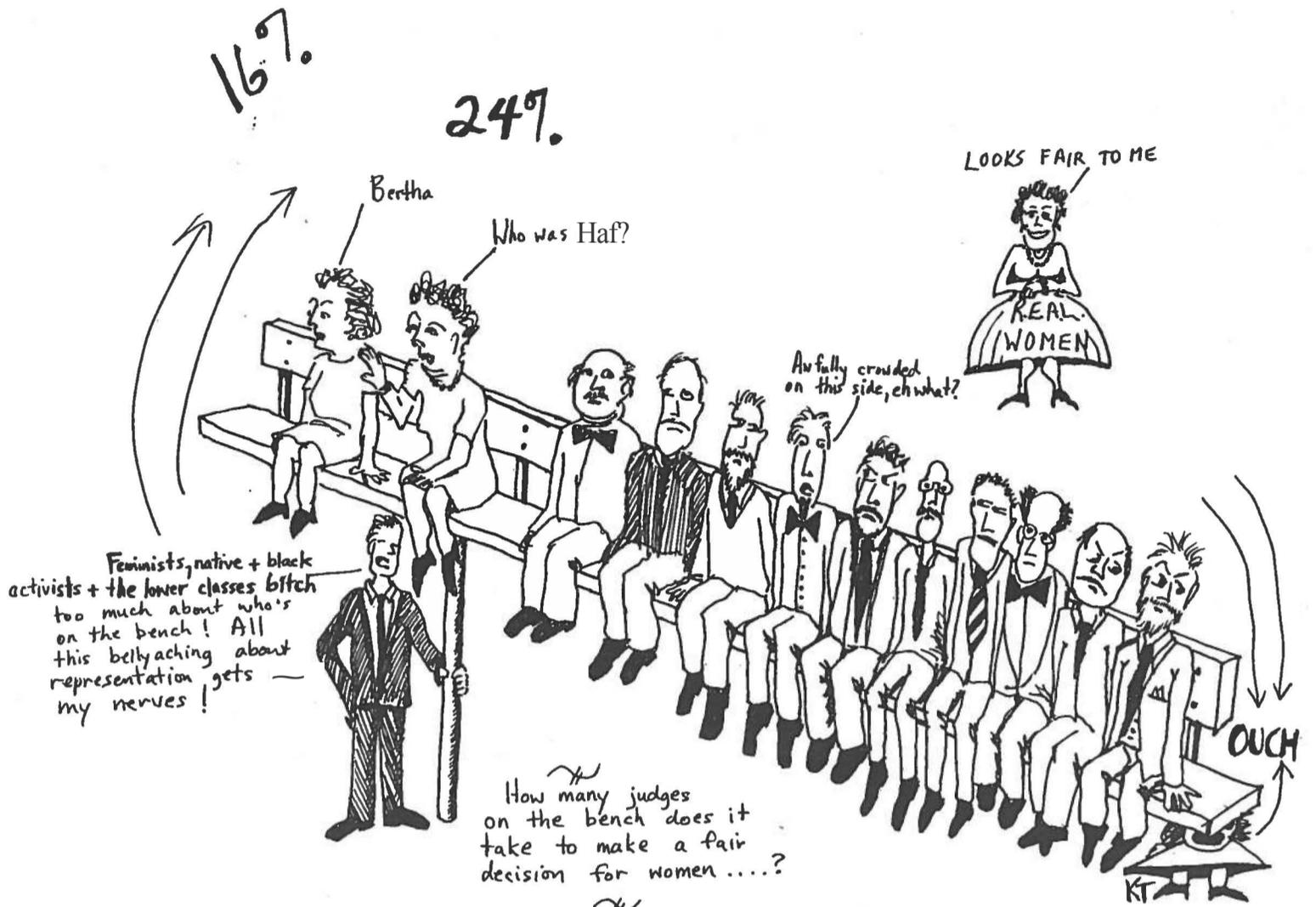
"In the heat of the moment, a judge might say something that isn't meant the way it comes out," says David Marshall, Director of the Centre and a member of the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories. "We hope no judges have a real bias, and we encourage them to examine their own values in these matters."

LEAF spokesperson Christie Jefferson says the fact that both male and female judges are participating in the

program is good news.

All of society's problems might not be resolved if only women sat as judges. Jefferson notes there is a perception in some quarters that women judges often come from upper or middle-class backgrounds and are sometimes out of touch with the problems less privileged women encounter.

"Generally, though, the experience we at LEAF have had of women on the bench is increased sensitivity to the realities women face in society. As more women are appointed to the bench, the position of women will be enhanced."



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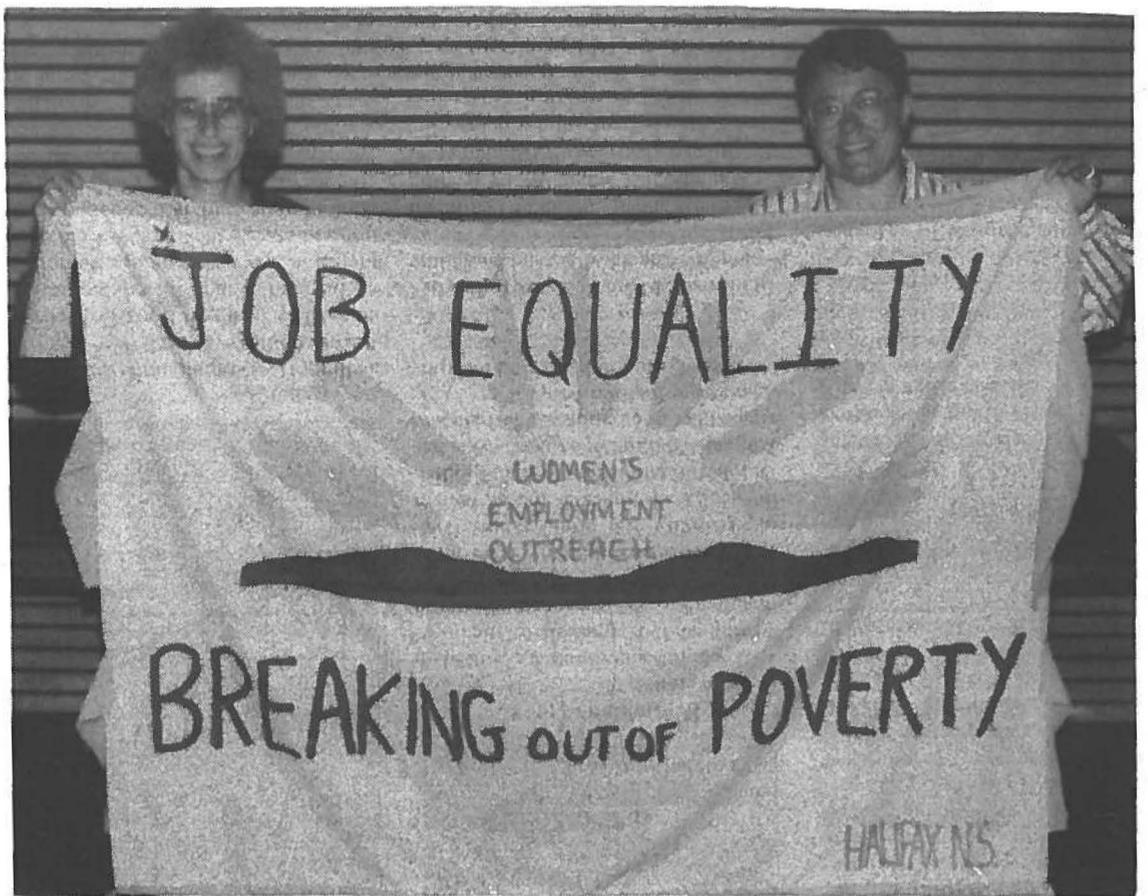
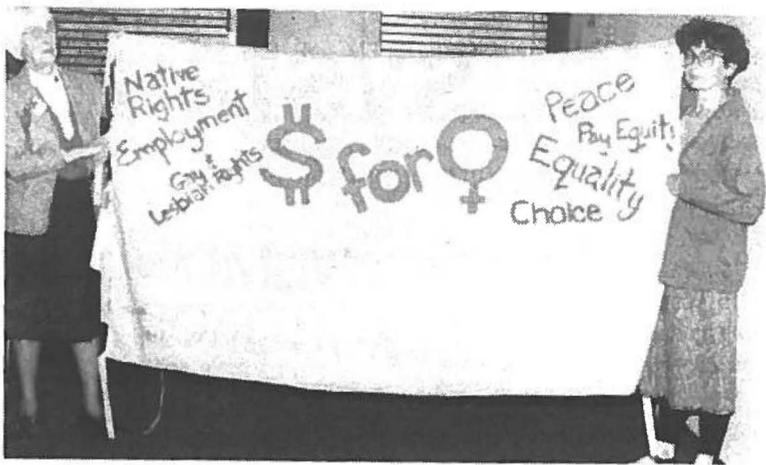
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The Banner Project

Several Nova Scotia women's groups made banners to be sent to Ottawa for an October demonstration on Parliament Hill. The date coincided with the 20th anniversary of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and the third Commonwealth meeting of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women.

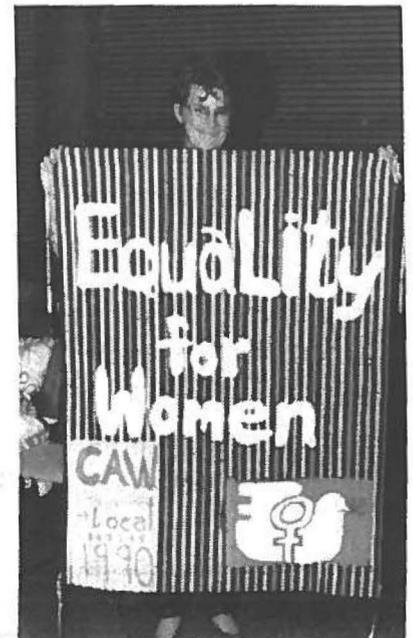
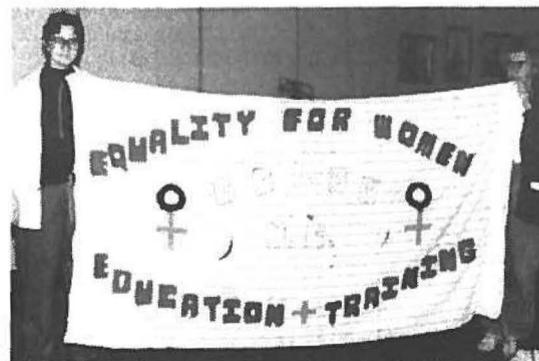
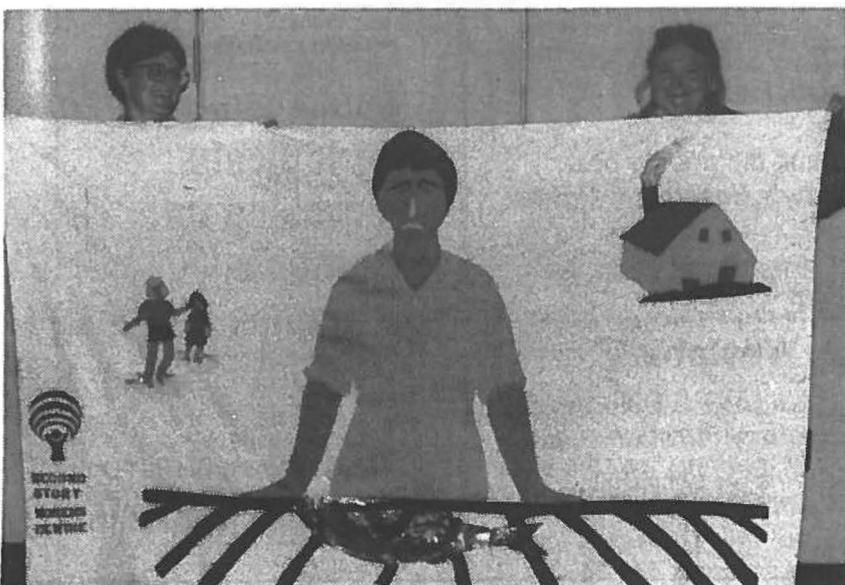
Banners from across the country, all with the theme of "Speaking the Truth about Women's Lives," were then joined together to form one large banner, which organizers hoped would be large enough to encircle the parliament buildings.

"The purpose of the banners and the demonstration is to deliver a strong and united message to our politicians that cutting funding to women's groups and neglecting women's needs and concerns, such as child care and poverty, are unacceptable to women, and that it is time the government took us, and our issues, seriously," said Stella Lord, the Nova Scotia coordinator of the project.

"While the Canadian government portrays itself internationally as being 'progressive' on women's issues, for a comparatively rich country like Canada our record is not that great when you compare it, for instance, to some of the Scandinavian countries," she said.

Shown on this page are some of the Nova Scotian groups participating in this project and their representatives.

- Antigonish Women's Resource Centre (Lucille Harper)
- Second Story Women's Centre, Bridgewater (Debbie Trask)
- Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CLOW) (Linda Roberts, Iona Crawley)
- Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIA-W) (Barbara Cottrell, Stella Lord)
- Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Women's Committee (Paulette Sadoway)
- Women's Committee, Halifax-Dartmouth District Labour Council (Carol Woodhall, Paulette Sadoway)
- Canadian Auto Workers, Local 1990, Women's Committee (Dawn Thornhill)
- Women's Employment Outreach (Ruth Gamberg, Dian Graham)
- Women's Action Coalition (Mildred Miller, Carolyn Wallace)



Photos by Debbie Mathers on September 24, 1990, at the Nova Scotia Public Archives.

Agnes Macphail, a pioneering politician

Dawn Leavitt

When the federal House of Commons convened in 1921, members of Parliament greeted one newly-elected colleague with jeers and ridicule. Why? Agnes Macphail, representing the United Farmers of Ontario, had just taken her seat as the first woman Member of Parliament in Canadian history.

From the first, it was a challenge. Quoted in E. Blanche Morcross's book "Pioneers Every One," Macphail remembered: "I was intensely unhappy. Some members resented my intrusion, others jeered at me, while a very few were genuinely glad to see a woman in the House. Most of the members made me painfully conscious of my sex..."

Despite the difficulties, Macphail stuck it out, drawing on the toughness of character learned from her mother to prove herself.

Agnes Macphail spent her early childhood on a farm, growing up with two sisters. From an early age, she enjoyed the lively talk of politics when friends called on her parents and was often found listening to the men instead of off in the kitchen with the women. Farmers talked of their problems, and the young girl listened, learning much that would prove useful in later years.

At first Macphail wanted to be a teacher, and she decided early that marriage would interfere with her plans. At that time female teachers had to quit when they married, so she decided to stay single. She felt a woman could not be independent and be a wife, and even at 16 she valued independence above all else.

After getting her teacher's certificate, Macphail taught for a time, but was soon drawn into politics. As a rural school teacher, she could join the United Farmers of Ontario, and in 1921 she was chosen as the South-East Grey candidate. Bucking pressure from party members who thought a woman couldn't do the job, she won the election of 1921.

Although hurt by the cold reception of fellow MPs, Macphail threw herself into constituency work, doing so well

that she was to run undefeated until 1940. After the United Farmers Organization collapsed, she sat as an independent for several years, aligned with a group called the Progressives. In spite of offers of a cabinet post from Prime Minister MacKenzie King, she refused to join the Liberals, preferring the freedom outside a party.

Parliament was considered no place for a woman, and men argued that the "gentler nature" of women predisposed them to be "angels of the home." To that, Macphail replied: "I want for myself what I want for other women, absolute equality. After that is secured, then men and women can take turns at being angels."

Her interests in women's rights led to involvement in many causes, though her first loyalty was to her farm constituents. Macphail supported the peace movement (made up mostly of women) and the fight for Quebec women to gain the vote, as well as social welfare and prison reforms.

In the 25 years after Macphail's election, only four other women made it to the House of Commons. As one of very few women MPs, she felt a special responsibility to Canadian women. In 1925, Macphail went to Glace Bay, NS to examine conditions during a strike. She attacked the government's "neglect of humanity" and spoke especially of the impact on women.

"I could not help but be struck by the tragedy of womankind in that place. Their youth is brief. Some young women are hotly resentful... but for the most part, especially if they have many children, their attitude is subdued and apathetic."

In addition to her other interests, Agnes Macphail supported peace efforts, sometimes drawing disapproval for her uncompromising pacificism. She opposed the traditional portrayal of war in school texts, with its emphasis on the glory of patriotism and victory. She also spoke out against cadet training of school boys, a common practice of the times.

Macphail worked hard for constituents who returned her efforts loyally, supporting her until the election of

1940. With war fever running high, her pacifist stance cost enough votes to lose the election. Up until then she had campaigned vigorously, but the defeat and failing health slowed her down.

Even so, Macphail returned to politics in 1948, this time as a provincial candidate for the Ontario Legislature. She became one of the first two women to be elected, but three years later lost once again.

Although taken for granted by most Canadians today, such reforms had to

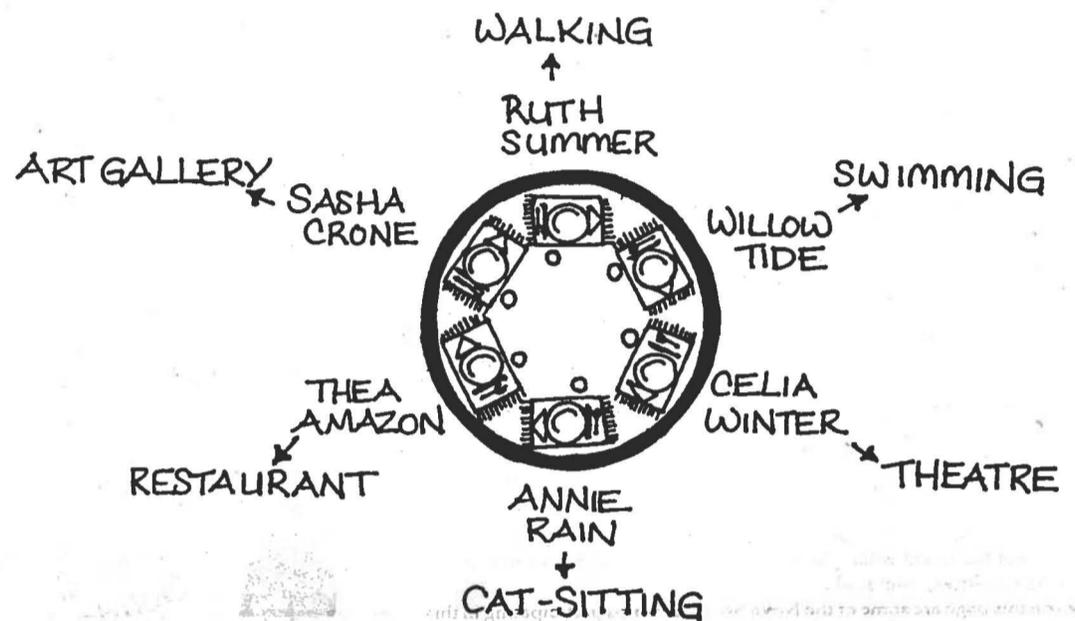
be won, and Agnes Macphail was a front-line campaigner for social benefits such as unemployment insurance, family allowances, and pensions for the blind, the disabled, and the elderly.

In 1953, the Prime Minister promised a Senate appointment would be forthcoming in the following spring. By that time it no longer mattered. In February Agnes Macphail died of a heart attack. She was 63 years old.

When the young Agnes opted for a career instead of marriage, she couldn't

have known how great her contribution would be. When she died, the prisoners she fought for acknowledged that contribution: In a paper published by inmates of the Kingston Penitentiary, Macphail's struggle for prison reform was remembered: "Conditions today in Canadian penitentiaries are far better than they were in the 1930s when Agnes Macphail set foot within the North Gate. The changes wrought within these cold grey walls were her handiwork; to her must go our tribute."

Solution to last issue's GynoGames



© Dian Day

The plight of African widows

Hannah Edemikpong

As women live longer than men (from 2 to 4 years in developing, and from 8 to 10 years in developed countries), then the majority of senior citizens are at one and the same time women and widows. The situation of widows, particularly in Africa, is one kind of oppression that has, over a long time, been taken from granted; the studies into the situation of widows have been very scarce and marginal.

The fate of widows varies from society to society. Among the Yako tribe in Cameroun Republic, a widow has no claim to her husband's property and also no right to remain in her husband's compound after the funeral rites of her deceased husband have been completed. Among the Yako a wife is never accepted as a member of the husband's family; she remains forever a member of her own family.

The story is very much the same among the Ibos of Nigeria. The woman is sent packing if she objects to the husband's kin taking care of his property. Occasionally, in a polygamous family, the widow is married to the husband's first son by another woman.

It is not only this deprivation of their husbands' property that is appalling and distressing, but also the unnecessary confinement and oppression widows are subjected to after their husbands' death.

In many societies the widow is restricted to her late husband's compound during the traditional mourning period, and she is made to sleep on a

mat on the floor. She is not allowed to take a bath or comb her hair during the period. If the husband is a titled Chief, the daughters of the husband's clan, called "Umuada", may confine the widow for upwards of 21 days during which she is not allowed to be seen, wash or change clothes. At the end of the mourning period the widow scrapes her hair, washes, and puts on a sackcloth (which is always a black attire) for one year.

Although this confinement is no longer acceptable to educated women, when and where they object, they are often accused of being responsible for their husband's death. Therefore, in their bid to exonerate themselves from such societal accusation, many widows still allow themselves to be subjected to the rigors of this tradition.

How can a widow who has been dispossessed of her husband's properties and land start a new life? What happens to the children of a widow whose husband's kin have mismanaged and squandered the husband's wealth, and nothing is left for the children? What fate befalls widows who have been dependent all their lives and valued primarily as homemakers?

Indeed, among the problems they face are poverty, loneliness, feelings of inadequacy as individuals, insufficiency of income and lack of health care. At times they are depressed, and their depression is mistaken for senility. Their children are often malnourished and succumb easily to episodes of diarrheal diseases and respiratory

illness, two of the leading causes of mortality in early childhood in African societies.

We of this Women's Centre cannot stay aloof to watch these women oppressed with their children. We believe that women must have the opportunity to have a say in matters that affect their lives and the lives of their children, which can be brought about to a large extent through education.

This has prompted us to launch an educational campaign by radio, television, newspaper and literature distribution for ending all traditional practices that endanger the lives of our women. With little funds we are providing direct services to these widows and elderly women.

Unfortunately, we are meeting a fraction of the need that exists, because of the escalating cost of running these services and lack of support. We therefore earnestly appeal to you to join us in our effort by your donation. We shall accept donations by personal cheques, bankdraft or International Money Order in any currency, and these should be sent by registered mail.

We shall also accept material gifts such as used clothing materials and books, but such packages should be inscribed "Charity Donation/Not for Sale."

Please don't enclose cheques in packages containing material gifts. Donations, gifts or inquiries should be addressed to: Mrs. Hannah Edemikpong, Box 185, Eket, Akwa Iboin State, Nigeria, W. Africa



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Single moms have always been oppressed

The following is an excerpt from Brenda Thompson's revised and expanded *Survival Guide to Single Mothers* which will be published soon by the Dalhousie Public Interest Research Group (Dal PIRG).

Brenda Thompson

At the turn of the 19th century, the vast majority of single mothers were widows. Death, war, illness, harsh living and working conditions took the lives of many people. When husbands and fathers died, the mothers and children were often left in poverty. Before divorce laws loosened up, many men simply abandoned their wives and children. Unwed mothers were charged for having children out of wedlock. Many

unwed mothers were forced to give up their children for adoption or commit infanticide (the wilful death of an infant shortly after its birth) because they were afraid and felt they had no other choices.

During the last 250 years, there have not been many ways for a single mother to support herself and her children here in Nova Scotia. The government of Nova Scotia, then as now, did not look upon women in poverty with sympathy. They blamed a woman's "morals" or "poor judgement" for the situation she found herself in. The woman who was a widow was often considered more "deserving" than other poor women.

What choices were available for

single mothers before the so-called "modern" state of welfare evolved? Some mothers were forced to become prostitutes on a part-time basis. In 1860, the number of prostitutes in Halifax was estimated to be between 600-1000. Some mothers had to sell themselves and their children as a source of unpaid labour. The mother was sold to one buyer, the children to another, and they became known as "the poor for a year." They could put their children into orphanages or send them to either the poorhouse or the workhouse. Poorhouses and workhouses were large institutional buildings where people lived and worked. The living and working conditions were extremely harsh.

Eventually government policy-makers decided it was best to try to keep families together and they decided to try to give aid to families instead of splitting up the family in a poorhouse or selling the children. Two poor relief organizations were set up. One was the St. Vincent de Paul Society, founded in 1853, and the other was the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP), established in 1866 in Halifax. The Association for Improving the Conditions of the Poor (AICP), which originated in the United States and later came to Nova Scotia, had a policy of not helping blacks and natives. I suspect this policy was continued in Nova Scotia. If you are a non-white single mom, you probably were not included in the poor laws until the mid-20th century. Chances are your ancestors survived because of strong family supports.

At first only widows were given financial assistance, as they were considered the most deserving of poor women. They received money for doing traditional work such as scrubbing, cleaning and needlework. Today this is called a "workfare" program. Then, as now, the women received barely enough to live on. Women who had a history of prostitution did not qualify for assistance under the policies of the AICP since they were considered to be "unfit." Eventually, wives of prisoners were given aid. Unwed mothers were denied aid and were sent to "homes" for unwed mothers.

The Home of the Guardian Angel was founded in Halifax in 1887. Most of the women who went there gave up their children for adoption. If a mother did decide to keep the child, she could be charged under the criminal law for having an illegitimate child. Unwed mothers could go to the poorhouse where they would give birth to their babies. The children would live as inmates and were made to work as soon as they were old enough. This continued into the 1920s and 1930s.

In 1930, a new assistance program (Mother's Allowance) was set up, and again it was only available to widows. It wasn't until 1958 that financial assistance was extended to cover abandoned or divorced mothers. Unwed mothers were still not given any assistance. In 1966, the Federal Government developed a cost-sharing agreement with the provinces for financial assistance for people living in poverty, known as the Canada Assistance Pro-

gram (CAP). This program required provinces to provide people on assistance with a basic minimum standard of living.

It was not until 1971, just 20 years ago, that the Province of Nova Scotia passed legislation which gave unwed mothers financial assistance. No longer did they have to face the bleak choice of giving up their child for adoption, or starving while trying to raise the child. Since that time, most unwed mothers have been keeping their children and raising them themselves. This has caused some couples, politicians, and church leaders to claim there are no longer any children available for adoption.

In 1983, the Social Services Minister introduced Bill 61 which "cut" unwed mothers under 19 years of age from assistance. This was supposed to discourage young girls from having sex. It was also a way of forcing young mothers to give up their children. In 1988, after five years of protest from single mothers' groups and activists who pointed out that this Bill violated the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, Bill 61 was amended to give teen mothers easier access to Family Benefits.

Single mothers are among the fastest-growing family unit in Canada. We are growing at a faster rate than two-parent families. In Canada, since 1986, we have increased by 24% while two-parent families have increased by less than 4%. Nova Scotia has the third highest rate of single parent families in Canada — 13.2% of all families. The Vanier Institute of the Family has reported that since 1980 there are 477.7 divorces for every 1,000 weddings. This means that most women in Canada will spend at least some part of their lives as a single mother. And most likely she and her children will live in poverty.

The poverty is not her own fault, but the fault of old beliefs, fears and attitudes about women who are independent. Although the number of single parent families is growing at a faster rate than two-parent families, we are in poverty much more than they are. Why is this so? It is because we don't have a second income or even the male income. It is also because we cannot afford the costs of daycare for our children (even in the rare occasion when it is available) so that we can enter the workforce. The fathers of our children often don't pay their court-ordered child support after they have left or have been removed from the relationship, and the provincial and federal governments do not force them to pay. Women are paid much lower wages than men and are not awarded promotions as often. There are not as many well-paid jobs for women as there are for men. All of these conditions and others contribute to the poverty of single mothers and their children.

The most important thing for us to remember is that single mother families are not "broken homes." We do not have to be a traditional nuclear family (mummy, daddy and 1.x children) to "work." There are many other types of families than the nuclear family (which always sounds like it's about to blow up anyway!)

We have been, and continue to be, strong. Our children are growing up in an atmosphere of independence. They are no different than millions of other Canadian children. So be proud. We continue to create history! Increasingly we will create history by and for ourselves, and together with all the other groups that have systematically been put down. Be proud!



(Photo by Beverley Rach)

1991 I.W.D. March

Carrie Melsom

I survived the horrors of my February blues by concentrating on March and the upcoming IWD celebrations. Thanks to every woman who worked, planned, and organized such great events. Friday, March 8, I headed down to Bloomfield School and entered a gym full of women. I loved it. What a great feeling to be part of all that energy and excitement. The music, humour and commentary were excellent.

Saturday I ventured out to a water-logged Commons. We were a chilled-but-hardy bunch that set out on a march along some of Halifax's busiest streets. The drums and the Furies set the tone, but things really picked up when we took to the street. Chanting and singing, screaming and yelling, chatting and discussing issues, we were almost able to forget the cold. The march ended at the Grand Parade with speeches, some of which are included in this issue of Pandora. It was a weekend worth waiting for.

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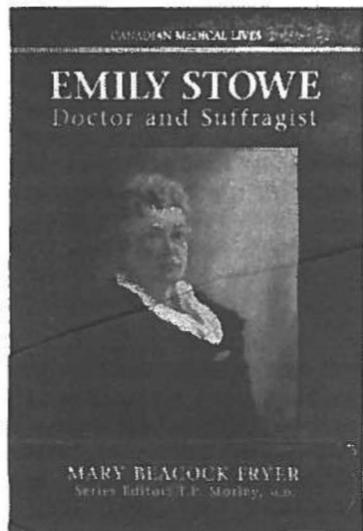
Canadian Book Information Centre tells us about new book releases



Sojourner's Truth
Lee Maracle

Urban settings, inter-racial issues and traditional Native cultural values are the focus of these stories told with a freshness, humour and urgency that transforms Native oratory into written word.

Press Gang Publishers, \$10.95 pb



Emily Stowe: Doctor and Suffragist
Mary Beacock Fryer

Emily Stowe was a pioneer in two fields: as a woman doctor, and as a crusader for women's rights. Although obtaining political power was more important for her that expanding medical knowledge, her role as a doctor was the cause that launched her into the struggle for women's rights.

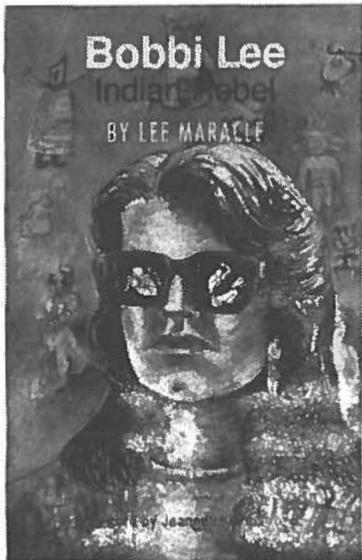
Dundurn Press, \$17.95 hc



Rapid Transits and Other Stories
Holley Rubinsky

A brilliant first book from a writer already in the top ranks. The title story of the collection is the inaugural winner of the \$10,000 Journey Writing Prize. Rubinsky's characters are gritty and uncompromisingly intense and complex.

Polestar Press, \$12.95 pb



Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel
Lee Maracle

"A tough autobiography of an Indian woman's life from the mud flats of Second Narrows Bridge, Vancouver, to the Toronto of the sixties and seventies. Lee Maracle gives us an important sense of the tough terrain of struggle toward political consciousness which all oppressed peoples undertake. This is a hopeful work for recovering the possibilities of envisioning a world where we are not beaten down every day." —Dionne Brand

Women's Press, \$12.95 pb



Proper Deafinitions
Betsy Warland

These reflective texts are centred on writing and its relation to memory, imagination, and the senses. Warland challenges linguistic conventions and celebrates lesbian identity as a source of creativity and erotic power. Addressing such topics as incest, racism and her relationship to the English language, the author explores what has shaped her as a feminist, a lesbian and a language-focused writer.

Press Gang Publishers, \$11.95 pb

Feminism: From Pressure to Politics
edited by Angela Miles and Geraldine Finn

An expanded edition of Feminism in Canada, this anthology by leading feminists, deals with fundamental questions of theory and practice, the relation between the world of academia and the world of activism, and the development of feminist theory.

Black Rose Books, \$19.95 pb; \$39.95 hc

Professional Selling: A Woman's Guide

Carol Vipperman

This book is valuable for women who want to succeed in the field of professional sales. It sheds light on problems that are frequently encountered by women in this non-traditional field and shows how to turn them into successes. A direct, concise resource book for the modern businesswoman.

Self-Counsel Press, \$9.95 pb



Changing Heaven
Jane Urquhart

An intriguing, beautifully rendered novel which weaves together two parallel stories. Urquhart once again leads us through a swirling pastiche of interwoven realities where the real and the imagined are artfully blended. Her literary landscape includes such characters as the ghost of Emily Bronte and crosses three historical eras.

McClelland & Stewart, \$24.95 hc



Telling It: Women and Language Across Cultures

edited by The Telling It Book Collective

Inspired by the 1988 conference of the same name, this unique compilation addresses issues of racism, cultural appropriation and homophobia. The conference was intended as a forum for women writers from marginalized communities to acknowledge differences and to celebrate their work. This book is a thought-provoking blend of dialogue, reflective commentary and creative writing.

Press Gang Publishers, \$14.95 pb



Women, Aids and Activism
The Act UP/NY Women & Aids Book Group

Finally a comprehensive and progressive book about women in the Aids epidemic. With informative discussion of safer sex and sexuality, HIV testing, treatment and drug trials, public policy, and activism, this book is the only thorough and up-to-date analysis of the AIDS issues for women. Includes a Canadian resource list of organizations.

Between the Lines, \$15.95 pb; \$35.95 hc



Margaret Laurence: The Long Journey Home
Patricia Morley

A critical and biographical study of the life and writing of this eminent Canadian novelist. Morley considers Laurence's twelve books, revealing the close links between her African-based work and the better known Manawaka fiction set in Canada.

She examines Laurence's singular genius and the forces that affected her background.

McGill-Queen's University Press, \$14.95 pb

For those who love our book pages!



The Canadian Book Information Centre has a new catalogue, *Women's Studies, Books by, for and about Canadian Women*.

This catalogue provides the most comprehensive and detailed listing of Canadian books of interest to women. It was prepared by the Atlantic office of the CBIC and was designed and printed in Halifax. The cover features, "Laughing Women," a work by Terri Robin Vernon, a Halifax artist.

The catalogue includes 118 titles from 38 Canadian publishers from coast to coast. All are members of the Association of Canadian Publishers. The listings are fully annotated with full illustrations of the books. The following subjects are included: biography, history, labour, literature, politics, reference, sexual politics and sociology. This catalogue will be of interest to librarians, educators, and feminists and anyone interested in women's issues or currently enrolled in a Women's Studies program.

Copies are available from the Canadian Book Information Centre, 1741 Barrington Street, Halifax, N.S. B3J 2A4 or call (902) 420-0688.

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 to keep tabs on everything that is going on, so... PLEASE won't you call and let us know the dates of important events? Call or write Pandora (454-4977; PO Box 1209 North, Hfx. B3K 5H4).

CLASSIFIED

•Want to go to Michigan and/or Provincetown? We are organizing a Maritime women's convoy to the Michigan Women's Music Festival and to Provincetown in August 1991. If you want to go to either or both places, drop us a note, to "Michigan", c/o Pandora. Let us know stuff like who, how many, do you need camping gear, have some to share, do you have a vehicle, need a ride, etc.

•Two women need a quiet, non-smoking, gay-positive place to live in Halifax, reasonable distance from NSCAD. Needed for Sept. 1. Contact 295 Stewart St., Apt. #4, Peterborough, Ont. K9J 3N2

•Are you a lesbian who has used donor insemination or self insemination for conception? If so, a lesbian/feminist doctoral student wants to interview you and your partner or co-parent for a study on issues that lesbians see as important in making this particular reproductive choice. Strict confidence. Write DI Research Project, Box 342, 2255B Queen St. East, Toronto M4E 1G3 (416) 691-5149

•Elizabeth Fry Society requests your assistance in promoting Halifax as the site for new Atlantic federal correctional facility for women. Write Dept. of Solicitor General, Minister of Justice, and/or Minister Responsible for the Status of Women. Contact E. Fry Society for more info: Suite 320, 1657 Barrington, Hfx. B3J 2A1 (902) 420-1069

•I am a survivor of childhood sexual abuse looking for others survivors who are interested in working together through the Courage to Heal Workbook. Contact Carrie c/o Pandora Box 1209, North Stn, Halifax, NS B3K 5H4

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Women's Employment Outreach offers free employment counselling services to women, including workshops on resume writing, interview skills, and the hidden job market, and individual counselling on improving women's chances of getting better jobs through upgrading and skill training. 4-part pre-employment workshops for women start the first Tues. of every month, 9:30-11:30. Call 422-8023.

RESOURCES

•**Telling Our Stories Our Way:** A guide to good Canadian materials for women learning to read, published by CLOW. \$10 for CLOW members and community-based literacy programs; \$20 for non-members and institutions. Write CLOW, 47 Main St., Toronto M4E 2V6 (Add 10% postage, 7% GST)

•A Women's Clinical Resource Centre to help in the rehabilitation of women addicted to alcohol or other drugs has materials on health, sexuality, life and vocational skills, and parenting tech-

niques, and also publishes a quarterly newsletter and a list of the centre's new acquisitions. Drop by the Centre, or write NS Commission on Drug Dependency, Women's Clinical Resource Centre, 6 Flr, Lord Nelson Bldg, 5675 Spring Garden Rd., Hfx. B3J 1H1

•**From We to Just Me** (book reviewed in January issue Pandora) is available by writing Kristopher Ryan, PO Box 52057, Winnipeg, MB R2M 5P9

EVENTS & GROUPS

•Support Groups at SSAV Centre: **Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse**—Drop-in night (May 28, 7-10); **Self-Help Support Group** every Tuesday, 7:30-9:30 pm, Every Sunday, 3-5pm; **Parents of Sexually Abused Children** Drop-in June 26, 7-10pm)

•A Support Group for HIV+ Women meets the fourth Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at #206-5224 Blowers St., Halifax. Call Johnneen at 425-4882

•The Health Action Coalition has received a grant from Health & Welfare Canada to support the "Health Action Project" which is committed to helping Nova Scotians take control over their own health and the health of their community. Contact Fiona Chin-Yee at 466-6095 or Marjorie Willison 477-6102 for more info.

•The Feminist Therapists' Support Group meets every 2nd Wed. of the month in Hfx. For more info contact Judy at 425-4514

•The Social Action Committee of Bryony House will be holding monthly meetings the first Mon. of each month. All interested women are invited to attend. Call Rusty Neal 454-9636.

Wednesdays at 10 am Women's Group. North Branch Library. Make your mornings your time to come to the North Branch Library for two hours of friendly conversation and informal discussions of local and global interest. The Women's Group will discuss such issues as North End bus service and health topics such as asthma, as well as enjoying visitors from other countries. All women are welcome. The coffee and tea is always on.

•Service for Sexual Assault Victims offers a parent support program for parents of sexually-abused children. The program includes Support Groups, monthly drop-in nights, emotional support, accompaniment during court hearings, info and advocacy. Phone Helen Crant 455-4240 Also 24 Hour Confidential crisis line—425-0122

•The Women's Action Coalition of Nova Scotia invites any interested women to join the new Council or to assist in small tasks, helping W.A.C. to present a unified lobby voice and connect women's groups across the province. Contact P.O. Box 9436 Stn A., Hfx, NS, B3K 5S3.

•Monthly drop-in for **Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Assault.** Last Tue. of each month, 7-10 pm. This is an open evening for survivors who may want to connect with other survivors, obtain resources, or just drop in for coffee. 6450 Young St, Hfx. 455-4240

•Concerned about the portrayal of women in the media? Get involved with **Mediawatch** and be part of a national network of women working for change. **Mediawatch N.S.** meets the last Sun. of every month at 7:30 pm at the Public Archives of N.S. in Hfx.. Phone Heather MacLeod, 422-3524.

•You are invited to the book-ordering

committee meetings at **Red Herring Co-op Books, Hfx.** to advise and suggest book titles in areas of feminist theory, gays and lesbians, ecology and spirituality. Phone 422-5087.

•**Third Place Transition House** is open in Truro. P.O. Box 1681, Truro B2N 5Z5 (902) 893-3232.

•**Voice of Women Nova Scotia** is looking for more women to become involved in the peace movement and to work on the co-ordinating committee, the newsletter, distribution of press releases, and administration. Phone 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 892-0895. Collect calls accepted.

•Listen to the **Dinner Party Sound-track** (women's music in a feminist context) on CKDU 97.5 FM at 8 pm Sundays.

•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. Community women's groups wanting to announce their events, call 424-6469. Women's Time needs volunteers to help out with programming. Call Jennifer at 424-6479, or drop in to the station at Dalhousie University Student Union Building. You don't have to be a student.

•**Spinsters on Air** broadcasts on Sat. from noon to 2:30 pm on CKDU 97.5 FM.

•**Lupus** strikes approximately 50,000 Canadians, and 90% are women. Lupus Canada provides initial information services, and referral to the closest provincial lupus organization, on their now toll-free line 1-800-661-1468

PHONE LINES

•**Lavender Connection**, an information line for women about events, marches, dances, groups, workshops, etc. will be accepting calls for listing events. Will be on line as of June 1. Leave a message and they'll get back to you—454-5465.

•**Literacy Information Line** has a toll-free number you can call between 8:30 a.m.—4:30 pm to get information on programs available to help you improve your reading, writing and math skills. 1-424-7544.

•**Transition House Association of Charlottetown, P.E.I.** announces that crisis line services at Anderson House are now available toll-free. Women may obtain information and support by dialing 1-892-0960 toll-free.

•**Fredericton Rape Crisis Centre** provides information on action, information and prevention. Call the crisis line at (506) 454-0437, or their business line (506) 454-0460. You can also write them at P.O. Box 174, Fredericton, N.B. E3B 4Y9

•**Service for Sexual Assault Victims**, 24-hour crisis line: 425-0122. Emotional support, referrals, information.

•**N.S. Advisory Council on the Status of Women** has a toll-free number within N.S. 1-424-8662.

•**INFORM-AIDS** provides information, support, and referral services with regards to AIDS. Open Tues. to Sun. 5 pm to 9 pm. Call 1-425-AIDS (toll free from anywhere in N.S.)

•**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.

•The **Pictou County Women's Centre** in New Glasgow, has established a Rape Line offering confidentiality, anonymity, information, and peer counselling for female victims of sex abuse, incest, and rape. The line is staffed by volunteers. 752-2233.

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

•**GALA (Gay and Lesbian Association of Nova Scotia)** has an info line on gay and lesbian events. Call 423-7129

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

•Call for Paper on Women and Aging for special issue of the journal of Canadian Woman Studies. Write 212 Founders College, York University, 4700 Keele St., Downsview, Ont. M3J 1P3 (416) 736-5356

•**Womens' Marketing** at the N.F.B. (1572 Barrington St., Hfx. B3J 1Z6) is interested in screening print materials on dating violence. If you have articles, stats or info, please call or write them.

•Seeking recordings of live performances of feminist humour for a research project. Please send ordering information or titles of available material to Joanne Gallivan, U.C.C.B., Sydney B1P 6L2

•**Contemporary Verse 2** will be publishing issues on the themes of race and culture, sexuality and orientation, and women and autonomy. Write PO Box 3062, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 4E5

•**Queer Press**, Canada's only lesbian and gay publishing firm, is calling for submissions for its first book—an anthology of writings by and about lesbian and gay survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Deadline May 31. Write Q. Press, PO Box 485, Stn. P, Toronto M5S 2T1 or phone 416-972-6690 or 416-461-5117

•**Women's Press** is gathering stories by women in prison, and ex-inmates, for inclusion in an anthology entitled **Words from Within**. Contact Pinelopi Gramatikopoulos, c/o The Women's Press, 229 College Street, Suite 204, To., M5T 1R4, or phone (416) 598-0082.

PUBLICATIONS

•Cassette/CD will be soon available of Loreena McKennitt's music for **The Goddess Remembered, The Burning Time and Full Circle**. Write Quinlan Road Prods., Box 933, RR #5, Stratford, Ont. N5A 6S6 to be put on mailing list. She also has three other cassettes/CD's available which can be ordered through same address.

•**Women's Health Clinic** has launched program for women called **Catching Our Breath**. The booklet and accompanying Guide covers factors that have caused women's addiction to tobacco and combines adult education methodology, group process techniques and issues like body image, weight pre-occupation and how women deal with expressing anger and other emotions. Write 3rd Floor, 419 Graham Ave., Winnipeg R3C 0M3

•"Worthy of Recovery" booklet explores the issues that gay/lesbian patients encounter in treatment and early recovery from alcoholism (Order #6764). "Inside the Invisible Minority: Addressing the Special Issues of Addicted Patient Who is Gay/Lesbian" is a pamphlet for counsellors in the field of alcoholism. \$2.50 U.S. each. Parkside Lodge-Wentgate, 4601 Interstate 35, North Denton, TX 7620

CALENDAR

•2nd and 4th Tues of each month : **Women's Night at Rumours**

•See a TV Guide for dates and times of programs being aired in next few months, including June 11: **Black History**, June 12: **Stereotyping in Media**, June 25: **Studio D's** latest titles, June 10, 17, 24, July 1: 4-part series that profiles women who are caught in the limbo of life in refugee camps.

May 18—June 1 **Bridging the Gaps** P.E.I. Creative discussions between lesbian and heterosexual women at Council of the Arts. For more info call Shirley 675-4808 or Salli 892-1491

May 31—June 2 (Also Sept. 20—22, Oct. 4—6 and Nov. 1—3) **Beyond Survival: Residential Weekend Workshop/Retreat—Psychosynthesis and Healing the Incest Wound**. Write Rosemary Sullivan, Pigeon Hill Bruideen, Peacemaking Centre, St. Armand, P.Q. JOJ 1T0 (514) 248-2524

June 6 7pm **Women and Development: An Open Lecture Series**. Presentation and discussion on the film, "The Global Assembly Line" with M. Patricia Fernandez-Kelly. Rm 234, Arts and Administration Bldg., Dalhousie

June 8, 9 **The Shamic Journey, Power and Healing: An Experiential Exploration** at Cedar Camp, near Sussex, NB Call 506-433-3151 (See ad this issue)

June 11—15 **Ink Drawings** by Treena Biddington, Anna Leonowens Gallery (Opening June 10, 6 p.m.)

June 14—16 **The Reconciliation of Differences Conference/Workshops**, organized by Jean McComber and Louise McComber, Ecole de Psychosynthese Roberto Assgioli Inc., PB 186 Rosemont Station, Montreal, P.Q. H1X 3B7 (514) 728-4551

June 15 2pm **Gathering at Rumours** to prepare signs and banners for Gay Pride March

June 21-23 8th Annual **Topshee Memorial Conference "To Act Justly...Social Principles and Social Actions"** St. Francis Xavier Univ., Antigonish, NS. For info call 867-2208

June 22 9 pm, **Womyn's Dance**, St. Charbel's Hall, Fredericton, NB. \$3. waged/\$5. unwaged. Cash Bar.

June 30 "Coming out Gala" and presentation of community awards; part of Gay Pride Week. Call GALA for info (423-2292)

August 13—18 16th **Womyn's Michigan Music Festival** (See Classified). **Saffire: The Uppity Blues Women**, Ferron, Lucie Blue Tremblay, plus many others. Write W.W.T.M.C., Box 22, Walhalla, MI 49458

June 14—16 **National Action Committee on the Status of Women** 19th A.G.M., at Carleton University in Ottawa (Note that this is a change)

End of June Mohawk/lesbian author Beth Brant will be doing readings (sponsored by Canada Council) during Pride Week. For more info call GALA office 423-2292

Aug. 30-Sept. 2 **First Lesbian Festival in Canada** in Montreal. Call 514-597-0858 (See article this issue)

Sept. 7, 8 **The Shamic Journey, Power and Healing**, Cedar Camp, Halifax, NS (See ad this issue)

Sept. 27, 28, 29 4th **Lesbian Conference "Growing Together"**. For info call 492-3822