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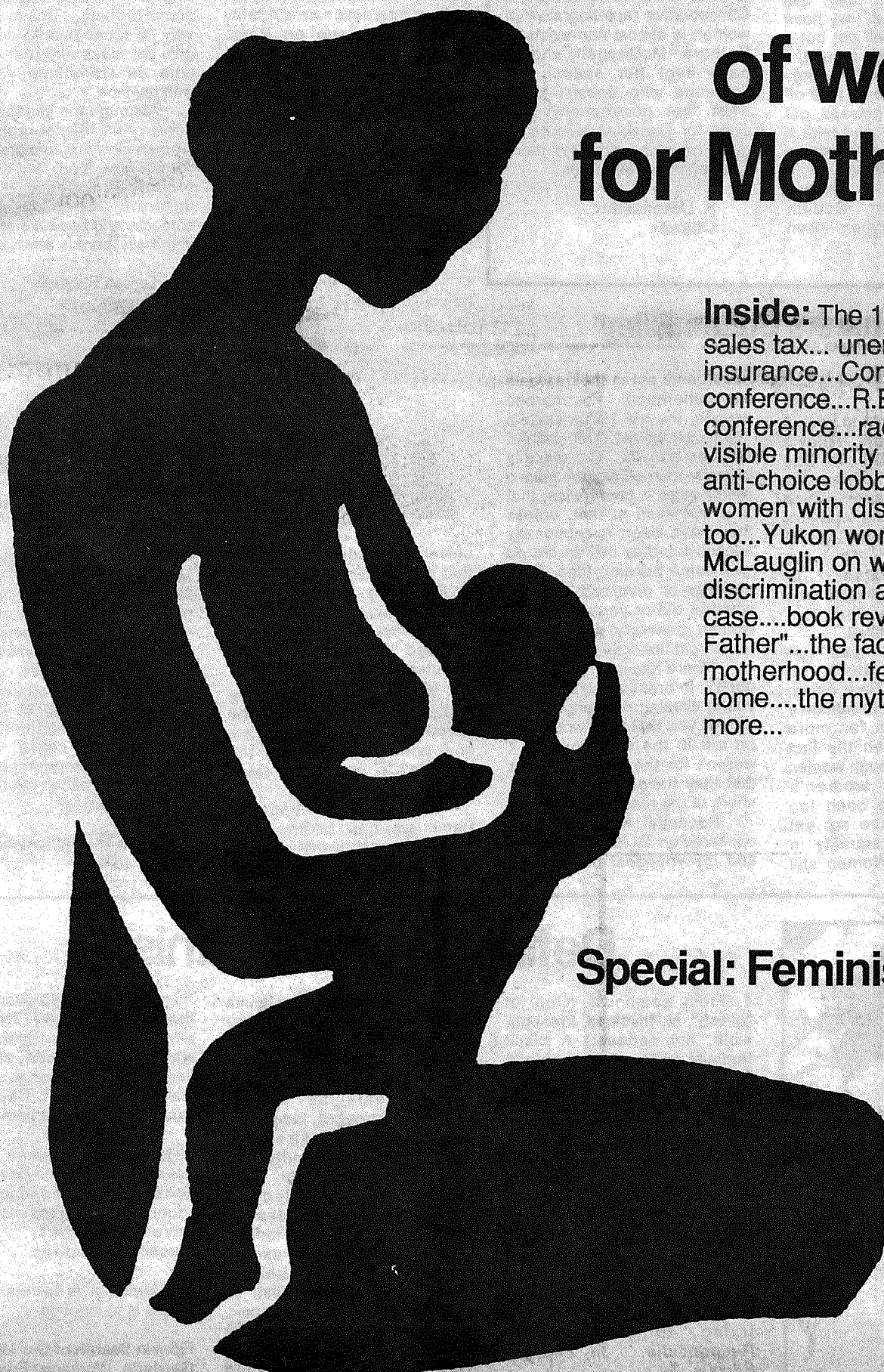
The Womanist

May/June 1989

A feminist newspaper distributed nationally

Vol 1, #4, Ottawa

Honour the strength of women for Mother's day



Inside: The 1989 budget - a review... sales tax... unemployment insurance... Congress of Black Women's conference... R.E.A.L.W. conference... racism in the immigrant and visible minority women's movement... the anti-choice lobby in Southern Alberta... women with disabilities are parents, too... Yukon women's conference... Audrey McLaughlin on women in the Yukon, discrimination against men? - the Wen-Do case... book review - "In the Name of the Father"... the faces of motherhood... feminism and women at home... the myth of motherhood... and more...

Special: Feminist Throne Speech



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We would like to thank the many women artists who contributed their artwork without tribute.

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Ted Riggs who helped box and ship the papers out.

To subscribe: To have the paper delivered to your home, the price is \$5-\$25 a year. For institutions: \$15 a year for non-profits, \$25 a year for government.

The Womanist was created to empower and enable women. We want to get back to the basics, the common ground that has built the women's movement, while celebrating our differences.

What can we agree upon? That we as women are important and that we have a right to be heard, to be respected, to be trusted.

As a movement we have a responsibility to enable all voices to be heard, equally. That is our commitment in this newspaper - to empower with ideas, information and inspiration.

The Womanist appears 6 times a year.

The Womanist

Womenspeak

Look around Barbara

Dear Womanist:

I want to congratulate you on a great edition commemorating International Women's Week. Bravo! I find that your newspaper is not only informative, but also very accessible to all women.

The only problem I found in this edition was the hypocritical article sent in by the "Honourable" Barbara McDougall. I realize that your paper is for all women, but where did she find the nerve to write her article? Her government has done absolutely nothing for Canadian women. Everyday, women in this country are losing something, from non-affordable, non-accessible day care, to no pay equity. You often hear "her government" talk about what they are planning to do, what they have done, what they will do; but if you take a close look around, it amounts to absolutely nothing.

Maybe she should take off her rose-coloured glasses, get off her ivory tower and take a close look at the real Canadian women -- poor women, single parents, women of colour, immigrant women, lesbian women, battered women -- then

maybe she would realize exactly what her government has done.

And to add salt to the wound she waits until one month after IWW and announces the unemployment insurance cutbacks. Yes, women can now take longer maternity leave, but not if they've adopted. Single mothers who find they have no choice but to quit their jobs, or who are fired because they've missed too much work due to family needs, will be left to the decision of the UIC worker as to whether or not she will get benefits. More money will be put into training programs, but for whom? Will the money also be put into day care programs to allow mothers to go into training programs? Once again, "her government" is working for Canadian women.

As far as I'm concerned, a Conservative representative of women is almost non-existent. Barbara McDougall should have kept her speech for someone who doesn't know what "her government" has done for Canadian women. I don't have the time for more Conservative fairy tales.

K. Desormeaux
Ottawa

Thanks Susan Riley

Dear Editor:

My compliments to you for publishing Susan Riley's **Around the Hill** in the Feb./March issue. This is the first article I've seen which offers root causes for women's failure to achieve total independence, to be completely liberated. In present-day mish-mash one can scarcely say that this vision has been fulfilled.

Feminism's loss of "freshness" can easily be accounted for by time alone, but the lack of feminism's current "focus" is far more complicated. Given the fact that there aren't enough women in parliament, women's expectations have been too high. Women have not yet gained complete equality in earning power. Women still

have dents put in their careers by motherhood. For married women, the old 1970s slogan, "You can have it all, baby," remains a myth. The majority of never-married women have a better edge -- careerwise, that is -- but even at that, unless they have been exceptionally successful, they still do not do well come pension time. The majority of divorced women, whether old or young, are the women (generally) suffering the most from financial disaster.

Where has the 1960s spirit gone? In present day, listen to young working mothers. Many will tell you that they would not be out in the work force if it weren't for the economic fact that they have to pay for their share of the rent.

Recently, Mila Mulroney appeared on TV for an interview and my youngest daughter (a

Thank you very much But

There is no more stressful, arduous and time consuming a task than looking for a job. But for an immigrant woman the job is even tougher.

Whether you have consciously decided to become an immigrant or have become one for another reason: civil war in your country, prospects of a better life here or marriage with a man from another country, you have all sorts of new experiences, new goals and challenges. And one of the first is looking for a job.

Canada has not been my first attempt at the job market. Holding a bachelors degree in International Studies from my country, Venezuela, and some past university studies at the Institut Internationale d'Administration Publique en Paris, France I pinned my hopes on finding a job in Canada using my experience.

I sent away about fifty resumes to different organizations that would have an interest in people like me with an International Relations background.

I started at the Public

Services Commission of Canada (PSC). According to the Employment Special Measure Program of the PSC I am euphemistically part of the Visible Minority Group which would give me priority status but I am not a Canadian so I do not have priority.

I was very disappointed as the door closed for me to work in the Federal Government. As the days passed I received a bunch of beautifully expressed negative letters.

After that I changed my direction and went after any job. I decided to expand my knowledge to more practical things that could help me. So, I did an introductory course in word-processing.

I also discovered the large world of the volunteer organizations in this country and left my name registered in some of them. This is a good way to meet people who can give me ideas and at the same time do something valuable with my time.

Although the situation may seem very discouraging for women who are immigrants but "don't give up." Try to look forward to more routes, different opening, make contacts and because spring in in the air, there is always hope.

Teresa Bobiash
Ottawa



university student) remarked that our P.M.'s wife has "the best of two worlds." Mrs. Mulroney has the 1980s image of an "office." In reality, Mila is a good Chatelaine, doing volunteer work.

Western society applauded (in token) the great social change. But most are now pondering what are the benefits? -- especially since economic change.

The Second Phase of Feminism has taken place during the past twenty years of the movement's opportunity.

Many women are juggling two jobs and, contrary to popular belief, the majority of men are not doing their share of child-raising. Other than denial, few seem to know the answer for this. But some have come to realize that until we have more women governing at the top these bad conditions for women will not cease. Sad to say, social change might have worked if we hadn't put the cart before the horse!

Olive Thiesenhausen
Toronto



Definition of Womanist

1. From womanish. (Opp. of "girlish", ie, frivolous, irresponsible, not serious.) A black feminist or feminist of colour. From the black folk expression of mothers to female children, "you acting womanish," ie, like a woman. Usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or willful behaviour. Wanting to know more and in great depth than is considered "good" for one. Interested in grown-up doings. Acting grown up. Being grown up. Interchangeable with another black folk expression: "You trying to be grown." Responsible. In charge. Serious.

2. Also. A woman who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually. Appreciates and prefers women's culture, women's emotional flexibility (values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter), and women's strength. Sometimes loves individual men, sexually and/or nonsexually. Committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Not a separatist, except periodically, for health. Traditionally universalist, as in: "Mama, why are we brown, pink and yellow, and our cousins are white, beige and black?" Ans.: "Well, you know the colored race is just like a

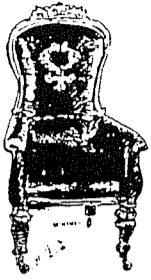
flower garden, with every color flower represented.) Traditionally capable as in "Mama, I'm walking to Canada and I'm taking you and a bunch of other slaves with me." Reply: "It wouldn't be the first time."

3. Loves music. Loves dance. Loves the moon. Loves the Spirit. Loves love and food and roundness. Loves struggle. Loves the folks. Loves herself. Regardless.

4. Womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender.

From **In Search of Our Mother's Gardens**, Womanist Prose by Alice Walker.

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Sorry we are late

Many of you have probably noticed that we are a little late some times, for example, this issue. We are committed to maintaining national coverage and realistically reflecting the diversity of the women's movement. This means that we are sometimes late rather than printing whatever we happen to have every two months.

We are a young paper, learning all the time. We hope to soon reach the point where we can guarantee you a paper every two months. Until then, you will see us approximately

every two months. The next issue will be out for September. Thanks for your patience and support.

We hope that some of you will consider supporting the paper by subscribing or advertising. It will assist us in being able to cover *The Womanist's* costs.

As a result of high demand, we have increased the number of copies we print, from 7,000 to 12,000, starting with this issue. We really need your support to maintain the paper. Help make it happen. Thanks.

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Canadian
Advisory Council
on the Status of Women



Conseil
consultatif canadien
sur la situation de la femme

Update on Women's Issues

The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW) is an independent organization funded by the federal government to advise the government and the public on issues affecting women. The CACSW produces original research exploring social, economic, and legal issues pertinent to women, such as wife battering, child-care, pornography, and women and pensions.

CACSW research is published as books, booklets, background papers, briefs and fact sheets. For a complete list of free CACSW publications, contact the National Office.

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Womenspeak

The politics of kindness and unconditional love

Dear Womanist:

This could be entitled "not another feminist manifesto"...or "the politics of kindness and unconditional love"...

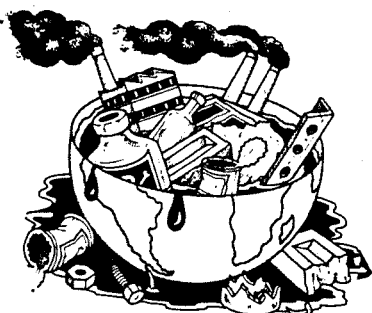
It's an ordinary Tuesday night. I'm driving to choir practice with my mother, a friend, my son, and one of the neighbours' children. Choir practice is where I go to meditate. For two hours, we sing a mixture of old show music, vaguely religious songs, and the odd silly kids' music. I love choir. I love the people I'm with. I have nothing in common with them "politically," except they are my community, my friends, people I've grown up with, people I live with.

As I drive, I am gossiping with my mother and thinking underneath about the latest bleak news that yet another "hole" in the ozone layer has been discovered over the Arctic. TV commentators are vague as to what it all means. I am wondering what to do next. I'm forty years old and often bone tired and afraid; and I've lived as a farmer/activist for most of my life. I'd like some peace and quiet, and instead these doomsday rumours continue to drift in. Except these are the scariest I've heard because almost no one is talking about them.

I have been living in "interesting times" (remember the Chinese curse) for what seems like a long time now, listening and formulating apocalyptic visions and grandiose solutions for all our terrible world problems for twenty years or more. I have a vision of myself wandering vaguely through the world covered in labels documenting

my history -- hippie, back to the lander, farmer, peacenik, environmentalist, radical, and overwhelmingly, feminist, my favourite label and one of the biggest and most brightly coloured. Of course, I've never really fit any of the labels, but they have their conveniences. Sometimes, I see them all strung together as "hippieenvironmentalistpeaceni kradicfeministtroublemaker," something a judge or bad journalist might have said, back in the good/bad old days of the seventies.

And now lately there's a new apocalyptic vision, the world winding down or up in



slow environmental degradation: the ozone layer disintegrating, the weather and climate changing, the rainforest burning, deserts and sand creeping wider and farther, death and despair in places like Bangladesh, Chad, and the Sudan, animals dying, disappearing, like a steady stream of smoke. It's an uneasy topic of conversation, which no one quite knows what to do with.

Whenever I introduce it, which I do frequently, it being a new and interesting preoccupation, I get two main responses simultaneously from the women I'm with. Our faces grow vague with despair and grief, and we are silent,

remembering oil spills, and TV news, gloomy reports from all over, finally, someone murmurs something incoherent about recycling, which brightens everyone up. Ah yes, recycling. Then someone murmurs about the greed of international corporations, at which people's faces brighten even more, this time with righteous anger. Of course, it's them, it's it, that ugly, all-around shit-disturber, throws in some nasty comments about our North American lifestyles, and the rampant consumer materialism which is now so fashionable and which I thought in the seventies we were all giving up (except it's so boring to be poor). And someone else says, indignantly, that they've worked hard to get where they are, and they deserve a certain level of comfort, and at these incipient signs of discomfort and possible conflict someone else changes the subject and with great relief, we all go on to discussing something more interesting, and less painful.

I work in the "women's movement," whatever that is. I get paid for it, which also forces me to examine it, be familiar with it, read the literature, think about it, talk about, and write about it. And I'm never satisfied. I was born a radical, a radical I'll die. I'm glad for me and for those of my friends, the women I know and love and would die for, that they have jobs and choices and better day care and that we have sexual assault centres and rape crisis centres and women's centres and women's studies courses and that there are brilliant warm caring women all over the place doing a great job at what they do. I'm glad, very glad. I take nothing away

from the work we've done, and the work we're doing, and from individual women on their journeys to understanding and awareness.

But I want more...always more, more more. I'm such a whiner, but that's how I'm made and where I come from. I read all those awful and demanding books by all those brilliant women, all those feminist and other books which say, "look we need to not just mend this system but change it," and naive fool that I am, I still agree with them. It's a system which is bad for kids, and trees and clean air, and beaches and seabirds and animals of all kinds.

I look around at the state of the country and do my research on women and poverty. Pile up statistics and what I see has changed is that some women have better jobs, and better titles, and one is a Supreme Court judge, and one is head of a political party, and another one runs a corporation. And some of us who have better jobs are feminists and some of us are not. It's often hard to tell or even figure out what the label means.



In the movement, we talk about "class difference," without ever defining what we're talking about. I think what we're really talking about, although we hate it, is that many of us now need the system to go on existing in its present form so we can keep our jobs and our level of comfort which we feel, and rightly so, no quarrel from me, that we've earned.

But then how, oh my sisters, do we work through this endlessly multiplying paradox of trying to change a system, primarily an economic one, which is increasingly feeding us?

We're not finished yet. We haven't lived out our visions. We've settled so often for what we could get, watched each other burn out and go away, fought for power without ever saying that's what we're doing, let the kinder gentler souls among us be pushed out. We've not heard each other even though we have listened and listened with our best ears, and tried and tried and piled insupportable burdens on ourselves and each other (yes, Susy, you can have it all by yourself, three kids, a career, a house, two cars, a mortgage, and still have time for sitting on

the Board of the Women's Centre and go to peace meetings, and don't, whatever you do, take home plastic bags from the supermarket. Yes, you can have a relationship with your significant other of whatever sex, but it takes work, we all know that, and that means work on yourself, and that means therapy and healing and remembering all those nasty little traumas that you thought you'd buried forever, and why don't you write a novel about it and tell others how to survive as well.)

And always behind us we hear the insistent beat of our addiction to apocalypse. The trees still fall in the Brazilian jungle, and the desert creeps south, and as hard and long and fast as we work, the sexual assault centres and rape crisis centres and safe houses fill up and up, and black and white, good and bad, positive and negative, spiral around one another into whatever strange and uncertain future we are able to have.

As I make my Tuesday night drive, and stand with all the other ordinary people that I care about, I can't find any villains or enemies anywhere. We are all innocent these days to the same extent that we are complicit. When I go to buy hay, the old man I buy it from complains bitterly about the "poisons" they're putting in meat these days. Who is? Who is responsible? How do we find them? How will we condemn them if we ever do? What should I tell this old man to do? Not eat? Not buy medicated food for his cattle? We shrug together as we sling bales into the truck.

We like to believe, we women, and especially me, that we have a love and understanding of our "mother" Earth. I have stood in circles and chanted and listened for changes in the wind, and gone walking everyday, and watched the eagles over the lake, and done my work and written letters and stories, and the more I have learned to love the earth and many of the people on it, without judgement or conditions, the greater sadness I feel.

Even as I push and organize and write and think and read, I'm still afraid, oh, my sisters, of the bitter smoke on the wind, and tired of whining at myself and each other. We have done so much, we have come so far. We are truly marvel, loving each other through the bitterness and finding joy in our small moments, and patiently stalking the sun through bleak days in a bleak world. Creating miracles we barely notice and changing as we go, and knowing only the one sure thing, that we continue and continue, that is why I can stand in the choir with these women who are my friends and family, and who carefully don't ask what I do, and why this story has no plot and no ending, only hearing into being.

Luanne Armstrong
Kamloops, B.C.



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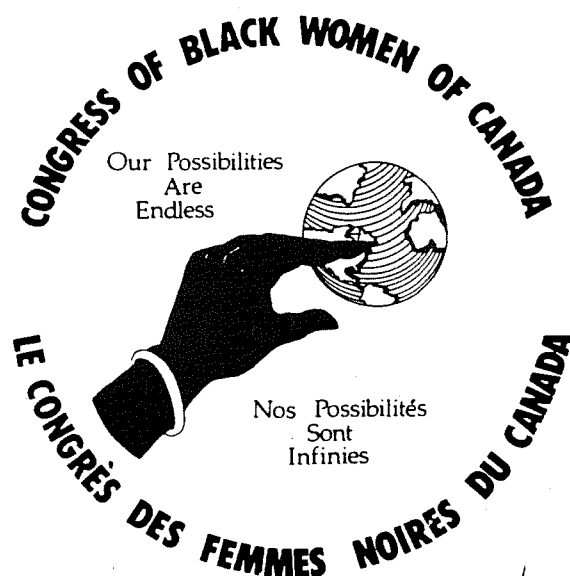
Congress of Black Women

"Our Possibilities are Endless"

Carol Ann Wright, was the key-note speaker for the Congress of Black Women of Canada's ninth national conference in Halifax, May 5-7, 1989. Last fall, Carol Ann ran against Art Eggleton for Toronto Mayor and turned the municipal race into a serious one of priorities, representation and issues like poverty and racism.

Carol Ann Wright has been a grassroots woman and a hard worker; she is a sixth-generation Canadian Black woman from Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Below are excerpts from her speech from the Conference which theme was "Our Possibilities are Endless."



I'm happy to be here today. Not only because I have the honour to be the keynote speaker but I was told yesterday that I was the replacement for Oprah Winfrey. Now, that's quite an honour. I am also happy to have been invited back home to speak. I come home quite often, at least once a year. Sometimes my parents wonder if I'm actually away I come home so much. But every time the plane lands, there's a certain feeling in the pit of my stomach that I'm home. It's just nice to touch base every once in awhile.

Before I go any further, it's really important that on this occasion my family is here. I didn't coerce my dad, but I told him that oh, yes, there'll be lots of men there. It really makes me feel good to see them all here. They're all sitting right here in front of me, and I won't be as nervous as I thought I would be.

During the course of the mayoral campaign in Toronto in November 1988, they were also quite instrumental in supporting me to do the job that I did. I talked to my father long distance, and he was encouraging support: "Make sure you know each step; make sure you read up on everything." My mother and my sister came up to support me; my mom was there as my right hand; my sister served as my protocol advisor. She made sure that I wouldn't do anything during my campaign that would ruin my image. She walked along with me, and said "You can't do that, you're running for mayor."

I left here 10 years ago to explore my endless possibilities, and to see what I could do in Toronto. After jumping some hurdles, I've accomplished a portion of my original goals and still continue to do so. As was mentioned earlier, the reason I stand

before you is because of the Toronto municipal election of 1988. One of the reasons I agreed to run against Art Eggleton was because the issues of poverty and racism had become an abstract issue with politicians. It's an issue when they need votes; then they'll go to the Black community and tell them how much they understand and sympathize with your plight; we fully understand what you're going through, and in fact they do not.

They'll tell the poor that they understand why they're living in inadequate housing, or, in fact, living on the streets, when they do not. They tell Moms on FBA and social assistance "We understand what you're going through, we can understand that." Now, these people have maids, they have \$300,000 homes. There's nothing wrong with prosperity; but don't pretend to understand the situation if you don't. Just recognize the fact that we have this happening in our society, and we have to recognize it, and we have to do something about it.

That's what the Mayor of Toronto was not doing; he was not recognizing that this situation needed immediate and priority attention. He responded to the crisis in Toronto of housing and poverty by building a Dome stadium. I thought this was quite inappropriate when, in fact, we have people living and dying on the streets due to exposure from the cold in winter. People first approached me about running because they had felt that since I was advocating at a community level, it might be nice to go Toronto-wide. But being kind of shy, I thought no, I didn't particularly want this exposure. But when I also found out that another candidate for Mayor was a white supremacist, that provided the incentive I needed to do it. So a month before the election, I agreed to run.

The end result was, to make a long story short, 26,000 votes, which I call significantly second. As a result of that, people were coming out and starting to bring some attention to the plight of the poor in the City of Toronto. Because, as you well know, the City of Toronto sells itself as a world-class city. It's okay to sell yourself as a world-class city, but when you have the

proportion of homeless that Toronto has, you can also consider it the capital of the homeless in Canada. So those two elements make this city pretty ambiguous.

Now, during the campaign, when it was first announced that I was running, the Mayor took it very lightly. He said he welcomed any challenge, and that it was very nice that I was running. When it got closer to the end, he was reforming; he was all of a sudden an advocate for the poor; he was talking about new housing projects; he was talking about going back and looking at different projects that we were talking about during the campaign, and how he could effectively change these things to meet the needs of the poor. This was just before election night, when my support was increasing; he wasn't sure by how much, but he was nervous.

It was considered a success in that he actually had to do some reworking of his structure; and he's still being challenged.

I also live in an Ontario Housing project called Regent Park. People who live in that community are disenfranchised, and when these people heard I was running, people started to feel empowered. When people start telling you "I haven't voted in 15 years, but because of you, I'm going to go out and vote," those are the kinds of positive strokes that you need to hear. Those are the kinds of things that people need to start doing, to start challenging governments and changing the system. After that, people were saying, "Are you going to run again? You got that support, just think what you'd do if you ran a few months earlier than that, and the support mounted."

But as noble as I'd like to think I am, the system still exists as it is. And we have to wipe out the system, and institutionalized racism that exists today. Since our conference theme is "Our Possibilities are Endless," there are two focuses that I want to touch on, the personal and political process. My parents constantly told us that our possibilities were endless; we could do anything we wanted to; we could be anybody we wanted to be; we just had to put our minds to it, and the only person who could limit us would be ourselves.

My father also mentioned the fact that there was racism out there; he wasn't blind to the

In the movement



fact that I would have to go through these hurdles. But he made sure that we knew what was out there, and encouraged, or insisted that we challenge as we go.

And I always remember when I was really young watching a National Geographic special with my Dad. We were watching a special on Africa, and all they were showing was the dancing of the tribes. My father said to me at that point that more than that had happened in Africa; there were kings and queens, and he started to give me a little history. From that point on, I started to think about things. That's where my consciousness came in. That's why I think it's really important to instill that awareness in your children at a very early age.

Also, in keeping with that theme, during school and going through the education system, my parents were strong advocates on my behalf. That's also extremely important to youth, because there weren't too many teachers who liked to see my parents in a really bad mood in school. I got a lot of things done by telling them, "Oh, I think my parents will have to come out today." Then the situation was taken care of. So having that kind of support takes you through the rough times, as well as the good times.

Now, politically, recognizing that our possibilities are endless means also confronting racism and classism and sexism and all of it, and challenging it at all levels of government. We have to root it out and insist that our system be reflective; we need a total revamping of the system. A lot of times governments will offer bandaid solutions to problems that are

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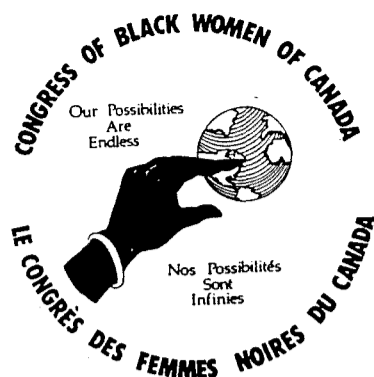


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"Our Possibilities are Endless"

ingrown in the system, and it just doesn't work; it's like painting a dilapidated building; it's of no use.

Now, the Congress as an organized body of Black women has the potential to do just that: to challenge. It makes me feel really good to see an organization of Black women such as the Congress, although I'm not yet officially a part of it.

After my experience with International Women's Day in Toronto, I am more happy to see you. The women who represent middle-class income people who were organizing this event asked me to be their keynote speaker. There was so much politics before I even got to the podium that I refused to go on; I refused the day before the speech. The Black Women's Collective was part of International Women's Day, and if it wasn't for them I wouldn't be speaking, because the kind of racism that existed in that whole movement was enough to turn your stomach. And I thought, "As women, where do you have time to be racist? Where do you have time to exercise this kind of snobbery and classism when we go to this type of conference on suffrage?" But I'm still a little naive yet; you'll have to forgive me.

Now, change. Change is urgent, and change is needed now, especially in our education system. And I know there are some teachers here, and I don't want you to be offended. But we have to look at the system internally.

I was reading the Congress brochure this morning, and it talked about taking action through participation in education. Now that means our education system has to educate our children, has to educate our Black children. Why is it necessary for my parents to do another training course at home about my heritage, about my African history? Why is that not in the curriculum of the school system? In the board of education where I stressed this, one of the teachers said, "But if we taught everybody's history, we wouldn't have the time." That was her view on the subject. So I said to her, "How would you feel if it was you, if the situation was reversed, and all you heard about was African history? I'd feel quite fine, thank you, but how would you feel as an European, or any other nationality?" She couldn't answer my question, so I thought I rested my case.

On the same theme of education, I was reading a book by Angela Davis, called *Race, Women and Class*, where she talked about when the slaves were freed, and the Emancipation Proclamation was announced, it wasn't simply the idea of freedom that people were excited about -- it was the opportunity for education, that thirst, that opportunity which made the possibilities seem endless.

Another point I want to make is that we as African women must remember that we are descendants of African queens and princesses and warriors, who not only led battles but who also led us out of slavery. The most distressing thing I heard the other day from a young Black woman was that she was waiting for her Prince Charming to take care of her (groans from the audience).

It's always hard for me because we were raised in a household where the work was distributed equally. We weren't told girls had to do this type of labour; my father always encouraged us in sports. People wondered why my sister and I were so rough on the court, and why we could hold our own with young men; it was because of this attitude that we could do anything we wanted to, and that we were to live our lives, no matter what happened in your life, you could be an independent person. It's extremely important that we educate our young women, so when I have an opportunity to do this in workshops and other forums, it's always distressing to still hear that. I wonder where the responsibility lies; is it in within our school system, or is it with our parents?

I'm jumping for a minute over to our federal politics. I heard a welcoming letter for the conference from Barbara McDougall. I remember being quite distressed a couple of weeks ago by her immigration policy. Related to that policy, the government said it would be cutting down on immigration until we deal with the racism that exists in Canada. As if racism is a recent thing; it's only happened in the last few years! This kind of narrow thinking is really reflected in our federal government, and it needs to be challenged. Someone needs to tell Barbara what's happening. Racism has existed since we've been here, as we got here, and why we are



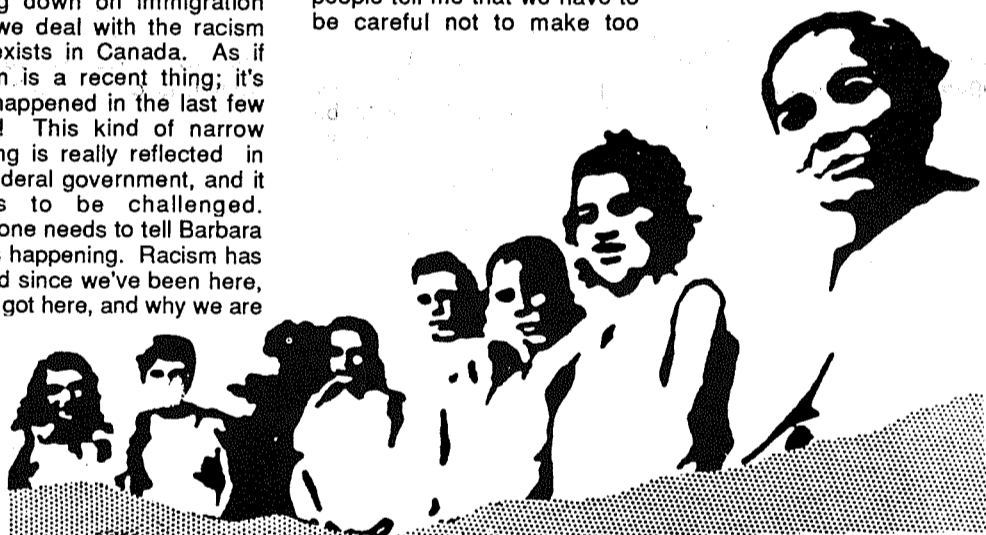
here. This is the kind of thing that you need to do locally.

The legislation that exists is ideally supposed to benefit all its citizens. When that does not happen, we have a responsibility as Black people to say this is not reflective. "I'm not benefitting from this legislation." If it happens in the schools, in the work place, in a nightclub, it doesn't matter. We are citizens of this country.

Sometimes I've heard Black people talk about not making too many waves. You know, we can't make them too uncomfortable; after all, they're sorry. Now, growing up as Mr. and Mrs. Wright's daughter, that's something I've not been uncomfortable with -- making noise. You always challenge. It's not true of all of us, but it's true of some. It's distressing to go to meetings, and hear people tell me that we have to be careful not to make too

many waves. Legislators and politicians need to be made to feel uncomfortable when they're messing up. They need to be told what they're doing, and what they're not doing. People will also say "they may not like us." But they never liked us from the beginning. Whether they like us or whether they accept us is not my problem. My problem is they've discriminated, they're being racist. It's affecting me, it's affecting my children; it's affecting our future. If we don't make these changes now, we'll still be living in slavery.

If we are to realize our possibilities are endless, then there are times when we have to make our plutocratic rulers (and I say plutocratic, because the people who have money are in power). And once we admit that to ourselves, then we'll realize where the problem lies. As an organized body of Black women, we have a responsibility to ensure that not only our possibilities are endless, but also our children's. With that last remark, I'm going to say have a good day.



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R.E.A.L.W.

R.E.A.L. Women received \$21,212 from Secretary of State to hold a conference entitled "Equality Revisited". R.E.A.L. Women:

- are opposed to women's equality rights as set out in Canada's Constitution;
- oppose the public financing of daycare;
- oppose equal pay for work of equal value;
- consider homosexuality a sickness and have proposed that it be medically treated.

Before the conference

Three weeks prior to the conference *The Womanist* requested that we attend as press. We felt that since they had been given public money then it meant that they had

demonstrated to Secretary of State that they wanted an open dialogue with women about issues.

In our first conversation with them, we were immediately refused because "we would not be objective about the conference." They did not want "feminists" attending.

It is important to note that R.E.A.L. Women have attended many events put on by feminist organizations, including NAC AGM and local events across the country. They have been denied the opportunity to participate in the organizing of various events because they do not support the overall objectives of the organizations. We were not asking to organize a workshop or even to distribute our

newspaper. We were requesting the opportunity to attend, listen and dialogue.

After repeated calls we finally were told we could attend as observers and would have to pay \$40. We were not recognized as press.

We understand that other feminists attended the conference but "in disguise." It is reprehensible that women felt that they could not get into a conference funded by the government unless they pretended they were not feminists.

At the Conference

- The Annual General Meeting was held the Friday night before the conference. It was closed, except to R.E.A.L.

Women members. Throughout the conference, and upon request, we were refused a copy of their resolutions. Why does a group receiving public money and wanting to affect public policy, not want anyone to see their resolutions?

- R.E.A.L. Women acclaimed their entire board. Lettie Morse is, again, the President.

- During the introductions, women were asked to stand when the province they lived in was called out. They made a special point of identifying the one black woman attending as being from the Caribbean. In fact, she was a Canadian citizen and was of Caribbean origin.

- Two women went for *The Womanist*. The first had few

problems registering and attending. When our second reporter, a black woman, arrived, the two women had greater difficulty reentering the room.

- In conversation outside the conference, a R.E.A.L. Woman stated that rape statistics are fabricated. She added that abortions should not be performed even if someone has been raped because, "the body shuts down when a woman is being raped, so it is impossible to get pregnant."

- Gwen Landolt attacked Supreme Court Justice Bertha Wilson on her ability to make a ruling on abortion because "Madame Justice Bertha Wilson is childless."

- *The Womanist*

Equality Redefined, not Revisited

by Janice Freeman

I'm glad that the Secretary of State Women's Program gave R.E.A.L. women a grant to hold their conference, "Equality Revisited". It gave me my first opportunity to examine the ideas and policies of a group that I had heard little about except in the media.

Media reports always seem to focus on the sensational, pitting right against left, R.E.A.L.W. against NAC. Common sense suggested to me that these polarities had to be simplifications of the truth. I know that not all feminists are left wing, so surely not all members of R.E.A.L. women could be right wing. I believed that the conference would give me a chance to explode some of the myths by examining R.E.A.L. women first hand. My examination resulted in a series of surprising discoveries.



My first surprise came when I attempted to register for the conference on Friday evening. I arrived at the Radisson Hotel, cheque in hand, about 4:30 p.m. Advance information had stated that registration began at 3:30 but no desk was set up and the two persons who were stuffing conference kits informed me that I was not welcome at that evening's session. When I explained that I was from the media and would like to report on their meeting, they looked a little worried. They explained that the evening meeting was their AGM, which was not part of the

equality conference and not open to the public or press. Throughout the whole weekend, I was unable to get a copy of their resolutions or a list of their new executive members. I wondered why they felt it necessary to withhold information which is normally public in most organizations.

I finally received my registration kit on Saturday, just minutes before the conference began. My second surprise came when I looked over the list of topics to be discussed during the weekend. I felt I was on familiar ground. Subjects such as day care, pornography, reproductive technology, and media relations are standard fare at most women's conferences. Furthermore, they were subjects that I have been exploring for several years and could discuss with some intelligence. Finally, we can build some bridges across perceived polarities, I thought.

My optimism was shattered as speaker after speaker reinforced those polarities. Everything the women's movement has worked to accomplish was held up to question and ridicule.

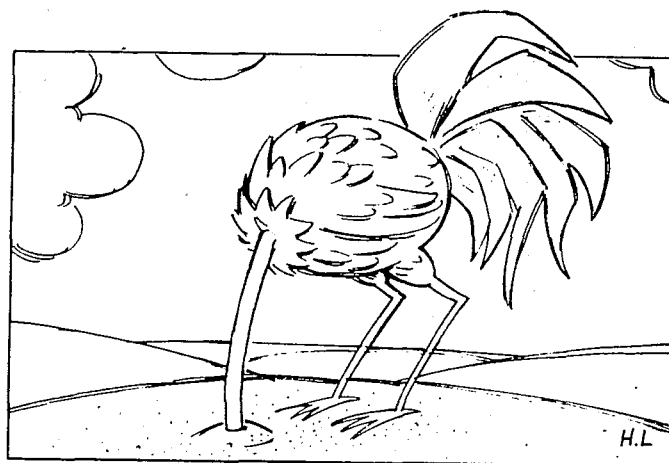
"There is no wage gap," declared one speaker. A few minutes later, Gwen Landolt stated, "The lack of government-organized day care has nothing really to do with the real cause of the wage gap." (Wait a minute, I thought, the previous speaker just told us there is no wage gap.)

Another expert said, "The long-term consequences of day care for children under the age of three are serious ... We run the risk of producing a generation of partial psychopaths." Yet, when questioned by a member of the audience, this speaker was unable to name a single study supporting this point of view.

A major theme of several talks was the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which was described as a socialist document undermining the traditional Canadian society. According to several speakers, the Charter gives appointed judges and human rights

tribunals more power than our elected officials. Worse still, they said, guaranteed rights for all Canadians means that homosexuals might be teaching our children.

R.E.A.L. women must get involved in politics because, "Every single one of the powerful institutions in the country is in the hands of the liberals," proclaimed Gareth Llewellyn in his talk on political equality. He encouraged women to get involved in the



political process by joining the Conservative party.

The Charter is also at the heart of the problem in the struggle against pornography, said a Pentecostal minister during his talk. Few women would disagree with his point that portrayal of sex with violence, with children, or with animals should be controlled. However, he said it was once again "liberal and feminist philosophy" which stalled any effective legislation because of a concern for free speech. They didn't ever acknowledge that pornography has been one of the most divisive issues in the feminist community. At this point I realized that there was little hope of building bridges on points of mutual concern with an organization that consistently used feminists, socialists, homosexuals or any other group as scapegoats.

I was tempted not to return to the conference on the second day because I had seen enough to know that I

could never engage in meaningful dialogue with persons who held such extreme views. However, a workshop with the provocative title of "Equality and Values Education in a Pluralistic Society" tempted me to return. My surprises of the first day of the conference were nothing in comparison to the incredulity I experienced during this workshop. The core of the facilitator's presentation was the belief that the pluralism and

horrorified. As the facilitator noted, it sounds democratic, but it is really "moral relativism." She concluded that the Charter guarantee of freedom of religion, is really "freedom from religion."

The fear and paranoia of R.E.A.L. women is best exemplified by a comment of one of the participants at the education workshop. She noted that the pervasiveness of insidious ideas in our officially sanctioned curriculum "must be the work of a very large and powerful organization... Could it be the KGB?", she inquired of the facilitator. Although the workshop leader did not support this point of view, it was clear to me that several participants did. When I could not control my laughter, and said out loud, "Ooooh, a conspiracy," several of them turned to me and said, "It is!"

Once again, I'm glad that R.E.A.L. women received public money for this conference. Because it was open to the public, I had the opportunity to attend and judge for myself if there was any hope of building bridges between the "them and us" attitude. There isn't.

R.E.A.L. women is primarily a group of white fundamentalist Christians who are frightened by any challenge to their absolute value system. These values are threatened by the tolerant attitudes embodied in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. If this new tolerance was brought about by socialists, liberal humanists, and radical feminists, I'm proud to be counted amongst them.

The media trick of pitting R.E.A.L. against NAC serves only to give R.E.A.L. women more credibility than they deserve. More Canadians should attend their meetings. R.E.A.L. women discredit themselves more thoroughly than could any number of angry protestors. They made tapes of all the conference sessions. Listen to them.

Janice Freeman is an Ottawa writer.

A fond farewell to "Broadside"

by Jeri Wine

In the movement



Broadside: A Feminist Review, a radical feminist publication with a ten-year publishing history, is going the way of many other Canadian feminist publications that are now only echoes in our memories. The accumulated years of zero to minimal funding, of struggles with meeting deadlines and paying bills, and the enormous demands on the unpaid labour of collective members have finally taken their toll. In May the **Broadside** collective will be publishing both its final, and by a (cruel?) twist of fate, its tenth anniversary issue.

The imminent demise of **Broadside** was announced to the Toronto feminist community through leaflets distributed widely during International Women's Week. The leaflets called for another collective of women to take over the publication, and to that end several meetings have been held.

Predictably, a new group of women has not materialized that is willing to assume the headaches, financial burdens and time and labour investment that would be required to save the publication. An additional factor is, of course, that it

would require an enormous amount of courage and sheer chutzpah to take over from a group of women with so much experience and knowledge who have earned the respect of the Canadian feminist community.

As a **Broadside** reader, subscriber and cheerleader since its first issue, I am deeply saddened by the loss of this fine feminist publication. The paper is a feminist establishment in Ontario, and is read by feminists across Canada. Its ten-year publication history represents a full generation of Canadian feminist activism; it's difficult to conceive the Canadian feminist scene in its absence.

I've spent a couple of hours interviewing Phil Masters, one of the collective members since the beginning, in preparation for writing this article. Phil believes that the ceasing of **Broadside's** publication is not necessarily a sad event but can be viewed as a natural development of the movement, that the **Broadside**



collective members are individually continuing their deep involvement in the feminist movement and have moved on to other commitments, and that the disappearance of **Broadside** leaves a gap that will be filled by new feminist contributions. I deeply respect her position and the right of the collective

members to make their collective decision to move on to new commitments, yet I mourn the passing of **Broadside**.

Broadside was born out of the activism and energy generated among feminists involved in the Toronto Women Against Violence Against Women in the late 1970's, eleven of whom formed the first **Broadside** collective. The issues taken up in the early years were shaped by the radical feminism of these women, including focus on pornography and violence against women, and analysis of the links between violence against women and violence against the environment.

The publication has reflected changes in the movement over the years, e.g. the increasing rapprochement between women's art and the feminist movement. In each issue **Movement Matters** provides information about the Canadian women's movement; there are articles by or interviews with feminist activists, authors and theorists; reports on major Canadian and international feminist events; feminist reviews of current books and films; and **Inside Broadside** has kept us informed about upcoming events in the Toronto feminist community.

The **Letters to the Editor** has served as a monthly forum for a variety of "hot", controversial issues in the movement.

Of the eleven women in the first collective only two, Phil Masters and Susan Cole, have remained till the present. Present collective members also include Helen Lenskij, Lisa Freedman, Brettel Dawson and Catherine Maunsell. Other members of the founding group who maintained their collective commitment for several years were Eve Zaremba, Bev Alanson, Judy Lawrence and Deena Rasky -- who resigned only last fall (I haven't attempted to list all of the collective members over the 10 year existence of **Broadside**). I mention these women's names because they are the unsung and unrecognized heroines of **Broadside's** success.

Of the collective, only Phil, who managed the office and carried out most of the office work, was paid (there have been a few other part-time paid staff members); her salary for full-time labour never topping poverty level. The women on the collective invested two full evenings each week, and a full weekend each month, a massive time commitment for a voluntary collective. In addition, each new member, if she was financially able, was asked to pledge \$500 over an

unlimited period of time to the publication.

The **Broadside** collective has had trouble paying the bills since its creation. They initially incorporated as a profit-making organization with the intention of inviting women in the community to become investors, then learned that they were prohibited from soliciting investors with assets less than \$250,000 -- a condition describing few women. In 1982, they re-incorporated as a non-profit corporation and were then eligible to make application for funding from granting

some feminist cause, or when they are unable to send a reporter to cover events. Since the publication has served as a forum for feminist debate, the collective is occasionally surprised to learn that it is being boycotted by one women's organization or another on the assumption that everything in its pages represents the views of the collective.

This problem has been particularly evident with regard to the **Letters to the Editor**, which are published uncensored. In short, **Broadside** has played its role



agencies.

They have been only modestly successful over the years, never receiving stable funding sufficient to cover operating expenses. Some granting agencies have been more helpful than others; e.g., since 1984, the Ontario Arts Council has provided them with a small grant each year. Canada Council gave them a small grant for three years, terminating when it was decided that **Broadside** did not include enough arts coverage. The Secretary of State Women's Program, which provides funding to most reasonably well-established Canadian feminist publications, has provided occasional grants for special projects, but refused operating funds.

The time and labour required to make grant applications which were often either unsuccessful or only minimally successful, in addition to the massive labour required to get the publication out, has drained the energies of the collective. Poverty is exhausting and demoralizing.

Broadside has served as a focal point for feminist energy in this community, often with segments of the feminist community furious with it for some reason or another. For example, because of its stability and predictability over the years some women have come to view it as rich and powerful, similar to mainstream publications, and have become angered when the collective is unable to make donations to


well, as both a fulcrum of feminist controversy, thought and activism, and a gauge of the Canadian feminist movement.

Phil assures me that something else will come along to fill the gap left by **Broadside's** demise, and that it will probably be easier for that to happen once the publication has definitely disappeared and the old entrenched people are gone. As she states, "one small group of women is not the sole repository of energy and intelligence in the feminist movement, and a monthly newspaper is really a cheap way of communicating. It can be done; it is accessible; all that's needed is money for printing and type-setting."


She believes that the group who takes up the challenge should not consist solely of white, middle-class women, but must include women of colour and Third World immigrant women, women who have the important questions for the present movement.

I do hope that her vision is realized; but at the moment I'm personally struggling with accepting that **Broadside** is really disappearing, and am preoccupied with mourning its passing.

*Jeri Wine is an Associate Professor with the Department of Sociology, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), in Toronto; she is also a long-time friend of **Broadside**.*



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Racism in the Women's Movement

In the movement

Feminist women's organizations mean places where women empower each other by listening, caring, accepting each other's differences. Where women are interested in and are communicating with each other. It is political awareness, growing together, it is where we initiate the changes to improve the status and lives of women. It is where black, brown, and white women are in solidarity. It is where women share experiences while accepting cultural differences.

Women's groups are about all of the above, but most of all, they are about relationships and the way we treat each other. If we are not open to the experiences of each other and the unique gifts we each have to offer as women, then we can not even begin to change society or our lives for the better.

The view we have of each other as women comes from our place in society, the ideology of our country, and our economic circumstances. The most visible way women are categorized is by their race. We all know who is a coloured woman, and who is a white woman. Women are also categorized by accents and their class in society. Listeners decide whether or not they like a specific accent. In Canada, the English accent wields power.

Women of colour are subjected to racism in their everyday lives. It does terrible things to the psyche and is internalized by women of colour, becoming an unconscious practice. The racism practised by women of colour towards each other is a vicious circle that starts with racism from outside the group and from the women's own culture. I call this internalized racism.



As a woman of colour, I have been subject to racist practices in women of colour organizations as well as in white women's organizations. Some of my personal experiences are painful, and I am still learning how to deal with them. I feel by describing some of the racist practices of internalized racism I have faced by women of colour, I will help women to speak out and confront the issue.

The meeting described below was the first organized meeting of women of colour and immigrant women in Canada. It was also the first non-white women's group meeting I attended in Canada.

I entered the meeting hall clutching ten dollars I had saved from my full month's grocery allowance of forty dollars. I had had to make and feed my children more applesauce and oatmeal than usual, and I had done all the laundry for the month by hand. I used only skim milk powder, and scrimped in other ways to save the ten dollars.

My heart was singing as I entered the hall. I will meet friendly faces for a change, I thought, I will be with women who care, who understand what it feels like to be discriminated against.

I paid the ten dollars for the ticket which included lunch and headed for the room where the opening address was held. Women were giving advice on how to organize, but not one word was said on how we

tears in my eyes were begging to flow. My hands shook as I fumbled into my bag, the bag fell to the floor, I retrieved it, found my ticket, handed it to her, and then headed straight for the restroom. I controlled the tears, then returned to the dining hall, took my lunch and sat at an almost empty table. The two women at the table were friendly. One spoke of her courses at the university, and the other of her children. I was silent, I felt drained. My cup had been half full when I came in; now it was empty.

At the end of this conference, the organizers congratulated each other and exchanged gifts. I went home confused. I felt as if I was in quicksand, that I would sink no matter where I stepped. I realized racism has no



should treat each other as women of colour. We had a nutrition break and then went to a workshop, where I felt uncomfortable because an immigrant woman was describing how things were done better in her country. By the end of the workshop, I was asking myself why I had come.

During lunch hour, I joined the line at the buffet table. I looked around me and smiled, because women were communicating in groups. I said to myself, "this is why we are here." I knew the woman who gave me a ride to the meeting, so I went over to say hello. She introduced me to the other women and announced that she had given me a ride to the meeting and would take me back when the meeting was over. Some of the women smiled at me and then continued their conversation, ignoring me completely. Another woman joined the group, and I was introduced again as the woman who was given a drive and would need one to get home. You can imagine how I felt. I felt worse than a third-class citizen. This woman did not say that my husband was babysitting her child in exchange for the drive!

One of the organizers then came up to me and said "Can we see you for awhile?" I smiled and said "Sure," thinking she would ask me to help with something (I had indicated before that I would like to help). She took me to her group and the person in charge of finances looked at me and asked if I had a ticket; she said she did not remember selling me one. They all looked at me; not one word was said.

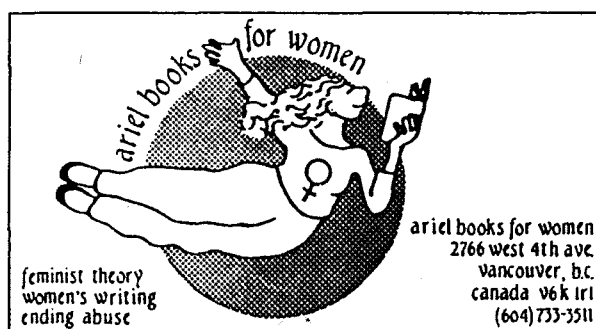
Meanwhile, my body temperature soared, and the

boundaries. I face it every day in the schools my children go to; the apartment I live in; the stores where I shop, even the church I attend.

Yet why did my experiences with the women of colour group hurt so much? It hurt when white women were racist towards me, but I was used to it, and I had built up coping mechanisms to deal with it. But racism from women of colour, sisters who the state named visible minorities, was unexpected. My expectations were different. I believed they would understand my life from their experiences of racism. I expected we would treat each other with respect and tolerance.

own sisters? Why is it that funding from Secretary of State gives women the power and the right to oppress their sisters and elevate themselves? Are women doing this in an unconscious way, or do some consciously manipulate and put down others so they will further their own interests or their own group/race interest?

This oppression needs to be confronted, and we have to constantly remind ourselves how insidious internalized racism is. We have to analyze our vision and our practices. Are they the same, or do we make it look good on paper, and practice the opposite? I feel women who truly want to work in the interest of women



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will have to constantly remind themselves why they are there and why women come to such groups.

For myself, I am more conscious of how I treat women. When I see a woman of colour, I see glimpses of myself and I see how we drain and use women's power. Women who take on the responsibility to form groups have to be responsible in the way they treat women. We should not take away from their cups, we should use the special gifts each one has to offer so as to fill all our cups. We need full cups to deal with the racism we are faced with in society everyday.

This article was very painful to do, and I did not add the really hurtful incidents which I have experienced. I feel this is a start for women of colour to confront the problem of racism, externally as well as internally. I would like to hear from women of colour about their experiences. Writing this article has also given me hope because it reminds me of the wonderful women who held my hands and were open about their experiences. They have filled my cup until it overflows.

Please write me:
Kay Nandlall
Box 74, Site 4
SS3
Fredericton, N.B.
E3B 5W9

Kay Nandlall is a mom, active feminist and student in New Brunswick. She is also a member of the Executive of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.



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WOMEN'S BOOKSTOP



The Sales Tax:

Why should women care?

by Jean Swanson

Do you think it would be fair for a woman on welfare to pay the same rate of tax as Conrad Black or the Bronfmans?

Most people don't. That's why, for years, we've had an income tax system where low income people paid a low rate of tax and wealthier people paid a higher rate.

But since the Tories have been in power, even the income tax system has changed so that the rich pay less and average working people pay more. According to the National Council of Welfare, the income tax burden for a working poor family will increase by 60 per cent between 1984 and 1991. A middle income couple's taxes will increase by 17 per cent and a well-off family's income tax will actually **decrease** by 6 per cent in the same period.

In addition, corporations have been paying less and less tax, even when they are profitable, and this burden has been shifting to individuals. For example, in 1986 there were 89,000 profitable corporations with \$22 billion in profits that paid no corporate tax at all.

The new federal sales tax that the Tories and big business want will shift even more taxes to low income and working Canadians and away from big business and the wealthy. Since women earn about 60 per cent of what men earn this affects us a lot.

What kind of sales tax do we have now?

Most provinces have provincial sales taxes. When you buy a blouse at the department store, the clerk rings up the price plus the provincial sales tax. In B.C., for example, it is 6 per cent.

In Canada we also have a manufacturer's sales tax which is more hidden. It is a tax of 12

per cent on most manufactured goods but varies to 18 per cent on cigarettes and alcohol and 8 per cent on construction materials. This tax is also levied on goods imported into Canada. This tax raises about \$17 billion a year for the government.

How are the Tories planning to change the sales tax?

By January 1, 1991, the Tories plan to implement a Goods and Services Tax (GST) of 9 per cent on all goods and services except basic groceries, prescription drugs, medical devices, residential rent, most health and dental services, day care, legal aid, most education, loans, mortgages, and life insurance. This is planned to raise about \$26 billion or about \$1,000 per year more from the average family.

Conrad Black, buying a diamond ring or a Ferrari, would pay this 9 per cent. So would a mother on welfare buying running shoes her daughter needed for gym. Provincial taxes would be added on to this for a total of 15 to 20 per cent. In other words, a mother buying a \$20 pair of running shoes would pay \$1.80 in federal tax as well as the provincial tax of \$1.20 (in B.C.)

Sales taxes are bad for women and low income people because they are regressive. That means that low income people pay a higher percentage of their income in tax than wealthy people. Since low income people spend all of their money, it will **all** be taxed (except for the exemptions). Rich people save money that is not taxed.

A recent report by the Social Planning and Research Council of B.C. estimates that a single woman needs a bare minimum of \$140.09 per month to meet expenses for non-food household items, clothes, personal care, and transportation. The new sales

tax would cost this woman an extra \$12.61 per month or \$151.30 per year. This excludes expenditures on many goods and services including recreation, movies, outings, etc.

But won't the sales tax credit protect low-income people?

The Tories admit that low-income people will be unfairly hit by the sales tax but claim that a new sales tax credit will compensate us for our daily loss of money. The sales tax credit that is now \$70 for each adult and \$30 for each child will be hiked to \$100/adult and \$70/child.

If the absolute bare minimum extra in taxes that a low-income person would spend on taxable items is over \$150 per year, you can see that the sales tax credit is more of a public relations maneuver by the Tories than a way of meeting the true cost of the new tax. There are other problems with the sales tax credit as a way of compensating low-income



income do not fill out the forms that are necessary to claim the tax credit because it is such a big hassle and there may be problems with literacy.

Don't we need a sales tax to fight the deficit?

There are many ways the government could reduce the deficit without hurting low-



income people. It could instruct the Bank of Canada to reduce interest rates. One per cent of interest increases the deficit by more than \$1 billion.

The government could create decent jobs for more people and increase the number of people who work and pay taxes.

The government could shift taxes to corporations and rich people who can afford to pay them. Canada has the lowest rate of wealth taxation of 24 industrialized countries. Corporations have deferred about \$30 billion in corporation income taxes. If these were paid, the entire deficit for one year would be wiped out. The government could increase the income tax rate for wealthy people back up to 34 per cent. (They reduced it to 29 per cent last year). It could tax capital gains (money made without working) at the same rate that wages are taxed. It could reduce military spending and close corporate tax loopholes. One researcher (Ternowetsky) shows that government tax loopholes for banks have been so useless in 1982, for example, that governments actually gave up \$670,000,000 to banks which **REDUCED** employment by over 3,000 people.

What should we have instead of a sales tax?

Taxes should be based on ability to pay. Here's what government could do:

- tax capital gains at the same rate as wage income (\$900 million);
- restore the 34 per cent federal tax rate for people earning over \$60,000 (\$600 million);
- have a serious corporate tax so that profitable corporations pay their share;
- have a wealth tax like European countries do.

How can I help fight for a fair tax system?

First, don't be afraid of discussions about taxes. Keep focussed on the basic issue: who is paying? who is getting?

Remember the basic principle of fair taxation: Taxes should be based on ability to pay.

Read an excellent book by Linda McQuaig, **Behind Closed Doors**. This explains the Canadian tax system, how we have been bamboozled by "experts," and it is actually funny!

Get groups or unions that you belong to to adopt policies on fair taxation. Explain the issue to your members. Write letters to your MP.

Join the Pro-Canada Network and its member groups and coalitions in fighting the first free trade budget and the corporate agenda that it represents. Contact the Pro-Canada Network at 904-251 Laurier West, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5J6 for the group nearest you. Get the one-page sheet on taxation produced by the PCN.

End Legislated Poverty is a coalition of 21 B.C. groups working to reduce and end poverty in B.C. For the last year, our major campaigns have been to get universal, government-funded food programs in low-income schools; to stop a \$50 cutback to primarily women on welfare in B.C.; and to fight the trade deal.

Solidarity with our sisters

in Canada and around the world!



The Canadian Union of Postal Workers

The UIC changes: what does it mean for the woman worker?

by Nancy Riche

Many Canadians are wondering what has happened in the last month. April is supposed to bring showers that lead to May flowers, but the government announcements from Ottawa seem more like a downpour which will wash away our caring, compassionate society.

The first storm came in the form of changes to the Unemployment Insurance Program. Employment Minister Barbara McDougall announced a plan that will drastically cut unemployment insurance benefits. This will be done by increasing the number of weeks a person must work to qualify for benefits, reducing the length of time that benefits can be collected and increasing penalties for people who voluntarily quit their jobs or are fired.

Currently, nearly 80 per cent of UI benefits are received by claimants with less than 50 weeks of work and a fifth is received by workers who cannot get more than 20 weeks of work. The combined effect of the higher eligibility requirements and the shortened duration of benefits is that seasonal workers and other workers with insecure employment are penalized. Women, immigrants and a

growing number of older workers fall into this category. Women and immigrants make up the majority of seasonal workers. Are the workers in the fishing and agricultural industries to blame because fruit and vegetables can only be grown and fish can only be caught in certain seasons?

Women change jobs more than men do because of family responsibilities, lack of opportunity for advancement, and harassment. Women are more frequently in poor paying jobs and many are working part-time because they cannot find full-time work. Should they be locked into poverty level wages forever? Should they be penalized for trying to find something better, to match their skills to the job?

The current penalty of 1 to 6 weeks for people who quit their jobs will be increased to between 7 and 12 weeks and their benefits will be reduced to 50 per cent of earnings rather than the normal 60 per cent. In making this change the government has recognized that harassment is a justifiable reason to quit a job and will not penalize women who quit for this reason. Proving harassment can often be easier said than done so many women will be faced with the

prospect of putting up with an intolerable situation longer before quitting to find a new job or they may quit and not be eligible for benefits.

What makes these changes to UI so bewildering is that they come at a time when unemployment is already



unacceptably high. At the beginning of 1989 only one province had an unemployment rate less than 5 per cent, and half the provinces had unemployment rates of more than 9 per cent. Looking at the proposed changes to UI one would almost think that the government is trying to create the impression that unemployment is voluntary and that people collecting benefits are somehow defrauding the

system they have contributed to. Over one million unemployed Canadians would probably find that funny if it weren't so sad.

The effect of the proposed changes on a worker living in Montreal or Vancouver where the unemployment rate is between 9 and 10 per cent is that they now need 16 instead of 15 weeks of work to qualify for 27 instead of 39 weeks of benefits. In Moncton or Saint John, New Brunswick, where the unemployment rate is between 11 and 12 per cent, workers will need 14 rather than 10 weeks work to qualify for 33 weeks of benefits -- 13 weeks less than under the current system.

As for fraud, out of the 3.2 million unemployment insurance claims each year, there are about 200 fraud cases. In giving such prominence to clamping down on abusers, the government is creating an illusion of widespread cheating to mask the real problem.

The second April deluge hit in the form of the Budget. There are so many things in the Budget that deserve unkind comment. But let's stick fairly closely to UI.

The Budget includes two things of relevance to UI. First, the Budget papers

The
1989
federal
budget



acknowledge that the government's deficit cutting and high interest rate policies will increase Canada's unemployment rate to 8.5 per cent in 1990. And second, the Budget announces that the government will no longer contribute to the UI program out of general government revenues; the entire program will be paid for out of UI premiums.

This is totally unacceptable. The government is creating unemployment, cutting UI benefits; and refusing to pay for the additional costs of the program that are attributable to high rates of unemployment.

The government has clearly decided to treat the victims of unemployment as villains. If this is how the government wants it, we will do everything we can to ensure that the "villains" rain on the Tories' UI cutting parade.

Nancy Riche is Executive Vice-President of the Canadian Labour Congress.

feminist perspectives

New Releases

No. 10, The Work of Child-rearing by Michelle Duval, explores this burden of mothers as the basis on which patriarchy's oppression of women has been built. The characteristics and institutionalization of «motherwork» and its effect on mothers is described, and a revolutionary strategy to transform it and ultimately society, is proposed.

No. 11, Getting Older and Better: Women and Gender Assumptions in Canada's Aging Society, by Susan McDaniel. In this article some assumptions about gender and gender differences which guide much thinking, including supposedly scientific thinking, are explored and questioned. Some of the challenges as well as opportunities for women in an aging Canada are highlighted.

No. 12, Smooth Sailing or Storm Warning? Canadian and Québec Women's Groups on the Meech Lake Accord, by Barbara Roberts. An attempt to clarify and heal some of the wounds suffered by the women's movement over the Accord, this article provides an overview and analysis of various groups' positions. Particular care is taken to explain the positions of women's groups in Québec to their sisters elsewhere in Canada. Includes a Constitutional chronology, text of the Accord and other background documents.

No. 13, Some Advice for Overcoming Barriers to Women's Achievement in Non-Traditional Occupations by Barbara Carroll and Frances Cherry. Provides women contemplating non-traditional careers with information about the types of barriers they may encounter and advice to overcome them. Based on interviews which tapped the experiences of women already involved in non-traditional careers.

Price: \$2.50 + 75c postage each.

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" First they attacked the pensioners, next it was the unemployed with cuts to their insurance, now this government hurts the poor and disadvantaged. This is the time to stand together. "



Shirley G.E. Carr
President
Canadian Labour Congress
Budget Day, April 27/89



Across Canada



Women in action



Wen-Do



The Wen-Do Women's Self-Defence Corporation is fighting a complaint of sex discrimination before the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Michael Celik, who has a black belt in judo, filed the complaint because he was not allowed to participate in a course on Wen-Do that his union was sponsoring. He is claiming sex discrimination against men. The group he is representing is the men's rights group In Search of Justice.

Wen-Do is a form of self-defence that was designed and has been taught to thousands of women. As Marilyn Walsh, the Director of Women's Self-Defence, points out, "Most rapes happen to women. Most spousal abuse happens to women. Yet, women in general don't participate in contact sports, don't learn to defend themselves." Further, men have dozens of other martial-arts courses to choose from.

The Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) has agreed to assist the Wen-Do Corporation in its response to this complaint. LEAF believes that Wen-Do's women-only policies are specifically designed to promote women's equality and therefore do not violate human rights legislation. But why is this man claiming discrimination and what is this group, In Search of Justice, that he represents?

The head of In Search of Justice, Ross Virgin, was quoted in the *Globe and Mail* as saying: "Women's groups say rape is rape. Rape is not rape. We know the difference between a 90-year-old Sunday school teacher and the woman who's screwed every guy in

Toronto."

In Search of Justice views men as an oppressed group and questions the credibility of government agencies, women's organizations and any women who accept that women's words are true. They simply don't believe women.

On wife assault: the group says that the Canadian Advisory Council's claim that one million Canadian men beat



Graphic by Gail Bessie

their wives is a lie created by anti-male researchers. In fact, says In Search of Justice, the actual number is around 2,000.

On men's sexuality: Ross Virgin's belief is that unsatisfied male lust constitutes a "medical problem" and warrants free, government-run prostitution. Until that is instituted, what does he propose men do to satisfy those uncontrollable urges.

They perceive women living their own lives, pursuing their own ambitions, raising their own children and demanding their fair share as being anti-male.

So is this a case of discrimination? As LEAF Executive Director Christie Jefferson points out, "Excluding Celik from participating in Wen-Do on the basis of his sex creates no inherent disadvantage for him.

He has unlimited access to a number of gender-neutral self-defence programs (and has advanced skills in judo) and has no need for training which is specifically geared to women's needs."

It seems that the courts may be on the side of LEAF as was evidenced in a similar case that went to the Supreme Court of Canada. In the Andrews decision, the court recognized that the equality guarantees in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, designed to alleviate disadvantage, may require different treatment of protected groups like women. LEAF will argue, on behalf of Wen-Do, that accordingly Wen-Do's women-only program addresses the disadvantage experienced by women as targets of violence. Therefore, the program is protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

If the Wen-Do Women's Self-Defence Corporation loses, then women risk losing many services, such as transition houses and rape crisis centres, that have been created to directly respond to the specific needs of women who are still facing the denial of their basic equal rights as citizens of this country.

You can help by writing a letter of support to Wen-Do, 2 Carlton Street, Suite 817, Toronto, Ontario M5B 1J3. You may wish to include in your letter a brief description of your own experience(s) of violence, and your feelings on how self-defence helped, or could have helped.

Please indicate on your letter whether your name and address can be used as evidence in this case. You should know that if it is used, it becomes public and therefore available to the men's group.

Manitoba

Judge suggests slapping women. Judge Ken Peters who suggested that women sometime need to be slapped is now facing a review by the Manitoba Judicial Council.

In the transcript of the case where a man was fined \$300 for hitting his wife, Judge Ken Peters commented:

"How does a person admonish his wife if she goes out on the town with other people, with guys, drinking, and comes home late when she should have been home looking after the children or cooking, or whatever else she is expected to do?"

"Sometimes a slap in the face is all that she needs and might not be unreasonable force after all; but here, there was at least a slap in the face to which he has pleaded guilty and is prepared to suffer the consequences."

Ontario

A new way to look at pay equity. Karen Lieberman, when asked on Canada A.M. about the discrepancy between what men and women are paid commented, "It has been suggested the male appendage is worth about \$10,000 in the compensation of any job."

She wasn't far off - the Public Service Commission of Canada that same week announced that the difference between men and women's pay was \$9,700.

She commented later, "There isn't any other difference between their work. I just gave a dollar figure to what the employers are paying extra for."

Karen owns the firm Families that Work, which does consulting work on family issues for corporations.



The Women's Action Coalition of Ontario is forming. A number of women representing provincial and national organizations working on women's issues have been meeting since December to shape a provincial women's action group. Such an organization would provide research resources, could respond to provincial government initiatives and issues that affect women. It could facilitate communication and common action campaigns among women's groups in Ontario.

Membership is recruited from provincial organizations, with provisions for individual membership, for women or organizations who agree to the following specific principles: equality; choice; human rights.

For further information please contact Janet Maher, 504-105 Raglan Ave. Toronto, M6C 2K7.

Québec

The Quebec government has legalized the practice of midwifery in Quebec.

In important ways, midwives provide better care than doctors. They spend more time with pregnant women and their families; because they specialize, they tend to be better informed than many family physicians when it comes to deliveries; and they are inclined to use less interventionist and less costly medical procedures.

The Midwifery Association is unsure about what the legalization actually means. They are positive it doesn't mean that they can just walk into the hospitals and be treated with the recognition and respect they deserve.

Punishing the woman for the father's sins. A mother from West Québec has been sentenced to nine months in jail because she did not protect her daughter from her husband's sexual assaults. Quebec Court Judge Gerard Charron said the woman played a passive role in her husband's sexual assaults on their daughter and "she did not protect her daughter the way she should have." The 38-year-old husband has been sentenced to three years in prison.



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HUMAN RIGHTS SUMMER COLLEGE AUGUST 13-25, 1989 UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

The fifth annual Human Rights Summer College will bring together community workers, teachers, trade unionists and human rights educators for two weeks of intensive training and collective exchange of strategies and information. The college is designed to provide activists with a chance to expand their knowledge of basic human rights concepts; to critically reflect on their social change activities; to obtain current information about issues, legal and community-based strategies for change.

Topics will include:

• Employment Equity • Anti-racism strategies • Rights as values in conflict • Collective rights • Charter of Rights and Freedoms and current charter issues • Practical skills development: lobbying, funding, using the media, teaching human rights skills • Organizing your community

For further information please write: Human Rights Research and Education Centre, 57 Louis Pasteur, University of Ottawa, K1N 6N5 or call (613) 564-3492.

Margaret Leahey, chairperson of the Alberta Advisory Council on Women's Issues, recently resigned from her position accusing the government of political interference and lack of commitment to her group.

There has been a growing dispute between the government and Leahey on whether the Council will continue to exist due to lack of money and lack of government interest. When she left she said "I don't think they (government) can continue to treat the council the way they have."

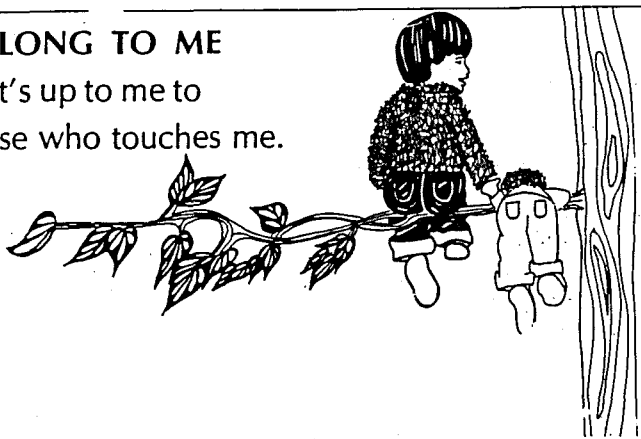
One example of government neglect was that Premier Don Getty refused to meet with her for a year after telling her to discuss problems with him any time.

The council has had a rocky time. After much organizing, Alberta women managed to convince the government that a Council was necessary.

They imagined a council that would identify concerns and issues related to women, monitor the effect of government policies and programs and make recommendations to the minister. The problem is that the minister has done nothing.

Alberta

I BELONG TO ME
and it's up to me to
choose who touches me.



Incestuous Father Sentenced - A father who forced his two young daughter to have sexual relations with him regularly for more than a decade has been given the maximum sentence possible, 14 years in jail. It is believed to be the first time in Canada that an incest case has drawn the maximum penalty.

In sentencing 64-year-old Alf Ivar Siverson, Mr. Justice Allen Sulatycky of Court of Queen's Bench said he was

overwhelmed with a feeling of disgust and sense of revolt, and noted that both daughters were forced to meet their father's sexual demands from the age of 10 onward. One was twice impregnated by Mr. Siverson, while the other suffered the first of two nervous breakdowns at the age of 11. The daughters, who have since married and changed their names, said they feel justice was done but are still upset.

Across Canada



Women in action



Newfoundland

In loving memory: Diane Duggan, a long-time feminist died suddenly in late April. Diane was an original member of the Working Group on Child Sexual Abuse and also served as Atlantic regional representative with the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres.

She was also active with Planned Parenthood and the St. John's Women's Centre.

Diane gave much of herself to her work and to women. She was honoured with a candlelight event, organized by the St. John's Women's Centre.

A friend noted, "She told us we got our strength from inside ourselves. Diane is the one who found that strength in all of us....She passed on so much to others. Our job is to keep passing that on."

Mothers, Daughters and Sisters of Invention

By E. J. Auerbach

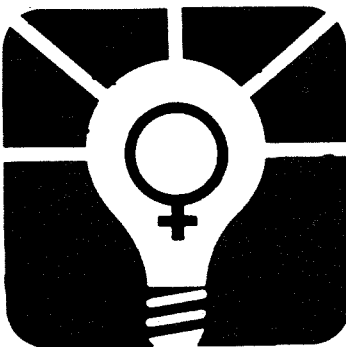
Do these names mean anything to you -- Bette Nesmith Graham, Frances Gabe, Patsy Sherman? You may not recognize them, but they're inventors. Bette Nesmith Graham created Liquid Paper,® Frances Gabe designed the self-cleaning house, and Patsy Sherman invented Scotchguard.®

You may be one of those women who thinks she can build a better mousetrap. In case you don't already know, you're not alone, and it's time to come out of the garage or the basement or wherever you go when the urge to invent comes upon you, and meet your sister inventors.

When Shelly Beauchamp and Lisa Avedon, the coordinators of the Women Inventors Project (WIP), held the first Women Inventors Workshop at the University of Waterloo in March, 1987, they were overwhelmed by the response they received. More than 25 women from five provinces attended, a considerable number when normally only ten Canadian women apply for patents in one year's time. Educating women on what procedures they need to follow in order to turn an idea into reality, WIP has started a network of more than 1000 members from all across Canada.

Women are always inventing, whether it be in utilizing their creativity to stretch a household budget suitable for three to cover five, or developing products that are useful to society at large. But as Shelly Beauchamp discovered while working as a technology consultant with the Canadian Industrial Innovation Centre (the Centre's role is to evaluate ideas brought forward by inventors) 95% of the

clients she saw were men. Because technological invention had been established as a male domain (patents are considered property and women in the past were excluded by law from owning property) women seemed reluctant to come forward with their ideas. Beauchamp pooled her technical and business expertise with Lisa Avedon, a specialist in adult education, and with funding from the Innovations Program of Employment and Immigration Canada, they began the Women Inventors Project.



Out of a small fifth-floor office in Waterloo, Ontario, and with the aid of many business and educational sources, WIP has produced a regular newsletter, two videos, a manual on inventing, and a workshop manual for teenagers. All are excellent teaching and learning tools. The videos are enhanced by interviews with actual women inventors who serve as role models in an area where women have been relegated to the sidelines. The manual on inventing entitled **The Book for Women Who Invent or Want To** is a needs-based outline on everything a prospective inventor should know about the inventing process. **Daughters**

of Invention is a guide for facilitators (teachers, community group leaders) with ideas about planning an in-house or in-school workshop for teenage girls. Complete with cartoons and bibliography the manual is a good starting point for those who want to promote non-traditional careers for young women.

A greater part of WIP'S energy has been spent in an advisory capacity. With the aid of the materials they have developed from workshops with women inventors, they have given support to inventor groups in several parts of the country. WINGS (Women Inventors Network Group Society) in Calgary has literally taken off, while other cities such as Vancouver, Montreal, Hamilton, and Toronto are in the process of forming their own regional groups. Some of the benefits gained from the network initiated by WIP are meeting women who are engaged in inventing, in sharing ideas and information, and asking questions. "How do I go about doing market research to see if my idea is original? When and how can I apply for a patent? Will I need a lot of money to proceed with my idea?" With an additional grant from Science and Culture Canada lasting until September 1990 and a grant from the Ontario Women's Directorate, WIP will continue to sponsor workshops and provide links to the expanding network of women inventors' groups. In addition, they will develop training kits to be used by government and business.

As part of their drive to educate more women about opportunities in technology and invention, WIP has put together a Travelling Exhibit called "Inventing Women." The

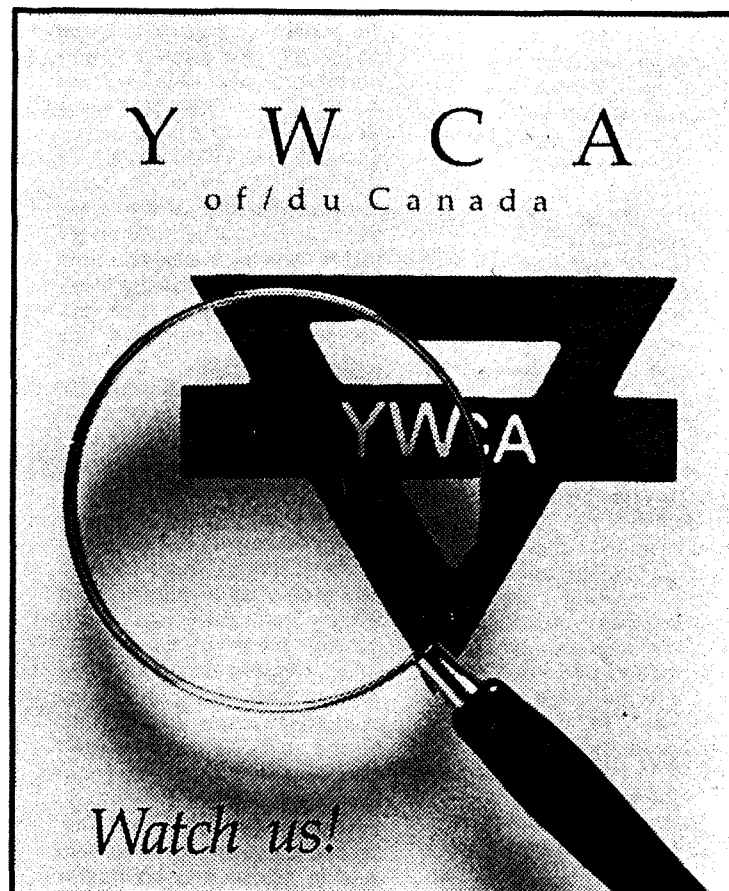
exhibit will be on display April 21 to May 31 at the North York Public Library. The inventions in the exhibit will range from computer technology to consumer products.

Among Canadian inventions will be the Jolly Jumper®, the famous tot bouncer, created by Olivia Poole of British Columbia, the Eyemaker Mirror®, a three-angled make-up and contact lens mirror, patented by the former flamenco dancer Chips Klien, and PC AID, a computer aid for disabled adults, developed by Leslie Dolman.

Inventions by Americans such as Stephanie Kwolek,

who developed the fibre known as Kevlar, and Nobel Prize Winner Rosalyn Yalo, who designed the radioimmunoassay, will also be on view, along with inventions by European women.

Contingent upon funding, the exhibit is expected to travel to Calgary, Saskatoon, and Montreal. Any organization or community that would like to book the exhibit or obtain more information about WIP and their work can write or call: The Women Inventors Project, Suite 500, 200 King Street South, Waterloo, Ontario, N2J 1N8 (519) 746-3443.



Across Canada



Women in action



Yukon Women's Conference - One Culture in Control



by Jan Langford

Whitehorse, Yukon -- Reproductive technology and traditional Indian healing are about as far away from each other as the village of Old Crow is from Ottawa. Yet those two diverse topics of discussion highlighted the 10th Annual Yukon Women's Conference. Over the three-day conference, other issues emerged, reminding us that cultural differences are important.

Creating a conference where women from all cultures can come together, feel comfortable and get something out of it is a challenge. In the Yukon, the Annual Women's Conference has been a focal point for trying to bring native and non-native women together.

This year's conference, called "Who Is In Control?: Sex, Reproduction and Intimacy in the 1990's" drew more Indian women than in previous years. About 30 of the 140 participants were native. However, while the conference can generally claim to be a great success, there is still much work to do if we truly want a cross-cultural experience.

The Women's Conference is organized by non-native women's groups. In the past, the Yukon Indian Women's

Association has been asked to participate. However, because of the dominance of white women in the planning, native women's participation has been peripheral at best. Although the racism has generally been unspoken, white feminists have made some ugly racist comments to Indian women.

Developing trust has been a slow process. Yearly turnover among the women organizing the conference has meant that mistakes have been repeated over and over again.

This year, the Indian Women's Association was asked if they would like to participate in the planning of the conference. They chose to offer suggestions for workshops that might address Indian women's health concerns. A small working group of conference organizers and Indian women activists met regularly throughout the planning. This process seemed to eliminate some of the communication problems and blatant racism that had hindered the participation of Indian women in previous years.

With the direction given by the Indian Women's Association, the conference theme grew to reflect both Indian and non-native women's

concerns. It started out being about the complex issues surrounding reproductive technology. Suggestions were gathered from many women's organizations. In the end, there were workshops on Indian family traditions, lesbian intimacy and homophobia, AIDS, infertility, traditional Indian medicines, reproductive technology, the healing circle, equality in the bedroom, birthing options, and more.

The key-note speakers also reflected the input from native and non-native women. Connie Clement, from Toronto Island, presented information on reproductive technologies that opened our eyes. And Edna Manitowabi, from the Sudbury area, touched our spirits when she spoke of Indian traditions and the process of healing. At the banquet, both speakers talked about our common experiences as women and the benefits of working together.

Having workshops and speakers of interest to both

Indian and non-native women made a difference. The workshops on Indian traditions were very popular among native and non-native women alike. Still, the conference can not be called a cross-cultural experience.

The content and structure of the conference is still controlled by white feminists. Indian women have no control of the planning process and thus no ownership of the event.

During the conference weekend, organizers became aware of other cultural issues that have never been addressed. For example, the food we serve, smoking policies and the availability of alcohol are all cultural issues.

One woman commented that at white functions there is lots of booze and no smoking while at Indian meetings there's plenty of smoking and no drinking. And while most women at the banquet thought the range of fresh salads and chicken casserole was

delicious, some Indian women stated that for \$15 a plate they would have liked some meat.

Food, smoking and alcohol are only three of the cultural differences that need to be recognized. Some non-native feminists are just beginning to see the cultural issues. We are just beginning to examine our own culture and the way it dominates our thinking and our way of doing things.

Dealing with racism in our own behaviour is not easy. But it is necessary. The non-native feminist community has a lot of work to do internally. And we have to decide if the Annual Women's Conference will become a forum for expression of two cultures or if it will remain solidly in the hands of white feminists.

Jan Langford was involved in the planning for this year's Women's Conference and is a member of the OptiMSt women's newspaper collective. She has lived in Whitehorse for the past five years and drives a jeep.

Women with disabilities are parents, too

by Pat Danforth

D.A.W.N. -- Disabled Women's Network, Canada is a national organization of and for women with disabilities. Our history as an organization is short, only since 1985 when 17 courageous women got together and said "yes" there needs to be an organization that addresses the issues of being female and disabled.

Women's organizations could not and cannot answer our unique needs. Disabled consumer organizations did not, and at times, do not see women with disabilities as having concerns outside generic disabled issues. DAWN's solution was to work with both groups. We believed and continue to believe that our own organization can act as a bridge uniting women's organizations and disabled consumer organizations. We also realized and continue to have affirmed the need to reach out to women with disabilities who are often isolated in institutions, homes and in themselves.

Outreach to women with disabilities includes mothers with disabilities. On March 25 to 27, 1989, DAWN Canada brought together women with

disabilities who are parents so we could discuss our common concerns, experiences and problems, and develop an action plan to address those issues. We came from across Canada, from St. John's to Victoria. Some of us were married, some separated, some never married. What we had in common was kids -- from babes in arms to young adults -- and a desire to use our collective experience to strengthen DAWN.

I was representing DAWN Saskatchewan as a mother of a 14-year-old boy/man. I had a lot of stories I wanted to share. Stories like asking my doctor about getting pregnant and him saying he saw no reason why I couldn't, even though I was a paraplegic and reliant on a wheelchair. He was right, getting pregnant was easy. And I figured this man knew what he was talking about. He hospitalized me one month before my due date. Thank goodness Carl decided to come two weeks early! The reason for me being hospitalized? Doc figured I wouldn't know when I was in labour and no matter what I said to him he didn't believe me until I was in labour.



Or about my struggle to get homemaking services and being told my husband should do more -- and finally getting homemaking only to lose it when hubby walked out and I could no longer afford it! I also wanted and needed other women's stories. I knew I could learn so much from others who have gone through similar experiences.

Our workshop on parenting was ably chaired by Linda Ervin, a United Church minister from Vancouver. She took a group of women, many of us strangers, to each other; and by the end of two days we were

a cohesive group primed to change our corner of the world. Why? Because for us it was the first time we had a chance to come together and find out that we had valid issues and concerns that needed action.

We defined eight priorities:

- * research funding;
- * sharing our stories;
- * creating a mother's support group to increase community support;
- * developing a network of information sharing;
- * coordinating with national groups on child care and parenting issues;
- * lobbying for funds to

cover actual costs for care workers, and standardizing funding programs for disabled people across Canada;

*working towards accessible day care;

* recognizing older parents and the need to develop adequate support systems for them.

To carry out our priorities we recommended to DAWN Canada's board of directors (and they agreed) that a caucus of women with disabilities who are mothers be formed. The caucus will develop specific proposals on our eight priorities, plus act as a liaison with other national organizations on concerns of mothers with disabilities. An ambitious plan for the women present but as one participant said "Of course we can do it, we're mothers, we always manage to get it done -- somehow."

Pat Danforth is a single parent of a 14-year-old. She works full-time and is involved in a number of organizations, including DAWN Sask., of which she is Chairperson. She lives in Regina with her son, two cats and a dog.

Cleaning up after the oil spill

by Valerie Langer

Forty people, with wheelbarrows, buckets, garbage pails, and shovels, their rubber gloves on, scooping thick tarry oil. Filling up any container available. Chopping up the kelp stuck in the oil so it would fit in the buckets. Trying desperately to shovel blobs the size of automobiles off the beach before the tide came in. Picking out barely recognizable dead birds stuck in the blobs. Rain turning to hail as night fell; and, finally, the tide pushing us off the beach.

We cried as we stooped over the tub at home, scrubbing the oil off our arms, hands and faces. Tried not to cover our house in oil as we took off our ruined raingear. Ate supper while listening to the ocean, picturing the huge patches of oil we couldn't even begin to clean up. We were fearing for the whales, the birds, the otters.

It was the first day of a clean-up which we would repeat for the next month.

The first we heard about the oil spill was on the news, December 23, 1988. The Sausse Bros. barge, *The Nestucca*, spilled 875,000 litres of bunker C oil into the ocean off the Washington coast. We were assured by the Coast Guard it wouldn't reach our coast.

January 3, 1989, sitting at the Common Loaf Bake Shop in Tofino, on the west coast of Vancouver Island, we get a phone call from Pacific Rim National Park staff. "We've got oil and dead birds on our beaches. Has anybody found anything on Chesterman's Beach?"

Shelley Milne went home, got some plastic bags and gloves, and went looking for oil on the beach. By Frank Island spit, she started running into small blobs, then huge blobs. She flagged down a friend jogging by, who ran to get more friends; and there we were - forty townspeople cleaning up the oil.

The next morning we got up and started again, except this time the waves had broken the oil up into smaller, pancake size blobs. As the days and weeks went by the wave action broke the oil up into quarter size pieces that lined entire

beaches. Instead of shovels, we had to rake the oil or get on our hands and knees by the logs and scoop it up by hand.

Dead birds were kept separate and were being heaped by the park headquarters; oil was being dumped at the Tofino airport until we knew what to do with it. Live birds were sent to the Friends of Clayoquot Sound office where a bird hospital was set up.

The Friends of Clayoquot Sound, the Nuu-Chah-Nulth people (aboriginal people whose land is in the area) and the townspeople were working madly. There was no way a community as small as Tofino and the native communities could possibly tackle the job of



LOVE YOUR MOTHER

cleaning the 60 km of wilderness coastline and islands that comprise the area of Clayoquot Sound.

Volunteers were starting to pour into town but because of rough seas we couldn't risk taking them in our boats to Vargas or Blunden Islands.

We called for the army to come in. We needed 1,000 self-sufficient, strong workers to clean up the isolated areas. We could handle volunteers for local beaches. We were refused the help of the army.

Our attempts to deal with the oil spill were frustrated at almost every turn by our government and our national Coast Guard.

When we needed helicopters to pick up bags of oil and to reach isolated areas, we found our politicians were using them to fly over us. When we needed more people to help, the Coast Guard was trying to play down the spill by putting out false news that the

spill was under control and the beaches were clean.

The company hired to do clean-up was sticking mainly to highly visible park beaches. The Provincial Emergency Program came two weeks into the spill to set up a volunteer office, even though the Friends of Clayoquot Sound had had a volunteer working well from day one.

We had to do a drastic action of oiling the BC legislative buildings in order to get money to feed the 2,000 volunteers that came through our town of 900.

And now? Two thousand dead birds were found (so about 20,000 died), only about 4% of the oil was ever recovered, fishermen who lost money while their fishery was closed haven't seen a cent of

compensation. Although the ocean has scoured the beaches back to their previous beauty, there is still a lot of oil somewhere on the ocean bottom.

We still need a coastal protection act, and we need to stop shipping oil up and down our wilderness coastline. The *Exxon Valdez* spill in Alaska was an inevitable punctuation to our "small spill".

The ocean is alive and we are compromising it by our demands for more fuel and petroleum products. Ultimately we are responsible for the oil spill and the death of the wildlife. Only enormous changes in our lifestyles and pressure on our government will save the absolutely beautiful coastal wilderness of Vancouver Island.

Across Canada



Women in action



Valerie Langer lives and works in Tofino, BC, one of the most beautiful places in the world as far as she's concerned. She wrote this article while in jail with five other Tofino women, for blockading a logging road near Tofino. She is one of 33 people who were arrested, all of whom were later formally honoured for their oil spill work!

Saskatoon International Women's Day committee - fighting a legal battle

by Theresa Healy and Sally Glendenning

Four days prior to Saskatoon's International Women's Day weekend of events, we were informed that Bernadette Mysko, a prominent member of a local anti-choice organization, had persuaded the secretary of St. Joseph's Parish church to break our contract, and refuse us the rental of the hall for the International Women's Day celebration dance. The stated grounds for the cancellation were that the church's board of directors had a policy against "all-women events". Later accusations that the IWD coalition was pro-choice and the IWD dance "known to be for lesbians" were raised as justifications for the cancellation.

clinic (when its lounge space was rented for a celebration of the first anniversary of the striking down of the abortion law) and the Community Health Unit (for their birth control clinic for teenagers, which provides confidential information and services to teens). Other members felt it was due to the lesbian workshop included in the events for the day.

Regardless of the reasoning behind the cancellation, we were forced to scramble to re-arrange a location for the dance. In the end, we lost money because of the costs involved in this change.

We were impressed to see that most of the coverage given by the local media was

It is to our credit that we had worked together extremely well over the previous months and had developed a level of trust and respect which allowed us to identify with each other, regardless of sexual orientation. We carried this sense of co-operation over into the post-event organizing.

A feminist lawyer has offered her services, and with her help and advice we are investigating a range of options.

One option is to lodge a formal complaint with the Human Rights Commission, because of the denial of rental on the basis of gender. There is also the possibility of filing a claim in the small claims court to recoup the losses we incurred. We could also file a civil suit for libel and slander against the individual women.

Our options also include non-legal remedies, and we are examining such things as an approach to local community groups, asking them to support a boycott of the hall. We would also like to meet with the parish council to educate them on the meaning and principles of IWD, and the human rights of women, of lesbians, and pro-choicers.

Our objectives are a public apology for the cancellation, compensation for our losses, a guarantee that a similar situation will not arise again, and a statement of support for IWD.

Out of all this has come a strong commitment to turn the ad-hoc committee into a year-round organization, and to see that the struggles of women receive support, education and celebration daily, not just one day a year. Any right wing aims of creating disunity and chaos with harassment and intimidation in the women's movement in Saskatoon have sadly backfired.

Theresa Healy and Sally Glendenning are members of the Saskatoon IWD Committee.



The church spokesperson told the local media the reason they cancelled was due to "misrepresentation". One of the co-sponsoring groups had booked the hall for the dance because the ad-hoc committee, as it is not a legal body of any kind, cannot enter into contracts. Apparently, you need two legal bodies in any contract so you can sue each other afterwards!

In actual fact, it has never been clear what the real reason was for the cancellation: Lesbianism? Pro-choice? Gender?

Some members feel that the cancellation of the hall was only another step in the anti-choice terrorism which has plagued the city in recent months. Examples of this over the past few months have included pickets of individual pro-choice doctors' homes, pickets at the local community

sympathetic and supportive. For example, an editorial in the local paper condemned the bigotry and intolerance which led to the cancellation, and correctly identified the need for sexual orientation to be included as a protected group in the Human Rights Code.

The support from the larger community was tremendous. The outrage expressed towards the actions of the individual woman and the church validated our experiences and feelings.

As a group, we found ourselves facing the external pressures with unity and dignity. There was no division, as might have been expected, along lines of sexual orientation. Differences which did emerge, after the events were over, were more ideological. They appeared as debates over questions of strategy: how to respond and deal with the aftermath.

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Across Canada



Women in action



"Housing is the visible tip of the iceberg of poverty," was the fitting opening comment of the Report of the New Brunswick Task Force on Housing. After a much-publicized tour of the province to view "Third World" housing conditions, the Task Force recommended a wide range of actions to address the immediate need for housing and remedying long-term poverty in the province. The Report was comprehensive in its case and would have been well received by everyone, if the Task Force could have brought itself to mention women.



Jeanne d'Arc Gaudet, Chairperson of the NB Advisory Council on the Status of Women said, "We are struck by the fact that although women, especially single-parent women, are the largest clientele of public housing, the Task Force Report hardly mentions them."

"We do not understand their reluctance to recognize that the problems of poverty and of housing affect one sex more than the other and that the needs of the female clientele could be different. The Report's recommendations could go a long way to addressing housing needs, but only if, in their implementation government takes into account the fact that women comprise most of its clientele and that women have needs particular to their group.

"To solve a problem, we must first identify it correctly. The Task Force report does not take note of two critically important facts: Poverty today has been feminized and the make-up of the Canadian family has changed significantly."

Although target groups such as seniors and low-income families and unserved populations such as youth, "victims of family violence" and deinstitutionalized persons were identified in the report, the sex variable was ignored.

However, the Task Force served to awaken the national public to the housing issues of adequacy and affordability. The Task Force members said they were appalled by what they saw and heard on their tour: "We saw living conditions... which many Third World countries with a fraction of this province's resources would be ashamed of."

About 40,000 NB households, or 17%, are in "core housing need" as defined by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, i.e. in which more than 30% of income is spent on shelter.

"The Housing Task Force has seen people cry; people without basic needs such as water, sewage, heat."

Most of the briefs submitted by the public had some strong comments about the housing situation in New Brunswick. One of the primary concerns was recognizing and supplying programs appropriate to rural and urban populations.

"The majority of New Brunswickers live in small communities or rural areas, which are growing faster than the urban sector (StatsCan). They lack access to many programs (no structure to deliver them); incomes are lower; housing stock is smaller and poorer; the 'housing market' is limited; qualified builders/developers are scarce; rental is almost non-existent; and building regulations are frequently impractical and unreasonable." (Provincial Steering Committee of Housing Coalitions)

It was found that low-income families in rural areas often live in deplorable conditions. They don't want to

go into debt, so they do without, often to the detriment of their own health and safety.

"In reality, people must choose between eating and heating."

In the cities, one of the major concerns was the lack of any minimum standards on rooming houses, where seniors and deinstitutionalized persons often end up.

"People living in a rooming house pay \$200/month for a room, no fridge, small stove (that doesn't work), bathroom shared with 10-15 other people, the entire accommodations were disgustingly filthy... the rooms were partitioned with sheets of wall panel that didn't even extend to the ceiling... and this was the best room in the entire house. Total income was \$405/month. There were no working appliances so the person had to find other ways of eating and since the bathroom was not usable for any human being, other resources had to be obtained for cleaning... Living in this kind of environment only breeds anger, hostility and contempt which can defeat you before you even start."

"From the standpoint of social progress, the right of every Canadian to decent housing is lagging about a century behind the right to primary education and some two decades behind universal health care."

The worst housing was most often found in rental accommodations. And who rents? - the poor (mostly women) and our youth.

"We visited one house for rent. The advertisement in the newspaper indicated that it was 'a small old house for rent, \$150 per month'. You cannot imagine the condition of this 'house' without seeing it. Even the rundown state of the exterior did not prepare us for the interior. The floor was so warped that walking on it gave the impression of being on a badly listing ship. Mismatched lengths of ancient cushion flooring affixed with carpet tacks tried their best to hold the rotting boards together. The stairway leading to the tiny bedrooms upstairs was narrow, crooked, and generally unsafe. The kitchen had no cupboards

by Rosella Melanson

and the bathroom had no washbasin... a foul smell emanated from the toilet. The walls and ceiling were in deplorable condition. Cracked windows tried unsuccessfully to keep the outside air at bay. Alarming, most of the electrical wiring was hanging on the outside of the interior walls ... The landlord informed us that he had only bought the house for the land it occupied,



and that he did not intend to put any repairs on it since he planned to tear it down in a year or two."

Probably the most surprising outcome of the Task Force was the consistent echoing of the same theme from almost everyone, from businesses to individuals that "the poverty of the poor is not a call to generous relief action, but a demand that we go and build a different social order."

As the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce stated in their presentation, "It has recently been published that in excess of 100,000 New Brunswickers live below the poverty line, and that one in six NB children live in poverty ... The business community views this as a tremendous waste of a great natural resource. People are resources and assets, and it is not good business to waste these resources and assets ... [In Sweden, every young person is guaranteed a job or training because of society's attitude] ... When there is not full employment, the attitude is clear - it must be the economic system, its policies and programs, and not the citizens, which has failed."

In an absurd incident related to the release of the Report, the Toronto Star carried articles concerning the Report and housing conditions, which prompted some concerned Torontonians to send money through the Star's Maritime office. As one Task Force member said, "My God, look in your own backyard." Maritimers know that more of them are poor, but they also know that the depth of their poverty is not unique in Canada and at least is not worsened by skyrocketing housing costs found in "Uppity Canada".

Rosella Melanson works for the NB Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

The Voices of Our "Third World Poor" in New Brunswick

Women Alone

"I never have money to do anything ... Sometimes I just sit around and cry because I am always alone. I don't even have money to go home to visit my dad and gram ... I had considered trying co-op housing which has subsidy (but) due to electric heat my income would not be adequate..." (Saint John Anti-Poverty Association)

"Many women of middle age are single due to abuse and/or alcoholism of a spouse, desertion or premature widowhood. With the advent of state supported single, unmarried mothers, many more women will be reaching middle age in the future, with the same housing problems. The majority of these women have little or no marketable job skills. They are considered too old to be employable, even if skilled..." (Wiser Women, Moncton)

"Over 70% of the elderly poor are women. Most of the elderly poor are unattached - living alone or with non-relatives - and 82% of these unattached elderly poor are women." (NB Advisory Council on the Status of Women)

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Racism in Women's Studies

(Excerpts from a talk presented at York University on racism in Women's Studies.)

Let me first ask, what entails women's studies courses? Are we non-white women a part of it? If yes, then why are our experiences left out, or made marginal content in the new herstory books.

Women's studies came about when women realized that their own historical perspective and experience had been left out of their education. Women's studies was to be the arena where the neglect and misrepresentation of women were to be counteracted. This was to be the course where women could come together and share collectively their herstory.

Black women have been among their white sisters, marching and negotiating for equality for women in the women's movement, yet they are still not recognized as equal in women's studies courses. Is this racist?

Racism is an ideology that propagates white supremacy, whose function is to justify inferior treatment for racially distinct groups. Is the women's studies curriculum contributing to this ideology? Is there a dominant group who have the power to oppress? You bet. Furthermore, non-white women have fewer resources to resist the oppression. One resource we do have and are using constantly is anger. Black women have been complaining for years about racism in their education. Although some people have been listening, little, if anything constructive has been done to alleviate the problem. This is why we show our anger. It is our only power and if we fail to use it positively we have no hope of achieving equality.

Black women crave knowledge, we want to read and learn about the lives, struggle and achievement of other black women. That is why we venture into women's studies courses, hoping that our thirst will be quenched. It is yet to happen. I speak from personal experience in a women's study course.

As a past Women's Studies student, I can honestly say that at times, I felt marginal and neglected by the Feminist Movement. Although I shared the classroom with my white sisters, we did not share the same experiences and realities. Hence, I was forced to be only an observer during their realm of reasoning.

I merely existed with my sisters and continued to learn "herstory" which was not much different from "history".

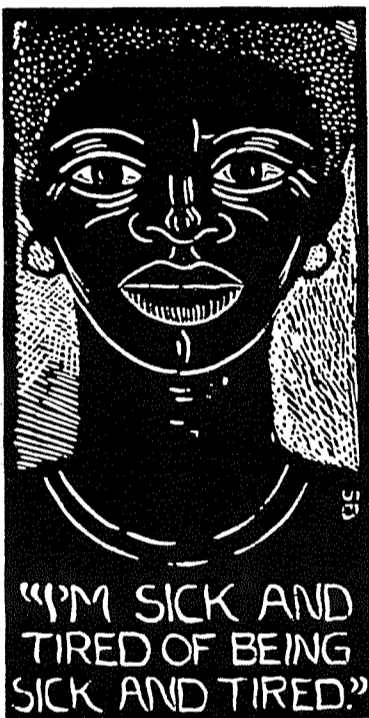
I felt enraged and saddened that you had bypassed my whole story and made it only a footnote in your texts.

When you did give me a small skit to play in the curriculum -- you paid close attention to me and observed me under your microscope along with all the other non-white sisters.

I was only called upon to clarify and answer ignorant questions that you could not find answers to in your text books. Only then was I allowed to speak about my plight as a non-white woman.

As racism slowly began to emerge in our conversation, it was quickly compared to gender and class oppression and again, the arena in which sexual liberation is addressed.

Do you know, that my oppression is not one or two-fold. My reality is subjugated not only by gender and class, but by race. When I am seen, I



am seen as a Black woman. Note: Black comes first!

I was the only Black woman in this course and the term paper was to find a woman's group that Betty Friedan's book *The Feminine Mystique* didn't address. I thought that Friedan's concept was not addressing the plight of the domestic workers who had to leave their country to work in Canada under sometimes harsh conditions.

My views and arguments were very strong on this subject, so I did very thorough research, taking my holidays and sick days off to write this paper. When I got my marks, I was very thrilled. I had done previous papers for this professor and my marks ranged from B to C+. But this time I got an A. Wow! I was asked to see the professor. I expected praise in front of this class of 35 people. However, my excitement was short-lived. Within minutes, the professor accused me of plagiarism!

She told me I was not capable of writing this paper and must have paid someone to do it. I was furious! Instead of going on to work from my class that night I went home and I complained to everyone who would listen. Then I started crying. For days I couldn't stop.

I complained to the Dean of the department and was told that as long as I wasn't

by Carmen Henry

charged with plagiarism he couldn't do anything. Since then, March of 1988, I have had a problem writing.

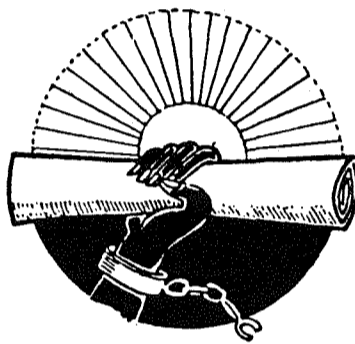
It wasn't until I was asked to speak at the "Forum: Equity and Access for Black, Asian and Native Women at York", in January, 1989 that I regained some confidence in my writing skill.

I suffered emotional stress because of this allegation, although I am healing now. Forewarned about feminist courses, I decided to venture forth, and I came out with wounded pride. I couldn't believe a woman would do this to another woman after studying the struggle women have endured to achieve anything. I re-enact the scenario many times in my mind to project how this could have been avoided. I thought, "Why didn't she ask to see my research notes, if she was in doubt about my writing ability?" I didn't want to believe that this had happened because I was Black.

It is time women writers and others who are involved in curriculum development stop pussyfooting around and confront racism, ethnocentrism, classism and limited treatment of Black women in their works. Our white sisters have to address the real issues of the economic racial oppression among non-white women.

In doing so, course offerings on Black women and other women of colour must be added to the curriculum of

women's studies. In the curriculum, there should be a theoretical perspective of non-white women, which would take us out of the margin and place us at the centre of the analysis, giving us the same status as our white sisters. We are looking for women's studies courses that reflect the importance of cultural, racial and social class variables.



Civil rights activist Fanny Lou Hamer commented that "the white women's freedom is shackled in chains to mine and she realizes for the first time that she is not free until I am free." I wonder how many white women know that's how a Black woman views the feminist movement.

Racism is a separate force that dictates the lives of all non-white people whether they

are males or females. Racism cannot be examined in sexism terminologies. Racism must be examined as a separate entity that dominates the lives of non-white women. Only then can it be placed in conjunction with sexism and classism.

Systemic discrimination is a reality lived by non-white people. This form of institutional racism hinders the progression of all non-white people and forces them to live structured lives. I once heard in one of my classes that if a woman is raped, then all women can be raped.

Sister, as long as I am discriminated against, you will continually be discriminated against.

That is the experience of a Black sister who has competed her Women's Studies degree at York University.

Thus, I compel you to respond urgently to your non-white sister's pleas to let her voice be heard in a positive light. Let her share with you past and present role models who have battled racism, sexism and classism and have come out of the war with no visible scars.

Come, enter my world, let me introduce you to non-white women who have fought for the right to be politicians, doctors, lawyers, and judges; for you already know about my sisters who are domestics.

Come, listen to these words that my sisters have spoken and are still speaking.

Come let us fight racism, sexism and classism together.

New Women's Studies programs at Carleton University

Have you ever been interested in finding out answers to questions such as

- "Why are women paid less in the workforce than men?"
- "Is literature written by women different from that written by men?"
- "Do women have a different approach to politics than men?"
- "Is the legal system a bastion of male domination or a way for women to achieve equality?"

This year, Carleton University has solved some of these problems by approving two new undergraduate programs in Women's Studies.

Starting in Fall, 1989, Carleton University's Institute of Women's Studies is offering new undergraduate pass and honours degree programs in Women's Studies combined with a second arts or social science discipline. Both programs allow students to develop a knowledge of the interdisciplinary field of women's studies, as well as a knowledge of another arts or social science discipline. The combined honours programs requires a more in-depth knowledge of the theories and methods associated with women's studies.

For further information, contact:
Institute of Women's Studies
Carleton University
Ottawa K1S 5B6
(613) 788-6645

Across Canada



Women in action



Anti-choice advocates have been making themselves seen and heard for as long as I can remember, which is likely as long as women's reproductive rights have been an issue (in other words, since the gloomy dawn of patriarchy). Their voices are lifted as stridently in Calgary as anywhere else; motivated by so-called "Christian" fervour, these self-appointed guardians of the fetus employ tactics which might seem comical, were the implications not so scary. (One sometimes wonders whether these zealots are motivated by moral conviction or by a desire to see themselves on television). In any case, without them, mainstream media would be hard put to find more captivating photo-opportunities.

Not only do these right-winged crusaders believe they have the right to determine the lives of all women, they are convinced they have the divine authority to break existing laws

and harass innocent citizens. Everyone has the right to an opinion, but nobody has the right to impose his/her beliefs on everyone else. I know that most Canadians support women's reproductive freedom, but the fringe who believes in restricting women's rights to their own lives has the publicity and money to persuade politicians and legislators they have a strong support base.

In November 1986, when Dr. Henry Morgentaler was giving a speech at the University of Calgary, anti-abortionists organized a protest, which drew only a handful of supporters, yet was capitalized by the media. A year earlier, Larry Heather was convicted of assault after spraying Dr. Morgentaler with ketchup from a plastic dispenser. Posters and displays exhibited by anti-choicists typically include photographs of a fetus in the womb, an appeal to the guilt conscience we are all supposed to rule our lives by.

For International Woman's Day 1986, the Calgary Status of Women Action Committee organized a weekend conference with the theme "Dialogue Toward a Multi-Racial Women's Movement." Due to a last minute double-booking error, organizers made the unforeseen event of holding the event at a nunnery. When local anti-choicists heard about

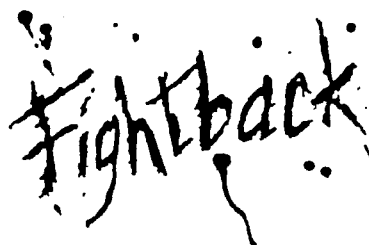
the conference, they organized a picket against the convent for allowing a "pro-abortion" group to hold a conference there. It was explained to convent officials that the word "abortion" would never be mentioned at a conference aimed at combatting racism, but nevertheless marchers were obliged to change their route. It is not difficult to guess whether local media picked up on the ten picketers or the 200 women celebrating IWD.

Perhaps it is mere coincidence, but again this year anti-choicist antics were staged close to International Women's Day. For years anti-choicists have regularly picketed the offices of the Calgary Birth Control Association (an organization which offers contraceptive counselling and does referrals for adoptions and abortions), as well as hospitals where abortions are performed. They have gone so far as to blockade the entrance, bolt doors and harass any women who attempt to enter.

On February 28, 1989, members of the Campaign Life Coalition demonstrated outside of the Peter Lougheed Centre of the Calgary General Hospital, while twelve men entered the building and chained themselves to equipment in the second-floor abortion clinic. The twelve men

(five from Calgary, six from Airdrie, one from Cremona) were charged under the Petty Trespass Act, and faced maximum fines of \$100 and jail terms if they refused to pay. A trial date has been set for October 1989; all have pleaded not guilty.

One week later, while stating they would likely obey a court order to stay away from



the hospital, these extremists threatened to picket in front of the homes of doctors who perform abortions. The doctors stated, to their credit, that they would not be intimidated by these "fanatics."

Not only did these anti-choicists carry out their threat the following Sunday, they also distributed gruesome full-colour leaflets in one doctor's neighbourhood stating "Dr. Wally Moscovitz lives at 216 Pumphill View S.W. and kills babies for a living." Their rationale for such a tactic is that if this doctor is not adverse to performing abortions, he should not be ashamed if others know. Forty-

five anti-choicists marched in front of this doctor's home; some stood in front of his house with a banner reading "Dr. Moscovitz Kills Babies."

Many of the anti-choicists refused to give their names, claiming they did not want to be harassed by those who do not share their views, yet they have no qualms about harassing patients and staff at the hospital. They also phone and harass the families of hospital board members, and mail graphic leaflets to anyone they decide needs the intrusion. Fortunate recipients of such literature have included reporters who may have indicated a pro-choice stance, pro-choice organizations, and people whose names have been gleaned from the "Letters to the Editor" section of local newspapers. One woman who had received unsigned articles accompanied by gruesome photographs, after writing a letter to the newspaper editor, remarked that she felt her freedom of speech was being threatened. Indeed it was.

At the end of March 1989, Michael Malley, President of Campaign Life Coalition, attempted for the fourth time in two years to obtain an injunction that would block city funding of the Calgary Birth Control Association. Fortunately, his case was adjourned

cont'd on page 19

Where to get *The Womanist* in Canada

Since so many of you have been writing and calling to find out where you can pick up *The Womanist* in your area, we decided it was high time to compile a list of some of our distribution points.

We've listed locations where the paper regularly is distributed in towns and cities across the country. You can also find the paper in many other places, but not regularly.

Many thanks to our distributors everywhere who put so much effort into ensuring that women are able to pick up *The Womanist* at these spots!

A reminder: if you want the convenience of having *The Womanist* sent to your home, please subscribe!

NEWFOUNDLAND

Corner Brook

Corner Brook Status of Women Council Centre

Labrador City

Labrador West Status of Women Council and Women's Centre, Community Centre, Drake Avenue

St. John's

Continental Restaurant
George Street

Rabbittown Community Centre
Graves Street

St. John's Status of Women Centre, Military Road

Stephenville

Bay St. George Status of Women Council Centre, Main Street

NOVA SCOTIA

Bridgewater

Second Story Women's Centre,
99 York Street

Halifax

Red Herring Co-operative Bookstore, 1555 Granville St.

Service for Sexual Assault Victims, 6450 Young Street

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown

Voluntary Resource Centre, 81 Prince Street

P.E.I. Advisory Council on the Status of Women

NEW BRUNSWICK

Fredericton

Harriet Irving Library,
University of New Brunswick,
or call Kay Nandall at (506)
459-8030

Moncton

New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 95 Foundry Street, Suite 207

Saint John

Women's Information Centre,
Status of Women Committee,
27 Wellington Road

Sussex

Women's Information and Resource Centre

QUEBEC

Montreal

Concordia University Women's Centre

L'Androgyne Bookstore

L'Essentiel Bookstore

YWCA

Coloured Women's Club

Senior Citizen's Council

ONTARIO

Bancroft

Maggie's Resource Centre of North Hastings

Guelph

University of Guelph, Women's Resource Centre

The Bookshelf, Québec Street
ClaySmith Craft Gallery, Wilson Street

Hamilton

Women's Bookstop, 333 Main Street West

Huntsville

Muskoka Whole Foods, 110 Main St. East

Kingston

Mrs. Dalloway's Books, 381 Princess Street

Prison for Women

Kitchener/Waterloo

Women's Centre, University of Waterloo

London

Womansline Books

North Bay

Low Income People Involved (LIPI), 20 Marshall Ave. W.

North Bay Women's Centre

Ottawa

Ottawa Women's Bookstore,
Elgin Street

Octopus Books, Bank Street

OCLISS, 392 Bronson Ave.

Immigrant Women's Centre, 18 Louisa

Women's Place, and most community centres in Ottawa

Peterborough

The Book Tree, 254 Charlotte Street

Thunder Bay

Fort William Clinic

Northern Women's Bookstore

Lakehead University Student Centre

Indian Friendship Centre, and a variety of community centres and laundromats!

Toronto

519 Community Centre, 519 Church St.

Native Women's Resource Centre, 245 Gerrard East.

Toronto Women's Bookstore, 73 Harbord Street

Immigrant Women's Health Centre, 750 Dundas St. W., #301

YWCA, 80 Woodlawn Ave. E.

DEC Book Distributors, 229 College Street

The anti-choice lobby



because he had not filed all the proper affidavits. Malley is also trying to locate women who have suffered physical or psychological problems following abortions after being counselled by the CBCA, in order to put them in touch with lawyers and sue the CBCA and the City of Calgary.

I used to just laugh at the antics of these self-righteous zealots, but I am becoming frightened. Sadly, they are gaining credibility with some Members of Parliament who forego their responsibility to represent all of their constituents in order to promote their own personal views. The recent pro-choice rally in Washington, D.C., which drew some 500,000 supporters, was encouraging; yet it is weighed against bombings of abortion clinics and other media attracting stunts in the United States. The struggle for women's choice, whether in regard to abortion or any other issue, is constant and never-ending.

Lisa Jensen is a very busy feminist in Calgary.

Balancing the Scales: social service workers charged with assault

by Teddy Gunson

"We begin with the belief that each person is of inherent worth and should be presumed capable of reason, choice, self-realization and independence... We therefore conclude that society has a responsibility to assist its members in their development and integration... The worth of society can be measured by the extent to which it provides assistance."



So says a report entitled "Transitions" a review of the Ontario Social Assistance Program.

Recent incidents in the Newfoundland Department of Social Services would lead one to believe that by the above stated standards, our social

integrity has reached an all time low. Three social service workers were recently charged with a total of eighteen offences including procurement of persons to have illicit sexual intercourse, breach of trust, extortion, sexual assault and aggravated sexual assault.

One of the men is accused of mutilating a woman's breasts, arms and back with a lighted cigarette while having intercourse with her. Another charge refers to the coercion of the same woman to have an abortion, under threat of losing her child to the Department of Social Services. All of the women involved are presently or were at one time recipients of Social Assistance.

Clearly, this points to abuse of authority, among other things, and is echoed by the recent rash of reported sexual abuse of children in the Catholic Church. What is not so clear is that while society perceives women and children as having similar characteristics of vulnerability and dependency, there is a vast difference in how the public responds to the abuse and violation of each.

While we can never condone the slow and ostrich-like approach to child abuse that has been the case until recently, public reaction to abuse of women has not changed markedly in centuries. In short, women have been and continue to be condemned for their own victimization.

The perception of vulnerability and dependency is a double-edged sword for women that frequently serves to endanger them. In general women are socialized to be passive and dependent.

As children, they are told that theirs will be a supportive role rather than a pro-active one. They are encouraged to be gentle, tidy, seen and not heard, sugar and spice and all things nice. If they live up to this ideal they will find some nice man to take care of them and live happily ever after. Small wonder the general condition of women's self-esteem is low.

A healthy self-concept is not easily attained by those who are systematically trained to defer to the opinions of others and think of themselves last. These very child-like virtues, when combined with women's sexuality, become the roots of their exploitation. Exploiting the vulnerable has become a multi-billion dollar industry whose profits increase alarmingly every year.

What does all this have to do with women on welfare? Simple. If all women must contend with this simplistic picture of their value, how doubly hard it must be for poor, uneducated and unemployed women who are single parenting a couple of children. These women must depend on society and its social system for their most basic needs and those of their children. The quality of their existence depends on the attitudes of those who are in positions of authority.

Across Canada



Women in action



Not all social workers abuse power, nor do all men abuse women. However, wherever there is an imbalance of power, abuse will exist. Since women comprise the largest number of the poor and the needy, this makes them very vulnerable targets.

There are some things we can do to help improve the condition of women on social assistance. First, we must find ways and resources to improve women's self-esteem, assertiveness, knowledge of their human rights, and access to fairness and justice. It takes conviction of self-worth and courage to speak out on exploitation and abuse. It also takes confidence that someone will hear and believe.

Second, we must convince our government that nothing less than a properly organized model of Social Assistance is acceptable. If our society's worth is measured by the extent to which it values its people, then unless we change destructive attitudes towards women, we are only 48% worth while.

Teddy Gunson is the Coordinator of the Women's Centre in Corner Brook, Nfld.

Where to get *The Womanist* in Canada

MANITOBA

Brandon

Brandon Branch of MACSW, 133-10th St.

Dawson

Department of Status of Women

Thompson

Thompson Action Committee on the Status of Women

Winnipeg

Original Women's Network, 388 Donald St., Suite 100

Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women (MACSW), 16-222 Osborne Street South

Bold Print Bookstore, 478-A River Avenue

SASKATCHEWAN

Prince Albert

Aboriginal Women's Council of Saskatchewan, 62-17th Street West

Regina

Regina Women's Centre, 219-1808 Smith Street

Saskatchewan Women's Resources, 2398 Scarth Street

Cathedral Community Centre, 2900-13th Street

Saskatoon

Whole Earth, Third Street

Broadway Theatre, Broadway

ALBERTA

Calgary

A Woman's Place Bookstore, 1412 Center Street South

Alberta Status of Women Action Committee, #303, 223-12th Ave. S.

YWCA

Self Connections Bookstore, Northmount Drive at 19th St. S.W.

Edmonton

Common Woman Books, 8724-109 Street

Red Deer

Central Alberta Outreach Society, 109-4818 Gaetz Ave.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Kamloops

Kamloops Women's Centre and other places in Vernon and area

Kootenays Area

Apple Tree Books, Creston

Lakeview Store, between Creston & Nelson, on the Kootenay Lake

Gray Creek Store

Terrace

Terrace Women's Centre

Vancouver

Vancouver Women's Bookstore, 315 Cambie Street

Spartacus Books, 311 West Hastings Street

Ariel Books for Women, 2766 West 4th Avenue

Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, 44 East Cordova Street

Vancouver Status of Women, #301, 1720 Grant St.

YUKON

Whitehorse

Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, 204-100 Main Street

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Yellowknife

Alison McAteer House, c/o YWCA, 54th Street

STOP THE

.. teachers ... shrinks ...
.. brothers ... professors ...
.. landlords ... busdrivers ...
RAPE
.. pornographers ... lawyers ...
.. fathers ... grandfathers ...
.. ministers ... boyfriends ...
.. judges ... cops ... dates ...
.. husbands ... strangers ...

MEN WHO RAPE

Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter 872-8212

- 24 hour crisis line
- emergency shelter for women & their children
- women's organizing centre

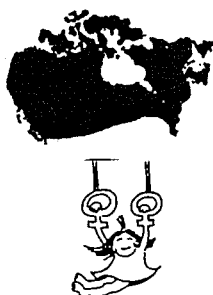
THE SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT CENTRE
CENTRE D'AIDE AUX AGRESSEES SEXUELLES

P.O. BOX 4441 STATION E. OTTAWA ONT. K1S 5B4
C.P. 4441 SUCC. E. OTTAWA (ONT.) K1S 5B4

Crisis Line: 234-2266

Office: 725-2160

TDD/TTY: 725-1657



"O Canada, our home and native land..." The anthem seemed a curious protest song but the pointed irony and blatant hypocrisy was not lost on those of us who had gathered in solidarity with the Innu people of Labrador and northern Quebec at Ottawa's Department of Defence last fall. Just that morning Innu demonstrators had been charged with public mischief for setting up camps on the runways of CFB Goose Bay to protest low-level flight testing over their ancestral homeland Nitassinan.

Since last September, the RCMP has laid 223 charges against Innu protestors, many of them women. In a landmark judgement on April 19, four of the protestors were acquitted. The Innu, who have never signed a treaty giving up Nitassinan, will now seek a court injunction to halt low-level flights by several NATO countries, including Germany, the Netherlands, and Britain. Both the federal and provincial governments are violating the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which remains a part of the Canadian Constitution and states that aboriginal people cannot be deprived of their land except on the basis of negotiations which are based on the equitable principles of justice.

Over 7,500 low-level flights occurred over Nitassinan last year causing incalculable social and environmental damage. From early spring until late fall, fighter planes routinely fly 30 metres (100 feet) above the ground at speeds up to 1,000 kilometres an hour. Noise levels can reach 140 decibels, the human pain threshold being 110 decibels. Despite the considerable evidence that these low-level flights cause hearing loss and stress-related diseases, as well as disrupt the migratory patterns of wildlife, the Canadian government has bid for a NATO Tactical Fighter

and Weapons Training Centre to be established at Goose Bay.

The establishment of this NATO base, the first in Canada, would increase the number of annual low-level flights over Nitassinan to approximately 40,000, and in addition expose the Innu to frequent sonic booms, combat exercises and nuclear strike training as well as the increased likelihood of laser and aircraft accidents. It will destroy the unique Innu culture and indigenous economy and turn Nitassinan into a war zone.

The proposed NATO base for Goose Bay poses a special threat to Innu women who fear that the military culture will destroy their social and community fabric. Throughout the world, in towns where the economy is dependent on a military base for its survival, women are physically, sexually, or economically exploited. Innu women are concerned about sexual harassment, prostitution, unwanted pregnancies, and AIDS. In June 1988, an 18-year-old Innu woman was raped by a member of the Canadian Armed Forces. And according to a Catholic priest, foreign air force men stationed in Goose Bay drive to the nearby Innu community of Sheshatshit to pick up young girls.

These concerns are tacitly acknowledged by the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Process, expected to be completed in the fall of 1989, which for the first time looks at the specific environmental impacts on women. This review process is highly suspicious, given its dependence on the military and the Department of National Defence's bid for the NATO base regardless of the review's recommendations.

In a recent telephone survey of 275 women in Labrador, 76 per cent had no or little information about the proposed NATO base in Goose

NATO out of Nitassinan

by Christine McKay



—CP photo

Bay. Many women feel powerless. One woman at a recent conference in Labrador, "Military Development -- A Matter Affecting Women", stated: "...it doesn't matter what we say, it's going to happen anyway. What can we do to change something we don't want? We can't do anything because there's this all-powerful government up there that's going to do whatever they feel like doing.

And that gives you a pretty miserable feeling, you know. What is the point?"

Despite the seeming hopelessness of their situation, the Innu continue their peaceful protests on the runways on CFB Goose Bay. Their campaign to end low-level flight testing over Nitassinan is gaining national and international attention. During April an International Week of Action was held with rallies,

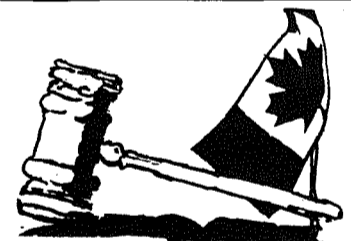
demonstrations, protests, and a "Take Back the Skies" action by hundreds of peace, environmental and human rights groups throughout Canada, the United States and Europe. The NATO Out of Nitassinan Campaign is sponsored by more than 50 peace, religious and Native organizations across Canada, and is facilitated by the Canadian Peace Alliance. For more information, contact Colleen Lundy at (613) 231-7127, or Jim Stanford at (613) 236-4532.

Low-level flight testing affects all of us, and the Innu need your support. Write letters to the Ministers of National Defence and Indian Affairs -- you don't even require postage.

Contact the Sheshatshit Women's Group in Nitassinan, and ask what you can do to help (c/o Elizabeth Penashue, Sheshatshit, Nitassinan, Labrador, AOP 1M0). Act to show that it is not pointless to protest human rights violations and to ensure that your silence does not contribute to the destruction of the Innu people and Nitassinan.

Christine McKay is a graduate student in Carleton University's Master of Social Work Program, and an aspiring writer. She recently joined Ottawa's NATO Out of Nitassinan Committee, and is a collective member of "Off the Pedestal," a feminist public affairs radio show with CKCU-FM 93.1.

The Ruling



The following is an excerpt of the decision by Judge James Igleliorte, Provincial Court of Newfoundland when he ruled that four Innu men were not guilty of interfering on the property "owned" by the Canadian Armed Forces at Goose Bay.

"We are not dealing with any land which has been the subject of divestiture through treaties, as under the *Indian Act*. Each of these four persons based their belief of ownership on an honest belief on reasonable grounds. Through their knowledge of ancestry and kinship they have showed that none of their people ever gave away rights to the land to Canada, and this is an honest belief each person holds. The provincial and federal statutes do not include as third parties or signatories any Innu people. I am satisfied that the four believe their ancestors predate any Canadian claims to ancestry on this land.

Since the concept of land as property is a concept foreign to original people the Court must not assume that a

"reasonable" belief be founded on English and hence Canadian law standards. The Innu must be allowed to express their understanding of a foreign concept on their terms, or simply express what they believe.

The Crown has presented to me recent cases such as *Baker Lake* and *Calder* which only emphasize the concept of land as property from an English law viewpoint. Like the I.Q. tests administered to school children some years ago which simply reflect the understanding of the maker of the test, not the person being tested, there is an inherent bias. For example, in *Calder*, the reference to "properly constituted authorities" is a justification of a Proclamation. It assumes that original inhabitants accepted this Proclamation and agreed that it extinguished their interests as users from a time which predated the appearance of Europeans.

These four people have shown me their belief in owner's rights is unshaken by the present occupation.

All of the legal reasonings are based on the premise that somehow the Crown acquired magically, by its own declaration, title to the fee and a consequent fiduciary obligation to the original people. It is time this premise based on 17th century reasoning be questioned in the light of 21st century reality.

Canada is a vital part of the global village and must show its maturity not only to the segment of Canadian society that wields great power and authority to summarily affect the lives of minority groups with the flourish of a pen to yet another "agreement" or "memorandum of understanding" resulting in great social and economic benefit; but also to its most desperate people.

The 40 year history of these Innu people is a glaring reminder that integration or assimilation alone will not make them a healthy community.

By declaring these Innu as criminals for crying "Enough!" the Court will have been unable to recognize the fundamental right of all persons to be treated equally before the law."

A Miracle in the Making

CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

Immunizing the world's children by 1990 — Canada is proudly participating in this extraordinary undertaking to control the six leading communicable childhood diseases that kill or permanently disable seven million children in the developing world every year.

For more information, contact: Canadian Public Health Association 1565 Carling Avenue, Suite 400 OTTAWA, Canada K1Z 8R1 Telephone: (613) 725-3769 Telefax: (613) 725-9826

Funded by the Government of Canada. Managed by the Canadian Public Health Association.



The Feminist Throne Speech

Governments always try to pretend that the things they do are things that must be done, and much of the public acts as though they believe it. It isn't always obvious that governments have options, that parliaments make choices that determine the direction of the future for all of us.

And those parliaments are made up of about 95% men. How different would it be if women were making the choices? Let's look at how some women would use taxpayers' money, what goals they would set, and where their priorities would lie.

*Dorothy Inglis
St. John's, Newfoundland*



Women's Voices

Women's voices must be heard, and what those voices are saying and how they are saying it must be respected. Processes must be established to involve women in all parts of the country in discussing, determining and directing national and international policy and practice. We are committed to these new directions for our survival, and because we accept the evidence of development - that resources provided to women are used for the benefit of the family and the wider community. This is where we will put our resources, to enable women to guide the transition to a sustainable phase in this planet's development.

*Patricia Keays,
Nanaimo, British Columbia*

Building Democracy

Politics up to the present time has been generally a very short-term activity, with most political people incapable of exceeding the span of a single election as their time frame for a vision of a better world. Women have a longer view of history, since we are closer to the generational shifts, and the nature of our lives provides us

with a more intimate acquaintance with human mortality. Men have said that the politicians' only duty is to get elected. Better to take the long view and fail to be elected than to perpetuate the myopia of the short-term solution.

*Iona Campagnola
McMaster International,
Hamilton, Ontario*

As a first step, we promise to follow the lead of Norway, and establish 40% minimum participation by women in all public bodies at all levels from local to federal.

Canadian women of strong mind and good social conscience want to have a balanced life that equally values time with children, time at paid work, time at home, time working away - they want to have fun. Reduced work weeks, guaranteed annual income, community cooperative funds and revolving loans, extended parental benefits are all aspects of strengthened social and economic policy consistent with these development policies.

*Patricia Keays,
Nanaimo, British Columbia*



Free Trade

Our government is announcing the cancellation of our ill-fated Free Trade Agreement with the United States. We did not realize that it would require us to lower our standard of living, reduce our social programs to conform to the American system, widen the gap between rich and poor, abandon non profit organizations, put many thousands of Canadians out of work while not creating new jobs, allow newer and more terrible American weapons systems to be tested on our territory, and sell our natural gas at rock bottom prices to American multinationals who pollute their own waters.

Instead, we will implement a new economic system, based on the principles of Canadian sovereignty, a planned economy, social justice,

sustainable development and international co-operation. Our government will work to convert our export arms manufacturing industry to the development of the best environmental clean-up technology in the world.

*Maude Barlow
Chairperson, Council of
Canadians
Ottawa*

Full-Employment Economy

The key to our economic policy is that every government initiative will be subjected to the twin questions:

1. How many jobs will it create and where?
2. What will be its effect on the environment?

For example, suppose that we find that the current supply of energy is insufficient to meet projected needs. Rather than initiate megaprojects like Quebec's James Bay or Alberta's tarsands oil extraction, we would look at new methods of energy conservation. Megaprojects, in addition to being extremely destructive to the ecology, create small numbers of temporary jobs in unpopulated regions, mostly for men. Energy conservation projects, such as better insulation or public transportation, create a larger number of jobs spread



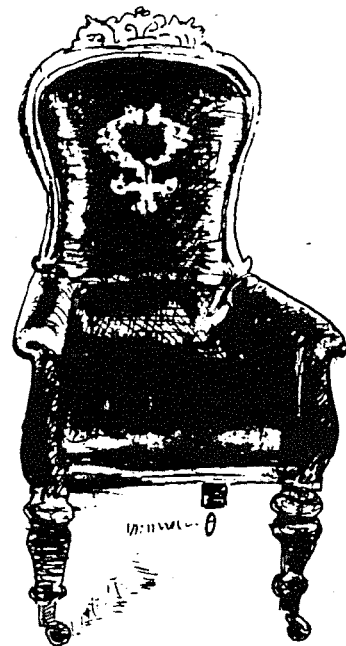
throughout the country, available to both men and women.

We will also be involved in direct job creation. While such job creation will include support to private enterprise, particularly in the areas of research and development and the promotion of export-oriented and import replacement industries, we will also be investing in public and para-public services. This is, in fact, a return to the policies of the post-war years when the rapid development of health and educational services contributed not only to our general well-being but also to our economic prosperity. Public service jobs require relatively little capital investment in imported goods and therefore have no negative consequences for our balance of payment. They are also non-polluting.

purpose of encouraging private firms and local governments to plan their investments in ways which will avoid cyclical fluctuations in inflation and unemployment.

However, the primary role will fall to the provincial and territorial governments. We will be asking them to set up special Councils for economic planning at the provincial and local levels. Similar councils will be set up on reserves and wherever native groups feel them to be appropriate. Composed of representatives of labour, business, government and community groups, their responsibility will be to identify local needs for development and to ensure the development and continuity of full employment in their areas. For example, if a major employer announces that it will be closing a facility or reducing the number of jobs significantly, the role of the local council will be to develop alternatives either with the existing firm or new firms. They will also be responsible for providing training programmes to ensure the smooth transition of workers from one job to the next.

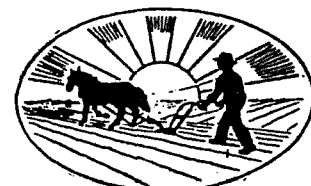
*Ruth Rose,
Montréal*



Rural Canada

This government takes farming - growing food for people - seriously in its own right. It recognizes the important contribution which the farming women, men and children make to this country. It also recognizes the social, ecological, political and economic value of creating and maintaining vibrant, healthy, farming communities. To this end, this government commits itself to reversing the present trends of rural depopulation and the deterioration of rural infrastructures.

This will require a range of agriculture and rural service policy changes. Given the distance from markets that much of Canada's agricultural produce is, rail transportation is important: rail line maintenance rather than abandonment will be a priority. Postal services to rural communities will be improved rather than discontinued or franchised with the resultant losses in jobs (mostly women's jobs) and service. We will encourage the provinces to improve the health and education services to rural people by earmarking shared cost grants in these areas.

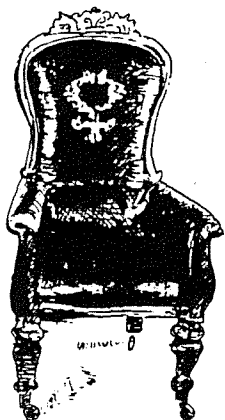


The urgent need for good quality, affordable, flexible childcare services in rural Canada deserves an immediate response. Our **National Child Care Act** (as explained later) will ensure such funds as are necessary to make adequate childcare spaces are available to the rural, as well as the urban, children in this country. These improvements recognize that rural women, who for the most part carry the main burden of maintaining family life, cannot do so in the absence of adequate services in rural communities.

Farming families must be able to make a living from the food they produce. This requires that the price of farm produce must be improved and stabilized. We will not leave the fortunes of farming families subject to the buffeting of



The Feminist Throne Speech was first distributed at the National Action Committee on the Status of Women Annual General Meeting on May 13, 1989.



The Feminist Speech

Taxes

Taxes will be based on the ability to pay. Immediate changes to the tax system will be:

1. Tax capital gains will be at the same rate as wage income.
2. Restore the 34% federal tax rate for people earning over \$60,000.
3. Close all loopholes in the tax system
4. Establish a serious corporate tax that all corporations must pay.
5. Cancel the regressive sales tax.

*Jean Swanson
End Legislated Poverty
Vancouver, British Columbia*



Training and Education

Our commitment is to providing an education to all those who want one, and to recognize the learning process as a life long process.

This government today announces our intention to put in place a Canada-wide accreditation system for recognizing experiential learning.

The Canadian Student Loan program will be revamped to include extending eligibility to include part-time students. The CSL program will also alter its repayment policy so that part-time students will be guided by the same policy as full time students, that is to start paying off their loan six months after they graduate. Eligibility for student loans will now be based on individual income not family income.

All adults who did not complete high school will be provided with free access to Adult Basic Education program, that will give them a second chance of a high school completion.

Affordable childcare will be provided for students on site at all post-secondary institutions in Canada.

A training equity plan will be introduced that will give women more equitable access to on-the-job company paid training.

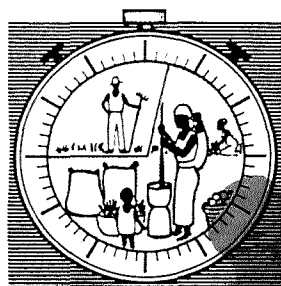
*Susan Witter, President
Canadian Congress of Learning
Opportunities for Women
Vancouver, British Columbia*

International Development

It is time to deepen and strengthen Canada's commitment to equality, development and peace. Facing the complex world of the 1990's and the next century, it is also time to more clearly define what we mean by these terms and this commitment.

Dictionaries give two definitions of "to develop". One is "to make bigger, better, etc." A second is "to work out slowly, by degrees, from within." Canada commits itself to the second definition of development - to work out slowly, by degrees, from within. Only through such an approach do we have even a chance of reaching the goal of sustainable development. And only through such an approach are we able to ensure that our development is appropriate and truly meets people's needs, not the political needs of the government of the day or the economic needs of one particular sector.

The false separation between development in Canada, particularly economic and community development, and international development, must end. By the end of next year, we will have established an umbrella Ministry of Development, a clearinghouse for all such work. That clearinghouse will serve and support regional and local work



across this great country, with staff and money allocated to local areas and regions, strengthening the community base from which social change must be guided.

In relation to equality in international development, we reaffirm our commitment to Women in Development, and to full implementation of the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA's) Women in Development policy by the year 2000. Key policies for emphasis include:

- to increasingly respond to the development objectives of Third World women by supporting their efforts to participate in development and their initiatives to improve their situations,

• to include women in CIDA programs and projects, in proportion to their share of the target group.

*Patricia Keays,
Nanaimo, British Columbia*

Foreign Policy

Our commitment to peace will shape our international relations. Canada will end all agreements that permit passage of ships with nuclear warheads in our waters. Acknowledging the statistical evidence available on the world's uranium and how it is used, in particular that significant amounts of what includes Canadian uranium are used for non-peaceful purposes, Canada will end all mining, production, and export of uranium. Duties and taxes presently attached to luxury items will also be levied on all military equipment and articles of violence.



All of our international relationships will be reviewed from the perspective of equality, development and peace, and those that fall short in some area will be directly targeted. One example is our trading relationship with South Africa. For as long as apartheid policies hold, and as long as the South African military is actively involved in destabilizing the neighbouring front-line states, all economic exchanges between South Africa and Canada will be terminated.

*Patricia Keays,
Nanaimo, British Columbia*

Consistent with this new policy, we are calling for the immediate withdrawal from Central America of all United States military support and aid. We are simultaneously increasing our humanitarian aid to this region through non-governmental development organizations and the besieged government of Nicaragua. We will also increase our diplomatic staff in Central America to better observe human rights violations and developments in the region first hand.

The Womanist



Defence

Since the concept of military defence necessarily postulates an enemy (whether or not one exists) and since international peace and the absence of war depends on national confidence and the security of all nations from aggression our government will rename the current Department of National Defence as a "Department of Security" and take steps to redefine its mandate.

The first aspect of redefinition will be to ensure that the policies and activities of any Canadian military establishment will follow from and be consistent with Canadian foreign policy. This will involve scrapping the existent white paper on defence in its entirety and recreating a new defence policy that supports our broader international objectives.

The mandate of the Security Department will include active encouragement of stable international relations through such actions as promotion of arms negotiations and development of international forums and practices for non-military conflict resolution. In particular, the Security Department will take reasonable and non-threatening steps to work towards the gradual and simultaneous dismantling of military blocs and alliances, since such structures are by definition closed and in themselves cause conflict with those nations which are excluded.

Our government will withdraw all support for the industrial sector which develops, builds and exports arms. Our government will, however, work with companies in this sector to help in the process of converting their production towards peaceful and non-aggressive ends. This may involve, for example, investing in a Canadian ship-building industry, as opposed to supporting a private company to produce destroyers for the navy.

Military personnel and those civilians employed by the current defence department will not face job losses, but will rather enjoy retraining and new



from the Throne

challenges due to the adjusted mandate. Training of recruits will be entirely rethought to prepare new military personnel for non-aggressive, productive roles in their communities and in the world.

Current military bases in Canada will remain open and will be redeveloped with reference to a cohesive industrial and educational policy. Forces personnel will continue valuable work in the community, such as emergency services, and such international services as peacekeeping, and will be encouraged to develop conflict resolution skills at all levels of human contact.

As well, Canadian bases will be developed to include functions such as certain areas of production or training and research and development that are necessary to our country but not being addressed by the private sector. One such area of concentration could be in environmental research and development and production of technology designed to deal with problems in this area. In areas such as these, the Security Department is fulfilling its broadened mandate to promote national and global security and reduce the insecurity that leads to conflict.

Anne Harris, Ottawa

Violence Against Women

We cannot have development without peace. We cannot have equality without peace. We may not have a future without peace. Our commitment to peace includes providing significant resources to strengthening community capacity to address violence against women in the home and to protect women and children.

Research into pornography, violence and abuse will be the basis of laws that we develop together, to ban all material that incites violence and sexual assault. So, too, will we research the relationship between violence and mass media, involving Canadians in that research and in education about the many forms of violence that have been illegal but tolerated and that are no longer acceptable in Canadian society.

Patricia Keays,
Nanaimo, British Columbia

Environment

Peace includes a more harmonious and peaceful relationship with the environment. All industrial processes, particularly those

producing toxic byproducts and wastes, will be assessed and true costs factored into prices and taxes. Environment cleanup will become a priority with accountability portioned in relation to responsibility for environment damage. Polluters will pay.

Forestry and other resource industries will become environmentally responsible or they will no longer be able to operate in this country. Sustainable practices in resource management will be strictly monitored and regulations strictly enforced. Control of resources will be located as securely as possible in local management regions.



The tanker traffic on Canada's west Coast will be redirected to outside our 200 mile jurisdictional limit, with more stringent requirements for construction of tankers passing through Canadian waters.

Environmental impact will join human impact as one of two priority assessments in all development. Canada will also work actively in all international bodies and forums to raise environmental security and sustainable development to the top of world and domestic agendas.

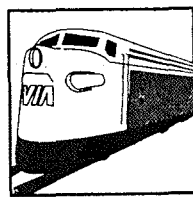
Patricia Keays,
Nanaimo, British Columbia

Transportation

The car consumes over 60% of the oil used in the US. We have similar figures. The car is poisoning the planet and absorbing public funds needed for other work. Support for effective public transit, and the end of hidden subsidies to the car -- road construction and maintenance, pollution are only two -- signal a new vision of effective transportation and breathable air.

Patricia Keays,
Nanaimo, British Columbia
Rail transportation in this country is essential for farmers, small business people, and the many citizens of this country who travel on VIA Rail.

Since the previous government has undercapitalized the service for so long, we will be immediately investing in the upgrading of the VIA Rail service. It represents a



national treasure and an energy efficient and environmentally sound method of transportation that will be encouraged in this country.

The Womanist

Fisheries

The government will immediately embark on a process of fishers' participation and integration in the developing and strengthening of the fishing industry in this country. Intrusions by ill-informed, often foreign lobby groups into the legitimate fishing and sealing activities will not be tolerated. The enforcement of the 200 mile limit, setting of quotas, issuing of foreign permits and all other matters pertaining to the fishing industry will be decided upon in conjunction with those Canadians who make their living in this sector.

The Womanist

Culture

Canada has one of the strongest and most unique cultural bases in the world. In addition to the native cultural heritage and the multicultural nature of Canada we have our own unique cultural institutions that have achieved world acclaim. We will nourish this cultural base and use it as one of the economic cornerstones of our economy.

In addition to providing substantial money to Canadian cultural organizations and artists, this government will:



1. strengthen the CBC and its world-wide reputation as a leading public affairs broadcaster in the world
2. rebuild Studio D of the National Film Board of Canada as our representative in film as reflected in the many honors that have been bestowed upon them.

The Womanist

Justice

This government recognizes that Canadians cherish social justice. To this end we will move immediately to rewrite the laws of the nation to bring them into accord with the objective of social justice for all. Further, these laws will be written in a language that is used and understood by Canadians in everyday conversation. Such laws will be available in all languages used in Canada.

In order to achieve this, the Canadian Law Reform Commission, made up of persons schooled and indoctrinated in gender, race and class bias, will be dismantled immediately and will be replaced with a Citizen's Commission that will undertake the immediate production of a new Social Justice Contract for Canadians. This contract will



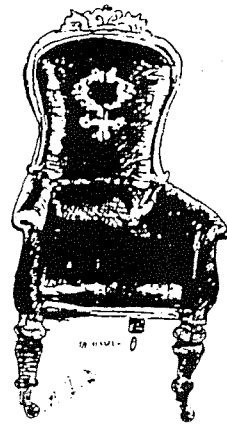
not make the artificial distinction between criminal and other forms of justice. This Commission will be made up of persons who have been marginalized and injured by the current system of (in)justice -- women, native people, persons of colour and persons who have first-hand experience as victims of crime or victims of the older process of (in)justice.

This new Social Justice Contract will be created bearing the following in mind:

Maintenance of peace will be the focus of the entire work. This will by necessity remove any remnant of the current adversarial system which bars truth-telling and is completely destructive of human relationships.

Emphasis will be shifted from the maintenance of property rights to the maintenance and creation of well-being and safety of all persons.

No person or institution in society will be exempt from responsibility for causing harm. Genocide caused by plundering of resources and poisoning of the earth will be considered most serious.



The state will maintain responsibility for providing the resources to factfind and to support solutions, but will not replace the victims in any of the process. Real people, not the state, will be recognized as harmed in the breakdown of peace.

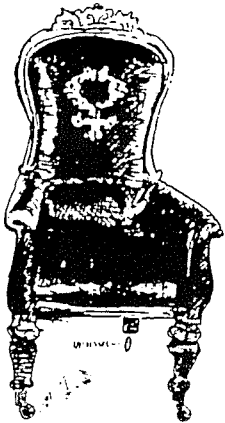
Recognizing that the roots of crime are found in poverty and inequality, this government will rely heavily on creating a system of social justice that will guarantee all Canadians a minimum standard of living that will meet human needs such as food, clothing, lodging, health and education and employment. In the long term this will go far to maintain and restore peace.

In the short run, it will be costly to re-write the laws and create new systems to maintain peace. Resources will be freed up immediately by declaring an amnesty for all persons who are incarcerated for property crimes, thereby emptying many of the costly correctional centres of the nation. This government will assist Provinces in closing the majority of provincially run institutions and in redeploying human and financial resources to targeted social service areas.

To divert further dollars, all persons who have committed crimes of violence will have their cases reviewed to take into account the circumstances under which the crimes were committed. All women who committed violent crimes in response to abuse by men will be granted amnesty, and will be offered extensive services to deal with the injury done to them. Others will be eligible for amnesty if the conditions that led to the commission of the crime can be addressed so that the people may rejoin society secure that they will not use violence as a means of survival.

There will be no release of men who have sexually assaulted women and children. While these men will be held in humane conditions they will not be released until treatment has been developed that will successfully address the dangerous behaviour that puts more than half the population in peril. To this end, the current treatment programs that are based on viewing rape as a crime of sexual dysfunction will





The Feminist Speech

Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism

Recognizing the racism inherent in Canadian society, this government will immediately engage all Members of Parliament in anti-racist and anti-sexist training. Over time, these courses will be extended to cover senior decision-makers in the federal public service, and, through discussions with the provinces, other levels of government and agencies under their jurisdiction, such as police forces.

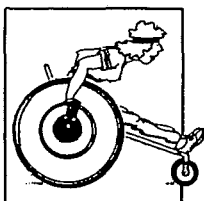
Amendments to the Multiculturalism Act will be introduced in this session in order to recognize multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society, and a concrete action plan for implementation will be presented.

Legislation will be brought forward to make an improved and strengthened employment equity program mandatory in the public and private sectors.

We will review all language and skills training programs to ensure that they address the needs of immigrant and visible minority women as a priority.

Glenda Simms

National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women



Disabled Women

This government makes the commitment to begin the process for the creation of a guaranteed annual income for disabled Canadians, and acknowledging the special needs of disabled mothers and together with the groups involved, determine the details.

The Women's Program will be mandated to allocate money to ensure that all women's groups receive adequate grants to create access to women's services and events for women with disabilities. Disabled women, immigrant and visible minority women's groups will receive funds to ensure that they can participate in the decision-making of the women's movement for the future.

All legislation, services and programs will be updated to ensure systemic discrimination is removed. Stronger sanctions will be imposed on all

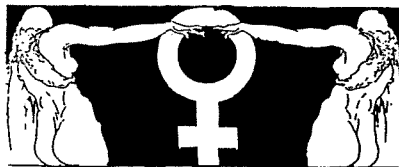
employers not complying with employment equity programs. CAP/VRDP (vocational rehabilitation program) and equivalent programs in Québec will also be updated to ensure that disabled women's needs are specifically dealt with.

Maria Barile
Montréal, Québec

Sexual Orientation

The energy and commitment that lesbians bring to improving the lives of all women is what we, as a feminist government, want to acknowledge, celebrate and support.

Therefore our government will amend the Canadian Human Rights Act in order to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in all areas under federal jurisdiction so that lesbians and gay men need not fear losing their jobs because they have had the courage to live and love in a way that is different. We respect this right to be different and for this reason we, as a government, have decided not to appeal the Canadian Human



Rights Tribunal ruling that a gay spouse is entitled to bereavement leave; we recognize that families take many forms and we want all Canadians to have the right to define who are the significant people in their lives.

Because some lesbians have had the courage to speak up and therefore improve the lives of all Canadians, we will support and catalyze this process by welcoming the voices of lesbians on all issues. We will do this by asking for lesbian input as policies and programs are being developed. We will mention lesbians when we speak about the diversity of Canadians. We will start a national public education program in order to educate Canadians in ways to diminish their own fears of lesbians and lesbianism, and other forms of homophobia. We want to make it easier for all Canadians to find the support and love that they need in a time of economic and social challenge.

Carmen Paquette,
National Lesbian Forum

Children

We have to become more conscious of the World Child Agenda, which includes our own kids right here in Canada, along with the kids of the rest of the world. Child Care is broader than

providing assistance to families in our communities who want daycare.

It is time for world action to create a Child Care Ethic for our time. Care of Children is a world wide problem. In ever increasing numbers all over the world children and youths find themselves on the streets: abandoned, uneducated, unemployed and alienated from any societal norms, without any loyalties except to their own gang, who substitute for "family." It is estimated today that there are somewhere close to 100 million children below the age of 12 who are working for a pittance in developing countries. Their work includes child pornography, sexual slavery and every unimaginable exploitative oppression.

Our world is one single Organism. We are dealing with abject poverty, whether it occurs in a remote Northern Canadian Indian village or a tormented South-West African, Central American or Asian village, or for that matter, on the street where we live. It is women and their children, the world over, who are the primary victims of poverty. Are we our Sister's keeper? Yes! But more importantly, they are ours!

Iona Campagnola
McMaster International,
Hamilton, Ontario

Child Care

Today, the government of Canada announces a comprehensive, free, universal, non-profit child care program to address the needs of all Canadian women, families, and children.

Like other social programs, so much a part of our country, child care today becomes a high priority. In addressing the needs of all Canadian women, families and children, the government of Canada is committing itself to a new **National Child Care Act** that will include:

• **National objectives:** Federal leadership, in consultation with child care advocacy and research groups, will establish criteria for the quality of and accessibility to child care

services. Standards will be set to ensure that children and families from Labrador to the Yukon will all have equal access to high quality, non-profit child care.

• **Child care choices:** This government recognizes the diverse and varied needs of families. Sufficient funding will be in place in order to develop, maintain, and expand responsive child care services, be they centre-based, work-related, family day care homes, or school-based programs. This government is committed to providing all with a real choice.

• **Funding:** User fees will now be completely eliminated and all costs will be shared between the federal government and the province/territorial government. No longer will affordability deny access to needed child care services.

• **Commercial centres:** For-profit child care programs will no longer be tolerated by this government. Children are not for profit!

• **Child care programming:** The **National Child Care Act** will ensure that all child care programming will be developmentally appropriate, non-sexist, non-racist and culturally sensitive.

• **Child care staff:** All qualified child care staff must be adequately compensated for



their work. Salaries will reflect the importance and significance of their work. As well, staff must be provided with adequate benefits and good working conditions.

• **Parental leave:** Maternity leave, parental leave, and family responsibility leave provisions will be included in this **National Child Care Act**. Adequate time and compensation will be awarded to those who require it. The inclusion of these programs is necessary if we are to have a truly comprehensive system of child care.

The government will be meeting with provincial representatives over the next few weeks to implement these programs. We look forward to providing the Canadian people with a just, free, universally accessible child care system.

Z. Sonia Ostrowska
Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare

be terminated and new models will be created based on the reality that rape is a crime of hatred and domination of women and children.

Until the new Social Justice Contract is complete the current codes will remain in place, but there will be no incarceration of persons who commit property crimes, and each crime of violence will be examined using the criteria outlined above.

Bonnie Diamond
Ottawa, Ontario

Aboriginal Women

Our government will immediately recognize, implement and honour the British North America Act and the original precedents set in the Act. First Nations will be recognized as the original inhabitants of this country and the government will recognize the First Nations sovereignty within the sovereign nation, Canada.

LISTEN TO THE PAST



LOOK TO THE FUTURE

There will be the immediate establishment of an Elders Council of Canada. It will be an advisory council to the House of Parliament and the Senate in determining long-range direction for the country.

There will be immediate recognition of all treaty agreements and immediate implementation of all treaty rights.

The bilingual policy of the country will be expanded to recognize the multilingual nature of this country and will include the First Nations languages.

There will be greater representation of aboriginal people in the House of Parliament by guaranteeing a minimum number of seats to aboriginal people.

Sustainable economic development will be the main thrust of the development on reserves and special consideration will be given to making the reserves self-sufficient economic units, based on native values, traditions and historical livelihood.

Debbie Meness,
Maniwakee Band



from the Throne

Reproductive Responsibility

Our government has considered the implications of the Supreme Court of Canada decision on the Borowski case. After careful consideration, the appropriate course of action in relation to this sensitive matter of abortion is not to introduce new legislation. We are finally convinced that this is a personal health issue and not a legal one and do not intend to recriminalize abortion.

Our government has recognized the need for prevention and a sexual health policy for Canadians. In addition to establishing such a policy, with input from the appropriate organizations we will reinstate the Family Planning Division of Health and Welfare Canada, increase funding for research into reproductive health issues, and improve the range of statistics available to the general public. Improving access to services and education, so that Canadians have equal access, regardless of where they live, will also be a priority.

Ronda G. Stoller
Planned Parenthood
Federation of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario

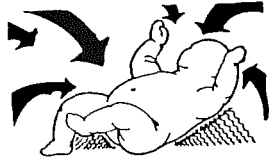


Reproductive Technology

The medical and scientific communities refer to this area as reproductive technology. The first move of this government is to reclaim for women the conception and birthing processes, from abortion to fully accessible alternative insemination programs to home births. As a step in that reclaiming, we have renamed the process of assisting in conception that has generally been referred to as "reproductive technology". We wish to ensure the focus and control is with women; hence our term gynoception.

We strenuously opposed a Royal Commission on Reproductive Technology when it came up for debate in the last session, because we feared that, under the previous government, such a commission would perpetuate and reinforce the male, medical and technological dominance that have defined this area as reproductive technology. However, given the change in government, we have decided to proceed with a Royal Commission, but with a very different focus. The major task of the Commission will be to study infertility to determine its causes and to make recommendations for its prevention. We recognize that

recommendations sincerely directed toward the reduction of the incidence of infertility will require serious expenditure of money on environmental and workplace clean-ups and on the development of new, safe methods of birth control. We are committed to directing our limited resources to these



types of programs and research.

While the Commission is conducting its inquiry, there will be a moratorium on all research directed toward the development of new technologies; no new in vitro fertilization programs will be started and existing programs will provide service only to those people currently on waiting lists. The Commission will be asked to develop criteria and standards for the testing and monitoring of any new technologies developed to assist in reproduction. The first question always to be asked is whether or not this technology should be supported at all. The principal criterion is whether a particular gynoception is in women's interests. In this regard, the Commission is instructed to ensure that all women's interests are addressed; the implications of any proposed technology with respect to race, class and disability will be given primary consideration.

The membership of the Commission will be drawn from the following – infertile people, people of colour, native people, lesbians, and variously abled people. The Commission will be facilitated by an activist from the women's health movement. The government will provide funding for consciousness raising and brain storming sessions to be held across Canada for women and men, separately and together, to discuss their experiences and concerns with infertility and gynoception. These sessions will be led by midwives and other health care providers and, it is hoped, will generate the submission to be made to the Commission.

This government is committed to women's control of our own bodies, sexually and reproductively. As part of that commitment, we will ensure that all services and programs that meet the criteria to be established by the Commission are truly accessible to all women.

Diana Majury
Faculty of Law, University of
Western Ontario
London, Ontario

Immigration and Refugee Policy

The first move of this government will be to develop immigration policies and levels

which will ensure a more equitable Canadian response to women applying for immigration to Canada.

A particular priority will be to identify refugee women for resettlement in Canada. We will instruct our visa officers to ensure that serious efforts are made to identify and process women refugees and their dependents. Our goal is to achieve an intake that reflects today's refugee population reality – at least 75% of the world's refugee population are women and their dependent children.



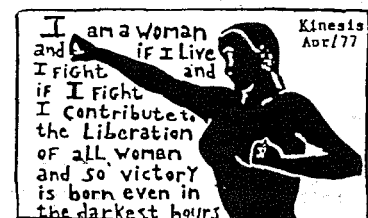
This change in policy and practice will provide significant long-term social benefits to this country through the values, the personal strengths, the perseverance and the educational and sheer survival skills of these women.

The future of a large backlog of asylum seekers in Canada will be addressed by this government. Many persons have been left in states of great anxiety and family separation pending a resolution of their claims. An immediate priority of this government will be to implement an administrative review of persons caught in this backlog. Those who meet acceptable standards with respect to any one of: protection needs; potential for establishment in Canada; difficulties in returning to country of origin, will be landed in Canada. Normal security provisions will apply. Family reunification will

proceed immediately upon acceptance in principle. Ministers' permits will be utilized to promote earliest possible admission of separated family members.

Further to the government announcement in November 1988 of a \$25 million initiative to assist immigrant women, the government will undertake a firm commitment to provide universal access for all immigrant and refugee women for language training. No woman will be denied access to language classes which will provide for the acquisition of English or French to a high level of competence. Daily allowances and childcare will be available. This government recognizes the long-term benefits of this short-term investment in the future of this country.

This government intends to seek an immediate reference in the Supreme Court of Canada with respect to the constitutionality of recently



proclaimed amendments to the Immigration Act. This government is committed to correcting those sections of the Act which do not meet our constitutional requirements and fail to respect our international obligations and humanitarian traditions with respect to the displaced and persecuted.

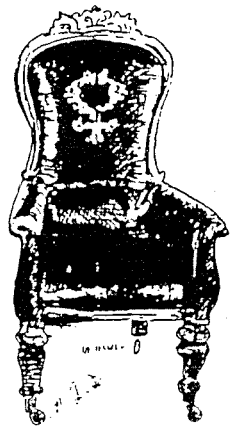
This government will shortly be announcing a major contribution to the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to integrate the specific needs of refugee women in their programming. This initiative has been encouraged by Canada over the past few years. This government will play a critical role in defining the outcome of this initiative. We are committed to ensuring its success.

Kathleen Ptolemy
Inter-Church Committee on
Refugees,
Toronto, Ontario

Whether it is changing the Grade 3 curriculum or launching out with English as a Second Language for new Canadian women, or giving out tree seedlings at funerals, we are capable of encouraging people to be caring, cooperative and motivated to contribute to society in every way. We are capable at the very least of raising our own children to appreciate these ethics of survival.

This is part of a Woman Agenda that I feel requires us to consolidate and amalgamate our power in order to achieve it, not just for ourselves, but for the benefit of the whole human family and all its tomorrows. We are fully capable of achieving this Agenda, and more, in political terms.

Iona Campagnola
McMaster International,
Hamilton, Ontario



Women's Power

We have to consolidate the power that the world's women currently have, and use it creatively, wherever it is vested, to achieve the Woman-Agenda. We can use a variety of methods and media to encourage and help the general public to learn, think consciously and talk about the key societal directions of our world at home and abroad. We can incorporate these directions in an organized way, into every aspect of our individual political lives, toward a better future. We can use our present work as mothers, teachers, secretaries, nurses, farmers, fishers or military women, lawyers, real estate salespersons, police or politicians to focus light into any area in which we have the power to do so.



A new Report: Women and AIDS

by Lynne Tyler

A report recently released by the UN Commission on the Status of Women at its March-April meeting explodes many myths popular in North America about women and AIDS. First and foremost, the disease is far more widespread among women than many first believed, and is spreading rapidly.

Over 1.5 million women worldwide are estimated to have the AIDS-causing virus HIV. Current estimates are that about 50% of adults with HIV will develop AIDS within 10 years, and 80% of infected children will develop AIDS within 5 years.

Many North American women believe the disease is primarily a male disease, and particularly a gay male disease. However, in most of the world, an equal number of women and men are infected. In some areas, up to 24% of pregnant women carry the virus, which can be passed on to their children at birth.

Africa is particularly hard hit by the AIDS crisis. Of the 1.5 million women in the world carrying the virus, at least 1 million live in Africa alone. It is estimated that over 100,000 HIV-infected children have been born in Africa since the start of the AIDS crisis, and this number will continue to increase over the next decade. The majority of these children are not expected to live to see their fifth birthday.

Nor is this chilling development restricted to women in Africa. The report cites two other disturbing studies. One showed a dramatic increase in AIDS among women in Haiti, from 14% of the cases in 1983 to 40% only two years later. In the United States, among young people enlisting for military service, the ratio of HIV-infected men to women was 2.5-to-1, far closer than the 13-to-1 ratio prevailing in the US generally. In fact, in New York, AIDS is the single largest cause of death for women aged 25-34 years.

The pattern of AIDS infection is different for different parts of the world. (see chart). What is similar is the devastating effects of the disease on women's lives.

As the report points out, AIDS is much more than a health issue. It affects and is

affected by women's relationships with their partners and families, their living conditions, their economic livelihood, their status in the community, their human rights, their access to services, and many other aspects of their lives.

Women lack equal access to education, health services, training, independent income, and legal rights. This affects their access to knowledge about AIDS (and how to prevent it), and their ability to take action to protect themselves.

Role in the Family

For some women, particularly in Pattern 2 countries, the major risk factor for women was the pre-marital and extra-marital sexual activity of their husbands. In most cases, it appeared that

protection against AIDS, a woman may get taunts, rejection, or outright violence and abuse.

Without an independent source of income, women are even more dependent on their partners, and therefore even less likely to risk rejection. Women are forced to choose between the possible risk of AIDS from their husband, and the very immediate risk of abuse or being thrown out of their home. Their concern for their children complicates this bitter choice even more.

Genital Mutilation

In some parts of the world, there are traditional practices in which the sexual organs of young girls (usually aged 6-8 years) are mutilated — for example, the vulva is sewn closed, or the clitoris is

on this. Certainly, it is an issue of great concern to African women's groups. They have also indicated there may be an increased risk of infection during the operation itself, because of the common use of unsterilised instruments shared among several girls at one time, as well as shared dressings.

Prostitution

Research among prostitutes in Africa, Asia, Europe, Haiti and the US has shown very different levels of HIV infection. In some African cities, studies have indicated that as many as 80% of female prostitutes are HIV-infected. Similar figures have been recorded in Haiti. But in Asia, Europe and the US studies have found much lower rates. Unless the prostitutes have a

Pregnancy

Women who are infected by HIV tend to get the virus early in their reproductive years. They are faced with a bitter choice: should they decide to never have children? or should they go ahead and risk infecting their children? This dilemma is worse because women's identity is often linked to their ability to have children, making it socially unacceptable to avoid pregnancy.

If an infected woman decides to have children, there is the possibility that they will not get the virus, but she herself may develop AIDS. The report predicts large numbers of children who will be orphaned in this way, and often left in extreme poverty.

Some people have called for the forced sterilization of infected women. Others have reported that infected women have been pressured to have abortions, against their original decision. Both of these seriously undermine women's human rights, and their right to self-determination.

Poverty

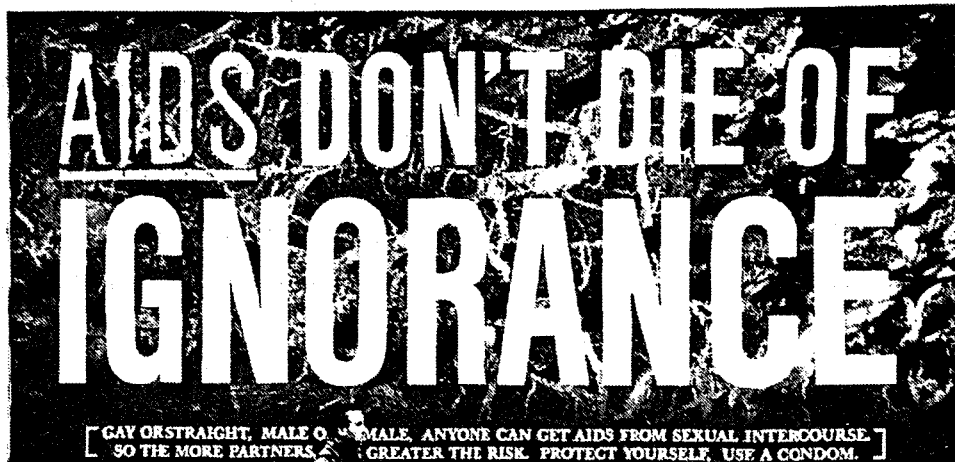
Because HIV attacks the body's immune system, concern is being raised about other factors that also reduce the body's ability to resist disease. In particular, some researchers have identified poverty, and most of the world's poor are women.

Malnutrition, poor shelter, poor sanitation and other factors related to poverty all contribute to poor health, and possibly greater openness to the AIDS virus. Studies to date have shown different results, but in the US at least, there is a higher incidence of HIV infection among poor minority groups than among more affluent Americans.

Discrimination

A woman with AIDS may be denied medical assistance, rejected by her family and friends, and forced to leave her job and home. She may be

cont'd on page 27



the husband acquired HIV outside the marriage and then passed it on to his wife, and through her, to their children.

Even in Pattern 1 countries such as Canada, where there is a high HIV rate in the gay male community, married bisexual men bring possible risks to their wives and future children. The report suggests that bisexuality is much more common than was previously realized.

All this makes relationships within the family extremely important in women's risk of getting AIDS.

For example, in many societies women are expected to be passive and submissive in sexual matters. If she asserts herself, and suggests her partner use a condom as

scraped or removed.

This is a sensitive topic in its own right, and the subject of controversial debate among women in different parts of the world.

However, in terms of AIDS, these are practices which, because they cause open wounds, would tend to increase the risk of infection both during the operation and after. Where genital mutilation closes the vulva and prevents vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse may be used as an alternative — the resulting damage to tissue is another possible route of HIV infection.

There is as yet no evidence that these practices are associated with a greater incidence of HIV infection, but there has been little research

history of drug use, the prevalence of HIV is low in these countries.

High rates of infection among prostitutes in some countries has unfortunately added fuel to the tendency to blame them, and never their clients, for the spread of AIDS. This may become an excuse for more social controls over prostitutes. The possibility that they might receive infection from their clients, and not the other way around, is rarely discussed.

In fact, some reports have shown that prostitutes in some countries have played an important role in slowing the spread of the disease, by insisting on the use of a condom with their client.

This is difficult in some cases, though. Prostitutes are often not in a position to insist on the use of condoms if their clients object. Clients may also insist on anal sex, which increases the risk of infection. For women who are economically dependent on prostitution, the choice is stark: take the risk of AIDS, or be denied the means of survival for themselves or their children.

The rise of "sex tourism" in Asia raises an additional concern. The current relatively low rate of HIV infection in Asia may be increased by the influx of men on "sex tours" coming from other parts of the world, placing women in this industry at even greater risk.

World Patterns of AIDS

Pattern 1

- most cases occur among homosexual or bisexual men, and intravenous drug users
- heterosexual cases are few but increasing
- mother-to-infant infection is small, because relatively few women are infected
- North America, Western Europe, Australia, New Zealand, parts of Latin America

Pattern 2

- most cases occur among heterosexuals
- equal number of women and men infected
- as a result, high number of mother-to-infant infections
- intravenous drug use almost non-existent, but contaminated blood and unsterilized needles for medical use are common
- homosexual infection is rare
- in some urban areas, up to 30% of young and middle-aged are infected
- sub-Saharan Africa, Caribbean, increasingly in Latin America

Pattern 3

- very few cases: HIV apparently did not arrive until the early to mid 1980's
- most cases are in people who have travelled to other parts of the world where it is more widespread, or who have contact with travellers from elsewhere (eg, prostitutes)
- Eastern Europe, North Africa, Eastern Mediterranean, Asia, most of the Pacific

How do you get AIDS?

Studies throughout the world continue to show that there are only three ways to get HIV, the virus that causes AIDS:

1. sexual intercourse, gay or straight,
2. exposure to infected blood or donated organs or semen, through
 - a) blood transfusions (this is rare in Canada as all blood is now screened, but it continues to be a major problem in developing countries who don't have the funds to screen)
 - b) sharing needles among drug users,
 - c) donated organs or semen that have not been screened;
3. from infected mother to child before, during or immediately after birth.

Native students...The struggle

by Catherine Louli

Bev Scow is a native woman of the Kwagwiltz first nation, and a student at the University of British Columbia in political science. Sherri Chisan is a native woman from Saddle Lake first nation, and a recent graduate from Lethbridge University in business management, with a specialization in business enterprise and self-governing systems for Indian, Inuit and Métis people. They are two very courageous women, fighting for basic rights — the right to an education.

Post-secondary education for native peoples has been considered a treaty right from as far back as these two women can remember.

"We don't have parents that can pay for education, we don't get good jobs," explained Bev.

When Treaties 1 through 11 were signed between the federal government and the first nations people, education was guaranteed as a right. This government has chosen to attack this basic right of native peoples, as it has with so many other programs in the country. The federal government is now arguing that the treaties do not specify **post-secondary education**.

Sherri explained "that the biggest problem with the new program is that it has been unilaterally designed and implemented. This program is paternalistic and colonial!"

The new program that the federal government wishes to implement is the Post-Secondary Assistance Plan. In a nutshell, what the program proposes to do is put a cap on financing, thereby limiting the number of native students studying, and to reduce the time allotment to finish a degree.

"Basically a bunch of civil servants and non-natives are going to decide how many



native students will receive an education, and how long they will be able to study for," added Bev.

I asked both women why a hunger strike? Bev explained:

"It's not a hunger strike, it's a hunger fast. Fasting is traditionally and spiritually based. What I mean is that fasting is a cleansing process, it opens you to spiritual connections emotionally and mentally to deal with the world."

Has there been a backlash to the hunger fast from the media? I asked.

"The backlash has been from the government," said Sherri, "telling the media that we are demanding too much, and yeah, I guess some people don't believe a fast is really happening. Maybe some people want a student to die. That's not the purpose of the fast, a fast is a ritual. All you consume are clear liquids, it's not a mysterious thing. Maybe it's mysterious if you're not familiar with the culture."

There is little doubt that the fast has had several effects other than spiritual cleansing. The first is public

awareness of the problem with education and native peoples — the media has covered this question extensively. The second effect is that native peoples from across Canada have united on this question and have built a solidarity network that will last beyond this particular crisis.

"The solidarity was there, we tapped into it, and the native peoples all connected," explained Sherri.

The leadership during the past month seems to have stemmed from the women. I asked both these women if this was unusual in native society.

"There are no clear cut answers. Some native societies are patrilineal, others are matrilineal, but women are the protectors of society," Sherri said. "When we arrived in Ottawa, the native women's centre opened its doors to us, and brought us under their wing."

This issue reaches far beyond the question of the government capping funds to native education support. It has everything to do with being treated as a partner in matters

which directly affect natives. Although the Mulroney government campaigned on consultation, native students are not consulted, nor are the elders.

The native students have asked for a moratorium, until they have a chance to discuss these proposed changes with other natives and present their opinions to government officials. The government has refused this suggestion flat out, stating that native students were being unreasonable.

I asked both these women what they will do should a moratorium be refused.

"I refuse to believe that will happen, I just can't think that way," stated Bev.

These students will continue to have hunger fasts, protests, petitions, and letter-writing campaigns. They will continue to seek support from different groups across the country. They will continue their struggle, telling this government and all future governments that the native

peoples of this land continue the struggle for equality, and this group of youth will not tire out!

If you wish to help the First Nation Student Network, please write to Prime Minister Mulroney, and send a copy of your letter to Pierre Cadieux, Minister of Indian Affairs, explaining to this government your opposition to the capping of funds for native education assistance, and the total lack of consultation.

If you would like more information, please write to:

First Nation Student Network,
c/o The Native Women's Association,

600 - 251 Laurier Ave. West,
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5J6

These students have no funding. If you or your organization wish to make a donation, it would help in the struggle. Please send all donations to the same address as above.

Catherine Louli works for the Canadian Federation of Students.

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

Statement of purpose

1. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives was founded in 1980 to promote research on economic and social issues facing Canada. The Centre monitors current developments in the economy and studies important trends that affect Canadians. Membership in the CCPA is open to individuals and organizations.
2. Through its activities the CCPA wants to demonstrate that there are thoughtful alternatives to the limited perspectives of business research institutes and many government agencies.
3. The Centre is committed to putting forward research that reflects the concerns of women as well as men, labour as well as business, churches, cooperatives and voluntary agencies as well as governments, minorities and disadvantaged people as well as fortunate individuals.
4. To achieve its ends the CCPA publishes research reports, sponsors conferences, organizes briefings and provides informed comment on the issues of the day from a non-partisan perspective.



For more information about the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
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Women and AIDS cont'd from page 26

physically abused by her partner and thrown out onto the streets.

This discrimination may happen to any woman, regardless of how she contracts the disease. She may suffer her abuse from the very partner who infected her in the first place.

She may be shunned by her community because her husband died from AIDS, even if she is not infected. In societies where widows are traditionally provided for by other family members, this rejection threatens her survival and that of her children.

Prejudice against AIDS victims is not restricted to women, but men tend to have higher incomes, more property, better legal rights, and other advantages that women do not.

AIDS also reveals already existing prejudices, as shown by the racist response in North America to early data showing that Haitians were a "high-risk" group.

This bigotry heaps even more pain on women, men and

children who are already suffering enormously from trying to cope with the disease.

It also makes the disease more dangerous. As WHO points out, if people who have the disease are stigmatized and rejected by society, then they will avoid health authorities and generally take steps to avoid detection. This makes it extremely difficult to get information to them on how to prevent the further spread of the disease.

In one Caribbean country, women detected as HIV-positive at pre-natal clinics risk being deported. As a result, women stayed away from the clinics in droves, on the off chance that they were infected. Obviously, this defeats the whole purpose of having the health system in the first place.

Women care for the sick

Women, so often responsible for caring for the sick in societies around the world, will face enormous

responsibilities in coping with the AIDS crisis. This includes both paid health workers and women who care for members of their family or community without pay.

Women health workers face additional risks of infection. This is not so much the case for hospital and paramedical workers, where protective gloves and clothing are available. However, traditional midwives and birth attendants, who don't have this protection, may be exposed to large amounts of contaminated blood when assisting at deliveries by HIV-infected women. Birth attendants often do hard manual labour, such as farming, and frequently have cuts and scrapes on their hands or arms, which increases the risk of infection.

The report is entitled "Effects of the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) on the advancement of women", from the Commission on the Status of Women, of the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

Below is an article based on a speech done in Saskatoon for International Women's Day.

The Women's Movement -

by Joan Riggs

In Canada today, the circles of women who are willing to proudly stand as feminists may be smaller but the pressure to conform by anti-woman forces is being met with a persistence to protect ourselves and a passionate belief and sheer determination to be heard.

That passionate belief in women, in feminism, in a movement, must be matched by the existence of healthy organizations that can harness that force. And therefore, our movement must be filled with healthy women. Because the bottom line is that **we**, the women, are our organizations.



Hope Osborne.

We must ask four things of any women's organization we get involved in: respect, appreciation, challenge and safety. I have walked through many doors in the last ten years and recently I have walked out of many of them, as the four things I need are not there.

My response has not been a unique one. Many women have left the "movement" to pursue feminism in a way that is less harmful to women. For some women it has meant returning to the home to raise non-sexist children (the greatest challenge for us all). For others it has been to leave to create our own businesses, organizations or environments that provide growth, challenge and safety.

With my partner, Lynne Tyler, I left the organized women's movement and created *The Womanist*, a national women's newspaper.

At *The Womanist* I feel that I can be true to myself and my politics. Ironically, I felt I had to leave the formal women's movement in order to be free to empower and enable myself and other women.

Martin Luther King Jr. once said "It is not a weakness, but a sense of high maturity, to rise to the level of self-criticism." The women's movement has reached that maturity.

I see the slow death of many women's organization around me. Their demise relates to a number of common

themes running through every women's organization in Canada today.

First we are confronted with the outside world. Feminist organizations are under constant attack by anti-woman forces, in part represented by R.E.A.L. Women.

A few years ago R.E.A.L. Women shouted exclusion from funding, from women's groups, from the media. Since then they have been given ample room by the male-stream media to be heard.

And how did we as feminists respond to R.E.A.L. W.? We did not take them seriously.

R.E.A.L.W. hit a nerve in this country. They addressed issues that the movement was not adequately dealing with. When R.E.A.L.W. appeared, it was an opportunity for the women's movement to acknowledge that we had made a mistake...that Betty Friedan's concept of work and the oppression of housewives did not encompass all women. For many of us it is not fulfilling to work for \$4 an hour in a factory.

For many women it is not fulfilling to provide our children with inadequate child care because there are no daycares and we have to go out to work. It is not fulfilling to have to hold down two jobs just to survive. For some women the idea of being able to stay home is an economic luxury greatly desired and not equated with oppression.

When R.E.A.L.W. appeared it would have been an important time to reaffirm our basic bottom line that all women's choices are valid. And that homemakers are equally important members of the women's movement.

R.E.A.L.W., through their propaganda have made us anti-life, anti-family. They have appropriated our language and our money.

R.E.A.L.W. received \$21,000 for their recent conference called "Equality Revisited." R.E.A.L.W. do not support the common international understanding of the word "equality" so how did they get the money? They used our words and they understood the nature of Secretary of State money.

Women's organizations, on the other hand, seem to have some trouble understanding the nature of Secretary of State funding.

It is government money. And it will be doled out based on political will, especially with a Conservative government that believes in buying votes and rewarding their friends.

Government money has defined the issues, activities and events we hold and ultimately it has defined the organizations of the movement. As a *Toronto Star* columnist recently put it, "As NAC goes, so goes feminism." What about the millions of other women who organize outside of NAC? Are we not the women's movement because the government doesn't give us money?

Government money gives Conservative backbenchers like Jim Jepson, a former MP

from London, Ontario, the "right" to censor our events, to define for women what was appropriate or inappropriate.

Government money does not allow us to spend money on our own agendas. Government money responds to political agendas and women are increasingly not on that agenda.

There is no longer a common belief in this country (if there ever was) that certain citizens are discriminated against and that the money Secretary of State provides is needed to ensure that those citizens have organizations to advocate on their behalf. Now, we have men shouting that they are being discriminated against. And they are being believed.

R.E.A.L.W. and others state that there are justifiable reasons that certain people are discriminated against. Women are after all, women first with responsibilities to childbearing and family before all else. Homosexuals are sick and need to be cured or punished. And those that say these things are being believed.

The threat of having our funding cut has become a way to control the movement.

Secretary of State money controls the way we conceptualize the movement. If we don't have the right idea to receive money than it isn't worth it. But that is a lie. The ideas that are worth pursuing, the actions worth creating may never receive Secretary of State sanction, but they always need the support of women.

And that is where lie the most complex barriers to women's organizations. The real threat to women's organizations is ourselves. We need to believe in ourselves and other women.

Women's organizations are in serious trouble today because we have a fear of leadership, because a high level of insecurity exists in individuals in the movement; and because we lack structures in organizations to cope with our workload and our problems.

Part of our response to the patriarchy has been to be anti-

power and anti-leadership. Yet, paradoxically, by being anti-power we have undermined our own movement.

One of the goals of the women's movement is to promote and foster self-determination. As women find and live their own lives they gain power - a power based on energy, strength and effective interaction. In turn we need to make use of that power to serve ourselves and other women. Not turn against these women.

Yet repeatedly the women's movement has responded to individual women's leadership and power as being unhealthy.

We are suspicious of the woman who is successful. She has something that the rest of us don't: a middle-class background, connections, the "right" color.

In part that is true. Yet, the woman who is in the movement making good use of her resources, acquired through her privilege, is not a woman to condemn. She is a woman to make use of, teach, support and learn from. We cannot decry the lack of resources available for women to reach their full potential on the one hand, and not accept each woman's unique set of skills,



cpf

emotions and attributes she brings to the movement, on the other hand.

We discount a successful woman as somehow being politically impure, as being compromised. We find fault with her work. We do not celebrate her achieving a profound sense of her self and

of offering her energies to the movement.

The women's movement today has a vacuum in leadership.

Audre Lorde says "The recognition of privilege is the first step in making it available for wider use, when we do not shrink from who we are, we do not deny who we are, we learn to use who we are in the service of what we say we believe in."

Each woman has some power, some privilege and thus some opportunity to do something for herself or another woman. Enabling does not need to be a forceful act or even an obvious one. It is merely the acknowledgement of a woman's reality, the confirmation that she is not crazy, the belief in her that she deserves love and attention. It is the simple reminder that you recognize that women are compassionate, responsible, intelligent and able to make decisions about our own lives.

Something women's organizations could benefit from is mutual accountability: the "leaders" accountable for carrying out action and enabling participation, the members for giving direction to the leadership and participating in some part of the action.

We are all leaders at some time, and we are all followers, whether in collectives, in hierarchies, or in any structure. In some instances, we act in both roles at the same time. Each of these roles requires skills.

As members of the women's movement, we must ensure our leaders know what we expect of them, what we will do to support them, and how we will hold them accountable.

Women must be secure to accept leadership and they must feel safe. We need to understand leadership as making use of the privilege that some women have and ensuring the power of each woman.

When women feel they cannot speak in the safety of the movement we remove any potential for healthy leadership to grow and develop.

When we, as women, abdicate responsibility for choosing our leadership we open the doors to the media and Secretary of State to choose. And they choose our spokeswomen based on how attractive they are, how articulate they are and whether they say what they want to hear. The result is that we allow the media to contain and control our political messages.

cont'd on page 29

National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada

National Office:
Suite 1102, 251 Laurier Ave West
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5J6
(613) 232-0689

Organisation nationale des femmes immigrantes et femmes appartenant à une minorité visible du Canada

moving beyond the strife

Maureen McTeer has recently been making national headlines because she has noticed that "the traditional women's movement seems crippled and divided." This is not a new story, especially amongst feminists, but it only became news because Maureen McTeer is recognized by the mainstream media as legitimate. We need to make our movement and women legitimate by taking leadership seriously.

be and what we are. We remain the victim, powerless and isolated from other women who do not share the same oppression.

The second identity is through the movement. This is the workaholic's identity. We give ourselves over to the movement. When something goes wrong in our organization, it loses money, a project fails we are crushed. We have lost ourselves.

Women's organizations at

But why do we not self-identify? Why are we not all pursuing the joyous road to self-determination?

Unclear identities lead to insecure women. And insecure women build insecure organizations. And the circle continues. Secure women strategize differently. We don't react to things. We prepare our positions, our expectations and we go after what we want because we have a right to have it.

The focus on victims has been, in part, an unconscious attempt to not take responsibility for the power we may have as women.

It is important to move from bemoaning that we receive only 64¢ on the dollar to recognizing that 64¢ can wield some power. With our 64¢ we can choose what and who we buy from. We can boycott what we object to.

With our 64¢ we can make changes amongst ourselves as women to acknowledge that it is only white women making 64¢. This does not mean that we stop demanding our rightful \$1.00 but we make use of what power is available to us.

"Power is the one force in the universe that is never wasted. In other words, if we do not use our power, it will be used by some other force." (Audre Lorde)

It is interesting to see who chooses to identify themselves as victim. My mother was a woman of colour and an immigrant woman. She felt alienated from the women's movement because she did not perceive herself as a victim. She was a survivor and a success.

In the last six years I have been on a board with poor women who live in public housing. They do not define themselves as victims. To self-identify as victims would take away the energy they need to survive the everyday tedium of poverty.

Often times, it is the women who are relatively privileged in the movement who hold onto the victim label. By lumping all women together as victims, a woman does not need to recognize that she may have access to more power than another woman. And with that privilege comes responsibility.

Feminist identity is not something like a badge that gets pinned on certain women. It comes about as part of a process of self-determination. It is not even an identity that we grow into. The feminist identity must incorporate the experiences of each woman who identifies as such. It is not based on her skin color, or her sexual orientation, or her political or organizational affiliation but her commitment to herself and other women.

Feminism has become associated with a morality - a correct line - a list of issues - an organization. It is none of those things. It is a politic. It is a perspective on life.

Feminism as a politic has as its content, as its foundation, an understanding

of women's lives. But if we do not talk honestly as women we will not have the very foundation to build a movement. A revolutionary politic is a world view that anyone can hold and that all people must hold eventually.

The critical question we must ask ourselves today is what is our vision? Women's power is based on the strength of each woman living her vision

nurture and support our organizations when we do the same for ourselves.

I would like to close with Bell Hooks, a black feminist theorist, from a talk she gave two years ago in Montreal.

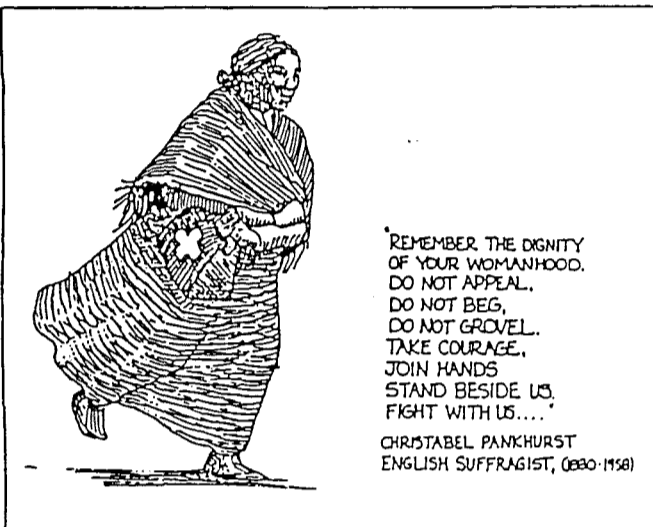
"Feminist movement should not promote and encourage despair. All revolution struggle is directed towards enhancing life. Revolution is the life force which liberates our consciousness and affirms our humanity.

Love is the practice which seeks to nurture and enable growth. As we work to be loving, to create a social environment, a culture that celebrates life, that makes love possible, we move against domination, against dehumanization."

Self-determination.

Empowerment. All the words we use are about love of women and of ourselves. Let's begin today.

Joan Riggs is the co-publisher and editor of *The Womanist*.



We like to run our group and organizations as collectives allowing everyone to be part of the decision making process. Yet, maybe every woman is not ready to take responsibility for the decision. Decision-making and responsibility are the flip side of the same coin. By creating organizations where no one is accountable but everyone is accountable we perpetuate the male lawmakers who rule over our bodies but take no responsibility for the babies born of our body. We become like the polluters who decide on the fate of our drinking water but want no responsibility for the clean-up of our dying planet and people.

Insecurity in a woman is a profoundly sad thing because it blinds her to her own abilities and potential and that of others.

Insecurity in women's organizations manifests itself in many ways from denying and accepting informal and formal leadership to the constant under-handed manipulation that is characteristic of women's organizations today.

Insecurity manifests itself most profoundly in the need for women to not take their identity from themselves but from other sources of identity. Most of us, in part, identify by our oppression. For some of us it leads us to a greater understanding of ourselves and others. For others, we bear our oppression as a badge and we become professional victims. I identify as a lesbian yet that is not all of my identity. I am also a daughter of an immigrant woman. The daughter of a woman of colour. I am many things, not all of them related to my simply being woman.

By identifying only through our oppression we can have no pride or vision of what we may

this point thrive on this type of woman because she is a great, selfless worker, often having no other priorities to interfere with her work. Yet the cost is her own personal self-determination. And ultimately the loss of her unique voice from the movement.

The third form of building identity is through ideals. Part of the evolution of the movement is to discover ideas but when we get fixed to one idea we become dogmatic and closed. Our ideals become politically correct standards and they further oppress women.



It is the kiss of death when an organization does not represent a body of ideals that is fluid and evolving but instead represents a party line. It means they deny the basic tenet of feminism - self-determination.

The final identity is through relationships. The energy of the person and an organization becomes focused almost exclusively on the internal dynamics. How do we feel about each other? Because of our insecurity, the more we focus on how others feel about us, the more we can begin to deny ourselves in order to be accepted.



of herself. If each woman, reaches deep inside of herself and acts upon that one feeling of self-expression we should see a fundamental shift in the world.

In closing, I want to return to my original point. Women's organizations are made up of individual women. We can only

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The faces of motherhood

It didn't take many months of motherhood before I realized that I felt out of step with not only many of the mothers I knew but out of sync as well with the image of the contemporary woman who can "have it all." As a full-time mother at home I felt implicitly criticized by a society that seems to assume that all women -- even mothers of young children -- should be working outside the home.

I reached out for support from other women at home but found that the mothers I initially connected with lacked an analysis of the oppressive ways in which mother work is structured in our society. I shared their commitment to a mothering style which accepts the dependence and intense demands of young children, but I also wanted my needs as a woman to be affirmed. I also wanted acknowledgement that the conditions in which most women mother are oppressive and make it almost impossible to nurture our children well. As a child-centred feminist, I felt myself to be an anomaly. It took me several years to discover that I wasn't the only at-home mother who considered herself a feminist.

Aware of the feminist critique of the homemaker role, I had approached the experience of being a mother at home with misgivings. Feminists point out that mothering and housework have little status in our society. More importantly, the role can isolate women in the home, preventing them from taking an active role and gaining power in the public sphere.

As well, homemaking can encourage a man to assume that child care and housework are primarily women's work. In addition, homemaking makes a woman financially dependent and can leave her destitute in old age or in the event of a marriage breakdown. Years in the home can also make it very difficult to re-enter the work force. The economic vulnerability of women at home is of particular concern because the family is not

always a safe haven for women and children.

I struggled to work out arrangements in my own life that would counter some of these problems. My partner and I chose to live in a co-op household with several other women. This arrangement lessened my isolation, provided us with occasional child care, and lightened the burden of household chores, giving me more time for other pursuits. While my schedule became too hectic at times, I pursued a wide range of interests outside the home, partly to gain skills, but primarily because of my need to establish and maintain a strong sense of identity separate from my mothering role.

Pregnant with my second child, I took on a part-time job with a parent-child resource centre, organizing and animating support groups for at-home mothers. I discovered that while many women at home may not use overtly feminist language to describe the problems inherent in the homemaker role, they are aware of most of them. In numerous discussions with other women at home, I found that the same concerns were expressed time and again.

Women find isolation and lower self-esteem major occupational hazards of being a woman at home. They describe stresses due to living on one income and some express an uncomfortable awareness of being financially dependent. Some have a sense that they are no longer part of the "real" world, that they are on the sidelines. Many have concerns about losing marketable skills and about their ability to re-enter the work force. And some have concerns about losing their sense of independent identity, separate from family.

But by far the strongest consensus among women at home is that being a full-time mother lacks status, recognition, and support in our society. Mothers at home are invariably quite sensitive about this lack of status. Most feel that there is a general societal pressure to work outside the home, an implicit message that any reasonably intelligent, reasonably well-educated woman would not spend any significant period of time at home raising children. Some mothers experience direct challenges about their decision from family, former co-workers and friends. Given the social climate, it is not surprising that women at home often feel defensive about their choice and at times criticized and unappreciated.

So why do some women continue to choose full-time homemaking and mothering especially if they have ambivalent feelings about their choice? There are a variety of reasons. An obvious assumption is that a woman has chosen at-home mothering partly because her family can afford it. While this has some truth to it, many mothers at home bristle at the suggestion that they are privileged, well-off women. In fact, at-home mothers are less likely than their working counterparts to have a post-secondary education and their families are not necessarily in a high-income group.

Many mothers at home have made the decision to remain at home because they want more time with their children and they are not comfortable having their children cared for by someone else for long periods no matter how qualified the substitute caregiver. In discussing their reasons for staying at home, women mention their desire to pass on their own values and ways of dealing with the world to their kids. Some say that they do not want to interrupt

"choosing" to work outside the home or "choosing" at-home mothering as if women today had real choices -- a smorgasbord of options.

While the conditions of at-home mothering may be difficult, many women find the available alternatives even less acceptable. Women talk about the impossibility of sandwiching "quality" time into the beginning and end of the day. Many feel that the price to pay for trying to juggle family and domestic responsibilities with paid work is just too high. They would rather attempt to live their lives sequentially, setting aside a few years exclusively for child rearing and then resuming paid work when children are older.

Most mothers at home today are not making a long-term career out of homemaking but are choosing to remain at home full-time only while their children are small. Since most women today are having only one or two children, women at home are an ever changing group as they move into and out of the labour force.

However, too often we separate mothers at home and mothers in the work force into

domestic responsibilities equally with their working wives.

As well, women in the labour force have traditionally been ghettoized in jobs that are often an extension of the kinds of work women do in the home -- service-oriented jobs which are usually ill-paid and low in status. The low status work done for free by women in the home is a magnified, more extreme version of the kind of work that many women do in the labour force. For example, it is no accident that child care workers and domestic workers are almost always women and that they are usually very poorly paid.

I doubt that much of the paid work women will ever be properly valued until we start to value the work that women have been doing for free. Valuing the traditional kinds of work done by women means making this work more visible and acknowledging that it is indeed work.

In our society we have a great deal of trouble recognizing unpaid work as work. Our language about homemaking is revealing. In response to that dreaded question, "What do you do?", many mothers at home answer, "I don't work." Most women seem to have given up saying "I'm just a housewife," but you usually do hear the comment "I don't work." But I think more of us are learning to say "I don't work outside the home," or "I don't work for pay."

The work involved in domestic labour -- mother work and housework -- has remained largely invisible, partly because it has been hidden in the home, but also because men have refused to participate in it, remaining willfully ignorant of just what is involved.

Mothers at home themselves often have trouble recognizing what they do as work, although they bristle at the question "What do you do all day?" because of the implied suggestion that whatever they do cannot amount to much.

**For the hand
that rocks the cradle
is the hand that
rules the world.**

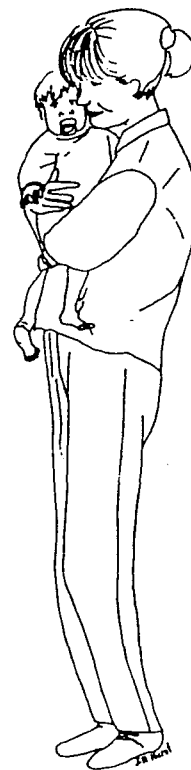
William Ross Wallace

breastfeeding before their child is ready; all talk about how much they enjoy witnessing the tremendous growth and development that take place in the early years. For many women, myself included, these positive aspects balance the difficulties inherent in at-home mothering.

Some women choose at-home mothering because they can't afford the alternative. A woman may not be able to find a job which would cover child care costs and increased expenses for food, clothing and transportation. And it may not be possible to find day care of acceptable quality, whatever its cost. Similarly, there are many mothers in the labour force whose reasons for being there are primarily financial. Too often we talk about

two distinct groups, assuming that they are somehow quite different from each other. But women working in the labour force have not escaped much of the work traditionally done by women at home. They are still shouldering most of the domestic and emotional work of the family. An increasing number of families are led by single women who do not have a partner to share responsibilities with and in two-parent families it has been well documented that husbands rarely share family and

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May Celebrations: The difference between what we say and what we do

by Rosemary Sullivan

May, the time when the earth lies uncovered again. The snow gone. Green life beginning to return. Boots discarded. New shoes clicking on the sidewalk. The earth is still too cold for bare feet.

Memories of May from my childhood at a catholic school: the May procession for the Blessed Virgin Mother, walking in straight lines across the grass in special shoes, dressed in a special white dress, head clamped with a white veil. Memories of my body being told to be still, don't move, don't run down the hill, don't run through the field, don't make a sound.

In 1870, after tending the wounded in the American Civil War, Julie Ward Howe started a two-year crusade to institute Mother's Day. This same woman who had written *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* to sing as those soldiers marched in their war procession now issued a new cry:

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

general interests of peace." Mother's Day was to be a day for peace.

In 1907, Anna Jarvis, an American schoolteacher, set out to get national recognition for Mother's Day after her own mother's death. She began what has been called one of the most successful one-person letter-writing campaigns in history. She contacted congressmen, governors, mayors, newspaper editors, ministers and business leaders throughout the United States. They listened and on May 8, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson signed a Proclamation designating the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day.

But are "Mothers" really loved and cherished in our society, our world? Yes, the British have long had "Mothering Sunday" and the

American effort has spread all over the world, through the card-selling business efforts, no doubt. But how does our world really respond to "mothering", to bloody childbirthing, to life-affirming values?

Whatever makes money is valued. But the natural chaos of all those things that have to do with women, their motherbodies, their blood, their "pre-menstrual" experience, their kitchen meetings and messes, their sharing and caring more about life than profits, their voices raised in protest of killing, are these really valued? Or are they dressed in white and told to hold in their stomachs and keep their mouths shut?

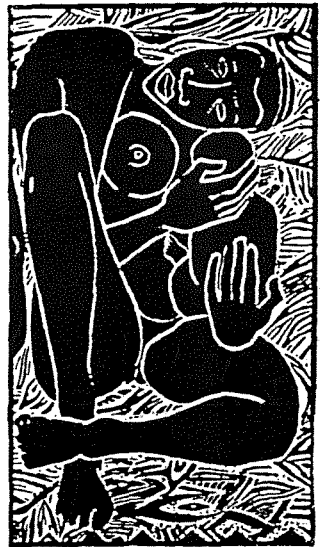
This May, I covered my body loosely with bright colours, and I put feathers and flowers in my hair. I wore

comfortable shoes, and went to Ottawa to join all those who do care in protest of the international arms exhibition, ARMX.

On May 22, Lansdowne Park was full of killing machinery made by Canadian manufacturers. From May 23 to May 25, ARMX displayed these wares to a crowd of 10,000 buyers and users of military equipment from around the world. This exhibition wasn't open to the general public, only to "bona fide buyers, prospects or users", according to the publicity.

These "bona fide buyers" were from countries that have repressive military regimes, like South Korea and Taiwan; countries involved in wars, hostilities and human rights violations, like Algeria, Argentina, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Brazil, Burma, Chad, Chile, Columbia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syria, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Uganda, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Zambia. War and repression are big business.

According to the Public Accounts of Canada, cited in Project Ploughshares working paper of 1986, there are 80



The faces of motherhood

Canadian companies involved in military production, including Bell Helicopter, GE, Honeywell, Litton, Northern Telecom, and Westinghouse. These companies get millions of dollars of our tax money through grants from the government. These same companies in 1987 gave \$439,109 in political donations to the PC's and \$16,101 to the Liberals.

What do we really value? If you believe in life and want to make a May-time statement, use your body and your voice to write letters to your MP, newspaper, minister, anyone you can think of to tell them you oppose Canada's involvement in war for profit.

Rosemary Sullivan is an activist and healer who writes a weekly column for the *Sherbrooke Record* in Quebec.

Feminism and women at home cont'd from page 30

The work is obscured because at the end of the day the meals are eaten, the clothes are dirty and the house is untidy, yet again. So often, the day disappears in a blur of interruptions, small upsets and unrecognized accomplishments. As well, we assume that work which we are doing out of love, particularly child care, is somehow not work.

Although mother work and housework are often invisible and lacking in recognition, domestic work is obviously socially useful and important work. I believe that society will only value domestic work sufficiently when some of the parenting done in the home is paid work and when men participate more equally in domestic work.

I do not believe that homemakers should be paid wages for housework from public funds; after all, every family has housework to do. However, I believe that parental care of young children should be recognized as part of a comprehensive child care policy; and any policy should include improved maternity and parental benefits. As we move towards greater governmental support of day care, we must be careful not to overlook once again the child care work done by mothers at home. This, too, is deserving of support and must be integrated into any child care policy which claims to be comprehensive. Increased governmental funding of non-parental child

care, although vitally necessary, will penalize parents who care for their children at home unless mechanisms can be found which also support parental care. Such mechanisms could include community support services such as parent-child resource centres as well as direct benefits to parents, beyond paid maternity and parental leave.



Some feminists balk at supporting long-term parental child care, objecting to anything which might encourage women to remain at home since this choice can be detrimental to women. But is our only answer that women should flee the home in an attempt to escape the burdens of mother work and housework? I think it is time we acknowledged the ambiguities and complexities in our lives. At-home parenting can be

tedious and burdensome, but it can also be creative and challenging. The home is not always a safe place, but it is not simply a place of exploitation and oppression for women. The home can be a place where parents, with support, can lovingly nurture their children.

Unfortunately, many women at home have felt left behind and left out of the women's movement. At-home mothers are often unaware of the work feminists have done which is of benefit to women at home -- work such as establishing transition homes and more equitable family law, and promoting pensions for homemakers. Instead, women at home focus on the ambivalent and sometimes overwhelmingly negative reaction many feminists have to the homemaker role.

Yes, feminists have uncovered and enumerated too often invisible work traditionally done in the home, and demonstrated its significance to the economy, but many feminists are unwilling to affirm the choice of being an at-home mother.

Too often, women at home are dismissed as a misguided, dying breed -- as if minority status makes their needs and concerns less worthy of attention.

While feminists are rightly critical of the role of women at home, it is presumptuous, I believe, to be judgmental about the choices women make in such an imperfect world. Feminists must continue to

affirm child care and domestic work as the real work that it is, and to support those who are doing such work.

Equally important are measures which would allow both men and women to balance family responsibilities with labour force participation. Such changes to the work place include flexible working hours, job-sharing, part-time



work with prorated benefits, and family responsibility leave. Although we are increasingly moving child care into the public sphere there are still parental and household responsibilities that, for the most part, will remain in the private sphere. We must take the burden of this work seriously. The work place has been designed by men and for men who have had women available to take care of child rearing and homemaking. We can not expect women to achieve success in the work place in the ways in which men have simply by providing day care.

In less than a generation we have moved away from a

monolithic model of motherhood, a single culturally sanctioned, "correct" way of doing things. Now there are many possible ways of mothering. But having moved away from the one supposedly "right" way -- a mother doing all the child care from birth through adolescence -- we seem to have lost our right to unconditional support for our decisions. No matter what arrangements you make for your child's care or whether you do it all yourself, there will be people, both individuals and organizations, who will be critical. I think we need to be gentler with one another and with ourselves, recognizing the enormous social changes that we are in the midst of.

And what of mothers at home? Are they a dying breed? I would hope not, since I believe that mothers need more time with their young children than they are currently experiencing. But I hope that the role evolves to include fathers as well as mothers, and that ultimately parents can combine family responsibilities and labour force participation more easily.

Maureen Kellerman is an Ottawa based feminist and Mom active in the group *Mothers are Women*.



The faces of motherhood

When she speaks to you, she always holds your hand. She is the last remaining person in the world to be fluent in the Tagish language and she proudly wears her beaded necklace next to her Order of Canada medal at official functions. Angela Sidney, in her eighties, a mother, grandmother, and friend to many spirits, is a woman of the North.

Judy was born in the Yukon in a remote area accessible only by boat or plane. She was raised by her family who ran a lodge on the Yukon River. Her ancestors had come from Britain. Today she is in her thirties, a widowed mother of five, an active trapper who makes her living from the land.

Margaret Joe is the first Indian woman Cabinet minister in Canada, a member of the New Democratic Yukon Government. Now Minister of Justice, she is also raising a grandchild. A long-time

advocate of Indian and women's rights, softball player extraordinaire, on the baseball circuit she's known as Muggsie.

And, there is Mary. She has a drinking problem, her children are in foster homes right now. She has been beaten many times by her husband, but things really started going wrong when she was raped at eleven years of age. She got a lot of help and strength from the women at the transition home; right now she's in an alcohol treatment program. She thinks she will make it this time and then will return home to her village.

These are just a few "women of the North." Not really so different from women everywhere, mothers, grandmothers living through good times and bad. Every woman has a story and because we are in a small community, we are able to share our stories, our joy and our pain in an intimate fashion. Unlike many city folk, we are not separated from each other by our class or our profession. We drink coffee at the same cafés and share our lives at the same meetings. It is one of the great joys of living in the North.

This intertwining of our past and our future is a constant thread of what happens in the community. There's not much talk any more of "non-traditional" occupations for women, because most

women have been pretty well doing a variety of jobs for a long time. Martha Louise Black, for example, left her husband and children in Seattle in 1898, headed for the Klondike, climbed the Chilkoot Pass during the Klondike Gold Rush, and upon arriving in Dawson City, found that she was pregnant. In 1936, at the age of seventy, she became the second woman in the Canadian Parliament, as MP for the Yukon.

In the 1970s, when there was no public transportation in



Whitehorse, a group of women got together and started a bus service. It is now the municipal bus system. A few years later, an Indian woman who had suffered repeated violence from her husband, got together with other women, became involved in politics and was the catalyst behind one of the first rural transition homes for women in Canada. Kaushee's Place, as it is now called, has operated successfully for a number of years, and has provided not only

accommodations for battered women, but has also helped raise the community's awareness of the issue of family violence.

All of this is not to say that women have not had to fight for the advances which they have made in the North. Women who choose a mining career still have a fairly rough time. But we also don't just accept things as they are without a fight. The first Supreme Court challenge under the Charter concerning the right of a woman to return to using her birth name was fought and won by a Yukon francophone woman.

Madeleine Gould, a Dawson City resident since 1946, won a landmark human rights ruling this year when she took the Yukon Order of the Pioneers to court for their policy against women members. Having been very active in the Order, Mrs. Gould just didn't think it was right that women were "allowed" to fundraise and hold social events, but still were not recognized as true pioneers. The Yukon Order has now appealed the ruling to the Supreme Court.

Women in the Yukon, as so many women everywhere, are continually examining our roles and our relationships within the community. The women's movement has begun to actively examine racism and to build coalitions with women of different backgrounds,



ages, and life circumstances. Priority issues for the women of the North include: improved child care; better supports for rural women; educational opportunities; equal pay, peace and international development; preserving the past and building a future for our children.

Our feminist newspaper, the *OptiMSt*, recently celebrated fifteen years of publication. The title of that edition perhaps best sums up my love for my home in the North -- **The Yukon: Where Men are Men and Women Pioneers!**

Audrey McLaughlin is the Member of Parliament for the Yukon.

Good luck, Audrey, and congratulations from *The Womanist* on becoming a candidate for the leadership of the national New Democratic Party.

Another look at Mother's Day

Mother's Day should be abolished. It is a sentimental contrivance of florists, candy-makers, the ecologically illiterate and male chauvinist pigs who enjoy tossing occasional bones to bed-ragged housewives.

The holiday has no tradition or wide appeal. It is without connection to ancient and lusty rituals, it is ignored the world over, and its vintage in America is recent and raw -- Philadelphia, P.A., 1907.

Why a day for motherhood? Is it not but one of many roles a woman might be born into? Why not an Aunt's Day, a Niece's Day? Why should procreation win the prize on this population-packed globe? Nothing wrong with babies, up to two, but no special virtue either.

Women have babies for many reasons, not all meritorious: because they are taught they ought, because they like to play with dolls, need company, because of tedium, or accident, to get ahead of the Joneses, to have someone little to push around for twenty years. Why a medal for this?

In place of a day for mothers, (I'm no simple iconoclast), how about honoring the people who adopt children? Now that would be a day to celebrate!

Father's Day? A mere afterthought of the Tie Industry and Bell Telephone, I leave it out of our discussion.

But many women most important in our lives never conceive or carry. You have your own precious list, I'm sure. I think of Emily

Dickinson, Florence Nightingale, Miss Steckelberg, a teacher of mine -- I forget the course matter, but never her generosity. These "barren" ladies I'll vote to kneel in honor of any day, in spring, winter, summer, or fall, for their surpassing, supra-uterine gifts to creation. May their fruitful tribe multiply over the earth!

We are indebted to mothers for half a life and many of us (myself included) for much more. But the much more hasn't to do with motherhood. It has to do with caring, respect, knowledge, responsibility. These qualities attach to persons, not ovaries.

So down with this cult of womb worship, this beatification of breeding, this Fallopian folly. Personhood, not impregnation, is the chief end of woman as of man. Mother's Day is an idol, and it's time to tie her tubes.

If Anna Jarvis can proclaim Mother's Day from a Methodist Church in Philadelphia in 1907, I can proclaim Woman's Day from a Universalist Church in South Weymouth, Mass. in 1971. Happy Woman's Day, ladies!

From a Unitarian Church bulletin, reprinted in the April 1988 newsletter of the Ottawa-based Infertility Self-Help Support Group

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The myth of motherhood

by Helen E. Cates



The faces of motherhood

This was a very difficult article to write, because of where I am in my life. It is delivered from the heart, wrapped in tears and grief. All the women I talked to about this subject told me their stories only if they could remain anonymous. Their children and their mothers are still alive and someday they hope for a better relationship with them.

I talked to: still married mothers battered by husbands, mothers who chose to be single parents, lesbian mothers, single parents not by choice, and women who were abused by mothers — that is something you never read about. The differences between the under-40 opinions and over-40 opinions is remarkable but not enough space to allow comment.

This has been a healing experience for me to know that I am not alone. The women I talked to are the face of motherhood. Even if we don't

fit into a national norm, our feelings are as valid as anyone else's. These women share with me a disillusionment with the face of motherhood.

The nuclear family just doesn't exist for me. Not to my knowledge. Once in a while I had friends who seemed to come from perfect families: one mother, one father, children, a dog, and a station wagon. The mother was there after work to pass out cookies and ask how the day went, but the fathers I hardly ever met. They were not my norm, and according to the statistics they are not anyone's norm. Over 1/3 of all adults live in single families, so that only leaves about another 2/3 in other kinds of families and we know that they are widely varied families.

This is not a research paper, this is not an unbiased piece of journalism. I looked around me. I asked questions. I got answers that proved to me that I am not isolated in my feelings and anger.

It is time we spoke out loudly about the negative side of Motherhood. There should be a book on the shelf that collects the experiences and wisdom of everyday mothers. Not the airy, fairy stories that appear on Mother's Day about how wonderful and special the relationship we had with our Mother was or is, and how overjoyed we are with motherhood. There should be a record of how difficult motherhood can be, not just the collected glow of saint-like mothers, but of the older, more experienced, and I boldly add, disillusioned ones.

Write to me with your experiences. I'm ready to write a book, and edit a book. I want to put together the true experiences of women. What is motherhood for you? Is it what you thought it would be?

If nothing else, we may be able to laugh together. I promise to answer each of your letters personally.

About me. I was under the

care of women as I grew up; my maternal grandmother, who held court in the throne room — actually the parlour on the chesterfield. She had a stroke in her late thirties, and never really left the chesterfield after that. She was a nurse before it was seen as a proper profession for young ladies, and brought up three children.

She was definitely strong, assertive, maybe a tad aggressive. My mother hated her, I adored her. I am not sure what a lady is but she wasn't it. She was not a perfect mother. My mother brought me up alone. We moved every year to avoid the rent increases. She was not perfect, either. I have been a single mother of four for five years, and I know I am not perfect. I have not lived up to anyone's ideals of mothering, not even my own.

My daughter brought home a biography that a teacher insisted she write. In it were the seeds of the beginning of the end. "My mother," she

wrote in her story, "if asked will tell you a heart-rending account of my birth." The sarcasm rings so sharp that tears rip at my heart. She has no idea how much I wanted her, and her brother and sisters. In that same story she wrote "my father is a successful engineer and my mother is a writer, but she hasn't written anything lately."

Once upon a time the fairy tale goes, all mothers were wise, kind, all-loving, forever caring, forgiving and magical. I knew that was true because I used to gaze fondly and wistfully at all artists' renderings of the ethereal images of the mother and child. I knew that there existed an all nurturing, perfect mother. We know that because all women are brought up to be nurturing, perfect creatures. It is our role; our lot in life.

Universally, women are fed up with myths, we are angry, we are disappointed with motherhood. We are fed up trying to live up to myths that don't exist.

The myth of motherhood: The propagation of an unreal glow of motherhood that draws and traps women to this day. There is no ethereal glow around motherhood. Half of the women I interviewed said that although they are happy their children are alive and well, they would not have become mothers if they knew the reality of motherhood. Motherhood is also tears and grief. We are sick of unreal images of motherhood; of roses, lace and candy.

Irene, a mother of four, told me, "I went to a counsellor, to get help for being upset that my children were going to go live with their father. 'I see a woman full of anger, and grief,' the counsellor told me. 'I'll help you grieve for your loss and handle your anger,' the counsellor said. I went away and thought about it and she was right. I really am full of anger and grief, but why should I learn to handle it?"

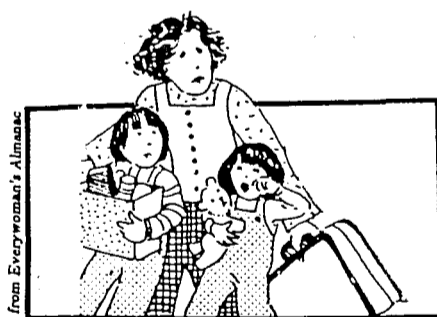
I once went to a psychiatrist, and asked him if he thought I was crazy because I was crying so much. He asked me why I was crying and I told him. He said, "Woman, if you weren't crying, I would think you were crazy." I thought about what he said a

lot and through the years I have used it to validate my feelings."

Joan told me, "My first child was born after a difficult, miserable pregnancy and was the fifth pregnancy. She was a miracle baby. Everyone was thrilled with her. She was bright-eyed, and full of wonder as she gazed around the labour room. All three after her were only a little bit more perfect, each so special in their own way. I planned to keep that

they can do it all. Over and over again women say "no problem I can do it all." They expect to be better mothers than their mothers. Most of them will succeed marginally, but at what cost? Most won't even live up to their own expectations.

One mother explained, "Everything I say, everything I do is responded to with 'Oh, Mom.' I remember saying the same thing to my mom, in the same tone of voice. My mom



open, trusting joy alive between me and all my children. It doesn't exist now that they are teenagers."

If you think children have modern views of motherhood, watch Tiny Talent Time, on your local cable station. Watch your generic versions of Tiny Talent Time featuring the tiny talented (I am never sure whether that means "tiny amount of talent or tiny in stature" — it seems to be both) when the MC, the clown, or the ring master asks each little tot what they want to be when they grow up. It hasn't changed much. The girls still say, "When I grow up I want to get married and be a mother." They sometimes add "I am going to be a doctor, lawyer, whatever." They boys never say "I want to be a father when I grow up."

The school counsellors report the same fantasy among our high school students. What has really changed? Nothing, except now they think

told me when I was growing up, 'Don't slump, stand up straight, and don't play with your hair.' Guess whose daughter always plays with her hair. Looking for split ends, I'm told. Looks real moronic looking through crossed eyes at the end of your own hair to see if it's split. Is that what my Mother thought of me?"

The real face of motherhood is tired, furrowed with worry and at the same time strong, determined and twinkling with laughter. Without laughter many mothers wouldn't make it to get up and face tomorrow.

My generation tried the motherhood and career bit. We are not ashamed anymore to say it is bull. My world does not include supermothers. It doesn't include superwives, superfeminists, or superwomen. It does include amazing women, resilient and struggling against odds and we are tired of the stories of

supermoms like, the own in **Expressions** magazine this month about the three talented women who have wonderful glowing relationships with their children, and all are living examples of super success and perfection. Most of us can't afford a horse, never mind a house, for our kids or private girls' schools. None of us are national broadcasters, actresses or opera stars.

But our children are still growing up thinking they can do it all; believing their mothers are failures because they haven't successfully combined motherhood and a career. We, on the other hand, tried to bring up our children believing they can do it all, be anyone, go anywhere. It has backfired on their mothers.

A friend decided to take off school and bake cookies one rare afternoon. When her daughter arrived home she said, "Oh, you've decided to bake like a real mother." Attitudes not learned at home, I assure you. No matter how feminist our views are the children are still bringing home unreal attitudes about motherhood and a family.

One university graduate explained, "I set out to do everything. I had my children, nursed two of them through Political Science 200, in the back row. I played and studied with them. I should have known it wouldn't work. I nursed every baby until they weaned themselves, often with a text book in the other hand. The writing was on the wall. When the babies were old enough, they used their free hand to try and knock the book out of my hand and pull my eyes to theirs. The first of many compromises to come — all choices between the children and a career."

"But they said I could have a career and be a great mother. I know they did! Who the hell were they! The top 1% of genius superwomen? I am just me, and I screwed up both career and childrearing. I am not alone. I pasted and coloured and played with my children, I read every theory of child rearing and in the end none of them were right."

My horizons are filled with single families headed by women, if not struggling financially, suffering emotion-

cont'd on page 34



Lucy Jochamowitz



The faces of motherhood

As an active feminist, mother, wife, and counsellor for abused women, I worry about the amount of time I spend away from my children. The following interview with my youngest daughter Natasha (age 12) helped me to view the situation differently. It started out as a discussion on what to get me for Mother's Day, and evolved into a talk that helped me see my daughter with a new understanding. I see her not only as a daughter, but also as a maturing adolescent who will help carry the torch of feminism.

Kay: Tash, what do you think Mother's Day is?

Natasha: Well, it is a day to celebrate mothers' and women's rights. Moms brought us into this world, and we

should thank them for that and the things they do and help you with.

Kay: Things they do and help you with?

Natasha: Mom tells us what is wrong and what is right, gives us advice, such as: Do your homework, then have fun. You have taught me how to do laundry, to cook, sew, pack wood, paint draw, shovel snow, fish and dig for worms! Gee, Mom, you taught me a lot of things!

Kay: What are the bad things Mom does?

Natasha: You can be impatient, make me do stuff, and don't do the same thing. You fall asleep with your good clothes on when you are tired; you put lots of popcorn in your mouth; and you tell me to put in one piece at a time. I have to do my share of the chores, I can't look at my favourite TV shows. You don't let me play games on the computer -- well, most of the games -- and you won't let me use a calculator for my math homework.

Kay: Speaking about math and computers, what do you think about school?

Natasha: It comes first, before anything else, my friends also.

Kay: Your friends seem to be quite important.

Natasha: They can be nice, but they can also be mean.

A mother and daughter

by Kay Nandlall and Natasha Nandlall



The one in the background is Nadia or Nadina, the one in the front right is my mom, Kay Nandlall, and the one in the striped sweater is Natasha Nandlall.

Kay: People can be mean to each other, Tasha. What does this tell you, for example, when you are older and would like to be in a serious relationship?

Natasha: Mom, when you tell me what happens to women (I work in a house for abused women), it tells me some men are cruel and I should be careful. I should get involved with people who treat me with respect, and would not take advantage of me or the relationship. Men think they

are better than women. (Giggle) I think we are better than they are.

Kay: You mentioned at the beginning of our discussion that Mother's Day is a celebration of women's rights also. Can you explain why you feel this way?

Natasha: Because it was women who helped us have the rights to go out and work and to be anything we please. We can be a fireperson or doctor; we do

not have to stay home and be housewives if we don't want to be. Men can stay home and do housework and look after babies. Women and men now have the choice.

Kay: What can you do to help the issue of women's rights?

Natasha: Write letters to the government. Speak up and demand our rights. Children should speak out, too, and not wait until they are women. I would like to ask women to come speak to us in school, and tell us what we can do to help. They should also tell us how to prevent the problems women are faced with now, like why women are abused, what problems may arise when marrying or living with someone. We should have a regular program in school.

Kay: Speaking about school, and what children should know, what do you think of fairy tales?

Natasha: I do not believe in them; it's somebody's wandering imagination.

Kay: Do you think we should explain the reality of fairy tales to children?

Natasha: Yes, before we read fairy tales, we should let the kids know it is just a fairy tale; it is only somebody's imagination.

The myth of motherhood

cont'd from page 33



ally. All do the best they can, some with less than others, but all care.

One woman expressed her frustration with motherhood, "I thought I would grow up to be a kind and loving mother close to my children. I felt in my heart I was making it, but now that my babies are almost teenagers it is like they are of another planet. Don't get me wrong, I'm a fairly modern woman. I go dancing every Saturday night, I love fun, I like wild clothes and wild music. I am university educated. I think I'm modern.

My teenage daughters treat me like a moron, and they like the music of the 50's that I couldn't stand then and don't much like the second time around. Now that we aren't close, the sacrifices I made don't seem worth it."

The idea that we can have it all -- a career and children is a myth. We are sold a bill of goods and we load ourselves down with guilt for not succeeding. We are only

beginning to let go of our guilt for not being superwomen, supermothers, superwives and superfeminists.

This article is not a lament for not measuring up to society's ideals but it is a claim that society has to change if we are to have both career and motherhood without guilt. Our daughters are still growing up thinking they can have it all. I am here to say it is not so, unless roles and choices are radically changed. I am not willing to be silent in my anger and let history repeat in its exploitation of women.

Until women decline the major responsibility of care and nurturance of men, children, relatives, the old, the sick and the differently abled, nothing is going to change. I am willing and able to share, and share only, in caring for others. I am willing to share power, money, domestic work and child care equally with those that I live with. Most importantly I am willing to accept the fact that I will nurture myself.

Looking around at the world and its lack of progress, my personal response to it is anger. I don't want to diffuse my anger, I am going to use it. I have every right to be angry, and I refuse to turn it in on me.

Until the message that women must share equally in all aspects of society: until we give up the role as primary nurturers; until all men and women accept this message; we live in never-never land, and the supermother fantasy goes on and on and on.

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What you always wanted to know about the budget but were afraid to ask

by Joan McFarland

What is a budget?

A budget is the government's proposed expenditures and revenues in the upcoming fiscal year (in this case, April 1, 1989, to March 31, 1990).

What is a deficit?

A (budget) deficit is when the government's proposed expenditures exceed the proposed revenues. A surplus budget is the opposite and a balanced budget is when proposed expenditures and revenues are equal.

Wilson has presented a deficit budget for the upcoming fiscal year:

Expenditures	\$142.9 billion
Revenues	\$112.4 billion
Deficit	\$ 30.5 billion

What is the debt?

The (public) debt is the accumulation of past deficits not compensated for by surpluses in other years. The Canadian public debt is expected to reach \$352 billion by the end of the 89/90 fiscal year. Because of this debt, \$39.4 billion of the government's proposed expenditures (e.g. of the \$142.9 billion) are for interest payments on debt.

How serious is the deficit/debt problem?

The \$2.7 billion campaign that the government has led urging us to "think of the future generations" is misleading and alarmist. Since the deficit is financed by money we owe ourselves (in contrast to the foreign debt which is money owed to foreigners), there is no danger of the country going bankrupt. We can print more money if it comes to that although such an approach would bring inflationary pressures.

Economists are not all in agreement about the seriousness of the deficit problem. See, for example, the *Globe and Mail* article, "Wrong Policy, Wrong Problem," (May 15) or the *Toronto Star* article, "Deficit not Problem Ottawa Says It is," (May 16). According to Keynesian policy (John Maynard Keynes was the most important economist of the twentieth century), a deficit budget is appropriate for an economy which needs stimulation -- e.g., where unemployment rather than inflation is the most serious problem. Many economists would argue that for anywhere in Canada, outside of Ontario, unemployment is our most serious problem.

What advantages would there be to reducing the size of the debt?

First, it would reduce our interest payments on the debt and thus allow more

expenditure on other programs. (Remember that the interest on the public debt is \$39.4 billion or some 28% of 89/90 expenditures). Second, a lower debt would allow lower interest rates -- having to attract funds from the public pushes up the interest rate. Third, it would allow a lower value of the Canadian dollar since a high interest rate attracts foreign funds which pushes up the value of the Canadian dollar. Fourth, it would help unemployment since a high value of the Canadian dollar causes unemployment by making our exports too expensive.

Are there hidden agendas in the government's budget?

Satisfying business and business' particular agenda is one aspect of this. All along there has been tremendous pressure on government by business to make trimming the deficit its number one priority. Ideologically, business wants government to cut its expenditures and put more and more of the economy in private hands (privatization). For practical reasons, business would like to see both a lower interest rate for the financing of investment and a lower value of the Canadian dollar for the sale of exports abroad.

The thrust of the budget also coincides with the government's free trade agenda. One of the most fundamental requirements for free trade with the United States is the harmonization of Canada-U.S. policies. This involves the withdrawal of anything the Americans might see as subsidies or incentives. Thus we can see in the budget the slashing of funds to Via Rail and Air Canada and less government contribution to unemployment insurance, day care, health, education and regional development programs, to name a few.

What measures does this budget take to reduce the deficit/debt?

Actually, the budget reduces neither the deficit (\$28.9 billion in 88/89, \$30.5 billion in 89/90) nor the debt (\$320 billion by March 1989, \$352 billion by March 1990). It only reduces them compared to what they might have been if spending and taxes were left unchanged.

The deficit has been tackled by increasing revenues (mainly taxes) and decreasing expenditures. The greatest burden (71% by one commentator's estimate), has been on the increased revenues: Revenue measures-\$3,956 million and Expenditure restraint measures: \$1,545

million

What are the major revenue measures in the budget?

The major revenue measures for 89/90 are:

• federal sales tax rate changes	\$795 million
• excise levy increases (gas & tobacco)	\$1,233 million
• personal income tax surtaxes	\$545 million
• large corporation tax & modification of surtax	\$410 million
• other measures	\$265 million
• savings from UI	\$425 million
TOTAL	\$3,695 million

What will be the impact of these revenue measures on women?

It is difficult to predict the specific impact of these cuts on women, apart from the UI changes which will affect seasonal and part-time workers especially hard. However, it is possible to say something about the impact on families at different income levels.

A progressive tax is a tax in which the rate increases for higher levels of income. The surtax, 5% of taxable income as of July 1, 1989 (3% for 1988 taxable income), is not progressive since the rate is the same for all levels of income. The newly introduced high income surtax of an additional 3% on high income level individuals (as of July 1, 1989) will, however, add some progressivity to the tax system.

The chartered accountant firm of Coopers and Lybrand have estimated that it is low middle-income families who have been hardest hit by the surtaxes in this and the last several budgets while affluent Canadians are better off than they were prior to tax reform in 1988.

For Canadians with taxable income of \$100,000, the marginal tax rates dropped from 53.88 % in 1987 to 46.48 % in 1988 and then will rise slightly to 48.03 % by 1990, still less than in 1987.

For Canadians whose taxable income is \$27,000, the marginal tax rate climbs steadily from 39.89% in 1987 to 41.97% by 1990.

Are corporations paying their fair share?

Corporations are able to avoid taxes by deferring them through the writing off of investments in plant and equipment at an artificially fast rate. (See Linda McQuaig's book, *Behind Closed Doors*, for more information on this). Broadbent gave the estimate that these "deferred corporate income taxes" now total more than \$39 billion.

The measures which are in the budget include a new minimum tax which is to be imposed on corporations worth more than \$10 million. Also, the Canadian Exploration and Development Incentive Program was withdrawn. A tax on banks which was talked about was not imposed.

What about the proposed goods and services tax (GST)?

The proposed goods and services tax will replace the

existing federal sales tax as of January 1, 1991. The tax will be 9% on all goods and services with the exception of basic groceries, prescription drugs, medical devices, residential rents, most health and dental services, day care, legal aid and most educational services. The tax is a regressive one (that is, opposite to progressive) in that the rate of tax is the same no matter what the level of income of the consumer. However, the government claims that income tax reductions for the lower middle class and a generous tax credit for the poor will leave these two groups no worse off.

The government also claims that the tax will be "revenue neutral" -- that is, the new GST won't bring in any more money than the federal sales tax it will be replacing. However, it is estimated that the new tax will cover 75% of all goods and services that are purchased (as compared to 33% before) and that it will raise the average family's cost of living by between 2.5 and 3%.

What are the major expenditure cutting measures for 89/90?

• Transfers to other levels of government (including child care)	\$265 million
• Major subsidies and transfers (including \$10 million for Secretary of State grants and contributions)	\$188 million
• Major payments to crown corporations (Via Rail, CBC, etc)	\$108 million
• Defense	\$575 million
• International aid	\$360 million
• Operations of government	\$ 49 million
TOTAL	\$1,545 million

What will be the impact of the expenditure cuts on women?

The major direct impact of the expenditure cuts on women come from the cuts in promised child care funding and the cuts to the Women's Program at the Secretary of State -- \$2 million of the \$10 million cut to Secretary of State was to the Women's Program.

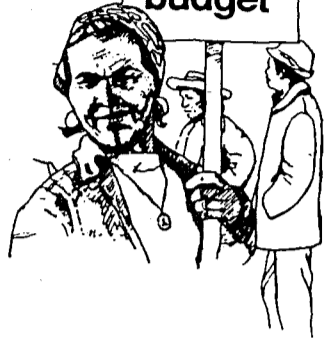
• Official Languages	3%
(\$1.5 million cut from \$30 million)	
• Multiculturalism	10%
(\$2 million cut from \$20 million)	
• Native Citizens	3.6%
(\$2 million cut from \$56 million)	
• Women's Program	15%
(\$2 million cut from \$13.2 million)	

The Established Programs Financing cuts (e.g., to the provinces for health and education) slated for 1990-91 of \$215 million must also be of major concern to women.

What is the attack on "universality" contained in the budget?

"Universality" is equal access to social programs regardless of level of income -- e.g., everyone gets Family Allowance, Old Age Security, medicare services, etc., even millionaires. Although Family Allowance and Old Age Security have already been made taxable, starting with the fiscal year 1989/90, those whose net income exceeds \$50,000 will have to repay their family allowance and old age

The 1989 federal budget



security payments. This is the so-called "clawback" provision in the budget.

What will be the regional impact of the budget?

The regions have been experiencing high unemployment while Ontario has been experiencing a boom. In this way, a deficit budget is appropriate for the regions. The recent crisis in the Atlantic fisheries with plant shutdowns and lay-offs makes that region's situation even worse than before.

With the budget, the poor regions are going to suffer from the cutbacks in transfers to the provinces -- health and education (starting 1990), day care and crop insurance. There will also be the very severe impact of the closing down of the military base at Summerside, P.E.I.

There are also cutbacks in funds to the Industrial and Regional Development program, development agreements with the provinces and the Atlantic Opportunities Agency (AOA). Cutbacks to Via Rail will also be particularly hard on the Atlantic Provinces.

Finally, the longer eligibility and shorter collection periods under the proposed UI benefits will affect all but the highest unemployment areas. Seasonal workers, e.g. in the fisheries, forestry, etc., will be especially affected as they may not be able to get the required weeks of work to be eligible for UI.

Where is more information about the budget available?

The Department of Finance has put out a package of documents entitled **Budget 89**. Most of the information you need is there if you look hard enough although the information is presented with a particular slant.

Also NAC, the Pro-Canada Network and the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Workers are sponsoring an across-the-country train trip to "get the budget on track." Those on the trains will join in protest activities at the various stops and provide information for those who want to fight the budget. For more information, contact NAC at (416) 922-3246.

Joan McFarland teaches Economics at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, N.B., and is the upcoming President of the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CCLOW).

Marlene Catterall

MP- Ottawa West

I welcome your calls and letters, and news of community events.



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"Give us tools and seeds" -

Graca Machel was Minister of Education in Mozambique for 14 years. She participated in negotiations for the 1974 agreement through which her country won its independence from Portugal. Currently, she is president of the Mozambique children's organization called the *Continuales* (the continuers), as well as president of the national commission of UNESCO, a member of the central committee of the governing Frelimo Party, a deputy of the people's assembly - the parliament of Mozambique, a member of the Mozambique women's organization.

She recently came to Canada on a tour sponsored by the World University Services. Below are excerpts of her speech at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

"Then they got angry and cut off one of my ears. They left me there bleeding and went off. I was cared with traditional medicines, but it took a year before I was really well.

"At the end of that year, I was kidnapped by bandits. I was trained at their base, learning how to dismantle and load arms. Also my job was to get water and wood. One day I was sent to get water and I took the chance to run away. I didn't know where I was going and wandered about. I arrived at an armed barracks and presented myself to the soldiers there." (He means Frelimo soldiers there.)

"They asked me where I had come from and when I said I had fled from the bandits, they asked me to take them to the base. I went there with the troops, but the base was

education today in Mozambique means to take into account that the one million and three hundred thousand children who are in school are somehow like Jose Sefamiej Mashawa.

So what does education mean to my country today?

We could think of education as buildings, equipment - children having comfortable schools and basic materials to learn. But this is not the case in Mozambique. School in our country, many times, means children and their teacher, sitting under a tree and, if it's necessary, trying to write on the soil. These children, with problems like Sefamiej Mashawa, are they really able to think, to concentrate, to learn geography, to learn maths, history and biology? Are they

who are refugees, with our economy destroyed as it is, with children being traumatized as they are - why we still stand up as the People's Republic of Mozambique from North to South, from East to West, as an entire country and also as united people.

People could be tempted to think that all these combinations of destruction, of destabilizing, could make this country, these people just say, "Well, enough is enough." Why then does it happen that with all these problems, all these difficulties, Mozambican people still stand as united people?

This is the response of people who defend their own interests, their own aspirations. When people know that the struggle is for their right to be the people they are, then they are able to accept whatever is the sacrifice being demanded of them. Because as our first president of the movement said, "The choice we have in Mozambique is to live on our knees or to die standing up."

The choice is that. To surrender - it would mean that, okay, we can live, but always on our knees. We'd accept domination, we would accept hegemony against Mozambique. But then - if we have to remain Mozambican people, we have the right to build our own dreams, we have the right to make our sovereign decisions - then we'll stand up and continue to be standing up, and if it is necessary, to accept that we'll die, but standing up.

I think there is another dimension of resistance I would like to make you think about. It is how it happens that a child who was brutalized by the bandits is able to recognize and to keep confidence in other people who are also armed. They do have arms - they are troops. How a child can distinguish between bandits and governmental soldiers? To say, "I run away, but I can go to Frelimo soldiers and present myself and tell them who I am and where I come from." This is the relationship and the confidence of Mozambican people in their government,



even in their army. It is the sense that the government and the Frelimo soldiers will defend our sovereignty. People feel that "If I need one place to be safe from the bandits, I can run to a Frelimo soldier and ask for help."

The struggle continues there because we peoples of Mozambique and peoples of Southern Africa understand that we have no choice than to try to survive, but survive with dignity. We have to struggle for our own right for dignity. And to identify clearly what are

our interests and who is against our interests.

I could tell you that in Mozambique we have 200,000 children who are orphaned like Jose Sefamiej Mashawa. But probably 200,000 children would just be another figure among the other figures you hear about Mozambique. What I wanted to try to bring to you is these children, how they face their future and their lives.

We want the nightmare of orphans in our country gradually to disappear, absorbing these children in our own families, to give them a second family and to give them the right to have a mother and a father and, of course, the right to develop themselves as normal people. This is a challenge. But it's also a dimension of how we struggle against apartheid and against the impact of apartheid in our country. No one of us should be marginalized just because they have been victims of apartheid. All of us should rebuild our links - our relationships - in families, in communities. To build one unique identity of people - Mozambican people.

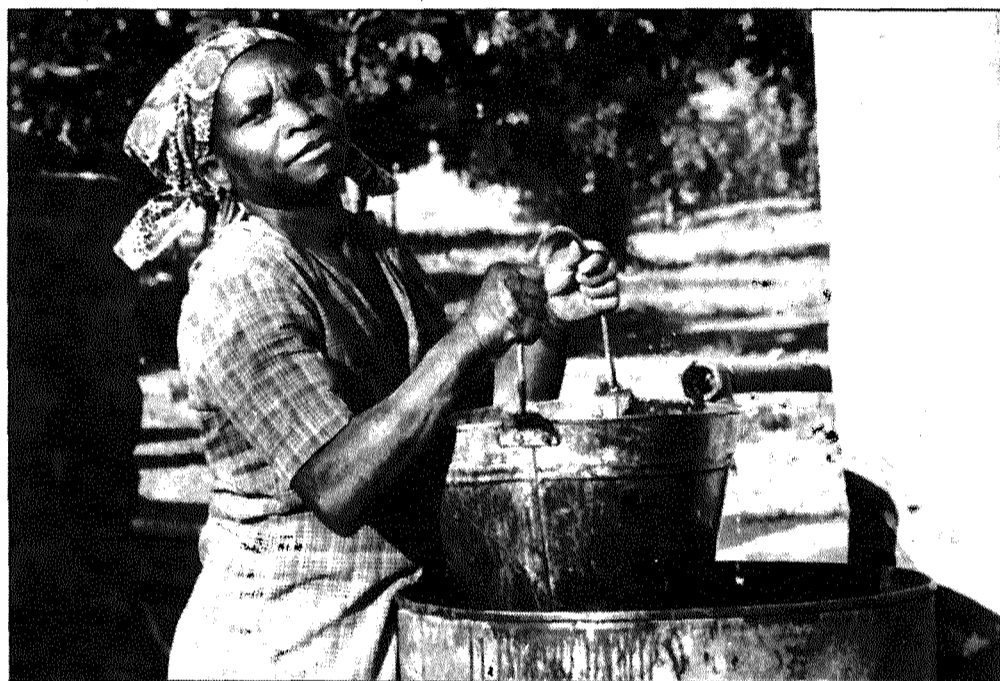
The impact of apartheid in our society is to try to build delinquents, assassins, people who are absolutely destabilized. So struggling against apartheid and destabilization in Mozambique is to build a very strong front of all of us in which any child is my child, and of course, any mother and any father can be a mother and a father for each child in Mozambique. This is another dimension of how we understand to struggle against destabilization and to maintain the development of our project of building the nation.

We are also trying to develop a sense of self-reliance. We try to make sure that people in displaced camps do not stay as refugees in the sense of only waiting for someone else to give food and clothing and medical assistance. As soon as they can, they should develop economic activities, especially agriculture.

On one hand we try to give them food and clothing, but on the other hand we give them tools and seeds, and we say, "Start again." In a country in which apartheid is trying to develop disability, we try to build the strongest and highest level of consciousness so that we will be strong when we are able to develop on our own. And those who are friends, those who are giving solidarity to Mozambique, mostly they'll come to join our efforts for development.

This sense of self-determination is not only a political sense. It must be rebuilding what was destroyed, replacing what was taken from us. Whatever are the changes to be done in Mozambique, Mozambican people themselves must start them, and then others will come in solidarity. It is another dimension of what we think about the links with international community. We expect all people of good will to

cont'd on page 37



I'm really very happy to be able to be able to bring a little bit of Mozambique to you tonight. I know many of you know my country, many of you know my region. You do also know what are the problems there, so it suggests an opportunity to bring a bit of our feeling, a bit of our challenge and still, many of our hopes and dreams of what we want to continue to build in Mozambique - with your support, of course.

I'll try to avoid talking about economic destabilization, and bring another kind of dimension of destabilization which I think in the future is of much more concern to Mozambique and eventually to other African countries in my region.

Imagine me as a child talking to you.

"I'm Jose Sefamiej Mashawa. I am fourteen years old and come from Asinga in the province of Vinamban. My father was a member of the militia and was killed by the bandits who came to the house. After they killed my father, they asked me to show them where his friends lived. I said I didn't know who they were or where they were. Then they cut off one of my fingers to make me speak. Again, they asked me where my father's friends were, and again I said I didn't know. Altogether, they cut off four of my fingers, but I said I didn't know anything.

already abandoned. Now I live in Langien Centre and I'm well cared for."

This is a short story of a Mozambican child of fourteen. We can multiply this story to thousands in Mozambique today. At that age I was dreaming of how to be able to finish my school, because studying was the passport of trying to be someone in society. And then after, in Venice, I learned from my own experience what education means. And I said, "Let us help to build the dream of many Mozambican children. Of playing, singing, dancing, going to school, having a stable family, being happy children. Children of independence."

I had the experience of working in the Ministry of Education for fourteen years. One of my biggest dreams was exactly how to make our children be happy and how to make our children grow in a free country. How to develop all their potentialities and their abilities of being people and being men and women. And of course, by that, build another dimension of development.

It is with a sense of disgust that I say that after thirteen years of independence, instead of children who think and play, draw, sing and dance, the stories my children tell me are exactly as this one of Jose Sefamiej Mashawa. An

in the position of understanding why there have been such brutalities and atrocities? And how is it going to help them to attend a school?

I would like you to think about what Jose Sefamiej is saying. Our children in many cases are no longer children. When a child has to learn to resist, to accept that they cut one, two, three, four fingers, and to keep quiet - this is not a child. This is an adult - an adult who understands what the bandits are going to do if he shows who his father's friends are and where they are. And he decides, "I'll die for his sake, but I'm not going to show where they are so they are not going to be killed."

This is a child who is prepared to die for the sake of other people. He is no longer a child. He is a soldier, in my country, who has learned that to defend people and to defend our nation, it can mean that he will die.

I'd like you to think that in Mozambique we are not only refugees. We are not only displaced people, but mostly we are people who are struggling and we are people who resist. This is the face of Mozambican people I would like you to think about tonight.

And to understand also - with all these brutalities, with the thousands and thousands of people who are killed, millions of people who are affected, thousands of people

Rebuilding Mozambique

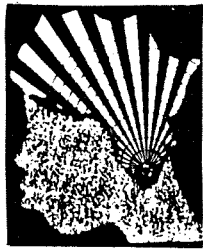
respect our dignity and not just give us food so that we'll survive today — this is good, it's important — but more than that, give us tools and seeds.

Of course I mean agriculture, but I could also mean training. There are seeds you can put in developing heads, in the minds of people. These seeds will germinate and we will develop ourselves. This is the kind of solidarity we expect from the international community. To plant seeds in our minds, to help Mozambican people to develop so that Mozambican people will walk on their own feet, to develop their own country.

What is destabilizing Mozambique is the apartheid regime. It's important for you — all of you — to give us solidarity, to help to build a Mozambique, to rebuild economic infrastructures, social infrastructures, to contribute in whatever way you think to rebuild the integrity and personality of our children, these children who are traumatized by the war. But to build a stable situation in Mozambique and in Southern Africa, that is decisive — to do

whatever is important and possible to accelerate the downfall of apartheid. Because then we'll have the basic conditions for changing the whole situation. Let me say we'll take control in the area, in the region — we peoples of our region, we'll take control.

Supporting frontline states is very important — it's necessary. But more than that, it's urgent. If you like, it is something we cannot wait for and try to give time. It's important to do whatever we can to make apartheid fall now. Don't get used to the figures. Don't get used to our faces of malnutrition and starvation. Don't get used to the numbers of people who have been killed. It's much more than numbers.



Don't get used to our children being traumatized. What is going on in that part of the world has to end. And we have a contribution to make to that.

When we try to appeal forcefully, directly, it's because we in our region are giving solidarity to each other, to one another. And then we have the moral strength to ask for solidarity. Because we know that whatever is possible — politically, economically, diplomatically of course, and even militarily — we peoples of our region, we are working together. We have been giving our possibilities and our efforts and resources to this struggle. But if it is understood and accepted that apartheid is a crime against humanity, then let us bring the whole humanity to support our struggle. And to do something concrete in action, not only to be sympathetic, but action, to say, "This is a crime against humanity, and you have to stop it."

I wanted to talk about the human dimension of destabilization and what it means. This is happening in Mozambique. But this story

Apartheid in its philosophy is a regime of violence.

But you know, I think in many, many people in our century the problem, the real problem, why very decisive steps are not being taken in Southern Africa — you know what I feel? Its a racist problem.

If all the thousands and thousands of people who are being killed and all these detainees in South Africa being brutalized — all these things — if they were not black people, I think action would have taken place a long, long time ago. We don't mean the same thing to many people in this world.

We don't mean the same — I mean we don't seem that we are human people. That's why people do not feel. I am sorry to say very frankly.

I mean to kill thousands and thousands of white children and the world to keep quiet as it is keeping quiet — they wouldn't accept it. They would have acted a long time ago [applause] but my children, my grandchildren, uh-uh, do not touch the heart of people. This is the point.

I'm telling them, "Look. Every seven minutes my children are dying in Mozambique. Do something!" And they ask me, "Give them time."

and many other things could be told to you by South African children, by Angolan children, Namibian children. In any of our countries, children of our region would tell you a story more or less similar to this. We just want you to feel our children are like your children. They have the right to be

happy. They have the right to live.

A black child of our region was asked, "What would you like to be when you are grown up?" And the child answered, "Alive." This is what children of my region expect. First of all to keep alive. And of course then the rest will come.

Women of Mozambique

(From the booklet "Women in Mozambique" in the resource kit **Mozambique: Apartheid's Second Front**, from Cooperation Canada Mozambique)

Realities of Rural Women

The vast majority of Mozambicans live in the rural areas and work the land. The 1980 census calculated that 70% of the economically active population works in family agriculture. Of this figure, 93% are women.

The average work day of a rural woman is arduous in the extreme, unaided by help from men and, except where development aid has penetrated, unaided by technology. The peasant woman is up at dawn, preparing food for her children and husband, preparing water for their wash. Then she sets off to walk to her *machamba*, or field, which can be miles away from her house. She hoes and plants and weeds with primitive hand tools. By midday, she has made the return trek home to begin another round of domestic tasks.

One Step at a Time

Other changes were introduced to try and ease women's heavy work load, particularly their domestic chores. One source of pride for Trés de Fevereiro is the electrically generated water pump which allows women to get their water comparatively speedily. Women recall how they used to scoop unsafe water from the river or travel long distances to collect just one 20-litre can of water. Now clean water can be collected in minutes.

There are schools, with

new classrooms being built. There is a health worker and a small clinic to provide basic medical care. There is a grain mill that grinds dry corn into the fine meal used in making the stiff porridge that is the staple food of the region.

Both the water pump and the grain mill have the potential for relieving women of literally hours of hard work each day. But what happens when they break down? — an inevitability in any society, but a critical problem in an underdeveloped one.

There's a good chance that there's no one who can fix it. Ninety per cent of Mozambicans were illiterate at independence, and shortly after, virtually every skilled Portuguese settler fled the country. The result is a grave shortage of skilled workers, including mechanics. Added to this are the problems of lack of spare parts (expensive to import), and serious transportation problems.

The benefits to women from this technology are also forestalled sometimes by men and by tradition.

Take the grain mill, for example. Even when the mill was functioning, many women did not use it because it would have changed the traditional way of cooking *papa*, the region's staple food. Traditionally, corn is ground to a paste after being soaked overnight, a task that the grain mill can not perform.

"We have not eaten," complain the men, "unless we have eaten *papa* the way it should be cooked." And so women spend hours of strenuous pounding each day, rather than take their dry kernels to the mill to be ground in minutes.

If preparing food was a job men did or shared, the grain mill might get more use.

Changing Traditional Customs

Another target for change is the traditional customs that are viewed as detrimental to women, such as polygamy, *lobolo* (bride price) and arranged marriages. These customs did not emerge simply because men liked the idea of having more than one wife, or as mechanisms to oppress women. Rather they are inextricably linked with the peasant economy. *Lobolo*, which is given from the husband's family to the wife's family, compensates for women workers lost from a family.

While objectively *lobolo* is oppressive to women and should be absent in a new, non-exploitative society, the need for it will continue as long as the economy remains essentially unchanged. The ultimate answer to transforming women's lives is to ensure that their daily domestic and agricultural tasks are altered and the sexual division of labour, which relegates certain tasks exclusively to women, is realigned. Not an easy problem to solve.

While women's heavy work load is recognized as an unfair burden, Mozambican society does not confront this situation directly. Women are urged to show that they can do what men can do. But the question just as urgent, but seldom asked, is "Can men do what women can do?" Not only has there been no active mobilization of men to share housework, the idea of women challenging men on the domestic front is discouraged.

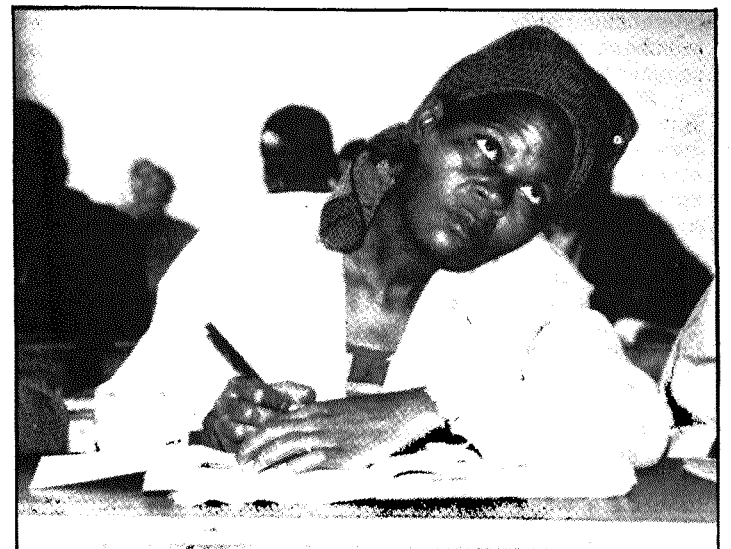
Women and War

The emancipation of women was one of a number of issues occupying the centre stage during the first few years of Mozambique's independence. No one had predicted that by the early 1980's, all questions of transformation and development would be pushed into the background by South Africa and its war of destabilization. The first five

and the Mozambican army.

Over two-thirds of Mozambican women have been displaced from their homes. They can no longer sow the seeds, tend the plants, harvest and cook the food. Instead, they must listen to their children crying in hunger, knowing that they can not feed them. They watch their children die and can not help them.

* Frelimo is the governing party in Mozambique. Frelimo,



years of Mozambique's independence was a period of hope; now the country is being devastated.

In many ways it is the women who bear the brunt. Over the past eight years, the MNR (Mozambican National Resistance, the South Africa-backed, anti-government forces) has carried out a consistent policy of attack, mutilation, rape, kidnapping and murder. It has targeted civilians in order to create massive dislocation, destroy the country's ability to feed itself and undermine the peasantry's support for Frelimo

which stands for Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, led the long but eventually successful struggle for the independence of Mozambique from the Portuguese.

The complete resource kit, with several in-depth booklets, shorter pamphlets, a full colour poster, and other materials, is available for \$10 (individuals) or \$20 (institutions) plus \$3 postage and handling, from Cooperation Canada Mozambique, c/o CCIC 1 Nicholas St, Suite 300 Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B7



The struggle in Uruguay

by Michelle Albert

For 12 years Uruguay was ruled by one of the most repressive dictatorships in Latin America. From 1973 to 1985 Uruguay had the highest number of political prisoners per capita of any Latin American country; one in sixty-five Uruguayans was tortured; one in four was interrogated, jailed, exiled, tortured or killed. About 200 people remain "disappeared" today. The military also abolished Parliament, trade unions and political parties.

In 1985, the military government handed over power to the elected, civilian government of Julio Sanguinetti on the understanding that they would not be tried for crimes that occurred during their rule. In 1986, Sanguinetti's government passed a law which granted immunity to police and military officers accused of human rights violations during the previous 12 years. This law is called the "Law of Impunity". At the time, polls showed that 80% of Uruguayans were against the law and felt that investigations of human rights abuses were the most important step towards the re-establishment of democracy. The day after the law was passed the movement for a referendum on whether the law should be repealed began and the National Pro-Referendum Commission (NPRC) was formed.

Tota Quinteros is an organizer with the commission and was one of the people involved in starting the campaign. She was in Toronto during International Women's Week and gave several public talks. She spoke at the rally on International Women's Day and led the IWD march with a pro-referendum banner along with members of the Uruguayan community in Toronto.

At a public talk in Toronto, Tota told her personal story of involvement and gave an account of the commission's struggle to gain the right to hold a referendum.

Tota Quinteros is one of the many mothers of the disappeared in Latin America. She is the mother of one of the hundreds who disappeared in Uruguay during the dictatorship. Her daughter, Elena Quinteros Almeida was arrested on June 25, 1976. Three days later she managed to escape while supposedly aiding her captors to get someone else. She made it to the Venezuelan Embassy but members of the Information



and Intelligence Agency invaded the embassy and abducted her. She was never seen again, becoming one of the 90,000 people who have disappeared in Latin America. As a result of such breach of diplomatic law the Venezuelan government broke off diplomatic relations with Uruguay. Since that time Tota has been very active in the struggle for justice and respect for human rights.

When the Law of Impunity was established, freeing all police and military from prosecution, the families of the victims of the regime were determined to see it repealed.

According to Uruguayan law, to hold a referendum you need to collect signatures of support from 25% of the eligible voters within one year of the law's implementation. That meant collecting 555,701 signatures.

Tota described the incredible grass-roots organizing that went into this effort. Women were very active and played a major role in this effort. The Commission is led by three women. The campaign ran up against many difficulties as the government and military were vehemently opposed to having a referendum. They encountered opposition from the mass media as well and many threats were made to those signing the petition. It was even suggested that the signatures be controlled by the Ministries of the Interior and National Defense! There was much intimidation of this sort to discourage people from signing.

Despite so many problems, by December 1987, the NPRC presented the government with 634,702 signatures, many more than was necessary. Although they had succeeded in their quest, they had to wait for the electoral court to verify every

signature. This was supposed to take six months but ended up taking almost a year. The court invalidated thousands of signatures on technicalities and generally made things difficult. They greatly feared the possibility that the referendum would be held and the law would be repealed.

On December 1st, 1988 the electoral court stated that 532,738 signatures were accepted as valid, almost 23,000 short of the number required. They also announced that 23,307 of the 36,860 signatures still being looked at would have to be reaffirmed in person. Not only that, but the people would have to go with their identification papers to

offices which would be set up for only two days.

A huge effort was made and several newspapers published the list of identity numbers to make them more accessible. The NPRC publicized the list and encouraged people to go verify their signatures.

In their report on Uruguay the Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America (ICCHRLA), stated: "In a country so recently emerged from long years of military repression, this was not an easy thing for people to do. But, despite their fears they did it. They included frail, elderly people with their proud memories of Uruguay's long tradition of democratic government before the 1973 coup; a woman who had given birth the day before came in a wheelchair. People who owned cars provided lifts to the electoral court offices."

Victory came on December 20, 1988 when the Electoral Court Minister announced that 555,917 signatures had been accepted as valid, 216 more than necessary. People celebrated in the streets for 8 hours. According to ICCHRLA "... twenty blocks of the main avenue in the capital city of Montevideo was filled with people, dancing, jumping up and down, and hugging one another." They had succeeded in their long and difficult campaign to gain the right to have a referendum.

The date was set for April 16, 1989. A green ballot would cancel the law and a gold one would uphold it, thus the "voto verde" (green vote) movement. Access to media was extremely limited as one minute of television time cost the equivalent of ten American dollars, the average daily wage of a worker.

On April 16, the votes were tallied and the referendum was lost. According to officials, 53% voted to keep the law and 40% voted to repeal it. The accuracy of these figures, in light of the government's previous actions, is questionable. But as Eduardo Galeano, a well known journalist and writer from Uruguay wrote before the referendum took place, "I don't know if the green vote will win the plebiscite, but the 600,000 signatures they've collected are already a victory, in this country of scarcely three million people. A victory against the tradition of paralysis and against the powerful machine of fear."

For more information contact: The Commission In Support of the Uruguayan Referendum, P.O. Box 474, Station U, Toronto, Ontario, M8Z 5Y8.

Michelle Albert is a freelance writer with a special interest in the global links between the many struggles for justice.

Two way ticket to El Salvador

by Sara Torres

As soon as the seatbelt sign was turned on, I could feel my heart beating faster than normally. The plane was supposed to arrive in San Salvador's airport in no more than 10 minutes.

I waited so many years for this moment that it was almost a dream flying over El Salvador's territory.

I could not take my eyes away from the window. I wanted to see everything: the hills, the houses, the rivers, the trees. It was like meeting somebody you love for whom you are willing to do anything to make him/her happy.

El Salvador represented so much to me. Its courageous people were my inspiration to keep doing solidarity work for them in Canada. Its women, its children, its muchachos are knowingly risking their lives in order to bring about a new society.

What would I lose by visiting them? Perhaps my life? Who knew! There have been already more than 10 foreigners who have died in El Salvador because they, as I do, believe in the justice of the struggle! How about the thousands of Salvadoreans dead since 1979? The assassination of 70,000 people. Seventy thousand rests on the hands of the Salvadorean government, backed by the United States administration.

After arriving at Comalapa's airport, the huge number of people dead were



not statistics any more. All those killed were present in the soldiers that I saw everywhere I went. They represented torture, rape, humiliation, psychological anguish, and death.

Many things happen daily in El Salvador. I can well recall a Tuesday afternoon when a woman came into her office wearing jeans and a white T-shirt. She seemed nervous but happy. Her name was Maria Cristina Gomez. It caught my attention because of her comments about being one of the speakers for the rally that I was also waiting to attend (she had four children and worked as a teacher in a school in the capital, San Salvador).

The rally started at 3 pm. We were all chanting slogans and songs. We had on our

hands little white flags which moved along with the rhythm of our songs. I felt very strong. It seemed that nothing could happen to us. We knew we were being watched by the security forces for the Salvadorean government. I am sure Maria Cristina knew the risk she was also taking attending the rally.


Peace through dialogue and negotiations is what all my friends wanted, in the capital, in the countryside, in the face of a tiny child sleeping on the street, in the mind of a grandmother looking.

My days in El Salvador passed incredibly fast. There was so much action going on that I was always catching up or behind. One day the government troops would break into the popular unions' offices, the next day the workers were marching on the streets denouncing it. The people are always on alert to respond to an attack.

When I said Adios to many of the women I met, it was an uncertain farewell. For my part, I was coming back to Canada confident that nothing can happen to me by helping them to achieve peace, freedom and self-determination.

In their case, it was different. Each day is a challenge to wake up alive in the morning, to eat, to work. That is why every woman hopes to see their people free. Their commitment is fearless. They know that they have nothing to lose but their lives.

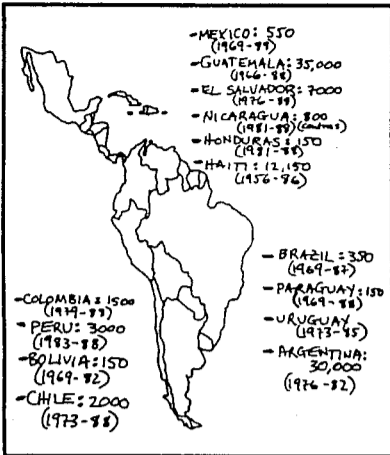
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DISAPPEARANCES, according to FEDEFAM.

"Desaparecido": the victim of a practice so perverse and widespread in Latin America that no word in English quite captures the full horror of it.

The "disappeared" populate a shameful chapter in contemporary Latin American history, a period in the 1970s and 1980s in which the military establishments of the Americas refined to new levels of cynicism and efficiency the practice of "disappearing": that is, the practice of sending plainclothes security agents to abduct and capture individuals without due process of law, of holding victims illegally in secret jails while denying any knowledge of their whereabouts to relatives, of interrogating and torturing victims before summarily executing them and disposing of the bodies in unmarked graves, and of failing ever to acknowledge the victim's fate, death or burial place to anguished families.

The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has defined "the phenomenon of disappearances" as a "complex

form of human rights violation" that exists worldwide, but which has occurred with "exceptional intensity in Latin America in the last few years."

Disappearance as practiced in the region in recent years is the product of "National Security" doctrines implemented by Armed Forces



In Canada we just have to lose our apathy.

My fear for their safety when leaving El Salvador was well justified. So far more than 10 people I met have been captured, tortured or threatened. At least one person has been assassinated by the government right-wing security forces.

Many times I feel strange in Canada again. At the same time it is rewarding to know that many Canadian women care about their sisters in El Salvador. So please do not give up, there are many things we can do together!

Our moral, political and financial support assures them another highway to building their future. Telegrams, letters, presentations, articles in our local newspapers, visits to El Salvador are concrete actions which put pressures on their repressive government.

When I left Maria Cristina Gomez in El Salvador, she was alive and full of energy. Today, she lives only in the minds of those who knew her. She was captured on the morning of April 5. Later that day she was found with four gunshot wounds in her head. She had been abused and beaten by the security forces of the government. I would like to quote something very nice that Brian Murphy, from InterPares said:

"Maria Gomez must not die anonymously. She was not anonymous to her students. She was not anonymous to her fellow workers in the Baptist church. She was not anonymous to the poor women in the barrios where she did her voluntary work. And she was

not anonymous to Canadian aid workers from agencies such as InterPares and the several Canadian churches supporting her modest efforts to help people improve their meagre lives in the face of increasing brutality and poverty."

"Most importantly, Maria was executed for being a woman, and a woman activist demonstrating the courage to act, because this courage is a fearful example which challenges the brute forces which resist any change to the system of privilege and poverty in El Salvador. The terrible brutality and sexual violence brought down on women by death squads and the military is purposeful and systematic, and creates a living fear in the hearts of mothers and daughters throughout the country."

A solution to the ninth year of civil war in El Salvador can be reached. The Salvadorean women and children need only your support. Keep in touch with me. Send your letter to:

Sara Torres
c/o Action Committee for
Salvadorean Women
117 Springhurst
Ottawa, Ontario
K1S 0E5

Sara Torres is a concerned woman, an ordinary Canadian citizen (as it is said in the media) of Colombian origin.

She is a mother who one day met a Salvadorean woman here in Canada, and whom, from her, little by little, got involved in the struggle. Today, after six years, she is even more convinced of her commitment to the Salvadorean aspirations for a new society.

waging internal war against perceived enemies and political opponents. Using ideological justifications for bypassing due process of law, security forces and paramilitary groups have "disappeared" an estimated 90,000 Latin Americans, according to rights groups. Training and technical support required by these operations have been funded, in many nations, by United States military aid.

In the 1970s, countries

under military rule (Guatemala, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay) were the chief violators. Today, the most serious cases are taking place in democratic countries headed by civilian presidents -- Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia and Peru -- according to FEDEFAM, the Caracas-based Latin American regional federation of relatives of the "disappeared."

(From *Our Search*, newsletter of the Central American Association of Relatives of the Detained-Disappeared (ACAFADE), March 1989)

Three women have come to Canada to talk about the cruel practice of disappearance that has been employed by the governments of Latin America. Mayra Alarcon and Emma Molina are members of the Central American Association of the Families of the Disappeared (ACAFADE), and Tilsa Albani is a member of the Latin American Federation of the Families of the Detained and Disappeared (FEDEFAM).

Both organizations have as their goals to end the practice of disappearance and to obtain the truth about the thousands of detained-disappeared people in Central and South America. ACAFADE deals specifically with Central America and was founded in 1982. It is based in San José, Costa Rica. FEDEFAM is a federation of organizations of families of the detained-disappeared. It is based in Caracas, Venezuela.

Mayra Alarcon of ACAFADE stressed that behind each statistic is a person, and behind each disappearance is

a family who suffers. She discussed the recent claims of a lessening of human rights violations in the region, pointing out that those statistics are used to gain more foreign aid. The lower figures, she claimed, do not represent a change in government policy. Forced disappearance continues today. Civilian governments have not stopped the repression. In fact, it is human rights activists who are increasingly being targeted and threatened with death.

The Esquipulas Accord, the agreement signed by the five Central American presidents to work together to solve the region's problems, has undoubtedly been beneficial in that it has created a space for Central Americans to talk. ACAFADE recognizes this as an important step, yet points out that throughout all the Esquipulas meetings and meetings of the Presidents of the region, human rights violations are never discussed. Mayra believes that part of the recent peace plan is the hope that more economic aid will enter the region. This new aid, however, will not be conditioned on respect for human rights.

One criticism of the Esquipulas Accord is the use of the "ley de amnistia", the amnesty law. This law will give immunity to those guilty of gross human rights violations.

Guatemala already has three amnesty laws which ensure that no military persons can be brought to trial.

In El Salvador the only exceptions made to not grant amnesty were in the cases of Archbishop Oscar Romero, assassinated in 1980 and Herbert Anaya, the head of the human rights organization in El Salvador who was assassinated last year. In Honduras amnesty laws were also brought in after Esquipulas.

One very important victory was the case of the families of four disappeared people in Honduras who presented their case to the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. The Commission then took it to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in 1986. (Both the Commission and the Court are organs of the Organization of American States (OAS), set up to deal with problems of Human rights in the Americas).

Last year the court set historic precedence in finding Honduras guilty of the disappearance of two people. It was the first time that a government had been tried in court for violating human rights and it was the first time that a government had been tried for having disappeared people. It was also the first time that compensation was ordered for relatives of the disappeared and the first binding case resolved by the Court.

The Court also found that it was the responsibility of the Honduran government, as well as all the governments who

signed the Esquipulas Accord to investigate crimes against humanity. They decreed that state responsibility does not end with a change of government. They stated that a current government can be held responsible for providing justice even if a previous government is found guilty of committing or tolerating abuses.

Mayra and Emma stressed that the Courts' verdicts were extremely important as they started discussion around the topic of disappearance and brought it into the public realm for the first time. This affects the social culture of a country and forces people to discuss the issue. It also has a similar impact on the international community. Mayra pointed out that before International organizations would only pay attention when there were thousands of "disappeared". But the court case showed them that attention must be given to even one case of disappearance.

Tilsa Albani, a member of the Latin American Federation of the Families of the Detained and Disappeared (FEDEFAM), discussed the issue in relation to Argentina. She is a lawyer for the "Madres de la Plaza de Mayo", the Mothers of the May Square. These women meet every week at the same time to pressure the government for information on the members of their families who remain disappeared. They are joined by the Abuelas de la Plaza de Mayo, the Grandmothers of the May Square.

Argentina was ruled by a brutal military regime from 1976 to 1982, during which time 30,000 people "disappeared". Tilsa explained how FEDEFAM attends international forums to make their concerns known. They target the Armed Forces as the main perpetrators of the Human Rights violations that occurred. The military gave themselves a self-declared immunity to persecution. The court cases that did come up were passed on to the military tribunal where very little has been done, not surprisingly.

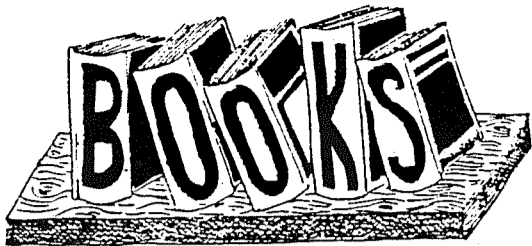
All three women stressed the important role Canada can play in their struggle for justice. The best way for Canadians to participate, they said, is to promote and continue the fight for respect of human rights in Canada, in Latin America and throughout the world.

For more information contact:

ACAFADE, Apdo. 8188-1000, San Jose, Costa Rica.

FEDEFAM, Apdo. 2444, Carmelitas 1010-A, Caracas, Venezuela.

Inter American Human Rights Commission, 1889 "F" St., N.W., Washington, D.C., USA 20006.



As a national women's lobby organization, the National Association for Women and the Law, on occasion we get calls from women frustrated that the legal system has failed them in one way or another. I received such a call about two weeks ago.

The woman said that her ex-husband hadn't paid child support in two years. He occasionally sends the odd cheap, useless gift if he happens to remember one of

the children's birthdays, and he hasn't told them where he lives. He hasn't seen the kids in more than three years. She supports her family on family benefits and she's burnt out. She was calling to find out if she could force him to take his responsibilities as a father more seriously.

This woman's situation isn't rare. In fact, evidence shows that this is one of the major problems facing custodial parents today. Ironically, however, women's

groups are not able to turn their energies to this particular problem because they are too busy responding to fathers' groups who have gained provincial legislatures' favour by claiming that they are being denied custody and access by vindictive women and a biased legal system.

Susan Crean's timely book *In the Name of the Fathers* explains how custody and other related family law "reforms" have left a great number of Canadian women wondering how they ever took custody for granted.

This is a book for the average person. By weaving real life situations into sections describing general trends in custody and access, Crean sets out legal problems in an easily readable fashion.

Crean tells the tragic stories of Gail Begaire, whose homosexuality was considered more damaging to her kids than her husband's sexual abuse of them. And Joanne Thatcher, whose politician husband stopped at nothing short of murder in his efforts "to get even."

Interwoven through the stories, Crean takes us through a history of women's custody rights in Canada and the current trends in joint custody, mediation, maintenance, support, and access enforcement.

Until the nineteenth century, women had no legal rights to their offspring. As Crean puts it "women laboured and delivered, men owned and controlled." Then in 1839, the "tender years" doctrine was legislated, giving women the

right to apply for custody if children were under twelve years of age. Finally, in 1971, an Ontario judge held that mothers and fathers have absolutely equal rights to their children. This, on the one hand, did away with the traditional notions that mothers are by definition the better caregivers and children are the property of the fathers. But it also allowed courts to minimize the immense role mothers usually play in the nurturing and caring of their young.



Canadian women spend four hours a day on housework and children if they are employed outside their homes; and six if they aren't. Husbands spend seven minutes a day doing housework if their spouses do not work outside the home. If their mates are going out to work, they spend 22 minutes at housework.

The financial consequences of marriage breakdown are sobering. In the year following divorce, women and their children experience on average a 73% drop in their standard of living while the man's standard of living rises by 42%.

Divorce is now recognized as a major cause of the feminization of poverty. Why is this happening? Partly,

because some men simply don't pay their child support payments.

As many as 85 per cent of court-ordered maintenance payments are in arrears at any given time. Many provinces have now created maintenance enforcement systems, but only Ontario and Manitoba have efficient computerized schemes.

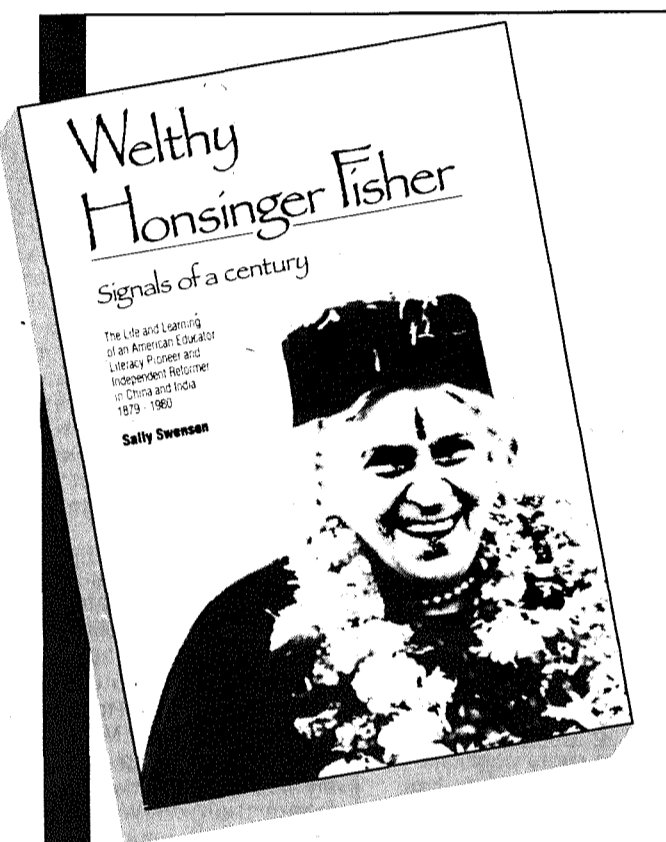
Women are still regarded as benefitting personally from their husbands' child support payments, despite the fact that spousal support is rarely awarded. When a woman asks for an adequate amount for child support, the husband often responds: "I'll keep the kids, I can do it cheaper."

Money plays a key role in custody decisions. Many fathers who are able to present elaborate plans for summer camp, music lessons, etc., come out as winners. The mothers cannot afford such impressive plans. Judges also consider the spouse's employment prospects, current income, capital assets, and stable home.

Often on marriage breakdown, a mother who had stayed out of the work force must retrain. This is seen by some judges as too disruptive and custody is awarded to the father whose new partner can stay at home with the kids.

The majority of couples settle custody without going to court. Most opt for custody for the mother, with liberal access to the father. Of the 15% who do go to court, custody is most often awarded to the mother. However, awards to fathers are on the increase even though

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In over a century of vibrant life, WELTHY HONSINGER FISHER pioneered in education for women in pre-revolutionary China, became one of the outstanding speakers for peace and social reform of her generation, and at seventy-three began her major work for literacy in India. She lived the world as one place long before global unity in diversity began to seem possible.

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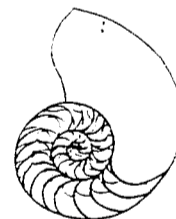
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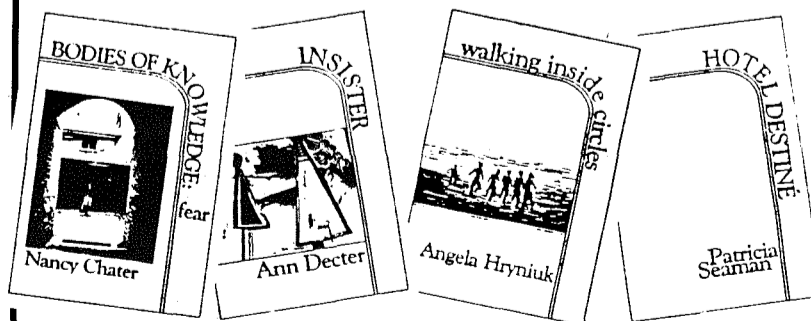
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of the Fathers"

they may not have participated in caring for their children during the marriage.

The phrase "best interests of the child" came into vogue in the early 70s and still remains a vague notion often defined by a white, middle-class, male judiciary and their colleagues, the mental health professionals in family law. Crean says that although psychiatrists' assessments can be good, they have their own biases. Also there is no appeal from an assessor's recommendation. If they don't like you, or more importantly don't understand or accept you, you could simply lose your children.

Mediation has also become extremely popular in family law. Crean says that power imbalances go largely unchecked and if the less powerful spouse refuses settlement at mediation she could be considered uncooperative by a judge later seen in the custody process.

In 1973 a controversial book, *Beyond the Best Interests of the Child* held that the custodial parent should determine access matters. Fathers were furious and set the stage for the promotion of the presumption of joint custody in family law.

Joint custody seems like a good idea at first, but forced joint custody became a recipe for disaster for warring couples. The difficult "friendly parent" rule requires the custodial parent to facilitate

contact between the children and the other parent. This only increases the burden on the custodial parent and has the effect of making her responsible for a situation she can't control. Also parents' mobility is fettered.

If sexual abuse is suspected between the child and the parent, the woman who makes allegations is often not believed. To make matters worse, if she delays throwing him out or reporting on him she runs the risk of being considered an accomplice. If she denies access the father may apply for custody. Lawyers realize how such allegations can hurt the custody case for the mother so they regularly advise mothers not to voice their fears of sexual abuse.

Crean describes the fathers rights' movement as more appropriately labelled the men's rights movement because it "has less to do with fathering than about male superiority and privilege." Says Crean, "They use the language of equality, assume a stance resembling that of an oppressed minority, they appropriate feminism and use it to undermine fragile legal gains made by women in one major area where significant change has actually taken place." Feminists have labelled the phenomenon "the equality backlash."

The fathers' rightists misrepresent facts and the law,

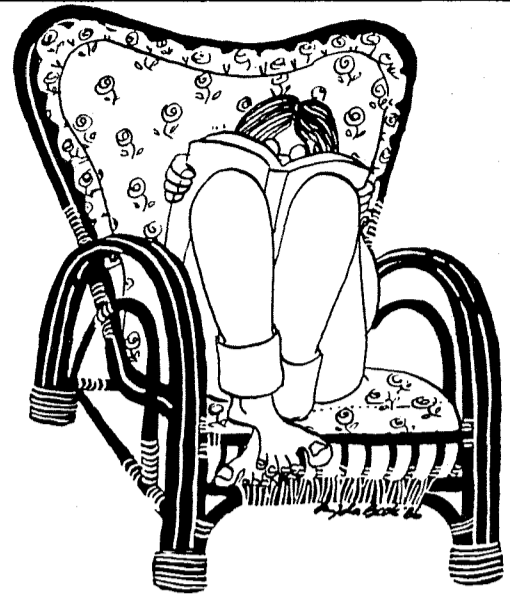
but they must be taken seriously because Canadian legislators are taking them seriously. They have presented unfounded access enforcement figures to provincial governments and government has responded by introducing legislation. This, despite the fact that all studies seem to indicate that a much more significant problem occurring after marriage breakdown is that the fathers don't make support payments and don't visit. These fathers' rightists are in the minority and seem to be motivated not out of love for their children but out of revenge for the ex-wife.

It is ironic that the provincial governments which introduced this access enforcement legislation with so little need for persuasion had required women's groups to do fifteen years of lobbying and research and statistics before they began to enforce support and maintenance orders. Default rates have been at 80 to 85%.

Access enforcement legislation means economic sanctions against single mothers. Manitoba, Ontario and Newfoundland have introduced legislation and the Uniform Law Conference of Canada is very interested in it.

Crean ends her book with a very useful chapter on the U.S. experience which provides us with examples of what not to initiate.

In all, the book is a good



OUR RIGHT TO LOVE: A LESBIAN RESOURCE BOOK

By Ginny Vida

read and useful particularly to persons going through divorce or custody proceedings or those working in the field. It could be made more useful if she didn't move back and forth from subject to subject throughout the book. Also I wouldn't have subtitled it *The Story Behind Joint Custody*. It deals with a lot more than joint custody.

One final note. Crean is not down on fathers taking an equal and active role in their children's lives. She is down on those who only seem to pick up an interest at the point of marriage breakdown or those who want custody because they can do it cheaper.

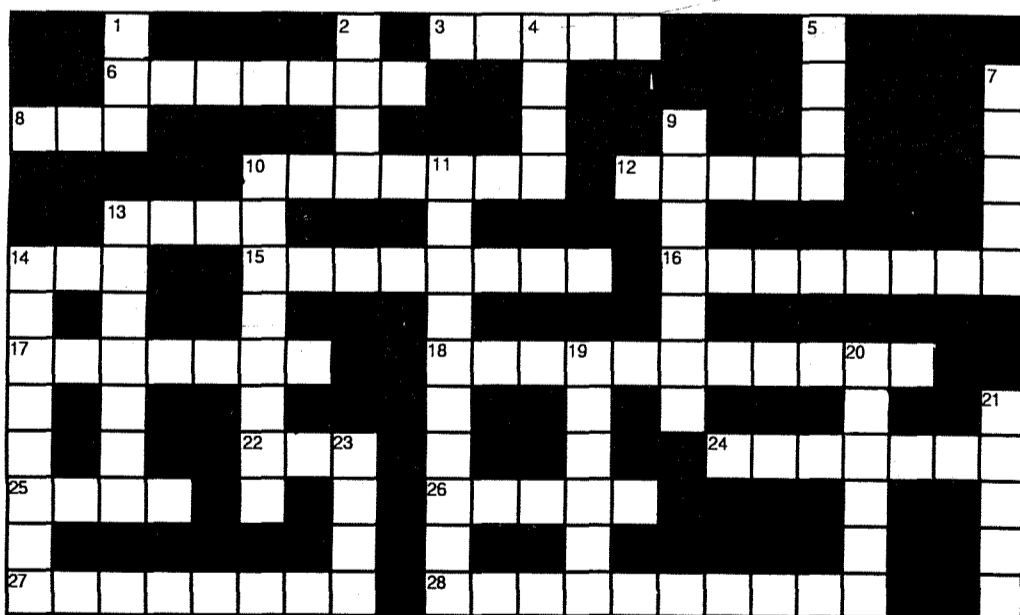
Louise Shaughnessy is the Public Affairs Co-ordinator at the National Association of Women and the Law.

Ginny Vida, Editor of *Our Right to Love: A Lesbian Resource Book*, is inviting lesbian photographers to submit photos of lesbians for possible inclusion in the revised edition of *Our Right to Love*, to be published by E.P. Dutton. Photos are due May 15, 1989. Preferred size is 8 X 10 or 5 X 7.

Our Right to Love is an anthology of lesbian writing that includes more than 40 essays, dozens of personal testimonies, and more than 100 photographs of lesbians plus some lesbian rights supporters. The original edition was published in 1978 by Prentice Hall.

Submit photos to: Ginny Vida, Editor, *Our Right to Love*, 45 Plaza St., #1-G, Brooklyn, NY 11217 (718) 789-0391. Please do not send negatives. Persons who wish to submit photos via Express Mail, UPS, or anything requiring signature, please send to Ginny Vida, c/o Commission on Women, 52 Chambers St., Room 207, NY, NY 10007.

A woman's crossword



Down

1. A natural reaction to Professor Philip Rushton's theories.
2. To go ahead, to show the way.
4. To make whole.
5. People who are most affected by a regressive sales tax.
7. Its what you do to urge the passing of a Bill.
8. 60% of its victims are women.
9. Canada helps create their existence through providing financial support to Third World countries which violate human rights.
11. Not competitive, but _____.
13. In January 1988, it was the subject of a law struck down by the Supreme Court of Canada
19. Not big, but _____.
20. National _____ Committee on the Status of Women
21. Harmony between men and women everywhere, between nations and races, religions and cultures. Harmony between humanity and the earth.
23. What non-sexist parents give their girl and boy children to play with

3. A system of values
5. The Prison for Women
6. In Manitoba they make up 40-60% of prison admissions
8. What women celebrate every March 8
10. A woman who advocates widespread political, economic and social reforms
12. The real issue at play in many forms of sexual abuse
13. What women are told to do freely and without condition
14. The Assembly of First Nations is the largest native group in Canada
15. The movement towards social justice and economic equality

16. The Canadian Charter guarantees it before, and under, the law
17. Child sexual abuse should prompt a feeling of _____.
18. Not authoritarian, but _____.
22. Apartheid in South Africa must _____.
24. As long as discrimination exists women will always work for it.
25. Low level flight testing is hurting these people.
26. Women _____, Take Back the Night
27. The _____ Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women
28. The goal of all the poor, the oppressed, the exploited.

Solution on page 42

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How the well are you?

by Cathy Beaumont

How do I know spring is here? Well, there are the usual signs: crocuses, robins, the sudden disappearance of my co-workers on sunny afternoons... But the surest sign of spring and impending summer is not to be found in the great outdoors. Walk into any hairdressing shop, line up in any grocery store, browse at any newsstand, and there they are: the fashion magazines. Glossy enough to use as a mirror, heavy enough to do any would-be assailant permanent damage, they broadcast the news: Spring is here! New colours! New styles! New body-conscious clothes! New sexiness! (Why these folks use so many exclamation points is beyond me -- perhaps they figure most of us have the reading equivalent of deafness). Between the covers of the fashion magazines cavort smooth-skinned, tanned (where have they been spending the past few months?), rail-thin, extremely well-dressed (and sometimes undressed) young women, all of whom telegraph the same message: You'd better do your best to look like us, otherwise you Just Won't Measure Up.

Spring and summer are fraught with anxiety for many women. Stripped of our comforting layers of wool, long sleeves and turtlenecks, we confront our bodies with ambivalence at best, terror at worst. Everywhere we look,

magazines, books, and tabloids tell us how to Lose Weight Fast, Get Rid of Winter Flab, and Prepare for the Swimsuit Season. We decide we don't like our shape, or the shape we're in, and set out to lose that stubborn five or ten pounds that we've always wanted to get rid of.

You know the rest. After a few weeks of enthusiastic, well-balanced dieting and working out, we discover that the scales have barely budged. We feel miserable, binge on Oreo ice cream and strawberry cheesecake, feel even worse the next morning, and decide to spend the summer in a muumu.

We've been told, from the time we were very small, that the closer we come to a certain "ideal" physical image, the more we will be able to attract the things we imagine will make us happy: a true love, money, friends, better jobs. It seems not to matter that the ideal physical image is unrealistic; we strive for it nevertheless, and use our failure to attain it to feel unhappy about our bodies. Why?

First of all, there's one thing that everyone knows and nobody believes: Dieting Doesn't Work. When bright, with-it women feel good about their bodies, they'll roundly condemn any form of dieting as an exercise in self-abuse. When these same bright, with-it women are talked into feeling bad about their bodies by the fashion magazines, there's no

telling what kind of diets they'll be willing to try. Nevertheless, for the record, here are the facts.

A woman who weighs 120-140 pounds expends between 1200 and 1300 calories each day on basic metabolism: breathing, pumping blood, digesting food, replacing and repairing damaged and worn-out tissue. If she goes on a calorie-reduced diet, her body will reduce the number of calories required for basic functioning in an attempt to maintain normal weight. So she'll lose a few pounds and then level off as her body makes its own adjustments.



She'll also probably become so accustomed to suppressing normal feelings of hunger and fullness that she'll lose touch with her natural ability to know when to eat and when to stop. If she diets without increasing her physical activity, the

weight she loses will be a combination of water, lean tissue, and fat. And over 90 per cent of the time, she'll gain back the weight she lost after she resumes normal eating patterns.

Whew! Depressing, isn't it? But lots of people do it. Maybe you've done it at some time yourself.

The second point is about why we get into the dieting maze to start with. Studies have demonstrated that women frequently overestimate their body size. In one landmark study, women were shown figure drawings of bodies of various sizes. They were asked to identify the drawing they thought they resembled, and the one they wished they resembled. Most of the women indicated they were average or slightly overweight, but over 80 per cent wanted to look 10 to 20 per cent underweight. And here's the kicker: **sixty per cent of the women who perceived themselves as overweight actually were not.** In fact, if there's one generalization we can make about men, women, and weight, it's that women are overly conscious about their weight, and men don't care enough.

So what are we to do this spring? Clearly, muumus are an option, but one with limited application. If you are really a lot heavier than average, or if you have overweight-related conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, or gallstones, you may benefit from losing a few pounds. But do it sensibly. Get some professional advice from a nutritionist and a fitness professional (and a doctor if you have medical complications), and be gentle with yourself. Combine

modifications to your eating habits with regular physical activity (walking is probably your best bet), and set both short- and long-term goals. Use affirmations and positive self-talk, or read an inspirational book to get you through the rough spots.

If you're still at odds with your body, and you know it's because you don't look like

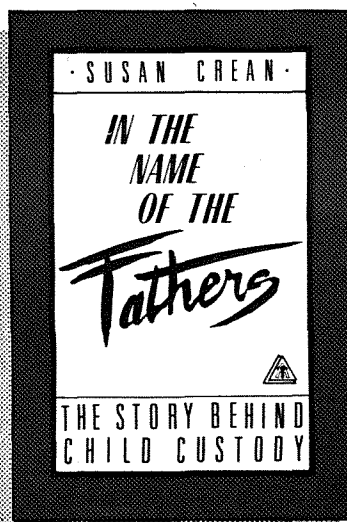
(fill in name of model/famous person/actress here), you should know that self-acceptance doesn't happen overnight. You can start, however, by starting to appreciate the things your body does well.



Try learning to do something new with your body, whether hiking, needlework, or planting a garden. If you're hooked on the bathroom scale, gather all your willpower and throw it away. Instead, rely on how you feel and the way your clothes fit to tell you how you're doing (this takes some time to adjust to, but it works). And avoid the fashion magazines at all costs. Take your issue of **The Womanist** to the grocery store and the hairdresser instead.

Spring is widely heralded as a time of change and renewal. This spring, maybe the change should happen in your head, not in your body. Stay well.

Cathy Beaumont is dedicated to fitness, well-being and chocolate. She pursues a wellness lifestyle in downtown Toronto if that, in fact, can be done.



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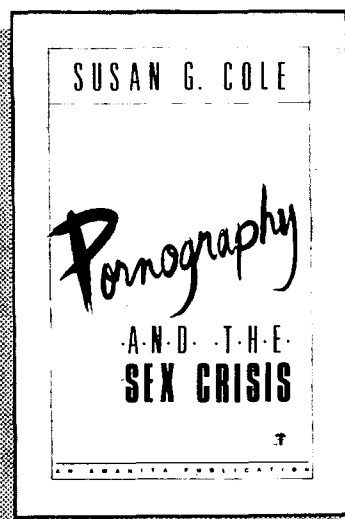
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13. Give

14. AFN

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16. Equality

17. Outrage

18. Egalitarian

22. End

24. Justice

25. Innu

26. Unite

27. National

28. Liberation

Down

1. Indignation

2. Lead

4. Heal

5. Poor

7. Lobby

8. Poverty

9. Refugees

11. Consensual

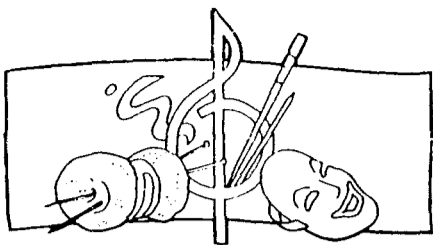
13. Abortion

19. Little

20. Action

21. Peace

23. Doll



Company of Sirens brings theatre to the people

by Lynn McGuigan

Company of Sirens is a unique theatre company which acts as a community animator. The company is devoted to developing original theatre productions and taking them to audiences interested in affirmative action for women. They perform at conferences, in women's shelters, at community centres, in schools, in the workplace, at union meetings and events, for women's service agencies, labour organizations and cultural associations. It is rare indeed to see **Company of Sirens** in a traditional theatre.

The plays developed by **Company of Sirens** focus on issues relevant to women, and the Company will actually tailor-make shows for specific audiences and sponsors. To date, **Company of Sirens** has been commissioned to develop plays dealing with issues such as sexual harassment, battered women, day care, racism, pay equity and women and work. Performances are followed by a discussion, led by the actors, about the issues raised in the show.

Founded in 1986 by a collective of women artists, the company now operates under the guidance of Co-Artistic Directors Lena Chartrand and Cynthia Grant. Chartrand's background includes several years with Pelican Players, a multicultural neighbourhood theatre which presented plays on local issues such as racism. She is a professional playwright who writes in both French and English. Grant was the founding Artistic Director of Nightwood Theatre, a women's theatre in Toronto, from 1979 to 1985. She has directed, written and acted for a wide variety of companies and is currently working with the



Company of Sirens, Mother Tongues, Rita Kohli and Cynthia Grant

Filipino community to develop a piece about this group's experiences in Canada.

Over the past year, the **Company of Sirens** has provided more than 150 performances reaching more than 150,000 people. The demand for their work has grown so quickly the Company currently has two troupes of actors on tour.

Shows developed to date have included *Shelter from Assault*, commissioned by the Ministry of Housing; *Foul Play*, commissioned by the Women's Studies Department of Glendon

College and the Sexual Harassment Education Centre at York University; and the company's first production, *The Working People's Picture Show* commissioned by a number of unions, women's organizations and community

groups, and developed in conjunction with Ground Zero Productions.

This June, the Company will be performing a new play commissioned by the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses dealing with racism and sexism.

Next season, the Company plans to produce three new shows: *All The Way*, dealing with teen sexuality and peer pressure which will tour high schools; *Les Ms.*, a lighthearted satire of recent Broadway hits and current feminist mores; and the *Portuguese Wedding Song*, a haunting portrayal of a woman's desire in the repressed old world culture of Portugal. A tour in the Maritimes of *The Working People's Picture Show* is in the planning stages.

As if all this activity was not enough, the **Company of Sirens** also produces a performance series called *Siren Soirees*. This series developed in response to the Status of Women's report on Women in Theatre, which revealed through statistical analysis that women are not well represented as playwrights, directors and artistic directors in Canadian theatre.

Through the *Soirees*, the **Company of Sirens** provides a forum for other women artists to present their work to the public and receive critical feedback. Over the years nearly 200 artists have been

seen in the *Soiree* series. Performers have ranged from groups such as **Hysterical Women** and **Ebony Voices** to individual artists such as dub-poet Lillian Allen to storyteller Itah Sadu.

In addition, at least once a year, **Company of Sirens** produces a show in a traditional theatre venue. This allows the Company to stay in touch with regular theatre audiences, and to encourage the audience it has reached in non-traditional venues to experience the company's work in a "real" theatre.

Company of Sirens is an exciting addition to the Canadian theatre scene and to the Canadian feminist movement. The Company's commitment to women artists and to feminist issues, and its commitment to taking theatre to the people in familiar, everyday environments has given it a unique role as an advocate for social change.

Lynn McGuigan operates her own business, McGuigan Art Ventures, in Toronto. She has produced theatre, dance and music events, and has written numerous performing arts publications.



Classified

Waxing Moon Healing. Planning a visit to Beautiful British Columbia, this August. Womyn Healing Village Society, a group of womyn organizing a womyn's healing village is planning a healing gathering during the week of the Labour Day holiday. Workshops. Play. Fun. Healing. Within a few hours drive of Vancouver. For more information please write WMHVS, c/o 14115 Marine Drive, White Rock, B.C. V4B 1A6 or call Jan or Brenda, (604) 536-2960.

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Apt / house to share. My name is Sheila McCarthy. I'm a feminist writer and poet, looking for other feminist men or women who are involved in feminist volunteer work, and who have an apartment or house to share. Please leave name & phone number at 230-1692 (Ottawa). No messages please.

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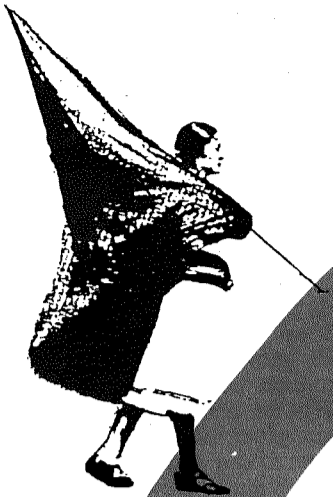
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Rumour Has it...



The Vancouver Women's Health Collective has recently released a book series on Women Talking About Health.

The five books are **Talking About Periods, Avoiding Pregnancy, Miscarriage, Infertility, Women Talking About Health.**

Each book is easy to read, with numerous clear illustrations, glossary, detailed table of contents and section on patient's rights.

Each book is \$12.00 and the package of five books sells for \$55.00. Prepaid orders only. Pay only \$8.50 per book if you are un/underemployed.

Send your order to #302-1720 Grant St., Vancouver, B.C. V5L 2Y7.

The Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan recently published an organizing manual. The manual covers how to organize ourselves, how to set objectives, how to select the best event to meet our objectives, includes check lists of all the things that need to be done, and lists all the community resources available.

Written in clear and easy to understand language, the manual is a valuable resource for any woman or group new to organizing events, or interested in simplifying the organizing of events. To order, enclose \$5 per copy to cover postage.

To order write:
IWS- Saskatoon Chapter
P.O. Box 9582
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The newly Elected Representatives of the **Congress of Black Women of Canada** are Esmeralda Thornhill, President (Montreal); Ettie Rutherford, Vice-President (Toronto); Sandra Aneirobi, Secretary and Nalda Callendar, Treasurer (Vancouver).

Esmeralda Thornhill is a lawyer, linguist and educator who has been working in the human rights field.

Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women

The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women was established in 1973. Its mandate is to advise the government and to inform the public on matters of interest and concern to women.

The following people have been appointed to three-year terms:

Western Vice-President - Sylva May Farrant of Calgary, Alberta is a policy analyst with the Human Resources Department of Amoco Canada Petroleum. A past president of the Calgary Business and Professional Women's Club.

Eastern Vice-President - Ginette Drouin Busque of Outremont, Québec, is a lawyer who has worked extensively on issues such as the reform of family law in Québec, the reform of the Québec Pension Plan and pornography. She has served as President of the Fédération des Femmes du Québec since 1985.

Lyse Bennett of Roxboro, Québec is a businesswoman who has devoted many years of service to community

affairs. She has been a member of the Catholic Women's League of Canada for 26 years.

Eileen Best of Cardigan, Prince Edward Island has had an active and varied career as an arts administrator and freelance writer. She has served as the Vice-Chair of the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Alice Brown of Kathryn, Alberta has owned and operated a family farming corporation with her husband since 1968. Ms. Brown is a past director of Alberta Women in Support of Agriculture and a member of Women for the Survival of Agriculture.

Kenneth Fisher of Ottawa, Ontario is a consultant with Neighbours Consulting. For the past two years he has directed projects on child abuse, employment equity and the new role of men as partners in the workplace.

Dyanne B. Gibson of Toronto, Ontario is Associate Director of the Admissions/Liaison Department at York University. She is a

member and chair of many committees concerned with recruitment and issues of interest to women.

Lynne Kennedy, of Vancouver, British Columbia is currently regional manager for a publishing company. She has worked with Winning Women: Committee for Political Skills, the Charter of Rights Coalition and Westcoast LEAF.

Lorraine Leduc of Baie-Comeau, Québec is a teacher and adult educator. She is a founding member of Regroupement des femmes de la Côte-Nord and was President of Naissance-Renaissance for 1984-1986.

Joyce Robart of Halifax, Nova Scotia has worked as a nurse. She is a Vice-President of the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women and an executive member of both the Association of Black Social Workers and the Congress of Black Women, Halifax chapter. Ms. Robart is also a member of the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women.



NAC - National Action Committee on the Status of Women - All Acclaimed

All positions on the NAC Executive were acclaimed at the recent AGM. There were no elections. The new executive:

Lynn Kaye, President (Toronto, Ontario) has been a NAC Executive member for six of the ten years since 1977. She is a homemaker and lawyer. Lynn Kaye was president last year.

member of Relais-Femmes and a member of its board of directors for 10 years.

Rabab Naqvi, Secretary (Montréal, Québec) has been a member of the NAC executive for one year. Her involvement in community organizations and women's groups began with the National Association of Canadians of Origin in India.

executive Co-ordinator of Bay St. George Women's Council and a feminist counsellor at the local Women's Centre.

Carol Sabo, Northern B.C./Yukon, has been on the NAC Executive for two years. Carol is a bookkeeper and has been a volunteer at transition houses, preschools, public daycares and sexual assault centres.

Diane Thorne (Southwestern B.C.) works at the Family Services of Greater Vancouver and is active in the YWCA.

Andrea Levan (Northern Ontario) is Past President of the Sudbury Women's Action Group and a lecturer in Women's Studies at Laurentian University.

Madeleine Parent (Québec) has been on the NAC Executive for eight years. A trade unionist, she has worked mostly with textile workers in Québec and Ontario.

Letti La Rosa (Prince Edward Island) has been a member of the NAC Executive for one year. She is the Treasurer and Board Member of the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women and the Chairperson of the Filipino-Canadian Group of PEI.

Reanna R. Erasmus (Northwest Territories) has lived in the NWT for 2 years and works with the government of NWT. Previously she worked at

the University of Alberta for seven years in the office of the Advisor on Native Affairs.

Audrey Wildman, (Saskatchewan) has been a member of the NAC Executive for the last year. She has been an active member of the IWD committee in Saskatoon for the last few years.

Anne McGrath (Alberta) has been a member of the NAC executive for the last year. She works full time as a Project Co-ordinator for the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee.

Members at Large

Kerry McCuaig (Toronto, Ontario) has been a member of the NAC Executive for the last year. She was an elected officer of Organized Working Women.

Phyllis F. Mosher (Hamilton, Ontario) has been on the NAC Executive for part of one year. She has been involved with the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs.

Jacqui Macdonald (Ottawa, Ontario) has been involved in the Ottawa Women's Lobby.

Sharon J. Costello (Vancouver, British Columbia) has been a member of the NAC executive for one year. She has been a member of the steering committee for MediaWatch and is a violinist for the six-piece all-women band "Key Change".

Marian Mathieson, (Sydney, Nova Scotia) last year was the Chair of NAC's Survival of the Planet Committee and member of the Employment Committee.



Fleurette Osborne, Vice-President (Hamilton, Ontario) has been on the NAC Executive since 1986. She was the President of the Congress of Black Women 1980-82.

Joanne Whyte, Vice-President (Hay River, Northwest Territories) has been on the NAC Executive since 1987. Originally from Toronto, she moved to NWT in 1981. She started the Hay River Women's Centre and Safe Home Network in 1986.

Ruth Rose, Vice-President (Montréal, Québec) Associate Professor of Economics at Université du Québec à Montréal. She is a founding

Janet Maher, Treasurer (Toronto, Ontario) has been a member of the NAC Executive for one year. She was nominated by the Child Poverty Action Group.

Regional Representatives:

Susan Hyde, Nova Scotia, has been on the NAC Executive for one year. She is a clinical psychologist and an ex-officio member of the Women's Action Coalition in Nova Scotia.

Joyce M. Hancock, Newfoundland, has been on the NAC Executive for the last two years. Joyce is presently the



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