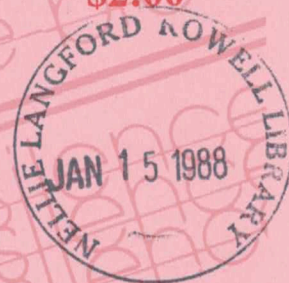


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December, 1987

Vol 6: 2

breaking the SILENCE

a feminist quarterly

Women in the Paid Workforce:
Liberation or Exploitation

In Unions

CUPE women check out pay equity
Social workers organize

On Our Own

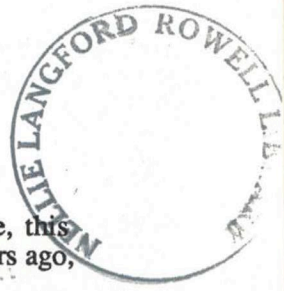
Immigrant domestic workers:
Will legislation help?
On her own: feminist filmmaker

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from the collective



collective

Ellen Adelberg, Michelle Clarke,
Wendy Gordon, Louise Guénette,
Evelyne Guindon-Zador, Alyson
Huntly, Joan Holmes, Gabrielle
Nawratil, Tünde Nemeth, Yvonne
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with the help of:

Deborah Gordon, Virginia Howard,
Diane Rogers

Collective Message

"You've come a long way, baby." In the workplace, this refrain is only slightly closer to the truth than it was 60 years ago, when it was first coined.

In this issue of *BTS*, we look at some of the challenges facing women in the paid work force today. Clearly, our struggle for better working conditions and complete equality with men is far from over. In soliciting articles for this issue, we hadn't pre-defined the areas of work and specific topics we wanted covered, but what we received reflects the reality of women's work today.

In Ruth Scher's article on unionizing social service workers, in Brendalyn Ambrose's story on domestic workers, and in the article by Sandi Howell and Irene Harris on pay equity, the limits of women's job opportunities are painfully obvious.

These articles and others also point out, however, that feminists have at least achieved some victories. We now have pay equity legislation, imperfect though it may be, in four provinces — Ontario, Quebec, Prince Edward Island and Manitoba — in the Yukon and in the federal jurisdiction. Complete equity in job training, advancement and remuneration is still elusive, but the quest is narrowing.

Social service workers are among the most highly unionized in the country — a phenomenon of the 1970s due in no small measure to women's growing awareness of their rights to equal recognition with men in the workplace. With unionization, as Scher points out, wages rise and working conditions improve.

The majority of women, however, still work in non-unionized jobs, where working conditions are far worse. Ambrose makes this crystal clear in her depiction of the way many domestic workers are treated.

Ellen Adelberg's story on Helene Klodawsky, a feminist filmmaker, illustrates the level of perseverance women who make films must have to continue their work in this underpaid, underrecognized field.

As part of our commitment to covering international issues, "Women in South Africa's Liberation Movement" brings us into the work world of Julie Frederikse, a most unusual author and historian.

While "women's work" no longer has the narrow definition it once did, with women today participating in paid work throughout the economy, too often work done by women is still undervalued. We can see from this collection of *BTS* articles that we may have come a long way, but we still have far to go in gaining true equality in the paid workforce.

Breaking the Silence is listed in the Index of Canadian Alternative Periodicals and is a member of the Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association.

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about *Breaking the Silence*

For too long women's voices—our struggles, and joy—have been silenced. Living in a patriarchal world, we have been separated from one another and from the mainstream of society.

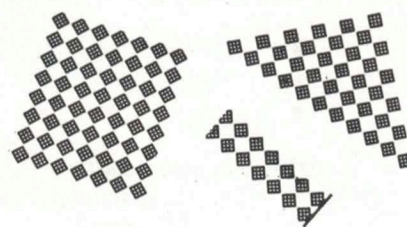
The *Breaking the Silence* collective is committed to giving women a voice. In particular, we provide a forum for discussion on the social welfare needs of women—needs such as support services for survivors of violence, affordable housing, sufficient and good daycare, adequate pensions and employment.

We are committed to moving toward a world absent of oppression: be it sexism, racism, classism, homophobia or ageism. We are committed to helping to build a peaceful and humane world where women's ideas, experiences and activities are heard and made visible.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance provided for this issue by the Women's Bureau of Labour Canada.

L . E . T . T . E . R . S

Breaking the Silence would like to encourage women to write—to make this a forum for your ideas, engage in dialogue on the issues that affect you, or respond to the articles published in BTS. We welcome your input!



Bonjour!

J'ai été très touchée par le contenu intelligent, l'étoffe philosophique et les discussions vibrantes qui transpirent dans vos articles du dernier numéro *Breaking the Silence*. J'ai un besoin fou d'entendre des femmes, «Lesbiennes de toujours, ex-hétéros, en transition ou pas», qui comme moi se débattent au creux des vagues de la réflexion pour trouver un sens à leur histoire, à

leur définition, à la théorie, à la pratique; pour mieux «être». Les tempêtes d'idées, les remises en question, les résonnances du cerveau et du cœur sont une grande source d'inspiration, de rafraîchissement et d'information. Il y a tant à dire, à démystifier, tant de libération à faire naître, et il est heureux(se) que vous procuriez une place pour le faire.

Vous me donnez une autre opportunité de me retrouver

discrètement auprès des femmes, de réfléchir, de me guérir. J'espère encore entendre ces douces résonnances lesbiennes . . . Pour celles qui sont silencieuses il est bon d'entendre celles qui maîtrisent la parole.

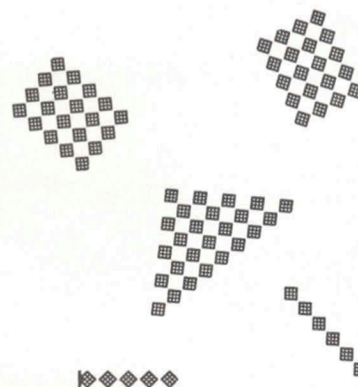
Merci!
Hélène R. Peladeau,
Ottawa



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Dancing with You

First song: an excuse

Second song: a decision

Third song: a testing choreography . . . swingtough swinghold
holdswing rounding

Fourth song: I'm dancing alone
I see you hanging wallpaper
between us
on the interbeam spaces of the wallframe
suddenly there.
I'm wondering if it's pretty on your side
and why you're ignoring the music
and why there are no walls, only wallpaper
and how you can do that
and why you've allowed for windows
we didn't have windows but we didn't have walls
and your space is lighter but it's only reflections
and our space wasn't dark enough for shadows.

Fourth song: I pull a forearm from the floor
and continue to dance — it's good as a pivot
for interesting moves I can't make on my own
but static elbows do limit the fun
so I release the extra hand and stutter/slide off.
I'm now cupping molehills of air in my hands and
pushing them down to the beat of music and hips.
I'm keeping an eye on the ledge of your window
hoping at least you'll pause to swing your legs;
your hands will grasp my shoulders and rock them
while my hands will pinch your knees
and we will be laughing
if not dancing.

Joan Condie



Illustration: Virginia Howard

Natural Allies:

Social Workers and Unions

by Ruth Scher

"The straw that broke the camel's back was when one of our staff was fired without cause," says Faye Ball, describing her decision to join a union.

"We thought to ourselves, 'If you can be fired without cause, so can I.' All of a sudden we realized that without union protection, you have very few rights."

So Ball and about 12 workers at the Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa (E. Fry) held a meeting and soon after, set out to form a union. (The society works with women in conflict with the law.)

"It was funny because we were so inexperienced," says Ball. "We went to the OPSEU [Ontario Public Service Employees Union] office in Ottawa, got a handful of union cards, paid our one dollar apiece, signed our cards and sent them to the Toronto office. Just like that."

"A few days later, we get a call from an organizer in Toronto, saying, 'I have all these cards on my desk and I don't know who you are.' We didn't have an organizer come down to organize us. We wanted to join a union quickly, so we just skipped that step."

Ball's case is not unusual. Like thousands of social service workers across the country, she and her colleagues found themselves in serious disagreement with management. Once thought to be complacent, social workers are finally coming into their own in the labour movement. They are no longer willing to accept the wages and working conditions caused by harsh government cutbacks.

Social workers are among the most highly unionized workers in the country. About 85 per cent of non-supervisory social workers are union members, compared to only 30 per cent of the total Canadian labour force. But this high rate of unionization isn't rooted in a long history of militancy. For the most part, social workers were swept into unions when public sector workers organized in the sixties and seventies.

In the mid-seventies, social workers in voluntary agencies began to organize in greater numbers.

*Lingering myths
about voluntary
agencies as "ideal
workplaces" broke
down in the 1980's.*

Employees in children's aid societies, hospitals and social planning councils tried to protect their salaries from the ravages of double-digit inflation. The threat of layoffs combined with a much tighter job market also prompted many workers to seek the benefits of collective bargaining. Teachers and nurses had made salary gains through their unions, leaving

social workers hovering at the bottom of the professional ladder.

Lingering myths about voluntary agencies as "ideal workplaces" broke down further in the eighties. The notion that employees and agency boards would always work cooperatively for the benefit of their clients didn't survive in an era of drastic cutbacks. As government restraint intensified, social workers saw their salaries drop against inflation, their workloads increase and their staff resources decline.

While most volunteer boards of directors, like that of the Elizabeth Fry Society, sympathized with staff, they still complied with government restraint guidelines, shortchanging both the workers and their clients.

The old-fashioned notion that social work was more a charity than a profession, and therefore merited low levels of pay, was also crumbling. Social workers were opening their eyes to the levels of pay other professions were receiving, and they wanted equal recognition and better remuneration.

In his book, *Case Critical: The Dilemma of Social Work in Canada*, Ben Carniol documents the prevalent attitudes of supervisors in the social services. "In an age of cutbacks," he writes, "social work managers feel the squeeze: deliver social services to more people but do so with fewer resources."

Ironically, the impression conveyed to frontline workers (those serving clients directly) amounts to a "blame-the-victim" approach. Carniol recalls his experience in an Alberta provincial department when the use

of overtime was suddenly and drastically reduced.

Management's message was clear. "The department's budget had to be cut back; therefore, do the work within regular working hours; if you can't we will have to conclude you are incompetent."

This situation isn't unique to Alberta. In 1986, frustrated with ever-growing caseloads, program cuts and low salaries, employees at five Ontario children's aid societies (CAS) went on strike. In a meeting with the Ontario Minister of Community and Social Services, members of OPSEU and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) expressed their bitterness.

"We are tired of subsidizing the system through overwork and low wages, and tired of negotiating with employers who wash their hands by claiming inability to pay." Citing examples of inadequate in-house

orientation and training, understaffing, high burnout and turnover rates, CAS workers said they were being forced to provide "terrible service" to families and children.

The issues at stake are not only salaries and working conditions, but the power to make decisions. CUPE Research Director Gilbert Levine says social workers are gradually losing control over their daily work as more emphasis is placed on paperwork and closer supervision of the work process: "Administrators are now pushing harder for discipline among social workers, encouraging authoritarian structures and hierarchies to control workers."

While government welfare departments are considered more prone to authoritarianism, similar hierarchies exist in voluntary agencies. Though social workers in this sector must answer to volunteer

boards rather than to a government minister, Carniol believes that "even this distinction is becoming blurred as voluntary agencies receive increasing proportions of their funds from governments."

Faye Ball has experienced the power inequities in the voluntary sector. "I think it might be true that power corrupts. No matter where you are, when you are in a power position something changes. Whether employers are social workers or not, they have the power to hire, fire, promote or demote."

Before the organizing drive at E. Fry, Ball says, complaints about working conditions, such as long shifts, didn't appear to be a high priority. "I find it ironic that here we were in the helping profession, this little group of workers who wanted some job protection, some job security, and they were trying to say 'No.'"

"We felt their attitude was 'if you don't like it, you can leave.' Well, we said, 'we don't want to leave, we just want the right to job security, the right to voice our opinions without the fear of getting fired.'"

As a profession, social work has changed a great deal in the last 10 to 15 years. According to Helen Levine of the Carleton University School of Social Work, "the question of employment is much more serious now than it was in the early seventies. When people graduated then, there were jobs available and there was mobility in the field."

"That's not the case now, partly because of cutbacks in social services, and partly because there are 18 schools of social work pouring graduates into a relatively shrinking field. With up to 100 people applying for a single job, there is a fair amount of insecurity in the profession."

For women in particular, a constricted job market has meant comparatively few career advancements. Feminism has made inroads into the social work analytical framework, but according to a study cited in Carniol's book, women are vastly underrepresented in senior government or voluntary agency positions — an appalling fact,



Illustration: Mary Fogarty

Design: Ellen Adelberg

continued on page 31

Domestic Workers, Immigration Policy, and Working Conditions

by *Brendalyn Ambrose*

Her coughing was so persistent that everyone on the bus stared at her. Her entire body shook as her stomach rattled with a cough which was evidently embarrassing. I thought for a while about how to ease her embarrassment. I remembered that only two weeks earlier I had such an awful cold that I had to go to the doctor, who prescribed some penicillin.

I moved to sit beside her. "I see the cold is giving you a hard time," I said lovingly. "Would you like some cough drops I have in my purse?"

"I have that," she replied, "a friend of mine took me to a druggist

and he gave me benadryl and other things, but the cold just won't go away."

I then told her about the awful cold I had had two weeks earlier and how the doctor gave me antibiotics to clear it up. "Perhaps you should go to a doctor," I suggested. After some encouragement, she finally agreed to do that.

"What work do you do?" I asked.

"I'm a domestic," she replied, "I work with a lady and her husband. They have only one child who is married, but they are not nice at all. There is never any meat in the house and hardly any food. I want another job. At one time, she had a friend who needed some help and she lent

me to that family. Her friend treated me so nicely that it was very difficult for me to return to my mistress when the time was up. The other family was very nice."

This woman's story is not uncommon. Most domestics in Canada are from Third World countries. Some of them who immigrated in the early 1950s and 1960s were teachers, nurses and government employees who accepted domestic work in an effort to find a better life abroad.

The present group of domestics have at least some high school education and a few even have university degrees, but they all pay the same price for being in Canada: namely, a job that pays very meagre

Illustration: Linnét O'Connell-Graham



Design: Yvonne Van Ruskerveld

wages, and no control over their working conditions, what they eat or when they get time off.

One woman has vowed to change this exploitation of helpless women by rich women: Judith Ramirez, coordinator of the International Coalition to End Domestic Exploitation (INTERCEDE). Ramirez is a social activist who has worked for more than a decade to improve the lot of immigrant women.

Launched in Toronto in 1979, INTERCEDE responded to the need for counselling and advocacy services of foreign domestics. Up until 1981 domestic workers got only temporary permits to work in Canada and were thrown out after three years. Under pressure from INTERCEDE, the Canadian government granted domestic workers the right to apply for landed immigrant status after working in Canada for two years. They had to meet certain criteria before being granted this status: they were judged according to their level of education, their language skills, financial security, work experience, number of dependents and upgrading initiatives.

If a worker fails to qualify, she can re-apply after a year. In discussing the difficulties with the program, Ramirez was quoted in the *Globe and Mail* (14 Mar. 1984) as saying that the women either did not know what criteria they had failed to meet or were given inadequate counselling by Canada Employment Centre (CEC) staff. She recognized the lack of proper communication between domestics and government agencies, and she made every effort to alter this situation.

Other groups, such as the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), and the Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues, joined INTERCEDE in calling for help for domestics.

As a result of these efforts, INTERCEDE received a grant from Employment and Immigration Canada to establish a counselling and referral service for domestics. The Service Unit was established in March 1984. In its first year of operation the Unit provided counselling on immigration matters for approximately 800 domestics.

INTERCEDE recently launched a court battle against the government of Ontario in an effort to obtain more humane treatment for domestics and to bring an end to exploitation. Francis Henry, an Ottawa-Carleton Immigrant Service Organization (OCISO) counsellor involved with domestic workers' issues, informed me that the main issue in the court battle is the right to full protection for domestics under the Employment Standards Act. INTERCEDE is fighting for an end to long working hours, low wages, no pay for overtime worked, sexual harassment and no holiday pay.



Henry said another problem domestics used to face was that they had to obtain release letters from a former employer stating that their services were no longer required before being allowed to look for work with another employer. Some vindictive employers refused to give release letters, thus preventing domestics from finding another job. Under pressure from INTERCEDE, the then Minister of State for Immigration, Gerry Weiner, abolished the use of release letters in September 1986.

On 9 June 1987, two months after INTERCEDE launched its court case, Ontario Labour Minister William Wrye announced new legislation which will affect domestics, nannies, live-in sitters working more than 44 hours a week, and live-out domestics working 44 hours a week or less. These four categories of workers will be entitled

to time-and-a-half pay after 44 hours work in one week. The overtime rate is set at a minimum of \$6.53 per hour.

The new legislation, which took effect 1 October 1987, stipulates that domestics be paid at least \$4.55 an hour. It also requires employers of live-in help to keep daily records of hours worked and to furnish written particulars of the job, such as specific duties, hours of work and "a clarification of non-working time."

INTERCEDE is not convinced that there will be an end to domestic exploitation, though, and Judith Ramirez vows to continue with the court case. She was quoted in the *Globe and Mail* (10 June 1987) as saying that the new rules recognized the principle of overtime for domestics, but at the same time introduced "an inferior standard" and "a little ghetto" for domestic workers because employers could negotiate time off in lieu of pay for actual overtime worked.

Ramirez fears that in most cases domestics will never see a penny of the overtime pay to which they are entitled. INTERCEDE will continue its fight for overtime pay until every domestic worker in Ontario has a right to time-and-a-half for overtime work, without any strings attached.

The irony of all this is that most domestics are women who are employed by other, rich women. Many of these rich and middle-class women have been vocal in demanding an end to discrimination in jobs, professions, the corporate boardroom, elite clubs, etc., and yet they exploit their own gender. The efforts of INTERCEDE and others have at least given an indication that there will always be a voice of conscience on behalf of any oppressed group of people.

bts

To contact INTERCEDE write to:
58 Cecil Street, Toronto, Ontario
M5T 1N6.

Brendalyn Ambrose is a Communication Consultant in Ottawa. She has met many domestics over the past ten years and listened to a lot of their grievances.

Double Discrimination: Racism and Heterosexism



Illustration: Tracey Clark

by Debra Pilon

Design: Ellen Adelberg

Sexism isn't the only kind of discrimination women encounter. Racism is a fact of life for millions of women in Canadian workplaces. Similarly, the homophobia of many "straight" Canadians puts roadblocks in the way of women who choose to love other women. What can union members do to eliminate the discrimination faced by lesbians and women of colour? What are unions like the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) doing to educate their members about racism and heterosexism? In this article, union women and others discuss ways to tackle these thorny issues.


Lesbians and women with brown or black skin are swallowing a double dose of discrimination in the workplace — discrimination which is not felt by their white or heterosexual sisters.

A "straight" white female CUPE member is relatively privileged when it comes to workplace discrimination: her primary struggle is against sexism. She's fighting for pay equity and better promotions. She compares herself with men and wants the same rights they enjoy in the workplace.

Lesbians and women of colour, on the other hand, wage a daily battle against racism and heterosexism (the

belief that male/female sexual relationships are the only valid or "normal" ones), as well as sexism. As a result of racism, women of colour find themselves shunted into the lowest-paid and most difficult work in predominantly female workplaces.

Women of colour and lesbians are increasingly ensuring that their collective agreements include a no-discrimination clause to protect them from racism and homophobia (fear of homosexuals and homosexuality) in the workplace. Such clauses can help women who are denied promotion or benefits as a result of discrimination.



But a no-discrimination clause alone can't end racism or heterosexism by an employer or a co-worker. The value of its inclusion in a collective agreement is that it often leads to an understanding that women of colour and lesbians are deserving of respect, equality and dignity in the workplace, as well as in the larger society.

The Silent Strangler

"A particular feature of racism in Canada, compared to the United States and Britain, is its apparent subtlety and invisibility," writes Kari Dehli of the Department of Sociology in Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Canadian women of colour suffer racism as surely as men of colour do. But they also suffer sexism. This combination makes immigrant women, along with visible minority and native women, "one of the most invisible and disadvantaged segments of society," according to Roxana Ng and Alma Estable, writing in *Resources for Feminist Research* (Vol. 16, no. 1).


"They have different access to education, are stuck in job ghettos, face greater unemployment and underemployment, and encounter restricted job mobility and advancement. Their access to services to which all Canadians are entitled is limited. And they earn less money than Canadian-born women, no matter how long and how hard they work here."

In common usage, the term "immigrant woman" is used to refer to "women of colour, women from Third World countries, women who do not speak English well, and women who occupy lower positions in the occupational hierarchy." A woman of colour who was born in Canada or has been a Canadian citizen for a decade or more may still be thought of as an "immigrant" by her white co-workers and her employer. This kind of stereotyping by white Canadians — unspoken though it may be — strangles women of colour. In the workplace, the strangulation takes the form of

relegating women of colour to the lowliest and lowest-paid jobs.

In Winnipeg, CUPE Local 500's affirmative action committee is on the verge of negotiations with the City of Winnipeg to establish an effective affirmative action program. Anne Nacci, chairperson of CUPE Local 500's committee, says a controversial survey recently undertaken by the city has proven how poorly represented both men and women of colour are in the workplace. To begin with, only 28.2 per cent of all city employees are women; only 4.5 per cent are from visible minority groups, and only 1.3 per cent are aboriginal people.

This contrasts sharply with workforce figures covering both the public and private sectors in Manitoba's capital which show that 50 per cent of workers are women, 6 per cent are from visible minority groups, and 10 per cent are aboriginal peoples. The City of Winnipeg's 61 managers reflect the white, male-dominated bias at city hall. There are only two women and two men of colour in senior management. There are no aboriginal people.




"The only way we're going to rectify this situation is to have women of colour become more active in the union committees that have been set up to address these issues," says Nacci.

Although it takes time to educate management about discrimination in the workplace, it takes just as much time to educate white union members. The battle is on two fronts.

As a black Canadian, Poppie Rabalao has known for years that women of colour are underrepresented in her workplace, Ottawa's Carleton University. "First of all, it's hard to get into the workforce [if you're a black woman]," she says. "And secondly, when you're in, upward mobility is very difficult."

A member of CUPE Local 2424, Rabalao has worked in the university's library system since 1973. She is currently a subject supervisor in the reader services section and chairperson of the local's human rights committee.



"Of course, management would say there's no discrimination at this university because they have a non-discrimination policy," Rabalao says. "But the reality is that there is underrepresentation."

"And the conflict the union feels is that equal opportunity programs might erode some of the gains our union has made on seniority issues. It's threatening to some people. There's also the fear that the struggle for equality would be pitting individual rights against collective rights."

Rabalao is convinced there's no conflict between what unions are fighting for and what people of colour need in the workplace. "We're all in the same boat," she says. "While I support the struggle for pay equity, I think the union needs to put the same energy into gaining equality for visible minorities, native people and the handicapped."

June Veacock at the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) echoes this sentiment. "There was this perception once upon a time that employment equity spoke only to white women. Now we see it being applied to men and women in minority groups, to the native population and to the disabled. Unions have a real role to play in the development of employment equity plans. We need to be looking at such questions as how can we minimize the repercussions of employment equity programs on seniority."

Both women agree education is a crucial component of any program that aims to eliminate racism in a workplace. A good place to start is with a no-discrimination clause. The very fact that local union members discuss the introduction of race and colour issues into their agreement before the proposals go to management is often a consciousness-raising experience. Some CUPE divisions are going further by setting up anti-racism workshops for their members and distributing information about the issues.

Coming Out

Unlike racism, homosexuality doesn't just divide a woman from her co-workers. Not being able to "come out" to co-workers about being a lesbian divides a woman from herself.

"It's like walking a tightrope," says a CUPE member from the Maritimes, describing the tension that gripped her before she finally told some of her co-workers she is lesbian.

"I don't know if it was courage or if it was just wanting to get it off my chest," she says. "I think it was just that I wanted to be comfortable, to be able to be myself at work."

In order to feel truly accepted at work, a lesbian must be able to be honest about her sexual orientation, and she must have the protection of a no-discrimination clause to back her up if her honesty has repercussions.

Protection at Work

A CUPE resolution which was passed eight years ago this spring urged Ontario locals to include sexual orientation in their no-discrimination clauses.

Susan Reed, a member of the executive of CUPE Local 1582 at the Metro Toronto Library and a health and safety officer for her local, has openly defined herself as a lesbian since 1971. "It was a combination of the women's movement and the gay rights movement that made me decide to be open about being a lesbian," she says.

Back in the early 1970s, when homosexuals at the library were fighting for a no-discrimination clause in their collective agreement, the rampant homophobia of the 1980s was unforeseen.

"At that time, it looked like everything was going to open up for us [homosexuals] forever. But now that we're in the 1980s we know better. We see how really valuable this kind of clause is."

Although the Ontario government passed an amendment to its Human Rights Code last December — it prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation — CUPE members such as Reed are happy that they have protection in their collective agreements. "You can't be too

careful," she says. "The collective agreement protection is much more immediate than the legislation."

Fighting for Equality

Karen Andrews knows firsthand about the immediate protection that can be provided by a no-discrimination clause. "Benefit schemes are supposed to benefit family members, so I wanted my family to be included," says the 27-year-old lesbian, a member of CUPE Local 1996 at the Toronto Public Library. Andrews' family includes her female partner and the partner's two teenage children.

In the spring of 1985, when some members of Andrews' family had to have extensive dental work, she decided they should be covered by her dental plan at work. CUPE Local 1996's no-discrimination clause prohibits discrimination on the basis of marital status and sexual orientation.



"When I raised it with our executive, they didn't think there would be any problem getting benefits for our family since dental and hospital coverage were available to [heterosexual] common-law spouses and families."

Andrews wrote to the library's personnel department to request the inclusion. Four months later, the library said it couldn't provide the coverage because the insurance carrier wouldn't agree that her family qualified.

CUPE launched both a policy grievance and an individual grievance on Andrews' behalf. The union also publicized her predicament. As a result of the publicity, the library's

insurance company, Cumba, decided to provide extended health care benefits (including dental coverage) to Andrews' family. The only coverage the family continues to be denied is family benefits under the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). The case is still in arbitration.

Double Discrimination

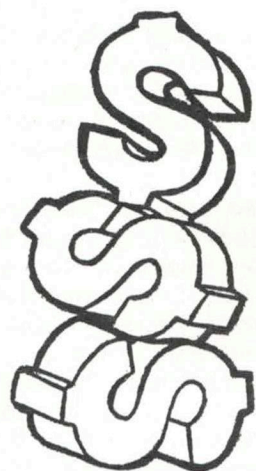
As well as using the usual procedures available to it as a union, CUPE has also complained to — and won the support of — the province's Ombudsman over OHIP's refusal to provide family benefits to Andrews.

On 9 July 1987, Murray Elston, Ontario's Minister of Health, commenting on the Ombudsman's recommendation regarding Andrews' case, said that OHIP coverage would *not* be extended to same-sex spouses because a partnership between homosexuals does not meet OHIP's criteria for families. But CUPE is challenging this in the Supreme Court of Ontario on the grounds that OHIP regulations do not define "spouse" and on the grounds that Bill 7 (the sexual orientation amendment to the Human Rights Code) protects lesbians and gay men from such discrimination.

"I think having [sexual] orientation in your collective agreement is essential," Andrews says. "I would have been lost if I hadn't had access to the grievance procedure." She says her fight for benefits "meant coming out at work ... something that's been very important for my self-esteem as an employee. I also think my case has helped to educate people in a very grassroots way."

bts

Debra Pilon is a CUPE public relations officer.



Bargaining and Lobbying for Pay Equity

Design: Yvonne Van Ruskenveld



by *Sandi Howell and Irene Harris*

Although several provinces have now enacted pay equity laws, they are all flawed in some way — excluding some workers, giving employers loopholes, and limiting the role of unions. Continuing efforts are needed on both fronts to reach the objective of nation-wide equal pay for work of equal value. Pressure must be exerted to improve existing pay equity laws and to have legislation introduced in the hold-out provinces. But at the same time the elimination of female-male pay disparities must continue to be a collective bargaining priority.

Wage discrimination persists despite the equal pay laws that have been on the books for many years (Quebec was first in 1975).

In 1971, Canadian women working full time were earning 60 per cent of the wages of full-time male workers. Fourteen years later, in 1985, women were earning 65 per cent of men's wages, an improvement of only 5 per cent. In 1985, over half (53 per cent) of women working for pay earned less than \$10,000, while

just 27 per cent of men working for pay earned under this amount.

Resting on our laurels won't close the remaining gap. A study in one Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) workplace demonstrated how inequitable that gap can be. In its 1983 survey of women in the workforce, the City of Ottawa compared the salaries of women and men who had equal previous on-the-job experience, years of service with the city, and level of education. The salaries of the women ranged from 64.5 per cent (a 35 per cent gap) to 86 per cent (a 14 per cent gap) of the men's salaries.

Equal pay is also an issue for part-time workers, 70 per cent of whom are women. Part-time workers are often paid lower hourly rates than other workers doing the same work. As well, benefits earned by part-timers are not on par with those received by full-time workers.

CUPE represents about 49,000 part-time members, who constitute 15 per cent of its total membership.

Three Approaches

Three main approaches have

surfaced over the years about how to solve the problem of wage discrimination.

As far back as 1914, unions were calling for **equal pay for equal work**. This was done mainly to prevent the undercutting of hard-won men's wages by low-paid women workers. Though women do not often do the same work as men, equal pay for equal work means that when they do, the pay rate should be the same. For example, if Jane and George are both caretakers, their rate of pay should be equal.

Another approach is **equal pay for similar work**. That is, if Jane is a cleaner and George a caretaker, and their work is essentially the same, they should be paid the same hourly rate.

Neither of those two approaches, however, solves the problem of wage discrimination. Most women work in jobs that are entirely *different* from those that men do, and that are undervalued simply because women do them.

Equal pay for work of equal value, the third approach, calls for the same wage rate for

Wage discrimination persists despite the equal pay laws that have been on the books for many years.

workers who are doing work that is different, but of equal value to the employer. (For example, if Jane were a clerical worker and George a labourer.)

"Pay equity" is another term used in relation to wage discrimination, specifically in some provincial legislation. These laws provide some measures to reduce the wage gap between women's and men's wages but do not provide true equal pay for work of equal value.

Analyzing Equal Pay

Achieving the legislative right to equal pay for work of equal value has been a long, slow process in Canada. In 1972, Canada ratified the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 100, which reads: "Each member shall, by means appropriate to the methods in operation for determining rates of remuneration, promote and insofar as is consistent with such methods, ensure the application to all workers of the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value."

Canada thus committed itself to implementing equal pay for work of equal value. However, Convention 100 allows the federal government and the provinces a lot of flexibility in the way they develop and apply equal value laws. This has led to inadequate legislation that has received a lot of valid criticism from women's organizations and the labour movement.

So far, five governments in

Canada have passed some form of equal value legislation: the federal government, Quebec, Manitoba, Ontario and the Yukon; legislation has also passed first reading in Prince Edward Island. (Legislation can be a help in negotiating equal pay for work of equal value. It can also be a hindrance, however, where it allows extensive loopholes, excludes many workers, and limits the union's bargaining role.)

Women's organizations and unions are lobbying for improvements to existing laws and for legislation in those provinces which have not yet gone beyond *equal pay for equal work*.

There are at least five basic principles which should be used to analyze current and proposed legislation. They apply to: coverage; the time it takes for pay adjustments; the money made available for pay adjustments; the role of unions in the process; and the enforcement of the law.

Most women work in jobs that are entirely different from those that men do, and that are undervalued simply because women do them.

The test in this last area differentiates between laws which provide equal pay for work of equal value as compared with those which provide what is being called pay equity. The difference was best described by Ontario's Equal Pay Coalition, which perceived pay equity as "one step towards equal value laws, which are our ultimate legislative goal."

Ontario's pay equity legislation,

for example, is a law that gives a "quick fix" pay adjustment to some women over a long period of time, not one that will enshrine a right for all workers to equal pay for work of equal value, as Canada is committed to do by its ratification of ILO Convention 100.

Because of its one-shot approach, pay equity legislation narrows the wage gap for some women while at the same time promising employers the process will not cost them a lot of money.

Here are some of the ways in which pay equity legislation works in the five areas mentioned above.

1. Coverage. Pay equity legislation in Canada usually aims to compare jobs predominantly held by women with jobs predominantly held by men (referred to as "gender predominance"). A certain percentage of women and men is required in these jobs for pay equity to apply. Consequently, those who work in jobs with less than the required percentage can be left out of the legislation. (Examples: In Ontario these proportions are 60 per cent women and 70 per cent men; in Manitoba, 70 per cent women and 70 per cent men; in the proposed P.E.I. legislation, it is 60 per cent women and 60 per cent men.)

A second test asks whether there is a minimum number of workers in a job class. For example, Manitoba requires that there be at least ten people in a gender-predominated job class, or the class is not automatically included.

A third test asks why positions can be excluded from the legislation (referred to as "exclusions"). Ontario allows employers to argue why there is a difference in rates of pay for the following reasons: seniority (a gender-free system); temporary training assignments; merit pay (it must be a formal system which has been brought to the attention of the employees); red-circled positions (red-circled during a gender-free re-evaluation process), and positions



paid more because there is a shortage of skills.

This last exclusion also appears in the P.E.I. legislation, but with an important clarification. There, any employer arguing a male group is paid more because of a shortage of skills will have to show that a comparable male group, in an occupation not "suffering" a skills shortage, does not have an equally inflated wage.

A final question on coverage is whether or not all workers are at least eligible for inclusion prior to passing the gender predominance and exclusion tests. Manitoba and P.E.I. included only public sectors. The federal legislation covers federally regulated employers. Legislation in Quebec allows complaints about both private and public sector employees.

2. Timing and money. Unlike equal value laws which provide for complaints and for ordering the

Women's organizations and unions are lobbying for improvements to existing laws and legislation in those provinces which have not yet gone beyond equal pay for equal work.

immediate closing of the wage gap (with retroactivity), pay equity laws provide for reducing the wage gap over a specified period of time.

There is a positive and a negative side to this. On the one hand, pay equity laws do not wait for individuals or unions to lodge complaints. Instead, the wage gap is actively identified through the comparisons of wages and job

One complaint about pay equity legislation has been its lack of flexibility in allowing employers and unions to work out the most practical ways to do comparisons and close the wage gap between women and men.

content of male- and female-dominated jobs. But in recognition of this proactive approach, provision is often made to give employers time to make the pay adjustments.

For example, in Manitoba, public sector employers can make the adjustments out of 1 per cent of payroll a year for four years. In Ontario, public sector employers have to complete all pay adjustments in seven years.

Meanwhile, private sector employers have as many years as it takes to achieve pay equity with a minimum of 1 per cent of salary a year. They don't have to start the process for three to six years, depending on the number of employees.

3. Role of unions. The ILO's Convention 100 says that collective bargaining should be used for equal value laws. In Canada, some equal value and pay equity laws have recognized the role of unions. However, one complaint about pay equity legislation has been its lack of flexibility in allowing employers and unions to work out the most practical ways to do comparisons and close the wage gap between women and men. For example, Manitoba and P.E.I. dictate comprehensive job evaluation programs. This doesn't leave room for CUPE locals and other unions to

bargain methods other than job evaluation to achieve pay equity. Ontario's legislation does not mandate job evaluation and may allow more flexibility.

4. Enforcement. Proactive pay equity legislation is very new. Manitoba was the first province to enact such legislation in 1985. Ontario's legislation is awaiting proclamation; Prince Edward Island's has only passed first reading.

Women and unions in other provinces are beginning to lobby for similar legislation. It will take time to know the extent to which such laws close the wage gap. We know that some women will end up with needed pay equity wage adjustments, but it is not clear whether this approach will significantly alter the consistent problem of women being paid 64 cents for every dollar earned by men.

What we do know is that legislation must have an ongoing element. It must continue to give to women in the workplace the opportunity to bargain equal pay for work of equal value.

This is of crucial importance. As welcome as pay equity legislation may be, it will never be a satisfactory substitute for contractual guarantees. The best pay equity benefits enjoyed by CUPE members are those that have been negotiated with employers and incorporated in our collective agreements. Bargaining will continue to be our main focus for making pay equity gains, with legislation merely setting minimum standards to be improved upon in negotiations.

bts

(A longer version of this article first appeared in *CUPE Facts*, Sept. 1987)

Sandi Howell is a CUPE senior pay equity officer and Irene Harris is a CUPE temporary pay equity and equal opportunities representative.



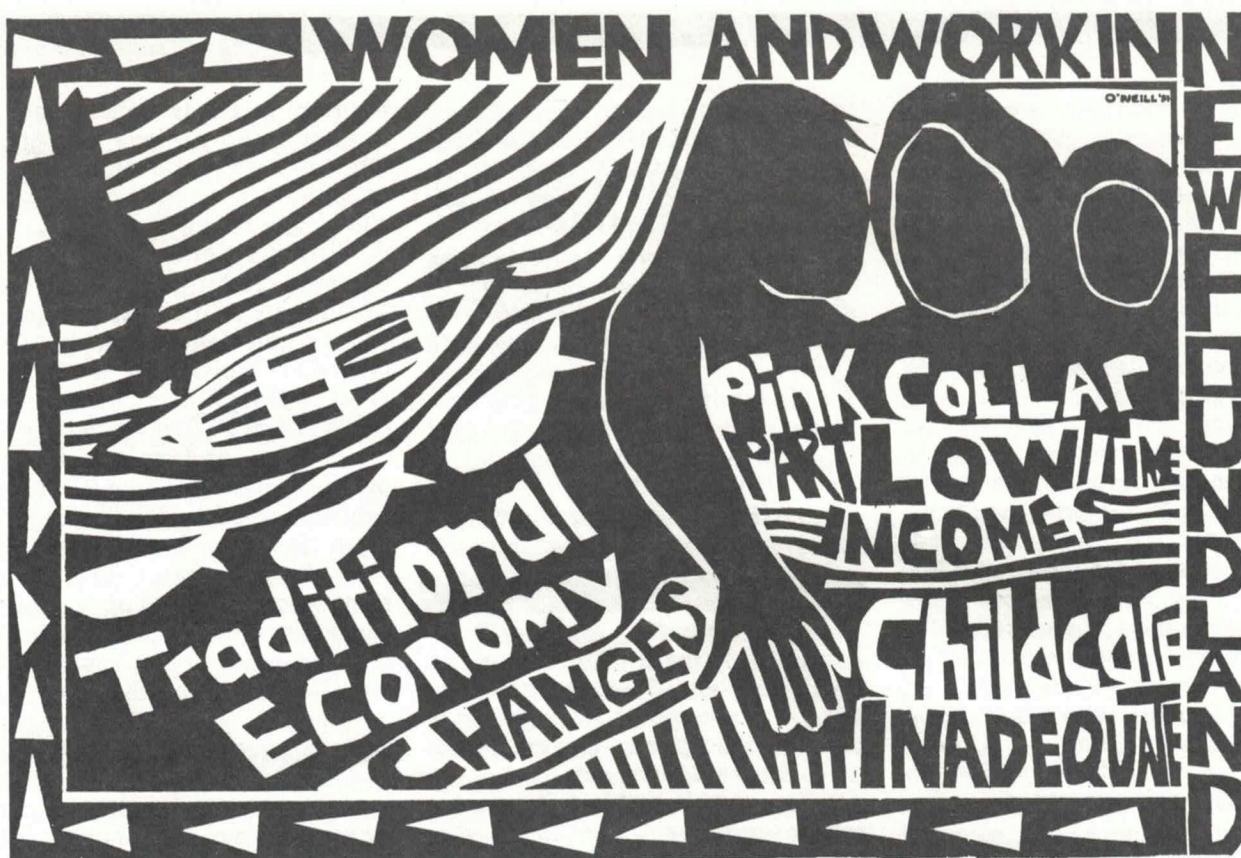


Illustration: Catherine O'Neill

Women and Work in Newfoundland

by Martha Muzychka

It is an undisputed fact that more Newfoundland women work outside the home more than ever before. But with a provincial unemployment rate of at least 21 per cent, jobs are scarce and opportunities limited. Without adequate support networks such as education, day care and cooperation within the home, many women find it difficult to keep a job, once they've managed to find one.

A Traditional Economy Changes

According to *Women and Work in Newfoundland*, a Royal Commission background report, two factors affect women's employment rates in Newfoundland:

1) The employment conditions in Newfoundland are such that the primary concern is finding any kind of work at all (and creating

unemployment insurance stamps) for the community in general. Usually "the community in general" is seen in terms of "the men in the community." 2) Since the Newfoundland economy has traditionally been based mostly on fishing, for a long time there was an economic structure set up in which paid work was not as necessary to the survival of families as was their unpaid labour.

Design: Evelyne Guindon-Zador

With changes in the fishing industry and in the Newfoundland economy, there has been a shift in emphasis in the kinds of work being done and in the need for cash. For many families (particularly those headed by single mothers), the woman's salary makes the difference between living below the poverty line and surviving above it.

Women's Incomes Low

In Newfoundland as in the rest of the country, women have lower average incomes than men; but whereas nationally women earn 64 per cent of men's salaries, in Newfoundland the figure is about 50 per cent. Differences are more noticeable within certain age groups and education levels. Even if women pursue higher education and training, they may receive only marginally higher salaries.

Women have lower average incomes because they are streamed into the pink collar ghetto, with low pay, low status and little opportunity of advancement, and into part-time work. Employers (and society) assume that most women prefer part-time work because they want more time to devote to their families, and that part-time earnings by women are used to supply luxury items.

Yet a July 1986 labour force survey revealed that 79 per cent of part-timers work part time because they can't find full-time jobs, not because they don't want them. Though a breakdown by gender wasn't possible for this survey, *Women and Work* suggests that at least 69 per cent of these workers are women, thus making this yet another ghetto for female workers.

The provincial government itself uses part-time workers: one department hires part-time teachers, who are paid \$14 an hour and who cannot work beyond a certain maximum number of hours per week. When the work exceeds this maximum, another "teaching unit" is

hired. Instead of making the job full time, and paying instructors at the same rate as regular teachers, the government exploits these workers (most of whom are women) by paying them less, and by not supplying regular benefits.

Child Care Inadequate

Newfoundland has the lowest day care availability rates, the lowest-paid child care workers and the least government spending on day care in Canada. There are approximately 15,000 pre-schoolers in the province who need day care; there are 1401 full-time spaces for children over two years old.

Nationally women earn 64% of men's salaries, in Newfoundland the figure is about 50%.

There is no provision in the Day Care Act (1975) for infant day care. Family care homes are not licensed even though the private caregivers may have up to four children in their care.

There are only three workplace day cares, all of them in St. John's. Only two centres provide after-school care while none offers weekend or evening care.

Most parents do not look on day care centres as babysitters; a survey showed 80 per cent of parents wanted educational programs for their children. The provincial Day Care Act does not require day care workers to be trained (though that may happen

soon). As a result, there is a trend among workers to take training, even though they will be paid only marginally more than non-trained workers.

Two programs, both located in St. John's, offer training for day care workers: the Cabot Institute's new two-year diploma program in Early Childhood Education, and the Early Childhood Training Centre's one-year program. There is already a long waiting list for admission to the Cabot Institute's program, while the Early Childhood Training Centre reports a steady increase in both full- and part-time students.

Women and Work is insistent about the need for quality, affordable day care as a support for employed women or women seeking employment:

In an unequal society, women have already many barriers to education, training, employment and economic security without the added problem of inadequate and unaffordable child-care services. (p. 119)

Newfoundland women need different types of day care, depending on the kinds of jobs they have and where they are located. Family care, seasonal care, part-time day care, and day care which can help shift workers are some of the models the report has suggested. Furthermore, there must be some form of licensed care for children under two, as many women cannot find good babysitters or afford to take two years' unpaid leave from work.

Women Innovative — But Need \$\$

Women and Work notes the innovative activities Newfoundland women are undertaking to find themselves work (especially since most job creation programs are devised with men in mind).

Women are organizing their own

continued on page 31

† h e W O M e N s

by Angel Páez
translated by Donna Johnson

In a dusty barrio in the heart of Lima, Peru, lies a small adobe house with a cardboard roof. It has the distinction of being the only shelter for battered women in that city of six million. I visited the shelter while travelling in Peru last December. Thanks to MATCH International, I was able to make contact with Rosa Duena, a feminist, human rights activist and founder of the shelter.

Women in Peru were shocked to learn that wife-battering happens in Canada. The abuses of "machismo" are a way of life in Peru. Surely, they said, Canadian men are more civilized!

The following article, which appeared in a Lima newspaper called La Republica on 28 November 1986, shows that Peruvian women have come up with some innovative ways of intervening in the cycle of violence.

The husband arrives home in a bad mood because he has had a fight with someone. He demands to be served his supper immediately. As she serves his supper, the wife asks the husband what is bothering him. The youngest child suddenly bursts into tears. The man orders the woman to silence the child or he will deal with both of them. The noise continues, the supper gets cold, and the husband does not want to hear another word.

Outside, the dogs begin barking, aroused by the argument in the house, and the child continues crying at the top of her lungs. Stirred up by the noise, the man hits the table, making the plates jump, throws the chair to one side and slaps the

woman. "I told you to shut that child up. Serve me some hot soup. Do you hear me?"

The wife responds by throwing two cups at her husband. Her beloved, darling husband, furious, takes her by the hair and slaps her across the face, once, twice, three times. She escapes, runs over to a small table, takes out a whistle and blows it with all her might. The man grabs the whistle and throws it and gives her again, one, two, three blows.

In the barrio, the whistle can be heard clearly. In a few minutes there is knocking at the door and voices can be heard: "Don't hit your wife or we are coming in." A group of six women come to the victim's defence. The husband responds by swearing at them. They reply, "Let her go! Let her go!" However, the moans and blows continue.

One woman enters by the window and opens the door for the rest of the group. The man doesn't know what to do. He defends himself by punching, but they immediately make him leave the house. He is ashamed, forced to leave his own home. A kind of women's self-defence patrol has just intervened.

The members of this patrol call themselves "Las Pegamaridos" (literally, the beaters of married men). They say they have organized so that they can in some way stop the wave of aggression against women. "If it is indeed difficult to tolerate violence in the streets, imagine having to confront disputes, rather, physical fights, that our compañeras suffer in the house," says Rosa Vasquez Acosta, president of the Club of Christian Women in the new district of "Ollantay" in San Juan de Miraflores.

The majority of wives in the

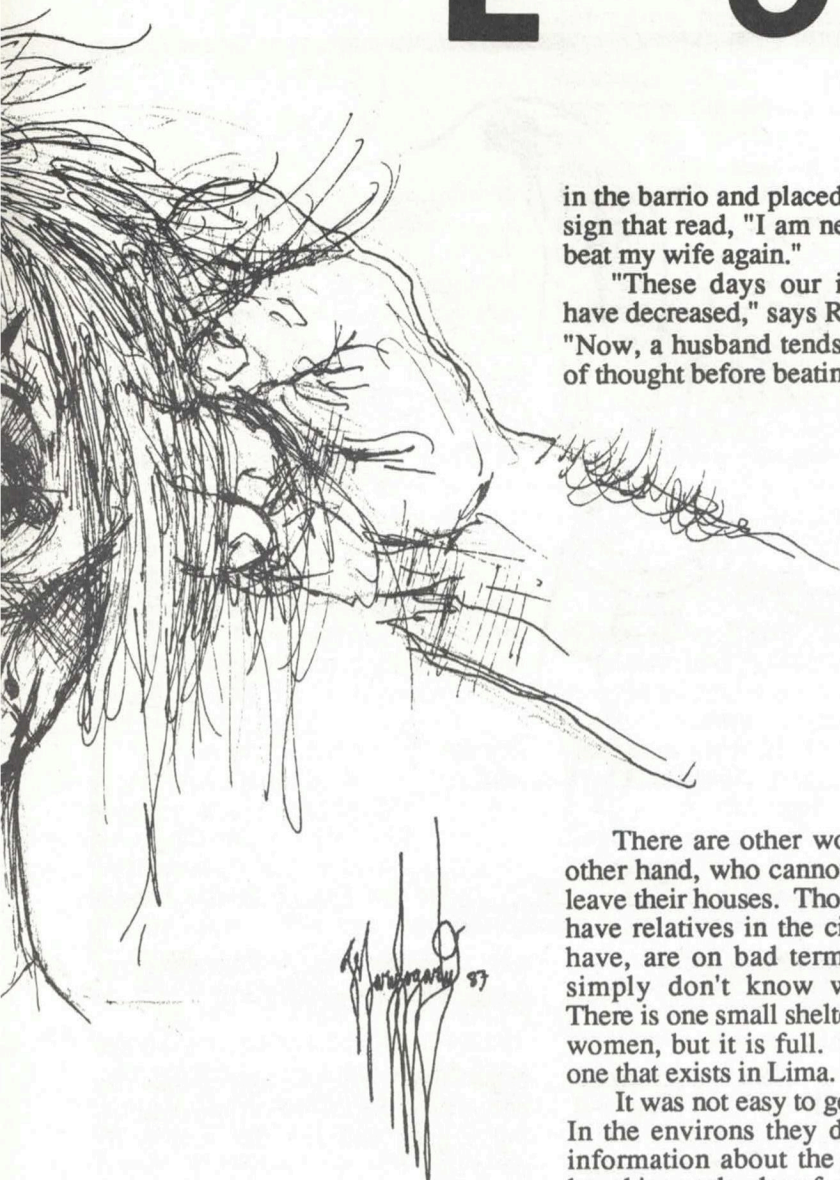
Illustration: Mary Fogarty



Ollantay barrio, at the farthest end of Paplona Alta, own a whistle. They have taken advantage of the system of self-defence against robbery in the barrio to defend themselves against violence in the family. If a husband attacks his wife, she blows the whistle so that immediately a group of women can come to defend her.

One of those rescued by the group, Rosa Medina Cuadra, was badly beaten by her husband because she did not want to leave the house. If she did, she would lose everything. The husband, Benito Silva Flores, had his lover in front of the house.

Y : ENOUGH



in the barrio and placed above him a sign that read, "I am never going to beat my wife again."

"These days our interventions have decreased," says Rosa Vasquez. "Now, a husband tends to give a lot of thought before beating his wife."

Design: Yvonne Van Ruskenveld

There are other women, on the other hand, who cannot stand it and leave their houses. Those who do not have relatives in the city or, if they have, are on bad terms with them, simply don't know where to go. There is one small shelter for battered women, but it is full. It is the only one that exists in Lima.

It was not easy to get to the place. In the environs they don't give out information about the shelter. And knocking at the door for the first time, we were scrutinized by fearful eyes. "Here men are prohibited from entering," explained Rosa Duena, organizer for the shelter and alderperson for the Lima municipality. "These women have not only been physically beaten. They have been psychologically traumatized, and they are afraid of having another encounter with the ex-spouse."

Clorinda Tinco Perez, general coordinator of the shelter, arrived there beaten, with a child, and

pregnant. She didn't want to have anything more to do with her boyfriend because he had beaten her up. The motive: she had had a child from a previous relationship. The second man she lived with could not endure this fact. "He was always throwing this in my face. When he came home drunk it was worse. 'You are a nobody, you have taken advantage of me,' he would say. This was not a good man."

Thin, tired and weeping, Olga Perez Ortiz related, "Here I live peacefully with my four children. I began to live with him — I don't want to say his name — when I was 15 years old, and . . ." She burst into tears, and her friend, Clorinda Tinco, consoled her. Clorinda finished the story. "Her mother had died, her father remarried, and they left her. Thus she agreed to live with a 40-year-old man. He was jealous. Every night when he came home he would check the house to ascertain if someone had come in. This included checking the most intimate parts of Olga's body to find out whether she had had sexual contact with another man. And then he would beat her profusely."

"I left with swollen feet," said Olga Perez, adding, "Nobody gave me information. Here at the shelter I gave birth to my fourth child."

In the shelter, where six mothers and nine children are living, the women receive psychological attention and food. Those who work in factories or in PAIT (a temporary work program) collaborate with those who do not have steady work to get money by selling sweets or by helping in community work.

"We would like to have more shelters." Rosa Duena points out.

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And they had five children. "I asked him, why are you doing this, why do you have another woman, and he hit me, hard. Various times he smashed my head."

A self-defence group intervened. One of Rosa Medina's children managed to escape from the house and call on one of the members. The other members were called; they managed to trap the man, who defended himself with an iron. Together they stripped the man, tied him to a post in the middle of the park

The Best Defence

Women, Self-defence and the Law

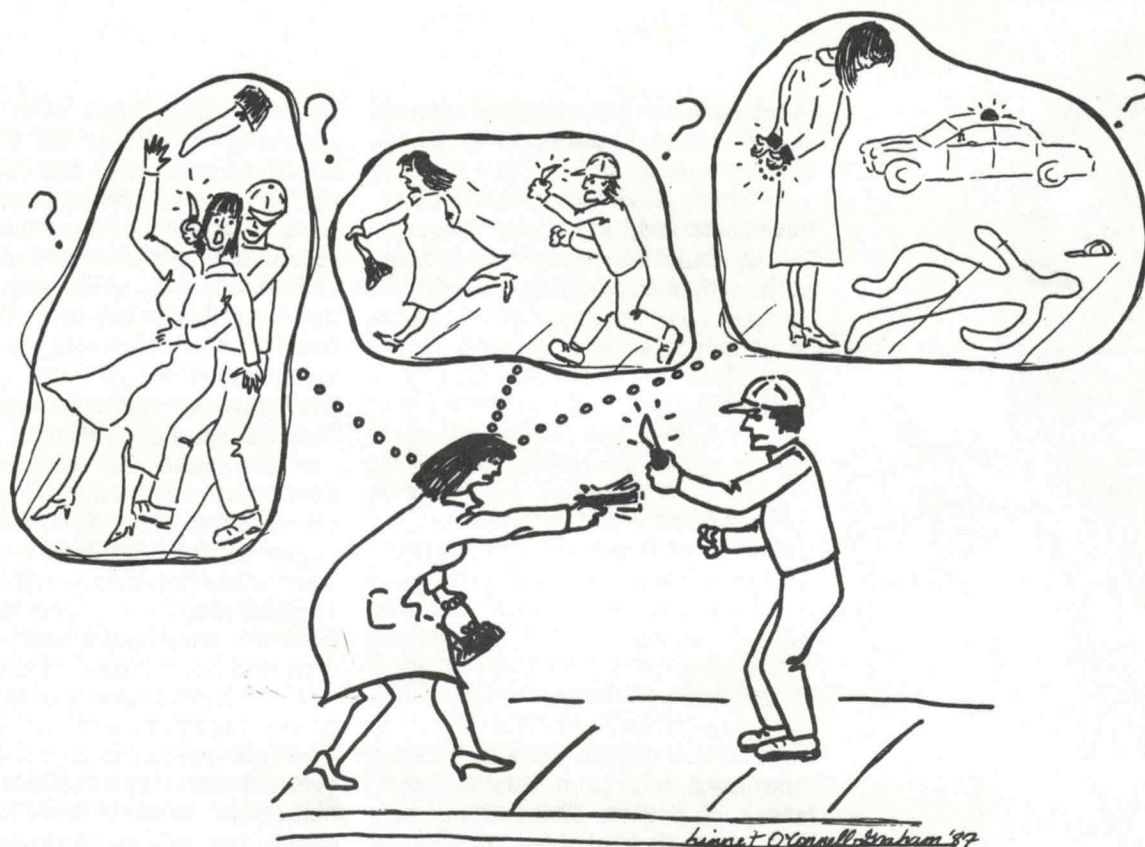


Illustration: Linnet O'Connell-Graham

by Shira Bernholtz

Design: Evelyne Guindon-Zador

One of the realities women face these days is increased exposure to personal danger, because of our greater mobility and visibility within the workforce, on the street and in the home. Many women enroll in martial arts or self-defence classes, but knowing how to physically defend ourselves isn't enough.

This article looks at women's self-defence from a different point of view — the law. Is self-defence legal? To what degree? How have the courts dealt with women who use physical violence to defend themselves?

Pleading Self-defence

The right to hurt or even to kill

someone in self-defence is governed by the Criminal Code, a long and often ambiguous statute. It's a difficult statute to understand, because of the special language used and the amendments made over the years. However, in order to know how the law affects women who use self-defence, you must understand what the written code says and what it doesn't say.

In our justice system, the prosecution must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the accused is actually guilty as charged. Theoretically, the accused doesn't have to say or do anything in court. Practically, she's better off providing evidence to support her case,

especially when she agrees that she committed the action complained of, but argues that she did it in self-defence.

The plea of self-defence is possible if:

- 1) the accused did not intend to kill the attacker, and the amount of force she used was necessary to prevent personal injury;
- 2) the accused did intend to kill the attacker because she was reasonably certain of being killed or seriously hurt, and she had no other way of avoiding the situation.

Less force is considered acceptable when defending property. A defendant would rarely plead that she was only protecting property: she



would argue that the person injured or killed was threatening either her or her family.

The best way of getting acquitted in these cases is to prove that the amount of force used against the attacker was necessary. To do so there are three issues to take into account:

- **The accused's state of mind at the time of the assault** is considered by the court in deciding if too much force was used to try to prevent the attack. The accused's testimony is only part of the evidence for this, however. All the circumstances related to the event are reviewed, and the "reasonableness" standard is applied.

The term "reasonable" occurs again and again in law. Did the accused act "reasonably" in the circumstances? Did she have a "reasonable" fear of being killed or injured which caused her to act in self-defence? No section in the Criminal Code defines "reasonable" or "reasonableness."

The use of these words shows that the actions of the accused are not only judged by what she *might* have thought or felt during an attack, but are also judged by what the *courts decide* is appropriate and therefore "reasonable" in our society.

- **Severity of injuries.** Although there's no need to match injury for injury, the seriousness of the injury caused to the attacker must be weighed against the harm the accused could have suffered. For example, the physical and emotional harm caused by sexual assault, which the public doesn't always view as an act of violence, must be presented in court if the victim is pleading self-defence.

- **Use of weapons.** The use of a gun for self-defence is acceptable

only where the attacker has previously injured the accused. The use of a knife is not as strictly barred and may be acceptable in many situations, including being outnumbered, but the person defending herself should inflict wounds just until her attacker is subdued. These "rules," however, only cover circumstances where the knife was grabbed on impulse. Again, if the attacker has hurt the accused before, stronger retaliation by the victim at the time of another attack may be excused.

- **Two other principles** are important when trying to determine the amount of force legally allowed for self-defence. You can strike the first blow if you have a reasonable fear of immediate danger. Also, while no one has to give up her home to an intruder, if you could have easily avoided violence (usually by leaving), the courts won't accept a plea of self-defence.

Wives Who Batter Back

Again and again the media have brought to public attention the plight of abused women, in particular those who lash back at their husbands. These murder cases, where the woman is on trial, have been important in understanding how the courts apply the law of self-defence.

The courts have in general been very supportive of women who fight and kill abusive husbands. An exception was the Stafford case, in which the jury acquitted Mrs. Stafford, but a Crown appeal succeeded against her.

In each previous case where wives had pleaded self-defence, the killing had occurred when the accused was being beaten. While Mrs. Stafford's fears were understandable, on the night of the shooting her



husband was unconscious from heavy drinking, his threats had been quite general, and no violence had been done.

As it is now worded, the Criminal Code does not make allowance for the environment within which a person lives as a factor causing her to kill in self-defence.

Should you fight back?

The only person who is always available to prevent an assault is the victim herself. The debate continues, however, over the usefulness and effectiveness of a woman physically resisting attack.

Only recently have police forces stopped suggesting that women limit their daily activities rather than learn to defend themselves. Prominent feminists and feminist publications urge women to lose their fear of violent contact and fight back.

Recent studies confirm that fighting back helps women to escape both physical harm and the psychological consequences of assault.

One study, which involved 94 women who had been attacked, found that those who had reacted verbally or physically with anger to their attackers were less likely to be actually raped. Those who were raped despite their resistance were much less likely to suffer depression later than those who had submitted without resistance.

Self-defence Training and the Law

Overcoming both women's lack of confidence in their physical abilities and their dislike of hurting other people remains the first and most difficult obstacle to self-awareness and self-defence.

As a group, older women are

particularly vulnerable because they are even more likely to be trapped by such psychological restrictions, and many believe that at "their age" rape is not a worry.

Many self-defence courses, for example, Defendo, teach that physical training should be used to permit escape rather than to start a fight. The Wen-Do organization, which teaches self-defence to women across Canada, provides a manual to all its instructors that includes a talk entitled "Women and the Law." This talk introduces the idea of "reasonable force" and gives examples. The guidelines proposed with this article are also included.

The question remains, what can be done to prevent acts of violence and aggression against women? For a start, women have to change their attitudes towards themselves and other women.

Training in self-defence teaches us how to take a stand against an assailant. It may even prevent or reduce confrontations if men realize that attacking a woman may be a risk to themselves.

Women need to learn more about self-defence. By learning about the restrictions imposed by law on the right to defend ourselves, we can use defensive techniques to our best advantage. Escaping from an attacker is a hollow victory if you end up in court as the defendant. Part of the decision on how to handle any attack should be based on the possibility of being charged with breaking the law as a result of acting in self-defence.

I would advocate, with caution, the use of force against force. In some circumstances, this may cause an increase in violence with more injuries and even death. Only the potential victim can assess the situation.

To use force, however, you must know how to fight back physically and psychologically. And when you fight, be warned: the law is only on your side if you keep within its framework, and this framework is often loosely defined, ambiguous and contradictory.

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Resources

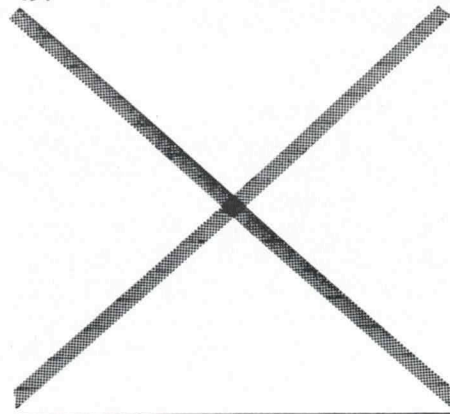
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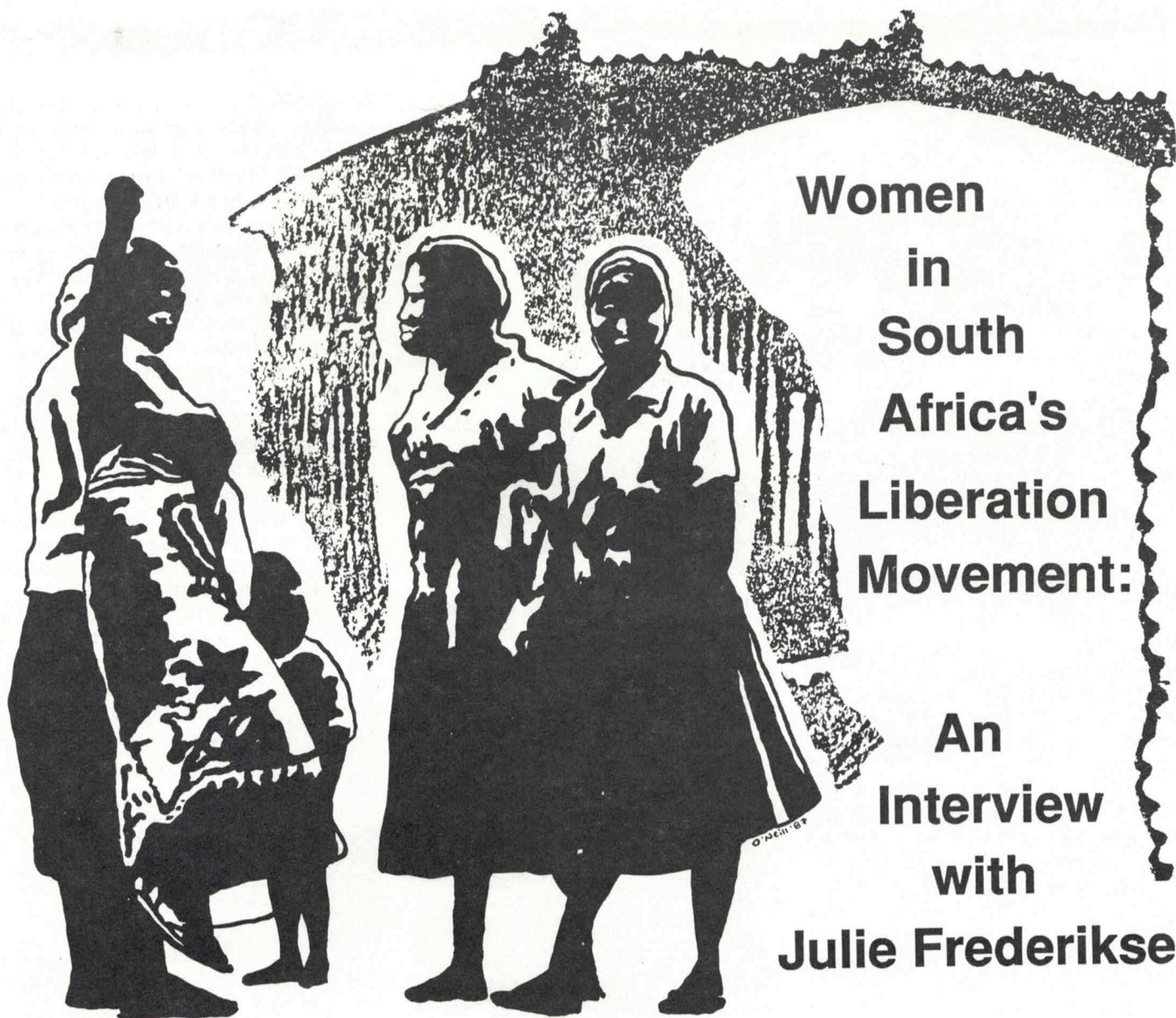
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Shira Bernholtz is a Toronto lawyer. She operates two businesses: CITATIONS — The Canada Legal Research Service and Handybooks, an office management firm.

If you are attacked:

1. Strike back at an attacker only to the point where s/he is no longer a threat to your safety. This may mean either until you have a chance to escape or the attacker leaves.
2. Use a gun only against an attacker who also has firearms.
3. Use any weapon other than a gun only when body weapons, such as a punch, a kick or a bite, would not be enough: for example, where previous assaults have occurred, or when there are several attackers.
4. Whenever possible, *threaten* to use a weapon before inflicting injury.
5. To increase your confidence use weapons that can be carried for purposes other than self-defence, for example, keys, a comb or knitting needles.
6. At those times when you feel most vulnerable, carry the "weapon" in your hand. In that way, you are not only removing the possibility of being charged with carrying a concealed weapon, but you are prepared to repel an attack effectively and immediately.
7. Don't use violence in removing a trespasser until s/he has refused a request to leave, or until it becomes apparent that s/he is about to attack either you or someone under your care.
8. Don't confront a thief who has taken your purse or parcel if s/he has not assaulted you while snatching the article.
9. Don't allow statements that foster myths about rape, wife-assault or incest to pass without comments, whether such statements are made by friends or politicians, or publicized in the media.
10. Insist that all girls be exposed to and involved in team and contact sports at school.
11. Lobby board of education trustees to introduce self-defence courses for girls into the schools' curriculum.



Women in South Africa's Liberation Movement:

An Interview with Julie Frederikse

Illustration: Catherine O'Neill

by *Adiat Fae Junaid*

Design: Louise Guenette

Born and raised in Washington, DC, which proportionally has the largest concentration of black people outside Africa, Julie Frederikse, writer and activist, became aware of issues of race and of South Africa's apartheid system. After covering topics of concern to labour, women and minorities for NBC and National Public Radio, Frederikse leapt at the opportunity to go to South Africa in 1979.

Once there she avoided the expatriate community, afraid she'd end up living in a ritzy white suburb with black servants. Instead she

ended up living in a poorer but livelier neighbourhood (she describes it as being "Sohoish") named Hillground — an officially white neighbourhood where many blacks have lived illegally.

Frederikse tells Albertina Sisulu's story as an example of the experience of South African women involved in the liberation struggle. Albertina Sisulu was separated from the infant child she was breastfeeding and held in detention by the South African security police.

"If you're breastfeeding and suddenly you can't anymore, that

child is suffering, but so are you," says Frederikse. "[Sisulu] was there for 14 hours and then she was detained for several weeks. Those first 24 hours were terribly, terribly painful for her physically as well as emotionally, knowing that her child wasn't with her. These kinds of issues are always a factor for women."

Utilizing a potpourri of anecdotes as a means of analyzing South Africa's apartheid regime, and the resultant liberation movement, is a Frederikse trademark. Her book, *South Africa: A Different Kind of*

War, is a montage of oral history transcripts based on the more than 300 tapes she recorded in South Africa between 1979 and 1984. Reproductions of advertisements, graffiti, newspaper headlines and government memos are organized under the headings: Resistance, Reform, Repression and War, giving the reader a kind of panoramic and kaleidoscopic view of the 1976 to 1986 period of resistance to apartheid.

Currently living and working in Zimbabwe, Frederikse was in Canada last May on a CUSO-sponsored tour to promote the book, which was published here last spring.

Critical of conventional media's tendency to "focus on the big names," Frederikse explains the importance of her methodology. "Oral history — letting people tell their own stories — can speak better than just more writing," she says. "It is the unknowns who are making the news, but rarely do we get a sentence from a worker on strike, for example."

When Frederikse talks about the role of women in the liberation struggle, one is struck by how she uses an almost verbal equivalent to the style of her book. The risk of this method is that her audience may easily wind up feeling buried in anecdotes and detail. Frederikse's dynamism and her use of insightful examples, however, gives her audience a good sense of the essence of the struggle.

Frederikse continues her story of Albertina Sisulu's detention: "She is really the mother of the struggle," says Frederikse. Wife of jailed activist Walter Sisulu, who was secretary general of the African National Congress (ANC) at the time of his detention, Albertina Sisulu is co-president of the United Democratic Front Women's League (UDFWL), created last spring.

"It's a national women's league and possibly the most important league since the ANC Women's League was formed in the 1950s. It had to be formed under conditions of tremendous secrecy. More than 300 women from throughout the country were involved," says Frederikse.



"Albertina was involved in the launch of [the UDFWL]. She had been involved in the Federation of Transvaal Women, but at the launch there was also the Natal Organization of Women, United Women's Congress from Cape Town, women's organizations from Port Elizabeth, which is the Orange Freestate that borders northern Cape and northern Transvaal. So you really had an effort to get women's organizations from all over the country.

"All these organizations represent different points of view. Some of them tend to have a lot of older women . . . which is great," says Frederikse. "Often in our part of the world we don't involve the older generation and there is this gap. That's why I think it's really interesting that grannies — the older women — are involved. Albertina must be well into her sixties. She's been involved since her children were born."

As an example of the influence of these grannies, Frederikse tells the story of a 35-year-old black man she interviewed. Originally from a very isolated and conservative part of the Orange Freestate, this man had become very active in the liberation movement through his involvement with trade unions. For his efforts, he, like thousands of other black people, was held in detention.

"I said to him, 'How did you get politicized?' He said, 'Well, in our

township . . . we have a certain granny.' There was some old lady who had been banished — a peculiarly South African treatment of people who take a different point of view . . . She politicized everyone in the little location that's probably never heard of Mandela and politics. She was the one who got them active."

Coming back to the formation of women's groups, Frederikse says, "It's tough enough for women to organize. They have the triple oppression of race, sex and class. Also, because men are more often detained than women, women have to face an extra burden."

Frederikse says women are increasingly able to take on leadership positions in established organizations such as the ANC and the UDF, in addition to forming women's organizations that deal with their special concerns. She sees this as a change that has been born of necessity as the liberation struggle has evolved and had to deal with such issues as the detention of both men and women.

To illustrate her point, Frederikse uses another anecdote which she feels exemplifies a great victory for the South African women's movement. She interviewed Mkhuseleli Jack, a young and important leader in current resistance activities. During the interview, she noticed that he made few references to women.

"So at the end of the interview I quite timidly said to him, 'You did mention men, but not women. Does that mean that you're not thinking about women's issues?' And he said, 'Oh gosh. I'm so sorry. They've been educating me. It's something I'm just learning. I come out of a culture that always talks about the man, but we know our women are important. We know that they lead in so many ways. I misspoke myself.'" Frederikse laughs: "He was really contrite and I think that actually says a lot."

Frederikse feels most women are still reluctant to recognize and assert their own power or to feel at the centre of things. Enter another anecdote.

"I remember interviewing a woman who had a husband on trial

continued on page 32

A FEMINIST FILMMAKER

by Ellen Adelberg



Design: Wendy Gordon

As an independent filmmaker, Helene Klodawsky, 31, wishes to dispel as quickly as possible any myths people might have about the life she leads. A transplanted Torontonion now living in Montreal, Klodawsky has spent the last seven years living hand to mouth, developing her craft.

For Klodawsky, filmmaking is a vocation. "My work is a labour of love — there is nothing glamorous about spending years and years waiting for dubs and drabs of money so I can make my next film."

For five years, she served a self-styled apprenticeship with Canadian documentary maker Laura Skye, helping her to research and write *Moving Mountains* and *Good Monday Morning*, films about women in the workplace. She graduated to co-producer with Skye on *All of Our Lives*, an award-winning documentary on women and aging.

Since her move to Montreal in the fall of 1984, Klodawsky has been directing films on her own. In September 1986, she finished *Painting Landscapes of the Times*, a half-hour documentary on Sue Coe, a feminist artist living in New York. She also completed directing *Love's Labour*, a documentary for TV Ontario about the challenges facing adult children and spouses in caring

for elderly relatives.

Klodawsky is now hard at work on her latest film — a National Film Board-backed documentary on the peace movement in Israel. The subject is one which she says is dear to her heart as a Canadian Jewish woman.

"I see myself as part of the world-wide Jewish community and part of that means finding out and letting people know what is happening in Israel. The peace movement there has, I feel, received far too little press coverage here. The film is a way I feel I can help to change that."

She says she is passionately interested in communicating messages to people through a medium in which art and social criticism are linked.

When she graduated from high school, Klodawsky thought she would become a painter, but a year at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design changed her mind.

"At the time I was in art school (1974-75), conceptual art was very big. The kind of work I wanted to do — real life drawings — was 'pas à la mode.' I decided to leave, and eventually I thought about going into film as a way of finding a more communicative art form."

With no training in filmmaking other than a few courses at Queen's

University in Kingston, Ontario, Klodawsky says she used sheer perseverance to persuade Skye to take her on as a general assistant. Those who know her well say she has a "will of iron." She has survived as a documentary filmmaker through dogged determination.

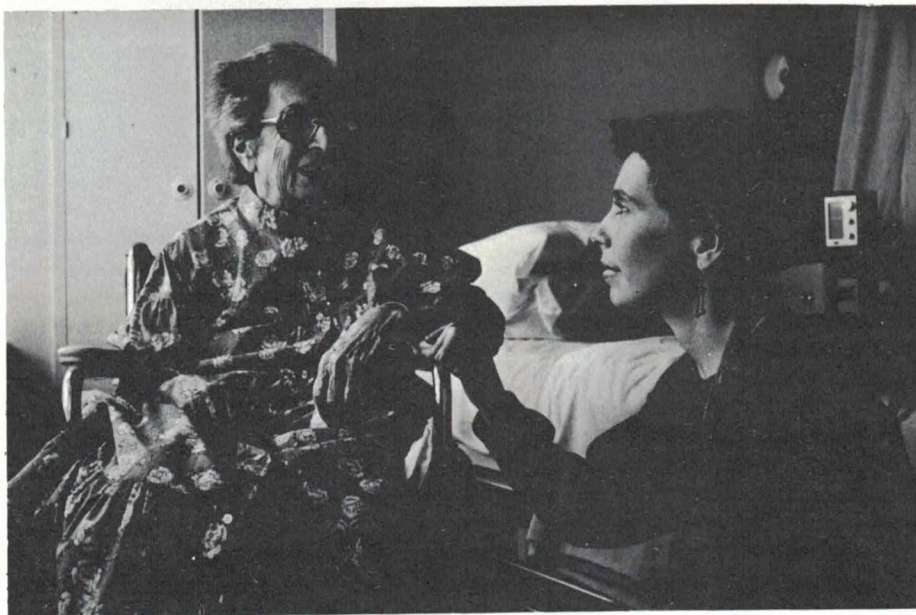
Klodawsky demonstrates a firm conviction when she talks about her work. "I choose to do films because I am moved by a subject. There's a personal connection between each of the topics I have worked on and myself."

"From the time I start to work on a film to the time it is finished three years have usually gone by. That's how long it takes to raise the money, get the production details worked out, and everything else. I have to be committed."

One of the things that allows Klodawsky to continue is the "tremendously supportive francophone filmmaking community" she has met and now works with in Montreal.

"Other filmmakers and production people I am close to, people like Sophie Bissonette, provide me with living examples of the willpower you need to continue to make films with very little money."

"The Sue Coe film was made on next to nothing. The reason it exists today, aside from my own devotion



Filmmaker Helene Klodawsky interviews subject in "Love's Labour".

to the project, is the devotion other people gave to it.

"Most of the film crew, who were Quebecois, worked on it for nothing. It's the spirit we share together, through knowing we have no money."

Klodawsky is concerned that less and less money seems to be available for independent film documentaries.

"TV is taking over more and more of our territory," she says. "The Journal-type documentaries are all people seem to think is needed. But many of us (independent filmmakers) don't work in the traditional reporting style."

"Rather than listening to reporters tell the story for the people who are actually living it, I prefer to film the subjects themselves explaining what is going on. To me that's an important value to maintain — even if it's hard to convince funders of that."

Why hasn't Klodawsky herself given in to the videotronic age? Her first response is that she hasn't had an opportunity so far to learn video techniques. She pauses.

"Actually I haven't been faced with the need to do video. Film has so many more visual opportunities than video. It has a far more powerful effect on viewers, and you can do so much more with colours."

The film on Sue Coe is a good example of Klodawsky's work with colour and visual images. Coe's drawings are rich, dark and disturbing representations of violent social events, like the 1983 pool table rape of a woman by four men in a Massachusetts barroom.

Shots of Coe's work are set off in the film against colourful, light-filled images of Coe herself, explaining her drawings and her concern with social ugliness.

Klodawsky says she was excited by Coe because "to me she makes art as exciting as social documentary. She is one example of many women who are trying to link politics and art."

"There is always an uncomfortable balance between art versus the social message. I think Sue Coe deals with that balance in an effective way. That she thought to

create art from rape — it's a lot different from traditional portrayals of Venus being raped by the gods!"

And Helene Klodawsky's work is a lot different from what we see on *The Journal*. In the future, maybe two years from now, when the Israel film is finished, she would like to use documentary in a way "which borders on fiction."

Costa Gavros, watch out.

bts

Films by Helene Klodawsky
The Seventh Day/Le septième jour, 16 mm (in progress)

Painted Landscapes of the Times, 16 mm, 26 min., 1986

Love's Labour, 16 mm, 58 min., 1986

All of Our Lives, 16 mm, 30 min., 1984

Los Marielitos, 16 mm, 60 min., 1983

After the Difficulties, 16 mm, 15 min., 1982

Good Monday Morning, 16 mm, 30 min., 1982

I See and I Am Silent, 16 mm, 30 min., 1982

Days of Courage, Days of Rage, 16 mm, 20 min., 1981

For more information or to order Klodawsky's films, contact her at:
5385 Durocher
Outremont, Quebec
H2V 3X9

Ellen Adelberg is a member of the BTS collective. She works as the Communications Coordinator for the Co-operative Housing Foundation of Canada, and as a freelance writer.

FILM REVIEWS

Working Girls

Director: Lizzie Borden

(United States, 1986),
90 min.

*reviewed by Yvonne Van
Ruskenveld*

The newspaper ad for *Working Girls* shows an attractive young woman smiling coyly from a long narrow photograph, as if her picture had been taken through a keyhole. If this is supposed to titillate viewers with the promise of soft porn, then someone should be sued for false advertising.

The film is a sympathetic, often funny, but ultimately depressing story about prostitutes. These particular prostitutes work out of a relatively high-class apartment which is so impersonal as to be almost sterile. They are polite and sometimes friendly with their clients but the glimpses offered of their acute boredom with the work seem to destroy any potential for titillation that the situation might have held.

By placing these women in such a comfortable setting, and having them managed by a "madam," the director has avoided complicating the story with the problems of street violence and exploitation by pimps.

Not that the madam is doing this out of the goodness of her heart, but her relationship with "the girls" is clearly business, with none of the coercion, violence and abuse of power associated with the male-female pimp-prostitute relationship.

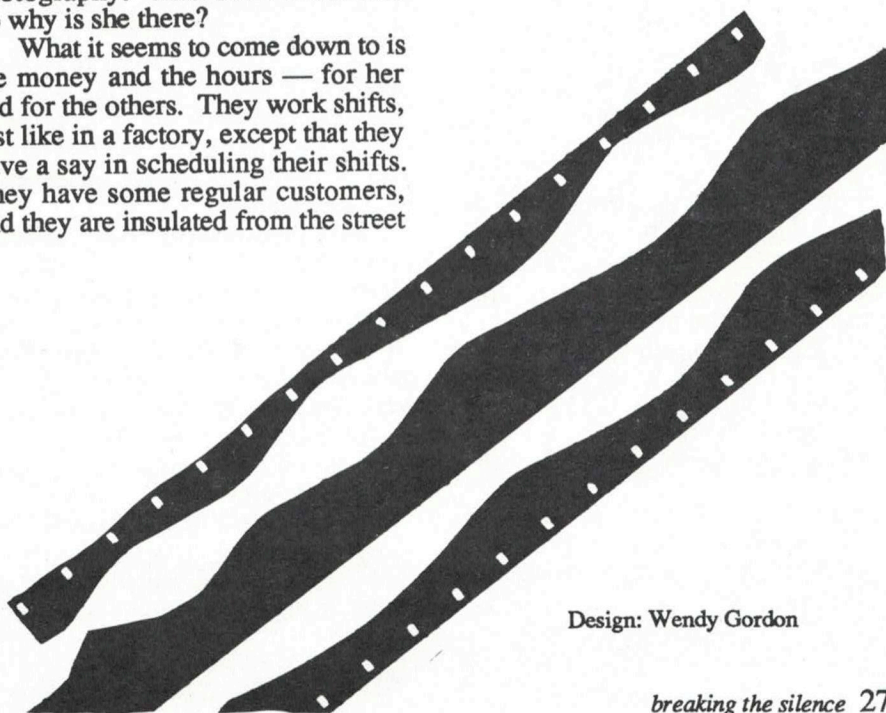
The movie follows the women through one day in their lives as prostitutes. We see them arriving in the morning, checking their supplies of condoms and other contraceptives, arranging their schedules, answering the phone, servicing their customers. We see them dealing with difficult customers, cheating the madam, and talking and bickering among themselves.

Most of the film is devoted to the women, giving each a chance to express her own reasons for being there. Only one, Molly, is shown outside the apartment. Louise Smith as Molly is very good. She is on screen almost all the time, and she manages well both the comedy and the drama. Her character is calm, intelligent and articulate. She has two university degrees and a career in photography. And she's a lesbian. So why is she there?

What it seems to come down to is the money and the hours — for her and for the others. They work shifts, just like in a factory, except that they have a say in scheduling their shifts. They have some regular customers, and they are insulated from the street

by dealing on appointment only and by having a doorman bribed by the madam. It all sounds so easy and so safe. And they certainly make big bucks: Molly at the end of the day has earned over \$800, for working a double shift.

The customers are interesting in their variety: old, young, middle-aged, middle class, wealthy, personable, aloof. What makes the movie so depressing is the way it shows that these women are selling not only their bodies but their minds and personalities as well. Very few of the customers want just sex. Most of them want something more: whether it's "Fantasy Fred" with his silly harmless fantasies or the young musician who wants Molly to see him "outside" so he can have power over her with "their little secret," almost all the customers are buying the woman, not just the sex.



Design: Wendy Gordon

FILM REVIEWS

The women cope by separating work and their life outside completely. Their boyfriends / girlfriends know nothing of their work. Amanda, the youngest in the group, says she has been going out for years with the same guy (who thinks she's a secretary) and she's never been unfaithful to him. Gina sadly admits that she told her boyfriend what she did for a living, believing that if he really loved her he would understand. Only later did she realize that if he really loved her there would be no way he could understand.

The film's one inconsistency is in the character of Molly. She gets very upset — at one point is even reduced to tears — whenever the words "whore" or "hooker" are used. This seems totally out of character for one so calm and realistic about the work. It seems to be an arbitrary choice of a characteristic perhaps meant to make Molly more human, and it only succeeds in disturbing the fabric of the story.

The director has brought together a group of sympathetic characters realistically portrayed by attractive, talented women. The camera work is almost documentary in style, but does not have the cold distance often associated with documentaries. The whole feeling of the film is of respect and warmth for the women. Yet the sterile apartment, the demands of the clients and the ambivalence of the women themselves combine to create the impression of sadness that remains after the movie ends. It is a good film, well worth seeing.

bts

Yvonne Van Ruskenveld loves going to the movies. She is a freelance writer and editor and is a member of the BTS collective.

The Witches of Eastwick

Director: George Miller

(United States, 1987),
119 min.

reviewed by Penny McCann

One summer's night in a small New England town, three women sit and drink and swap fantasies. They piece together the perfect man, a man with whom their lives would become complete. The drunken camaraderie of these three lovely young women forms a psychic siren call that draws the man of their dreams to the sleepy town of Eastwick. But the problem is that their Prince Charming is the devil incarnate — cute and cuddly and delightfully naughty — but still the devil.

That's the premise of one of last summer's most popular films, *The Witches of Eastwick*. Michelle Pfeiffer, Cher and Susan Sarandon play the three lonely young women (the implication being that they're lonely because they don't have men). Jack Nicholson is Darryl Van Horne, their evil seducer.

Like the smooth-talking and sexy Darryl Van Horne, *The Witches of Eastwick* also seduces. And, like the devil incarnate, this film is nasty.

Not only did the film's cast draw packed houses, its premise did as well. Based on the best-selling novel by John Updike, the film expertly picks up on the current fascination with witchcraft.

The first half of *Witches* is fine — even amusing. The three women are enjoyably offbeat and Jack Nicholson is outrageous as always.

However, the encroachment of evil in the film brings to the fore a nasty streak of viciousness. The humiliation and murder of Felicia (a Christian woman who alone recognizes Van Horne's evil nature) clearly exposes the underlying misogyny of the film. After watching a sickening scene of projectile vomiting and brutal murder, I was no longer tolerant of this up to then somewhat amusing and slightly offbeat film. Instead, I felt sickened and embarrassed at my previous tolerance.

Fortunately, the slick seduction of the film misled me only so far. Once its misogynistic impulses were exposed, I felt freed from its seductive trap.

Superficially, the film seems somewhat progressive. In the end, the three women overcome their evil seducer and regain control of their lives. But the underlying current of viciousness that surfaces halfway through the film led me to mistrust any positive reading of it.

The women's empowerment at the end of the film seems like a ruse by which further subjugation, humiliation and brutalization of these women will take place.

Many films are open to more cerebral analysis; *The Witches of Eastwick*, however, encourages a visceral reading. The physical revulsion I felt when leaving the movie theatre sums up my criticism. Perhaps it was the graphic projectile vomiting that did it, but I don't think so. My physical revulsion was caused by something far more vicious than that. The only word to describe this film is nasty.

bts

Penny McCann is a member of Ottawa's Great Canadian Theatre Company.

BOOK REVIEWS

Sometimes They Sang

By Helen Potrebenco

Vancouver: Press Gang,

1986. \$6.95

reviewed by Candis J. Graham

Eight years ago my friend Patricia Ginn handed me a book. It was *Taxi!* by Helen Potrebenco. She said it was a Wooonderful book and I must read it.

I looked at it and knew my hand would not automatically reach for it in a bookstore. The orange and purple cover looked garish, and the inner pages were newsprint. I am attracted to pretty-looking books.

I started to read the book, because Patricia said it was a Wooonderful book, and because I'll read almost anything (posters on telephone poles, the backs of airline tickets, junk mail — it runs in the family, my mother reads dictionaries and encyclopedias). Once I started reading, I couldn't put it down. Patricia was right, it was a Wooonderful book, quite unlike any other book I'd read. She was driving

cab at the time, and Helen Potrebenco's novel gave me a glimpse of what her job was like and why it left her exhausted — physically and emotionally. It also made me think about social issues like employment and poverty and racism and sex roles.

Taxi! was Helen Potrebenco's first published novel. Now her second novel, *Sometimes They Sang*, is in print. (In between she has had two books of poetry published as well as a collection of short stories, essays and poems.)

This one is a pretty-looking book. *Sometimes They Sang* is printed on good quality paper, and the distinctive design of the yellow and black cover makes it a book my hand yearns to hold. This book also made me think, and I couldn't stop thinking once I'd finished reading.

Taxi! was published in 1975, *Sometimes They Sang* 11 years later. That seems like a long time between novels. Will I have to wait until 1997 to read her third novel?

Why has this writer worked as a lab technician, a taxi driver and now an office worker? Why isn't Helen Potrebenco working full time as a writer and poet?

Women writers earn about half what men writers do, no matter if they write full time (over 30 hours a week) or part time (less than 30 hours a week).¹

Why isn't this talented woman a household name in Canada? Why

haven't I read reviews of her books in the daily newspaper? I only discovered her thanks to Patricia. Since then, I've noticed that I usually receive blank stares when I mention Helen Potrebenco to women.

With relatively few people knowing about their books because of lack of reviews, women are less likely than men to have works translated, anthologized, chosen as texts, or bought for libraries or archives. The women themselves are less likely than men to be funded for readings, awarded writing grants, popularized in the media, or chosen as writers-in-residence.²

Perhaps the design and quality of her first book is a clue. All her books have been produced by small publishers with tiny budgets, limited resources, and a concern with social issues. They don't have the money to send her on cross-country tours, to finance public readings and interviews with journalists, to put ads in newspapers and magazines.

Another clue — her concern with social issues. This is not the stuff popular novels are made of, not the



BOOK REVIEWS

kind of writing which receives prestigious awards. If you want to make money as a writer, write Harlequin romances or thick paperbacks filled with sex and violence and wealthy people. If you want to become a household name, write literary novels filled with symbolism and lyrical descriptions of nature. Whatever you do, don't write about social issues, even if there is symbolism and lyrical descriptions of nature. And if you must write about social issues, don't do it from a strong feminist perspective.

I found more clues inside this novel: "... this is my book and Odessa will act like the women I know rather than the women portrayed in real writers' novels." Odessa, the main character, is looking for an office job, struggling to find meaningful friendships and relationships, living from one pay cheque to the next, looking for a decent place to live that is also affordable, trying to reconcile her politics with her life.

Waged employment is a recurring theme in Helen Potrebenko's writing, just as it is a recurring issue in my life. Odessa is looking for work in an office. How come I can read armfuls of books and never read anything about work? About looking for waged employment, about preparing for job interviews, about the agony of each interview and

walking along the lonely street afterwards?

Odessa offers an opinion:

I think, she said carefully at the next committee meeting, that there have been no good books written by or about women in recent years. I think the worst, the very lowest depths, are Erica Jong and Kate Millett, followed closely by Germaine Greer and Margaret Atwood.

What does Odessa mean? There have been no good books written by or about women in recent years? Hasn't the women's movement changed all that? This is 1987! We have feminist publishers and feminist magazines and women's bookstores.

Only 26% of fiction books published recently in Canada were by women.³

A little later Potrebenko writes: "But it continued to rankle Odessa that feminism has few books and little music." Do we have only a few books? How many books have I read that reflect my everyday life? Books like this one, about being a feminist within the feminist community and within the much larger non-feminist world?

Feminist publishers represent less than 2% of the total number of publishers in Canada and they are all small and produce few books.⁴

I, for one, am glad Helen Potrebenko works at other jobs to support herself and still finds time and energy to work as a writer. I hope she continues to have the strength to do this, until women give her the recognition and financial support she deserves. And I must write to Patricia and tell her to read this book. She is an unemployed office worker these days, and may agree that Helen Potrebenko has written another Wooonderful book.

bts

Notes

¹ Anne Innis Dagg, *The 50% Solution: Why Should Women Pay for Men's Culture?* (Waterloo: Otter Press, 1986), p. 43.

² Ibid., p. 46.

³ Ibid., p. 29.

⁴ Ibid., p. 21.

Candis J. Graham is preparing a collection of short stories for publication next year.



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businesses: for example, the Placentia Bay Mat-Makers turned a social activity into a small business, providing incomes for six women and rejuvenating a traditional Newfoundland craft; the Corner Brook Status of Women Council sponsored a feasibility study and workshops on owning and operating tourist homes, six of which were established between 1985 and 1986.

Nevertheless, this kind of innovative thinking needs money from rural development associations and the government as well as wholehearted support from the community at large. *Women and Work in Newfoundland* concludes that the inclusion of women in the long-range planning, technical assistance, and development of

Newfoundland's fisheries, mining and offshore industries is necessary to develop a viable, multifaceted and equal society.

bts

Resources

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Labrador. St. John's, Oct. 1986.

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Martha Muzychka, a long-time BTS member, now corresponds from Newfoundland, where she is a researcher with the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

continued from page 7

considering they make up the majority of frontline workers.

Carniol also writes that unions have not been able to address all inequalities in the workplace or guarantee social workers a greater role in the decision-making process. "But this reflects the limitations of the industrial relations system in Canada," says Gilbert Levine.

"Unions operate in a context with strong 'management rights' clauses, making it impossible or very difficult for workers to control their work process. However, there are some heartening signs where strong CUPE locals have been effective in reversing planned staff cuts, and in negotiating on caseloads."

Public sector unions have also exerted a great deal of pressure on social service employers in the last decade. Through strikes, government lobbying and media publicity, the labour movement has raised public awareness about the effects of government cutbacks on social programs. "The fact of the matter is that social workers and unions are natural allies," adds Gilbert Levine, "because both are concerned with building a more just system through effective social welfare programs."

The concrete benefits can also be

felt in the workplace. Conditions have improved at E. Fry. "Even though management still has the right to manage, we now have job security and can't be fired without cause," says Faye Ball.

"When union members go to a labour-management committee meeting, it's wonderful because we can raise any issue, any grievance, and not worry that there might be repercussions three or four days down the road. That's because we now have parity, the power between the employer and the employees is more equalized and we're there to talk about common problems."

The executive director of the Elizabeth Fry Society, Jane Fjeld, also says she thinks management-employee relations have improved since the union came into being.

"The union," says Fjeld, "forced the agency to deal with some long-standing issues — with working conditions, such as shifts . . . and provided the agency with a framework, a more concrete and predictable method for handling internal difficulties."

On a personal level, Faye Ball takes great pleasure in her union activism. "I'd like to take more union educationals and become more active with women and labour. I think this

is really important because wherever we go, this knowledge is a good thing to have. It's something we'll have forever."

bts

Resources

If you are interested in joining a union, contact your local CUPE office or provincial government union. A mailing list of unions is available from the Canadian Labour Congress, 2841 Riverside Dr., Ottawa K1V 8X1.

Further reading:

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Ruth Scher is a frequent contributor to BTS and an active member of Organized Working Women, a union women's organization based in Ontario.

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for treason, a son who had left the country to join the guerrillas, and a daughter who'd suffered mentally from being detained. Her attitude was, 'Oh, I'm not that important. I'm just a back-room person,'" Frederikse recounts. "I said to her, 'Have you ever thought of the fact that without people like you where would the rest of them be, especially the men who are supposedly in the forefront?' And she considered it, but she just wasn't used to thinking in a kind of ego-oriented way. Meanwhile she was involved, continuing to organize the women's federation in Jo'berg. She would have had every excuse to say, 'I've had it up to here. I'm not going to be involved because it means potential arrest.'"

Perhaps part and parcel of this apparent lack of interest in personal power is what Frederikse describes as "... a tendency, and I don't want to misrepresent things, for women in Africa not to assert the women's struggle over anything else." She adds, "They will often say, 'We have to remember that (and others will criticize them for saying it) our struggle will come later.' And then others will say, 'Well, look, if you make coffee through the whole thing they aren't going to change things when liberation comes.' So that debate is on the agenda."

"You'll actually have some women saying, 'Our struggle is for liberation. We can't be derailed by [influences] from a bourgeois or white feminist movement,'" Frederikse continues. "On the other hand, you'll have cooperation between women of different race groups: white and black women, the so-called coloured community and the Indian community. ... So I think they are working through that [debate] and I think their dialogue and their terms of reference aren't exactly the same as ours in North America."

Frederikse is careful, though, not to say that most South African women, while having an interest in feminist ideals and strategies, see the resistance movement as foremost: "I'm saying they have wed the two."

There are a lot of women in South Africa today, and men, who wouldn't say, 'Our struggle has to come second.' But they would say there is a way that we weave together the two struggles."

It was at a poetry reading in Hillground that Frederikse met Gcina Mhlope, a young domestic worker and aspiring writer who lived in a women's hostel. "A lot of people think it's just the men who live in single sex hostels in awful conditions," says Frederikse. The two women would spend hours together in Frederikse's flat, talking. "Becoming friends with her was really an education for me because she had a lot of pride in herself. She liked living in the women's hostel because she was in touch with the people."

Today Mhlope is a successful

actor. "She's now acting in really big plays. She's been to the Edinburgh Festival and reviewed by the *New York Times*. I could just see what her life was like and I could see what a struggle it was for her to move into the position she did to become an actor." According to Frederikse, Mhlope's story is not an anomaly, but rather is another example of the history of many black South Africans — both women and men — who achieve great things and contribute to the liberation movement despite the conditions under which they were born.

bts

Resources

South Africa: A Different Kind of War is published in North America by Beacon Press and distributed in Canada by Fitzhenry and Whiteside.

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"We have had to tell at least 15 women who have come here looking for help that we have no space. I don't know what will happen to them."

"Violence occurs in all places, equally to wealthy or poor families, and whether their politics are leftist or to the right," says Julia Janempa Guitterez. She did not want to speak. However, seeing her compañeras explain why they have come to stay at the shelter, she says, "My husband — we are still legally married — Victor Andrianzen, who is employed by the Partido Unificado Mariateguista, is an evil man. He beat me all the time and has never provided for the children. I have to do everything for them. He doesn't ever come to bring money, and if I try to claim it, he just insults me. I don't understand how this type of man can direct a town when he cannot get along with his children and has

committed himself to another woman. He said that it was 'a combination of factors' but I do not know for what reasons he left me."

What can a battered woman do to terminate a quarrel with her husband? In an inquiry made in the pueblo joven "Bayovar" in San Juan de Lurigancho, 34 of the 100 women questioned said, "Go to the police station." Fifteen said, "Nothing. I am resigned." Only 13 separated from their husbands and six fought back against their aggressor. Sixty-nine per cent of those questioned said they were beaten by their husbands.

"We must educate our men," says Rosa Duena. "But I don't know if it will work here."

bts

Donna Johnson works at Lanark County Interval House, a shelter for battered women in Carleton Place, Ontario.

RESOURCES

Salt of the Earth, a classic feminist film, is now available on video cassette, both VHS and Beta. A popular film with American women's groups in the 1970s and blacklisted during the McCarthy era of the 1950s, it portrays the true story of a Chicana's political awakening during a 1950s zinc mine strike in New Mexico. To obtain a copy send \$59.95 + \$2.00 shipping to Voyager Press, 2139 Manning Avenue, LA, CA 90025.

The Bustelo Incident, a book by Myra Tanner Weiss. The author expresses her views of the relation between Marxism and feminism; more specifically, about the struggle of Marxist women within the male-dominated movement. Single copies sell for \$3.00 US (including postage); bundles of ten or more can be ordered for \$1.50 US each. Write to Myra Tanner Weiss, P.O. Box 30054, New York, NY 10011.

Free Trade and the Future of Women's Work is the title of a new book by Marjorie Cohen. She is the first to examine the impact of free trade on women, particularly those working in manufacturing and service sector jobs. 100 pages. Available for \$7.95 from: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Suite 1004, 251 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5J6. Tel. (613) 563-1341.

Pay Cheques and Picket Lines: All About Unions in Canada. Children's fiction writer Claire Mackay turns to non-fiction in this book about the history of the union movement for 10- to 14-year-olds. 101 pages, with charts, illustrations, index. \$19.95 cloth, \$12.95 paper, from Kids Can Press, 585 1/2 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M6G 1K5. Tel. (416) 534-6389.

Fieldwork by Maureen Moore is the first book of a new mystery series from The Women's Press. A criminology student, also a single

mother, gets caught up in a politically sensitive murder investigation while interning with the Vancouver police homicide department. The paperback sells for \$8.95. To obtain your copy contact: Margie Wolfe at (416) 598-0082.

Playing with Our Health: Hazards in the Automated Office is a booklet providing clerical workers with accurate and up-to-date information on the health hazards of Video Display Terminals (VDTs). Written by Marcy Cohen and Margaret White, it also deals with workplace stress, reproductive hazards and taking action on health and safety. It is priced at \$10 for one copy or \$7 for orders of 10 or more copies.

Taking Control of Our Future: Clerical Workers and New Technology is another book written by Cohen and White. It identifies relevant issues facing clerical workers as a result of technological change. The cost of this book is \$15 for one copy or \$12 for orders of 10 or more copies. Both books can be obtained through: Women's Skill Development Society, 4340 Carson Street, Burnaby, BC V5J 2X9. Tel. (604) 430-0458.

Through Her Eyes: Resources for Women's Studies. A series of half-hour videotapes and accompanying workbooks, available as a series, in individual units, or as three modules. Of particular relevance to the theme of this issue is Module 2 "History, Women and Work" which consists of six units such as: Women's Work in Historical Perspective; Women's Work and Automation; and Women in Science. For further information contact: The School of Continuing Education, Room 302, Administration Building, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6. Tel. (613) 564-6660.

House Works Gallery Café, 371 Lisgar Street, Ottawa, Ontario. The combination of a casual café atmosphere with access to the fine and performing arts. It is a unique cultural centre with the primary objective of presenting multicultural art, highlighting women in art and particularly women's art, both traditional and non-traditional. Members are provided with a comfortable women-only space three nights a week. Check it out and bring a friend!

Notice to all women artists: Slide Registry — submit slides of your artwork and biographical information to the Women's Art Resource Centre, 183 Bathurst Street, 2nd floor, Toronto, Ontario M5T 2R7. Tel. (416) 368-3475.



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- A look at conflict and change in feminist organizations

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