

THE POLITICS OF POPULATION CONTROL: a report from Mexico

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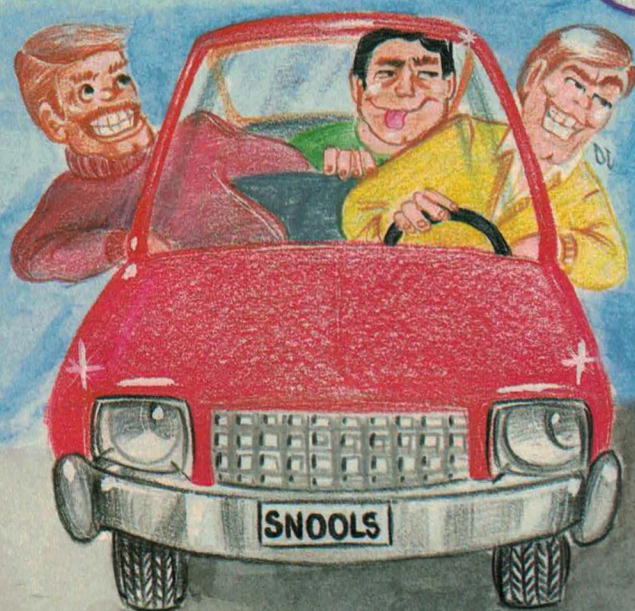
HERizons

A WOMEN'S NEWS MAGAZINE

MEAN STREETS

**Encroaching on
Women's Space**

▼
**Prostitutes Speak
Out: tell it like it is**



▼
Our Time Is Now
**First women's festival,
a cultural delight**



HERizons

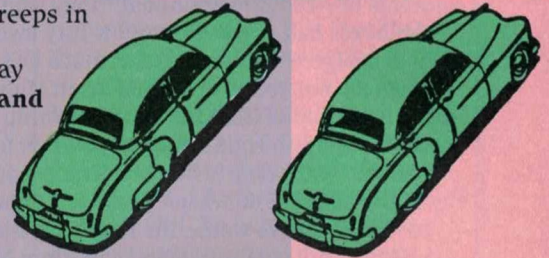
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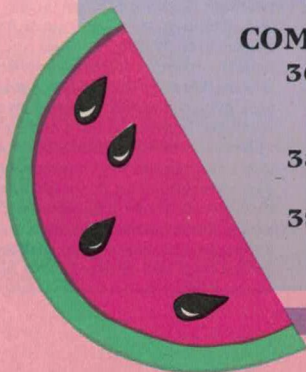
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editorial

The Aftermath of the Electronic Election

A feminist friend of mine told me over coffee recently what she thinks the federal election results mean for women.

"The bad news," she told me, "is that Brian Mulroney won. The good news is that John Turner wouldn't have been any better."

"But Brian Mulroney just discovered women's issues last June," I protested. "How could he win an election on such a weak platform?"

My friend called me politically naive and poured herself another cup of coffee.

"The Tories didn't win the election because they had better policies than the Liberals or NDP," she explained, "they won because John Turner was such a dud."

I've never had to live through a Tory sweep before, so I wasn't really in a position to disagree with her. And as much as I hate being called naive, I had to admit she had a point. John Turner and Brian Mulroney's policies on women's issues, were indistinguishable from the start. Learning what it was women were lobbying for was obviously an equally new experience for both leadership contenders while Ed Broadbent, who clearly had the most progressive policies, wasn't taken seriously by many because he wasn't perceived to have a chance to win.

To make matters worse, the media pollsters conducted the election for us (Who would dare not vote Tory after "Knowlton Nash" told us that's what we were going to do?) and then they told us the results long before the ballots boxes were even emptied on election day. The debates that were staged to discuss policy were declared won and lost on execution rather than substance by celebrity journalists and the media's obsession with visual presentation gave Brian Mulroney a clear vote of confidence. Having dismissed NDP leader Ed Broadbent's chances at the outset CBC and CTV gave Broadbent's campaign only the bare minimum of coverage required to justify the salaries of the reporters assigned to his campaign. Never mind that he was the only candidate with solid policies to offer.

Somewhere between my second and third cup of coffee, I came to realise that the momentum created by women lobbyists during the campaign had more to do with process than visible results. All of our actions — The National Action Committee's Shocking Pink Paper, the Debate, the scandal over John Turner's bum-pinching, the record number of women candidates and the clout of the gender gap — marked the beginning of a new era in women's political existence, although the immediate results appear to be minimal.

Patriarchal rule persists, however the short-term results of the gender gap are evidenced by the few commitments that were extracted from Brian Mulroney during his campaign: enforced affirmative action within the federal civil service and crown corporations, job creation for women and a commitment to end discrimination against native women. Although we've barely begun to change the substance of our political clout into policies that will affect meaningful change for women from a herstorical perspective, the gender gap has proven a valid tool.

Now that the Tories are faced with delivering on their promises, the difference between the Liberal and Conservative policies for women may prove to be as indistinguishable as their campaigns. The only comparable difference between John Turner and Brian Mulroney may turn out to be that Brian Mulroney will smile when he tells Canadian women that they'll have to wait for their equality until the economy picks up.

A glance at Mulroney's cabinet is perhaps more telling of his politics than any pre-election rhetoric. Jake Epp, as the (anti-abortion) minister of health, will have a great influence on women's accessibility to abortion. And remember John Crosbie, the man who set out to bring in Playboy Playmate Shannon Tweed to fundraise for his PC leadership campaign? As Canada's new Justice Minister, Crosbie will be the man we'll have to enlist to change the patriarchal laws of the land. Early cabinet announcements named no one to the Status of Women post, although the Prime Minister's Office responded when asked, that it had been thrown in with the Secretary of State portfolio. In its entirety, Mulroney's cabinet promises no more for women than job opportunities for the six women cabinet ministers Mulroney appointed.

Now for the good news. . .

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The aim of this magazine is to provide an alternative means of communication with a feminist perspective in order to stimulate, to inform, to effect change, and to unify women's strengths, serving as a forum for women.

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letters

Dear HERizons collective,

In the letters column of the September issue of *HERizons*, you printed a text entitled "An Open Letter by Ann Hansen. Edited Version". The title you selected is misleading. In fact, the text in question is taken from a statement which Ann made in court prior to being sentenced to life imprisonment by Judge Toy on June 5th, 1984. Entitling this statement "An Open Letter" (to whom?) and printing it in the Letter section rather than the News section of *HERizons* trivializes it.

As for your editing job, it is unfortunate that some of the important political elements of Ann's statement — e.g. her reasons for choosing underground illegal actions and her analysis of the relationship between direct action and other political activity — were omitted.

It is also standard practice to inform the readership where the full version of an unedited text can be obtained . . . Interested readers can write for a copy of Ann Hansen's complete statement from *Resistance — Documents and Analysis of the Illegal Front*, P.O. Box 790, Station A, Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2N6. (cost \$1.00)

Ann Hansen and Julie Belmas are now serving their sentences at Kingston Prison for Women. They welcome letters. The address is Box 515, Kingston, Ontario.

In Sisterhood
Michèle Pujol
Winnipeg

Dear Editor(s),

Thank you for the issues of *HERizons* which I have already received. Your articles have been very informative and well-written, and I have enjoyed most of them. I am writing to express my views as a Christian feminist who finds some problems in getting involved with the feminist movement. I consider myself a feminist in the sense that I am in favour of equality for women in jobs and in marriage, and opposed to any form of oppression of women. I

believe that the feminist movement has had a great impact on the quality of life of women in the world today. So why am I reluctant to get involved? Because there seems to be an assumption on the part of many feminists that one has to be "Pro-Choice" to be a true feminist. As a Christian, I cannot condone therapeutic abortion, except for medical reasons where the mother's life is endangered by her pregnancy. But that does not imply that I and other Christians cannot empathize with, or indeed feel responsibility for women with unwanted pregnancies. I feel very strongly that if Christians are to say that they are opposed to abortion, they must be prepared to provide support in every way they can to women with unwanted pregnancies who decide to continue with their pregnancies. I acknowledge that the church has at times in the past been quick to condemn, slow to forgive, and reluctant to continue loving single mothers. But I hope that people in the feminist community realize that many Christians do see the responsibility that we have to such women, at a time when they most

need our support.

Another point with which I would like to take issue is the commonly-held belief that "Pro-Lifers" are opposed to contraceptive use and contraceptive education. It is true that there are many who subscribe to this view, but there are also large numbers of people like myself, who are strongly in favour of contraceptive education, since it is obvious that as the numbers of unwanted pregnancies drop, so will the numbers of therapeutic abortions, to which we are strongly opposed.

I am sure that there are people who are convinced that one cannot be a feminist without being "Pro-Choice". I have tried to point out the ways in which my views on unwanted pregnancy have some similarity to yours. I am not unaware of the implications for women, of being able to choose whether or not to bear children. Certainly, freedom and equality for women would be greatly advanced without the reality of unwanted pregnancy. I do not condemn those who choose abortion, although I do begin to lose patience with those who return for a second or third time. But please, try to see my point of view. If one believes that all life is sacred from conception, then it is easy to feel outraged at the termination of such very young lives. So, although I try to appreciate your point of view, I often feel angry about this issue.

I, with many other Christians, am trying to empathize with those who consider abortion acceptable. There will always be a dividing line between us. But my hope is that if all of us concentrate on preventing the problem by contraceptive education, and on providing support for mothers and their children, the antagonism between "Pro-Lifers" and "Pro-Choicers" will diminish.

I would be interested to know if my views would be welcome in the feminist movement.

Yours sincerely,
Ann McKenzie, M.D.

Letters and responses
welcome from readers.

HERizons Magazine
200-478 River Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3L 0C8



Dear Editors,

I realize that this letter is late in coming. However, I still felt it was important none-the-less to write and congratulate you on your April 1984 article entitled "It's Just Your Nerves".

As a staff member of one of the first centres in Canada to address the issues of women and addiction, I feel that articles such as this one are crucial for women to have access to. Over the years we have certainly experienced the problems you address in the article as they relate to women and tranquillizers and women and the medical profession.

I would also add that one of the hardest issues that chemically dependent women have to deal with is that of the "stigma".

In my experience I have seen the unquestionable need for women-only treatment programs and self-help groups, and hope that as a women's magazine you will continue to do feature articles on these programs so that women can be aware that there is help available.

I enjoy reading your magazine and wish you every success.

Sincerely,
Sharon D'Arcy,
Community Education Worker,
Womens Addiction Centre
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear HERizons,

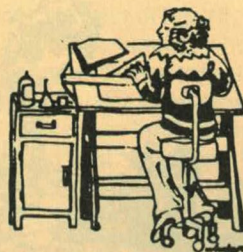
Just picked up your September issue. As always, the Nelliegrams are very informative. I was also glad to read the article "Is There a Better Way to Birth?" by Claire Dow, as two of my friends just had babies — one interventionist (having to go to the hospital, have drugs, an episiotomy, an uncaring and rushed doctor) and one at home with a midwife (an easier time, and a more positive experience all around). Claire Dow's article gave much needed information about birthing.

On the other hand, the article by Christine Skelton, "How to Relax — And Live With Everyday Stress", infuriated me. (And certainly added to my stress level.) Skelton has totally bought the psychiatric/psychological concept of stress — which is that even though environmental factors may contribute to stress, we, as individuals, have total control over how we deal with it. This analysis individualises a collective problem — the problem, the horror, of daily living in a world where the majority of people

struggle to maintain physical existence while supporting a rich (and middle class) minority (mostly white men and their female lackeys). No wonder we have stress! Stress is not a "syndrome" (as Skelton states, pg. 24, col. 1), as "rape trauma syndrome" and "battered woman syndrome" are also *not* syndromes. This kind of psychiatric labelling places blame on individual women for our being raped or battered, as though it's something inside of us that caused us to be battered or raped or stressed out. We don't need therapy and "relaxation training" for our "syndromes", we need to change the situation/system which legitimises violence against women. As women, as oppressed peoples within and outside of current U.S. borders, we are angry, we are frustrated, we are in pain, we are stressed out because of how we are exploited and oppressed in this world, *not* because we may happen to have a "Type A" personality. If we had jobs we enjoyed, which made us feel worthwhile, if we didn't have to worry about paying the rent, feeding our kids, whether the car will run (if we even have one), *that* is what would reduce stress in our lives. All this psychological bullshit is perpetuating our oppression — all we have to do is learn relaxation techniques and our lives will become stress free and "healthy". Sure, relaxation and meditation are great in the short term (when we can find the time between maintaining our existence to do these things). I intend to continue doing political work in whatever form I can in order to *change* this capitalist, male-dominated, racist and stress-producing society, *not* "learn to live with it."

Susanna Smith

P.S. Please don't edit this letter. I was sorry to see you had edited Ann Hansen's letter — any way I can get an unedited copy?



Dear HERizons,

Recently, a friend of the café library donated copies of the March, April and May issues of *HERizons* to our community library.

I would like to offer a few personal comments (which do not necessarily reflect the views of the collective).

An article in the May issue is entitled "Where Do Men Fit Into Feminism?". This is precisely the question I am asking myself these days. I have been a voracious reader of feminist books and magazines, and I feel that I have been able to put theory into practice in my daily life. But I am becoming increasingly critical, as feminism becomes more and more recuperated and absorbed into the dominant ideologies. Feminism has become the loyal opposition, and retains, little that is truly revolutionary. We are confronted with a myriad of "feminist" oppressors: bureaucrats, politicians, psychologists and bosses whose only ostensible role is to perpetuate a discourse of power and domination. While some are pursuing nebulous neo-mysticisms, others advocate a totalitarian "feminist" state. Others wish a social democracy which smashes the unions, and others a liberalism which napalmed Vietnamese villages. I really don't know what to make of all this.

As soon as feminism leaves the terrain of "feminist" issues, it is immediately absorbed into one form of domination or another. Feminism accepts power. Its relationship with the state has become cosy and incestuous, and it reproduces capital in all its forms. The few contestatory voices are drowned in a sea of liberal/social democratic apologetics.

Sexism must be combatted in all its forms. To the extent that feminism is the servitor of forms of domination, "good-bye to all that."

Take care
Michael William

Dear HERizons,

Yes, I finally broke down and got a subscription to your wonderful magazine. Of course, the Save 20 per cent helped a lot! I've been buying my *HERizons* at stores and at MACSW and getting them free at some wimmin's events and borrowing Lynn's (my sister) for a long time now, and I figured Lynn's moved away, there aren't that many events in the winter, they cost a lot (for me) in the stores,

and yes! I want the status that comes with having my very own subscription to a magazine (just kidding). But seriously, HERizons is a big boost that I *need* every month, and why not get my boost two weeks early every month?! Oh!! before I forget, CONGRATULATIONS on going National. Now it's a small(er) step for one woman (who doesn't live in Wominitoba) to go buy HERizons, and a HUGE step for Womankind (AT LAST! a national feminist wimmin's magazine in Canada!) I really hope you could understand that last sentence. Reading it over, it doesn't make a lot of sense.

Anyways... I'm glad you kept a Wominitoba section even though you're national now. Never forget your roots! The French section is a great idea — I just wish I was bil-

lingual. Oh well, I'm working on it. Also the article 'Is There a Better Way to Birth?' I found very informative and interesting, and when it comes time for me to consider a baby (I'm only 16 now) I'll know my alternatives. Thank you Claire Dow! One last good comment before I get to the constructive criticism (I'll bet you can't wait): Lyn Cockburn is hilarious! Her column is one of the first things I turn to in the mag. She has the gift of making a person *think* about a serious subject at the same time as making them laugh. And now the bad news: your graphics leave something to be desired, especially photograph arrangement. One notable example is the article Spunky Women (the title also leaves something to be desired) in the June/July issue. The article was supposed to be a photo essay, mean-

ing the photographs are most important. Instead, the photographs were mauled with a pair of scissors and then arranged around the words. I had the opportunity to see some of the original photographs, and they weren't done justice in the magazine — not even close. And please don't chalk this up to bias, me being related to one of the authors of the article. I have noticed this in other articles. I hope that you will ask whoever does your graphics to be more careful with the photographs. I'm sure I would not enjoy having the top of my head lopped off with an X-Acto knife!

In spite of the photographs, I still want to subscribe. Thanx very much for listening (reading?) to my griping, and thanx very much for HERizons.
In Sisterhood Michelle Suderman

bulletins

CREATING UNITY —

The Midwives Alliance of North America Conference will be held at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor St., W., Toronto on **October 31-November 4, 1984**. Among the speakers will be Sheila Kitzinger, British social-anthropologist; Ina May Gaskin, American midwife; Michele Landsberg, journalist; and practicing midwives from Canada and the U.S. will discuss their profession roles and political activities. Full conference costs \$175.00; for further information call the Midwifery Task Force of Ontario at (416) 537-2257 or register with OISE at (416) 923-6641.

THE WOMEN'S NETWORK OF THE RED RIVER VALLEY —

is an umbrella organisation to coordinate advocacy and educational efforts of groups committed to full equality for women, with membership open to organisations and individuals whose goals are not in conflict with the Houston Plan of Action, UN Decade for Women, 1977 (copies available on request). The geographical area to be served includes the twin city Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area and the surrounding 100,000 square mile area of both Minnesota and North Dakota plus an extension to groups in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The

primary goal is the establishment of a workable consortium of feminist groups and individuals to enable coordination of advocacy and educational efforts through a central office and regular newsletter. Secondary objectives are mutual support, maximum impact on the greater community, increasing the number of women and men committed to feminist goals, a directory and attracting funding for the benefits of networking. Memberships are \$15 individuals/\$25 organisations to: Women's Network of the Red River Valley, Box 3092, Fargo ND 581087 (701) 232-6479.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY WOMEN AND THE ARTS CONFERENCE —

To be held on **October 10-12, 1985** at the Hofstra University, New York welcomes scholarly papers on the female imagination and the arts as related to women in the eighteenth century. Deadline for completed papers, **February 1, 1985**. For information contact Hofstra University Cultural Centre, Hempstead, NY 11550.

AUSTRALIAN FEMINIST DALE SPENDER —

will be speaking on **Saturday, October 27th, 1984** at 8 pm in the Faculty Lounge, Library Sciences Bldg., St. George and Harbord, University of Toronto; cost \$3.00. Her books include *Women of Ideas (And What Men Have Done to Them)* and *There's Always Been a Women's Movement This Century*. For information contact Toronto Women's Bookstore at (416) 922-8744.

WOMEN: IMAGES, ROLE-MODELS —

A conference organised by the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW) to be held **November 9-11, 1984** at the Université du Québec à Montréal, to bring together all women who have an interest in the question of collective images and representations of women in everyday life. Women of different social walks will come together, speak their differences and share their experiences through various means, such as workshops, group discussions, poetry, plays, music, films.

For information call:
Evelyn Tardy or
Marie Vallee,
Organising Committee (514)
282-4522 or 282-4430.

WOMEN IN CRISIS —

Crisis Services for Women in B.C. A conference will be held from **November 18-20, 1984** at the Empress Hotel, Victoria to gain an overview of the range and quality of crisis services available for women in the province and to find alternative ways to deliver services in northern and remote communities. The conference is designed for those working in crisis services for women. For information contact the sponsor: School of Social Work, Women's Programs, University Extension, University of Victoria, P.O. Box 1700, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y2 (604) 721-8470.

PRAIRIES EMPOWERMENT TRAINING INTENSIVE —

This three day workshop to train facilitators is scheduled to be held in Winnipeg from **Friday, December 7** at 9 am to **Sunday, December 9** at 6 pm (Friday and Saturday evening included). Day 1 — Despair and Empowerment; Day 2 and 3 — Intensive Training to gain leadership tools for peace work. People should attend who have had group experience in feminist consciousness raising; political or religious witness groups. Facilitators will be Tova Green, feminist therapist and peace activist from Boston and Nancy Moorhead, volunteer peace worker with feminist and church groups; both are part of Interhelp, a non-partisan network who work against Nuclear Holocaust, Environmental Deterioration and Human Oppression. Costs: \$100 standard, \$50 low-income (please pay more if you can subsidise someone) (Location TBA, Billets and some meals provided); make cheques payable to Barbara Roberts or Joanne Sydiaha (Training Intensive). For information call Barbara at (306) 664-3688 or Joanne at (306) 382-0489; to register (Winnipeggers only) call Erica Smith at 667-4882.

ACTION, EDUCATION DES FEMMES —

un organisme national de femmes francophones dédié à l'éducation offrira des sessions de formation aux participantes des quatre provinces de l'Ouest.

Les trois ateliers suivants s'offriront simultanément en deux blocs: stratégies politiques, stratégies de regroupement et techniques d'animation en ateliers.

La rencontre aura lieu les **16, 17, et 18 novembre** prochain à Winnipeg.

Si vous désirez y participer, veuillez communiquer avec votre représentante provinciale: Louise Proulx en Colombie Britannique au (604) 327-6457; Adrienne Bernard en Alberta au (403) 479-3532; Cécile Allard en Saskatchewan au (306) 648-2513 et Rachel Massicotte au Manitoba au (204) 233-7926.

TORONTO BIRTH COMMITTEE —

recently presented extensive plans to set up an independent downtown birth centre where mothers who desire an alternative to hospital care can give birth. The \$1.5 million project is endorsed by the federal National Health Research and Development Project, a funding body with an eye on experimental methods for delivering health services. The group of doctors, nurses and midwives are hoping to garner support from reluctant Ontario Health Minister Keith Norton.

FEMINIST EDUCATION —

Essays on any aspect of Feminist Education should be submitted before **February 1, 1985** to appear in a special issue of the Journal of Thought, An Interdisciplinary Quarterly, entitled *Feminist Education*. Send manuscripts or inquiries to Barbara Hillyer Davis, Women's Studies, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK 73019.

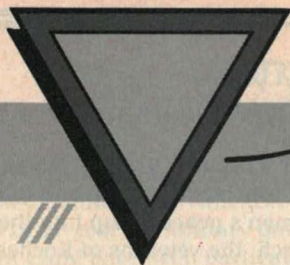
WOMEN AND THE INVISIBLE ECONOMY —

A conference that will focus on women's unpaid labour on **February 23-25, 1985** at Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, Montreal. Among the topics are: The Value of Unpaid Labour; Housework Studies; Double Burdens; The Work of Mothering; Unpaid Work Outside the Home. For further information contact Suzanne Peters at the Institute, 1455 De Maisonneuve Blvd., West, Montreal, H3G 1M8 (514) 879-8521.

UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN (1975-1985) —

End of The Decade Conference will be held in Nairobi, Kenya from **July 15-26, 1985**. A parallel meeting of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) entitled "Forum 85" is also taking place at the same time in Nairobi. This world conference will review and appraise the achievements of the Decade for Women, analyse obstacles to further progress, and develop forward-looking strategies to the year 2000. Conferences have already been held in Mexico City (1975) and in Copenhagen (1980), to mark the beginning and mid-point of the Decade to strengthen understanding and cooperation between developing and developed countries as well as promote concerted action to improve the status of women.





The recent United Nations International Conference on Population in Mexico City reaffirmed the right of all individuals and couples to make free, informed decisions on childbearing, including the number of children they wish to have and when they wish to have them. This is a major principle of the World Population Plan of Action developed in Bucharest in 1974, when the industrialised and developing nations gathered to try to bring the population 'crisis' under control. This right to freely decide the size of family and its spacing is currently being denied to millions of women around the world (including Canadian women) because they do not control their own fertility, nor is their physical and mental health or economic circumstance seen as a major factor in the decision they make to have a child.

Political Control

Proper family planning can improve the health of women and their children, but population control can also be a very dangerous tool. How is family planning being applied and in what circumstances? We must look at the context, as well as the methods. Is it being used to deepen existing socioeconomic injustices by focusing poorly explained and coercive family planning programs on poorer segments of the population? Or is it being used to close social and economic gaps by allowing families of different social classes access to gradual and voluntary family planning?

Political control through population control is a factor at the international level. It is common knowledge that there is enough food to feed us all — but it is the economic needs of the industrialised countries that have determined trade patterns and crops of developing countries since colonial times. The majority of the world's

The politics of population control

Laura Sundberg



Two-thirds of Native families headed by single mothers under 35 live below the poverty line.

population lives in the Third World, and will continue to suffer because industrialised countries hold the balance of economic and political power.

Unfortunately there are examples of governments manipulating the poor. In Singapore the government announced in June, that young women with little or no education would be paid to be sterilised after their first or second child. This followed a scheme introduced in January which was aimed at encouraging educated women to have more children. These policies are not only racially biased, but class biased as well, since they assume that only the highly educated classes can produce intelligent children. The promised educational bonuses for these 'intelligent' children of educated persons will give more privilege to the elite while penalizing the disadvantaged for a situation over which

they have no control.

Education at the community level is necessary to develop marketable skills for women, especially those women who have been bypassed by the formal education process. Once women have financial resources, they gain the ability to exercise decision making within the family. Community leadership skills grow from access to education. Management skills, in particular, are needed so that women can be a part of the decision making process at the community, national and international level.

Cultural Traditions

The World Fertility Survey noted that in 17 out of 20 countries surveyed, as many as 40 per cent of women at risk of pregnancy and desiring no more children were not practising contraception. Why is this? This seems particularly strange in light of a recent World Health Organization survey of 21,000 women, of which 9/10 knew that the health of both mother and child was improved if there were fewer births and longer intervals between them.

Cultural factors have a major impact on a woman's decision to practice family planning. In many countries, a man's virility is proven by the number of children he fathers. This is known as 'machismo' in Latin America and is also prevalent in the Caribbean and in most traditional African societies. In Africa, family planners have poured millions of dollars into programs to convince women to have fewer children, and to either use contraceptives or be sterilised, but they have not focused much attention on men's responsibility for fertility control, or the cultural bias in favour of boys.

The traditional preference for boys in many cultures is a factor working against population control programs. The World Fertility Survey reported that of couples with equal numbers of

sons and daughters in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Republic of Korea, Nigeria, Argentina and China, 88-99 per cent of those who expressed some preference, wanted a son. Only in Panama did significantly more couples prefer daughters over a son, although daughters were about equally preferred in Columbia, Costa Rica and Thailand.

This preference for boys perpetuates the myths of male superiority and can actually endanger the lives of females. A recent study in rural Bangladesh found that the death rate for girls ages 1-4 was 50 per cent higher than for boys. A closer look also revealed that women received less food and a lower level of health care among all income classes. In China, female infanticide has increased in poor rural areas where the tradition is still illegally practiced, as has violence against the mothers of baby girls. China's newest population control scheme, to limit Chinese couples to only one child, has reportedly increased the incidence of female infanticide.

In addition to the right of women to control their fertility, men must learn to share familial and economic responsibilities. Rami Chhabra, in a recent United Nations Fund For Population Activities publication suggests that "greater sharing of responsibilities between parents for home and children could do more to pull women out of repetitive, reproductive fate than any manipulation of roles through work policies."

Education

The overwhelming irony of the population question is that population specialists have known for years that policies which respond to women's needs — particularly those in education, age of marriage and childbearing, play an integral part in allowing women to take control of their fertility, and, thus, improve their quality of life and that of their children. Access to contraceptives can delay parenting into the 'twenties', the threshold when fertility is affected. This is crucial because currently half the world's population is made up of young people under the age of 25, and the youth population of the developing world is expected to almost double in the next 20 years.



Most governments have endorsed family planning. Mothers wait for advice in a maternity and child-care centre.

But even in Canada, not all women have the same access to birth control information. Teen-agers are a prime example of a group that is currently being denied birth control. Sex education is being attacked and school boards are feeling the pressure. Low income Canadians and visible minorities are also jeopardized, as they often do not have access to family planning information due to language difficulties, cultural traditions or because family planning is not a priority in the struggle for survival.

The measure of the success of the World Population Plan of Action will be seen in change that improves the quality of life for those who have the least. For women, the right to determine their reproductive future is a must. This depends on governments and their people building bridges for women: from a time when women were forced to define themselves as wives and mothers whose sole salvation was in having sons — to an era where women and men can participate in a greater spirit of partnership and sharing of roles in all spheres of life.

Laura Sundberg was an official observer at the U.N. International Conference on Population in Mexico City. She went on behalf of the Canadian Population Task Force as an observer on the Status of Women.

Nelliegram

NOT KEEPING PACE — When told by city officials that they had to allow a women's peace group into their march, the veterans of Rochester, NY decided instead to cancel the city's 116th Memorial Day parade altogether. Rochester Women's Action for Peace had asked to march at the back of the parade carrying banners, distributing leaflets, and giving away balloons saying "Teach Peace" as a way of memorializing the nation's war dead.

New Directions for Women

Nelliegram

KEEPING THE PEACE — A Denver homemaker, Barbara Donachy, has built 35,000 miniature replicas of nuclear weapons and set them up in her backyard. She spends the last 18 months making the tiny ceramic models to illustrate the size and cost of the U.S. stockpile. The models are built-to-scale and sport prices exactly one millionth the cost of the equivalent big-time weapons. Cheapest is a \$4 three-inch Minuteman warhead. The most costly is a \$2,400 four-foot Trident submarine.

New Directions for Women

Nelliegram

BANNING THE COLOR PURPLE — Alice Walker's Pulitzer-prize winning book, *The Color Purple*, has been temporarily banned from the Oakland, California Public Schools. One school board member is quoted as saying, "I don't want my children reading this garbage and I want our library committee to check this out." If the committee of district librarians finds the novel acceptable, it will be back on school shelves. Meanwhile, the author was invited to address a high school graduating class at a different Oakland school. The principal there said she wanted to honour Alice as "an unforgettable role model and heroine."

New Directions for Women

Women in Chile fight back

Poverty, lack of health care, disrupted families and violence; the effects of 11 years of military government in Chile have been particularly hard on women.

Lake Sagaris, a Canadian journalist living in Chile, reports that when women speak out against the military, they are subjected to sexual harassment and rape by General Augusto Pinochet's security forces.

In early June a 17-year-old woman filed a criminal suit against two Chilean police. After she had been arrested during an International Women's Day event, she testified she was dragged to a cell and raped. She was released the next day, and not charged. Doris-Brigitte Stahl was arrested during an anti-military protest and forced to remove her clothing. She was then harassed and insulted when she was forced to walk up and down the narrow aisle between a busload of police officers.

The unemployment rate in Chile is another factor; one in three Chileans is unemployed and women earn less than men for the same work. Daycare is virtually non-existent, even though mothers are forced to seek wage-earning work outside the home.

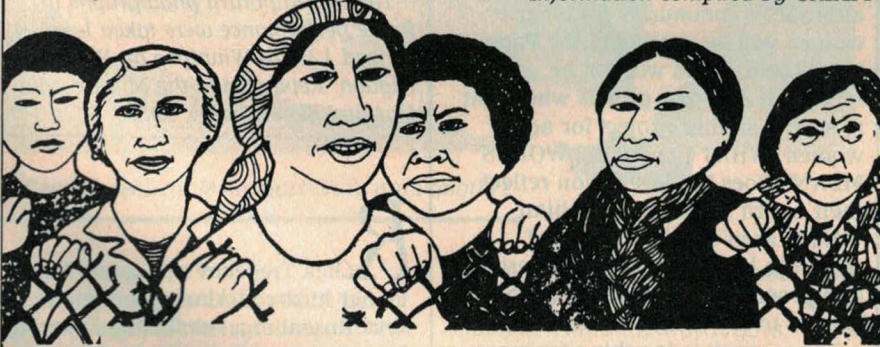
For women in Chile however, sexual violence is not limited to military-related persecutions. A study of Chilean girls between 11 and 17 conducted by sociologist Raul Lira-Morel found that 14 per cent of pregnancies were caused by rape and rape-incest.

But Chilean women are fighting back and the efforts of women's groups, educators, organisers, activists and health workers provide a forceful opposition to Pinochet.

"Women, particularly, are exploited in their daily lives, in their homes, in the streets, in their paid and unpaid work," says Maria Asuncoín Busto, president of MUDECHI (Women of Chile). "But we can't change this without democracy. We are suffering from an economic and political system which works against us, not for us."

The work of organisations such as OXFAM is also supporting the work of women's and other community groups in Chile. In addition to this support, information about the rights of women and children, basic health and hygiene and contraceptive information is helping those in Chile struggle for a better life.

Information compiled by OXFAM



elliegram

SOUR NOTES AT DISNEYLAND — A rule prohibiting same-sex dancing at Disneyland has been declared illegal after a trial in Fortuna, CA. A sign on a dance floor had read "Couple only (male/female)." High school student Andrew Exler filed a sex discrimination suit nearly four years ago after having been escorted off the dance floor with his male dancing partner.

A security officer told them at the time that "this is a family park. There is no room for alternative lifestyles." When Exler claimed that the rule violated state law, he was told, "We are a private business. We make our own rules." The case was the first jury trial Disneyland has ever lost.

Guardian

-poor judgements-

Good Samaritan failed by justice system

MILWAUKEE — A Milwaukee man who tried to help a woman who was assaulted wound up in hospital, partially paralyzed while his assaulters were set free.

Dennis Pritzl suffered head injuries which left his left side nearly paralyzed after two men in a pick-up truck drove away quickly during a scuffle, pulling him under the truck, after the same two had been harassing a woman who had asked Pritzl for help.

Circuit Judge Frank Crivello dismissed charges against the two men because he saw nothing in the criminal complaint to indicate that the men deliberately set out to hurt Pritzl. The men's lawyer said that the accused weren't to blame because they hadn't initiated the scuffle with Pritzl. The lawyer also maintained that the woman was in no danger at the time she pleaded for help.

Children's credibility on trial

Defence attorneys involved with the Jordan Sex Cases in Chaska, Minnesota have been trying to undermine the credibility of the children testifying against Robert and Lois Bentz. The two are accused of operating a child pornography and prostitution ring in the town of Jordan, 48 kilometres south of Minneapolis, in which 37 children as young as two were abused by the Bentz's and other adults.

The attorneys defending the accused have suggested that the children were bribed to testify and coached what to say on the stand.

One girl, under cross-examination, called a defence attorney "dumb" for suggesting that she didn't like her molestor very much. Another, said to an attorney, "You're making that up," when he suggested that she had been threatened to testify in the case.

Children were forced to perform sexual acts with adults, animals and with each other, according to testimonies heard at the trials. The rapes were also filmed. Two of the Bentz's three sons were among those testifying.

Baby boom?

More and more women appear to be having their children without getting married. Women in Canada had about 2,400 more babies than they did the previous year, but said "I DO" less.

The number of marriages in Canada decreased 4.5 per cent in the 12-month period ending in March of this year, according to Statistics Canada. An associate professor of sociology at the University of Ottawa says that people are living together and either not getting married or postponing marriage until they're older and economically stable.

Homosexuals not protected...

A U.S. Court of Appeals panel said it found "no constitutional right to engage in homosexual conduct," following the appeal of a U.S. Navy decision to discharge of one its officers. The court also said homosexual conduct within a military unit was almost certain to be harmful to morale and discipline.

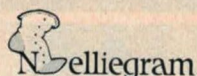
James Dronenburg, who had served for nine years as a Korean linguist and cryptographer with a top secret clearance, was discharged in 1981 after admitting that he was a homosexual.

...But they should be

The Alberta Human Rights Commission says homosexuals should be protected from discrimination under the province's human rights legislation.

Commission chairperson Marlene Antonio anticipates some opposition to the commission's recommendations, although she points to a recent Gallup poll which indicated that 52 per cent of Canadians believed homosexuals should be protected from discrimination. The Manitoba Human Rights Commission has also recommended that discrimination based on sexual orientation be illegal.

The Alberta commission also recommended that discrimination against pregnant women and mental illness be barred.



MS. FOUNDATION NO MONEY FOR CRONES NEST PROJECT — The Crones Nest is a project of the Pagoda, a community of lesbians in St. Augustine, Fla. The project grant was sought to research and develop a program to expand the community to include a residence for older womyn, "whether physically strong or not; of whatever colour, creed or economic condition; lesbian or heterosexual — who choose to live their lives in community with other womyn." The grant proposal listed such innovative concepts as active involvement in administration; option of active involvement in running the home; skill-sharing; natural and holistic healing, and womyn's control over her own death experience. To accomplish this the physical structure, administration and programing would all coalesce to create an environment which would provide a variety of choices to long-living women and could be replicated throughout the country.

In spite of the proposal's assertion that such programs would be models for others to follow, the Ms. Foundation gave as its reason for rejection, "the experience of the Pagoda women in working to establish an alternative community for older women will be specific to the Pagoda constituency, and will not be replicable by other groups who want to start a similar project for aging women. WHAT DO THOSE WORDS MEAN? Does Ms.'s rejection reflect their board's belief that lesbian womyn aren't real womyn and therefore lesbian womyn's experience and program design would not be helpful to all womyn?"

The committee is asking for more contributions from individual donors as it continues to seek out progressive foundations and funding sources. One of the most important tasks the group is working on is the completion of a slide/tape presentation showing the problems long-living womyn face, and some of the alternative solutions the Crones Nest project would provide. Write to: Crones Nest Project, 207 Coastal Highway, St. Augustine, FA 32084.

Matrices

I'm Talking From My Time — By Rhea Tregebov

Erica Smith

Reva Rosenberg is my husband's grandmother. She was born Reva Gur-arieh in Charadetz, Russia, near the Polish border. We believe she was born sometime in January, 1888. Gur-arieh means "like a lion".

In August, 1912, when she was in her twenties, she followed her brothers and sisters to Winnipeg. The family translated their name to Gray. On March 9, 1919, Reva married Yossel Rosenberg. This is the first date I know for sure.

Reva and Yossel Rosenberg had three children: Bernie, Leo and Sara. Yossel died November 9, 1944.

Reva's eldest grandson, Alan Tregebov, recorded the conversations with her on January 28 and 29th, 1983 in her home in Winnipeg. I have transcribed and re-recorded portions of these conversations for this performance.

The contemporary photographs used in the performance were taken June 10, 11 and 12th in Winnipeg by Peter Higdon. Reva died in the Misericordia Hospital September 9, 1983.

Rhea Tregebov's poignant tribute to her husband Alan's grandmother, Reva Rosenberg, *I'm Talking From My Own Time*, is the result of four hours of taped conversations between Alan and Reva, and countless hours of obsessive transcribing by Rhea.

"For a long while," writes Rhea, "I've been interested in the differences between spoken and written language, between 'literary' language and the language of the everyday. When I was taking a course in linguistics in grad school, I learned how different spoken language is from what we consider 'proper', standard English and how despite these

variances from the standard, spoken language still communicates so well . . . I have been moved and amazed by the eloquence that people assume unconsciously when they are speaking of something they care

would have explained, as if to a child: "You have to do it — and see it — and that's all." After all, didn't people everywhere struggle? Did you get mad when the boys learned tanach and Gemorrhah and everything, and the



Reva Rosenberg is my husband's grandmother.

deeply about."

We hear Reva's exact words, her pauses and stumbles, falling on our ears with the fluency and beauty of unadorned truth. Unconcerned about facts or details, plot or narrative, she communicates the essence of her life: what it was like to live it "from the inside out". With immense care, her granddaughter-in-law, Rhea, has transcribed not what she heard, but what Reva actually said. Thus avoiding the trap of reducing the old woman to a colourful ethnic baba.

Her life eludes political analysis. Reva herself would have been impatient with such useless folderol and

girl's didn't, asks her grandson, Alan. Of course not. "How could I be mad? (laughs) That's the way it goes." Earth was important. Bread was important. Survival.

And so she lives out her life, an upright woman, against the grief and turmoil of our age. Think of the thousands and thousands of women like her, most of them unknown and unsung, who quietly (sometimes not) spun their webs of strength and weakness, insight and illusion, bitterness, tenacity, laughter and tears. Lives that in their very ordinariness seem so extraordinarily compelling to us, the searchers.



Poet, Rhea Tregobov

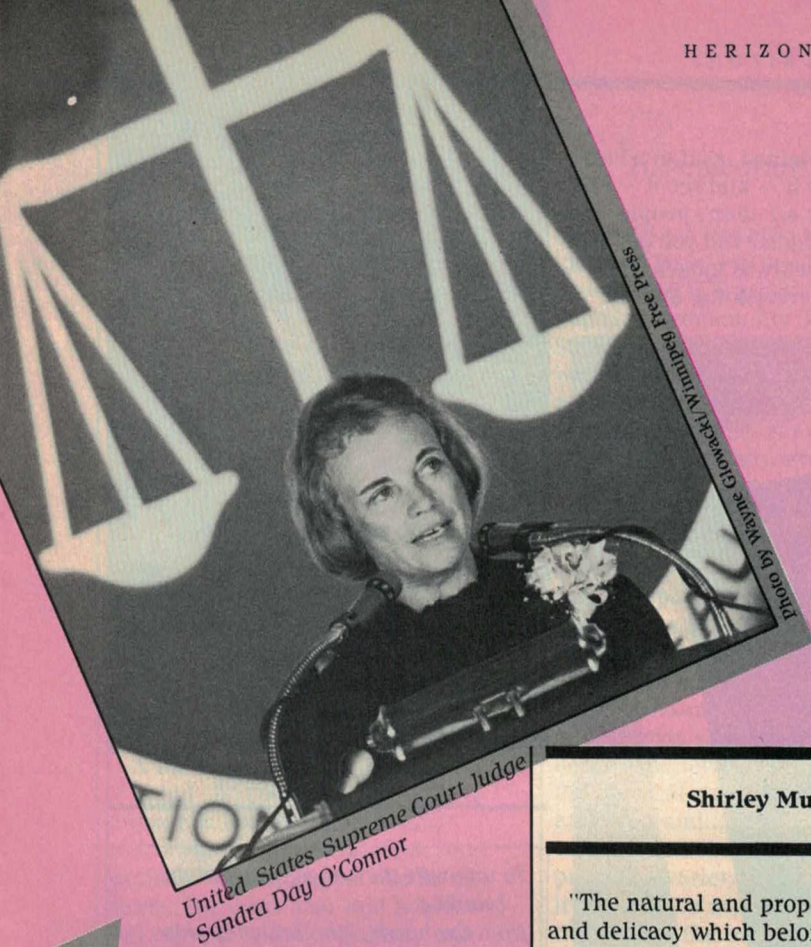
*To untangle the hands, take out the
braiding
from the hands, long brown braids
twisted at the top of the head
for dancing at the village girls' dance.*

*Working wool into the darned heel of a
sock.*

*Take from them four in the morning in
the barn,
heat pushing from the heavy sides of
the cows.
Working a breathless calf into life.
And sift out the smell of dust,
of the leatherbound, brittle spine
of worked goldleaf, of something
closed.*

*Untangle the hands closed on the little
girl's
shoulders from the hands of the
glass-blower
in the Levant, the goatherd alone in
Babylon.
Working the brown kid back into the
flock.
And count back, subtracting, count
three brothers
and two sisters dead one by one. Count
to 54,299.
Count the Jews in Charadetz (find
Charadetz)
and then take her hand from theirs*

© Rhea Tregobov



United States Supreme Court Judge/
Sandra Day O'Connor

Shirley Muir

"The natural and proper temerity and delicacy which belongs to the female sex evidently unfits it for many of the occupations of civil life."

This was one of the reasons a justice of the Supreme Court of the United States gave when he upheld an Illinois state decision barring women from the practice of law in 1872.

Eighty years later when Sandra Day O'Connor graduated from Stanford University law school she came face to face with the same 1900s mentality. The law graduate found the only job she could get with a law firm was as a legal secretary.

"Happily that rationale has now been soundly rejected," says Day O'Connor, the first and only woman on the Supreme Court of the United States. The 54-year-old justice and former Arizona senator was sworn in to office Sept. 1981, 109 years after the Illinois case.

While addressing the Canadian Bar Association convention in Winnipeg last month, Day O'Connor said when she graduated law firms had not yet started hiring women.

"Yet today 35 per cent of law students are women. I'm sure Justice Bradley (author of the above quote) would roll over in his grave, a woman has even been appointed to the Supreme Court of the United States."

The Illinois court case was ruled in favour of maintaining the male domain on the legal profession, even though the fourteenth amendment to the constitution, which includes an equal rights protection clause, was in effect.

The American constitution does not include any express protection against sex discrimination, which advocates of the Equal Rights Amendment are trying to correct.

Day O'Connor says the American judiciary hopes to learn the effects of constitutional equality from the two-year-old Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which guarantees protection under the law regardless of sex.

"I believe that both those who support and oppose the ERA in the United States will be watching Canada for how such an amendment will effect our lives if it would be adopted.

"Even in absence of provisions in the constitution that expressly forbid sex discrimination, women in my country have made enormous strides both by legal action as well as application of the Equal Rights Protection Clause."

Day O'Connor quoted English author Samuel Johnson who once said, "Nature has given women so much power that the law has very wisely given them little."

"The framers of your charter apparently did not agree that that was wisdom," she observed.

Sandra Day O'Connor
Canada progress of Women

PORNOGRAPHY UPDATE

Porn customers prefer erotica?

James Check, a York University psychology professor, recently completed a study on pornography in which he found that men preferred erotica to pornography, although they found pornography just as exciting.

The men, between 18 to 78, were shown three types of films — violent pornography, non-violent degrading pornography, and erotica. When asked to evaluate what they had seen, the men identified the violent and degrading pornography as being more obscene than erotica. The men were all consumers of pornography.

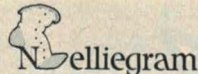
The men also said that they preferred the women in the non-violent, non-degrading films. Most of the participants agreed there should be more restrictions on the availability of violent and degrading pornography.

Check said he "debriefed" the men who took part in the study by talking to them about the different effects of the three varieties of videos. Check didn't explain why the consumption of violent pornography is increasing if men get turned on equally by erotica, except to say that men who rent videos don't know whether they're getting the violent or non-violent variety.

Clamp down on child porn

Following an NBC program which named Denmark and The Netherlands among the biggest producers and exporters of child pornography, the Danish government ruled to seek stronger penalties against child pornographers.

Prime Minister Poul Schluter said his cabinet will push for mandatory jail sentences for distributing child pornography.



TAX TIPS OUT TO LUNCH — Revenue Canada is accused of harassing dozens of Windsor, Ontario, waitresses on unsubstantiated estimates that they receive 12.5 per cent gratuities from customers who pay their bills in cash. The assessment expects employees to pay more taxes ranging from \$450 to \$2,000.

"I can't see why they're picking on us little people," said Karen Melnik, at a news conference. Having worked only part time during 1980 and 1981 she earned less than \$4,000 annually, still her tips have been estimated by Revenue Canada for the two years at \$9,356.

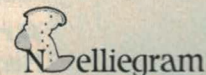
Denying that 12.5 per cent has been set arbitrarily, Charles Curley, chief of verification and collections, said each waitress is assessed individually. That might be true said Pauline Karulis and Therese Cyr, but they confirmed that they did not know of any waitresses assessed at less than that amount.

The Tories taketh away

Although the number of child abusers has increased, the PC government in Ontario is cutting back services to abuse victims, according to the Ontario public service union.

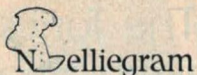
The Ontario Public Service Employees Union told the Legislature's Standing committee on Social Development that the situation in Ontario has reached crisis proportions but the government isn't doing much to help abused children. There has been a 73.5 per cent increase in the number of known sexual abusers of children in Ontario.

The union's brief states that social workers in Ontario are handling caseloads from 35 to 60 and are unable to do full justice to the responsibility involved with each of them. Because the system allows for no preventive work to be done with families in trouble, Children's Aid societies spend all their time and money on 'rescue operations' to safeguard children from violence. Children are even removed from homes when it is not necessary, the union says, because social workers don't have the luxury of spending the amount of time with each case that is warranted.



GOOD JUDGEMENTS — "No longer will society accept the idea that a woman, even if she may initially act in a seductive or compromising manner, had waived her right to say 'no' at any further time," declared Massachusetts Judge Robert Barton before sentencing three rock band members to six to twelve years in prison for raping an Army private. "No" means 'nothing further', and whatever past excuse may have been accepted for sexual arousal in males that could not be terminated are no longer tolerated by this society and jurors who are a cross-section of this Commonwealth. Women are equal partners with men. They are not sexual objects."

Rag Times



NO IDOL THREATS — The state of Kansas has made several attempts to honour Ceres, the Roman Goddess of Agriculture, by putting her atop the state capital building. But some state legislators say no to the proposal, "in Kansas, agriculture comes from God, not a Goddess." The latest plan would see the statue itself erected but avoid actually using the Goddess' name. Speaker Pro-temp Ben Foster said the statue, which would cost about \$200,000 to create and install, would show the importance of agriculture in Kansas. But State Representative Pat Weaver complained: "She's a Goddess and has nothing to do with our agriculture. The good agriculture in Kansas comes from God, and I think it's an insult to put her up there."

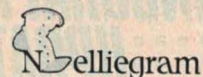
Harrisburg Area Women's News

Bitter/sweet victory in rape case

FLORIDA — A 41-year-old man was found guilty of raping his wife, after another judge had found the man not guilty because the victim was his wife.

William Rider kidnapped and raped his wife in a Homestead, Florida trailer in 1982 but Judge Joseph Farina dismissed the sexual assault charge because he said there was an "interspousal exception" in English Common Law for a man who rapes his wife.

The Third District Court of Appeal reinstated the rape charge and ruled that the "sexual battery statute proscribes a crime of violence, not a crime of sex."



PHONEY CHARGES — As they are streamlining their corporation AT&T Communications fired a telephone operator, apparently because she spent too much time trying to help customers. The dismissal of Maevon Garrett, drew criticism from the Communication Workers of America. AT&T said she was dismissed because of "unsatisfactory work performance". Ms. Garrett said her work was described as good, but her productivity lousy. They claimed she stayed on the phone too long. The operator said she felt a "moral obligation" to assist elderly or confused callers. It seems that operators can "reach out and touch someone" but only if they do it in an allotted number of seconds.

The Morning Union

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Labour companions

DEBBIE HOLMBERG-SCHWARTZ

The St. Boniface Hospital is now offering the services of labour companions to women using the labour and delivery ward of the hospital. The program is specifically targeted at women who enter the hospital without the support of a friend or family member.

Labour companions are women who have had at least one positive birthing experience and through their confidence in women's ability to birth, are able to act as consistent and effective support people.

Kris Robinson and Gerry Freund are two of the women responsible for implementing the labour companions program. Both women have had extensive experience in obstetrics and are committed to enhancing the birth experience. Kris is a nurse midwife presently employed by the St. Boniface Hospital as the inservice coordinator for labour and delivery. Gerry also works at the St. Boniface as the nursing coordinator for labour and delivery.

The concept of having a woman present at births to act as an advocate for the labouring woman is indeed an old idea although as Kris points out, "midwives have been eradicated from people's consciousness". She adds, "Midwives are the experts for normal births."

Labour companions are not expected to be birth experts, but rather patient and caring women who offer encouraging words and soothing touches to a labouring woman.

After an initial interview with Kris (at which time prospective companions are accepted or found unsuitable) companions receive a two to three hour orientation. The orientation includes a tour of the

hospital's birthing facilities and a briefing on hospital procedure and alternatives. Each month companions are expected to attend a meeting to debrief with one another and take part in learning seminars. Seminars cover a variety of topics such as Cesarean deliveries, pushing techniques, etc.

A labour companion's function is similar to that of the *doulla*, meaning female support person. Doullas accompany women through their pregnancy as well as their delivery.

This is also one of the goals of the labour companions program. Kris says, "Ideally we would like to have the companion meet her client a couple of months before her expected due date. We arrange the first meeting and then it is up to them to continue." In these cases the labour companion is expected to go on call for these women. If for some reason the principal companion is not available for the woman when she is ready to deliver, an alternate companion attends the birth.

The ultimate success of the program depends in part on the cooperation of the medical staff of the hospital. It is hoped that physicians will inform their maternity patients of the companions program and encourage women to use it. Companions are expected to receive their clients from a combination of physician referrals and call-ins from nursing staff who assess the condition of the pregnant women admitted to the hospital and respond to her needs.

The companions program is also structured to accommodate the special needs of native women. Both the Native Liaison Services of the St. Boniface and the



KRIS ROBINSON

Southeast Tribal Council have women available to act as companions. These women are keenly aware of the isolation and communication problems native women are subjected to. Their involvement in the program is very much in demand because a large percentage of women entering the hospital alone are native women. Pregnant women from northern communities are sent to Winnipeg to have their babies because adequate birthing facilities are not available to them in their own communities. Native women may spend anywhere from four to six weeks separated from their family and friends, awaiting the birth of their babies.

The presence of labour companions has also had an impact on the nursing staff of the hospital. Nurses require assistance during the times when the ward is very busy and when they are needed to fulfill a myriad of functions usually all at the same time. A companion can meet the needs of the birthing women while the nurse can attend to concurrent tasks and, of course, both nurse and companion can work together to provide a sup-

portive and relaxing atmosphere.

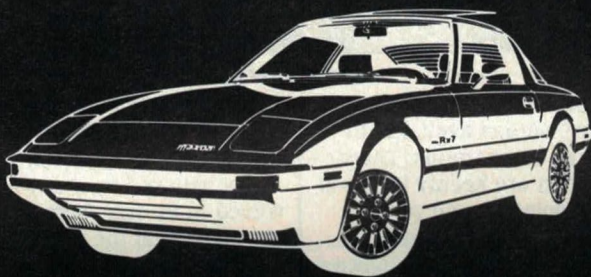
It is believed by many involved in diverse facets of obstetrics that the presence of doullas or labour companions is an immensely important element to ensuring safety and satisfaction in childbirth. This belief is supported by research which indicates that doulla attended births require less medical intervention and often labours are shortened by up to two hours.

The program at St. Boniface is functioning proof of these advantages. To date approximately 23 women have been referred to the program, 16 of whom have delivered their babies with the help of a companion. Both companions and mothers report the births were positive experiences. A formal questionnaire will be made available for women who used companions so they can provide suggestions, comments and general feedback.

It appears that already the labour companions program has met its immediate goals of making labour less stressful and birth a more positive experience for women... naturally!

*There are
some things
about a classic
that shouldn't be
taken for granted...*

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Money runs out for post partum services

The Post Partum Counselling Service of Manitoba, at 890 Carter Avenue, in Winnipeg plans to run two new programs this fall, even though their Federal funding is quickly diminishing.

A new support-sharing group for pregnant mothers who have experienced post partum depression in the past will attempt to circumvent post partum depression before delivery. Also new to Post Partum Counselling is a support group for mothers who have experienced post partum depression who are trying to decide whether to have more children. Both programs are in addition to regular features of Post Partum Counselling, which includes one-to-one counselling, group work, telephone counselling, marriage counselling and a volunteer program. The counsellors hope to be able to expand their public education program for professionals, groups, and for women in rural and northern areas.

The Post Partum Counselling Service offers women something few doctors or agencies can — staff and volunteers relate to clients' concerns in ways that translate into helpful action for the woman and her family. Post partum depression is a social concern and does not exist solely in medical circles. The Service

does not prescribe antidepressants or tranquilizers, but works co-operatively with physicians when women do need medication.

Mothers turn to Post Partum Counselling because it validates their experiences; women want to find their own answers in a place where they feel safe to express their concerns and to share their experiences.

Elaine Bergen, one of the Post Partum counsellors at Post Partum Counselling, says the response she receives proves that the need for the service exists, but funding for the service is running out.

"We need a secretary, another staff counsellor and funds for speaking engagements, and travel," says Bergen. As of this month the Post Partum Counselling Service will be forced to revert back to a totally volunteer agency. Bergen suggests that women to write Prime Minister Mulroney and remind him of his promises made during the election to women. A good place to begin honouring his party's commitment to women's issues is the Post Partum Counselling Service of Winnipeg. If the Conservative government doesn't come through, Post Partum Counselling may have to close its door.



PLURI-ELLES: centre de ressources pour femmes

Il n'existe plus, il n'a peut-être jamais existé, une femme franco-manitobaine-type. Ce qui distingue notre époque cependant, c'est la grande diversité de femmes dans la communauté: ménagères, mères de famille, ouvrières, professionnelles, femmes d'affaire etc. Ainsi, il n'est pas étonnant que l'organisme qui sert de centre de ressources pour cette pluralité de femmes francophones se nomme PLURI-ELLES.

PLURI-ELLES a vu le jour en octobre 1982 suite aux résultats d'une recherche indiquant le besoin d'un tel organisme. Toutefois, le rôle exact de PLURI-ELLES, ainsi que son rapport avec

d'autres groupes féminins francophones tel que RESEAU, demeurait flou. Un travail assidu fût alors effectué afin de clarifier son mandat et concrétiser ses projets. Aujourd'hui, il semble que le concept de PLURI-ELLES comme centre de ressources pour femmes correspond le mieux aux souhaits de ses membres.

Lors de l'assemblée annuelle le 5 juin 1984, cette nouvelle organisation a adopté une structure provisoire, sujet à l'approbation de ses membres de l'année prochaine. Cette structure prend la forme d'une marguerite. Evidemment, le centre de la marguerite représente le conseil exécutif et ses comités qui gèrent PLURI-ELLES et servent d'outil catalyseur et d'agent de liaison. Les pétales illustrent les différents projets, concrets et réalisables,

répondant aux besoins de cette pluralité de femmes francophones, ici au Manitoba.

Les projets déjà en marche comprennent un centre de documentation, des sessions d'information sur divers sujets touchant de près la femme et un groupe de membres sympathisantes, c'est-à-dire les femmes qui appuient PLURI-ELLES mais qui ne peuvent participer activement. D'autres projets éventuels sont le projet "Contact" (basé sur Contact-Community Information), le projet "Garde d'enfants", des groupes de soutien, des soupers ou d'innombrables rencontres, la formation de groupe d'intérêts et enfin, un projet d'affirmation de soi.

L'avenir de PLURI-ELLES, grâce à l'enthousiasme de ses membres et l'énergie de son conseil exécutif, semble promettant. Bien sûr, la



survie et la santé de l'organisme dépend énormément de "l'input" d'un membership toujours croissant. Ainsi, PLURI-ELLES vous invite à visiter leur bureau au troisième étage du 210, rue Masson; ou à composer le 233-1735 entre 9h⁰⁰ et 16h⁰⁰ du lundi au vendredi.

Au plaisir de vous voir!

Pierrette Gisiger

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TWO "SUPER WOMEN" REQUIRED — We are a young, struggling but no less enthusiastic Womens' Group in need of some superhuman strength and willingness to work on a voluntary basis. If you are faster than a speeding bullet (can type, etc.) and are willing to leap tall buildings in a single bound (or at least keep our office in shape) we want you! All dynamic duos please rush to the nearest phone booth and call: 237-5775, Manitoba Fund For Women Inc.

Tax update

The Winnipeg YW has felt for some time that its tax burden is excessive and unfair. Of eight YW's surveyed in major centres across Canada, we are the only one not exempt from municipal taxation. This burden cuts into resources which could otherwise be used to expand our social service programming for women and girls throughout the city.

Accordingly, the YW has refused to pay its taxes for 1981, 82, and 83 in order to call attention to this issue. And although our building was listed in the city's tax sale June 13, we have no intention of forfeiting our premises.

We are in the process of appealing our tax status to city council and to the provincial government, and it is through these means that we plan both to keep our building and to have justice done with respect to our tax burden.

YW Woman

Business women's club planned

A group of Winnipeg women are planning to open a private women's club next year in Winnipeg.

The Aurora Club is expected to include a health bar, whirlpool, squash and weight room as well as banquet and meeting rooms. Organisers of the Aurora Club say that a market study they commissioned indicated that many Winnipeg women could, and would support this type of facility. Plans are to open next September. Corporate, individual and government funding avenues are all being explored. The Aurora Club states its aim is to provide an environment for women to pursue fitness, professional and social interests. For more information call 943-7776.

calendar

OCTOBER

24 WENDO — practical techniques of self-defence for women. A six-week course is starting on **Wednesday, October 24** from 1-3 pm at the Fort Garry United Church, 800 Point Road. There is limited registration and a minimal fee. For more information and to register phone the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre at 269-6836.

30 MARIANNE AND JULIANE — a film by German director Margerethe von Trotta is based on a real-life story of two sisters' complex relationship; their private lives and public politics. DON'T MISS IT; performance at 8 pm on **Tuesday, October 30** at Cinema Main, 245 Main Street. Presented by Film Furies, donations welcome.

31 FEMINIST AUTHOR ANDREA DWORKIN SPEAKS — sponsored by the University of Manitoba's Womyn's Centre on **Wednesday, October 31** at 7:30 pm in the Multi Purpose Room, University Centre. Among Dworkin's recent books are *Pornography: Men Possessing Women* and *Right Wing Women*; she has been a tireless campaigner against violent pornography. Watch for details on posters or call the Womyn's Centre at 261-9191.

NOVEMBER

2 THE FIGHTING DAYS — by Wendy Lill, tours Manitoba **November 2 to December 2**. Nellie McClung, the Beynon sisters, and George McNair live through WWI on stage. The play is performing for schools throughout Manitoba, a Winnipeg run starts **January 24**. For touring information call Gaile at 942-7291 at Prairie Theatre Exchange.

7 RELAXATION SKILL TRAINING COURSE — for Beginners to learn a variety of techniques. The six week course will be taught by Jan Ellis beginning **November 7-December 12**; 7:30 to 9:30 pm at 67 Sherbrook St.; dress casual, bring blanket; course fee is \$80. To register or for more information call 775-8156.

13 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING — of the Reproductive Choice Coalition on **Tuesday November 13** at 7:30 pm in Room C100 at the University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Avenue.

14 THE LITTLE PRINCE — Saint Exupery's enchanting fable of a child's search for friendship is performed from **November 14-18** by Actor's Showcase at the Gas Station Theatre. Pre Xmas tours are available for elementary school audiences. For information contact 947-0394.

14 PAMELA BANTING READS POETRY — on **Wednesday November 14**, 7:30 pm at Liberation Books, 160 Spence St., 774-0637.

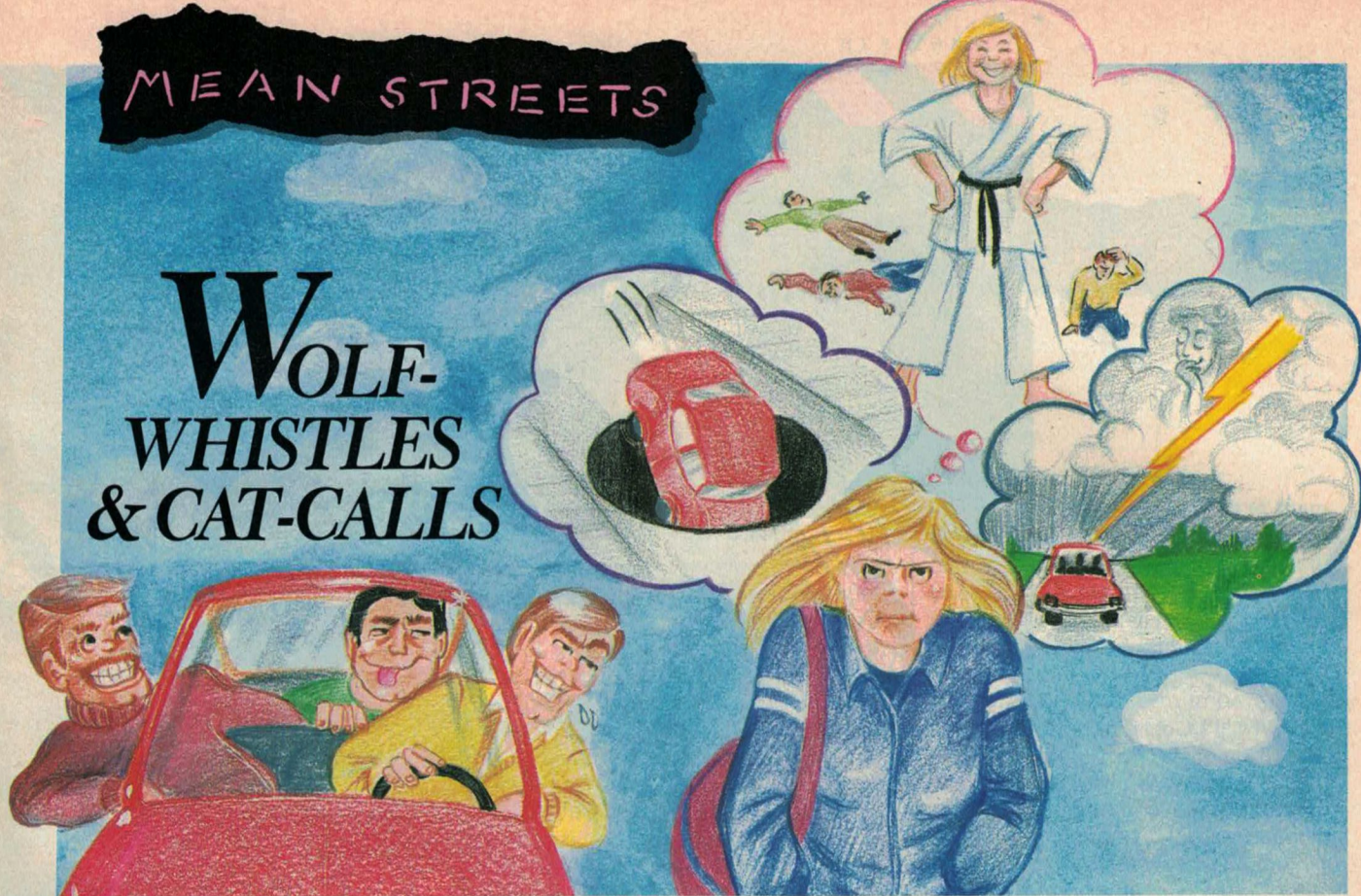
22 PROJECT PREVENTION — conference on drinking and driving, **November 22-23** at the Westin Hotel in Winnipeg. Fee \$40; for information call 944-7318.

24 HOLIDAY SOCIAL FOR CHOICE — at the Crescentwood Community Centre at Corydon and Rockwood. Draw for a two-week trip to Cuba. For tickets or information call 775-7774.

DECEMBER

5 ALLIGATOR PIE — this popular play will be performed by Toronto's Theatre Passe Muraille and will play at the Gas Station Theatre from **December 5-9**; suitable for children of ages 3-12. Tickets available from Actor's Showcase at 947-0394.

WOLF-WHISTLES & CAT-CALLS



When I was little, the summertime meant the end of school, a mandatory pixie cut and frequent trips to a nearby swimming hole where I basked unsuspectingly in all the glory of my two-piece bathing suit. It's a long time now since I've worn one of those and not simply because the old one doesn't fit. I also sported tight happy-face t-shirts and frail jean shorts, but these too remain in the past. Now I wear long shorts, loose shirts and more often than not, a brassiere.

The perils of puberty gave me two breasts and a lot of leering boys — leering boys became leering men. I'm no longer free to stroll on hot summer nights, comfortable in my tank top and shorts. There is always the everpresent honk, the "Hey, baby!", or the frequent "Nice tits!". Suddenly I find myself waiting for the fall and thick woolly sweaters.

Last week I almost fell off my bike when some jerk howled at the prowess of my rear. Life really has become a day-to-day encounter with insults and abuse. At least riding a bike I pass them quicker. Still they yell, grab, and tug at every corner. Walking, I've become keenly aware of the intricacies of the sidewalk. I've also learned about twen-

Janine Fuller

ty different ways to say "Get lost!", all of which are totally ineffective. Seemingly my backyard is the safest place to be, providing I'm the only one there.

Last week a friend was in the beer store when a man leaned over her breasts saying, "Not bad, they'll do."

"F-k off squirrel dink," was her quick retort. But even such an abrupt insult did not deter him from following her all the way to her car, where she escaped safely, beer and all.

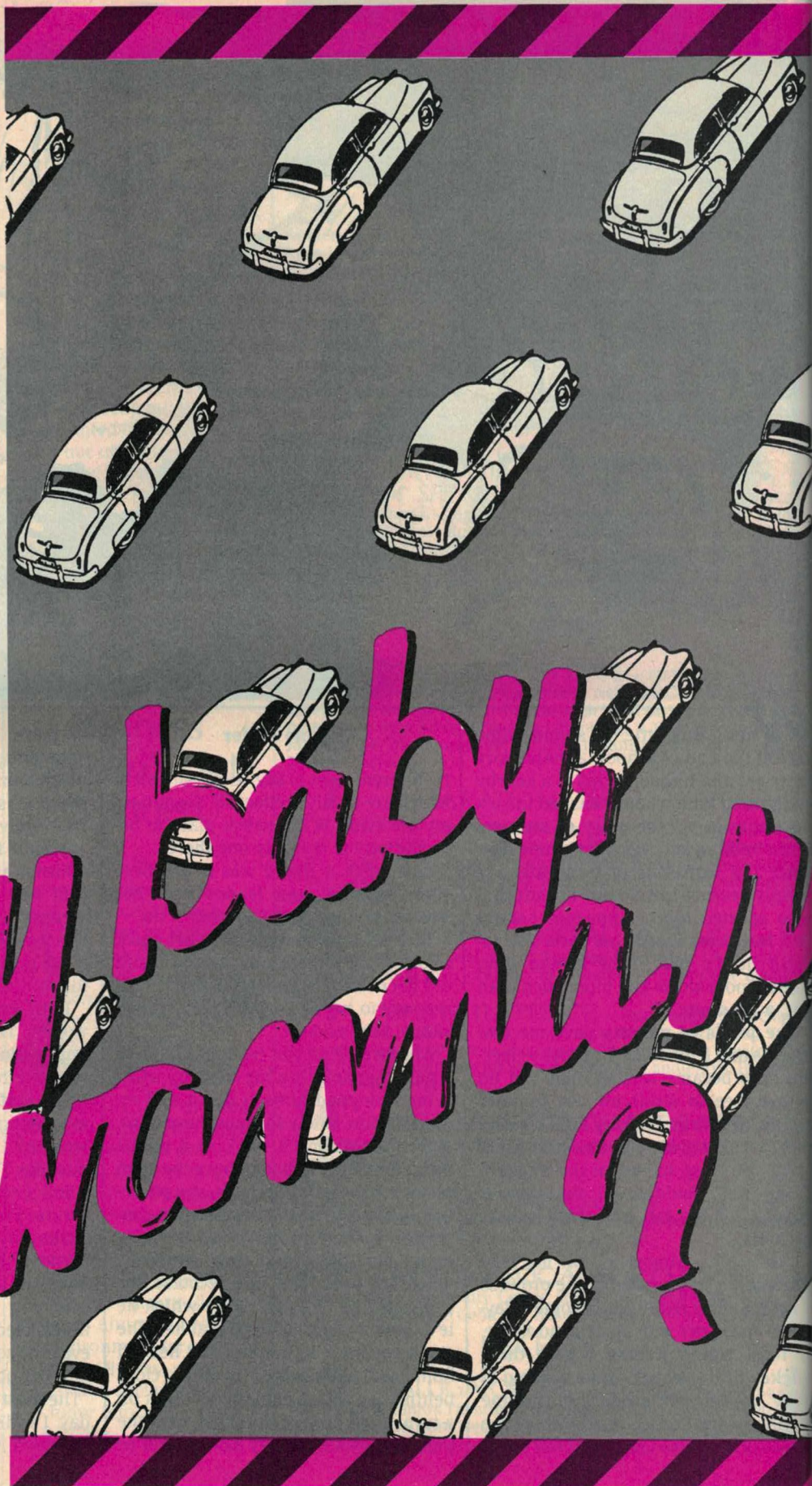
Another friend was reading a book in a park (apparently a big mistake) when a man plopped himself down and remarked how lonely she must have been, driven to reading a book in a public park. Keeping her book above the brim of her eyebrows at all times, she politely told him she wasn't interested in conversation. He told her he'd been watching her for a long time; he knew where she lived. With little recourse, she suggested he "f-k off," after which he levelled a barrage of insults at her. She stuck her book in her bag and headed home with his laboured breathing close behind her. She eventually lost him on a turn. But since she lives right near the park, she wonders every day whether he

is there watching and waiting. It's something every woman faces, every woman thinks about. Gone are the days when we skipped home down the back lane oblivious to danger.

A male friend of mine says that wolf-whistles and cat-calls are all quite innocent and women take things far too seriously. He suggests that I should just enjoy all the attention, the wrinkles will move in quickly and soon I'll be longing for compliments passed.

I do know men who don't hassle women. They've honestly considered the implications of such behaviour. I hope they tell their friends. Even now as I sit here stuffing my face, a man is motioning to join me. Can't he see I'm writing? I'm eating alone, a fatal mistake. I'm marked for approach.

But I won't shut my door and stay inside. I'm an outdoor person. I like parks, city streets, evening strolls with my lover and I'd like to think that just once we could walk without looking over our shoulders, that we could acknowledge passersby. (Sometimes even the squirrels become suspect.) One day I'm going to come home and say, "The most amazing thing happened today. I walked home alone and nobody bothered me!" ▼



Hey baby,
wanna?



MEAN STREETS

Christeen Chidley-Hill

Marilyn leaves her downtown office building for the day. As she passes into a section of the revolving door, a tall, well-dressed man enters from the street. After a half-turn, the man applies his heel to the rear of his section of the revolving door. The door jams, trapping Marilyn and the man into their sections. Very deliberately, he looks at her. Then, taking his time, he starts the door moving again. He enters the building; Marilyn exits into a darkened street.

Marilyn has just been harassed, and she feels threatened and uncomfortable. After a tiring day, she faces the chore of defending her space on the subway, on the connecting bus and on the walk to her apartment building. From past experience, she knows that even in her apartment building she is not safe. Marilyn wonders what she can do to ease her tension and to stop being harassed.

It is difficult to find a woman who has not experienced some form of street harassment: comments, touching, grabbing, ogling or any disrespectful behaviour that a woman has no control over.

Street harassment is any unwanted behaviour that makes you feel uncomfortable or threatened, that you can't control and that causes you to alter your behaviour in some way. In the words of the Sexual Harassment Task Force of the Michigan Women's Commission, "sexual harassment is sexual contact, or threat of sexual contact or coercion for the purpose of sexual contact, which is not freely or mutually agreeable to both parties." Rape, of course, is the ultimate manifestation of harassment and, although harassment does not necessarily lead to rape, it does serve as a constant reminder that rape is a prevalent threat in our lives.

Many women recall that harassment began when their bodies started to develop, although some remember

older boys making comments to them years before the onset of puberty. Some of these comments preceded or included coercion to perform sexual acts, and acted as early reminders in the women's bodies-are-to-please-men assertion of male sexuality.

The only time I seem to have some respite from the street jocks is when I'm with my child; it is as though I have passed from being a potential sexual partner (or a slut) to being a colonized womb (or madonna). It is also probable that once a woman becomes a mother she is seen as less threatening since she fills a passive, identifiable role. Seemingly, at least, she recognizes her "place."

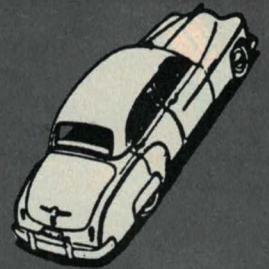
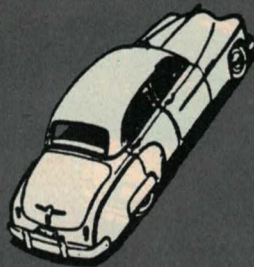
Women of colour are subjected to comments and behaviour that are both sexist and racist. It is a double jeopardy stemming from white society's belief that women of colour are more carnal than white women. The verbal abuse these women are subject to reflects these and other denigrating stereotypes.

Similarly, stereotypes define the comments addressed to lesbians who are also regarded with contempt. Harassers are prone to mention that "a good screw is all she needs," or wants, to straighten her out. Old, fat or disabled women are also singled out because of their physical characteristics. Since they do not fit the stereotypical image of female beauty, they are likely to be subjected to desexualizing insults. These comments may be interpreted to indicate the disgust the harasser feels for his "victims". In fact, this interpretation is applicable to harassment of all women who do not fit the image of the "perfect woman" — the Brooke Shields billboard type.

Women I know have told me that they're flattered by men's attention, but they also say they would stop the harassment if they could. They have inferred that street harassment is no more



MEAN STREETS



than a clumsy attempt to make contact, that it's indicative of lacking social skills. Even if this were the case women shouldn't have to bear the burden of men's inadequacies.

With all its gratuitous aggressions and sexual overtones, harassment boils down to one concept — the power of men over women. Lois B. Hart and J. David Dalke, authors of *The Sexes at Work*, state that harassment leads most women to experience a sense of futility and powerlessness. Harassers assume they have the right to coerce women. The sexual expectations of whistlers and pinchers are sometimes unspoken. It's their means of asserting themselves. Harassment as power is a political tool, a way to prove "maleness", not a means of flattery.

To avoid abuse on the street, women go to great lengths. We change our street routes to walk in well-peopled areas (although some women have found that areas with plenty of street traffic also have plenty of harassers). Women who can afford to, take cabs, while men walk or ride home undisturbed. Many women cross the street to avoid construction sites — often regarded as the most likely arena for street harassment. (Men seem to be bolder when they have other men for an audience, whether they are working on a construction site, in a car, or in a corporate office). Often, women try to alleviate the problem by travelling in groups. There is marginally more safety in numbers. In Canada, the problem of safety on the streets is exacerbated by our winters; when darkness falls as early as 4:30.

Street harassment is a widespread social problem that affects women in every city, town and village. How women deal with these attitudes depends upon the situation. Using the

power analysis, women should use whatever means they think will work, while carefully assessing the dynamics of the situation. When faced with harassment we can ignore it, make light of it, sneer at the perpetrator, discuss the encounter with him or attempt to embarrass him by making an insulting retort. However, never far from mind is the fact that some men like to believe that firm rejection is a sign of encouragement and possibly an invitation to use force. Much of the everyday stress women experience can be attributed to the persistent threat of harassment and violence.

Advice given to women is in the form of "don'ts" — don't hitchhike, don't go out at night, don't talk to strange men, don't wear provocative clothing, don't go to parties or bars alone, etc. Such restrictions perpetuate the role of women as passive, frightened creatures with no control over what happens to them. It makes us solely responsible for male sexuality and the alleged response we arouse in men. While these don'ts are personal decisions each woman must consider, they are not ways to prevent harassment or to ensure our safety. Often they only serve to increase the fear and tension we already experience as a result of harassment.

Unfortunately, the only ones who can stop harassment are men. We can do what we can by enrolling in self-defense courses, by supporting the educational work of our local rape crisis centres, by protesting (e.g. Take Back the Night marches), by talking to other women and men about what harassment is and how it feels. Only when women are treated seriously will we stand a chance at being able to walk the streets safely. In the meantime, the one-liners and hand gestures will have to do. ▼

MEAN STREETS

To Get To You

*It's never easy.
Even the effort of a few steps
from the bedroom to the kitchen, say
or a few muscles, opening my eyes
to find you, still there in bed beside me
is an act of magic or faith,
I'm never sure which.*

*All I know is that it's learned
by doing, over and over again,
like any other trick,
until you don't need to think about it.
Like now. Like the way I'm walking home
to you through this city I've learned to accept
as the only kind there is: five o'clock,
night coming down and rain
just hard enough
to make the crowds on the corners shove a little
when a bus finally splashes to the stop.
Outside a restaurant, two men shake hands
and a little boy holds his father's
as they watch a toy airplane turning in a shop window.
It could be anywhere. But what I want you to notice
are the women. They are wearing white nurses shoes,
or dirty sneakers or high-heeled boots.
They carry briefcases and flowers, bags of groceries
as they hurry home to husbands and kids,
lovers, ailing parents, friends.
We all have the same look somehow.
See: over there by the bank
how that stout woman lowers her eyes
when she passes that group of boys,
how her movement's mimed
by the blonde, turning her head
when a car slows down beside her.
Even the high-pitched giggle of the girls
in that bunch of teenagers is a signal
I've learned to recognize. Tuned in
by my own tightened muscles, jawline or shoulders.
In fact, you might study the shoulders.
The line of the backbone, too; arms and hips,
the body carried
like something the woman's not sure what to do about.*

*I've already told you that this is an ordinary city.
There are maps of it and lights to show us
when to walk, where to turn.
What I want you to know is that it isn't enough.*

*On a trip to Vancouver once
I discovered clearer landmarks. Red ones,
sprayed on sidewalks all over the city.
They marked the places
where a woman had been raped,
so that when I stepped out of a coffee shop*

*to find one on the pavement by the laundromat
geography shifted.*

*Brought me to the city I'd always imagined
happening in dark alleys, deserted parking lots,
to somebody else. Brought me home in a way,
no longer the victim of rumours or old news,
that red mark planted in the pavement
like the flag of an ancient, immediate war.*

*I used to hope it was enough
that you were gentle
that I love you,
but what can enough mean, anymore
what can it measure?*

*How many rapes were enough
for those women in Vancouver
before they got stencils and spray paint
made a word for their rage?
How many more until even that word
lost its meaning
and the enemy was anything that moved out there.
Anything male, that is.*

*How can any woman say
she loves a man enough
when every city on the planet
is a minefield
—she must pick her way through
just to reach him?*

*It's not that we manage it, though.
It's that we make it look so easy.
These women wearing their fear
like a habit of speech or movement
as if this were the way
the female body's meant to be.
The way I turn the last corner now,
open the door to find you
drinking wine and reading the newspaper,
another glass already filled
and waiting on the coffee table.*

*When I turn on the hall light
the city will retreat into the rain,
the tiny squares of yellow
marking the other rooms
where men and women greet each other.
It's a matter of a few steps,
magic or faith, though it's not that simple.
The way the rain keeps watering the cities of the world.
How it throws itself against our window,
harder, more insistent,
so that we both hear.*

© Bronwen Wallace

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Les femmes la politique

Même après avoir obtenu le droit de vote au fédéral (1918), les femmes eurent recours aux tribunaux pour obtenir le droit de siéger au Sénat. Il semble qu'en ce début de siècle, on ne savait pas encore si l'on pouvait considérer la femme comme une "personne". Le Rapport de la commission royale d'enquête sur la situation de la femme¹ note qu'aux termes de l'article 24 de l'Acte de l'Amérique du Nord britannique de 1867, toute personne qualifiée pouvait être nommée sénateur. Toutefois, dès que l'on insistait pour qu'une femme soit nommée, le gouvernement se réfugiait derrière l'ambiguïté de la loi en prétendant ne pas savoir si "les femmes" entraient dans la catégorie de "personne".

Il a fallu l'intervention de cinq femmes (dont Nellie McClung), qui soumièrent une pétition demandant à la Cour suprême une interprétation officielle du mot "personne", pour s'entendre dire le 24 avril 1928, tenez-vous bien, "que la femme ne rentrait pas dans la catégorie de "personne". Est-ce que, par hasard, les femmes jappaient, meuglaient ou hennissaient en 1928? Ou bien, étions-nous douées de pouvoirs divins? Ce qui empêchait les hommes de nous considérer comme des personnes!

De toute façon, la persévérance de nos grands-mères eut raison de ces vilains messieurs de la Cour suprême puisqu'elles firent alors appel devant le comité judiciaire du Conseil privé; dès l'année suivante, ce dernier décida que le mot "personne" s'appliquait aux représentants des deux sexes et que les femmes pouvaient être nommées sénateur (pourquoi pas sénatrices?) du Canada et exercer ces fonctions¹.

La sous-représentation politique des femmes au Canada

Ce n'est pourtant pas parce que nous avons acquis le droit de siéger au Sénat que nous y sommes également représentées. Cairine Wilson fut la première "Madame le sénateur" en 1930. À partir de cette date, jusqu'en 1970, 227 hommes et 8 femmes¹ furent nommés(es) Sénateur. Ce qui veut dire moins de 4% de l'ensemble des sénateurs.

En 1984, on retrouve environ les mêmes proportions au niveau de la Chambre des Communes. Avant les dernières élections, 5,6% des députés à Ottawa étaient des femmes c'est-à-dire 16 femmes sur un total de 282 députés. Le 4 septembre, 27 femmes ont été élues soit un peu moins de 10% de l'ensemble des députés. C'est un déséquilibre outrageant pour les 52% de l'électorat



"Le pays vous appartient, mesdames. La politique, c'est tout bonnement une affaire publique, la vôtre, la mienne, celle de tout le monde."

Nellie McClung, 1917

que nous formons. Même si le chiffre a presque doublé cette année, il demeure que la participation des femmes sur la scène politique fédérale n'a que très légèrement évoluée depuis le début du siècle.

À part les politiciens très peu de personnes sont conscientes de la puissance du vote féminin. Nous formons plus de la moitié de l'électorat, et cela, nos chefs politiques des trois partis officiels l'avaient bien compris cette année. C'est pourquoi, ils n'ont pas pu se permettre de refuser de participer au débat politique organisé par le Comité d'Action Canadien sur le Statut de la femme le 15 août dernier. Si l'on s'en tient à ce débat, la condition féminine devrait bientôt s'améliorer!

Les promesses tiendront-elles?

Considérant qu'après 20 ans sous la direction d'un gouvernement libéral, les statistiques sur la situation de la femme sont désastreuses, M. Mulroney a promis:

- de créer le climat dans lequel les femmes pourront atteindre l'égalité qu'elles exigent et à laquelle elles ont droit.
- d'augmenter le supplément de pension pour les personnes-femmes âgées.
- qu'après avoir corrigé les problèmes internes du gouvernement fédéral en

tant qu'employeur (principe du salaire égal pour un travail d'égale valeur), il s'engagera à aller plus loin auprès de ceux qui aimeraient transiger avec le gouvernement fédéral et ce, dès la première session.

- de prendre des mesures spéciales pour venir en aide aux femmes dans le domaine professionnel. Il s'assurera, par ailleurs, que les femmes aient un juste et égal accès au crédit.
- de s'engager à ramener d'urgence à la Chambre des Communes, le projet de loi, bloqué en juin par le Sénat, qui redonnera aux femmes indiennes les droits qu'elles ont perdus en épousant un non-indien.
- de ré-investir dans des programmes de recyclage pour les femmes qui perdront leur emploi à cause du développement technologique.
- de prendre des mesures urgentes au niveau des pensions alimentaires pour que cesse la capacité du mari de se faufiler à travers les provinces évitant ainsi une responsabilité légale et morale.
- de ne pas couper sur les programmes sociaux afin de réduire le déficit national tout en réalisant ses promesses.²

Le tirage au sort avait, de loin, favorisé notre nouveau Premier Ministre puisqu'il n'a pas eu à se prononcer sur les grandes questions de l'heure à savoir le désarmement, l'avortement et les garderies. Nous n'avons donc aucun engagement concret de M. Mulroney à ce sujet; avec le balayage conservateur de septembre dernier, on peut donc s'attendre "au statut quo" concernant ces questions.

Le NPD: le parti des femmes???

À part le fait de nous donner une arme (si minime soit-elle) pour revenir à la charge auprès du premier ministre élu, le débat du 15 août a permis à M. Ed Broadbent d'afficher des positions claires et précises sur la condition féminine. Positions qui, normalement, devraient charmer la gent féminine. Cependant, et un groupe de femmes le lui a reproché à Toronto, M. Broadbent, tout au long de la campagne électorale,

mmes et itique

Carmen Tremblay

ne semblait pas tellement déterminé à prendre le pouvoir cette année.

Son Parti a toutefois conservé la plupart de ses sièges à la Chambre des Communes (32 en 1980, 30 en 1984). Et ce malgré l'incroyable raz de marée Conservateur qui s'est accaparé la plupart des sièges libéraux. C'était, d'autre part, très flatteur pour les femmes, de constater que le Nouveau Parti Démocratique défiait l'histoire en présentant 65 candidates. Pourtant, malgré ce nombre impressionnant, nous observons que pas une seule femme de plus (du NPD) n'a été élue dans le nouveau gouvernement. Il n'y a toujours que trois femmes qui représentent ce Parti au gouvernement. On peut dès lors se poser des questions sur la répartition des candidates dans les circonscriptions.

Ce n'est pas un secret pour personne que les provinces de l'Ouest favorisent le parti NPD (l'Alberta est naturellement exclue de cette affirmation pour des raisons que nous connaissons bien). Or, sur les 65 candidates NPD, 16 seulement représentaient les provinces de l'Ouest. Neuf étaient dans la course pour des sièges détenus par des Conservateurs albertains. Deux luttèrent au Manitoba, dont l'une contre le ministre Lloyd Axworthy et le conservateur bien connu Bud Sherman. Cinq candidates en Colombie-Britannique dont deux ont été ré-élues. Aucune candidate n'était en lice en Saskatchewan, où ce dernier y a remporté presque la moitié des sièges, c'est-à-dire six sur une possibilité de quatorze.

Le reste des candidates était ainsi réparti: dix-sept en Ontario, quinze au Québec (où le NPD est boudé par l'électorat), quatre en Nouvelle-Ecosse, cinq au Nouveau-Brunswick, une à l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard, trois à Terre-Neuve et une au Yukon⁵. Cela rappelle l'année 1965, où le parti libéral a présenté une femme contre John Diefenbaker dans le comté de Prince-Albert; trois ans plus tard, le parti conservateur faisait la même chose en envoyant une femme se battre contre Pierre-Eliot Trudeau dans la circonscription de Mont-Royal¹.

Ce genre de tactique, venant du NDP, est encore plus irritante. Il est le seul parti officiel qui a, du moins en théorie, toujours défendu les droits des femmes et encouragé l'égalité sociale, économi-



"C'est illusoire, pour les femmes, de s'attendre à ce que les hommes leur bâtissent le monde dont elle rêve. Elles devraient plutôt en entreprendre elles-mêmes la création."

Anaïs Nin, *Journal*, 1974

que et politique à laquelle nous avons droit. Cependant, il semble que la pratique diffère de la théorie. Nous en avons eu la preuve sur la scène provinciale, au Manitoba, lorsque le docteur Morgentaler a tenté d'ouvrir une clinique d'avortement. Officiellement, le NPD, son chef et ses partisans (ns) approuvent ce genre de projet. Du moins, c'est que nous avons entendu lors de la dernière campagne électorale. Pourtant, c'est bien l'honorable Roland Penner, procureur général du Manitoba donc NPD qui a donné l'ordre d'envahir les lieux et de fermer la clinique. Morgentaler a dû retourner dans l'Est où le gouvernement du Québec le laisse libre de pratiquer ses avortements.

Le caractère socialiste du Nouveau Parti Démocratique ne voile donc, qu'en partie, le chauvinisme de cette institution politique. Il demeure quant même un parti alternatif intéressant malgré la faiblesse de ses dispositions internes à encourager concrètement l'égalité de la femme.

L'histoire au présent

Par ailleurs, comment un gouvernement peut-il prétendre créer un climat favorable à l'égalité de la femme, quand plus de 90% des membres qui le forment sont des hommes? Au début du siècle, Mary-Ellen Smith fut la première femme ministre au cabinet de l'Empire britannique. Pour se faire élire à

l'assemblée législative de la Colombie-Britannique, elle avait fait campagne sur les salaires des femmes dans les industries (salaire égal pour un travail d'égale valeur) et sur les pensions pour les "mères de famille indigentes"⁴. Les revendications féminines énoncées lors de la campagne électorale de 1984 furent fondamentalement les mêmes. Est-ce à croire que nous tournons en rond?

Il est évident que nous avons besoin d'une représentation plus équitable à tous les paliers de gouvernements et aussi là où les décisions importantes se prennent, que ce soit dans le secteur public ou privé. Cependant, une mise en garde est à faire! Certaines études⁵ ont démontré que la femme, en situation de pouvoir ou d'autorité a parfois tendance à devenir encore plus tyrannique que les hommes. Pourquoi? Pour prouver aux autres (surtout aux hommes) qu'elle est capable d'occuper une telle fonction. La "Dame de fer" (Margaret Thatcher) en est un bel exemple. Les femmes au pouvoir ont tendance à suivre les traces de leurs prédécesseurs. Ce piège est tentant parce qu'il fournit des modèles comportementaux véhiculés par des mâles qui ont, pendant des siècles, pratiqué et assimilé le pouvoir, en oubliant malheureusement trop souvent la responsabilité humaine qu'un tel poste exige.

Il nous appartient donc, à nous les femmes (puisque les hommes ne semblent pas disposés à le faire), de développer une nouvelle forme de pouvoir, complémentaire à celle que l'on connaît déjà qui prendra en considération, et les intérêts économiques du pays, et les besoins humains des individus qui le composent sans restrictions vis-à-vis l'âge, le sexe, l'ethnie ou la couleur de ses membres. Ainsi, peut-être verra-t-on disparaître le voile subtil de l'oppression au profit d'une société qui respectera et ses hommes, et ses femmes, et ses enfants, et ses minorités ethniques.

1. Rapport de la commission royale d'enquête sur la situation de la femme. Ottawa, 1970.
2. Propos de Brian Mulroney lors du débat télévisé du 15 août 1984.
3. Information Canada, 1984.
4. "La Revue Statut de la Femme" Vol. 9, No. 2, été 1984, juillet.
5. COHEN Yolande, "Les dimensions politiques dans la réalité quotidienne des femmes". Exposé le 27 avril 1979.

TO THE RESCU

Isabel is cleaning the Ladies' washroom. Someone has written "Jesus Saves" in menstrual blood across the back of a cubicle door. After working twenty-eight years in a downtown restaurant, Isabel has seen worse sights. Once she found an old woman with both legs broken lying in a cubicle; some girls had beaten and robbed her and no one in the restaurant had heard her feeble cries. Another time, as Isabel flicked off the lights in the Men's washroom, someone called out "Hey, leave those lights on! How can I see what I'm doing?" A skinny young man was kneeling before the toilet gashing his wrists with a razor blade.

Isabel scrubs the door clean then rinses her cloth in a bucket, washing the water weakly red. She pours the water down the toilet and flushes.

At the sink she lathers her hands with soap and holds them under steaming hot water until her skin reddens. She prides herself on being sanitary. Some waitresses get slatternly after years in the profession. Not Isabel. For twenty-eight years she has scrubbed, disinfected and guarded the food from contamination with the zeal of a health inspector. Her dedication is due partly to her inability to sit still — she always needs to be doing something with her hands — and partly to her loyalty to Princess Steak and Pizza House. After working at the restaurant for twenty-eight years, Princess Steak and Pizza House is more a home to her than her dingy, one-bedroom basement apartment. Through all the restaurant's changes in ownership and name, she has remained, a fixture of the establishment.

Patting her hands dry on a coarse paper towel, she walks into the main dining area to check the time.

At the cash register by the front door she sees Bill Perks, the new owner, slip a twenty dollar bill into the slightly opened blouse of Brendy, the new hostess.

Isabel's hands convulse suddenly, crumpling the damp paper towel into a small, hard wad.

Bill Perks' fat white hands, knobby with thick rings, pluck at Brendy's creamy blouse. He moves his loose, red lips close

Brendy stays behind the till, grinning as she notices Isabel's discomfort.

Bill Perks looks at his watch then glances up at Isabel. "It's almost eleven o'clock. Everything ready to open?"

"Yes, Mr. Perks," Isabel replies.

She is afraid of being fired. When Bill Perks bought the Princess Steak and Pizza House last year, he fired all the older ladies, except Isabel, hiring eighteen and nineteen year olds in their place. "Our clientele is mostly men. They like to have a good-looking waitress," Isabel heard

When she started working here she was twenty-nine. Her husband had just left her. Childless, broke and still pretty in a bland, mousy sort of way, waitressing suited her.

to the girl's face.

Isabel turns away. Hot with embarrassment, she wishes she could slink away, hide in the Ladies' washroom until opening time.

She hears Bill Perks laugh.

She peels open the tight ball of paper towelling in her hand and begins to rub minute ketchup spots off a plastic-coated menu.

"Well, Isabel," Bill Perks says stepping out from behind the counter and sitting down at the table nearest the cash register.

him explain to the milkman one morning. Isabel is kept on because she knows more about the restaurant than anyone else living.

When she first started working here, she was twenty-nine. Her husband had just left her. Childless, broke and still pretty in a bland, mousy sort of way, waitressing suited her. She made good tips and didn't mind working the late shifts. That was when the restaurant was called Basil's, a fancy place with lavish, tasseled menus and customers who dressed

E

up and made reservations. Occasionally Isabel thinks she sees some of the old clients outside the window. They are sleek, richly dressed and middle-aged. They point in the window or push their faces up to the plate glass and seem to say, "Remember when that was Basil's? I still dream of those cream rolls the chef called Schillerlocken." But these people never come in now.

Bill Perks has made changes in the kitchen and decor. He has learned all the quirks in the circuit box and has even fixed the plumbing so that Isabel's knowledge of where to put the makeshift patches is obsolete. Bill Perks doesn't need her now. She is afraid she will be the next and last older woman to go, to be replaced by a young girl. At nights, in her basement apartment, she lies in bed staring at the ceiling, panicky and dry-mouthed. Being fired would be worse than being left by her husband. She can hardly remember him anymore; she hasn't seen him since the day he walked out on her. Being fired and having to leave Princess Steak and Pizza House would be much worse.

"Good. Let's open then," Bill Perkssays. "Get me a cup of coffee. Brendy, unlock the door, sweetheart."

Bill Perks calls the young waitresses "honey," "dear," or "sweetheart." All morning he sits at his table flipping through the early newspaper and orders the eighteen year olds around.

"Get me some cigarettes from the machine, dear."

"How about a refill, honey?"

"Sweetheart, close those curtains. The



Nancy Holmes

cont'd on page 40

You could say I had some misconceptions. As one of those student journalist-types, I had myself convinced, (as students journalists so often do) that I had my finger on the thrombotic mutter of the Canadian music scene. There were, I knew, very few 'recognised' women musicians in Canada. And those musicians who did have something to offer were largely invisible. I might have been sadly correct about my first conviction, but I was dead wrong about the second. That was misconception number one. Number two has much to do with having smacked into adolescence at the end of the early seventies folk era, and into the late seventies punk hiatus. I instinctively understood that the festival was not going to include any of the late seventies punk stuff. And I was positive, having checked out the festival brochure, that it was back to Woodstock, with a list of performers I had never heard of — or if I had, somewhere in my telescoped memory, I heard them labelled folk.

The festival had barely gotten under way when I realised how wrong I had been. What I actually got was powerful positive performances by some of the best and most diverse talent in Canada. Performers ranged from obvious festival choices such as Connie Kaldor and Heather Bishop (two big draw names in the feminist entertainment circuit) to artists less familiar to festival goers, such as the traditional Inuit chanting of Lucy Kownak and Emily Alerk. The second pair, known as the Baker Lake Throat Singers, stood face to face in traditional dress, chanting and breathing rhythmically through the nose and throat. Pushing air up through the diaphragm to create sounds — some like birds, others like the wind rushing through trees on dark and ominous nights — would be a difficult thing to do. This process is a type of Inuit game, where the one who laughs first loses the round: the throat singers endeavored several rounds for our pleasure.

Another festival notable was Nancy White of CBC morning fame, known for her sardonic interpretations of current issues. White was in fine form festival night, her wit razor sharp and her performance reaching its peak of perfection right at the start with "Mr. T", a tune making the most of John Turner's penchant for patting women's bums.

"I know God is a woman, but is she ethnic?" Maara Haas, an animated gypsy moth and one of Manitoba's most

popular writers, brought the house down with this line. With clear, running prose, Haas' stories belonged to all of us — an expression of our experiences as women growing, learning, living. We've heard them before. But we wanted to hear them again, her way, told with warmth and humour. In a sense the entire festival was like that. Images were repeated in so many ways: recalling our struggles, detailing our differences, but stressing overall, the similarities between us.

Clearly, a show stealer was Beverly Glenn-Copeland; when she put her fingers to the keys and opened that expansive voice of hers — classically trained — outpoured a sound controlled, deep, earthy and full. Copeland is an engagingly funny performer, with a magnificent vocal range, spanning the entire gamut of emotions in a single song. She is a talented pianist and composer. Copeland's compositions are indeed an emotional experience for those who heard her perform on Sunday evening.

Of course, there were so many others. To name a few: there was Ezell, a modern dancer who interpreted the novel *Obasan* by Joy Kogawa, a Japanese-Canadian, who writes about the herding of her people into internment camps by the Canadian government during the Second World War — a dance about acceptance and growth; The Pillow Sisters — Lauri Conger, Julie Masi and Lorraine Segato — otherwise known as the other half of The Parachute Club, performing with humour and perfect harmonics; Miche Hille, the closest the festival came to punk: her style was more folky than anything else, but strong and gutsy folk (Miche was one of the instigators of Vancouver's all women punk Industrial Waste Banned); there was Alanis Obomsawin, performing the beautiful and haunting song from her recording "Bush Lady".

But it was the black singers of protest who injected that element of urgency and pain so often missing in feminist concerts. We all experience oppression because of our sex, and many feminist performers convey our frustrations well. Black

OUR TIME



Lillian Allen, Lorraine Segato (at the mike), and Nancy White at the "Can't Kill the Spirit" workshop.

OUR TIME IS NOW!



Lise Boily et Johanne Boily

Les 1 et 2 septembre 1984, environ 1200 femmes ont vécu ensemble une expérience "archétypale". Il s'agissait du CANADIAN WOMEN'S MUSIC AND CULTURAL FESTIVAL, le premier festival national de la sorte, entièrement monté et organisé par des femmes canadiennes. La fête eut lieu au Rainbow Stage, un théâtre en plein air situé au parc Kildonan à Winnipeg. Une cinquantaine d'artistes invitées se sont présentées sur scène devant un auditoire captivé pour reconnaître et vivre ensemble le thème du festival: "OUR TIME IS NOW."

Elles l'ont dit et vécu de différentes façons. Les riches talents de ces femmes venant de tous les coins du pays étaient mis en évidence dans les tentes d'exposition avoisinant l'estrade principale. La peinture, l'artisanat, la sculpture, la photographie, la couture, la céramique, le tissage, la poterie, la bijouterie et plusieurs autres formes d'art originales attestaient une source de créativité trop souvent inexploitée chez la femme canadienne.

Thèmes

D'abord dix "workshops" exploraient à travers la musique et la poésie, les problèmes et préoccupations des femmes du 20e siècle. La lutte et le combat, la prise de conscience des féministes réclamant leurs droits, figuraient dans trois de ces thèmes. Le premier intitulé *Fini le silence* examinait l'inceste, la violence domestique, la situation des autochtones, et l'égalité des sexes. Le deuxième, *Chansons concernant le Monde du travail*, se rapportait aux femmes face aux réalités du marché du travail, la tâche d'élever des enfants, les syndicats, la réalité d'enfanter. Le troisième, *Chansons de défi*, englobait la révolution et les résolutions des femmes engagées, la fierté et le courage, la force et l'intégrité des femmes qui affrontent

les injustices sociales, en somme la revendication des droits de la femme.

Afin d'équilibrer l'énergie, le programme comprenait également des thèmes plus légers et divertissants. Comme le montrent les titres suivants, le côté "Humour-Entertainment" avait été prévu en quantité suffisante.

"Qui rit survit, Chansons préférées, Jazz/Blues fusion, A Capella/Instrumental, Country and Western/City and Eastern"

Les invitées

Elles sont venues, elles ont joué, et elles sont reparties triomphantes. Parmi ces invitées distinguées, on retrouvait la poète militante jamaïcaine Lillian Allen, la jazz woman de l'Ouest Holly Arntzen, la Manitobaine bien-aimée Heather Bishop, la merveilleuse saxophoniste Janice Finlay, la musicienne accomplie Beverly Glenn-Copeland, l'incomparable conteuse de Winnipeg Maara Haas, l'irrésistible chanteuse et compositrice manitobaine Karen Howe, la féministe-humaniste Moon Joyce, Mairi McLean et bien d'autres.

De plus, la population autochtone du pays a été particulièrement bien représentée. On a applaudi chaudement les Inuit Throat Singers et l'écrivaine métisse Beatrice Culleton. Et jamais n'oublieront celles qui l'ont vue, Alanis Obomsawin, la plus calme et la plus sereine de toutes les invitées. Membre de la tribu Abénaki, résidant actuellement à Montréal, Alanis a percé droit au coeur avec ses chants et ses récits du peuple indien.

Les organisatrices, sensibles au multiculturalisme, ont également respecté le bilinguisme de la nation canadienne. Des artistes bilingues étaient au programme à la grande joie des spectatrices francophones.

Il était bon par exemple d'entendre Connie Kaldor, native de la Saskatchewan s'exprimer en français à plusieurs reprises. Au même titre, la célèbre satiriste polyglotte Nancy White s'est montrée à l'aise dans les deux langues officielles.

Puis est apparue sur scène la parfaite bilingue Marie-Lynn Hammond. Cette membre de Stringband, musicienne et chanteuse extraordinaire, féministe respectée, a joué ses propres compositions en français aussi bien qu'en anglais. Elle a aussi interprété quelques extraits superbes d'une pièce de théâtre dont elle est l'auteure.

feminist culture, however, expresses the ultra exploitation — the triple oppression of sex, class and race. It is important, when organising feminist gigs and festivals, that we do not neglect and alienate our sisters (Black, Natives, Asian) who struggle with oppression by race, and the valuable contribution they make to feminist culture.

There was Lillian Allen. Living in Toronto, Allen works solo and with De Dub Poets, a group of three dub poets who perform poems of rhythm and resistance. Allen is considered one of Canada's leading exponents of dub: a style put across with the stressed rhythm of the reggae beat. A distinctively Jamaican oral approach to poetry, dub was developed concurrently in Jamaica and England in the late seventies. Allen's poetry is about rebellion, about survival and the strength and the will to fight back. As a black woman from the Carribean, Allen's experiences and cultural traditions are different from North American black women who express their oppression in a different way. Four the Moment, an a cappella vocal group from Halifax, Nova Scotia, has a clear gospel and soul tradition. This group of four women who performed at the festival were inspired by Sweet Honey in the Rock. Lillian Allen explained the bond between the two separate traditions. As a woman from the Carribean, her experiences may differ from those of black women who experience oppression by race in North America. But the experiences black

women share, and the exploitation of women black and white, comes out of the same spectrum of exploitation. Experiencing culture made by black women, gives all women greater insight into the roots of their own oppression.

The entire weekend was high energy, but informal, and everyone was in fine form. Performers and organisers wandered about, and most were accessible for those who wanted to talk and share ideas. And the performance wasn't the extent of it. People were tramping round the tents and stalls where workshops were happening and where local crafts-women displayed their work. There was art to wear, dolls, pottery, fibers and fabrics. Having so many women in the same place at once, creates positive and strong energy.

The weekend turned out to be a collection of some of the most talented performers Canada has witnessed. There were no amateurs here, only a group of artists getting together (many for the first time) to play for those who enjoy good art by women, but rarely get the opportunity to go out and see it first hand. Watching and listening to women play instruments as skillfully as these women did, was an empowering experience. It shows that this is certainly not the women artists who are invisible, but the critics, media, promoters and concert goers — who are blind to their art. Festivals such as *Our Time is Now*, instigated by the Same Damn Bunch, should become an annual event.▼

Célébration

Quelle fête! Vraisemblablement inspirées du spectacle de Ferron le vendredi soir précédent, les invitées du festival ont dévoilé tour à tour leur calibre professionnel. Ce regroupement d'artistes qui se sont rencontrées, pour la plupart, au festival, acceptaient avec entrain le défi de jouer l'une avec l'autre après seulement quinze ou vingt minutes de répétition. Un courant de haute tension faisait frémir la foule qui témoignait en direct du jeu sensationnel créé par le spectacle.

Les membres de l'auditoire rendaient à leurs soeurs musiciennes cette énergie libératrice qui se transformait et se recyclait. Devant la réalité apparente de leur solide compétence, la confiance des artistes-invitées a vite grandi. Les répertoires plutôt structurés au début sont devenus plus libres et spontanés. Durant 48 heures, la magie est venue s'installer, enveloppant toutes celles qui participaient à cet événement historique. C'était un "high" naturel de premier ordre.

Après le "high"

Après tant d'émotions et de réactions affectives, le côté cérébral s'est mis en marche. Comment juger objectivement cet événement culturel? Comment estimer la vraie signification et la portée de ce festival national? Chose certaine, on a touché les 1 et 2 septembre, l'archétype de l'animus/anima, le yin/yang, la polarité masculine/féminine.

Au juste, depuis combien de décennies parle-t-on de l'émancipation de la femme au Canada? Pour autant qu'on pérore et qu'on ergote à ce sujet, les femmes canadiennes "réveillées"¹ ont toujours reconnu qu'un écart existait entre leurs aspirations et la réalité qui les entoure. Au cours de cette longue remise en question, en pleine période de transition, les femmes ont vécu une époque d'ambivalence et d'insécurité reflétée par les slogans populaires du jour, des slogans à contre-sens comme "You've come a long way BABY". Et la crise de conscience continuait, devenant de plus en plus intense.

Et puis, les 1 et 2 septembre 1984, tout près du centre géographique de l'Amérique du Nord, tout aussi naturellement qu'une mère donne naissance, la crise a accouché; le nom est devenu verbe; le verbe s'est fait chair. Les femmes ont donné vie aux mots "Our time is now". Les 1 et 2 septembre 1984 à Winnipeg, cinquante femmes fécondes ont fait l'amour à 1200 femmes qui



Suzanne Bird shares her music. In back are Gwen Swick, Sherry Shute, Catherine MacKay, Rita McNeil, Karen Howe and Connie Kaldor looking on.

PHOTO: MARNI KALEF

avaient soif de goûter les visions artistiques et l'esprit d'indépendance de leurs soeurs émancipées. Rien n'arrête le temps lorsqu'il est là, prêt à être consommé.

Et puisque dans la vie rien ne se résout et tout continue, il reste donc aux puissantes vibrations émises à ce moment, dans le temps et dans l'espace, à s'infiltrer doucement dans la conscience du peuple. Peu importe s'il n'y avait quotidiennement, que 1200 femmes et quelques représentants masculins. En réalité, les femmes ont fait leur preuve devant les plus sceptiques qui vivent, c'est-à-dire, elles-mêmes. Ce festival, en certifiant l'autonomie culturelle des femmes, a prouvé aux citoyens et aux citoyennes canadiennes l'égalité des sexes. Suivront, en définitive, l'épanouissement et la spiritualisation des humains. Au lieu de passer notre

temps à lutter pour nos droits, nous, les femmes du monde entier, pourront un jour chanter ensemble avec Marie-Claire Séguin:

"Pour dire des mots d'amour à ceux que j'aime,
Je prendrai le temps qu'il me reste
Vos visages en tête —
Pour dire que la vie nous berce à l'envers de nous
Pour dire que le temps s'amuse à faire le reste pour nous.
Plus l'on vit et plus l'on aime
Plus on devient grand de coeur,
petit de tête. . .
et c'est bien".

Et ça sera bien.

I terme bien connu dans l'histoire du féminisme franco-manitobain qui signifie "émancipées". ▼

Lise Boily



Suzanne Campagne

Suzanne Campagne, artiste fransaskoise résidant maintenant à Saint-Boniface, membre du groupe Folle Avoine, a participé au festival les 1 et 2 septembre. Les chansons que Suzanne a choisi d'interpréter reflètent l'âme d'une artiste engagée et l'esprit d'une femme confiante qui suit le rythme du temps. Suzanne (née le 8 mars, journée internationale de la femme) a confié à HERIZONS quelques-unes de ses pensées et de ses convictions en relation avec les chansons qu'elle a choisies d'interpréter au festival.

J'ai douze ans maman: "J'aime faire cette chanson, une composition de Luc Plamondon, sur deux plans. Il y a premièrement le côté de l'enfant de 12 ans face à tous ces mi-faits, mi-vérités, vivant dans l'insécurité d'un avenir incertain. Ce que je vois en évidence chez les jeunes, c'est une attitude de résignation, une impuissance, ce qui a produit comme résultat une génération de jeunes plutôt réactionnaires. Je regarde les jeunes adolescent(e)s qui désirent tout avoir, qui vivent pour le moment, et je constate qu'ils/elles ne savent pas vraiment ce qu'ils/elles veulent. Et puis du côté parental, que faire? Même si les parents comprennent, où est la solution? Que faire face à la menace nucléaire, la pollution et les maux sociaux qui refusent de disparaître. . ."

A tout recommencer: "J'ai choisi d'interpréter cette composition de Ziz, un artiste franco-manitobain, d'abord parce que je crois fortement qu'un ou une artiste qui se présente sur scène a une certaine obligation de s'engager dans les causes qui lui tiennent à coeur. Ma première cause, à moi, fût la francophonie. Ce n'est pas une cause plus

PHOTO: MARNI KALEF



Four the Moment, a capella group from Halifax, Nova Scotia.



Maara Haas,
Winnipeg writer,
has many
stories to tell.

PHOTO: MARNI KALEF



PHOTO: MARNI KALEF



Lauri Conger and Heather Bishop tickling the ivories and the audience.

valable ou plus importante que beaucoup d'autres causes mais ce fut la première qui m'a touchée de près. C'est la raison pour laquelle j'ai fait le point sur l'Article 23. Souvent à des festivals de la sorte, on importe des causes. Bon, je dis bien! Cela est important puisqu'il faut prendre conscience de toutes les injustices partout au monde. Mais il est essentiel de garder les yeux bien ouverts pour voir ce qui se passe *chez nous* — autant qu'ailleurs. Et chez nous justement, il faut s'en rendre compte: ce que Sterling Lyon et les Conservateurs ont fait au Manitoba, c'est du fascisme et il faut le dévoiler. Le pire de toute cette question controversée de l'Article 23, ce n'est pas que les cloches ont sonné pendant 23 jours et ce n'est pas la résurgence d'un groupe de racistes. Le plus regrettable; c'est qu'on a pris une chose positive et qu'on l'a tournée au négatif. Il aurait fallu voir la beauté dans la variété et célébrer nos différences. Maintenant, c'est À TOUT RECOMMENCER. Je trouve que c'est bien dommage quoiqu'il ne faut quand même pas trop se décourager. . . ."

Blues de négociation: "Cette chanson, une de mes compositions, je l'ai écrite dans un moment de découragement. Comme tous/tes les artistes, j'ai souvent affaire à des personnes insensibles et/ou ignorantes. Ces personnes voudraient voir les artistes du monde déployer leurs talents sans question de rémunération "vu que vous êtes né(e)s avec ces talents et qu'ils ne vous ont rien coûté." Moi, je crois et je sais trop bien que les artistes doivent consacrer beaucoup de temps et d'efforts à développer ces talents. Je trouve donc normal qu'il/elles se fassent payer pour des services rendus. J'ai déjà dit à plusieurs reprises qu'à mon avis, au Canada, c'est l'individu créateur qui subventionne l'art. Trop souvent dans notre société, les artistes rencontrent quotidiennement des gens insensibles qui ne comprennent rien de cela. En terminant, je dois ajouter en souriant que de mon côté, cette composition "Blues de négociation" m'a servi d'atout dans plusieurs cas!" ▼

Johanne Boily



Marie-Claire Séguin

Tout le monde connaît sans doute les grandes lignes de la carrière professionnelle de Marie-Claire Séguin. Cette Montréalaise a pendant douze ans, connu un réel succès dans les milieux folk/rock avec son frère jumeau Richard. Une tournée en France, couronnée de succès, a établi une fois pour toutes la suprématie de cette chanteuse québécoise sur la scène musicale française. Marie-Claire fait maintenant carrière seule, et ne cesse d'étonner ses admirateurs/trices. Sa présence au festival a été estimée plus qu'elle ne le saura: sa chaleur humaine, son caractère professionnel, sa voix extraordinaire et ses convictions féministes ont impressionné plus d'une spectatrice lors du festival. HERizons s'est entretenu avec la "diva sauvage" dimanche 2 septembre. Comme le témoigne l'essentiel de ses propos, Marie-Claire Séguin est une femme charmante, intelligente et libérée qui vit son féminisme.

HERizons: Quelles sont tes impressions de ce festival, Marie-Claire?

M-C.S.: Ce que je trouve le plus important dans ce festival, c'est qu'on le fasse! Qu'on le fasse, qu ça se dise! Avant il y avait tellement de choses à faire qu'on portait tout ça comme un ulcère. . . Il y avait tellement une urgence dans le besoin de dire des choses parce qu'il n'y avait pas d'oreilles pour écouter; on devient frustrée quand on parle et puis ça ne passe pas. Mais maintenant, on peut le chuchoter, le crier, le rire! Le festival nous offre toutes sortes de façons de voir les choses, toutes sortes de vécus, d'histoires. . .

HERizons: Quand et comment es-tu devenue féministe?

M-C.S.: Je ne sais pas à quel âge je me suis réveillée. Entre 25 et 30 ans, on prend un recul. J'ai commencé à gagner ma vie j'avais 15, 16 ans. C'est après un certain recul que je vois que j'ai toujours été indépendante dans un milieu exclusivement mâle. Il n'était pas question à ce temps de tout remettre en question parce que j'aurais explosé!! Ma prise de conscience est venue avec mon fils. C'est tout arrivé en même temps. Je savais que je voulais faire ma musique. Je préparais un album. Je devais envisager des problèmes et de femmes, et de ma génération. Entre 25 et 30 ans on retombe sur terre et on regarde ce qu'est la vie, l'effort, la fatigue, le mono-parental, les peines d'amour, la dépression... j'étais outragée de voir comment les femmes avaient à se battre avec tout. Pourtant, je ne voulais pas me battre!

HERizons: T'engages-tu souvent dans des actions concrètes, par exemple le festival des femmes, pour la cause de la femme?

M-C.S.: Avant, le radicalisme et le féminisme me faisaient peur. Mais maintenant je trouve ma place comme femme et je me dis, moi j'ai mon vécu et c'est tout. Ça me fait du bien de me rapprocher des femmes. . . Je suis là dans beaucoup de manifestations. C'est très important. C'est un "ressourcement" très important pour moi.

HERizons: Tes chansons sont-elles orientées vers le féminisme?

M-C.S.: Je ne peux faire autrement que de dire des choses qui me concernent, qui me touchent. Je parle de moi, alors je parle des femmes.

HERizons: En 1984, ici au festival, on est surpris de voir seulement des femmes, à la batterie à la basse, au piano, etc. . .

M-C.S.: Ça commence à émerger. On peut affronter les critiques. Il y a une base pour se perfectionner. Il faut atteindre notre maximum et être exigeantes. Les critères ont été créés par des hommes, nous sommes en train d'apporter les nôtres.

HERizons: Que veut dire selon toi le slogan "our time is now"?

M-C.S.: Notre temps est là. Le temps sera toujours là! Ce qu'on vit maintenant, c'est notre bataille. On se leurre si on dit "ça va venir. . ." Do it now! . . . Si on ne fait pas un travail "underground" dans le temps présent, on ne changera pas la structure qui est au fond, c'est-à-dire nous-mêmes. Notre seule prise de pouvoir c'est dans le moment, alors qu'on le fasse! ▼

I'd never have thought that I might one day become a prostitute. Just the opposite — you refuse to think about it. You might have it in the back of your mind, maybe all women do; you can't help knowing more or less that it's always there as a possibility; it creeps up on you unawares, and then the day when there's no money left, when you're really in the shit, when you really have to do something to feed your kids, then you say, "Yes, why not?" At that moment, considering all that goes on in a woman's mind, that she feels deeply about, I think it's an act of courage.

'C' — Prostitutes/Our Life

Prostitutes are good for business, merchants as

Hookers on move

Documenting Prostitution



Working a collection prostitute

Spoken almost ten years ago beyond the stained glass and flickering candles of a church in Lyons, France where this woman sought sanctuary, these words continue to echo. Did this church, filled with shadow, offer the subversive blurring of boundaries? Where is this woman now? Is she alive? Does she know that her action has inspired other occupations, by other women working as prostitutes?

After the recent occupation of Vancouver's Christ Church by prostitutes, the phone jangles and the door buzzes at another unofficial sanctuary, the apartment of Sally DeQuadros, a spokeswoman for the Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes (ASP). She has twenty years of these acts of courage behind her. Newspaper clippings and xeroxed articles chronicling the daily confrontations of prostitute and government paper her desk and personify a growing network of activists unwilling to recognise the boundaries of the 'red light district'.

Sally's actions and deeds, in which she is joined and supported by women from many countries of the world, make her part of a feminist struggle, a struggle that defies the working conditions of their lives. The determined resistance of women like 'C', Sally DeQuadros and other outspoken prostitutes challenges the women's movement to connect with the experience of the woman, instead of the image as crafted by police and pornographer alike.

The State is the Biggest Pimp of All

Against male authority, feminists have always struggled to take back control over our bodies, our lives; the very streets we travel on. Annual 'Take Back

the Night' marches of hundreds of women challenge the violent intimidation that keeps women from moving about freely. Yet, every night of the week, women who work as prostitutes confront the state in the streets demonstrating that as men maintain control of the streets, so they control women's access to money.

In June of 1975, 150 prostitutes occupied the Church of St. Nivier in Lyons, France, claiming sanctuary thereby spotlighting in the international press how strict control of the streets by the local police and courts meant a steady flow of funds for government coffers. Recounting in *Prostitutes/Our Life* the beginning of that control of the street, 'A', from inside St. Nivier, wrote: "There's a certain maximum number of prostitutes on file, classified, listed. If a new girl arrives, she has to go to the plain clothes police. They're the ones who decide whether or not to accept her 'application', depending on the quota they've fixed." Just to make sure she learned quickly who was boss, the police forced her into a prison-like hospital for two weeks even though she neither received or needed any treatment. Having created a manageable pool of 'working women', the police and courts were charging daily and, at times, hourly fines. Another woman, identified only by the letter 'E' stated: "There are pros working just to pay off their fines and their debts. Right now, prostitution is only really profitable for the State."

So it was that the occupation became instrumental in starting a prostitutes' strike which spread to many other towns. Despite having become such a public focal point, the police rushed the church. In numbers two to one, the police forcibly dragged the women from the church premises. These actions synthesized the women into establishing the French Collective of Prostitutes.

Inspired by the hereto unrecognised power of women organising as prostitutes, the English Collective of Prostitutes (ECP) was formed and established themselves in 1975 as part of the International Wages for Housework campaign. In 1981 they published an 'A-Z for Working Girls' guide to inform women who were considering prostitution as to the laws they would confront and created forums for dialogue between pros and non-pros. Based in the Kings Cross area, one of London's oldest 'red light districts', the ECP offered legal guidance and support to prostitutes who increasingly pleaded 'not guilty' to

cont'd on page 32

cont'd from page 31

police arrests for 'solicitation', while these same women were shopping or taking their children to babysitters.

After increased police harassment, ECP requested a grant from their local Council for a monitor to keep substantial records of police action and arrests.

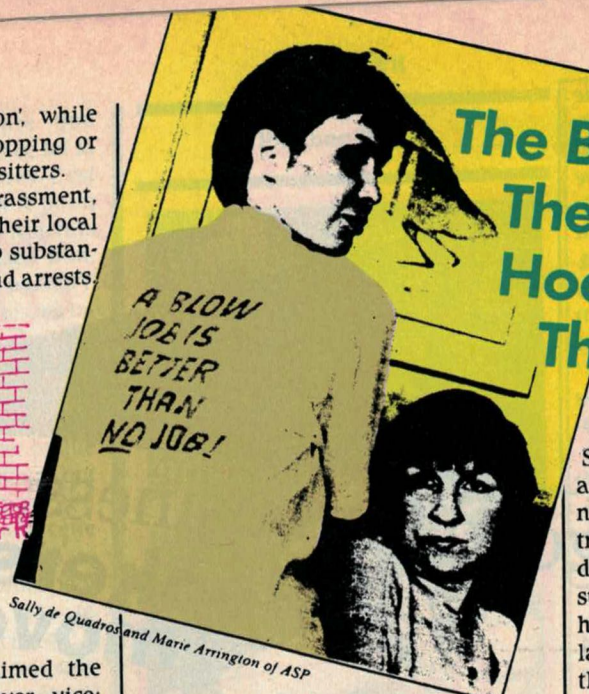


Abuse angers hooker

King Cross area police claimed the crackdown as a victory over vice; boasting 1,000 charges for vice-related crimes. Councillor Kate Allen responded by saying, "Increased arrests will only succeed in moving prostitutes to another area of London temporarily, to earn money to pay off their fines — it won't stop prostitution." Still, the request for a person to monitor the police was denied. In November, the ECP occupied the Church of the Holy Cross for 12 days protesting police illegality and racism. They did not emerge from sanctuary until all their demands were met.

Beside the various laws that pronounce sex work illegal, urban planning schemes become instrumental in curtailing the free movement of street prostitutes. In their planning strategies to realise prime revenue property from urban core areas, existing or newly written municipal laws become tools chipping away the streetwalker's footing. Vocal coalitions of neighbourhood committees become a 'grass roots' expression of the real estate developers' plans for urban renewal.

The consequences of similar repressive actions on the part of civic, legal and law enforcement agencies in Vancouver were brought out during the Christ Church occupation on July 20, 1984, organised by the Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes (ASP). This search for sanctuary and dialogue by Vancouver prostitutes with local West End residents was, as in Lyons, France, an attempt to end the isolating tactics of local government authorities. West End residents, worried about the property values of their fashionable condos, organised around a 'Shame-the-Johns' campaign receiving official sanctions to roam the street intimidating all women



The Battle Of The Streets: Hookers vs The State



The apparent success of Vancouver's Shame-the-Johns' campaign is causing a mushrooming of these vigilante organisations in other Canadian urban centres. In Halifax, the Downtown Residents' Association has successfully pressured their Attorney-General to apply to his province's Supreme Court for a similar injunction. Niagara Falls is putting the screws on Ontario's Attorney-General, Roy McMurtry decrying a loss of tourism and an increase in bad publicity and street crime. Winnipeg's mayor, Bill Norrie is getting advice from lawyers to see if the B.C. ruling can be copied here to deal with Winnipeg's 'red light district'.

Peggy Miller, of the Canadian Organisation for the Rights of Prostitutes (CORP), has criticised city politicians for living off the avails of prostitution. By forming committees rather than acting to deal with the problems that prostitutes face, they are "making political careers off our backs. Girls out here are drowning while you sit on committees."

Just Trying to Make a Living

Throughout the world, women as prostitutes, in response to governments which seek control over their access to money all the while claiming a share of a lucrative sex industry, have organised as sex workers. In an attempt to resist government imposed marginality, these advocacy groups of prostitutes and supporters have sought a voice as part of the larger women's movement; often a frustrating search. Selma James of the English Collective of Prostitutes writes: "Before unions were legal, every trade unionist was illegal, a criminal and probably often a hated or even despised neighbour. Every immigrant who crosses a national boundary for reasons governments don't approve of — to campaign for peace as women have done or to claim a share in accumulated wealth as Third World people have done — is illegal. Being illegal workers, prostitute women are part of this illegal organising tradition, to get higher wages than women are supposed to have, for work

(and men) easily labelled 'prostitutes'. Their campaign quickly got the backing of Vancouver mayor, Mike Harcourt, who promised to "rid residential areas of creeps and scumbums who flaunt their trade on street corners". Subsequently, an injunction was doled out by a cooperative B.C. Supreme Court system. Listing reasons of "noise, intimidation or interference with people's enjoyment of their property", they have labelled steadily increasing numbers of persons (from 30 at date of injunction to 134 at time of writing) as prostitutes and have forced them to leave the West End of Vancouver under threat of \$2,000 fines or two years of imprisonment.

Having travelled the streets of the West End regularly since organising ASP in 1982, Sally DeQuadros and Marie Arrington feel that the government decision to respond to the 'Shame-the-Johns' only realised a desire to 'clean up' Vancouver prior to the Pope's visit and the need to rehearse legal controls the police want to exert during Expo '86. These pro unionists also recognise a tactic on the part of police consistent with their earlier counterparts in France to herd the women into the sparsely populated area around B.C.'s domed stadium where they can be effectively controlled.

The Women Against Rape (WAR) in Britain also understood the consequences of Vancouver's 'public nuisance' injunction by stating that: "Women everywhere demand the right to go anywhere, at anytime, for pleasure or work, in safety and without fear or threat of violence or arrest. When prostitute women are not safe, no woman is safe. The streets are ours."

SISSENS CALLED TO THE BAR

In the early fall of 1911 when Melrose Sissons applied to the Law Society of Manitoba for permission to study law, the "learned benchers" of the society scratched their heads in puzzlement.

Melrose Sissons was well qualified as a law student, having graduated from the University of Manitoba with a silver medal in political economy and history, the highest award the university offered. But Melrose Sissons was also a woman, and members of the law society refused her entrance to the law school on the grounds that the word "person" in the Law Society Act of Manitoba meant "male person" only.

Sissons fought that ruling and won. Four years later she was one of the first women called to the Manitoba bar.

What the young woman from Portage la Prairie, Manitoba did to change the minds of the learned benchers remains hidden in the past. Minutes of the September 26, 1911, meeting of the law society show they discussed her application, then sent it to their solicitor for his opinion.


"I have come to the conclusion that a woman cannot, as a matter of right, compel the benchers to admit her as a student-at-law, assuming that she complies with all the other requirements and regulations of the Society," Edward Anderson (K.C.) replied one month later.

Anderson was not sure if the organization had the power to admit her if they so desired, but he cited what had been decided in several other provinces. In New Brunswick, for example, the court had ruled that "at common law a woman has no right to become a member of the law society and will not be recognised as an attorney-at-law." On the other hand in Saskatchewan the benchers had decided they had the power to admit women, "construing the statute where it refers to a person embracing a person of the female sex." In



Picture of Melrose Sissons that hangs in the University of Manitoba's law school.

Tanya Lester



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Ontario the application of one Clara Brett Martin to study law had resulted in an amendment to the Ontario Law Society Act to permit the admission of women.

Anderson suggested that if the Manitoba benchers wanted to admit women they get the legislature to amend the Manitoba Law Society Act, but that if they didn't want to admit women they arrange to have the question decided in court.

Ignoring this advice, members of the Manitoba Law Society decided at their October 27, 1911, meeting to "write Miss Melrose Sissons that the benchers regret they cannot accept her notice of application for admission as counsel advises that under the present law women are not eligible as members of the Law Society."

The Manitoba benchers no doubt agreed with Chief Justice Ryan of Wisconsin who in 1875 denied Lavina Goddell the right to practise law.

"It would be revolting to all female sense of the innocence and sanctity of their sex," Ryan wrote, "shocking to man's reverence for womanhood and faith in women, on which hinge the better affections and humanities of life, that women should be permitted to mix professionally in all the nastiness of the world which finds its way into courts of justice; all the unclean issues, all the collateral questions of sodomy, incest, rape, seduction, fornication, adultery, pregnancy, bastardy, legitimacy, prostitution, lascivious cohabitation, abortion, infanticide, obscene publications, libel and slander, of sex, impotence, divorce."

It seemingly did not occur to Ryan that women were already involved, as victims in most of the nastiness he cited.

Ryan's view was not shared by all men. Humourist Stephen Leacock, for example, was quoted as saying he could see no sense in legally debarring women from the practice of law. "Either women can do a thing or they cannot," Leacock wrote. "If they can, let them by all means; if they cannot, there is no need of any law in the matter."

When she was refused admission to the law school in 1911, Sissons told a newspaper reporter that almost her earliest memory was a "dream ambition of becoming a lawyer." Sissons had been born in 1887 into a family of seven girls and one boy. Her family were farmers. Why she dreamed of being a lawyer is unknown, but she had that professional goal firmly in mind when she left Portage la Prairie to enter the University of

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Manitoba in Winnipeg as an undergraduate.

After her rejection by the Manitoba Law Society Sissons declared that she intended to apply to law school in Saskatchewan where a more progressive stance had been taken and where women were allowed into the profession. But that became unnecessary in 1912 when members of the Law Society of Manitoba re-evaluated their position.

In their book *Substantial Justice: Law and lawyers in Manitoba 1670-1970*, Dale and Lee Gibson write that Sissons was persistent and succeeded in having the Law Society Act amended. Minutes

of the law society meetings do not show how this happened. The next mention of Sissons is on November 22, 1912, when her name is lumped together with all the law students who had written their First Intermediate exams, the first set of law exams.

The 25-year-old Sissons had prepared for the exams through studies in her home town. According to a newspaper article, she "pursued the reading of law for but four or five months" at the Portage la Prairie law firm of Taylor and Colwill before "winning an honorable place in the list of candidates."

At that time, students at law went through a sort of apprenticeship program instead of attending classes at a university. Still, Sissons had to pay exam fees, including \$164 for her fourth series exams, which she had to write to be recognised as an attorney.

In her petition application to be called to the bar, Sissons wrote an "s" in front of every "he" and an "er" over the "is" in every "his." There was to be no doubt that Melrose Sissons was a woman.

November 26, 1915, the Winnipeg Telegram announced the good news in a story headlined, "Two Manitoba Girls can Practice Law." One of the "girls" was Melrose Sissons. The other was Winnifred Wilton.

Wilton had graduated from the University of Manitoba and applied to enter law school in 1912, after Melrose Sissons had already fought for and won the right for women to practise law. But Wilton had her own claim to fame: according to the newspaper article, she "secured the highest aggregate of marks obtainable in the 'call' and attorney examinations."

Sissons had passed with honours, an accomplishment for someone who had studied law away from the large legal libraries of the city.

Sissons and Wilton were "welcomed" into the field by Mr. Justice Curran. Con-

veniently suppressing his memory of what had happened in Manitoba only four short years before, Curran noted with some derision that in Quebec a woman was not allowed to be called to the bar because she was not considered a person. "He was glad to know that the benchers of Manitoba did not take the unchivalrous view that a woman was not a person," an article in the Winnipeg Free Press reported.

Sissons continued to practise law in Portage until 1917, when she married Earl Stuart Everall. Everall was also a lawyer, and he and Sissons had grown up together and gone through school together in Portage. The couple moved to Winnipeg, where Everall taught political science, then to the small town of McCreary, Manitoba, where he resumed the practice of law.

Melrose Sissons Everall's daughter Janet says her mother never practised law after she was married. She stayed at home to raise her three children, but she continued to take an interest in law through her husband's practise. She was also an active member of the McCreary United Church, the Women's Institute and many other community organisations. Melrose Everall lived in McCreary until she was 80 years old. In 1973, six years after she moved to Winnipeg to live with her daughter, she died at the age of 86.

She had lived to see the slow process through which women took up the practise of law.

By 1952, there were still only 10 women holding certificates to practise law in Manitoba. Saskatchewan had fared somewhat better, with 30 women admitted to the bar, but only four were actually practising. In Alberta there were just five women lawyers.

By the 1970s women in law schools were becoming more and more numerous.

"The year 1972 marked the beginning of a significant influx of female law students," a paper in the University of Manitoba law school archives reported. "Whereas prior to 1972 there may have been a half-dozen women in the entire student body of the law school in a given year, commencing in 1972 the number of women in the first year class began to climb drastically." That climb has levelled off, and now 30 to 40 of the 130 first year law students in Manitoba are women.

A photograph of Melrose Sissons, the lawyer who opened up the profession to all persons, hangs in a classroom at the Manitoba law school. ▽

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that women are supposed to do for free."

In the U.S., Margo St. James became one of the first public personalities to act as an advocate for 'hookers' after starting a rap group called WHO (Whores, Housewives and Others) on Mother's Day in 1972. She said she understood at the time that she needed to enlist the support of housewives because they "understood that women who have to have sex they don't enjoy with husbands, and who are prevented from leaving marriage by economic reality, are far more numerous and worse off than most prostitutes, who at least have the economic resources to leave an abusive situation." With the support of a Methodist grant she went on to found COYOTE (Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics) in San Francisco. Money raised at COYOTE's Annual Hookers Ball and by the tax-exempt Victoria Woodhull Foundation supports a newspaper, *Coyote Howls*, and her public work to decriminalise prostitution.

Even in 1975, the women who were part of the French Collective of Prostitutes spoke about their attitudes to their work: "We are of course encouraged to say how much we hate not only ourselves but our job — as if everyone else loves theirs. But we don't hate prostitution more than other workers hate typing or any other work. But if a hooker prefers her job to other jobs, she's perverted. Now some aspects of our job can be interesting — meeting and talking with people from all walks of life, friendships with your workmates; whatever the case, you make an experience. As in typing, it can be exhausting and boring but like other workers you don't want to do the job for life. What makes our job so different from other jobs is the money. We are told to hate our jobs in the same way other workers are told to love theirs, and for the same reasons. We are all supposed to hate good wages and love hard work and long hours. But none of us does."

Peggy Miller — acting as a spokeswoman for CORP in Toronto, presented a brief to the Fraser Commission during their recent travels across Canada to study the situation of pornography and prostitution. The brief urges the decriminalisation of prostitutes as a means of improving the lives of women who work as prostitutes. Unapologetically, the brief states: "We live in a world of commodities, and usually the need to compromise the ideal to survive in such a world is accepted as a 'fact of life'. For the most part, individuals are able to determine their own kind and extent of

compromise; the factory worker may spend most of his waking hours as a human machine, sacrificing his human potential for the security of a weekly paycheck; a doctor or hospital can withhold critical medical aid, or a businessman destroy urgently needed food as a matter of policy if the price cannot be met. All these exchanges involve buying and selling, as commodities, those things we purport to hold dear; all involve compromising the 'ideal' and all are prostitution."

Having defended their right to choose how they will make a living these unions of prostitutes are also demanding a substantial improvement in their day-to-day working conditions. Many of the same demands are being made by all women workers: safety from violence, harassment and exploitation by an employer, private or public.

Harassed and persecuted by local and national governments, prostitute women are targeted for high levels of male violence, unknown in other types of waged employment. Multiple murders of prostitutes precipitated the 1975 church occupation in Lyons, France. These women did not feel the police were offering adequate protection, nor were they solving the murders. One of the occupants explained their resentment for the police: "You can never rely on the cops against assaults, not before, during or after. A girl had her whole stomach slashed with a razor, and the guy was released the same morning. But for the smallest fuss, we're the first to get carted off." To ensure a measure

tween the contemptuous attitudes held toward women by the Ripper's friends, the prosecution, the press, and that of Sutcliffe himself. In Vancouver, the media were instrumental in transforming the West End workplace into an open territory for 'kerb crawlers' only intent on harassing local hookers.

Despite this non-cooperation by the police and the media, prostitutes are asserting their human right by using the legal system to establish precedents. In Halifax a Criminal Injuries Compensation Board tried to refuse workers compensation to a prostitute who had been abducted, struck with a hammer and forced to perform sexual acts against her will. "It is my view that an award to any individual who has contributed to her own misfortunes, as did this applicant, should be disallowed," wrote the vice-chairman, Robert Bruce. Upon appeal, the Nova Scotia Supreme Court ruled that prostitutes do qualify for compensation and Judge Angus Macdonald awarded the woman \$1,500. On Vancouver streets, ASP regularly gets information about abusive clients which is then printed on Bad Tricks Sheets and distributed as a caution to prostitutes. The organisation has recently branched out to Calgary where the first Bad Trick Sheet showed that tricks in this oil town had a penchant for pointing guns at women.

Economy forces women to prostitution



No Bad Women, Just Bad Laws

of workplace safety most prostitutes in France walk in the company of dogs. Resented by cops, the dogs nevertheless keep clients on their toes.

Often advocacy groups of prostitute women are the only outcry in defiance of a mass media that sensationalises their lives and promotes them as a focus for male anger. During the trial of the English multiple murderer, Sutcliffe, the ECP demonstrated against prostitutes being on trial instead of the accused. They accused the media and the courts (both prosecution and defense) of consistently making distinctions between the murder of 'pure' and 'impure' women. Pointing out that the murder of the 13 women left 23 children motherless; that all women are vulnerable to male violence but especially prostitutes, the ECP clarified the very thin line be-

In addition to fighting for health and safety in the workplace, prostitute unions are organising to assert worker control. Usually this translates in opposing the creation of state-run brothels. Brothel conditions are repeated all over the world. In Nevada women get cards and a weekly medical check-up. Their wages are split 60/40 with management and the Internal Revenue Service gets a chunk off both. Sally DeQuados of ASP says, "We don't want that — it's tantamount to slavery. We want to control the working conditions."

Since its creation in 1983, the Collective of Australian Prostitutes (CAP) has been fighting to allow working women a form of self-management; freedom from the pimping style of control of the State, police and pimps themselves. Ros

Nelson, a CAP worker, is also trying to reduce the women's isolation which "can be very emotionally destructive and can take you a long time to get over this if and when you finish work." CAP envisions a worker house collective, with regulations made by the six to eight women who would take responsibility for the daily duties. Cooperative struc-

English Collective of Prostitutes (ECP) criticised this resolution as an attempt to undermine women's abilities to choose what countries they will work in.

receiving a passport under pretense of saving 'their' women from being sexually abused in foreign countries. The only results this had was to increase the price of passports for women on the black market.

US PROS Introduce Services for Prostitutes

tures would be equitable, and would also provide safety, support and companionship. Women would be able to enforce industrial health and safety rules such as customer health checks and insisting that condoms be worn. Already, there are rules which women working together in the same geographical area agree to. In Lyons, besides no kissing on the mouth with clients there is agreement not to allow themselves to be sodomised. "This is all perfectly normal," said 'C'; "it's a sort of collective agreement that comes about gradually, cash being what determines it. No disloyal competition if you like."

Prostitute unions organised by women of colour are confronting racism. Priscilla Alexander, co-director of the U.S. National Task Force on Prostitution, in an article in San Francisco's *Plexus* feminist newspaper states that proportionally more women of colour are arrested for prostitution than white women and "85 per cent of women who spend time in jail for prostitution are women of colour". Discrimination against the poorest sectors is apparent in that streetwalkers account for only 20 per cent of all prostitution while 90 per cent of the arrested prostitutes are streetwalkers. New York's Black Women For Wages For Housework question how any black women can be above prostitution as racism forces them always to have the least money, the least chances of being hired, going to school, finding housing, while getting the first 'opportunity' to be fired, fined, or jailed. All this "means is that all Black women are suspected of being or expected to be prostitutes anyways. It's always open season on Black women."

No Bad Women, Just Bad Laws

During the 1975 International Women's Year the United Nations considered a resolution to remedy the international traffic in women. Making a presentation before the committee the

The hookers speak out

They successfully blocked the resolution as it would have increased international police and state powers to curtail movement across national borders, which the ECP identifies as an attack to keep Third World women contained and easily controlled in designated areas of the world. Organisations of prostitute women like ECP demand that women be allowed free mobility both physically and socially in their search for the highest wage. In turn, they caution that prostitute women must be empowered rather than the mechanisms of state law.

The movement of prostitute women between various countries give those sex workers the power to escape the designs of a particular government for the local sex industry. In Thailand, the centres established to service as many as 70,000 military servicemen in a year between 1968-69 have not collapsed; rather they now service Japanese men and Thai males who have adopted this style of recreation. Depending on tourism as their second biggest income sector, Thai deputy minister of tourism explained in 1980 they would have a need for money for the next ten years. Therefore, "I ask all governors to consider the natural scenery in your provinces together with some forms of entertainment that some of you might consider disgusting and shameful because they are forms of sexual entertainment that attract tourists." Yet, Thai prostitutes, discontented with the wages and working conditions of the 'natural scenery' have tried to find work in West Germany, Switzerland and Japan resulting in a backlash of Thai men complaining that their women were being exploited abroad. Local government authorities added more restrictions to

PROSTITUTES Protest

As in Europe, women prostitutes in North America take advantage of differing government restrictions. Because prostitution is legal in Canada and the crime of soliciting must be proven to be pressing and persistent according to the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in 1978, many prostitutes have come from the U.S. (where prostitution is illegal, except in the state of Nevada) to work in Canada to take advantage of better working conditions. In retaliation local police authorities have used various methods of registering sex workers. In Winnipeg, there have been a number of reports of women being photographed in bars by vice officers who regularly take snapshots of 'their' clientele. This practise has been confirmed to members of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women in conversations with Inspector Clarke Peckover of the Winnipeg vice division claiming the photographs are a means of determining the movements of prostitute women between Winnipeg and other Western Canadian cities.

When local state authorities institute 'clean-up' campaigns the only result is fear and intimidation of prostitutes being the most vulnerable to condemnation. In Bangkok reformatories are set up on the guise of vocation schools where prostitutes are put for a year to go through re-training. *Connexions*, an international feminist magazine, reports these women to be incarcerated under 24-hour guard. They receive beatings for smoking and not folding their clothes properly. Their training consists of kneeling as they approach teachers and visitors while learning to weave, sew, launder, cook, skills in beauty care and bookbinding; with the heaviest emphasis on housewifery and housework. Thus the reformatories continue to equip inmates for nothing better than employment as domestic servants. Labour laws in Thailand, as in many other countries, do not give even minimal protection as

to income and treatment of these employees so that there is little incentive for prostitute women to do the 'decent' work.

Public labelling and thus affixing permanently the consequences of having worked as a sex worker operates as a way governments attempt to force women in remaining a part of the local sex economy when the local wages do not justify remaining in prostitution. In Switzerland to get any other job besides prostitution one must have a Certificate of Good Morals and Habits which, if you are a drug addict, alcoholic, homosexual or prostitute, means you do not meet government criteria. " 'Good morals' means you have to be honest," says Griseldis Real, a Swiss writer, painter and mother of four children who has worked as a prostitute for 12 years, "and honesty is only present if you make love for free." In Vancouver, the B.C. Supreme Court's injunction was used to punish women prostitutes. Because their names appeared publicly on West End telephone poles and in government offices, they were evicted, fired from jobs and stigmatised to the extent of losing family and friends. In addition, their position as mothers will always be threatened by a legal system that has the power to assign morality.

We Are the Experts of Our Lives

In April of 1983, the English Collective of Prostitutes (ECP), Black Women for Wages for Housework and Women Against Rape unequivocally opposed an 'occupation' of Soho, London's explicit district of pornography and prostitution, as sponsored by two anti-porn and anti-violence against women organisations. The prostitute women of ECP envisioned this feminist action as a potential confrontation between women, 'good girls' attacking 'bad girls'. In particular, the black prostitute women declared: "In Soho the majority of women out on the streets are black. In proposing to 'reclaim Soho for women', the fact is that white women who can afford not to work as prostitutes on the streets are proposing to 'reclaim' the streets from Black women who have no alternative. For women working in the area this 'occupation' of Soho will be an occupation by a hostile army."

Similar 'occupations' have been staged in the 'red light districts' of San Francisco, New York, Minneapolis and other large urban areas. Often, while these guided tours of Soho-like areas are conducted as a means of educating women to the dimensions of the sex industry,

they put women sex workers on display for dispassionate observation. Feeling attacked and betrayed, prostitute women are increasingly voicing their anger at the distortion of their lives.

This position is expressed by many vocal women in the sex industry. Nicki, an English woman who works as a stripper resents being depicted as an item of pornography and nothing else which is designed to make her: "exactly like those blow-up plastic dolls, that's the image most feminists seem to have of women like us. It's as if our whole lives are fetishised and what is really offensive about that is that that's precisely how men see us — not autonomous, not as human beings, but as some sort of outward manifestation of porn. We're not just a problem; we aren't merely pornographic images — we're here; as much part of this shitty culture as any group of women, and we've as much to say about it."

Although Lucciola (Firefly), an Italian prostitutes' committee newspaper, talks about feminism as having lit the way for all women including prostitutes, editor Michi Staderini questions why feminists have not met with prostitutes "who are struggling for concrete improvements in their profession".

Other outspoken prostitute women have begun to question feminist initiatives in opposition to pornography and prostitution which enlist support for legal reforms, censorship and anti-porn brigades. Selma James of the ECP writes: "The anti-pornography tendency as it has grown has lobbied for more State (police) control of explicitly sexual materials, and has often attacked not only the sex industry but those employed by it, treating workers and employers as one entity. No other workers, especially if they're women, are dismissed in this way by the women's movement." At the Tribunal on Crimes against Women in 1976 held in Brussels, Margo St. James of COYOTE cited lack of support from feminists as a major reason why 'working girls' had not attended to speak of their particular oppression. She urged the establishment of international networks to help dispel the myths surrounding sex work and to share in the inspiration when women prostitutes accomplish victories in their lives.

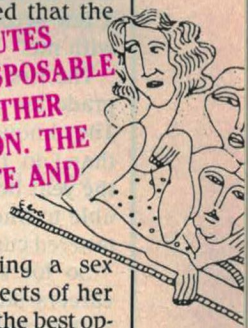
In the past decade that support network has become more readily visible and empowering for sex workers. The National Organisation for Women (NOW) in the United States passed a resolution to decriminalise prostitution in 1973. While prostitution is not illegal

in Canada, the cross-Canada tour of the Fraser Commission on Prostitution and Pornography heard from many Canadian women's groups that the police and legal system is still particularly punitive to prostitutes. More immediately, during the Vancouver church occupation, support for ASP and the prostitutes being harassed by the public nuisance injunction came from many individuals and groups. Vancouver Rape Relief provided sympathy vigils as well as food catering; women politicians and churchwomen wrote letters of support; telegrams were received from national and international women organised around the issues of violence toward women and prostitution decriminalisation; demonstrations at Canadian embassies were held in the U.S. and Britain. More recently, at the end of September, the Toronto 'Take Back the Night' marchers also made decriminalisation of prostitution one of their principle demands.

By this mutually empowering experience, the women's movement, in turn, is empowered. Ros Nelson of the Collective of Australian Prostitutes points out that as a feminist she recognised that the

FOR TOO LONG PROSTITUTES HAVE BEEN SOCIETY'S DISPOSABLE WOMEN, WORTHY OF NEITHER RESPECT NOR PROTECTION. THE TIME HAS COME TO UNITE AND FIGHT BACK.

negative conditions of being a sex worker impacted on all aspects of her life, but feels she is choosing the best option available to her: "I'd rather prostitute myself twice a week to do all the things I want to do as a feminist, than become a waitress at whatever a week and get my bum pinched and be exploited and oppressed and slapped around and have no recognition for the work I do and work 40 hours a week and have no time for really important things that I want to do." So the boundaries between who is a feminist and who is a prostitute become blurred as women connect their lives to the lives and struggles of prostitutes with help of women like the founders of the English Collection of Prostitutes, Margaret Valentine and Mavis Johnson, who remind us that at times we "have carelessly confused prostitution, much as people confuse housewives with housework, and have not learnt the lesson the women's movement taught from its birth: women are not responsible for the situation we are forced into. We are not our work." ▼



SATIRICALLY YOURS

Sex Ain't Much Fun

Lyn Cockburn

Three years ago, I found myself teaching French in a small high school in the interior of B.C.

The principal, a huge Australian man with an accent undiminished by thirty years in Canada, had a heart of mush and a voice which sounded like six angry sergeants.

At the time of my introduction to him, I know nothing of his softer side, so I am thoroughly intimidated when he roars at me. "Cockburn, you'll teach Guidance!"

Since my familiarity with "Guidance" consists of the suspicion that the course no longer goes by that title, I try however feebly, to argue him out of the notion that I am capable of teaching it.

"That course has had more names than the local pizza joint," he shouts. "Not enough women teachers. You have to do it." He stomps off, only to reappear a few seconds later, "And don't argue with me!"

The first day of classes, I and thirty grade ten girls eye each other warily. They know far more about "Guidance" than I do. They after all, took the course the year before, while I have only been able to find vague references to it in a tattered curriculum guide.

So for several months, we discuss careers, study habits and getting along with unreasonable parents and horrible siblings without resorting to murder. After four months, they are as bored as I am.

"What about sex?" I ask bluntly and a little nervously in January.

"Yes!" they respond enthusiastically. Then all thirty look guilty.

For the next few weeks we discuss sex, or rather I talk and desperately try to get them to participate.

They do make a few comments.

"If you let your boyfriend go all the way, he thinks you're a sleaze."

"If you don't go all the way, you'll never have any boyfriends."

"My parents would kill me if they ever knew I was on the pill."

"Using birth control means you're thinking about sex. It's premeditated and that's bad."

"In this town, if you go to the doctor about birth control, he or his nurse phones your parents as soon as you leave the office."

Their frustration hangs in the air. I can

tell they are bursting with questions, but for some teenage reason which I've lost contact with, they can't bring themselves to verbalize their concerns. I start to wonder about myself. Do I look like the sort of person who would narc on them?

After several days of going home, turning on the shower full blast and yelling my own frustration into the spray, I hit on a possible solution.

There isn't a woman doctor within a hundred miles, but there is a gentle, humorous male doctor in the next town down the highway and I am certain he will agree to come and talk to us.

When I inform the class, some girls look interested but most look alarmed. "You can write your questions on slips of paper and I'll give them to the doctor," I tell them. They still look alarmed and finally, I catch on, "You can print or disguise your handwriting. No signatures required." Instant relief.

They scribble furiously and I drive thirty miles through the winter's worst snow storm to deliver the 105 slips of paper to the doctor, who insists he needs time to do his homework. As I drive, I curse and long for the cool impersonality of French grammar.

The doctor arrives two days later, 105 pieces of paper in hand.

"No," he says. "You cannot get pregnant by kissing." And he brings out a chart and gives a thorough, yet sensitive explanation of reproduction.

"Menstruation is not a punishment; it is a natural bodily function." More charts, more explanations.

"Some men may indeed lose their respect for the women they make love with, but those men aren't worth knowing."

"Using birth control is not a crime. It is a matter of personal choice. It does not detract from the enjoyment of the sexual act."

"You have to decide whether your parents would be more upset if you come home pregnant than if you come home with some form of birth control."

"Sex is NOT something you do to please your boyfriend or husband. It is something you do because you enjoy it."

He answers every question in a grave

and friendly manner. He temporarily loses his cool when he gets to the one about, "Can you get VD from a toilet seat?" "Yes," he says. "But it's most uncomfortable." The class stares at him in horror and he hastily explains he's only joking. They then look at him in disapproval, so he doesn't try any more funny stuff.

After the class, the students crowd around him. Questions fairly jump out of them and he promises to come back in a couple of weeks.

Pleased as I am that they are finally asking questions and getting answers, I feel sad. The questions haven't changed since I was in high school in the late fifties. What sexual revolution, I ask myself. These kids have the same worries, fears and negativity that I did. All that has happened is that they have had their worst fears allayed.

"My god," says the doctor after they've all left. "I would never have guessed that 16 year-old girls have such negative feelings about sex. It's all very well to preach chastity at them, but we've also got to let them know that it's a natural, enjoyable act. It's as though we're afraid that if we let on that sex is beautiful, these kids will all rush out and become promiscuous."

He keeps his promise and comes back in two weeks. He spends the whole hour talking in his gentle fashion about the joys of sex. He explains that while it's a good idea to remain a virgin as long as humanly possible, this does not mean that there is anything sinful or negative about the sexual act itself. But something is wrong; the atmosphere has changed. A feeling of sin hangs in the air and nothing the doctor says can get rid of it. These girls are convinced that sex is something you worry about; it is not something you enjoy.

Obviously, if we refuse to talk about sex in a frank and natural manner until the high school level, it has by that time, become a mysterious, worrisome and yes, sinful topic.

I end up depressed. I didn't really want to know that kids in 1980 are as upset about sex as they were in the fifties.

It's time for another sexual revolution. Only this time, let's not put the emphasis on "doing it"; let's put the emphasis on talking about it. ▽

POETRY

UNDER A CLOUDY MOON

Moonlight on your thigh,
cool flesh gleaming
under the haze of a
clouded moon.
Charcoal centre of you
absorbing the filtered rays
that stream through pale
green netting.
Moonlight on my thigh,
your face gazing
on the unlit core
of my other self.

© Jorica Perry



SUPERSTITION

You ask me how it's going
And I can only reply
That a grey cat crossed my path today,
Which means, I guess,
More of the same:
Nine to five, Monday to Friday,
Junk mail in the mailbox,
Television in the evening
And a movie on the weekend.
It's enough to send you out
Looking for a black cat
Just for a change of pace.

© Marion Young

IMMIGRANT

I see her ever day
Crossing the parking lot at four
A black anomaly within a land of snow
A lonely and misplaced woman
Desperately squeezing from the land
Its celluloid comforts

Caribbean temper chilled
By guarded hostile looks
And smiling chic that stabs beneath its gloves and masks
That stop the blood more than the blizzards and the frosts
Of barren Prairie winters.
She often wonders why.

Not slave, not ayah nor domestic
But now as pedagogue she comes
Wistfully seeking a better life.

To Canada, land of silver dreams
Refuge of slave, reject and persecuted.
But when the dross of mass-produced catalogue-bought trifles
Has worn
And when the shiny metallic coach
Has spluttered and groaned its last
Somewhere upon a lonely highway
Its guts congealed by biting cold
And when the sun petulantly hides its head
Then insane jungle rhythms reverberate from
The gaudy Hilton perched crazily upon the
Belmont Hills
And amidst the fevered tingle of rum punches
Carnival spectres rise from
Decaying baronial mansions around the
Queen's Park Savannah
And return to haunt her.

© Madeline Coopsammy

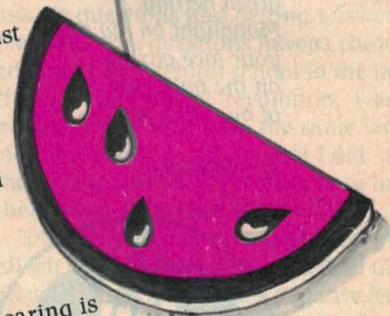
To be published in "An Anthology of Black Writers in Canada."

MOTHER MATTERS

A Memorandum: From Your Child, Regarding: Me

a reprint

1. Don't spoil me. I know quite well that I ought not to have all that I ask for. I'm only testing you.
 2. Don't be afraid to be firm with me. I prefer it. It lets me know where I stand.
 3. Don't use force with me. It teaches me that power is all that counts. I will respond more readily to being led.
 4. Don't be inconsistent. That confuses me and makes me try harder to get away with everything that I can.
 5. Don't make promises; you may not be able to keep them. That will discourage my trust in you.
 6. Don't be too upset when I say I hate you. I don't mean it, but I want you to feel sorry for what you have done to me.
 7. Don't do things for me that I can do for myself. It makes me feel like a baby and I may continue to put you in my service.
 8. Don't let my bad habits get me a lot of your attention. It only encourages me to continue them.
 9. Don't try to discuss my behaviour in the heat of a conflict. For some reason my hearing is not very good at this time and my cooperation is even worse. It is alright to take the action required but let's talk about it later.
 10. Don't make me feel that my mistakes are sins. I have to learn to make mistakes without feeling that I am no good.
 11. Don't demand explanations for my wrong behaviour. I really don't know why I did it.
 12. Don't tax my honesty too much. I am easily frightened into telling lies.
 13. Don't forget that I love experimenting. I learn from it, so please put up with it.
 14. Don't take too much notice of my small ailments. I may learn to enjoy poor health if it gets me too much attention.
 15. Don't put me off when I ask honest questions. If you do, you will find that I stop asking and seek my information elsewhere.
 16. Don't answer silly or meaningless questions. I just want you to keep busy with me.
 17. Don't ever think it is beneath your dignity to apologise to me. An honest apology makes me feel surprisingly warm toward you.
 18. Don't ever suggest that you are perfect or infallible. It gives me too much to live up to.
 19. Don't worry about the little amount of time we spend together. It is how we spend it that counts.
 20. Don't let my fears arouse your anxiety. Then I will become more afraid. Show me courage.
 21. Don't forget that I can't thrive without lots of understanding and encouragement, but I don't need to tell you that do I?
- Treat me the way you treat your friends, then I will be your friend too. Remember, I learn more from a model than a critic.



LEGALEYES

Incest and the Badgley Report

Jennifer Cooper

The exploitation of women and children through physical or sexual abuse within the family and other trust relationships is gradually being exposed and addressed. Wife battering is found to occur with terrifying frequency and some provinces are beginning to treat spousal assault on the same basis as other kinds of assault. Better reporting and detection mechanisms have exposed the tragic extent of child battering and sensitised professionals are learning new ways of effecting intervention and prevention. Spousal rape has finally been criminalised. And now child sexual abuse is the subject of a three-year federal study and report.

The Badgley Report on Sexual Offenses Against Children and Youths, completed in August 1984, reduces into hard statistics the largely hidden yet pervasive incidence of child sexual abuse:

- at some time in their lives, about one in two females and one in three males have been victims of one or more unwanted sexual acts.
- 80% of these will have first been committed against those persons when they were children or youths.
- 99% of the offenders are male.

To their credit, the Badgley Committee recognises both the frequency and seriousness of sexual offenses which are committed by persons that hold a special position of trust and power over the child. They propose a new offense which would criminalise "sexual touching", including intercourse, by a person in a position of trust including a parent, step-parent, grand-parent, guardian, teacher, employer or babysitter. This offense recognises that power can be exerted by the offender and used to abuse young victims who are particularly vulnerable to them. The harm lies in the breach of the vital position of trust reposed in the offender by virtue of their special relationship with the victim.

Unfortunately, the Committee goes on to recommend the retention of the existing incest section of the Criminal Code. This section focuses solely on sex-

ual intercourse between close blood relatives. There is no distinction made between sexual relations between consenting adult siblings, for example, and a father who rapes his daughter. There is no protection for male children who may be sodomized by a coercive father.

The emphasis is on the potential genetic defects which may result in children born of incest and therefore anything short of penetration in a male/female coupling is not criminalised. This is hardly the important harm that needs to be redressed by the criminal law. It is the safety and well-being of young incest victims which is paramount. They must be protected from the trauma which results from the exploitive, rather than the sexual, nature of the offense.

In view of the recommendation for a new "breach of trust" offense, the incest section as it pertains to child victims is, at best, redundant. At worst, it is a harmful expression of past values which ignored the abuse of power in a family relationship and the consequent trauma suffered by the less powerful victim.



TO THE RESCUE

cont'd from page 25

sun's in my eyes."

He creases a napkin with his fat, ringed fingers and watches the girls jump and scurry.

Isabel plods from table to table setting out cutlery. She wishes she hadn't seen Bill Perks and Brendy together. It is the first time she's actually caught him fooling around with one of the young employees, though she knows about it. The girls talk. "Is Perksever a creep," they say. And Isabel has seen him tugging at the young girls' collars and hems, as if straightening their uniforms. She says nothing about it. She avoids looking at him when he does this. She feels sorry for the girls.

Bill Perks never touches Isabel. Her pinky-orange uniform is not only tight, bulging and pinching her flesh, but it is also inelegantly, exposing her shapeless, veined legs and her fat-encased knees.

When he asked Isabel to work Friday and Saturday nights, although she has seniority and can supposedly have all the day shifts she wants, he said, "Have a heart Isabel. You don't want those young girls working all hours if they can help it. You don't have to worry about rapists and stuff late at night, like they do."

Isabel avoids the cash register all morning. Brendy is leaning over the counter laughing and whispering with Bill Perks.

Lunch hour is busy. The March day is unseasonably warm and there are more customers than usual. Businessmen walk into the restaurant in twos and threes, carrying coats over their arms. Construction workers order beer with their lunches; taxi drivers splurge on steak and fries. Isabel lugs platters of pizza from kitchen to table, kitchen to table. The noise. The orders. The weight of the trays drums all thoughts of Bill Perks from her mind.

Shortly after twelve, all the tables are taken except for the booth at the back by the swinging doors to the kitchen. Bill Perks reserves that one for undesirables — winos, teenagers, and secretaries. At ten after twelve Brendy escorts a teenage couple to the back booth and Isabel brings them two glasses of water.

They are young, not any older than the waitresses Isabel works with. The girl sits scrunched into the corner of the booth as close to the wall as she can get. Her long, limp, blonde hair falls over her face so that only the tip of her sharp nose is visible. She is twisting a ring on one of her bony fingers and seems to be staring at her moving hands. The boy is tall and his dirty plaid shirt hangs on his thin shoulders looking too big for him. His

menu is open, unlike the girl's, but he is not reading it.

"Would you like to order now?" Isabel asks.

"Two Pilsner. We'll order some food in a minute," he says.

His eyes are dark and shiny but curiously unfocused. Isabel feels he is addressing the swinging doors of the kitchen.

Fifteen minutes later, the boy orders two more beer along with steaks, fries, and chef salads. Each time she brings the young couple more beer, Isabel notices that they are eating very slowly, merely sliding their french fries in the ketchup on their plates and poking at their steaks with their knives and forks.

At one o'clock Bill Perks stops Isabel on her way to the kitchen. He leans towards her; his breath is wet and smells of onions with which he smothers his pizza.

"I'm off to the bank. Keep an eye on those two in the back booth. I think they're high on something. Such scum. Watch they don't try to get away without paying. Oh, and keep an eye on the till. Brendy is taking her break now."

Brendy and Bill Perks leave the restaurant together and Isabel remembers the twenty dollar bill tucked into Brendy's blouse. How can the girl bear That Man, she thinks.

A month ago she overheard Brendy talking to the other girls in the kitchen. Isabel was kneeling behind an open cupboard door looking for packets of sugar. Brendy said, "I don't care. I let him hang around me for the bucks. Why not. I've got him where I want him. But — yech — the old fart. I smell grease and B.O. everytime he comes near me." At the time Isabel told herself that Brendy could easily be talking about one of her boyfriends. The "old fart" wasn't necessarily Bill Perks.

Now she thinks, foolish girl. She'll regret it someday, selling herself to that dirty man. She isn't sure how Brendy will regret it but she is comforted by the thought.

People are leaving the restaurant. Businessmen in three-piece suits stand at the counter tapping their credit cards impatiently while Isabel juggles a trayload of pizza and a pot of coffee through the disorder of uncleared tables and dawdling customers still sipping coffee or eating desserts. Her feet ache. She tries to walk briskly back to the kitchen to return the coffee pot before going to the cash register. The businessmen shift their coats from one arm to the other, looking at their watches. Where are those other girls when they're needed, Isabel

thinks disapprovingly. She is always amazed by how lazy the young waitresses are. Lately, at Bingo, it is her favourite topic of conversation. Not having a husband or children; it is the one subject which Isabel can count on to get the attention and sympathy of the other ladies at her table.

As she passes the back booth, Isabel sees the teenage boy leaning over the table. The girl is slumped forward in her corner and the boy is poking her shoulder.

"Wake up. Wake up," he keeps saying.

Isabel stops. The girl is slouched in an odd position. One arm is twisted behind her back and the other arm is lying on the table, the hand soaking in a puddle of Thousand Island dressing in the bottom of the salad bowl. Her forehead is pressed against the edge of the table and her hair falls all around her face and into the juice-leaking steak.

Isabel stoops and shakes the girl.

"Wake up," she says.

"Wake up," the boys says.

"What's wrong with her?" Isabel asks, suddenly worried.

"I don't know. She just flopped over all of a sudden." His blank, dark eyes gaze in Isabel's general direction. "We popped a couple of downers this morning. Maybe we shouldn't have drunk all this beer. I feel kind of funny."

They must have had four or five beer each, Isabel thinks, her throat constricting. Why didn't I notice? I should have done something.

She sets the pot of coffee down on the table and tries to push the girl into an upright position but the girl sags back and her head thuds against the table. Isabel takes the girl's hand out of the salad bowl and begins to wipe the dressing off with a napkin, thinking frantically about what she should do. But the hand is so cold and loose, she quickly drops it on the seat of the booth.

"Just wait here," she tells the boy, a sick feeling in her stomach. "I'm going to call an ambulance."

In the kitchen she dials the emergency number. She has never phoned for an ambulance before and her hands are trembling. Whenever anything unusual happened in the past, like the old lady with the broken legs or the suicidal man, the owner or manager took charge. But Bill Perks isn't here now, she thinks, and that girl, well, something's wrong.

After calling for the ambulance, she picks up a cup and saucer and returns to the booth. She pours the boy a cup of coffee. Then, frowning, she stares at the unconscious girl. Should she splash cold water on the girl's face?

"Hey, miss, could we have some service?" she hears one of the businessmen at the cash register call out.

"Could I have my bill?"

"I asked you for some ketchup a while ago."

Where were those other girls for goodness sake? Probably in the bathroom, smoking cigarettes while Bill Perks was away. Isabel leaves the boy and girl in the back booth. She's done her best.

She is about to walk over to the cash register when Bill Perks comes into the restaurant and scowls at Isabel when he sees the line-up at the front counter. Brendy slides behind the till and takes the credit cards and money while Bill Perks stands beside her, jovial and apologetic.

"Sorry for the wait. The girls are so rushed today. Hard to get good help. Yes, thanks, come again."

Isabel shrugs and goes to serve the other dissatisfied customers. When all the complaints are soothed over, and she has



attended a group of newcomers, Isabel walks up to the counter where the owner and the hostess are whispering and smiling over the open drawer of the cash register.

Isabel feels she's intruding. Hesitantly, she says, "That girl in the back booth has passed out. Out cold. I just called an ambulance. . ."

Brendy, Bill Perks and Isabel all hear the siren. It's a thin, wavering whine, muffled by a few blocks of distance but growing clearer by the second. Isabel is glad to hear it; the girl will soon be out of her hands. She is afraid she will be asked what sort of emergency measures she has taken. She wishes she had splashed some water on the girl.

Then she sees Bill Perks' face.

His small eyes bulge out of their fleshy folds. His knuckles whiten as he strangles the roll of bills he has been playing with. He raises his hand as if to strike Isabel but instead he shakes his fist in her face, the bills sticking out

from each end of his closed hand.

"You stupid bitch! An ambulance!" he hisses.

He grabs Brendy's arm and shoves her towards the door. "Send that ambulance away. It's all a mistake. Say anything. It's a prank."

Shocked, Isabel says urgently, "That girl, she's really bad. I think she could be, well dead or I don't know, I really think that ambulance should take her away."

Brendy stands at the door, looking at Isabel and then at Bill Perks. "If there's really something wrong, like if this chick is dying, we'd better get her out of here fast. I'm not sending that ambulance away."

Bill Perks shakes his fist of dollars at Brendy and whispers fiercely, "Shut up, you little slut. You send that ambulance away or you're fired. Do you understand?"

Two small patches of red appear on Brendy's cheeks and her eyes widen. She runs out onto the street.

Bill Perks graps Isabel's flabby upper arm and pushes her ahead of him into the kitchen. His rings and fingernails dig into her skin.

In the kitchen he swings her around and shoves his face close to hers.

"You stupid, stupid bitch. You never call an ambulance to a restaurant. To the front door! In broad daylight! Do you know what kind of reputation the place could get? What sort of game are you playing? You've been in this business long enough to know that. Trying to make me look bad, are you? Are you?"

Isabel can't speak. Her legs wobble and she has to hold onto the counter to keep from sinking to the floor. Bill Perks peers over the swinging doors at the couple in the booth and then goes to the phone.

"Damn it, if this is some hoax on the part of you or those kids, you'll pay, you old cow."

He dials a number and says, "Hi. I need a cab. Princess Steak and Pizza House. That's right. Eleventh Avenue. Back door. Yep, back alley."

He hangs up the phone and is suddenly in front of Isabel again. "You try a stunt like this again and you're through. You hear? This is your last warning. I've had enough of you. Now make that little prick pay for his steaks and get that girl out of the dining room — quietly."

He walks out of the kitchen and Isabel is shaking so much, the seams of her uniform strain with the force of the moving flesh.

She is weak with shock. How can Bill

Perks say such things? As if she'd try to make him look bad. Doesn't she want to keep her job? Doesn't she shut her eyes to all his fumbblings with the waitresses' uniforms, just so she won't be cast out? I'm going to be fired, she thinks. Tomorrow he'll hand me my cheque and tell me to leave. No notice or anything.

She is unaware that she is making little moans in her throat. Black, thick panic swamps her. She holds onto the counter with both hands, as if it were the only solid thing in the room.

One of the other waitresses jostles Isabel as she enters the kitchen to collect an order.

"Watcha doing just standing around?" the girl says irritably.

Isabel shouts suddenly, "And what if I am? Don't I have a right to stand around as much as you? You and your lazy, good-for-nothing friends?"

The girl is startled and hurries away to fetch her order. She begins whispering to the cook, but Isabel doesn't notice their stares in her direction.

Isabel is remembering Bill Perks saying, "You'll pay, you old cow."

She shivers slightly. She lets go of the counter and takes a few hesitant steps to the swinging doors. Her pace gains momentum and she crashes through the doors and come to a halt beside the back booth.

"Help me get this girl to the back door," she says coldly to the boy.

He stumbles to his feet, bumping into the table, looking vaguely at Isabel as she tugs the girl's arm. The limp body almost slides off the plastic seat, onto the floor.

"Damn it. Give me a hand," Isabel shouts. The boy leaps and grabs the girl under her armpits. Isabel notices several customers looking up at the sound of her voice.

A small idea flickers in the back of her mind. She tries to brush it away.

She and the boy drag the slack body into the kitchen. It flops around and nearly slips from their grip until they drop it onto a chair by the back door.

"Hold her up for God's sake," she snaps at the boy who stares at Isabel blankly as if he doesn't even know who the unconscious girl is or what he is doing here.

Isabel paces the kitchen floor, restlessly. The small idea pricks at her. She goes to the swinging doors and opens them just a crack. She sees customers staring at each other, whispering. She sees Brendy sitting by the cash register, looking unhappily out the window. Bill

cont'd on page 46

REVIEWS

Pure Lust; The Times of Daly

French feminists Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous, Nicole Brossard and Madeleine Ouellette-Michalska are defining, re-claiming, re-calling, dis-covering words that focus sharply on women owning/realising their own language. An outstanding author of the English genre is Mary Daly, the Shrewd Prude who has courageously forged ahead to combine her insistent re-claiming of words with an Elemental feminist philosophy. "The waking of minds is accompanied by the waking of words." (HERizons, June/July 1984, p. 23)

Pure Lust, since it is a work of studied errata, is a Mistake — at least, from a patriarchal perspective. It is also part of the creative crystallizing of women's experience, an exploration of Feminist Elemental Be-ing which thrives on proud Wanderlust/Wonderlust.

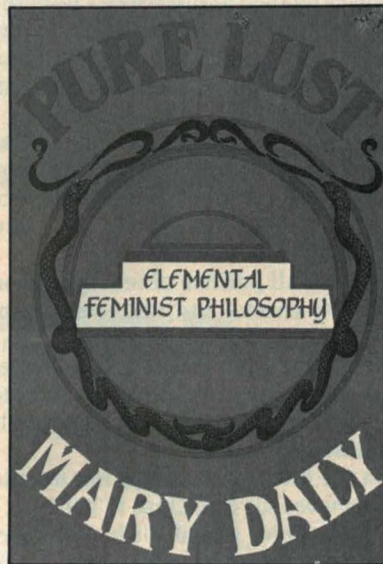
"The Wanderers of this Work meander through three Realms of Spheres, coursing first through Arch-spheres, the Realm of Origins; then through Pyrospheres, the Purifying Realm of Fire; and last through Metamorphospheres, the Realm of graceless/Graceful transformations. Our struggles are Battles of Life-Lust, transcending the States of Stag-Nation. Our Quest implies constant Creation." (Preface, xi.)

In recalling original wholeness, Daly spins through the experiences of women who, in spite of all odds, struggle to remember themselves and their history in the 1980s; a period of extreme danger for women and their sister the earth and her other creatures. All are targeted by maniacal fathers, sons and holy ghosts for extinction. Her aim is for meta-patriarchal consciousness alive and growing, passion for what is most intimate and most ultimate, an intense joy of woman-identified bonding and creation.

It is necessary to approach this monumental work with, first, a dictionary, and secondly, with a perservering, courageous mind, as Daly's writing has become not only more intense but also more philosophical since her last book *Gyn/Ecology*. For a new Wanderer, Daly's language is perhaps complicated and obtuse. And yet, once fundamental words such as sadosociety, sadospiritualism, elemental and gynergy (all in-

Adena Franz

Pure Lust by Mary Daly, Boston: Beacon Press, 1984, \$25.75.



cluded in Daly's index of new words) are understood, a-mazing new in-sights leap to the foreground and every chapter whirls the reader beyond existing perspectives. It is an exciting and compelling book, virtually impossible to put down once started.

Daly's audience is exclusive: women-minded readers. Her prominent metaphors, the building blocks of feminist language, would be incomprehensible to anyone with a male mind (i.e. patterned patriarchal beliefs). Daly picks up every nuance through which patriarchy has established its phallic mode of thought. These she brings out as they stand, nakedly blatant, stripped of all decorative value so that we cannot be deceived or choose to be led further along a so-called "it's-good-for-you-women" path.

For example, "theologians such as Paul Tillich have tried to write of 'creative justice'. Yet this effort is so alien to Pyrosocial awareness and analysis, so reinforcing of submission and of what can be called the feminine imperative, that it will make a feminist's flesh crawl. Tillich writes, for example:

Creative Justice demands . . . that he be accepted who is unacceptable in

terms of proportional justice. In accepting him into the unity of forgiveness, love exposes both the acknowledged break with justice on his side with all its implicit consequences and the claim inherent in him to be *declared* just and to be *made* just by reunion (emphasis by Daly).

Certainly, acts of forgiveness are necessary in any deep relationship. But this is not all that Tillich is arguing for." (p. 277) Daly goes on with an exercise to prove that Tillich's logic is useless if used in cases of sexual assault or wife battering. Even worse, his moral verbiage serves the structures of oppression.

Using Tillich and some other patriarchal texts (most of which were written at the expense of women) as secondary springboards, Daly exposes and names the Sadosociety for what it is: boreocracy, (a member of snotboys, butchers, plug-uglies, fixers, studs, to name only a few, p. 22), a society legitimated by sadospirituality. St. Jerome, Gandhi, T.E. Lawrence, Dag Hammarskjöld, Robert Oppenheimer serve as examples in a long list of snoolish scholars who have drained women of wholeness, memory and Be-ing.

And that is only a beginning. Daly does not flinch from describing precisely who has undermined women and how. This naming process requires Elemental faith and an irrevocable commitment to the cause of women and all Elemental Be-ing. We become Dragons, Maenads, Hags, Prudes, Scolds, Vixens, Websters and Weirds who are able to laugh wildly at sadospiritual males attempting to cover up their sense of impotence (John Paul II, Ronald Reagan). We become Racy Women who Sin in the most colossal and cosmic way by be-ing Elemental. New Voyagers may join at any time.

To follow Daly through her Realms of Pure Lust is sometimes incredibly hard, requiring Outrageous Courage and focused gynergetic fury. To bring about change in our sadosociety is to convert our potted anger and fear into gynergizing Rage/Courage, encouraging one another to Realize our Tidal connections which are at once astounding, absorbing and utterly be-wildering.

It is a journey wherein the much longed-for Feminist University already exists. Stolen women's words come home to us in any lusty act, such as writing, creating pots, painting, Take Back the Night marches, work in battered women's shelters, concerts, anti-porn protests. These are creative Spiralings of time, divinations of a future we create.

Among the many institutions Daly inspires along this journey, Elemental Feminists will realize that:

— the experienced reality of women who continue to Move includes moments of Moving Alone, ("Aunt

Mehetabel" and Her Muse, p. 305);

— Female Dreaming is noisy, joyous and musical;

— feminist separatism is a communal process, affirming the flow of connectedness within each woman — her Presence of Presence;

— spirituality rich Ugly Old Maids, that is, Spinsters/Prudes, are enabled to ask the right questions which can crack vacuous stereotypes;

— Elemental philosophy is of the world and it is for those who love and belong to this world, who experience Be-Longing in this world, who refuse the horror of Self-loss implied in dy-

ing "with Christ" to the Elemental spirits of the universe;

— backlash against the Wild movement of Erratic women from those who perpetually preach against "cruelty" even as they perpetuate biocidal acts is to be boringly expected and predictable;

— metaphoric hops/leaps are hopeful.

Daly calls out the invitation to anyone sensing these Other dimensions, who realize what it means to be a radical feminist. For, "nothing is really lost to those who Lust. Our luck is with the Fates." (p. 416) ▼

REVIEWS

The Journey

Yvette Parr

I was totally enthralled to read this book. Anne Cameron is a Canadian author who has previously published the acclaimed *Dreamspeaker* and *Daughters of Copper Woman*. *The Journey* is the story of two women who "rode, fought, and, shot their way across the Canadian Frontier. Their names are Anne and Sarah."

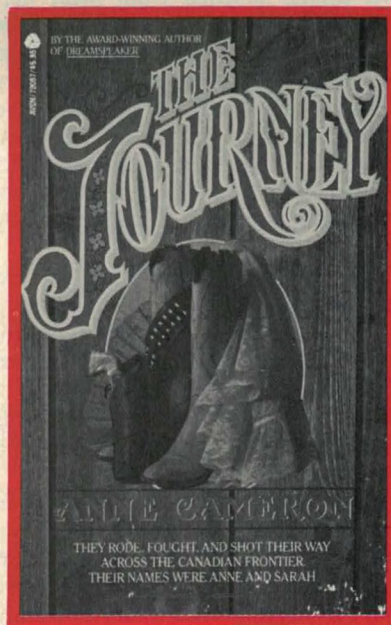
At the outset of the story, Anne is 14 years old. She soon escapes from her stepfather who has terrorised her and her mother for years. This treatment culminates in her mother's death due to his refusal to get urgently needed medical treatment. In the face of this situation Anne shows ingenuity, strength and fortitude.

After burning down the family farm house and presumably incinerating her hateful stepfather, she plans her trip West with much aforethought. I was there, in spirit, rooting for her.

Sarah, the book's other major character, is a dance hall girl; one of the painted/tainted ladies opening up the illustrious West featuring honky tonk saloons and the feverish search for gold. After a few mishaps of her own Anne meets Sarah who, branded a whore, is being tarred and feathered by the town's citizenry.

Joining forces, the pair start up a fies-ty, unique relationship full of sensitivity and comraderie. Anne teaches Sarah some survival tactics and feeds her Prairie Dog and anything else edible

The Journey by Anne Cameron. Avon Books, 959-8th Ave., New York, NY 10019.



they can forage. Sarah, in turn, shows Anne another side of life when she is introduced to Belle and her bevy of dance hall beauties.

The author has woven a portrait of life in the old West; a fantasy that embarks on a reality that women can, will and do act strongly in their lives.

Anne's stepfather daunts their journey as Anne and Sarah learn to survive by their wits and talents.

Sarah becomes pregnant and Anne's tenderness for her friend is touching. The birthing scene is described poignantly. Later in the book, Sarah is raped and withdraws bitterly into isolation only to be healed by Indian women with their knowledge of herbs and spiritual ceremonies. Inevitably Anne and Sarah become lovers and in this book lesbian love is not belittled or sensationalised, rather, it is affirmed. Anne and Sarah bond in their love for each other despite the pressures of their society and grow together with Sarah's daughter and the other children they've accumulated along the way.

From the beginning to end, Anne Cameron had me sad, happy, tense, enthralled in a myriad of emotional journeys that denote her true gift as a storyteller. Read *The Journey* if you want to be transported into the world of two strong women who are very likely reminiscent of real women in the times of the Wild West, but whose stories were never recorded. ▼

REVIEWS

Reality of Abortion Documented

Studio D, the Women's Studio of the National Film Board of Canada launched a powerful and moving film about abortion at Toronto's Festival of Festivals in early September. Decried for its "untimely" opening during the Pope's visit, *Abortion: Stories from North and South*, written and directed by Gail Singer, speaks for women around the world. The film is about women's right to safe, medical care.

Filmed in Ireland, Peru, Thailand, Japan, Canada and Columbia, Singer's film is a random global survey of abortion, and confirms that abortion is a daily occurrence in all societies, crossing lines of race, religion and social class. A young woman in Ireland is confronted with an unwanted pregnancy. In a country with a prohibition on abortion and on the dissemination of birth control information, her only option is a family planning service in Dublin, where arrangements are made for her to have an abortion at a clinic in London. The young woman worries that her identity will be revealed and that the London clinic will attempt to contact her employer. The counsellor assures her that her anonymity will be protected. A midwife in Thailand gives her daughter painful abdominal massages daily for a week to induce miscarriage, but her efforts fail. She seeks the help of a doctor at the local health clinic who is willing to perform an abortion, but it conflicts with her spiritual beliefs.

The film's final segment is about Columbian women who have had abortions performed by unlicensed abortionists. It shows that public health care in Columbia is inadequate and the local people say that one goes to the hospital only to die. A doctor who "does not believe in abortion" tries to save the lives of these women. But most of them die as a result of the unsafe procedures or of the diseases they contract in the hospital's wards.

Exploring the abortion issue in a social context and presenting the related facts, this film will be an important tool for public education. By appealing to both sides of the pro-choice polarity, the film focuses the abortion debate away from narrow moral perspectives and discusses women's need, and their right, to safe medical care.



Gail Singer. Photo: Kandice Abbott.

Toba Bryant

Only a small percentage of the world's women have access to safe abortion, and information about birth control is not available to all women. And no contraceptive is completely safe and effective. Singer learned from local herbalists that herbal remedies are not always reliable birth control because they require a certain kind and quality of soil to be effective. The film also underlines how in many cultures, women continue to be socialized to accept sex as their duty and are valued only for the number of children they produce.

Singer's film universalises the experience of abortion. One cannot help but be emotionally affected by the injustice that the film reveals in its examination of the cross-cultural reality of abortion. The experience is, in the words of a Japanese woman, something women "press down and hide."

Singer describes the project in positive terms; one which would not have been possible without the support and funding of Studio D. She discovered that her all-women crew had an advantage in obtaining permission to film in the different countries. The authorities assumed that there was little harm that a group of women could do. In Peru, for example, Singer and her crew were permitted to film inside the women's prison.

Singer wanted to treat abortion for what it is: a universal experience. She

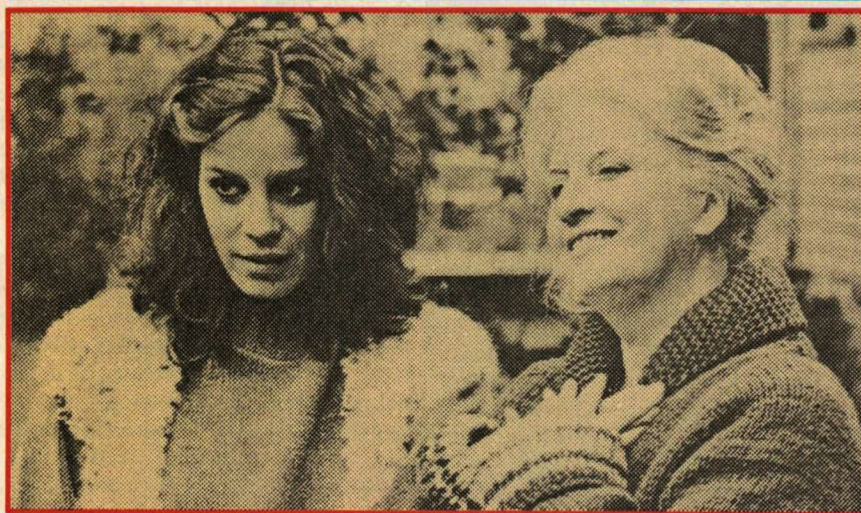
explains: "I wanted to show it (abortion) as an everyday experience. The position of the film is that abortion exists no matter what restrictions prevail: legal, religious or medical. The corollary is that to deny women access to safe medical procedures is tantamount to condemning them to sickness, infertility, misery and even death."

The film also asserts the need to promote family planning and improve the means of birth control. Singer's film is provocative and should raise constructive discussion on abortion and related issues.

Abortion: Stories from North and South marks a new direction for Gail Singer, whose film career began in 1968. She started to work full-time on documentary films in 1972. In the mid to late 1970s, Singer made half-hour television documentaries, usually about the plight of native people, ecology or the North. These works included *Riverain: Gift of Passage*, *Time of the Cree*, *We Don't Live Here Anymore*, *Seasons of Plenty* and *Arctic Oil Spills*. In 1979, on the invitation of Michael Scott executive-producer of the NFB prairie region, Singer wrote and directed a half hour film about battered wives entitled *Loved, Honoured and Bruised*. It was filmed at a Winnipeg shelter for battered women and their children and was honoured at film festivals in Canada, the United States, Australia and Ireland. This film and *Portrait of the Artist as an Old Lady* (1982), a profile of painter Paraskeva Clark, are personal explorations from a woman's point of view. ▼

REVIEWS

It Can't Be Winter...



Deborah Clarke

"I married at eighteen and all of a sudden I was fifty — it's hard to remember what came in between." Thinking back over a lifetime devoted to a husband and eight children, recently widowed Adele Marquis is stunned by the sudden absence of her husband, although she does not miss him. The poignant story of Adele's liberation from the confines of her married life — in a sense her rebirth — is the focus of Quebecois feminist filmmaker Louise Carré's award-winning film, *It Can't Be Winter, We Haven't Had Summer Yet*.

The film's opening scene portrays the well-known and desperate situation faced by most women in Adele's situation. At 57, she is left without a pension, few marketable working skills, and a heavily mortgaged house. In spite of these realities the film fails to deal realistically with Adele's financial situation.

Adele's children view her as a helpless dependent and see no alternative but for her to move in with one of them. One daughter, Camille, unsympathetically points out Adele's inadequacies, refusing to see her mother as an independent woman. She wonders, "What's to become of mama? Whenever I think of her I still see daddy by her side," but she adds, significantly, "and yet, he wasn't often there."

Adele herself has a difficult time

believing in her own capabilities. She spends the first lonely winter in her house. Yet stubbornly refusing to move, she turns over the photos of her dead husband as if trying to remove his power over her. When Camille comes to the house in mid-winter and finds the clock stopped, the phone disconnected due to neglected bills, and a graying, defeated looking woman, she concludes that her father must really have treated her mother "like a princess all those years."

This daughter's unfair accusation serves as a turning point in the film. Adele finds herself free to do things she's never been free to do before; she goes to a bar, buys new clothes, cuts her hair and gets her drivers' licence. She copes with her financial problems by taking a boarder with whom she develops a wonderfully sensitive relationship. She confesses to him that survival within her marriage had depended upon regular escape through her daydreams. She had hoped and prayed that her children would not be girls because they too would be forced to "live in their heads."

The real demonstration of Adele's liberation is the refusal of her boarder's offer of marriage. Although remarriage would have been the most likely route for Adele to take, she puts her house up for sale instead and sets out to fulfill her life long dream of travelling.

The recent Toronto showing of the film at the Rivoli Cafe was sponsored by "Women's Action for Peace". ▼

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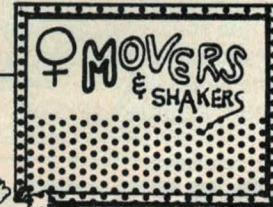
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NOT JUST PIN MONEY — Selected Essays on the history of women's work in British Columbia. The 30 papers are available in limited edition for \$12. Cheques payable to Camosun College, 3100 Foul Bay Road, Victoria, B.C. V8P 4X8.

The Canadian Artist and the Income Tax Act Booklet is available from the Canadian Council's Communication Service. The 27-page booklet deals with six problem areas: inventory; cash basis or accrual basis of accounting; employee status or self-employed status; reasonable expectation of profit; block averaging; and tax treatment of Canada Council grants. For a copy call Helen Murphy, toll free at 1-800-267-8282.

WINDSCRIPTS's fall publication, Volume 2, Number 2 containing literary and visual art of Saskatchewan high school students is available for \$3. Distributed to all Saskatchewan high schools, the magazine is used extensively by Saskatchewan teachers for class room instruction and is also in bookstores and on newsstands. Copies can be obtained from the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild, Box 3986, Regina, S4P 3R9.

What is the Midwifery Task Force? The MFT is a growing number of health professionals, parents and other supporters working toward the recognition of midwifery in Ontario. Because many people in Ontario do not know about the midwifery option, we are actively pursuing our objective through public education and lobbying work as well as drafting legislation. To do this work effectively, we must raise funds on an ongoing basis via membership dues (which include the quarterly newsletter *Issue*), social functions, conferences and donations. We enthusiastically welcome all health consumers and professionals to join us as active members. The Midwifery Task Force, Postal Station 'T', Box 489, Toronto, M6B 5C2 (416) 537-2257/294-4832.

PLACES OF INTEREST TO WOMEN — the American women's guide to the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean. Be it Halifax, Topeka or San Juan, the compact listings provide instant familiarity with what's going on in the lesbian community. This year's issue includes: women's bookstores, hotels, bars, restaurants, publications, centres, hotlines, women's land, churches, organisations and AA groups; all updated by the lesbian publishers and staff. For mail order, send \$7.00 (include 1st class postage) to Ferrari publications, P.O. Box 35575, Phoenix, AZ 85069.

WOMEN'S ACTION FOR PEACE is currently attempting to raise money for legal fees for taking part in a civil disobedience action at Litton Industries last November. Donation would be much appreciated and can be sent to: Women's Action for Peace, c/o Ruth McMurdy, 23 Huron St., Toronto, Ontario, M5T 2A2.

INTERNATIONAL FEMINISM — Networking against Female Sexual Slavery report from the April 1983 Global Feminist Workshop to Organise Against Traffic in Women has just been released. The report presents material on the practices of female sexual slavery and forced prostitution of women globally. Cost \$6 U.S. (air mail postage extra). Distributed by: International Women's Tribune Centre, 777 U.N. Plaza, New York, 10017.

TO THE RESCUE

cont'd from page 41

Perks is walking among the tables, smiling. He's probably telling the customers that the girl is drunk when the truth is she's half-dead. May even be dead for all I know, Isabel thinks, too chilled by the idea to take the girl's pulse. She watches Bill Perks waddle and laugh. She remembers the fist of dollars shoved into her face. She remembers him calling her a cow and accusing her of trying to make trouble for him.

She slips back into the kitchen, collects her purse and stuffs her street clothes into a plastic bag. She sits down beside the boy and the limp body until the taxi arrives, only two minutes later. The driver helps haul the girl into the car and the boy scrambles into the back seat beside her, just as she slumps forward, lifelessly. Isabel slams the car door and the taxi skids away. She sees the boy turn and look out of the back window. He smiles and waves good-bye, as if he were going on a trip.

Quickly she returns to the restaurant, her hands twisting the plastic bag nervously, though her eyes are bright. She opens the swinging doors wide. There are still several customers in the restaurant. Bill Perks is at the counter and Brendy is sitting at the table, sullen.

"Bill," Isabel calls out, feeling bold not calling him "Mr. Perks." She licks her lips, then plunges. "Looks like a case of food poisoning. Guess we're going to take the girl to the hospital. She's pretty bad. Maybe you should take the steak off the menu."

All the customers cease eating and talking. Brendy jerks her head around and her face breaks into a huge grin when she sees Isabel. Bill Perks lunges forward and his hands grab at thin air.

Isabel runs clumsily out of the restaurant and into the warm spring sunshine in the back alley.

The sun dazzles her eyes and she remembers Brendy's broad grin. Isabel begins to cough and sputter. Laughter bursts out of her as she runs, letting her thin coat flap open, swinging her arms back and forth. Laughing and huffing she runs all the way around the block passing by the front window of Princess Steak and Pizza House. She pushes her nose against the glass and waves at Bill Perks, the flustered waitresses, the empty, littered tables. Then, her lungs burning and her breath coming out in gasps and laughs, she walks on and doesn't look back. ▼

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