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WOMEN'S NEWSAND

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## Unless All of Us are Safe: None of Us is Safe

September ushers in the annual Take Back the Night March; the time when feminists take to the streets to make a strong statement against society's continued tolerance of violence against women. But someone who is already on the streets night after night might not be marching — the woman who works as a prostitute.

Still, prostitutes are also organising in their own interest and for their own safety. Winnipeg's chapter of the Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes (ASP) has followed the example of ASP in Vancouver and Calgary by publishing a Bad Trick Sheet. With information regularly supplied by the women on the street and distributed among themselves, all pros can be on the lookout for the men who have threatened or committed crimes of murder, rape, assault and robbery against other prostitutes. These women want to protect themselves. They should also get protection from the local police force.

Instead, taking their lead from Toronto's finest. Winnipeg police have laid over 50 charges (some women have been charged more than once). *Counselling to commit an indecent act* is the charge the cops expect will help them put a crimp in the activities of the 40 to 50 prostitutes who they claim are overrunning the Albert Street warehouse district. Most of these charges will come to trial in November or December. If they stick, as in Toronto, the city clerks should be raking in about \$12,500 for the city coffers. Should the convicted women not be able to pay the fines, their collective alternative is a potential of 150 months or 12½ years in jail.

Either way, in real or potential earning losses, this will mean a lot of extra work at the old grind. At the average cost of \$60 a trick, these women will have to turn an extra 200 tricks to pay off their fines. All this is not even counting the lawyer's fees.

While the recent extensive and expensive Fraser Commission recommended that prostitutes should be able to ply their trade from small private establishments. namely their apartments, the Winnipeg vice division, in its report to city council, decried the cost (\$427.750 per year) of the eight extra men they estimate they would need to enforce these recommendations. Yet, how much is it already costing the city to entrap prostitutes with undercover cops, lay 50 charges and pay the police to testify in court? What are the additional court costs? This money would be better spent on ensuring no crimes are committed against prostitutes.

Meanwhile, back at the not so hallowed city hall, city councillors weren't that anxious to have prostitutes disappear when they found it prudent to stall a request before the executive policy committee for a \$40,000 per year counselling centre for juvenile prostitutes (an extimated 30 per cent) in the city. Even a suggestion to cover the expenditure with the \$3,000 annual fees levied against massage parlours and escort services did not melt their cold, cold hearts. One could surmise parlour workers would much rather have their hard earned money pay for this storefront centre to help juveniles than fix some leaky watermains.

Perhaps the city is spending much of its revenue to subsidise the refurbishing of the very warehouse area where many Winnipeg prostitutes work, in order to attract those desirable Yuppie apartment dwellers? Maybe if prostitutes weren't continuously ripped off by Johns and spurious fines, they could afford the \$500 to \$800 monthly rents for those trendy warehouse suites. Then they could work where they live and live where they work, satisfying the recommendations of the Fraser Commission with the deferred property tax blessings of the city no less.

But lest 1 get too utopian in my hopes for all of us to take back the night. September also ushers in the wrath of Justice Minister John Crosbie who's taking back the law: he will ask parliament to pass a street soliciting law (Bill C-49) despite Fraser's comprehensive recommendations to decriminalise prostitution. Besides impeding vehicular and pedestrian traffic, winking, blinking and nodding between sellers and buyers will be criminalised on the suspicion that this behaviour might lead to pay-for-sex (not dinner) encounters. This bill, once passed by our legislators, will make the street vending of sex illegal. I just hope at Crosbie's next constituency fundraiser, when the Playboy bunny jumps out of his cake, she doesn't come on too strong. I hear, they may even start charging the Johns.

Seriously, many social advocacy and women's groups spent long hours preparing thoughtful and realistic recommendations for the Fraser Commission. The Commission, agreeing that women work as prostitutes because of economic need and a lack of alternatives, advised against further criminalisation. Our municipalities and federal governments are determined to protect their interest in our lives. A pimp by any other name is still a pimp.

Come on women, let's take back the night for all of us working women.

Brigitte Sutherland

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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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#### Dear Editors:

Christine Kulyk's *Science Fiction* with a Difference is very interesting. but I wonder if Läaden is a pale imitation of something that has already been done very successfully for both men and women.

Esperanto is a language which attempts to be more precise than all modern languages; yet it is easier to learn than any other, and its spelling is strictly phonetic. Its original purpose was to foster world peace.

However, Harry Harrison, the wellknown science-fiction writer who introduces Esperanto into many of his books, doesn't appear to think it will succeed in bringing peace. For example, in the 30th century when the planet Earth has long been destroyed and its inhabitants are dispersed among various other planets in the Universe, Esperanto is understood by everyone, but wars are still rampant.

There is a free 10-lesson postal course in Esperanto available to anyone who wishes to learn this precise and easy language. The lessons are marked by volunteers. Information about the course can be had from The Canadian Esperanto Association, C.P. 126, St. Beaubien, Montréal, Qué, H2G 3C8.

#### Sincerely, Esperantist

#### Dear HERizons.

Seven years later, here I am, a feminist, still living in this small northern, one-industry town. It is called Iroquois Falls and is located north of North Bay, about 300 miles. According to the tourist pamphlets. Iroquois Falls is known as the "garden town of the north." I can't help but grin every time I come across the description. Certainly there are a few gardens around, but that can hardly justify the picturesque description Iroquois Falls was given.

So what does a feminist do in a male-dominated town? She tries hard to hold onto her sanity. Mind you, I wasn't always a feminist. When I first arrived, I was your typical, loving wife, who cooked wonderful dishes and anxiously awaited her husband's return from a far off bush camp. Those were lonely days when I was too shy to meet people and relished the safety of our small apartment. The love of my life was rarely home and long distance phone calls to my family were frequent. Those calls didn't make me feel like I was reaching out and touching someone. Rather, I felt more depressed because I realized how far out of reach they actually were.

Nothing was familiar to me, not the french I heard around me, nor the constant talking about others which was so much a part of the small town atmosphere. I remember taking my first taxi ride and the driver telling me how much I was going to enjoy living in a small town. He cautioned me. Everybody knew everybody else's business. Coming from Toronto, it fascinated and alienated me to see so much interest taken in other people's lives. Back home, you were just another face in the crowd. But in Iroquois Falls, people talked about you. Though it may not always be good, at least they knew you existed.

That was my first impression several years ago and the town hasn't changed much. But I have. Due to some very important people in my life, I grew and changed. I still feel lonely. But it's a different kind of loneliness that has taken over. I feel I am amongst the few feminists who are a minority that share the feminist perspective. To simply acknowledge vourself as such is similar to having the bubonic plague. People fear the word as if being a feminist means being a radical, man-hating woman. How can we make them understand that we are not out to expel them, but to add the word "equality" to their vocabulary?

Iroquois Falls is isolated from the rest of Ontario in the sense that new ideas and views are slow in being accepted. The graduating teenagers in the town tend to hold onto their grandparents' stereotyped views. If you're lucky enough to be hired at the paper mill and protected by a union, you are often subjected to rude sexual comments and sexism at its best.

I feel like a closet feminist sometimes, as I realize how gently I must introduce feminist views in order to reach a greater scope of women and not frighten them away. It can be so frustrating and tiresome because often I feel like shouting out at the inequality and sexism being practiced here. I remain optimistic as I realise change is possible. The wheels of progress have started to turn in the form of a consciousness raising and support group which is slowly becoming a reality. Eventually, we hope to reach the women who need a place to go to for support and information for whatever the cause.

Alcoholism and wife beating are just a few of the more popular problems. They're real and large in number, unlike the facilities for the women. Only recently has a home for battered women been established in our area. For three to six weeks, the home offers ten women and their children the opportunity to reexamine their lives with the help of trained staff. This is just a band-aid solution though. Still, what is needed is a place where women can go to share and have access to new ideas. which will enable them to realise their self worth.

So while other feminists across Canada are struggling over issues to agree on and fight for, those of us in small communities are plowing ahead to educate women to just feel comfortable with the word "feminist". We have a long way to go. Even if the rest of Canada takes on the feminist perspective, it's isolated towns like Iroquois Falls that will stagnate if we let them. So, we go on.

#### Kim Gareau Iroquois Falls, Ont.

Re: A Letter from the Country by Luanne Armstrong, March 85 issue:

As Carol and Laura, I am also a 'city' person living in the country. After 22 years as a professional social worker, four years ago I 'retired' and moved to the country, 65 kms west of Edmonton, to live on an acreage where we are building ourselves our home. Fearing intellectual stagnation and as I am alone two weeks out of three (my companion's work schedule), every fall and winter I take correspondence courses from a university. Spring and summer I am busy attending to our garden (and subsequent food processing!), our 10 acres which need both clearing of dead trees and the planting of new ones etc. etc. HERizons might like to compute a list of universities offering correspondence courses which, incidentally, one may take for pleasure or for credits towards a degree. I have used Waterloo U. courses, and know that Saskatoon, UBC, Memorial U. (Newfoundland) all offer fascinating and diverse courses. It may not be the answer for all of us but for some of us it may be salvation!

#### Sincerely, Louise Garand Dunfield, Alberta

Dear HERizons:

Please renew my subscription to HERizons. I am elated to find that your magazine has finally "gone national". I left Manitoba four years ago, but still deemed myself vicariously eligible for the "Manitoba Womyn's News Magazine".

I am relieved at your refusal to fold despite the pressures of the fundamentalist movement with its attempts to refute everything staunchly pro-womyn like HERizons.

I have been consistently pleased with the high quality content and especially with your pro-womyn advertising policy. Thank-you.

As an activist for womyn's reproductive rights, I observe your battles with great interest and empathy. However, our media tends to lend voice and credence to those opposing womyn's rights and we are thus isolated from our sister's triumphs and victories. I sorely miss your "Choice Update" column and wonder at its seeming demise. Please... we desperately NEED both defeats and triumphs articulated in our national news magazine!

Other issues which I would like to see addressed are those specifically affecting single parent womyn like myself especially the great issue of womyn in poverty (eg. "womyn on welfare").

I anticipate the monthly arrival of HERizons and always prepare to take a good portion of its arrival date "off" in order to savour it in a cover-tocover perusal.

Please continue the fight and keep faith.

#### In Sisterhood Lynette Dueck Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Dear Debbie,

Enclosed you will find a subscription. I am wishing you much success. I have hoped for quite a while for a magazine other than Chatelaine, for women.

As a feminist and a full time homemaker, I am hoping your magazines will deal with my particular concerns, as well as articles such as "discrimination in the work place." Examples of my concerns (and many other full time homemakers) would be pensions for homemakers, and tax breaks for homemakers since our family income is so much lower yet I cannot deduct tuition fees for myself or child care for the children. I may not have an income, but my husband's income is considered family income I'm running on

Much success with your magazine.

Sincerely yours, Thea Voort, B.Sc., B.Ed. Bramalea, Ont.

Dear Herizons

I have been watching your magazine for the past year and think it has improved immensely.

I am enclosing a money order which was originally destined for Chatelaine. I think this is the much better choice.

> Carolyn Seely Mayo Portugal Cove, Newfoundland

Dear HERizons:

Just want to drop you a quick line to thank you for a valuable contribution to Canadian (and especially Canadian Women's) media.

It is particularly pleasant to get



something generated from other places. I am not a native Torontonian — and much as I enjoy my life here, I wouldn't want to see us lose sight (and vision for) our nationwide movement.

#### **Lois Heitner**

#### Dear Women at Herizons

This magazine is right on — it has punch, wit, humour, and it says it like it is. A friend of mine subscribes to Herizons and leaves her copies, when she's finished in our office. As soon as I started reading them, I also became aware through newspaper accounts, that Herizons is under seige, and for one of the usual reasons — women taking a powerful stand on issues. A traditionally unfeminine thing for us to do.

I felt that reading someone else's copies wasn't enough — Herizons needs our support and every \$15.00 it can get, so here is mine for a year's subscription. This magazine performs a vital, important function for women. My heartfelt thanks to you for a job well done, and may you be able to keep up the good work for us.

**Heather Bright** 

#### Greetings:

I was very pleased to receive your invitation to subscribe to the woman's news magazine with which you are involved. I guess it is the courage shown by your organisation, in sending literature to the male of the species, that caught my attention. I would be interested to know whether that decision has been a satisfying one in terms of the philosophical response that you received since its implementation.

I think that the fact that males and females are born intellectually equal is indisputable. It therefore saddens me immensely that the male is giving such a poor account of himself. I guess what I'm trying to say is that in spite of outward appearances, men are really equal to women. It's just that the male ego impairs male judgement, and because males have been historically in "control", women are required to be much, much more competent than their male competitors in our society today.

Looking forward to my first magazine I remain

> Yours truly J. Fiorito

#### PRAIRIE REGION

#### AD HOC MANITOBA COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS END OF DECADE FOR WOMEN CONFERENCE —

Will be holding a Post-Conference All-Day Public Meeting on Saturday, **September 14th, 1985** at Riddel Hall, University of Winnipeg. Reports will come from Manitoba women who attended the conferences in Nairobi, Kenya this summer. For more information contact Glenda Gerbrandt at 947-9699.

#### TAKE BACK THE NIGHT MARCH —

Friday, **September 20, 1985** at 8:00 PM. Rally at the Manitoba Legislative Building. Women's march and social to follow. Childcare available upon request; please preregister by calling 453-3879.

#### STAR WORDS: A WRITER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY -

Is the title of the fourth annual literary conference and annual general meeting of the Manitoba Writers' Guild to be held at the Winnipeg Museum of Man and Nature on **October 3-5, 1985.** The conference will focus on the future of writing, from computers and new writing technology, to forms, styles and content of future writing. For information contact Phyllis Laing, Manitoba Writers' Guild, 374 Donald Ave., Winnipeg (204) 942-6134.

#### COMING ALIVE IN '85 -

Saskatchewan Childcare Conference will be held in Saskatoon on **October 4. 5 and 6, 1985** and is sponsored by the Saskatoon Professional Child Care Associaton, Inc. For brochure write to: Mary-Ann Ludwar, Preston Avenue Day Care, 1529 Preston Ave., Saskatoon S7H 2V6 (306) 573-3535/374-7952.

#### AFFIRMATIVE ACTION YOUTH EMPLOYMENT -

Strategy Conference will take place late in October with approximately 150 youth from different ethnic minority groups and 50 of employers interviewed during summer, to give both groups an opportunity to outline the difficulties they face in employment. Rights of immigrants and refugees in the work force will also be discussed. Contacts: Karen Jensen,



The Children's Home of Winnipeg (204) 786-8431 Ext. 263; or, Sukhie Dhaliwal and Helen Escobar, IYY/AAYES Project Coordinators (204) 786-8431 Ext. 272.

#### EASTERN REGION

**WOMEN AND OFFSHORE OIL** — The implication of offshore oil and gas development for women will be discussed at this international conference at Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland on **September 5-7, 1985.** The conference theme is two-fold: the offshore labour force, and implications for the family. Contact: Dr. Jane Lewis, Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's AIC 5S7 (709) 737-6592.

#### CANADIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION CONVENTION -

From **September 17-20**, **1985** in Quebec City will highlight 1985 International Year of Youth with topics: Values held by youth; the new reality; towards an education system better adapted to youth, etc. Contact: CEA office, Suite 8-200, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto M5S 1V5 (416) 924-7721.

#### CHILD CARE WORK: CREATIVITY IN TIMES OF RESTRAINT -

Is the theme of the 14th Conference on Professional Practice in Toronto on **September 26-27**, **1985**. Contact: Child Care Workers' Association of Ontario, Inc., P.O. Box 90, Weston, Ontario M9N 3M6



WOMEN & DEVELOPMENT: BEYOND THE DECADE -

This conference is an opportunity to reflect on some of the main issues of the past ten years and those emanating from the UN Conference in Nairobi. Information: Dev. Ed. Prog., Ctr. for Int'l Prog., 15 University Ave., E., Guelph, Ont. NIC 2WI (519) 824-4120 Ext. 3778.

#### WESTERN REGION

#### NATION-WIDE ISSUES, NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION —

People Making the Difference is the theme of the annual conferences of the CACE and the ACE/BC at the Empress Hotel, Victoria on **October 24-26, 1985.** The aim is to learn ways of using community education as a means of taking local initiative on large-scale national and international issues. Information: Angie Preston, Comm. School Coord., James Bay Comm. School, 140 Oswega St., Victoria, B.C. V8V 2B1 (604) 384-7184.

#### INTERNATIONAL

#### VIII INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE WORLD ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN JOURNALISTS AND WRITERS —

Is being held in Mexico City **September** 22 - 28, 1985 with the theme subject being "High Technology: Unlocking the Human Potential."

For a copy of the program or other information, write Gloria Salas de Calderéon and Kena Moreno, Comite Organizador, Bosque del Molino 54, La Herradura, Mexico 11000, D.F., Mexico.

#### SUBMISSIONS

#### ABORTION STORES WANTED -

The Childbirth by Choice Trust, a prochoice educational organisation is compiling women's stories about their experiences with illegal abortions. We intend to publish these stories and are particularly interested in recording the personal history of older women. Have you or someone close to you had an illegal abortion? Have you had experience with illegal abortion in your professional capacity? If you are willing to write or tape your story or to be interviewed, please write to: Leslie Pearl, Childbirth by Choice Trust, 40 St. Clair Ave., E., Suite 310, Toronto M4T 1M9 (416) 961-1507. Confidentiality will be absolutely respected.

HERIZONS

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International Conference on Native Families and Communities

by Nelle Oosterom

Charlene Beardy was only seven, her sister Claudette six, when their world fell apart.

One day they were native Indian children living and playing within a familiar circle of people they recognised as family — parents, grandparents, cousins, aunts, friends.

The next day they were frightened little girls with dark eyes staring in bewilderment at the faces of white social workers who spoke strangely and asked them a lot of questions they couldn't answer.

Soon they were playing in unfamiliar schoolyards, going home each day to whatever white foster parent in whatever Winnipeg suburb they happened to be living in. And all the while they wondered where their real family was.

Two years later, they received the news that they were to be sent to another country.

"We were going to the States. We were told we were going home to our families. We thought our families would be sitting down there waiting for us. But it was a different family. It was white. It was our adoptive family."

Charlene, now 18 and with a child of her own, spoke in a matter-of-fact tone as she told a roomful of people at the July International Conference on Native Families and Communities of the turbulent, lonely years spent growing up as an Indian in white, middle class America.

At first, their Michigan parents made every effort to tell the children as much as they knew about their native culture and background. But after a time, the adoptive parents apparently grew tired of Charlene's unceasing questions. "They told me to shut up."

Over the years, patience and understanding grew thin on both sides. "If something went wrong in our household, it was my sister and I who were blamed. We were always reminded, 'behave, you're not really part of this family, you're just staying with us!"

Charlene ran away. She was placed in a detention centre for a while. Then she ended up in a Detroit hospital where she underwent psychiatric treatment. "They told me I was crazy for wanting to run away from home."

After her release, the teenager struck out on her own, getting a job, supporting a child and renting a townhouse in Detroit all by the age of 16. Efforts to find her real parents through Children's Aid Societies in Canada and her adoptive parents were stymied. "I was told 'your mother doesn't want you." When she finally did obtain her mother's address, she found that wasn't true.

"My mom got in touch with me and wired me a ticket home," said Charlene. Her sister came home a year later.

Accompanied by her mother and her grandmother at the Winnipeg conference, Charlene declared she was glad to finally be home.

But the bitterness against the Children's Aid Society in Manitoba that had until 1982 routinely shipped native children to adoptive white homes in the United States and other provinces hung heavy at the conference. Dozens of people told stories of heart-breaking separations. often with breaking voices and tearfilled eyes.

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In 1982, a few days after the Winnipeg media splashed the story of what was called "cultural genocide" across the front pages, an embarrassed provincial government of Premier Howard Pawley declared an immediate moratorium of out-ofprovince adoptions. An inquiry by then Family Court Judge Edwin Kimelman was launched and native groups set about in earnest at the task of finding their children.

Anishinaabe Child and Family Services, a native-run family welfare agency, returned 46 children to their native families between April 1983 and September 1984. An unspecified number have been returned since then, some from far-flung places such as Michigan, Oregon, Washington, Indiana, Alberta and Ontario.

The aim of the July conference was to find ways for native groups to set up their own family welfare agencies. Much of the impetus for their efforts is fueled by anger. But, as the 200 conference goers were reminded. simply replacing the face of a white social worker with a brown one isn't enough.

Ronald Lewis, a Cherokee Indian and social work professor at Arizona State University, said freshly-trained native social workers who come to reserves "with all the answers" will be regarded suspiciously. He suggests that social workers spend about six months blending into the community, gaining its trust, before integrating into what he referred to as the natural helping system of spiritual advisers and helpful relatives that already exists in most native communities.

As for foster parenting, Lewis and others suggest that in most cases, it is taken for granted in native communities that an aunt or grandmother will step in to take care of a child if it is being neglected by its parents. Lewis said white agencies have inhibited this kind of care from taking place because conditions on reserves are judged by them to be unsuitable. When foster parenting takes place on reserves, as it often does, it is almost always done without the knowledge or consent of the Children's Aid Society.

# Women Negotiating Negotiating Negotiating de East which Peace North America

by Luanne Armstrong

Some delegates to the International Women's Peace Conference, held recently in Halifax, were puzzled by the theme, "Women's Alternatives for Negotiating Peace." What would be negotiated; by whom? But as the conference grew in intensity and involvement, it became apparent that real negotiating was going on in many different ways and at many different levels.

Dr. Ursula Franklin, and Martha Gooding wrote, in their background paper to the conference: "As yet, no one presently conducting disarmament negotiations has recognised what the ultimate goal of their negotiations should be. They are caught up in the scenario of domination, when the real scenario is the safety of our planet, and the right of future generations to survive."

No one conflict or issue dominated the conference. They recognised that women see the "inter-relatedness and interdependence of actions and events. Instead, militarism, or what Ursula Franklin calls "the threat system," was seen as a global problem which destroys lives in many different ways.

Negotiations over an immediate conflict took place as Israeli, Palestinian, and Lebanese women met and came to eventual agreement on four resolutions, including a call for the creation of a Palestinian state, as well as an international conference on the Mid-

dle East which would include the PLO.

Another kind of negotiating took place between women from developing countries, and the mostly white North American women, who had to face their own unconscious assumptions about women from other cultures.

A clear message came from the women from Nicaragua, Chile, India, the SNCC (outlawed South African National Congress) New Caledonia, and many others, about these women's strong sense of self-determination and pride in their cultures. They asked the conference to dispense with the term "third world," which they found condescending and insulting. "There is only one world." they said. They also asked Canadian women to take a clear look at their own responsibility for racism, for example, the involvement of Canadian banks and businesses in South Africa.

The rest of the day saw continued discussion about the process of approving the specific resolutions which had come from the small groups. Finally, most of the resolutions, now called affirmations, were passed by consensus, including one demanding that Canada "clearly and unambiguously express its oppositions to the arms race by refusing to participate in the U.S. Pentagon's Stategic Defense Initiative, (Star Wars.)" Affirmations which did not receive consensus were set aside as "working" affirmations. Some delegates pointed out that the conference was really

negotiating new ways of working together, and even new kinds of language. For example, it was felt that words like "demand," which prefaced many of the resolutions were confrontational, and reflected the patriarchal system.

The women at the conference understood how interconnected the problems facing them were, from uranium mining in Saskatchewan, to atomic bomb testing in the Pacific, from the sale of war toys to the building of Star Wars; from Lebanon, to South Africa, to Nicaragua, women shared a common understanding that broke down the barriers of nationality and race.

The overall feeling of the conference was best symbolised by the double rainbow around the sun which appeared in the sky at noon Saturday. The local newspaper later called this a rare meteorological phenomena caused by ice crystals in the high atmosphere.

Simone Wilkinson, of the Women's Peace Camp at Greenham Common in England, summed up many women's feelings when she said, "Women are a nation in exile behind their own borders."

On the final day of the conference, a statement expanding on this theme which had been accepted by the whole conference was presented to Michelle Landry, the Canadian government representative, for further presentation to the UN conference to mark the end of the Decade of Women, held in Nairobi, Kenya, in July.

This was the third International Conference of Women for Peace, organised by the Voice of Women. The others were in 1962 and 1967. The 350 delegates to the conference, from 33 different countries, made a firm commitment to the continued building of a global women's peace network.





Some delegates at the Halifax International Women's Peace Conference. Photo by: Dian Denis





# NELLY JITSUYA

## Feminists in Peru

#### **Heather Ramsay**

"Our conviction that the patriarchal system must change and our allegiance to other women — that's what keeps us committed to the women's movement in Latin America," The words are those of Nelly Jitsuya, of Peru, spoken recently at a Canadian conference.

According to Jitsuya, the feminist movement in Peru is just at its beginning, and is still primarily an urban, middle-class movement centered in Lima. Peruvian feminists share many of the concerns of their sister feminists around the world, but as members of a developing country, much of their organising is done with women in low-income communities on projects like retraining and communal food programmes.

One major difference between Peruvian and North American feminists is the level of police and state repression of political activity. In Lima, participants in a non-violent march can be followed by tanks and surrounded by armed police. People are commonly arrested without reason or recourse, and Jitsuya tells how a friend was arrested off the street and held for two days.

Said Jitsuya: "Yes, we live in fear of walking down the streets. But the movement still goes on because as feminists, we are not satisfied with the system as it exists. And if we want to change the situation, we have to get together and organise ourselves, even if that means arrest and harassment ... otherwise, it means we are accepting the whole situation as it is and that cannot be."

Some women's centres in Lima receive international funding, while other groups and organisations do not, Jitsuya explained. Those that do not are fueled only by the dedication of their membership and a willingness on the part of groups to help each other.

"When you have no money," she said, "even ink and paper can be difficult to find and all groups freely share their resources." The groups also often work on joint projects and events, like the Women's Festival of poetry, music and discussion which has been held on International Women's Day for the past three years. A recent joint effort among women's groups was the launching of two feminist candidates for government office. Neither candidate was elected, but the procedure is part of the movement's development.

"As a movement, we are still in the process of defining ourselves", Jitsuya explained. "Every group has different objectives and it is sometimes difficult to reach an argreement as to what issues will take priority. A big concern right now is how to integrate women who are interested in coming into the movement. We also have a women's coffee house which provides a very supportive environment for women to meet in."

One obstacle that prevents women from being more active is the strong emotional and financial ties that bind them to their families. Another is the accusation that all feminists are lesbians. According to Jitsuya, the media plays a major role in distorting the lesbian lifestyle but does not address the women's movement in any other serious manner. Although homosexual activity is not illegal per se, lesbians and gay men still suffer incredible police repression. "If a lesbian or gay man is arrested or thrown out of a job, no one is going to protest," Jitsuya said, "The lesbian and gay movement does not vet receive enough back-up support to counteract such harassment and oppression."

A paper produced by Childbirth By Choice, currently being distributed by the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, says that the film "The Silent Scream" is an attempt to give an aura of scientific respectability to the "prolife" minority. The organisation says the film is unscientific and factually incorrect; it is sensational and dishonest.

The Film is Unscientific. Dr. Bernard Nathanson, the narrator, begins his presentation with a host of polysyllabic scientific terms in order to establish his authority and the supposed scientific objectivity of the film, and he continues with a highlycharged "description" of an abortion viewed through ultrasound. But here is what the experts have to say:

- Dr. Martin Gillieson, director of gynecological ultrasound at the Ottawa General Hospital: The film tries to portray the fetus "assuming all the attributes of an eight-yearold child". The ultrasound images do not show what Nathanson claims. The "silent scream" of the fetus is actually the space between the head and the chest, not the mouth.
- Dr. Edwin C. Myer, chairman, department of pediatric neurology at the Medical College of Virginia; "To make a statement that the fetus feels pain is a totally ridiculous statement. Pain implies cognition. There is no brain to receive the information."
- Dr. Pasko Rakic, chairman, neuroanatomy, Yale University School of Medicine (and one of the leading U.S. experts in neuroembryology): "In order to scream one would have to have synapses in the cortex." These nerve cell pathways do not begin to develop in the fetus until at least 24 weeks.
- Dr. Richard Berkowitz, professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York: "(The film) is factually misleading and unfair."
- In 1984, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists went on record that a fetus is incapable of feeling pain early in pregnancy (before 20 weeks).

To date, no experts in the field have come forward to defend Dr. Nathanson's thesis.

The Film is Sensational. The narrator employs loaded, emotive



# "Silent scream" A study in deception

language throughout his presentation. "The child", says Dr. Nathanson, "senses aggression in its sanctuary", and moves in an "agitated" manner in a "pathetic attempt to escape." Its heart rate increases as it "senses mortal danger". This kind of language reflects not what is seen on the screen and not what actually occurs, but the private beliefs of the narrator.

Nathanson further sensationalises (and thus unwittingly trivialises) his message with innuendo linking abortion clinics to organised crime.

The Film is Dishonest. Dr. John Hobbins of the Yale School of Medicine, and Dr. Martin Gillieson of the Ottawa General Hospital, believe that the film may have been speededup in certain spots to make it appear that the fetus is thrashing in pain. Dr. Philip Hall, an associate professor of gynecology and obstetrics at the University of Ottawa, states, "If you're trying to convince (students) of an argument, then you really shouldn't be using something dishonest. It's just technical flimflam", he continues, and he also points to the misleading enlargement of the ultrasound image.

Delliegram

THE LOVE HOLLYWOOD DARE NOT NAME — Steven Spielberg can face up to special effects, dangerous stunts, visits from aliens, and multi-million dollar budgets, but can he withstand the filming of romantic scenes between ... women?

Apparently not. That bit of information comes from syndicated entertainment columnist Marilyn Beck, who last week reported on Spielberg's justbegun filming of Alice Walker's pulitzer-prize-winning novel, *The Color Purple*. Actors bringing the book to life will include Whoopi Goldberg, Danny Glover, Rae Dawn Chong and Adolph Caesar, but absent from the film version, according to Beck, will be the book's emphasis on the romanand the model used in some scenes to represent the fetus. The model gives the impression that the twelve-weekold fetus is as big as a full-term baby, whereas a twelve-week fetus is, in fact, about two inches long.

The film is dishonest in another crucial respect — it totally ignores the women's point of view. Women are scarcely mentioned: when they are, it is only as passive carriers of the fetus, or as "victims" of abortion.

Perhaps the most strikingly dishonest aspect of the film, however, is that it does not advance solutions to the abortion problem. It tells us that abortion is unpleasant, but not how abortion can be prevented. There is no mention of sex education, contraception or contraceptive information which would reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies and thus the need for abortion. Dr. Nathanson coyly invites the audience to work together to find solutions, but he proposes none.

In fact, Nathanson is on record as publicly supporting a Human Life Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. which would make all abortions illegal, for whatever reasons. But merely passing draconian laws does not prevent abortion. Similar "solutions" are already in force in countries such as Uruguay (150,000 illegal abortions annually, in a population of three million) and Portugal (180,000 illegal abortions every year). Before Italy repealed its Mussolini-era antiabortion law in 1978, there were 800,000 illegal abortions annually, with 2,000 abortion-related deaths.

tic relationship between battered wife Celie and Blues singer Shug Avery. Who requested the removal of the lesbian theme from the film is unclear.

As Beck so delicately puts it, "The female homosexual relationship in the book will be presented in the movie as a strong friendship with only the suggestion it could have been more, leaving it up to the audience to decide." **Her Say** 



HERIZONS



FILMING THE "MOTHER OF AGENT ORANGE" — A T.V. movie is in the works about a black woman described by some as the "Mother of Agent Orange."

From 1977 to 1983, Veterans Administration staffer Maude DeVictor gathered case histories of families exposed to "Agent Orange," the herbicide used in the Vietnam war. She presented appeals to the V.A. on behalf of veterans' families and helped publicise "Agent Orange" concerns in the Media.

An attorney who filed the original lawsuit against Agent Orange makers says DeVictor was "The one who made the connection, one of the first to rally the vets, the one who helped restore their dignity and show the illnesses weren't just in their heads."

DeVictor claims that as her work on the Agent Orange issue continued, the National V.A. Office ordered her Chicago supervisors to limit reporters' access to her. And in 1983, the V.A. fired DeVictor, claiming she spent too much time on union business for the American Federation of Government Employees. The V.A also cited her for "Conduct unbecoming a federal employee," but denied that her dismissal was linked to the Agent Orange controversy.

DeVictor — whose efforts should soon be the focus of a T.V. film made by an independent producer — says she would do it all over again despite her dismissal. Says DeVictor "I wasn't hired to be the bosses' friend. I was hired to serve this country."

Her Say

# Sterilisation leading U.S. contraceptive

Sterilisation is the form of birth control used by 33 per cent of Americans who practice contraception. *Population Today* reported recently that the pill still follows a close second at 29 per cent, with the condom at 12 per cent, diaphragm 8 per cent and IUD at 7 per cent.

The publication also reports that the rise in premarital sex recorded during the 1970's did not continue into the 1980s.



# Feisty Ferraro in Ottawa

#### by Debra Pilon

Geraldine Ferraro may be under fire from some quarters for having lent her name and image to one of the two colas battling it out in Cola Wars. But being a cheerleader for motherhood during a homey, laid-back TV commercial written by the star herself doesn't seem to have tarnished this star's star.

If anything, when Ferraro (the Democratic Party's vice-presidential candidate during the 1984 U.S. elections) visited Ottawa June 14 to speak at a conference sponsored by the Ottawa Women's Credit Union, her star seemed to be secure and shining in the feminist sky. Certainly the I,200 people who turned out to see and hear her at the National Arts Centre (NAC) were delighted.

Ferraro was feisty. She delivered a strong condemnation of anti-choice forces everywhere, pointing out that women's struggle for reproductive freedom is inseparable from the struggle for economic autonomy.

"We're not going to let male-

#### OOPS

The review "Defending Supergirl" which appeared in our July/August issue should have attributed the character Supergirl to DC comics rather than Marvel comics. dominated conservative interests make our decisions for us," she told the audience. "Abortion is a personal decision, not a political one." the NAC overflowed with applause.

As one of a panel of four women, Ferraro spoke at the opening night of a weekend conference called Kaleidoscope '85. The topic discussed by the panel was "The Cost of Equality: A Women's Challenge".

Shelagh Day, currently the executive director of LEAF (the Legal, Education and Action Fund of the National Association of Women and the Law) was undoubtedly Canada's star that evening. While talking about the equality sections of the Charter of Rights, Day told the crowd that women in Canada are just beginning to stretch our wings. "And governments are exhibiting all the behaviour of a stunned bridegroom." she added, sending the audience into riotous laughter.

The costs of equality are real costs and governments must not be allowed to use a mandate for deficit reduction to wriggle out of commitments to equality for women. "If we agree to wait for better economic times then we are agreeing that equality is only tenable in boom times, that equality is a luxury." she said.

The costs of equality will have to become part of the nation's budget. according to Day. And since taxpayers' money will be used, taxpayers should be thinking about how government priorities can be rearranged. "I, personally, am prepared to give up defence spending, new uniforms for the military, my \$500,000 capital gains tax. Expo '86 and all domed stadiums," she quipped.

Mary Frances Berry, an American law and history professor and civil rights activists rounded out the panel in fine form with a rousing call to action across all borders. Barbara McDougall, the Minister of State for Finance in the Mulroney cabinet was also a panelist.

The most shocking statement of the evening came when McDougall, a former vice-president of Dominion Securities Ames Ltd., urged women to act "socially" — as opposed to independently — to achieve equality. She then said: "I want to thank feminists. They as a group have opened doors for us."

# Family orders bill inadequate

The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women says that the federal government's Family Orders Enforcement Assistance Act is not an enforcement act at all, but merely a means of providing information.

The Advisory Council, as well as most feminist groups in Canada, would like to see a national enforcement agency which would have the power to garnish wages and other income from federal sources when a parent defaults repeatedly on a courtimposed maintenance agreement. More than half of all maintenance orders in Canada are not followed. The most that this new bill could accomplish would be to provide information on parents who default on support and custody orders.

Herizons gratefully acknowledges the support & contributions of:

D. Ceplis, Thompson, Manitoba M. Horden, Calgary, Alberta



THE GAME OF PEACE — Not all nineyear-old girls concern themselves with just jacks and jump-rope. For example, there's the California nineyear-old who's just invented a game whose object is world peace.

Michelle Alexander created her "Give Peace a Chance" board game as a third-grade class project for her gifted children's school in Fresno. Players, representing the U.S. or the Soviet Union, forfeit important points if they reject a compromise in arms race negotiations. But they can pick up points if they take such steps as sharing an invention that benefits both countries.

In her paper explaining her project, Michelle wrote, "I invented this game to stop war. The object is to get the most points, hopefully by compromising and making your country a nuclear-free zone. This means the children of the world will be able to grow up." Her Say

# IUD linked to sterility

The authors of two studies published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* are recommending that women who have never had children should not use an IUD for birth control because it may cause them to become sterile.

According to one of the studies, IUD's seem to double the risk of infertility. One study was done by researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, and the other at the University of Washington in Seattle.

The Boston study found that the risk of infertility rises rapidly in the first few months of IUD use. Both reports conclude that plastic IUD's are more dangerous than copper-covered devices.

Daniel Cramer of the Boston hospital estimates that 16 per cent of the 550,000 U.S. cases of tubal infertility, or 88,000, were caused by IUD. About 2.2 million women use IUD's.



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Arlene Mantle and her band performing at Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in Toronto in July.

Sixteen years ago, on June 27, 1969, crowds of lesbians and gay men in New York City fought back against a routine police raid on a gay bar called Stonewall Inn. Their initial resistance was followed by three days of rioting, and for the first time, cries of "Gay Power" echoed in the streets.

"Stonewall", as the events are now referred to, marks the beginning of the contemporary lesbian and gay liberation movement.

The spirit of Stonewall is a spirit of resistance. It has fueled the last 16 years of organising within the lesbian and gay communities where the riots are commemorated annually in Lesbian and Gay Pride Day celebrations.

In Canada, Pride Days were organised sporadically throughout the 70's. More recently, they have occurred regularly in Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver. This year's Toronto celebrations were linked with the 7th annual International Gay Pride Association conference in July. Delegates from 17 countries met to plan actions and exchange information about such issues as the right wing attacks on lesbians and gays, rights of lesbian and gay teachers, AIDS organising, and the failure of Amnesty International to adopt lesbians and gays as prisoners of conscience.

Montreal's Pride Day ran in conjunction with La fete National. Pride Day in Edmonton was part of Lesbian and Gay Awareness Week, and included concerts, discussions, dances and films. Vancouver's celebration was one component of a lesbian and gay festival which took place July 29 to August 10.

# Restoration of inflation protection urged

Now that the government has realised it went too far when it announced it would de-index old age security payments, maybe it will realise the unfairness of de-indexing family allowance payments. This is the hope of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, who have called on the government to restore full indexation to mothers receiving family allowance.

"Senior citizens, a majority of whom are women, have been effective in communicating their needs to the government. However, most Canadian women juggling a family and a job do not have the time, energy, and resources to mount a campaign on their own behalf," said Sylvia Gold, CACSW President.

"We strenuously object to this chipping away of family benefits; these cuts may not seem major to highincome people, but they will have a serious effect on families with moderate and low incomes," she said.



PROMINENT FEMINIST SPEAKS — Feminist ex-inmate, Kate Millett, author of *Sexual Politics, Sita* and others, recently spoke on the subject of lunancy and sex roles.

She lashed out at the mental health system and the notion of "mental illness." Citing Thomas Szasz, she made an analogy between the Inquisition and psychiatry's institutionalisation of women. Conformity and passivity, she explained, are the prerequisites to mental "health" and the behaviour expected in psychiatric institutions.

The absence of mental patients' civil rights and the oppressive conditions in mental hospitals were elaborated on. Millett called for an abolishment of mental institutions.

Millett is currently working on a book, *The Looney Bin Trip*, which discusses the horrors of psychiatry.

Madness Network News



I TELL YOU, I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WORSE, BEGGING OR BEING KEPT!



Women employees in Los Angeles will achieve comparable worth raises as a result of a federal discrimination complaint filed in 1981. The union (AFSCME) cited numerous examples of female librarians and office workers earning less than male truckers and gardeners. Decision costs the city \$12 million over three years, 80 per cent of the 3900 workers affected are female.

#### Women's Network of the Red River Valley

When mothers of children sexually abused by Denmark's reputed childporno king Josef Grote found out he'd been secretly released from jail on bail, they raided his home as he slept and beat him. When he broke from the angry women his only escape route was a lake. He waded in. The women bombarded him with rocks. driving him deeper. Grote, not knowing how to swim, drowned. The charges he had been jailed on resulted from stories by children attending the camp where Grote worked. Hundreds of color childporn films were confiscated, all involving children at the camp., Interpol agent Paul Sappio estimated that "3000 children had fallen prey to Grote." No charges are being filed on the unknown band of mothers, Sappio stated, "no jury on earth would ever convict any of those mothers."

#### The Backlash Times

The New York State Legislature passed a measure that would ban the display of pornographic materials in stores where public access is not limited, such as drugstores and supermarkets. The materials could still be sold at the stores but would have to be covered.

A federal jury in Hartford, Connecticut awarded \$2.3 million to a woman who charged that police violated her constitutional rights by failing to protect her from attacks by her estranged husband. The last attack left Tracey Thurman heavily scarred and partly paralysed. In addition, the jury also awarded \$300,000 to her three-year old son, who witnessed the attack. California has become the first state in the U.S. to set minimum levels for court-ordered child support payments. The law requires judges to set payments no lower than what children on welfare would receive, or to give reasons why a lower amount has been approved.

A federal jury in San Francisco awarded Daryle Amborse \$265,000 in damages in her sexual harassment suit against her former supervisor at U.S. Steel in Pittsburg.

Members of the National Organization of Women in the U.S. have asked for and received the resignation of West Virginia Supreme Court Chief Justice on the grounds that he fired his secretary for refusing to baby-sit his son. The 59 year old secretary had claimed that the babysitting demands were affecting her health.

The U.S. Supreme Court in a six to three vote decision said peace activists may be prosecuted for peaceful demonstrations during open house on military bases if the bases previously barred them from entering. Writing for the majority, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said protesters' first amendment rights were outweighed by the "important government interest in assuring the security of military installations."

#### HER SAY

A 25 year-old woman who filed a civil suit against a Baltimore doctor for rape has been granted an unprecedented \$4 million (\$2 million punitive damages and \$2 million compensatory damages) award by a circuit court jury. Civil law specialists attribute the large award in part to the income of the doctor, pointing out that most rapists (who are convicted) do not have the financial resources to pay off large fines.

#### off our backs

A British Court of Appeals has made it illegal for doctors to give advice or treatment on contraceptives or abortion to under 16-year old girls who do not have their parents' consent. The Gillick decision has already had serious repercussions in keeping young people away from sexually transmitted disease centres. The judgement is being appealed by women's groups, doctors' organisations and the National Union of Teachers.

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#### INTERNATIONAL REPORT

# Israeli women in debate

At a recently held Women's Division conference staged by Israel Bonds in Israel, a variety of opinions from all corners of the political spectrum was presented to the delegates from the U.S. and Canada.

Among the presenters, Professor Ruth Lapidot, Chairperson of the National Council on the Advancement of the Status of Women in Israel, said that her council has five major objectives for improving the status of women in various areas. She felt that the advancement of the rights of women under Jewish law was the most difficult and found it understandable that in the Knesset report delivered by a 1975 committee on the subject headed by M.K. Ora Namir, the topic of Jewish law had not been dealt with. Referring to these matters she said, "They can be changed, courage is needed to do it." Professor Lapidot felt that there had been a regression in the status of women in that the number of women members of the Knesset was lower than it had been ten years ago and that of our "25 Cabinet ministers, there is not a single woman Cabinet minister.'

One of the reasons advanced by Professor Lapidot for lack of progress in advancing the status of women in Israel is the general impression that women in the army do not perform important tasks. Among the examples cited of the disadvantageous position



of women under Jewish law, she spoke of the well-known fact that only a husband may initiate divorce proceedings; and that in the event a spouse is mentally incompetent, the husband can be granted the right to remarry a second wife, but there is no equal privilege for the wife of a mentally disabled husband.

Afterwards, Kol Isreal reporter and Journalist Freda Keet spoke of the triple bind under which Isreali women function; the resentment felt that Jewish Halachic law controls the personal life of women, adding, "My Judaism is the Judaism of the school of Rabbi Hillel, who always looked for the compassionate, humanistic, kind and generous way to interpret the Halacha." She declared that what is running Israel today is the school of Shammai, which finds the "most rigid, most ultra-orthodox, and most uncompromising interpretation of Halachic law."

The second bind under which Israeli women operate is that advanced. sophisticated and Western as Israel is, "we live in the Middle East, and a high percentage of our population is influenced by a Middle Eastern society where the image of women is very, very negative." A massive job of re-education is required.

The third bind derives from the fact that Israel is a society that has been at war for 37 years. Women know that it is the men who go out to die on the front lines and perhaps bear a sense of guilt for not doing more for the defense of the country. "The only safety, security and warmth is what women can provide in the home, and so they take on a caring, nurturing mother role.

Shulamit Aloni, head of the Citizens' Rights Movement, attacked the self-righteous of Israel in projecting an image that "a victim can do no wrong". Among her criticisms of Israel were that the country lacks a written constitution. lacks a Bill of Rights, suffers from racist, religious discrimination. One example of this is that the Ministry of the Interior does not grant identification as Jews to the Ethiopian immigrants: "They love them so much they strangle them with humiliation." She accused American Jewish women of playing "a Christian game with us. by sending us dollars and making us

your Vatican". She observed that although three women sit as judges on the Supreme Court of Israel, they cannot be members of a religious court or even appear as a witness in a religious court.

On the subject of "Who is a Jew", she described the behavior of the religious community as blackmail practiced against the majority of the population, and said that such decisions could affect American Jews since, in law, there is no recognition of non-orthodox Judaism.

The minorities in Israel live in a ghetto. The Zionist idea aims at sovereignty and consequently, "we make a mess of the rights of the minorities." Israel seems caught up in a Shakespearean tragedy, in regard to her relation with the Arabs, and the end of the tragedy will be a stage littered with corpses. She charged that American women such as the audience, who fight for liberties in the U.S., nevertheless unthinkingly support every government of Israel. She felt the current stress in Israel is on ignoring the morals of the prophets while stressing the rituals. This she saw as a retrogressive step. She closed by saying, "Excuse me for spoiling your beautiful dream."

In response Zena Harman, a former member of the Knesset, observed that M.K. Aloni had left an impression that everything connected with democracy, with human rights and with peace in Israel is appalling. She stated that to the contrary, the vast majority of the people are seriously concerned with peace.

She complained that on the "macrolevel" there is little opportunity of translating intellectual understanding into actuality, and consequently she had chosen not to continue serving in the Knesset, but to work on the "micro-level", where the actuality is living with your Arab neighbours and with your religious neighbours. Within a divisive community such as Jerusalem, there are bodies which cut across community lines such as the YMCA and the Children's Council, and she has chosen to work on these bodies. She also stated in Israel there is a continuing tendency of leadership to claim that "they know what is right for people." What is actually needed is input from below, from the clients. This is the way to build.



ASPARTAME-SICKENING SWEET — Aspartame, the artificial sweetener known as Nutrasweet, may be doing more than just sweetening your soda — it could affect your brain and the brain of your unborn child.

Researchers at Emory University have come up with evidence that Aspartame may cause permanent brain damage to the fetus in the womb. According to Doctor Louis Elsas, who oversaw the research, the damage might not show up for several years.

The findings of Elsas are corroborated by a similar study at the University of Illinois. Doctor Reuben Natalon, professor of pediatrics and genetics, found that many women are sensitive to a component of Aspartame called Phenylaniline. If those women use Aspartame when pregnant, their children may be born slightly retarded. Eight to IO per cent of women could have the sensitivity.

Critics of the Food and Drug Administration charge that the FDA ignored similar studies in order to give the additive clearance. Last month, the general accounting office disclosed that FDA commissioner Arthur Hill Hayes approved Aspartame over the objections of several researchers who linked the sweetener to potential brain tumors.

Her Say

## Trafficking in women and children

West German feminists and the opposition Social Democratic Party are waging a campaign to persuade the government to crack down on the importing of women and children from developing countries for sexual purposes.

Agencies run advertisements in weeklies throughout Western Europe offering "affectionate Latin American women for marriage — trial period and right to return guaranteed". They also offer men tourist trips to developing countries, which include a hotel and a female — sometimes girls under 10 years old. The men can select the woman or child through a catalogue which provides photos and "vital statistics".



TRIUMPH OF 'GOLDEN OLDIES' — It seems that so-called "Jiggle" won't entirely dominate the TV airwaves next fall. At least one fall premiere will be about women over 50 — an N.B.C. show called "The Golden Girls".

The show, a comedy about three women who are approximately 60 years old, stars Bea Arthur, former award-winning actress in "Maude," Rue McClanahan, Arthur's co-star on "Maude," and Betty White, who won two Emmy awards for her work on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." Estelle Getty, who appears in the movie "Mask," also stars as Arthur's 80-year-old mother.

Producer Paul Junger Witt is still pleased about "The Golden Girls," saying that "For years the networks wouldn't go near people that age." Susan Harris, who created the series, says "Our perception of people in their 50's and 60's is that their lives are over. It's not true. They are very vibrant, alive, interesting, sexy people. I think we can change that perception."



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# THE NUCLEAR EXPERTS

(HALIFAX) — Just one seat left — well almost one ... "Oh by all means!" the aging, well-dressed gentleman wouldn't mind at all moving over a bit.

"You don't look as if you normally take up that much room," he remarks congenially. "When's the baby due?"

"Today!"

In the modern, genteel courtroom hung with old oil portraits, the two murmur politely about pregnancy, then about her first daughter. Not about the historic trial about to resume; nor about her reasons for supporting the defendant — to the end. Nor his reasons for



In this precedent-setting case, a Halifax jury ruled that Dr. Donna Smyth, a University professor, writer and anti-nuclear activist did not libel the reputation of Dr. Leo Yaffe when she criticised his judgements in advocating the use of nuclear energy. Yaffe, a nuclear chemistry research professor, tried to prove that Smyth, had injured his reputation in an article she wrote in response to Yaffe's comments.

Following is an account of the trial, and its repercussions, written by Eleanor O'Donnell MacLean, a writer and broadcaster living in Halifax.



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being there. He is after all Dr. Leo Yaffe, the man who is suing Annapolis Valley resident Donna Smyth for defamation of character. The plaintiff takes out of his vest pocket some notes from the trial which he's jotted on a pamphlet given to him by the Veterans for Multilateral Disarmament ...

His personal civility adds to the solemn yet bizarre quality of the trial. Why would someone from Montreal take an Annapolis Valley resident through three years of legal proceedings ... to debate in the end the meaning of one word in one paragraph, found in an Op Ed (opinion editorial page) article appearing one day in a newspaper in Halifax? Why would he sue only the author and not the publisher of the newspaper? How can several lawyers and witnesses, a judge, a jury and 60 onlookers be seriously spending their days pondering over the meaning of the word "parade"? Supporters crowded into the oak pews say interests far greater than the individuals in the courtroom are involved.

Everyone is on their feet long before the judge sweeps into the room and up the stairs on to his dais. He will say, before charging the jury to decide "for yourselves" on the case, that in his opinion of the facts, the tone of Donna Smyth's "strident" article about nuclear development could well lead someone to conclude that the man suing her for libel was "sort of a hired gun".

Excerpts from a letter which was entered as evidence [incredibly, for the plaintiff] from Dr. Douglas Anderson, Department of Chemical Engineering, University of Toronto, to Dr. Leo Yaffe: Someone was telling me the other day that you had had an 'exchange' with some anti-nuclear people down in the Maritimes ...

... Right now I am trying to get through to 'Physicians for Social Reponsibility'. It is a pity that we cannot spare more time to deal with these people ...

... I may have more time [after retirement] to nail some of these 'social political' adventurers.

Among the companies who have had interests in uranium development in the Province of Nova Scotia:

Lacana
Uranera
Saarberg
E & B Resources
Union Carbide

Amidst the hubub and congratulations, Donna Smyth's voice is musical and calm: "It's a victory for uppity women!" she says simply. No libel, no damages. A private citizen, a nonexpert, a woman at that, she dared to challenge a man's authority to speak on scientific matters outside the realm of his own expertise ... And she won — at least in principle.

Smyth hadn't intended to go on a courtroom "crusade" against unfair laws: she simply expressed her views in writing on a matter of public debate. But her refusal to be intimidated into a retraction landed her in court.

Her original article was a response to an interview in the *Chronicle-Herald* with McGill University professor Leo Yaffe, who had come to the province to speak on the topic of "The Health Hazards of Not Going Nuclear." Feeling that the article presented a dangerously uncritical and unbalanced view in favour of nuclear development especially at a time when communities across the province were debating uranium mining — Smyth wrote to the editor. Her own, non-nuclear view was printed on the Op Ed page.

In her article, Smyth had assembled and systematically analysed what she calls "a standard set of arguments" in favour of nuclear development. (Dr. Yaffe happened to be the most recent exponent of these views.) The result? It was the kind of article that gets photocopied and re-photocopied, passed from one person to another after church coffee hours or during public hearings ... the kind that might well end up taped to the fridges of those priceless targets of pollsters and politicians, "The Undecided."

Excerpt from Donna Smyth's Op Ed article:

There is a form of hysteria which results from the suppression of threatening or disturbing knowledge. Having read William March's coverage in The Chronicle-Herald of Dr. Leo Yaffe's recent lecture on nuclear power, I can only assume Dr. Yaffe, President of the Chemical Institute of Canada, suffers from the complaint he purports to correct — the hysteria, as he calls it, of the anti-nuclear lobby.

Dr. Yaffe's stand on this issue is political rather than scientific; it is obvious that he is neither objective nor impartial. He is only one of many 'experts' the nuclear industry will parade in front of us in their desperate attempt to sell 'nuclear' to Nova Scotia.

It was this second paragraph of the article that vexed Yaffe and became the focus of the lawsuit. In the discovery stage of the trial, Yaffe claimed that Smyth had made the distinguished scientist appear to be "in the pocket" of the nuclear industry.

Smyth maintained that her use of Yaffe as an example was merely topical, and in the same style of public debate which he used. Yaffe's own area of professional expertise — nuclear chemistry — was never in question. However, no one had to accept him as an authority on all the other areas on which he expressed an opinion: the Middle East, Ter-

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rorists, fossil fuel reserves, blown-up power lines, or the likelihood that increased coal consumption might cause the planet to suffocate from an overabundance of carbon dioxide. (This problem, he had speculated in his lectures, might prompt Jane Fonda "who may sometime find out about this hazard", to star in a movie called the  $CO^2$  Syndrome ...)

Excerpt from Donna Smyth's Op Ed article:

Dr. Yaffe would have us believe we have no alternatives. He speaks as though we have only a black and white choice between coal and nuclear. Alternative technologies, such as solar, and alternative sources, such as tidal, are summarily dismissed. Coal becomes nuclear's whipping boy. We are told how dangerous it is. We hear how even hydroelectric dams break and cause deaths by drowning.

We are not told that the difference between nuclear and other conventional energy sources is qualitative. Radioactive materials are produced at every stage of the nuclear cycle, beginning with uranium mining and ending with bombs.

The Defence called its own distinguished scientist, Dr. Ursula Franklin (doctorate in experimental physics, member of the Science Council of Canada, University Professor of the University of Toronto) ... Yes, she knew both Dr. Smyth and Dr. Yaffe, personally ... Yes, she had even tried unsuccessfully to prevent his lawsuit through mediation ... Yes ... Yes indeed, she still greatly respected Dr. Yaffe as a scientist ... She was only sorry she could not prevent this unfortunate lawsuit ...

Excerpt from Cross-Examinations: Mr. Pugsley: Dr. Franklin, would you agree that the reputation of a scientist, for objectivity, is a very important factor in a scientist's reputation?

A. I am not sure. Objectivity is a very slippery process. It's a sad thing: that you know most about the things you are deeply involved in ... and I think a scientist's reputation depends on being open to evidence of others. If you think objectivity is only to believe in one's own work, then I think you take objectivity on a very narrow thing. It means to take others as seriously as one takes oneself. Q. Would you agree that for a scientist, to be known as being in the pocket of a particular side on a debate, would be a grossly unfortunate thing to happen to that scientist? (cont'd. on page 34) Loss:

- The act or state of losing; failure to keep or win.
- The state of being lost, or of having suffered destruction ...
- Useless application; futile expenditure; waste.
- *Injury* or *diminution of value* within the limits provided by an insurance policy ...
- Electrical or mechanical energy expended in overcoming friction, etc., and from which no productive work is obtained.

Funk & Wagnalls Dictionary (Italics mine.)

Loss seems to be a conditon of life. Why can't we get used to it? We go through life losing things, places, people. Every loss becomes a personal affront to our psyches, and frequently to our bodies as well. You'd think by this time we'd know enough and brace ourselves for it.

You thought you were; you thought you were braced. Tough-minded and realistic, you thought by this time you could stand anything. And here you are right back on your uppers, wondering how you are going to get through this one. It's about the pain, and not only the pain. You feel disoriented, physically at odds with yourself, out of step with others, remote, unreal.

Welcome to the club. Everyone who suffers a loss feels this way; it's your best hope of recovering. You're not an unfeeling machine. You had a personal investment in whatever — whomever — you have lost, and you need to withdraw, both the investment and yourself. You need time to lick your wounds, come to terms with the gaping hole in your life, and come back fighting.

My God! The cliches! Unfortunately, they're all true, true, true. Now take another look at the definitions at the beginning of this article, especially the italics in them: failure, destruction, waste, injury, diminution of value, from which no productive work is obtained. That's it. That's you, a classic case. Well, be careful.

Way back in 1949 psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Holmes began noticing the "coincidence" of a variety of illnesses, ranging from tuberculosis and cardiac disease to skin disorders, in patients who had recently gone through major life changes: the death of someone close, divorce, a job change, and so on. By 1967 Holmes and a fellow psychiatrist, Dr. Richard Rahe, developed the Social Readjustment Rating Scale, now commonly called the Holmes Stress Score. on the basis of their accumulated data. Forty-three stressful life situations were given numerical scores. Death of a spouse racked up the highest score with 100 stress points, closely followed by divorce with 73 (some later experts have reversed this assessment: as one divorcee said to me, "At least you know where your husband is!"). The scale (see box) has been used to identify the connection between personal crises and illnesses and to predict high-risk situations. You're on dangerous ground if you score 150 or more in any two-year period. It means that you have reached overload, that life has become intolerable (you could have told them that), and that you should be doing something about it.

There are all kinds of loss and few human beings can go through life without experiencing some of them. Some prevalent ones today, however, didn't occur in other centuries. For example, in the seventeenth century no one was run over by a car. I had an assignment to interview a million-dollar lottery winner and told her about the Stress Score. (Even good events carry their load of stress. Christmas carries a value of 12 stress points.) Fascinated, she began to keep track of her score like a sports fan watching the batting averages of her favourite baseball players. She phoned me one day to ask what the score was when your oldest daughter had an abortion. (And what about the daughter's stress?) Holmes and Rahe didn't cover that one. Only in the twentieth century?

No matter how liberated a women is, and no matter how good and valid are the reasons for her to have an abortion, she will still experience a sense of loss — and look at those key words from the definitions again: failure, destruction, waste, injury. The same is true if a woman suffers a miscarriage. And two young women have told me recently that they felt loss when they were delivered of their babies by Caesarean section. One said she simply had to nurse successfully because she felt she had to do something "normal" for her child. The other said she felt she had been denied



GOOD GRIEVING: Embroidering loss into your life B E T T Y J A N E W Y I I E





part of the whole process of birthing.

The loss of a child who has had time to be part of the family, to be known and loved, brings with it an even more devastating blow. Frequently the pain and self-recriminations, the doubt and the if-onlies will split a marriage. The incidence of divorce. I have read, reaches higher proportions than the average following the death of a child. There are other losses connected with children. A handicapped child can also generate that sense of waste and futility connected with loss and can tear a marriage apart.

We also have this concept of ourselves: "Nice girls don't do that." So we have been told by our mothers and society in general all our lives. Among the things that nice girls don't do is get divorces. have abortions, or have children out of wedlock, get fired from work, go on mother's allowance or welfare. Today, all of these things happen to women from all walks of life. Poverty itself is a very stressful state. Until you've been there, you think it only happens to lower class, uneducated, careless females. Think again. "Every woman," as the National Action Committee states, not originally, "is one man away from welfare." And every woman is vulnerable to the loss of friend, lover, husband, child, job, money, and selfesteem.

The point is that if the gap between your expectations and reality is too wide, you will suffer from the stress of loss. Your perception of this discrepancy is what gives you the most pain. "We cannot change reality," says pop psychologist Wayne Dyer, "but we can change ourselves." We have to in order to survive. We must adjust to reality.

Now take another look at those definition words. Failure. You see, it has to do with perception. If you are a failure in your own eyes you will have trouble succeeding. Failure is not implicit in the event but in your reaction to it. So you got fired from work. That happened to one of my daughters not long ago (female, single, "didn't need the money", last hired, first fired - all the classic reasons). It took her a couple of months of diligent searching but she found a new job - and the love of her life. They were married eight months after she started work at the new place.

I consider myself a playwright. All my other writing is to support my habit of

theatre. I've had about 20 plays produced, beginning with puppet and children's plays, but I've never had a solid hit, I mean a hit. (Otherwise you'd know all this.) What I say is that failure goes to my head. Every time I don't succeed I try again. A rejection to me is like a red flag to a bull. I charge. If I let failure get to me, I would have no productive work. I cannot afford any diminution of my value by other people.

When my husband and children and I left Winnipeg, we left a big old house that we had spent four years remodelling. My architect-designed kitchen sang like a four-colour ad and produced goodies out of Gourmet magazine. I cried the first day I began to stuff things into the little kitchen in our new splitlevel house in Stratford. But I kept on cooking. I moved again, to Toronto, after my husband died, and coped with a narrow gallery kitchen - and produced another cookbook in it (the Betty Jane Wylie Cheese Cookbook). Recently I have moved again. In fact, you are the first people I am writing for in the new place. My kitchen is so tiny you really could not swing a cat in it, let alone cook one. (Who wants roast cat?) But I consider it a challenge to find storage pieces to double my cupboard space, and a job to give away things to my kids and thrift shops.

"At last, I'm free," said Diogenes the Greek philosopher who broke his only possession, the bowl he begged for his food with. I'm not free yet, but I'm getting there.

That's stress too. Change in residence carries a score of 20; change in living conditions is worth 25. But it's okay. I like what I've done. Listen, adjustment is my middle name.

What you have to do to cope with stress, besides accept and adjust, is recognise both what has happened to you and how you feel about it. One of the first emotions you will feel is anger. Psychiatrist Karen Horney (one of us) was among the first to point out that you cannot deal with your anger unless you allow it to enter your consciousness. So you've had a rotten deal. No one has suffered what you suffer. Everyone treats you like dirt. Why did this have to happen to you? Dammit!

Go ahead and feel outraged. Spill it all out. Ask all the questions. Shout out all the rage. Scream. Cry. Don't repress it. Recognize what you feel. Yet, your rage or grief is not a justification for doing violence to yourself or others. But don't tuck your feelings of resentment out of sight and out of your conscious recognition. They'll do violence to you if you do that. They must not be allowed to fester in the hot, dark recesses of our unconscious. Otherwise, one of these days

#### Anxiety Level Chart

LIFE CHAN	GE
LIFE EVENT UNIT VALUE	
1. Death of spouse	100
2. Divorce	73
3. Marital separation	65
4. Jail term	63
5. Death of close family member	63
6. Personal injury or illness	53
7. Marriage	50
8. Fired at work	47
9. Marital reconciliation	45
IO. Retirement	45
11. Change in family health	44
12. Pregnancy	40
13. Sex difficulties	39
14. Gain of new family member	39
15. Business readjustment	39
16. Change in financial state	38
17. Death of close friend	37
18. Change to different line of work	
19. Arguments with spouse	35
20. Mortgage over \$10,000	31
21. Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	
22. Change in job responsibilities	29
23. Son or daughter leaving home	29
24. Trouble with in-laws	29
25. Major personal achievement	28
26. Mate begins or stops work 27. Begin or end school	26 26
	25
28. Change in living conditions 29. Revision of personal habits	23
	24
50. Trouble with boss 51. Change in work conditions	20
32. Change in residence	20
33. Change in schools	20
34. Change in recreation	19
35. Change in church activities	19
36. Change in social activities	18
37. Mortgage or loan under \$10,00	
38. Change in sleeping habits	16
39. Change in family get-togethers	15
40. Change in eating habits	15
41. Vacation	13
12. Christmas	12
43. Minor violations of the law	11
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Notice that the majority of these Life Changes involve loss of some kind.

you'll wake up with a skin disorder, a headache that won't go away, a hernia, asthma — one of those illnesses that caught Dr. Holmes's attention. You'll be another case history, one among the 80 to 85 percent of people who visit their family doctor for illnesses connected with emotional problems.

You may not be a writer. Nevertheless, I offer you this writer's technique for dealing with the stress of loss. Put your troubles on paper. Get yourself a notebook with fairly big pages and sit down when the black mood hits you and write. Do your screaming, ranting and raving on paper. It's easier on the furniture, your fists, and your friends. You won't ever say anything you'll regret. If you have been indiscreet or profane, no one is ever going to know. You can hide the evidence or better, burn it. But the expression of your feelings will do you a world of good. As you write, you will discover the real source of your anger, maybe even the real source of your perceived failure and injury. A crisis can, ironically, even become an opportunity for self evaluation and growth. By going over the circumstances of your life, you can ask: Have I been setting myself up for it without realising it? It's not the end of the world if you have. It can be the beginning. Because if you recognise the fact, then you can do something about it.

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, so well-known for her dealings with death and dying, says there are three basic stages in coming to terms with either one's own impending death or with the death of a loved one. They are: shock, denial, acceptance. We all experience these emotions. It's the way we handle them that enables us to go on. But they apply to more than our reaction to death. They apply to any loss, and they are the best antidote there is to the threat of the high Stress Score.

Of course, shock. Disaster is always shocking, no matter its source. In the case of physical shock, as in a car acci-

Don't tuck your feelings of resentment out of sight and out of your conscious recognition dent, we all know what to do. Keep the victim warm and don't move her. We tend to forget that in the case of an emotional shock, but the rule still applies. Keep warm and don't move. In other words, let the shock and initial pain roll over you. DON'T DO ANYTHING. Just wait, and keep warm. Turn on the electric blanket and crawl under it, or wrap yourself in your duvet. Have a bubble bath. Make hot chocolate. Do all sorts of creature-comforting things until you have absorbed the first shock.

Denial is natural. It's a defense mechanism. Why me? Surely not? It didn't really happen! I don't believe it! It can't be true! How could it happen so quickly? Yesterday the world was normal so why isn't it today?

Go ahead. Don't believe it. Deny it. Hide from the truth. The facts won't go away. You can't either. This is where your anger comes in, because it follows on the heels of denial. This is where your therapy begins, too. Go ahead and writhe. It keeps you supple. Roll, as they say, with the punches.

And finally, acceptance is a passive state. It's not. Acceptance is very hard work. You have to run at it with all of your might. Embrace the hard facts of your life. Make them part of you. Work with them. Eventually, those hard, unpalatable facts will become part of your life, a given that you learn to work around, or even an asset - really! because of the strength and selfknowledge you have gained from them. Not from them. From yourself. From your own hard work in making your loss part of you and in using it rather than letting it use you. See? Not passive at all.

Trust me.



Author and playwright Betty Jane Wylie is a former Winnipegger now living in Toronto. Her best-selling book is **Beginnings:** A Book for Widows, McClelland & Stewart, now going into its 6th edition in Canada, and published in the United States, Great Britain and Australia. Her most recent book, The Book of Matthew, McClelland & Stewart, about her brain-damaged son, published in hardcover in October, 1984, has just been released as a mass market paperback under the Seal Bantam imprint.



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# rizons "Gone National" Party



chwatz. Tracy Komarensky. rland. Penni Mitchell. reuil



N Having our cake and eating it





Je la connais depuis longtemps, Marie-Blanche. Plus longtemps qu'elle ne me connaît. Son histoire a suscité chez moi bien des crampes interrogatives. Comment avait-elle accepté de continuer à vivre? Jeune, active, jolie, intelligente, elle était devenue handicapée à l'âge où une jeune femme est en pleine possession de ses moyens. Je la savais très engagée dans la défense des droits des personnes handicapées au Québec, entre autres en tant que présidente du Regroupement des usagers-ères du transport adapté, de 1981 à 1984. J'avais eu vent aussi de sa traversée de l'Atlantique, à l'été 84, à bord du Jacques-Cartier. Ce que je ne savais pas d'elle, elle me l'a confié par un beau dimanche d'octobre.

Issue d'une famille de filles - elle a cinq soeurs - avec une mère travailleuse sociale et un père prof de cégep et écrivain, Marie-Blanche a d'abord étudié la philosophie à l'Université Laval, puis les arts à l'École du Musée, à l'UQAM et à Concordia. Elle partage présentement son temps entre son travail pour l'Office des personnes handicapées du Québec, au bureau de Drummondville, et ses nombreuses activités et multiples ami-e-s à Montréal ou partout ailleurs sur la planète. Marie-Blanche est plus mobile que la plupart d'entre nous. Toujours aux aguets, elle prend le temps de réfléchir avant de répondre à mes questions, les yeux grand ouverts.

#### Comme la fatalité

Mon accident? C'était en 1977. Je venais de rompre avec mon chum, qui était américain. L'année scolaire commençait à l'UQAM et s'annonçait très bien. J'étais enthousiasmée. J'avais suivi mes premiers cours le mardi, et le jeudi soir ... il y a eu un incendie ... chez moi. Un incendie criminel, au milieu de la nuit.

À l'odeur du feu, je me suis réveillée. J'ai vérifié si le poêle était allumé, il ne l'était pas. J'ai ouvert la porte de mon appartement ... il y avait des flammes et de la fumée dans l'escalier. Je me suis alors précipitée dans la cuisine et je me suis assise sur le rebord de la fenêtre. J'habitais au troisième étage. Les autos passaient. Des gens aussi, qui commencaient à s'arrêter : "Ne sautez pas, mademoiselle!" J'ai senti mes cheveux qui grésillaient. Je me suis dit que je me casserais les jambes (je n'ai jamais pensé à la colonne), que j'allais rater ma session. J'avais 26 ans.

À l'urgence, il y avait plein de monde pour moi. Je n'avais plus de sensibilité en bas de la ceinture. Le soir même, un bel interne m'apprenait avec beaucoup de ménagement que mes jambes avaient été irrémédiablement atteintes.

J'ai un peu vécu la suite comme dans un rêve. J'ai reçu beaucoup d'amour de mon entourage. Et je me prenais pour une sainte. J'ai des photos de moi, à l'hôpital. On dirait la pureté incarnée. Je voulais être drôle pour ma visite. Je faisais comme si ce n'était pas grave, ce qui m'était arrivé. Je me souviens aussi que mon équilibre tenait à l'ordre de mon univers matériel immédiat. Mon magnétophone à portée de main, mes livres rangés à mon goût. Ce genre de détails prenait soudain une importance vitale.

À l'Institut, pendant ma période de réadaptation, j'avais l'impression que mon bonheur allait être lié au fait que quelqu'un s'occupe de moi. Mon chum était revenu, nous étions très proches l'un de l'autre. Mais j'étais en train de développer une vision très matrimoniale de la vie de couple. La passion, l'attirance physique, la sexualité seraient évacuées de cette vie-là. Je croyais que je ne pourrais plus inspirer que de l'amour-protection, de l'amourtendresse. Qu'on me trouverait sans doute gentille et charmante, mais jamais plus séduisante. Ça n'a pas duré longtemps. À l'Institut, j'ai trouvé séduisant un gars qui ne bougeait ses bras qu'avec difficulté et pas du tout ses jambes. Il y a eu comme un effet de retour sur moi. Si je pouvais le trouver sexy, il n'y avait



Marie-Blanche Rémillard SEPTEMBER $\square 85$ 26 aucune raison pour que je n'inspire pas le même sentiment.

#### Au sortir du reve

Je me suis réintégrée rapidement dans le flot de la vie. Je suis sortie de réadaptation en février pour aller vivre avec ma soeur et mon chum. À la fin de cet étélà, j'ai décroché un petit emploi à la Société des fêtes nationales, emploi qui a été salutaire et a facilité mon retour à la vie dite normale. J'ai recommencé l'université en septembre, à Concordia, qui était plus accessible aux personnes en chaise roulante.

En me réintégrant, j'ai constaté toutes sortes d'attitudes, de croyances autour de moi. Entre autres, qu'une personne handicapée est le vivant rappel de la *fragilité du corps*. L'image de maladie, de menace et de mort associée au fauteuil roulant, je l'ai vue, je la vois encore dans les yeux des autres.

Parmi les personnes qui s'approchent de moi, il y a celles qui me trouvent sympathique et pour lesquelles mon handicap n'est pas un obstacle, ou présente un intérêt supplémentaire. Il y a aussi celles qui s'approchent parce que leur premier réflexe, dans la vie, c'est d'aider. Et puis il y a les curieux-ses, qui ne te regardent pas dans les yeux, qui sont attiré-e-s par la *phénomène*. C'est parfois inhumain, et parfois une façon maladroite d'entrer en contact.

Somme toute, il n'existe pas d'attitude univoque. Souvent, les attitudes rafraîchissantes sont le fait de personnes qui ont bien connu une personne handicapée. Mais le manque de simplicité, face au handicap, je le comprends. Je l'ai vécu quand j'ai commencé à militer et à rencontrer des personnes souffrant d'un handicap autre que le mien.

Je comprends donc que les gens exagèrent parfois dans leur délicatesse. Au point de vouloir faire abstraction de ma chaise roulante. pourtant bien réelle. Elle requiert un certain temps de soins chaque année, cette chaise. Un handicap entraîne des limitations fonctionnelles dont it faut tenir compte. Pour moi, l'attitude idéale serait un mélange de conscience du handicap et d'acceptation de la personne.

#### Un certain regard

Il m'est impossible d'envisager une relation amoureuse avec quelqu'un qui ne m'accepterait pas totalement. Je veux être aimée non pas malgré, mais avec mon handicap. J'ai besoin de me sentir en confiance avec mon partenaire. La sexualité est un domaine de jeu, de rire, de plaisir et de détente. En dépit d'une diminution de sensibilité, mon corps est aussi présent, aussi capable de recevoir et de donner l'amour.

Il m'arrive cependant de souhaiter que mon corps soit invisible. J'aimerais pouvoir toucher et être touchée sans qu'on puisse le voir. Je ne suis donc pas tellement différente des femmes au corps vieillissant ou de celles qui n'aiment pas leur corps. J'ai intégré les critères esthétiques de ma société et, dans une partie de moi, j'en suis victime.

Pourtant il y a des moments où je me sens comme un tout. À ces moments-là, dans mon sourire, mon regard et mes gestes, lorsque je suis *une*, non seulement je me sens séduisante, mais je séduis. Au contraire, lorsque je me trouve un air infirme, le regard des autres me pèse. Il est d'autant plus important que je n'aie pas, face à moimême, des réticences que je ne veux pas retrouver chez les autres.

J'ai eu un chum handicapé, après mon chum américain, qui m'a beaucoup aidée. Il m'acceptait inconditionnellement, il m'aimait totalement. Probablement comme n'importe quelle femme souhaiterait être aimée. Nous étions par ailleurs de joyeux complices. Il était lui aussi en chaise roulante. Il conduisait une voiture adaptée. Nous nous trouvions formidables de nous débrouiller si bien, tous les deux. Comme il était plus handicapé que moi, j'étais moins exigeante, plus active. Je prenais davantage d'initiatives. Nous étions très heureux. Mais, petit à petit, notre couple est devenu socialement lourd à porter. Et puis, il existe une sorte de règle, chez les personnes handicapées, selon laquelle tu n'es parfaitement intégré-e que si tu as un emploi, tu conduis une auto et tu sors avec une personne qui n'est pas handicapée ... Il y a tellement de raisons qui amènent un couple à se défaire. Ce que je sais, c'est que j'ai acquis avec lui beaucoup d'autonomie.

#### Cherchez la femme

L'autonomie me coûte plus cher qu'à une autre, car j'ai besoin d'outils pour la conserver. Je ne peux pas, par exemple, sauter dans un autobus quand je veux m'en aller. Par contre, je me considère *physiquement* plus mobile que d'autres femmes handicapées. Il y a peu d'endroits qui me résistent. J'aime descendre les côtes à toute vitesse. Je saute les chaînes de trottoir. Il y a aussi l'espace du bateau que j'ai apprivoisé l'été dernier. Nous étions 26 membres d'équipage, dont sept handicapé-e-s. Lorsque tu te retrouves en groupe sur un territoire aussi restreint, tu apprends à ne pas trop te compliquer la vie.

Je dirais que le pire obstacle, c'est la peur. La peur de la douleur — c'est effrayant d'affronter une plaque de glace avec des béquilles — mais aussi la peur du ridicule et de la solitude. D'habitude, en bas de 40 ans, les femmes paraplégiques arrivent à ne pas trop avoir peur. J'en connais plusieurs qui sont instruites, qui travaillent et ... qui vivent seules. Les hommes handicapés, eux, trouvent plus facilement une femme pour les aimer et s'occuper d'eux. Survivance d'un dévouement typiquement féminin, sans doute ?

Il y a cependant un danger à prendre le cas d'une personne handicapée pour le donner en exemple. Chaque cas a son histoire, chaque handicap sa spécificité. Je ne suis pas nécessairement représentative des femmes handicapées, même s'il existe entre nous une solidarité évidente. Nous vivons cette expérience commune de constituer une minorité. D'autre part, il y a place, c'est certain, pour la solidarité entre femmes handicapées et non handicapées. Une amie, dernièrement, me faisait remarquer que pour étudier au verre grossissant les problèmes des femmes dans la société, on n'avait qu'à examiner à l'oeil nu ceux des femmes handicapées. Dans le fond, lorsqu'on y regarde à deux fois, nous sommes différentes ... mais pas tant que ça.

#### **Une impression**

Marie-Blanche me regarde d'un air légèrement sceptique lorsque je lui demande si elle a trouvé agressantes certaines de mes questions. Certaines, oui. Celles qui l'ont poussée à constater qu'elle n'était pas aussi unique qu'elle aimait le croire. Ce qui m'a étonnée. J'avais eu plaisir à découvrir la semblable-au-delà-dela différence. Ça m'avait donné l'impression de jeter un pont sur le courant trouble des préjugés.

Elle a un sourire discret lorsque je lui demande si elle n'a pas un peu de révolte, cachée quelque part. Parfois, oui. Lorsqu'elle voudrait se promener en forêt ou au bord de la falaise. Parfois aussi lorsque le geste quotidien s'éternise. Mais la révolte s'apaise toujours. Elle est bien québécoise, Marie-Blanche, lorsqu'elle me confie: "Au fond, tu sais, je vis avec mon handicap comme je vis avec l'hiver. Dans un mélange d'inquiétude, de fatigue, de familiarité et de bonheur."

**Josette Giguere** est traductrice de formation, journaliste à la pige et "littéraire" par passion.▼

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# Why so many women read (and need) Harlequins

Enter the world of Harlequin Romances.

Welcome to a world of travel, love and adventure, where young orphaned women meet strong capable men. Girl meets boy. Girl hates boy. Girl loves boy and finally boy loves girl. It's a world of fantasy and whether right or wrong it's an escape many women need.

For Susan, a 20 year old Dalhousie University student, Harlequins are a much needed break from a stream of essays, tests and papers. She's living far away from home and is in need of emotional support. On Sunday afternoons she often picks up her room-mate's most recent Harlequin (she says she'd never buy one) and relaxes for an hour of mindless adventure.

Susan is not alone. Thousands of women read Harlequin Romances. The negative and stereotypical portrayal of women in Harlequins has feminists asking why women read them at all, and the inadequacy of existing research on this subject has some feminist academics giving Harlequins a fresh look.

Angela Miles, a sociology professor at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, says she recently "came out" as a Harlequin reader and is touring the lecture circuit to talk about her experiences and ideas.

She says understanding why women need and read romances is essential to an understanding of women's lives. Miles believes the deeply emotional experience of Harlequin reading is about love not sex, nurturing not seducing and mother love, not male hero worship.

Miles says that her interest in Harlequins made her look for other feminist

## SAMANTHA BRENNAN

work on the issue. When she found it, she says it was disappointing.

"Feminists just haven't applied the feminist principle of using your own experience when dealing with Harlequin romances."

Instead she found essays that talked about how horrible Harlequins were without asking why women read them.



"Oh Knute," she cried, her voluptuous Amazon muscles rippling 'neath the sleeves Miles says the feminists who actually did talk to Harlequin readers still treated them as an other, an alien species.

"We all recognize the faint echo of the myth of knight in shining armour riding off on the white horse. What is it about this myth that attracts women?"

When speaking in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, her lecture, "Confessions of a Harlequin Reader" attracted a crowd about as unusual as the lecture topic itself. Sitting in a semi-circle around Miles were feminist academics, women Harlequin readers and one male aspiring Harlequin writer anxious to meet his readers.

"You don't have to do a lot of research to find out that Harlequin's message is that your life has no meaning without a man."

She admits it's no surprise feminists are upset with Harlequins and the myth of women's powerlessness they perpetuate. But Miles says we must take the questions further and ask what is it about the Harlequin romance that is so attractive to women.

"I have been out as a Harlequin reader for awhile now," says Miles. She says she realised she was addicted to the Harlequin experience when in the middle of her PhD thesis she wanted to go home and read a Harlequin romance. She says the turning point came when she actually considered buying one.

Miles said as a feminist she remembered the personal is political and couldn't accept making Harlequins an unquestioned area of her life.

She says this led to her asking the question — "If they are so bad, why am I reading them and if they're not why

can't I tell my friends? This is when I knew I had to "come out" as a Harlequin reader," said Miles.

"I didn't send out cards," she says. "But I dropped it into the conversation whenever I could." She says she watched herself finding ways to defend her habit.

"I asked them (my friends) what is wrong with women fantasising about finding love, never doing housework and seeing exotic places?" But still these reasons failed to satisfy her questions.

Miles says she began to look at the dialogue and plot of Harlequins to find out what was so attractive to women, including herself. She says she found that the male hero in Harlequin romances, the knight in shining armour, is a mother image. The male hero may be arrogant but he's also self-sufficient, strong and nurturing, says Miles.

"One thing Harlequins are about is not having to mother men, which is something married women know lots about. If you're looking for mothering you turn to Harlequins."

She says Harlequins are able to provide women with emotional rewards society fails to provide them — love, affection and nurturing. These are things we associated with our mother, says Miles.

Using dozens of quotes from Harlequins, Miles shows the male hero as someone who washes the heroine's feet, tucks her in bed and buttons up her coat. The woman is childlike and submissive. Miles says it's significant that the heroine in Harlequin is usually an orphan living in the home of the male hero.

Miles says you can pick up any Harlequin Romance to find examples of these characters. She's right. "The Turn of the Tide", a Harlequin Romance, by Samantha Day tells the tale of Stefanie Hart, a woman who recently left her job and is vacationing in Nanaimo, B.C. Stefanie is an orphan without family or friends and she's getting away from a shattered romance.

Enter Jesse Stuart — the older man. He mistakes Stefanie for a teenage girl and this is the base from which their romance forms. She plays the part of the young impetuous girl anxious to learn and he is only too willing to teach her.

"She sat quietly, an embarassed flush staining her cheeks. After last night she was all too aware that she deserved the censure she could hear in his voice. To her surprise, he reached across the table and touched her clenched hand with gentle fingers ... 'Just make sure you don't go do it again.' he said severely, of her faded flannel shirt. ''If you were but a man of gentle strength, (instead of a square jawed buffoon) then might we try to make sense of this crazy world.''

"Oh Cassandra." he whispered plaintively, "I guess it doesn't take a genius to figure out that a raven haired WASP like me. (square jawed, passionate and wealthy though I might be) could never offer a woman like vou happiness." With that he swooned.



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then flashed her a wide smile."

Only later when she falls in love with Jess does Stefanie realise that it's essential she tell Jess her real age. The book chronicles Jess' many attemps to care for Stephanie — he's saved her from drowning, given her tours of the beach and even cooked meals for her.

Fantasy.

This is the key to the Harlequin experience — fantasy and emotion.

"She's on an emotional roller coaster ride created by the writers."

She says the heroine moves from resistance to love to rejection and then to reconciliation.

Both Harlequin romances and mother-child relationships contain this mix of nurturing and dominance, Miles says.

Miles is quick to reject the theory that women have a psychological need to reconcile conflict with their mother. Instead she says Harlequins can act as psychological "lever" to ease pressure in difficult times.

And although readers, writers and analysts all agree Harlequins are an escapist fantasy, as Miles says, they're better than other routes women use to escape, such as valium or alcohol.

Claire Harrison is a writer of Harlequin Romances. While she agrees that emotion is the key to the Harlequin, she says the genre has changed considerably since feminists began criticised it for its portrayal of women as helpless and unsuccessful without a man.

Harrison says the Harlequin heroine is now older, sophisticated, smart and well able to support herself. But she admits that the details of the heroine's life aren't that important to the overall book: "What's important is that the emotional terrain between the two has to be mapped out precisely. ... Who cares what the heroine's career is, what the hero's career is?"

On the last page of "The Turn of the Tide", Jess turns to Stefanie as they lay in bed. "Marry me soon, love," he murmurs. "Very soon." The fantasy is complete, for Harlequins rarely tell what happens after the kiss and inevitable proposal.

"They're nice books about nice people leading nice lives." says Harrison, "It has to be a nice world. The readers don't want to read about a world where there is cancer and the threat of nuclear war or inflation."

Samantha Brennan is National Features writer for Canadian University Press, and is currently living in Ottawa.



# POETRY

#### END OF ANOTHER SUMMER HOLIDAY WITH MY DAUGHTER: Thoughts at the Airport

I am drinking a cup of coffee, looking around amid the strangers in my hypnogogic dream;

as if it were the most natural thing in the world: to sit in an airport restaurant, alone after your plane has taken off (I heard the announcement) and behave as if

It's just another day, another cup of coffee, another restaurant ... just another goodbye.

Does missing you increase my love for you? I don't know. Each parting seems to give my love a sharper, poignant edge, that cuts across my eyes like a biting Arctic wind, as I watch you go yet one more time.

The tears dribble into my cup. I drink them down along with the coffee — I'll be using them again.

My lips are trembling; feel like they'll gallop right off my face like two wild horses, uncontrollable; betraying my anguish at loving you, leaving you,

see you next summer.

© Francesca Bonacorsa Montreal, Quebec

#### SUMMER SOLSTICE

As the sun ascends the sky's peak I kneel in clusters of round, scalloped leaves Ripe red strawberries nestle in the shade of guardian stems like eggs protected by a mother hen.

Mom, I wish you could be here to enjoy your favorite fruit share in the warmth of the day and the gentle wind that makes the trees dance. Like you, I pick off the brown, dead leaves and the berries fuzzed with mold. My woolen sweater absorbs the sun and warms me all around in a big hug. I pick berry and weed alike — carefully, systematically

It is my way of celebrating the sun whose rays have sweetened the heart-shaped fruit. This image I send to you.

© Amy Siblo-Landsman Palenville, New York

#### WOMAN LYING DOWN

Lying here, my mind struggles to make lists of things, virtual linearities of experience, plans in straight lines. Duties fan out in a peacock's tail of crepe paper streamers

My daughter, my conscience, accuses me of exaggeration: You, mother, drone out these duties just to make them appear more than they really are, to stun me with their complexity. Maybe she is right, but my heart says she is wrong and wrong.

There is another reason

My mind is a jumble of impenetrable circles, hermetically sealed musts and oughts, a veritable bingo-ball machine of relentlessly bouncing contingencies, a tirelessly hopping crowd of spherical tyrants.

So when I can order up my bouncing balls into neat little lists, when I can tell myself to go shopping, cash cheque, do laundry, clean out cat's box, call Lydia and Dumas, from this comes a sense of shaping my female destiny: at least a change from spheres to lines, from balls to sticks, a respite from bouncing. It's peaceful just lying here.

Lists are wonderful things: they make fun of real life. So when I schedule the bank visit, the laundry and cat's box, when I add them up on my organized little piece of paper, the total reads: Screw this and continue reading **Anna Karenina**.

© Cornelia C. Hornosty Dundas, Ontario

September for me is a time of lists. Lists of courses to take, projects to start, organisations to join. Lists of all the ways I'm going to make my life more interesting, more useful and more relevant. September begins fall, the true season of new year's resolutions. In my mind it far surpasses spring as a time of "fresh starts" and "new beginnings". Of course we most often associate it with the "back-to-school" harbinger of books, pens, detentions and tests. Few of us have escaped internalising the academic calendar. We gear down in summer until the passing of Labour Day quickens our pace. Fall is a time of getting our lives in order.

This is my second fall in the city. It's my second chance to fulfill the expectations I had of moving here, of doing urban things, of making my life better. I arrived in Toronto with a priorised list. The following is but its beginning: find feminists; find feminist publications and

### MARY LOUISE ADAMS

HERIZONS



write; take a dance class; learn to make videos; swim (community pools here are free); find out about computers.

Of course, before undertaking any of those. I had to find a job, a task which initially consumed all my energy. Fortunately, in taking care of it I managed to pursue the first two items on the list so thoroughly that the latter ones never had a chance (it took five months, but I managed to get jobs on two feminist publications). Two years later the situation is still the same. Although busy and happy with what I do. I frequently feel, as we all do at sometime or another, that I should be accomplishing more, that I'm not doing enough.

My sense of inadequacy is an indication of how the dominant culture operates — valid as it may be it is still well padded by privilege. One of the basic premises of a society built on middle class norms and experiences is that everyone has the possibility to improve their lot in life. It's a premise that informs a plethora of myths about discrimination and injustice; if women would just stop being so passive; if poor people weren't so lazy: if disabled people would quit feeling sorry for themselves, they could all take their equal place in this world.

As a minor case in point, I present my lists. Tiny bits of paper and unobtrusive scribbles continually find their way to my notebook and my calendar — "dance class, Wed. 6:30", "prices at the Y go up Sept. 1". Every so often I weed through these little gems, culling those that seem totally impausible. I save the rest to compile new lists which I review periodically, promising myself I'll get back to them and follow them up. I rarely do.

I wonder why I persist with this habit. It's quite clear that my scribbles, as organised as they are, have little influence over the course of my life. My

Find feminists Find feminist Fublications Publications and write Take a dance class

suspicion is that they are part of a compulsion that grows from my background. I've been primed to be upwardly mobile. But, most of my paid work is done within feminist organizations, work which the average middle class parent would consider 'going nowhere.' There is no opportunity for promotion, the chances of getting a raise are abysmal and long term job security is non-existent. How can a girl possibly make something of herself?

I enjoy what I do and I get satisfaction from its relevance. A comparable position in a mainstream organization, with all its attendent benefits and opportunities, would give me less, not more satisfaction. Yet, I still suffer periodic episodes of unease. In misguided attempts to overcome them I make lists of all the things I think I should be doing. I suppose my logic is that although I may not be an executive I can still be fit and educated about a wide variety of topics, two of the pre-requisites for upward mobility.

Though some of us try as we might to transcend our upbringing, to create new ways of living and interacting in this world, particular occasions serve as reminders of those "old" lessons and values.

September, and its many connotations (back-to-school time, resume-your-lifeafter-summer time, begin-new-projects time) is such an occasion for me.I am deluged with doubts and questions about my life: Am I doing enough? Is my life going anywhere? Shouldn't I really be trundling off to school, gaining enough credentials to ensure my place in the "real world"?

Depending on my presence of mind, it often takes some time before I realise that these doubts are not my own. They reflect the trivialisation of feminism by the rest of our society. Some of this, no matter how good our feminist qualifications, is bound to be internalised. It makes us feel discontent with ourselves Learn to make Uideos Swim Find out about Comput

> and our work when we are actually discontent with the culture. It can make us forget, at times, that the fight against women's oppression is very much a part of the "real world".

> But even knowing and understanding what motivates my discontent. I suspect I will continue to feel it as long as our society operates the way it does. So, until the "revolution". I will continue to make lists. My hope is that their content will change. At least once or twice as September progresses, I will probably feel the urge to evaluate and re-vamp my life. But with the right analysis the process can change from a disheartening experience to an enlightening one. A month of doubts can become a month of possibilities.



#### CHALLENGING THE NUCLEAR EXPERTS (cont'd. from page 18)

A. I would say no and I say so from my own experience. I think scientists are citizens and they are moral creatures. I have - you would see from my C.V. and other things - a very longstanding and very biased standing in favour of peace and many other issues of social justice. And so I am very clearly identified in many debates with one side. Nevertheless when I was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada, the citation quoted the fact that I did not shy from being involved in an advocacy form on issues of general and moral concern. So I would suggest to you, on the basis of my own career - and I assure you, the

#### CHRONOLOGY: YAFFE vs SMYTH LIBEL ACTION

#### January 1982

Leo Yaffe tours the Martime Provinces as President of the Chemical Institute of Canada. He gives a public lecture (previously given in Vancouver in June 1979 and published in *Chemistry in Canada* in December 1979) under the title, "The Health Hazards of Not Going Nuclear". The same lecture is given in Halifax, Wolfville, Antigonish, Sackville and Fredericton.

#### February 1982

An opinion piece with the title. "That Desperate Attempt to Sell Us Nuclear" by Donna Smyth is published in the February 15th issue of the *Halifax Herald*.

#### March 1982

A letter from Yaffe calling Smyth's article "a diatribe" and calling for a retraction is published in the *Halifax Herald* March 19th. On March 22nd Smyth writes a reply which is published in the *Herald* on April 6th. March 30th. Yaffe's Montreal lawyers send a letter to Smyth threatening a libel action.

#### April 1982

Smyth receives a second letter from Yaffe's lawyers threatening a libel action. This is followed by a lengthy personal letter from Yaffe on the same theme.

#### April - June 1982

Smyth consults Halifax lawyer Mary Clancy who writes two letters on her behalf to Yaffe's Montreal lawyers re-

career of a woman in Engineering is not absolute roses — that it is not to the detriment of a scientist to have a clear and moral position. And if that means to be identified with one side of an issue, so it be. — Because others also have clear positions on issues: this is why we have debates."

Other witnesses testified, and finally the sections of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms were read to the court.

"Did you see the jury?" people said as they hugged one another. (Go to any suburban shopping mall and see for yourself: male and female, a variation of ages, dress, occupations and bearing).

questing further information. No reply is made to either letter.

#### January 1983

Two weeks before the statute of limitations would have expired, the Halifax firm of Stewart. MacKeen and Covert, acting for Yaffe, serves an originating notice and statement of claim. The statement of claim identifies the second paragraph of Smyth's article as defamatory and calls for general. special, exemplary and punitive damages for an unspecified amount. The Halifax Herald is not named in the suit.

#### February 1983

Acting through her lawyer, Smith files the defence that, "the words complained of ... are true in substance and in fact ... and are fair comment made in good faith and without malice on a matter of public interest."

#### March 1983

The Nuclear Critics Defence Committee is formed with the aim of "providing background research, moral and financial support for nuclear critics in Nova Scotia who, as a result of legitimate. legal and non-violent opposition to nuclear power and weapons, find themselves the object of harassment or intimidation for their views" and devotes it primary attention to the Yaffe vs Smyth case.

March 28th, 1984 Legal discoveries held.

January 16th-18th, 1985

July trial before Justice Peter Richard of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court.

When they faced the judge across the room and announced their verdict, they were serious, and they were smiling.

"It was like a boxing match," she says of the ordeal. At each adjournment, the beautifully dressed woman would emerge, supporters would ply her with apple juice, and put her back in again for the next round. While the trial itself may have been like The Fights (as they're called here), the student of Tai-Chi and professor of English had not chosen the match. After talking of the three years of living under the threat of legal action, with the attendant financial worries and uncertainties, knowing how one's own reputation can be subtly undermined, she says evenly that by the time she took the witness stand and faced Ronald Pugsley, Q.C., "I knew I was fighting for my life."

The life for which she was fighting is prodigious; in addition to a full teaching load at university, she writes feminist fiction, plays and poetry; performs in street theatre; edits articles and organises events in the peace movement: gives workshops ... But all the activities are rooted in the tranquil meadows nearby her home in the storybook Annapolis Valley. She lives there with her friend, Gillian Thomas, who also teaches English at a university. When their area appeared to be up for grabs for uranium exploration, both women did what many Nova Scotians did across the province, and many thousands have done across Canada. They became Citizen Scientists ... They studied and researched, wrote away for articles, had countless meetings, and organised against uranium development. "Objective" research of "experts" it was not: it was learning and science for survival. By then, most of the major energy giants had come to Nova Scotia after active encouragement from the province ("The more activity, the more we like it," a provincial Department of Mines official enthused). Their farmhouse in Ellershouse was just 18 miles from one of the "hot" uranium finds.

Excerpt from Donna Smyth's Op Ed article:

Immediate deaths are not the point.

The latency-induction period for most cancers is 10-30 years. In this situation, people die later after industry liability has run out. Accompanying problems are depression of the general immune system leading to lower disease resistance, premature aging, increased incidences of still births and abortions. Also of concern and still a matter of scientific debate are possible mutagenetic defects — irreversible damage to the human gene pool.

Donna Smyth "won" her case — the first libel case in Canada to appeal to the Charter. The financial costs were considerable; the personal and social costs incalculable.

The "winner" now owes an estimated \$20,000 in legal fees. (One bill which raised evebrows was for \$1,000 in expenses which Dr. Yaffe charged for a trial-related overnight stay in Halifax ...) Though the court costs in Nova Scotia are covered by the losing side, many essential legal expenses are not. The estimated debt does not even include about \$5,000 Smyth had already spent on lawyers in the years leading up to the trial. But it's only because she was relatively financially secure and had a strong community backing that she was able to stand her ground. "What about someone with fewer resources and support systems?" she asks. "I never would have survived without them. I could have been shut up really easily. 'Justice' is too expensive.'

Excerpt from Donna Smyth's Op Ed article:

What Dr. Yaffe and nuclear proponents always leave out of their economic analyses are the hidden costs of nuclear power: tax breaks, limited liability nuclear insurance with the tab being picked up by the government and ultimately the taxpayer; direct and indirect government subsidies; decommissioning of nuclear reactors (average life of 25-30 years) and subsequent management of these forever-radioactive sites; long-term surveillance and management of uranium mine tailings and high-level reactor wastes; long-term degradation of the immediate environment, including hundreds of acres of land used for dumping uranium mine wastes and tailings; longterm degradation of worker and public health.

Apart from these hidden costs at home, the only way to sell Candu abroad is to bribe developing countries with unprecedented offers of direct aid, credit lines and reduced interest rates. While some of us cannot afford to renegotiate our house mortgages, Canada is offering Mexico a 7.5 per cent interest rate to buy Canadian nuclear reactors. Romania, despite its flagging economy, was offered a \$1 billion credit line.

Even supporting Donna Smyth was expensive. Late on Sunday night, a week before the trial, one member of the Defence Committee was suddenly subpoenaed for cross-examination by the plaintiff's lawyers. Other members of the committee, now needing their own independent lawyer, spent an anxious week wondering if they would be next... "I don't think I'll ever forget going to teach my classes that week," says Gillian Thomas, "and expecting at any moment to be tapped on the shoulder by someone from the Sheriff's office carrying a white envelope ..."

And how do you assess the costs of the hundreds of hours of support work spent by a group: a filmmaker, professors of Education, social work, a homemaker, an environmentalist, a writer, several Quakers ...

Costly to society are Canadian libel laws which allow plaintiffs to pick and choose their defendants.

What's more, unlike the rest of common law which ensures that one is innocent until proven guilty, these laws place the burden of proof on the defendant. "It was preposterous," says Smyth of a case which never should have been brought to trial. And while the bias in favour of class, prestige and privilege seems ever present in the courts, under these laws, the costs of a judge and jury are borne by society - so that the courts may hear cases which only the priviledged are likely to bring to trial. When he instructed the jury on points of law, the judge clearly explained that you can't sue for damages for a reputation you don't have. Given such standards of income measurement and public profile and given the cost of lawyers, most Canadians could never sue for libel, no matter what was said about them.

Costly to the environmental movement was the effective suppression of Donna Smyth's succinct and cogent argument against any kind of nuclear development in Nova Scotia, and the silencing of a very articulate opponent to the nuclear industry. More costly still was the diversion of her energies and those of friends and supporters who work in the peace, women's and environmental movements.

But perhaps most costly of all: For three years, writers, active citizens, and the public in general were allowed to live in doubt — some in anxiety. Like uncomfortable schoolchildren, we wondered again whether someone bright would be punished for speaking her mind.

Excerpt from Donna Smyth's Op Ed article:

We must make sure that we are part of the decision-making process and that we represent, not only ourselves, but the interests of our children and grandchildren for generations.



**Gillian Thomas:** 

"There was an incredible amount of mail that Donna's had from all over the country supporting her in this. It was also fascinating how our rural neighbours reacted — the night after the trial, a farmer who lives near us phoned to congratulate Donna and was completely choked up with joy. Everybody had seen it on TV and there was this amazing sense that someone from Ellershouse had got the better of Halifax and of Upper Canada ..."

The plaintiff had to catch a plane so he missed hearing the verdict. The night after the trial, a healthy, beautiful, baby boy was born to the woman to whom he had spoken of grandchildren. And plans were already underway for the legal defence of the "Pentagon Party Poopers", 14 people who had sung (allegedly, "chanted") peace songs outside a luncheon of Pentagon officials and Nova Scotia businessmen.

A lot of the same people who had supported Donna Smyth now joined her in raising funds for them. One night it was a benefit cabaret ... there was mime, there was singing, and there was wit and there was foolishness; people laughed till they cried, and the Emcee was Donna Smyth. She played the part of the judge.

[Ed. note: Donations to help defray Donna Smyth's legal expenses can be sent to the Nuclear Critics' Defense Committee, c/o Dr. Toni Laidlaw, 1559 Lemarchant Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia.]▼

# No Holds Barred: Women's Writings from Prisons

#### REALITY

This is an essay I've written, that explains a little of what has been happening in my life, lately.

I'd start at the beginning only my life has no real beginning; not one that I can put my finger on. But I'll start at the only place I know where to.

At the beginning of the end.

What is reality?

A blurred image of people crowded around.

Flashing lights of red and blue. An unknown person seating me in a car, throwing sentences at me that have no meaning.

After they take these cuffs off, they place me in a cell where many, like me, have passed through before.

As I consider what to do, and who to call, the darkness filled with restlessness, and intangible dreams take over.

Next, I stand before a crowd of people, situated in different parts of the room, some are here to consider, and judge what I've done, others are here to observe, and listen.

Silently, I stand before the man who has my freedom in his hands. Raising his glasses, he trys to look deep inside me, but he only sees what he's probably seen before.

A person, a young person who has, somewhere down the line lost the road which they were walking, unevenly on. Along the way, grasping onto a number of different emotions; confusion, hate, and fear, then hiding them behind a mask.

Only our bitterness reflects off from the crimes we commit. Giving us the name we feel we deserve, criminal, and being labeled as a criminal is what sets us apart from the rest of the world.

It sets us far enough away so that you don't see the pain in our eyes, yet close enough for us to hurt those who we think hurt us. Though our plans always back-fire, we continue to try, and try again, in the end we only succeed in hurting ourselves, by making ourselves hard and calloused from too many jail terms.

Now I'm standing in a court room, while people watch and wonder what his verdict will be.

Understanding that I have done something, not easily accepted in the judge's eyes, makes this sentence, I know, I'm about to receive easier to accept.

Slipping into my thoughts, I can't help wonder; why me ??

Living within the boundaries of the life I grew up in; "The Street". I watched the world around us, "The Street People", glow bright. Seeming as though its rays were trying to reach for me and take hold of me. Yet, fear takes my hand, and guides me back to the fog that I've known all my life.

Startled back into reality by a man's voice questioning me. I only hear myself say "No, your Honor", then, with a shake of his head he takes what little freedom I had left.

Sitting here now, my life has stood still, and will continue to do so whether in jail or out there.

#### This is reality.

Being a naive kid at the age of fifteen, it was an easy thing to fall into prostitution.

I guess living on welfare half of my life, and being in different homes, the other half helped.

I realised, after I was convinced by certain people, that on the

street, I was receiving the attention that I've always wanted. So, in having all this attention, I noticed that I wasn't as lonely as I was before I started.

But like all things that seem good, my good times came to a sudden halt.

I got tired of the role that seemed to take over my life. So, I began to wear my faded blue jeans, and I didn't feel the need to wear any make up. I even started to wear my hair straight, or in a ponytail, which, in my case, looked awful. I know I wanted people to notice, I guess. To me they didn't seem to say the right things.

They usually asked me why I didn't look as good as I used to. They didn't seem to accept me as easily as they did when I was playing the role of the "Happy Hooker" who supposedly always looked good, and I believe that without conceit, I did look good. But when I began thinking that no one really liked me for me, I said to hell with them. I then quit doing the things that I guess I really enjoyed. dressing up, and looking good.

I began to draw into myself, and I started to take my drugs and/or booze just to get through the day. Why? Because, I feared people, especially myself.

I became afraid of not being good enough, yet I feared being told that I acted too good, which I've always been told a number of times. Either people were telling me that I didn't look as good as I was anymore, or they told me that I was a snob, when really I was always too shy to approach anyone.

So I drank, and/or got high, and tried to keep to myself.

Sometimes, I woke up with a guy I didn't even know lying beside me. Usually though, I'd cry myself to sleep, alone in a rented motel room.

When I drank, I drank at clubs where no one knew me.

Sitting where I could watch the people and try to figure out what was so different about their lives from mine. I found out that there was a difference, in lifestyle, and in maturity.

They seemed to be more carefree, and never really wanted to think about things unless it had anything to do with having a good time.

Around them I felt more at ease, like the things that happened to me never really even existed.

I felt ashamed of the lifestyle I created for myself and whenever someone would find out about it, I'd pull over my protective curtain and wait for their reaction. If they questioned my unusual lifestyle, I'd usually try to avoid answering or I'd ask them what was so different about it that it was the only way I knew how to survive which I guess was true at the time.

Really, what I'd want to do is cry, and ask them to help me find a different way of life. Not only that but to stand beside me and guide me. But being able to hide your true feelings is the key to being a, so they say, successful "Street Person".

For me, it's easier to laugh at the bad, wrong things that exist in my life if I keep laughing, smiling and telling myself that I'll survive through this, the bad will disappear in time. Now I don't know about that because my laughter, smile, and hope is dwindling leaving me to feel the brush of coldness I feel in the "Street People" who have already lost what little I have left.

Each time I lower my wall, someone plugs my cannons, so I add another layer of bricks.
The darkness that is starting to cover me is beginning to make me cold and lonely. I feel like I am losing myself in my own darkness.

My fear is becoming a cold unfeeling person, these are people I have lost my respect for. I never liked their attitudes, or their sense of judgement.

I feel sorry for those who have fallen prey to these heartless people, because I know what they can do to someone who has never dealt with their kind before.

They take what they can get from you, and leave you feeling drained.

If you've been lucky and they've left you some strength to go on with life, you'll take it ... or you get smart and go to someone you can get the strength to go on.

Or you do as I did, and continue to let them play with you until you can't seem to go on any longer.

After a while you learn to lose yourself in drugs and booze, it eases the fear of not knowing where you are going., for a while.

I suppose you can say I am lucky, because I am now starting to realise that I do have a choice and if I really do want to survive, which I do, I'll have to begin right here, now, before it's too late.

I don't want to look back on my life in a few years when I'm thirty or so, and see someone who didn't at least try.

I'd like to be able to tell my daughters about my life someday, and I'd like to say that, yes, I had it rough, but I tried, and I succeeded, that I survived my own war; MYSELF.

I know that it'll be a long road, and probably rough, too!!!

But, I will SURVIVE.

Survival is MY REALITY .....

© Donna Lynn Gamble



#### FRIEND

When you heard friend singing you get the rifle down flashlight aiming for my brain you always miss

When you get out the prison I piss on it to warn the others they think, that one's too clever

She's dangerous. dont stick around to be slaughtered

they think, I'm good. despite your fur and pretty teeth Six nipples and tail,

All I want is love you stupid humanist that if you can.

Right, I'm parasite, I live off your leavings gristle and rancid fat taking without asking

Make nest in the cupboards, out of your suits and underwear You'd do the same if you can

If you can afford to share your crystal hatreds It's your throat I want

The mate trapped in your throat though you try to drown him With your greasy person voice.

Hiding between your syllables I can hear friend singing.

© Lorraine Campbell

#### EASE AGE

I want to ease into old age along side your gentleness

they slide with you over somersaulting season

and not notice a wrinkle here and there

frosting on our weather air or hair for getting there

along side your gentleness is getting here

© Lorraine Campbell

#### **REACHING OUT**

She reached out They reached back

Her palms were open They pointed a finger

She cried They just walked away

"She's adjusting" They said "She'll be alright in the morning"

She cried and they heard "Some have difficulty adjusting" they said

She stopped Adjusting or caring

Now a mere existence She forgets to cry

Tears don't sting They don't come

Sleep is no longer restless It won't come

She eats But there is no taste

She no longer reaches out Their fingers have wilted

© NR

#### HOME

Seagreens and blue sky the seagulls are waiting White horses and salt spray Ride it, ride me, ride my wave,

Old men and cigars Seagulls are waiting Vancouver Island Ferry sea greens and blue sky.

Mariners call and lighthouse star White horses, salt spray, seashells And the oyster's pearl. Where do you light the candle?? Illuminate my soul.

Make it a ferry Ride my tide, Ride the wide Blue ocean salt spray ....

Ferry me in an oyster's shell

Ride the tide on the wide Blue, green & grey, a sailor's way ride me now, ferry me there in an oyster's pearl.

© Gwen Emslu

**JUST PASSING THROUGH** (For my man son Mac MacLean)

Train track beckons, on finger crooked move on, move on.

Train track travelling tell tale marks travel stains and memories just passing through

Winter's white portrait greying edges and brown Weary wounded spirit moody mellow me moonrise star rose

Sunshine and prose just passing through Anonymous faces - no names Where are you headed familiar refrain

Don't know me, I won't know you Train track beckons move on, move it along Hail the morn Today's tomorrow

We're just passin through

© Gwen Emslu



PEOPLE MISTAKE

those arms and legs

now its broken

they don't work anymore

## ENTERPRISING WOMEN Life in the Fast Lane

Alice Macpherson is a motorcycle racer, mechanic and co-owner of Arrow Motorcycles in Vancouver, B.C.

When I arrived at Arrow Motorcycles to interview Alice in the middle of a weekday morning, she was at her desk in the office working on the books.

The first question I asked her was: "Why the motorcycle business?" Her quick answer is simply this: "I bought a bike."

To anyone familiar with bikes, that is explanation enough. Bike owners are always poking around, tightening, adjusting and fixing things on their bike. Safety depends on it. Alice bought her first bike for cheap transportation, and become a mechanic. Her first problem Alice Macpherson at work. because she didn't have much money, apprentice. "Nobody wants to hire a woman," she explains. In the fall of '71 she got a job which lasted nine months and gave her a foot in the door. Last April, in what she refers to as "the worst year for the motorcycle business in living history" she opened Arrow Motorcycles with a partner.

Now that Alice is established in the motorcycle business, things are easier for her as a woman. She credits her experience and changing attitudes about women, as two factors for the improvements. Most of her problems now are those any small business person faces.

Running Arrow Motorcycles is a lot like running a household. "You don't have to cook meals and change diapers, but its not much different from being a housewife," she says. In addition to fixing bikes and cars. Alice does the books. cleans, and deals with customers. Working hours are from 9 am until 6 pm Monday through Saturday, the "normal full time hours for the average owners of a new business." she says. Partner Ken Botham shares the workload, and tasks are divided depending on who is busy, and what they are interested in working on. The major advantage of running her own business is self determination, which means "not having to deal with the boss' delusions of grandeur," says Alice.

Just using her bike for transportation,

#### MARY MARTIN

and learning to be a mechanic were not enough for Alice. She also races bikes. There are very few women who race motorcycles, and fewer now than when she started racing in 1972. "Most of the time I'm the only woman racing." In bike racing there usually is no sex division. And there isn't really a need for one, says Alice, who is sceptical of the few women's races that there are. "There was one called the 'Ms. Match'. And who wants to enter a class called 'powderpuff'?'

Another offshoot of motorcycles is the





maintenance courses Alices teaches. Mostly women attend her courses, learning the basics such as changing and adjusting chains, how a carburetor works, and troubleshooting. The course is not particularly aimed at women, but few men attend.

Teaching self defence is in keeping with Alice's attitudes of self determination, and getting out and doing what you want to do. "I think every person should know how to defend themselves." She first came in contact with self defence while living in Toronto in 1972. She continued on to become an instructor, and primarily teaches women and children, as well as other instructors. "The more anybody knows the less likely they are to follow-up if something is initiated with someone else." Her classes consist as much of conciousness raising - discussing how threats of rape and other violence restricts people, how to deal with situations, and how to avoid situations without staying constantly under lock and key.

But the motorcycle business, racing, and teaching self defence and bike maintenance are only part of what Alice has done and is doing. With a long list of occupations both traditional and nontraditional, from cashier to typesetter to goldsmith and candle maker she refers to herself as a creative schizophrenic. Currently she organises and runs security for some of Vancouver's largest festivals in her spare time. "What else are you going to do at night?" she asks.

Alice is also actively involved in Women in Trades, which is both a support network for tradeswomen and promotes women in non-traditional work. "Women need to be heard, and it's important for women to talk together."

At this point in the interview I caught up with my frantic shorthand and paused to watch Alice who was again doing more bookkeeping. I'd gone through all of my questions but one, and so asked if she had anything to add. She barely had to think about an answer. "Don't worry about what you can't do. There are thousands of people who'll tell you that, just ask anybody. It's more important to figure out what you can do. Whatever it is, try. The worst you can do is fail, and if you don't try, you already have."



### LYN COCKBURN

An Alberta judge recently reduced a man's 30 day sentence for breaking his wife's elbow, slapping and kicking her, because according to the judge, she provoked him by yelling and acting like a shrew. "She tormented him and therefore, asked to be beaten", concluded Chief Justice William McGillivray.

I consider this decision a positive landmark in Canadian jurisprudence.

I've been wondering for weeks what to do about the man on my volleyball team who chooses to ignore the fact that I'm just learning to spike and who mutters uncomplimentary remarks when I bang the ball into the net rather than over it. Acts like a shoat, he does. Obviously just asking for it. I won't get more than a weekend in jail for rearranging his kneecaps.

Then there's my brother. We're of different political persuasions and as a result, we argue a lot. I of course, remain logical, calm and reasonable throughout these exchanges, while he often rudely yells at me. I'm glad to know that I can now do something about his provoking me. I used to beat him up when we were kids and with the help of the karate I've learned since the Alberta judge made his decision, I'm sure I can still do so.

And my father. He's a nice man and I love him dearly, just as I'm sure the Alberta man loves his wife. Nevertheless, my father has been yelling at me for years. Especially when I borrow things. For example, last month I borrowed his lawn mower. I asked most politely and then when I returned it three weeks later, he shouted at me. Most unreasonable. He's not going to get away with such behaviour anymore though. The next time he provokes me, I intend to fetch him a smart one.

Then there's Sam, one of my bridge partners. Sam is a good sort, but his bidding is erratic. He often overbids with wild abandon and gets me into contracts an expert couldn't make. Then he makes rude remarks when I don't succeed. The man provokes me everytime we play bridge and I'm not going to take it any longer.

Worst of all, there's the proprietor of what used to be my corner store. When I politely expressed my objection to the hard core porn magazines he sells, he yelled abuse at me. Now instead of walking two blocks out of my way and contenting myself with telling everyone I know why I no longer shop there, I'll go back and practice my karate on him.

All in all, there are quite a few people in my life who provoke me and therefore, deserve a good beating.

I've been momentarily tempted in the past to whack them one or break a few bones, so obviously are they asking for it, but I've always worried that the law might not allow me to beat up people just because they deserve it.

Now that I know it's O.K., I intend to straighten out my interpersonal relationships.

It is indeed encouraging to know that at long last, the courts recognise that some people provoke beatings and that those who insist on behaving like shrews or shoats can no longer expect to get away with it.

The end.▽

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Status of Women Organisations across Canada, and *Herizons* magazine invite you to join our listing of status of women groups, and become a



numbers. Appearing in all 8 issues of Herizons for the upcoming publishing year will give you the visibility your organisation needs, whether you want to attract new members or just get your name out there. And you'll be in good company, with the following organisations.

#### In Manitoba:

• The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women #16-222 Osborne Street Winnipeg, Manitoba R3L 1Z3 (204) 453-3879 Membership \$15 (income adjustable)  The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women #133 - 10th Street Brandon, Manitoba R7A 4E7 (204) 725-2955

 Women's Health Clinic #304 - 41 Graham Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0L8 (204) 947-1517

#### In Alberta:

- Red Deer Status of Women Association #109 - 4818 Gaetz Ave. Red Deer, Alberta T4N 4A3 (403) 347-2480 Membership \$10
- Alberta Status of Women Action Committee Box 1573 Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N7 (403) 424-3073 Membership (suggested) \$10

#### In Ontario:

 The Canadian Coalition Against Media Pornography P.O. Box 1075, Station B Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5R1 Membership \$15

## GOING PLACES Travelling Alone and Unafraid

Whatever those unacquainted with it may think, solitude and ... loneliness are far from being devoid of charm. Words cannot convey the almost voluptuous sweetness of the feelings ...

> Alexandra David-Neel – world traveller & scholar

Travelling solo can evoke this charm, or it can evade you completely in the dayto-day struggles of getting along away from home. But in preparing for the problems, you make room for the joys. They're well worth the effort. Travelling by yourself, you are able to experience everything more fully. With a companion it's often tempting to hide in your own little insular unit; alone you are compelled to interact with the world around you.

#### KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GETTING INTO

Peace of mind comes with preparation. Begin by choosing a destination you can feel comfortable with. If you've never travelled alone before, you'll probably feel best visiting a country where women are treated much the same as in Canada. The more you know about your destination before you go, the less uneasy you'll feel after you arrive. Read travel guides, talk to other women who have been there, phone a travel agent or the consulate of the country you'll be visiting. Get as much information as you can about social customs and attitudes towards women, as well as local dress standards and, of course, at least a few words of the language (be sure to learn the words for "I'd rather be alone", "I really mean it", and "Help!"). If you can, get addresses for local women's groups, and individual contacts through friends. And when you arrive, do follow up on these contacts. They're your ticket to the inside track, and you may even meet some real friends this way. If you'll be staying in public accommodation, make reservations in advance if possible, and get written confirmation. The safest, and usually cheapest, places for a woman alone are bed & breakfasts, youth hostels (a misnomer - they accept all ages), small hotels, pensions, and YWCA's.

#### SOME THOUGHTS ON PACKING

Choose clothing that is comfortable, doesn't need ironing, in a complementary range of colours, and appropriate to your destination. Pack just as light as GAIL BUENTE



Gail Buente is a Vancouver-based writer, researcher, mother, and student, who is currently researching the hypothesis that life begins at 40.

you can - don't take more than one of anything except underwear, and don't take anything you can't live without. Even if you don't lose anything, you may decide to purchase an item of clothing, and you should be able to discard the old to make space for the new. Remember to pack any things you might not be able to buy where you're going (tampons, film, motion sickness pills, or prescription medicines). One friend says she always takes along ear plugs and a sleep mask, because inexpensive hotels are often situated near a train station or freeway exit. And the last thing before leaving - take a photograph of the contents of your luggage or pack; these things have been known to get lost in transit, and to collect any insurance you have to prove what the contents were.

#### WHEN YOU WANT TO BE ALONE

It seems an almost universal cliché that men everywhere view North American women as sexually available — especially if they're travelling unaccompanied. The best, in fact the only, way to deal with this is to accept it and admit that there is little you can do to change it. What you can do is avoid it, ignore it, or try not to let it bother you.

When you're in a restaurant or club by yourself, make it clear that you want to remain alone. One woman suggests keeping some money visible on the table to let men in the room know that you intend to pay your own way. Another way of making it obvious that you aren't looking for company is to carry a book or notebook along.

Still another tactic, for the more per-

sistent pests, is to embarrass them by announcing loudly to passersby that you're being harrassed. Some women say that when all else fails, you can always start talking about feminism. This seems to be a most effective technique to make them lose interest fast!

Usually you'll know intuitively whether a situation is potentially dangerous, or simply irritating. Trust your instincts. If you feel uneasy, or afraid, act on those feelings. Don't ever hesitate to assert your rights. You will probably never encounter this person again. The only reaction that is inappropriate is panic — it will only make you feel more powerless.

#### WHEN YOU DON'T WANT TO BE ALONE

If you're in a place where there are likely to be feminists, seek them out. Go to the women's bookstore or centre, or get a copy of the local women's newspaper to find out what women's events are going on. If there is no feminist network to connect with, there's always the travellers' network.

You may have heard that a solo traveller should look as if she knows where she's going, even when she doesn't. All this will do is get you more lost than you already are.

#### DON'T FORGET: IT'S YOUR HOLIDAY

There's only one reason for travel, and that's your own enjoyment. You should travel when you're feeling good about the rest of your life. One woman suggests taking along a special item something that will make your homeaway-from-home more home-like. Use this time alone to pamper and indulge yourself. It can be a time of selfreflection, for keeping a journal, a period of intensified activity, or simply an interval for doing absolutely nothing. Find your own pace. No matter what your schedule, always take the time to sit down for one hot meal a day - even if it's just a bowl of soup. Be with yourself, collect your thoughts, and savour the moment. You're making memories; make them good ones!

For specific safety tips write for pamphlet: Reservations For One: Women's Guide to Safe Travel, Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre, 1045 Linden Ave., Victoria, B.C. V8V 4H3. Enclose 25¢ and SASE with request.⊽

# MOTHER MATTERS Sex Education: Opposition Still Heard

Few education issues evoke such a wide range of responses and emotions as the topic of sex education. The controversy is reflected in the fact that while most Canadian adults (83 per cent according to a May 1984 Gallup poll) believe schools have a role to play in providing sex education, only half the schools offer it in some form. Most provincial governments leave decisions about sex education up to individual school boards, citing differences in community needs and attitudes.

In Winnipeg, "some (schools) have good programs and some have virtually nothing," says Dr. Lois Beckwith, family life consultant with Winnipeg School Division No. 1. There is a compulsory provincial health curriculum which includes optional drug and sexuality units, which some divisions have offered for a number of years, while "some school divisions probably won't be doing it in 20 years time," she says.

In September 1983, in a move to standardise curriculum, the Manitoba education department piloted a family life education program in some school districts. It was modelled after the successful Calgary School Board program, which the National Council on Family Relations recognises as one of the best in North America. However, local parent groups joined with the province-wide People's Education Policy Manitoba, Inc., to protest the program.

In a four-page tabloid with the words "Warning! Parents Beware" printed in a bold red letters two inches high, a group called St. Vital Parents for Responsible Education warned other parents that prostitution, divorces, and loss of home privacy, as well as pregnancies, abortion, and sexually transmitted diseases, would emerge as consequences of the sex education program. At school board meetings the program was denounced as a "dangerous" philosophy that teaches children to "attack the moral values taught by parents and church."

The pressure tactics worked, and the provincial government halted the pilot. Despite the furor, St. Vital school board trustees decided to continue with the program in September 1984. Evidence of widespread support from parents and students — more than 92 per cent of eligible students signed up for the program in its second year, does not deter

### PLANNED PARENTHOOD

a well organised opposition.

Similar scenarios are being acted out in other provinces. In Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, the batte for sex education was fought for seven years before school trustees approved guidelines for classes in 1984. A number of schools had been offering the classes for several years before being given formal approval.

In Pictou County, Nova Scotia, some members of the Knights of Columbus wrote letters to the provincial education minister objecting to a pilot sex education program for junior and senior high schools, run by a local women's group. A local school official responded by banning all outside groups from doing similar programs in the schools.

Originally, the Alberta government rejected a call for the inclusion of human sexuality in the health curriculum. Yet, bold steps taken at the community level made possible a sexuality unit included in the family life education course in Lethbridge. Only a couple of the 8,000 students opted out. The Calgary program for Grades 4 to 9 is now used as the model for similar courses across Canada. Of those Calgary students eligible, 98 to 99 per cent take the course.

There are ways to overcome opposition, as some school boards have learned. The Calgary Board of Education has "gone through an evolutionary process from 1970 to the present," says Bunny Gow, the family specialist. Gow and other educators says it is very important to involve parents in the implementation process, keeping them informed through letters and meetings, and making all course material available for appraisal. Sharon Graham, education coordinator with the Calgary Birth Contol Association, believes "once parents find out what it is that the students will be given, they will be supportive."

Still some parents continue to fear that only the biology of sex and birth control is being taught, while morality and responsibility are being ignored. One Christian Reformed Church minister was quoted in *The Vancouver Sun* as saying, "If sex education deals almost exclusively with preventing pregnancy, then I am against it." Much of the opposition is not directed at sex education per se, but at the suspected quality of program. The St. Vital and Calgary family courses were criticised as "ethically and morally neutral."

Advocates of sex education say morals and responsibility are integral facets of any program. Norma Drosdowech, family life consultant with St. Vital School Division No. 6, says the St. Vital and Calgary programs "do not impose any set of values on the children, but encourage them to discuss issues with their parents so that family values are reinforced."

One way to decelerate the increasing polarisation may be for the opposing sides to recognise what they have in common. As Maureen Jessop Orton and Ellen Rosenblatt wrote in a 1981 Planned Parenthood Ontario report, "Disagreement over sex education and birth control services for young people usually ignores the fact that both proponents and opponents seek to reduce uncaring, exploitative sexual behavior." No studies have been able to find a correlation between sex education taken in school and increased sexual activitiy. A 1983 study of 1.100 Quebec students in Grades 9 and 11 found those teens who were given sex education were not more likely to have sex, but had more knowledge and showed a more responsible and less exploitative attitude to sexuality.

Often, attempts at compromise by local school boards fail. As in St. Vital, "the opposition continues to organise, and they don't give up,' says Norma Drosdowech. She says people who support sex education tend to do so passively. Instead of trying to win the minority to her side, Drosdowech is determined to spur sex education advocates to become "pro-active", and declares, "That may be how we'll fight. We know what we believe in. We're not going to be swayed by scare tactics."▽

This is an edited version of an article submitted as part of a public information campaign during Planned Parenthood Week September 29 to October 5th. Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada/La Federational pour le planning des naissance du Canada, rue Slater Street, Ottawa K1P 5H3 (613) 238-4474.



### NEWSWORTHY Reviewed by PENNI MITCHELL

Susan Crean's latest book, *Newsworthy The Lives of Media Women* is an expertly crafted tapestry of the experiences of women in the Canadian media establishment. Stylistically, the book manages to reflect the various forms of media which serve as its setting; readers get a taste of the media via the medium. It's fast-paced and bright for television aficionados; provocative in its narration for As It Happens loyalists, and is a familiar balance of just-the-facts and human interest for the old-fashioned print perusers.

Bypassing formal introductions. Crean creates conversations with her readers using upbeat journalistic prose to spell out the evolution of women's involvement in print and electronic media in Canada. Thankfully, the people in it are more true-to-life than the media itself. Elizabeth Gray, Ann Medina, Jan Tennant, Christina McCall, Doris Anderson and Barbara Frum are all included in this history told by the women who know the industry well. Many were there when television began and most attest to the 'boys club' atmosphere which relegated them to low level lowpaid jobs for longer periods of time than their male peers. Most have seen the patriarchal presence in the media nudged and prodded over the years into a less-sexist establishment.

The stories Crean tells are bluntly

SUSAN CREAN

Newsworthy The Lives of Media Women, by Susan Crean, Stoddart Publishing, Toronto, Ontario

## REVIEWS

authentic. In one of the first chapters, June Calwood recalls how one of her first bosses. Globe and Mail owner George McCullagh, tried to coerce her into having an affair with him; she was young, impressionable and determined. Calwood declines repeatedly, and goes on to become one of Canada's best known writers. Christina McCall, a longtime journalist and former wife of Peter Newman, talks of how she was exploited as free labour by her author husband while she researched his books and got no credit for her work. Now having written books of her own on Canadian politics, one can't help but wonder if she could have reached her potential under the influence of an overshadowing and domineering husband who never questioned that his work was more important than hers.

Crean's stimulating ability as a storyteller manages to empower at the same time. Woman after woman who came to work at the CBC during and after the Second World War became a mentor for other women: quietly and consciously helping those who came up behind them. Women like Margaret Howes who were there for Elizabeth Gray and became powerhouses of the country's broadcasting corporation were never hired officially as staff, because the corporation had a policy of not hiring married women as permanent staff. Policies that forbid husbands and wives to both work at CBC had the debilitating effect of pushing many women out once they married co-workers - that so many women have excelled in spite of the odds is remarkable.

Not surprisingly, most of the women Crean interviewed have developed a feminist consciousness, not only about their work, but about world affairs and the stuff news is made of. On page 201, Crean writes: "When Frum says she has 'no respect whatsoever for authority' and states that, so far as she's concerned, prime ministers and popes are 'just the same quivering pieces of meat' inside as she is, she is explaining an attitude that is the essence of what people find so compelling about her character."

And on why women make better interviewers (did I say better?) than men: Helen Hutchinson:

"I think women have an advantage; I know I do. Doing all those live interviews for Canada AM you could really see it at play. As soon as two men sit down together there is a contest. The guest says something and the male interviewer says "Of course," and passes on. Whereas I, as a woman, can stop and say, "I wouldn't know a Keynesian theory if I were sitting on it. Please explain in laymen's language."

Crean is to be congratulated for producing, researching and directing an evocative and creative docu-drama; one which takes careful consideration of the women's movement as an influencing factor in the success of these women no 'if-you-try-hard-enough-you-canmake-it' sentiments here. Crean transcends the usual adulational success-styled story and has managed to emerge with a marvelous book about the women who manage, announce, produce and ARE the news in the mainstream media.∇

## PORTRAIT OF AN ANOREXIC

Reviewed by SHARI MEAKIN

This is a riveting autobiography.

It is honest and revealing, at times frightening, at times depressing, but shows a nicely timed sense of ironic humour that lightens the mood and keeps the pace flowing smoothly.

It is the story of Maureen Ardell, a Cranbrook teenager who was only 16 years old when she was admitted to Shaughnessy Hospital in Vancouver suffering from anorexia nervosa. She weighed only 64 pounds and took four months to regain 31 pounds and a normal life.

The diary she completed while hospitalized, supplemented by chapters written by her mother, form the bulk of the book. It is an intimate look at the life

Portrait of an Anorexic, A Mother and Daughter's Story, by Maureen Ardell and Corry-Ann Ardell. Flight Press, 2-3630 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6R 2B7, 128 pps. \$9.95. Paper.

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of this young anorexic.

Anorexia nervosa, as we all know by now and the Merck Manual states succinctly, is a self-induced food aversion which is a manifestation of psychiatric illness. Anorexics not only don't eat: they can't eat. The book goes a long way to explain why.

"If I can't control that part of my life (eating), maybe I won't be able to control other things," Maureen jots on one page of her journal.

It is no accident, Maureen discovers, that the disease targets teenage girls hovering on the edge of maturity. They are especially susceptible to societal mores. On the one hand, society pays high tribute to women who are slender, idolizing Vogue models who look more gaunt than not, worshipping beauty queens who have only 80 per cent of normal weight. On the other hand, food and booze ads are larded between magazine articles, and sandwiched between T.V. time slots.

"No wonder we are all confused," Maureen writes.

Whatever the cause, anorexia nervosa is debilitating and dangerous. As weight decreases, so does concentration, resistance to disease, reflexes and the ability to menstruate. Fine hair or lanugo blankets the body as a reaction to the loss of protective fat. Eventually, neurons in the brain begin to misfire. The sufferer may have seizures and can die. Maureen records these possibilities with a candor that is chilling.

While Maureen is struggling to combat the disease, her mother is struggling to understand it. In the course of her research, Corry-Ann discovers numerous books that propose a myriad of sometimes conflicting theories. These leave her feeling guilty, depressed and angry. Anyone who is treading a similar path will be relieved to find their secret fears aired and exonerated in such an honest, articulate fashion.

The tandem writing of mother and daughter provides a balanced picture of both sides of the illness — the worry and guilt the family members experience, and the rationale, needs and fears of the anorexic. The chapters alternating between the two fledgling writers add depth without being repetitious.

Portrait of an Anorexic provides valuable insights into the trauma of being anorexic, and as such is an asset for anyone who works with anorexics, suspects a friend may be anorexic, or who is anorexic.

It is a moving portrayal of life on the inside track of suffering. $\nabla$ 

## DESPERATELY SEEKING SUSAN

Reviewed by BRIGITTE SUTHERLAND



As of August young women will be Desperately Seeking Susan, their idol Madonna, at the local video store. For any aspiring 'Baby Madonna', the movie is a way of seeing which lace gloves or mixture of brassiere, beads and crucifixes will fabricate that "bad girl" aura of control and independence. Capitalising on her successful movie debut, both Playboy and Penthouse have raced to the newsstands with photos taken of Madonna prior to her current notoriety. Each mag uses a cover pic of her dressed as Susan looking streetwise and self-assured. Will her young fans become disillusioned with their 'boy toy' heroine? What can we, as women still seeking to define our own sexuality. tell our daughters, sisters or young women friends about the fantastic mystique of Desperately Seeking Susan?

Basically the movie chronicles the adventures and the sorely missed adventures of Roberta (Rossana Arquette) caught in a tepid marriage to a rich hot tub salesman. By following a recurring personal ad always entitled 'Desperately Seeking Susan' (Madonna), Roberta lives vicariously through her own secret true-life soap. After spyinglong distance on one of Susan's trysts, following her to a second hand clothing store, buying the sequined jacket that Susan has just traded for rhinestone boots, and writing her own "Desperately Seeking Susan' ad to return a locker key, Roberta encounters a lamp post and her amnesia and her 'switching' of personalities begin.

And so also begins a disturbing dramatic metaphor. During actual filming, movie set gossip followed the heated exchanges between Arquette and director, Susan Seidelman, over just how much amnesia Roberta did suffer. It's an ironic plot device employed to heighten the films camp. Yet, women in a sexist society are always confronted with how much amnesia is required to survive in it.

Forget all the posters advertising Deperately Seeking Susan depicting Roberta and Susan, as buddies, hip-tohipster. These two women do not have anything of a personal relationship. They do not talk to one another, exchange a wave or share a meal. Do I dare give away the movie's rousing conclusion that they do hold hands (but only briefly)? These two women do carry on a long distance relationship via their clothes, the fabric of their lives. Roberta digs through Susan's converted drum case valise to find her identity. Because Roberta is wearing Susan's distinctive coat everyone treats her like Susan. (Sounds pretty wacky, huh?) Once (the real) Susan gets a handle on Roberta's address, she goes over to check out Roberta's closet full of pastel silk jackets, her sophisticated tub, her kitchenware. and poolside TV and bar. There's no switching of identities or perspective, there's only Madonna's knowing scrutiny of "suburbia" as something off the rack.

Much of the movie's satire comes from casting Madonna by the director Susan Seidelman. In most respects Desperately Seeking Susan represents a five million dollar remake of Seidelman's earlier film Smithereens, the depressing life of a young punk, named Wren, who's rejected by everyone and who also lives out of her luggage. With Madonna the movie is given a depth of character the screenplay never allows. Madonna brings a history to a cast of human props. Even someone (me) previously unacquainted with Madonna's poppersonna has to admit she has cinematic presence. Whorishly dressed throughout while Christian crosses dangle from her ear and neck, she exudes the plump teutonic facination of Marlene Dietrich in the Blue Angel. With a crass class she washes down Cheesies with vintage red wine. Her selfish living off the 'fat of suburbia' is empowering.

Without Madonna the movie losses its power and reverts to a snide humor. usually at the expense of other women. Sometimes I almost wished for canned laughter to show me exactly where Seidelman saw the joke. One particular series of scenes comes to mind. While wearing a tutu, high heels and carrying a cage of doves. Roberta is picked up by the police as a prostitute. Should I have laughed here? (In Canada soon it will only take a wink or a wave.) When Roberta, looking bewildered and innocent, is eyed suspiciously by another prostitute and is then asked how she uses the birds, should I have chuckled? Finally when Roberta's hot tub ball-andchain comes to learn the details of her arrest supplemented by his sister's insistence that Roberta could also be a secret lesbian hooker, should I have rolled in the aisles?

Although Madonna's force of personality makes Desperately Seeking Susan a kind of punk docu-drama, the movie leaves out the vulnerability of any woman out on the street. While living in New York on a dollar a day scrounging for unused french fries (she's a veggie) found in garbage cans. Madonna worked as a nude model. Acting in a porn flic her shirt was torn off "to heighten the intensity of the scene" without being informed by the director. The powers that controlled her life then are again asserting their rights over her image, her career. Having signed a release, Madonna has no claim to Playboy's glossies. now said to be worth six figures to the photographer. Lest we forget before Siedelman's film comes to its predictable happy ending, the director gives both heroines the customary chance to bare their breasts though not their souls.

Seidelman has only succeeded in clothing our hope for strong gutsy heroines. Already women counsellors from Women Against Rape (WAR) in Mount Laurel, a suburb of Philadelphia have issued a warning particularly to young women against a rapist who promises stardom to hopeful "Baby Madonnas". Those women from WAR aren't worried about the morality of emulating Madonna's blatant sensuality but are fearful of victimisation. Fashion, at times heralding independence for women, has more often been absorbed and turned against us. Desperately Seeking Susan might have been more of an empowering film had Roberta (sans amnesia) and Susan spilled their guts to one another as much as their baggage.▽

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A woman enters and illuminates the stage with flickering candlelight. She merges with a mask to become the goddess Isis who speaks: "All that dies had first to live." Seven leather masks embodied with dance convey the many aspects of woman as goddess. Diana, moon-faced, personifies the hypnotic rising and dipping of the tide in each of us. Hecate's breathing birthing is followed by Demeter's interpretation of

> Performer Dian moves as the goddess Demeter in Mythology — Part I of Visions /Re-visions.



life's balancing act. Only Kali's mildmannered demeanor disappointed as her expected anger and retribution did not materialise.

Collectively created by expressionistic guitarist SilverFirth and Dian Denis, mask maker and movement artist, from Prince Edward Island, the play explores our connection to all of creation in Mythology; struggles within the restrictions of Reality and social conditioning; and ends with an Utopian ritual to express ecstacy.

Mythology makes way for the broadly drawn characterisations of the seven deadly sins with Dian becoming them all in turn. Pride, sloth, gluttony, greed, envy, lechery and sloth's grostesque behaviors are marvelously complemented by gaudy, larger-than-life masks. Energetically portrayed they enter with the chest-pounding Pride and retreat, thankfully, with the screaming fierceness of Wrath. It was apparent that the audience has had close experience with all of these personas.

During the final part of the performance, entitled Utopia. Dian takes the shape of a vital medicine woman who alone inhabits the stage. Utilising all four elements (air, fire, water, earth), she marks the east, the south, the north, and the west of the earth. After seeding for new growth, the woman, now an old crone, rattles to the spirits upon her demise. From her huddled form, a helmeted Amazon is promptly reborn. The end of the performance is thus a beginning.

This play was staged as part of the 1985 National Multicultural Theatre Festival, July 1 - 10, at The Gas Station Theatre in Winnipeg. After the performance, adjudicator Nancy Drake, a voice and drama teacher at the University of Manitoba, felt this performance art was well-conceived. She also expressed that the music performed in accompaniment by SilverFirth was well-synchronised and often complementary to the total effect. However, she encouraged them to work in more variety and experimentation to increase the impact of the audioextension.

Vision/Revision is planning a cross-Canada tour in late October and is looking for performance space. Suitable for art's centres and women's group spaces, they are able to perform both English and French versions. For information contact: Dian & SilverFirth, P.O. Box 1856, Charlottetown, P.E.I. CIA 7N5 (902) 566-5427/964-3345.▽



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ANDREA DWORKIN TAPE on Pornography and Civil Rights. Video tape is free of charge on the condition no admission fee is charged and it is shown in its entirety. Contact University of Manitoba Womyn's Centre, Box 98, University Centre, Winnipeg R3T 2N2 or call 261-9191.

WOMEN: A WORLD SURVEY, a 44-page document filled with statistics and graphs illustrating changes in the global status of women since 1950. Single copies from MATCH International Centre, 401, 171 Nepean St., Ottawa K2P OB4 for \$7.00 plus \$1.75 postage and handling.

LET'S TALK about Sexual Assault. National award winning 20 pp. booklet for young women. parents, educators discusses sexuality and relationships, the new law, assertiveness, self defence, prevention and more. Order I to 49 copies for \$1.50 each plus postage and handling from Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre, 1045 Lindex Ave. Victoria, B.C. V8V 4H3 (Bulk rates available).

WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST IS a 10 min. film to encourage women to consider recreational boating. Available free of charge from the Allied Boating Association. 5468 Dundas Street West, Suite 325, Islington, Ontario M9B 6E7 (416) 236-2497.

WOMEN OF STEEL is a 28 min. video documentary available in <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" or <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" VHS which focusses on the effects of the current downturn in the American steel industry on the women who had taken advantage of the affirmative action programs of the 1970's. For costs and availability write to: Mon Valley Media, 5048 Orinoco St., Pittsburgh, PA 15207 (412) 521-0951.

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principles as they are established. LEAF will work with lawyers in every province to put its strategies into action, and as the fund develops it will be able to act as a kind of clearing house for equality cases, so that expensive and time-consuming legal work is not duplicated.

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For further information and speakers, please contact the national office of LEAF at:

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