

SHEILA KITZINGER: ON WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE OF SEX

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The Cover Up of the Century

In an attempt to construct a definitive statement on abortion, my passion and my pen stall clumsily. My mind races off in a dozen directions at once: on tangents about women's rights, inadequate birth control, annual statistics on choice that echo impressively year after year, and of men's responsibility in preventing unwanted pregnancies.



Only two streams of thought surface above the rest. The first comes unexpectedly: that the vantage point of the reproductive choice struggle has been muddled under the

illusory two-sidedness to the debate. I was stunned that I had to acknowledge that abortion is not about to be outlawed in Canada, and that the current abortion rights movement exists to demand services for which women have an established need. If the services degenerate further, a groundswell of more radical, confrontational action will emerge. The right of women to abortion services is non-negotiable.

The choice issue isn't and has never been about who is right and who is wrong; it isn't about when life begins, or whether rape justifies terminating the life of a fetus; it isn't even about polls showing widespread support for a woman's right to abortion services in her community. The second realisation I came to was that the public element of the abortion *debate* has efficiently quashed any real discussion of the choice issue at all. The abortion *debate* has been as much about censorship as it has been about health, and while it has had all the elements of a good newsstory — two sides obligingly fighting it out in front of the TV cameras in the name of publicity, plying in vain for reporters' sympathies — the vantage point, or nonnegotiable element of the choice issue still remains ignored, suffocating in the mythology of 'choice'.

The choice issue is not about choices at all, but about two uncomfortable ultimatums. If women don't have access to safe, legal abortions, they risk their reproductive capabilities and surrender their autonomy to a paternalistic medical establishment and a punitive Criminal Code.

In an effort to refocus the abortion rights movement on the discriminatory aspects of Section 251 of the Criminal Code, the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL) and its sister organisations are holding a series of tribunals across the country, beginning in October. This is an opportunity for the evidence of women to be heard. Similar tribunals held in 1968 were instrumental in helping to widen access to abortion in Canada. Women who attempted to have abortions before 1969 (the year current Criminal Code provisions on abortion were adopted), women who have dealt with theraputic abortion committees and hospital abortions, as well as women who have had abortions performed in free-standing clinics are needed to testify at these tribunals. This is a historic opportunity to turn the tables around; instead of women being on trial (which so often happens when women seek abortions), Section 251 will be tried for discrimination against women. Participants are invited to describe their experiences in person or have someone read them aloud if they wish to remain anonymous. The tribunals will culminate in a public action in Ottawa in the Spring and support is being mobilised among community groups willing to make statements supporting reproductive choice as well.

It's time we heard women talk about the choices that they do not have the power to make. Time to listen to the thousands, maybe the millions of women who have come face to face with patronising, stalling therapeutic abortion committees in hospitals; women who have been forced to sell their possessions to travel to Montreal or North Dakota for abortion services that their provincial departments of health should ensure are available; women with four or five children who are faceless to the panel of doctors who judge them and force them to wait inexorably long weeks until the abortion they are finally and graciously permitted to have endangers their life. Let's listen to the instances of malpractice by a medical establishment that routinely denies women abortions, lies to them about abortions, then blames them for using unreliable birth control. These are the choices that women make.

Women must be heard, again and again, until the rigid mythology around the abortion *debate* is replaced with an acknowledged public discovery that the issue has not been resolved, or even properly discussed. Until now.

Penni Mitchell

In Manitoba contact Alison Norberg, Coalition for Reproductive Choice, P.O. Box 51, Station L, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3H 0Z4 or call (204) 453-7774 Contributing Editors: Betsy Warland (Poetry): Di Brandt (Fiction); Mary Louise Adams: Heidi Muench: Nicole Morin

Managing Editor

Debbie Holmberg-Schwartz

Financial Manager Patricia Rawson

Circulation Manager Marie Montreuil

Advertising: Mona Brisson, Azaleta Ishmael-Newry

Art and Production: Montage Design, Winnipeg, Manitoba

> Cover Photo Eleanor Enkin

Typesetting Jude Gaal

Contributors:

Joan Meister	Lisa Timf
Joan Baril	Joy Parks
Gert Beadle	Lois Anderson
Noelle Boughton	Tanya Lester
Ilana Simon	Ursula Pflug
Dorothy Kidd	Ingrid MacDon
Suzanne Pope	Connie Smith
Lyn Cockburn	* Sara Ellis
Gail Buente	Sarah Klassen
Barbara Carey	

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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 HERizons,

A Catholic by birth and not a radical feminist by nature, I remain firm in my conviction that abortion is murder. Whether or not abortion is ever justified is a question that I have not had to deal with personally, at least not yet, but I do commiserate strongly with anyone who has faced this extremely difficult decision.

Last June I attended a local parish screening of The Silent Scream, a film which, by itself, goes a long way in convincing the undecided that abortion is morally questionable. What prompts me to write this letter is my reaction to the discussion that followed this screening. Not very far into the discussion, it became evident that the people who were "pro-life" were opposed to artificial contraception and wondered whatever happened to the importance of "family." Soon the papal edicts against premarital sex and adoption by homosexuals surfaced, and I was appalled by the direction of this talk among advocates of "human rights."

My question is this: why is such narrow-mindedness and tunnel vision so widespread among such pro-lifers, who claim they are champions of all human life? They oppose artificial contraception, yet expect us to react with surprise when we are told that "it is largely Catholics who seek abortions." Do they not realise that such attitudes only serve to alienate those who merely wish to live according to their own consciences without hurting others? It's almost enough to spur me on to conversion on the abortion issue.

Yours truly.

Lucy Watroba Hamilton, Ontario

Dear Editors

I would like to comment on the letter by Dr. K. Emmott regarding vaccinations. The doctor states that in his/her opinion it is immunisation that has caused the rapid drop in cases of pertussis, diptheria, polio and tetanus, yet several epidemiological studies indicate these diseases began their rapid drop in incidence before routine immunisations began.

The figures quoted for incidence of complications are also somewhat misleading because the doctor quotes the incidence of brain damage, death, etc. per number of doses. As in the case of pertussis the child usually receives 5 doses of the vaccine (3 initial DPT and 2 boosters). Using the figures the doctor provided of 1/110,00 doses resulting in coma... one child in 22,000 will experience encephalopathy, 1/1,750... one child in 350 will experience convulsions, 1/300... one child out of 60 will experience high fever. This puts the statistics quoted by Dr. Emmott in an entirely different perspective I think, for parents trying to weigh the risk with the benefits of vaccinations. Sincerely.

> Mary K. Libal Kinoosao, Saskatchewan

Dear HERizons

Your July/August '85 "Active in the Arts" issue packs a real punch. It's very exciting to read. I am very pleased with Janine Fuller's article on Cynthia, Amanda and myself as well.

I think your courage in continuing to publish lesbian material is terrific. I am sending you a list of signatures which I collected in May at a dramatic reading which I did of lovette Marchessault's *Lesbian Triptych*.

> Gay Bell & 19 other signatures

INTERNATIONAL

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TIME OFF FOR WOMEN -

The International Wages for Housework Campaign is calling for women worldwide to take "Time Off" on October 24th, 1985, the 10th anniversary of the Iceland women's general strike in 1975 at the beginning of the UN Women's Decade. Stopping work for some part or all of October 24th will be our way of celebrating the UN Decade for Women and will, as the founder of Wages for Housework Selma James says, "ensure that governments must now declare their intention to respond to women's just demand that all our unwaged work be counted in the Gross National Product of all countries."



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PRAIRIE REGION

A CELEBRATION OF WOMEN WRITERS -

This reading series is presented by Liberation Books with the assistance of the Manitoba Arts Council: Tuesday, Oct. 1 Kristjana Gunnars; Friday, Oct. 4 Jan Horner; Friday, Oct. 11 Di Brandt; Tuesday, Oct. 15 Women and Words; Friday, Oct. 18 Kathie Kolybaba; Tuesday, Oct. 22 Margaret Clarke; Friday, Oct. 25 Pat Sanders and Tanya Lester; Tuesday, Oct. 29 Janick Belleau; Friday, Nov. 1 Pam Banting. All readings begin at 8 PM at Liberation Books, 160 Spence St. (off Broadway), Winnipeg, Manitoba.

SECOND WREATH

A conference marking the 100th anniversary of the Ukranian Women's Movement to be held at U of Alberta, **October 11-14, 1985**, in Edmonton. Workshops focusing on ethnicity and feminism, history of the Ukranian Women's Movement, feminist issues, current dilemmas, literature, art, folk art and media will be offered. For more information call Sonia Maryn 433-0063.

WOMEN PREPARING FOR RETIREMENT -

An examination of issues, policies and practices **October 21**, **1985**. Keynote speaker: Louise Dulude, Vice-Pres. of NAC; panel 1-4 PM. Marlborough Inn, Winnipeg, Manitoba, fee \$10, sponsored by Age and Opportunity Centre, 947-1276. Call for more info, registration brochure.

EASTERN REGION

SEXUALITY 85: SENSITIVE ISSUES IN SEXUALITY -

Is the topic of a **November 13-14**, **1985** conference to be held at Toronto's Skyline Hotel. The keynote speakers will be Flo Kennedy, author of *Abortion Rap*, with topics ranging from Sexual Identity and Maturing to Body Image. For further info write or call: Professional Management Development, Humber College, 205 Humber College Blvd., Rexdale, Ontario M9W 5L7, (416) 675-5077.

THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE -

This career and Lifestyle Conference for women will be held on November 22-23, 1985 at University of Western Ontario, School of Business Administration, Room 40. This year the Paths to Success Conference will focus on meeting the challenges of change that are revolutionising all aspects of contemporary life. Among several feature speakers will be Chaviva Hosek, President of the National Committee on the Status of Women. Fee \$115 (includes meals. refreshments, materials); course no. GC060610101. For info: Faculty of Part-Time and Continuing Education, Stevenson-Lawson Bldg., Room 23, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, (519) 679-3631.

ADULT LITERACY NOW! -

The Human Development Council of St. John is holding a conference on **November 7-9, 1985** in New Brunswick on adult literacy in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Movement for Canadian Literacy. Contact: Adult Literacy Now! Conference, St. John Human Dev., P.O. 6125, Stn. A., St. John, N.B. E2L 4R6.

WESTERN REGION

NATION-WIDE ISSUES, NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION: PEOPLE MAKING THE DIFFERENCE —

This annual conference of the CACE and the ACE/BC will take place on **October 24-26**, **1985** at the Empress Hotel in Victoria, B.C. with an aim to learn ways of using community education issues such as the economy, employment, global survival. Registration: Angie Preston, Comm. School Corod., James Bay Comm. School, 140 Oswego St., Victoria, B.C. V8V 2B1, (604) 384-7184.

NATIONAL

FARM WOMEN — NETWORKING FOR ACTION —

This second National Farm Women's Conference will take place November 21-24. 1985 at the Prince Edward Hotel in Charlottetown, PEI. The intent of this conference is participation by women from across Canada to influence decisions made on the important farm issues of today. One highlight will be Laura Heuser, of Women for the Support of Agriculture in Michigan, who will draw from her experience with the formation of the coalition of American-Agri Women. Info: Ann Boswall, Conference Coordinator. Second National Farm Women's Conference, P.O. Box 984 Charlottetown, PEI CIA 7M4, (902) 892-1027.

WOMEN AND ISOLATION -

Dr. Margaret Fulton, President of Mount St. Vincent University will deliver the keynote address at this 1985 CRIAW conference which will explore the theme of isolation of women as a result of geographical or social circumstances. Among the topics explored will be the experiences of native women and rural women. The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women holds this conference in Saskatoon from **November 8-10, 1985**. For more info contact: Glenis Joyce, Division of Extension & Community Relations, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Sask. S7N 0W0 (306) 966-5553.

IMPROVING THE DELIVERY OF COMMUNITY BASED HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES —

Is the theme of the National Conference of the Canadian Council on Social Development to be held from **November 24-27, 1985** in Ottawa. Contact: Elizabeth Parker, Conference Coordinator, CCSD, 55 Parkdale Ave., Box 3505, Stn. C, Ottawa, Ontario KIY 4G1, (613) 728-1865.

UNITED STATES

COMPARABLE WORTH CONFERENCE -

This conference on October 17-19, 1985 in Minnesota will focus on this state's 1982 comparable worth law and will include papers on the philosophical, economic, and historic implications of this new legislation. Contact: Professional Development and Conference Services, 315 Pillsbury Drive S.E., University of Minnesota, MN 55455.

BLACK WOMEN WRITERS AND THE DIASPORA —

Is the topic of a conference at the Michigan State University on **October 27-30**, **1985**. Contact: Linda Susan Beard, English Dept., MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.

WOMEN'S ORDINATION CONFERENCE —

The National Women's Ordination (WOC) Conference will be celebrating its 10th anniversary on October 24-27, 1985 in St. Louis, Missouri. The group will be developing strategies to achieve women's ordination in the Catholic Church. "Project Priesthood," was launched to locate future women priests and gather data from them on their calling. WOC is also interested in hearing from women who left the Roman Catholic Church for ordination in other denominations. Contact: WOC at P.O. Box 2693, Fairfax, Virginia 22031, (703) 255-1428 or (314) 664-4454.



Thirty per cent of all Inuit children have hearing impairments. A quadriplegic woman can be sterilised without her or her husband's consent. Young women with disabilities have twice the chance of becoming victims of incest as their non-disabled sisters. The resources of the women's movement are just as inaccessible in the rest of the country as they are in Vancouver. I acquired these and other sometimes startling insights among a group of other women with disabilities who were involved in an unique and exciting project which got underway in Ottawa from June 20-23, 1985. The exchange of information, identification of issues and resulting plans for actions all coalesced in the formation of the DisAbled Women's Network (DAWN).

Sponsored by the Secretary of State's Women's Program and the Disabled Persons's Secretariat, 17 women with disabilities from every part of the country gathered together to discuss issues of current concern.

The first item on our agenda was to share information about ourselves and who we felt we represented. It was during this session that we learned that our initial basis of unity was our status as women with disabilities and that there were many variations in perspective from that point. Some women were feminists; some were socialists; some were neither; some were both; some were lesbians; some were straight. Some women saw the unified and heterogenous disabled movement to be of primary importance; some saw the formation of a disabled women's organisation to be a priority. Others described a vision of the latter being created from within the framework of the former and still others saw an organisation of disabled women to be imperative and necessarily autonomous. Clearly, there was much to be done!

As is often the case with women, the process by which we arrived at identifying our concerns was as interesting as the resulting issues which

Dawn is rising

were identified. The list of concerns was long and comprehensive, if not concise and well-shaped. After considerable discussion, we arrived at a shorter list of six major categories which encompassed all of the initial material. These broad topics for further and smaller group discussions were: accessibility to the women's movement and to the services for women; violence against women with disabilities; affirmative action; assertiveness, awareness, and self image: sexuality (choice, homophobia, reproductive rights) and, parenting and child care. We were not surprised to note that our issues of concern paralleled those of non-disabled women.

We are, however, faced with added complications on the same themes. Accessibility is probably one of the key issues, since so many other solutions to so many problems hinge on it. If we can't get there or go to the bathroom there or hear it or see it or understand it, then we can't benefit from it. While we understand that most women's activities are underfunded, we resent the low priority assigned to making the women's



movement events and resources accessible. Few if any rape crisis, battered women's, detox, birth control, abortion, child abuse or counselling centres are accessible; women's bookstores, meetings, and daycare facilities are often inaccessible as well.

Violence against women with disabilities is part of a vicious circle whereby disability leads to sexual assault and/or battering and these lead to disabilities. Raped and battered women are still being put in mental institutions and drugged. often developing drug dependencies. Often disabled women are not married and live with their families. They may not be physically abused but may be emotionally abused. They may be made to feel a burden or encouraged to remain perpetual children. Pornographic magazines perpetuate the sick notion that violating or abusing disabled and vulnerable women is a sexual turn on

The discussion group on sexuality unearthed many issues: recognising the importance of the emotional aspect of sexual relationships; the media's false image of the perfect woman complete with the perfect body; the myth of the oversexed or asexual disabled woman; the feminine mystique which is defined by a traditional, heterosexual marriage complete with children and job; or, the difficulty of the sexual partner who is the primary care provider recognising the disabled partner's sexuality.

It was no surprise to learn, from the group discussing awareness and selfimage, that women with disabilities generally have a poor self-image and lack assertiveness skills. We also lack visible role models and support. And, we are possibly one of the most underemployed groups around. Speaking of jobs, take parenting imagine not being able to hear, see, or even catch the little ones as a parent.

By Saturday afternoon, we were ready to respond to the question, "What can we do about it?" Many options presented themselves, dealing with both the specific concerns and the general problems, from group and the individual perspective. Some of the specific solutions included approaches such as establishing and enforcing policies on sexual assault in institutions: lobbying for better training of counsellors and the professionals; promoting community expertise by electing disabled women to boards, councils, and government positions; and, learning more about our own bodies.

The growth of DAWN was one of the immediate tasks identified. We established a Modem Committee which, through the magic of modern technology and the Amazon Network (a feminist computer bulletin board) will communicate by computer. The Committee will also apply for funding to hire a coordinator, organise our communications and discuss the need for the entire national DAWN group to reconvene later in the fall.





On an individual basis, we agreed to return to our regions and attempt to organise the disabled women there. Another immediate task is to contact local women's groups and services to explore their willingness to involve women with disabilities. We will spread the word and lobby consumer groups to solicit funds to initiate research on disabled womens' issues. We will try to set up forums for women with disabilities to discuss concerns and interests. And, we'll work to involve new women, thereby building our organisation and avoiding burn-out.

The conference ended the way these things do. We were exhausted; we had planes to catch. Some of us wrote a media release announcing our formation. Before we scattered, we empowered the Modem Committee to act on behalf of the group. We hugged and staggered off. But as tired as I felt, I was aware of a tingle of excitement. We'd done it and we were going to continue to do it and soon hundreds of us would be doing it — rising up.

HOW TO CONTACT DAWN

British Columbia: Joan Meister (604) 254-8586; Jillian Ridington (604) 738-0395

Alberta: Irene Feika (403) 464-1861

Saskatchewan: Pat Danforth (306) 949-0337

Manitoba: Paula Keirstead (204) 943-2092; Elizabeth Semkiw (204) 589-0035

Ontario: Donna Hicks (613) 829-3809; Joanne Doucette (416) 466-2834; Pat Israel (416) 691-8965

Quebec: Maria Barile (514) 725-4125; Marie Blanche Remillard (514) 524-8915

New Brunswick: Marie St-Germain (506) 764-5592

Nova Scotia: Margaret Hiltz (902) 422-2283

Prince Edward Island: Susan Buchanan (902) 566-3165

Newfoundland: Fran Dinn: (709) 579-6212

North West Territories: Barbara Smith (403) 873-6426



HERizons apologises to photographer Sheila Spence for not crediting her for the wonderful photos she took of our anniversary party which were published in our September issue.



This poem appeared incomplete in our July/August issue. Below, the poem appears in its entirety. *HERizons* apologises for any inconvenience to the poet.

a poem from Double Standards (published by Longspoon Press, Edmonton)

> night setting the theme seems always to be that sky's dark a starless abyss we so willingly spiral into most high immutable

child at window looks on as beautiful aurora weaves magic between poles coincidence of opposites exorbitant

while down below snowwoman stands askance in the parking lot of a mythical homeland lights caught in her coal black eyes pale as day cast against night like moonstones

ou un loup-garou

moonstone moonstone sacred talisman gouge them out place them in my mouth so I can see what I've forgotten

© lola lemire tostevin Toronto, Ontario



The Ontario Law Reform Commission has recommended in a recent report that surrogate motherhood be regulated and not banned. Despite a strong dissent on the decision, the majority of commissioners maintained that surrogacy ought to be permissible as a matter of public policy.

The commission report argues that the exploitation of impoverished women and the possible tendency to regard babies as commodities — two objectionable aspects of surrogacy can be dealt with by regulatory devices. The report makes the point that surrogacy will not disappear if it is prohibited, and that surrogacy is most effectively controlled within the open public domain.

According to the report proposals. all surrogacy agreements would be contracted in writing and would have to be approved and supervised by Family Court. A judge would decide upon the suitability of all parties concerned, proper remuneration and other matters. The surrogate parent would lose all legal claim to the child at the time of its birth and the commissioning couple would then become its sole legal parents. Surrogacy arrangements would only be permitted through private agencies under strict government regulation. All unapproved agreements would be unenforceable and punished by a fine.

the newsmagazine for alberta women

The Associated Press of Pakistan reported August 9th that prison authorities in that country refused to release a newborn baby from jail when the infant girl's mother was released because bail had been posted for the woman but not for her child.

* *

Great Britain has said that it will change its immigration laws to allow foreign-born wives to bring their husbands to Britain. Under current immigration laws, only women with at least one British-born parent may bring their husbands to the country. Foreign men who are permanent residents of Britain are exempt from that requirement. The New York State Legislature has passed a bill authorising courts after a hearing, to order closed-circuit televised testimony of children in sex crimes cases. The children would have to be 12 years old or younger, and would have to be judged to suffer severe psychological harm if required to testify in the traditional courtroom setting.

* * *

The first film-maker convicted of violating California's anti-pimping law was sentenced to 90 days in jail rather than the minimum three-year prison term prescribed by law. Prosecutors had charged that the women who performed in his 90-minute movie *Caught From Behind, Part II* were prostitutes because they were paid to perform sex acts. Superior Court judge James Albracht did not impose the minimum sentence because, he said, a long prison term would be "cruel and unusual" punishment.

Portland, Oregon Police Chief Penny Harrington has announced a plan to discourage prostition by publishing the names of prostitutes' customers in four community newspapers. Letters will also be sent to the registered owners of cars spotted picking up prostitutes. The letters will warn the recipients that prostitution is illegal.

. . .

California Dreamers, Incorporated of Chicago has landed in some undreamed of trouble thanks to its publishing a greeting card that shows a nun with the caption, "It's all right if you kiss me - so long as you don't get in the habit." The company's creative director says he assumed the formal black and white photo of a nun seated in a chair was actually of a model in costume. But no. it turns out it's actually Sister Candida Lund. a real-life Roman Catholic nun and Chancellor of an Illinois College. The company says it's pulling the card from the racks, but the good sister is seeking retribution anyway, according to her lawyer, who says she is "entitled to a substantial monetary award." HER SAY

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

There are two contenders for HERizons' quote of the month this issue. The first candidate is Russell Doern, whom many of you will remember as the Manitoba MLA who instigated a smear campaign against HERizons earlier this year. In addressing questions to the provincial minister of Energy concerning a major Limestone Hydro Project. Doern grilled the minister on the affirmative action groups being considered for employment. (The government says it hopes to hire 50 per cent women and a large number of Northern Manitobans.) Doern asked the minister: ". . . if an ordinary person applies for a job in connection with this project and he is not a Northerner or not a Native, if it is a man instead of a woman, etc., doesn't that lessen the opportunities?"

* * *

The second candidate is Tony Cherniak, of the Winnipeg Police Vice Dept. On a CBC news segment dealing with prostitution, Cherniak was describing why licensing prostitutes would be an ineffective way to curb prostitution. If police were enforcing the law, he said, they would be stopping people to ask whether they had a license or not and in horror. Cherniak described what might happen to a woman standing at a busstop in the area who gets stopped by police.

"It could be a legitimate person," Cherniak decried, "it might be someone's wife."

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The Morgentaler Clinic in Toronto: a day in the life of a combat zone

Pro-life activists frustrated by the Toronto Morgentaler Clinic's continued operation have become increasingly violent since the summer.

In one incident demonstrators blocked both the front and back entrances to the clinic to prevent two patients and their escorts from entering. When Dr. Robert Scott came out to assist the women, he was attacked and had his nose broken. One woman suffered cuts and bruises. Two men were charged with assault.

Three weeks later four more demon strators were charged with trespassing after they occupied one of the clinic offices. Other arrests have followed similar harassment. None of the incidents have caused any significant interference in the operation of the clinic where 15 women per day have access to safe abortions.

Reverend Ken Campbell of Renaissance Canada (a well-funded, right wing fundamentalist group) has made several unsuccessful attempts to perform citizen's arrests on individuals leaving the clinic. On one well-publicised occasion he tried to hold two women members of the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics as they left the building. He told police he wanted them arrested for their "association with the Morgentaler crime syndicate." Police refused to take the women into custody.

According to Anne Brunelle, a volunteer who has been working at the clinic since January, demonstrations outside the clinic now have "more people, are becoming more virulent and more misogynist."

Since the clinic re-opened in January, picketing has occurred daily outside both its front and back entrances. Ten to 20 people can usually be found marching the length of the sidewalk at the clinic's front or lounging about the Way Inn, a so-called Christian café and counselling centre in the same building. The "café" is funded by Ken Campbell's group. According to Anne Brunelle it serves primarily as a thoroughfare for picketers to get quickly from the front of the clinic to the back.

Mary Louise Adams

Last winter one picketer informed the local press that some protestors recruited by the pro-life group were being paid. And up until the beginning of summer holidays, the ranks of picketers regularly included children and teenagers from Catholic schools who had been given the afternoon off so they could be bussed-in to participate.

Most picketers at the front of the clinic are primarily concerned with publicly opposing abortion. Picketers at the back seem to be more concerned with harassing women. The rear door is the one used by clinic patients and staff. Picketers there, the majority of whom are men, claim they are providing counselling for women seeking abortions. Their verbal abuse includes such lines as, "Don't kill your baby, we'll help you" or "You'll suffer for this" or "They only want to butcher you in there."

"It's so obvious," says Anne Brunelle, "that they think women are stupid." They refuse to understand that the women who come to the clinic have not made that decision lightly. The "counsellors" " concern for a woman disappears by the time she leaves the clinic. They have been



known to sing. "Happy Birthday to the baby you just killed" while shoving a fist-sized plastic doll into a woman's face, or leave a tiny wooden coffin on the clinic's steps. They attempt to insult women by calling them prostitutes or lesbians.

Women of colour who come to the clinic are regularly ignored, confirming the suspicion that the pro-lifers' primary concern is the protection of white babies. Others become victims of insults. They often accuse women of colour of entering the clinic to "kill white babies."

The most virulent attacks are saved for the clinic staff and volunteers. One hundred and fifty women currently volunteer at the clinic as patient escorts. Two women will meet a patient at a "safe house" in the neighbourhood, tell her what to expect from the demonstrators and then accompany her through the crowd and upstairs to the waiting room. After the abortion, the escorts will walk with her to the bus or the subway. They are often followed by male demonstrators. As one might expect. women who arrive or leave with a male friend or lover are harassed much less.

Increasingly escorts are subjected to physical harassment; they are pushed, shoved, restrained and sometimes hit. More routinely they are called photo: Loren Williams





murderers, baby-killers and dykes. One day a woman escort was told to get married and have children. She promised her harasser she'd ask permission of her husband and children to do so. As Anne says, "They just can't believe that there could be perfectly 'normal' (in their eyes) wives and mothers who support this place." The assumption is that everyone who works at the clinic is doing it for money. "How much did you get for killing babies today," they're asked.

The harassment and pickets have turned a quiet neighbourhood into a tense one. Local shop and restaurant owners are losing business. Their regular customers are afraid or unwilling to wade through the pickets. Residents of the immediate area are continually subjected to the antichoice propaganda video "Silent Scream," played repeatedly in the window of the Way Inn. Residents endure repeated infestations. They regularly find their street crowded with camera people, reporters and police. Most recently their street has become a favourite haunt of an antichoice motorcycle gang called Bikers for Christ that was recruited by Ken Campbell to support him in his actions. As one resident has noted. "If they were just regular loiterers. instead of Christian ones, none of them would have been permitted to stay."

In the meantime choice supporters are lobbying Ontario's new Attorney General Ian Scott who has the power to legalise the clinic. If he were to take such action, the current charges against Dr. Morgentaler would be dropped while clinic staff and patients would be spared the threat of future raids.

HERIZONS

Considering a change?

Ever thought about a career in advertising sales?

According to an article in *Folio*, the trade magazine for the magazine industry, more talented women than men apply for ad sales jobs, women come better prepared for interviews and, are more creative in their sales approach.

Another plus for women in ad sales might be that more women than men are applying for jobs in the field, according to Frank Rizzo, vice president/director of advertising sales for Gralla Publications in the U.S. The article also recognised that women are often given promotions at a lesser rate than their male counterparts, and are often excluded from the old boys network which is still very much a part of closing business deals. Carol Taber, publisher of Working Woman notes that women moving into management levels in the industry have been stalled at the entry and middlelevel positions. The article concludes that unless women move up the ladder at a rate commensurate with their skills, they are bound to give up on ad sales as a viable career option and find other business ventures more worthwhile.

elliegram

PRESERVING THE ESKIMO TONGUE — Older women in Canada's Northwest Territories are proving to be the saviours of Eskimo languages once so imperiled that less than 600 people in the region were fluent in a native dialect.

The latest campaign to preserve the native tongues got underway in 1981 The project hit an early snag, however, when organisers discovered the only people fluent enough in the languages to be competent teachers were middle-aged women — who felt they couldn't forsake their families for long teaching stints far from home.

Instead, organisers quickly set up a rotation plan patterned after oil drillers' work schedules, giving the teachers more time in their own communities. Graduates of the teacher training course now instruct local school children in grades one through three. Organisers say the project will serve as a model for saving other endangered languages native to North America.

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W/e are the moral majority

The Globe and Mail survey on abortion conducted last June reminded us of something we may forget from time to time, as we busily defend the rights of women to safe and legal reproductive services... namely that WE ARE the moral majority. Sixty per cent of Protestants and 57 per cent of Catholics surveyed favoured increased access to abortion facilities.

A full 78 per cent of those surveyed thought abortions should be possible if the abortion has been approved by a therapeutic abortion committee; 87 per cent approve if the woman's health is endangered.

Catholics and Protestants aren't the only ones who are prochoice. At the last general assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, delegates overwhelmingly reaffirmed the Church's support for abortion if needed to preserve a woman's life or health. Anti-choice elements within the Church had asked the assembly to oppose any move by the government to make abortion more accessible.

Catholic theologian Marjorie Reiley Maguire is another example of why the Jerry Falwell-styled Moral Majority isn't either moral or a majority. At a recent panel on Faith and Choice sponsored by the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL) in Toronto, Maguire reminded the audience that there has always been a diversity of opinion on the issue of abortion between and within religious groups.

Maguire's philosophy on the issue of when personhood begins is both sensitive and considerate of the woman's rights. She says that the life within the body of a woman cannot become a member of the human community without her welcoming it into that community: personhood is bestowed by the mother if, and when, she accepts the pregnancy.

For the record

Of 1213 midwife-attended home births in Switzerland over 16 years there were no maternal deaths, three transfers to hospital and five baby deaths. Of the babies that died, autopsies indicated one encephalitic baby, one spina bifida, one with bowel obstruction, one still birth and one unusually large baby born to a diabetic mother.

Good news for London

One hundred and twenty-one policewomen, all chosen for their compassion. sympathy, tolerance and empathy have been posted throughout the Metropolitan Police force in London. England to help rape victims. The women will act as counsellors and supporters as well as taking down information.

The detectives want to put the emphasis on the victim's welfare rather than seeking to identify the culprit immediately and will provide as part of new procedures. a shower and change of clothing for the victims.

You could always start your own business

According to the US Department of Labour's March 1984 report to the President, small-sized, woman-run businesses increased 35 per cent between 1977 and 1980, while male-operated sole proprietorships increased only 11 per cent. As well, the number of self-employed women increased 10 per cent, while the number of selfemployed men increased only 1 per cent.

October 11 Maara Haas (Winnipeg) October 19 All Women's Social at the Ski Club (For tickets contact Bev 942-8212) Ms. Purdy's will be closed that evening. October 31 Halloween Party November 3/9 Debra Joyce (Minneapolis) November 14 Visions-Revisions (P.E.I.) November 28 Bev Ross (Edmonton)



THE "CONSPIRACY" OF PEACE — Some British women's peace camps like the one at Greenham Common become so well-established that they almost become a part of the landscape, but the authorities aren't always so willing to accept the peace activists' presence.

Spare Rib magazine in London reports that seven women currently face charges of "conspiracy to commit criminal damage" for their role in maintaining a peace camp in Alconbury, England.

The military base at Alconbury is home to a fleet of high-altitude spy planes and also serves as a halfway point for cruise missiles. Police dismantled the first women's peace camp at Alconbury after just one day and managed to rout the second string of campers in only six hours. After peace activists set up a third camp in the summer of 1984, police arrested nine women, two of whom were later released without charge.

If the remaining seven women are found guilty of "conspiracy," they could face some stiff sentences — of between three to 10 years.

HER SAY



TWO, TWO, TWO MISTAKES IN ONE — Think you can't get pregnant after skipping "just one" birth control pill? Well, you're wrong, and so are a lot of doctors.

Physicians used to pooh-pooh such reports from their patients, but now researchers at Leeds University in England say even a single missed pill can, indeed, result in an unwanted pregnancy — especially if the slip-up occurs early in a woman's cycle. The researchers also caution that taking two pills the next day may make matters even worse by causing a hormone feedback that increases fertility. Instead, they suggest that women use other birth control methods if they skip a pill during the first week.

The researchers are also pushing for a shortening of the typical pillfree gap between cycles, from the usual seven days to just five days. HER SAY

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Recent recommendations favoring the legalisation of midwives in Canada have left midwifery advocates hopeful their dream could soon become a reality.

"Sometimes I think this will never happen in my lifetime," says Kris Robinson, a British-trained nursemidwife who works in Winnipeg's St. Boniface Hospital as an in-service education coordinator because she cannot legally deliver babies in Canada.

"But then," adds Robinson, who has been lobbying hard in Manitoba for the use of trained nurse-midwives in hospitals, "I see some progress and I think it just might happen."

Midwives' optimism improved in mid-July when an Ontario coroner's jury investigating the death of a midwife-delivered baby recommended midwifery be legalised in Ontario. The four jurors spent three weeks investigating the October 1984 death of a two-day-old infant who had been delivered in his parents' home by two midwives.

The jury concluded the boy could have lived if he had been sent to the hospital sooner. But, after hearing Ontario coroner James Young urge them to recommend legalising midwifery so it could have educational and practical standards applied to it, the jurors also made 15 recommendations regarding midwifery. They urged that midwives be accepted as an integral part of Canada's health care system and, in Ontario, that they be covered and controlled by provincial health laws. They also recommended that within five years, midwives be governed by a new college of midwives.

Coroner Young said Canada's health care system would benefit if the jury's recommendations were followed, but politicians like Manitoba's NDP Health Minister Larry Desjardins were non-committal. Desjardins said the use of trained midwives is being considered in a review of Manitoba's health care system, but their costeffectiveness would have to be considered.

Canada is presently one of only nine of the World Health Organisation's 210-member-countries which does not condone midwifery. England, Holland and the United States have medical systems which train and incorporate midwives for low-risk births while doctors handle riskier deliveries. In Canada, only registered nurses working in the far



north — where doctors are scarce can take midwifery courses and legally help women deliver.

For all others, the law is clear. Louise Tod, executive director of the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses (MARN), says Manitoba's medical act — similar to those across Canada — states that midwifery is a medical act which cannot be practiced without a licenced doctor in attendance.

Business women around the world

Business women from 14 countries met to share experiences and pool entrepreneurial skills at the first Asia-Canada Women in Management Conference held recently at the University of Victoria.

Bank officials, factory managers, small businesswomen, commodity traders, consultants and corporate officers compared notes on the challenges of doing business as a woman. Not surprisingly, there were many similarities between the problems expressed by the women who came from Burma, Nepal, China. Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Fiji, the Philippines and Canada. Getting bank loans from paternal institutions is a global problem, it seems, even though women may be better at business than men.

In British Columbia, the rate of survival for women's businesses is two to one compared with businesses started by men. Sharein Kazmi of Pakistan told delegates that 95 per cent of women in Pakistan repay their business loans, compared with around 70 per cent of the men.

One recommendation arising from the conference was that Canada (as well as other countries) should become affiliates of Women's World Banking, a financial institution established to assist women entrepeneurs. Despite that, there are active midwives. In addition to those in the news in Toronto and Nova Scotia, many others work quietly outside of the law. In mid-April, a Winnipeg lay midwife called Simone organised a midwife training session in downtown Winnipeg attended by 21 women. Most had no formal medical training, but many were practicing midwifery.

Many midwives like Simone, who learned midwifery by watching midwives and reading textbooks, are keeping a low profile because they fear being arrested for their illegal work. But others, such as Robinson, are lobbying for change.

Robinson wants to see a system similar to England's established in Canada. There, women with low-risk births are delivered in hospital by trained midwives while nearby doctors offer backup or handle riskier births such as forcep deliveries and caesarean sections.

To that end, Robinson and some colleagues have been encouraging MARN to endorse nurse midwifery as, Robinson says, the nursing associations in B.C., Ontario, Alberta, and Nova Scotia already have. MARN is studying the issue, as is the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women, which advises Manitoba's government on women's issues, and the Winnipeg Council of Women.

Meanwhile, the National Association of Women and the Law has passed a resolution supporting the use of trained midwives in Canada, government funding of midwives' education programs and medicare coverage of the service.

Research projects using midwives in hospital situations have also been or are being carried out in British Columbia and Edmonton, and Robinson currently chairs a St. Boniface Hospital Committee looking into starting a similar pilot project there. Edith Parker, nursing director of St. Boniface's maternal-child department, says its launching could take two years.

It could take years before midwifery and its accompanying education, certification and regulation systems are in place in Canada. But untrained midwives such as Simone laud any progress in this direction, even if it means working in a hospital with a doctor back-up.

"It's great, that's the ultimate goal," she says. "If that happened, I'd be the first to enroll."

T A T I 0 N L R E P 0 R Ι N T E R N A

After my arrival in Nairobi on July 3rd to attend Forum '85, the first item on my agenda was to contact street prostitutes. Prostitution is illegal in Kenya but you don't get arrested unless you are unable to pay off the police. It was relatively easy making contact. I was told by the women, after I related to them the situation for prostitution in Canada, they had been warned that if they were still on the street at the beginning of the conference they would either be detained or shot. Many women said they were going to Mombasa, a seaport city where many ships dock and the tourist industry is booming.

I travelled to Mombasa by bus and talked to several women, some of whom I had previously met in Nairobi, others from Mombasa and many from the rural areas of Kenya. There are also women from neighbouring countries who come to Kenya to work as prostitutes. As in other third world countries there is a migration of poor women from the countryside to urban areas in Kenya.

Upon my return to Nairobi the whole atmosphere of the city had changed. I was unable to find any of the women I had contacted earlier. Approximately 75 per cent of those who didn't leave town were women who couldn't leave their children alone. These prostitutes were rumoured to be detained on the military base outside Nairobi to keep the soldiers happy, while the men had the extra duty of keeping women attending the non-governmental and official UN conference safe. The beggars, the disabled (lepers, etc.), the children of the streets. the women and male hawkers who brought their wares into town were all removed from the streets: Nairobi was getting ready for the women of the world.

In Nairobi the security was such that the police — complete with machine guns — were all over the campus, on the roadways, in the hotels, in the hallways, outside the workshops, and in the lineups. They were ready at anytime to act without the slightest provocation. A local prostitute told me, "This is the worst time, ever since the conference." Incredibly, one woman from Canada said she was in favour of what the Kenyan government did because they did it to protect us.

On the street: impressions from Nairobi

Marie Arrington

At one point during the first week of the conference, a Kenyan woman, who had had a verbal argument with a European woman about being ripped off, was beaten by the police and incarcerated for the night. Some American women attempted to get [her released but to no avail. Many African women, when they knew who they could trust, had a lot to say about the oppression of women in Africa, the lack of freedom of speech. the lack of opportunities, the low pay for women and the lack of recognition for women's work. As one young prostitute said, "We carry the country on our back, and they beat and harass us."

While the Kenyan government made the work of rural women a focus of the conference and women's poverty was discussed everywhere, there definitely wasn't unanimity on how to solve it. The government had daily trips to selected villages set up for delegates, but some of us went to villages that weren't on the list. I am unable to describe the poverty, the illness, the women with children abandoned by the men. These poor women were trying to feed their children the best way they knew how; and living in less than huts. This is a side of Kenya not many conference women saw.

A prostitute in Nairobi makes 5 shillings for a blow job, which is .45¢ in Canada, and 20 shillings for a lay, which is \$1.80 Canadian. (The average wage for a middle class worker in Kenya is 1,500 shillings per month, which is \$136.00 in Canada.) Many prostitute women are supplementing the wages of the local policemen by payoffs. The women are able to buy off their jail time for 500 shillings: if the women don't have the money they are taken to Lakata prison for up to two weeks. The prison system is run on the old English colonialist system: the women are awakened at 5 a.m. and dig in the soil all day. While they are digging they have to carry a bucket of excrements on their heads. If they spill it they are not allowed to wash. Every evening they get beaten with a wire. One young prostitute (age 17) I met had been working since she was 10, and is the mother of three children, the oldest of which is three, said that when she is locked up her oldest child takes care of the other two. There is no one else to care for them; they are abandoned and when she is released she has to hunt for her kids. When asked what her biggest problems were she said, "The police is the first problem ; they lock us up until after the conference is over. Then comes the pope.

On the last day of the conference an older woman, with a false ID badge. came to the university and asked to see me. She was a woman who lived on the Kenva/Uganda border and owned her own house. This is not an acceptable situation in Kenya, where women don't own property, so she was being accused of being a prostitute. She also rented rooms to young women from Kenya and Uganda who work as prostitutes. She got harassed by the police regularly, who wanted to be paid off. We talked about the medical services available for the voung women - there are none. Some of them start to work as young as eight years old. Many are supporting mothers and grandmothers by prostitution, because there is no one else or any other way to support them.

She asked me if I could get someone, maybe the World Council of Churches, to intercede for her and the women of Kenva. She thought that women in western countries have total freedom, that women aren't poor, that there wasn't such a thing as prostitution. This older looking woman, who wasn't very old at all, said that while many women die from diseases related to working, many die from having too many children, from being battered. from starvation and from just plain overwork. She says that the Kenyan woman has a clamp on her mouth put there by the government.

Marie Arrington is a founding member of the Vancouver Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes. HERIZONS

RUBRIQUE FRANÇAISE Pornographie: L'image de nos corps violentée

C'est cet après-midi là que toutes mes préoccupations majeures ont abouti à l'évidence: toute cette pornographie influence les hommes dans la société actuelle à mépriser la présence du sexe féminin sur la terre; j'étais encore sous l'effet de la nouvelle: ma fille de sept ans avait été victime elle-même de violence. Un homme dans une voiture sur la rue Laurier, à Montréal en plein après-midi d'été très chaud, a essayé d'attirer ses soeurs et ses amies de belles gamines, dans sa voiture; les cinq petites filles pensèrent à faire une chaîne et se tirer toutes ensemble, main dans la main, et ainsi retirer leur amie qui avait déjà accepté \$1.00 et sûrement se faire enlever. Nous en étions toutes bouleversées, d'autant plus que tout ça s'est déroulé à la même période que les manchettes des recherches du petit Viens, retrouvé mort après abus sexuel sur lui.

L'image du corps des femmes, sa propre image est affecté directement par les médias et véhéculée par une société qui nous stéréotype, nous encourage à nous représenter en cover-girl, du roman Arlequin à la page du centre de la revue Playboy. L'enjeu social que la jeune fille doit représenter un modèle esthétique idéal est décrit dans le livre de ludy Blume, "Blubber" où l'obésité la tourne au ridicule dans sa classe quand la jeune écolière ne correspond pas physiquement comme les autres, au standard du poids par rapport à la taille; feuilletons les revues spécialisées sur l'apparence, les mannequins aux corps presque sublimes d'où trop souvent le développement de la condition féminine se lie à l'attitude des regards approbateurs "pour plaire" plutôt qu'à l'estime de soi, la confiance en soi. Les structures sociales actuelles utilisent donc à des buts sexuels le rôle de l'existence des femmes. Exemple: des femmes très sexy pour mousser une marque de voitures, alors qu'un athlète masculin pourrait en faire autant. Mais il y a l'image. C'est par la pornographie que l'utilisation de l'étalage et affichage de matériel tel que la prolifération des films obscènes où les situations associent sexualité et violence présente la violence accessible aux jeunes. Banaliser des techniques sado-masochistes en distribuant à toute personne consommatrice par cette industrie bien organisée, nous oblige à prendre cons-

NICOLE MORIN



UNE NOUVELLE ÉDITRICE VOUS DIT BONJOUR! Je me joindrai à vous, chères lectrices et lecteurs, pour les prochains mois. Les articles suscitent souvent des débats, des remises en question ou des critiques. Bonne déesse, j'attendrai vos commentaires, une bonne idée pour se rejoindre!

C'est avec plaisir que nous échangerons sur l'actualité des femmes d'aujourd'hui, toujours avec une petite touche d'histoire commune. Ecrivez-moi! Bien vôtre.

Nicole Morin

cience des ravages d'encourager cette montée de la souffrance des femmes.

Saivez-vous que dernièment à Montréal, se tenait le premier procès pour obscénité devant juge et jurés. En Cour Supérieure, la revue Penthouse présenta son édition de décembre 1984 avec une série de photos intitué Sakura. Des images où des Japonaises sont ligoés et suspendues à des arbres. A l'automne prochain, les jurés n'ayant pu parvenir à un concensus à même les standards de la communaué canadienne sur les contraintes sexuelles, devront-ils dèbattre ébattre le droit des femmes qui consentirent, para ît-il selon la plaidoirie de Penthouse librement, à être ligotées et ficelées ainsi comme de la viande, à quel prix, sans souffrances? Ce premier droit de regard sur la liberté de l'être humain à accéder à la dignité, au respect se mêle intimement au sort du corps de

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ses femmes victimes. Toute la distribution massive des revues dans les magasins, les réseaux de films daz, les hôtels, par satellites, où nos enfants, nos frères, nos pères sont inondés d'images de cette violence. Nous devons veiller à contrôler les fonctionnaires des différents paliers judicaires aux divers échelons exécutifs tant municipaux que provinciaux pour qu'ils administrent les mesures nécessaires à définir l'obcénité donnée par le Code criminel ainsi que tout avilissement faisant partie aussi de la pornographie. Que le CRTC s'engage à ne pas diffuser des images avilissantes, dégradantes des femmes sous peine de perdre ou de ne pas recevoir sa licence à une programmation de destruction: une relation d'exploitation, d'oppression systématique à l'égalité des sexes. Dans un mouvement collectif, ne plus encourager les commerces vendant journaux ou magazines. Le mouvement de libération des femmes se fera à partir de nos choix: changer notre histoire, nous créer une identité non seulement selon les normes de rôles sociaux, de culpabilité à être dominée. battue, appauvrie. Où sont l'amour, la tendresse? "The needs of sex and love are undeniably real in men and women. boys and girls, but why at this time did they seem to so many the 'only' needs?"* Les prostituées sont dans des conditions de pauvreté. Critiquons l'industrie qui gagne de l'argent en les exploitant: Le chiffre d'affaires annuel de cinq millions de dollars à cinq milliards au cours des douze dernières années. On trouve vingt mille librairies réservées aux adultes, les "shows" et les films de sexe en Amérique du Nord, c'est-à-dire quatre fois plus que de restaurants MacDonald's. Cette déshumanisation de la femme pousse à transformer les êtres humains en objets: ne nous destinons pas à rester indifférentes et dépendantes: la pornographie est la théorie, le viol, le harsèlement sexuel les pratiques. Que les revues et livres soient à un, cinq mètres du sol, à ne voir que les tîtres. Husler, femme mineure exploitée sexuellement, Family Affairs spécialité: inceste: Hogtie (sadomasochiste), Switch (châtiment corporel correctif). Votre carte de prêt de la bibliothèque municipale qui a achetée avec des fonds publics, de ces livres! L'exploitation pornographique s'attaque aussi aux enfants quand on ne peut nier

toutes les répercussions possibles scientifiques d'un contrôle génétique chez les filles. Souvent le lien de parenté des agressions sexuelles avec la victime, la domination sur elle par l'homme nous obligent à rester vigilantes. Les deux meilleurs vendeurs, Playboy et Penthouse, ont ensemble un plus fort tirage que celui de Time et Newsweek réunis. Les cinémas porno ont des entrées de dix millions de dollars par semaine. "Ce qui me dérange dans la pornographie c'est que c'est pas du tout sexy et c'est tout mélangé avec des vieilles idées patriarcales horribles qui charrient que le sexe est essentiellement maléfique et que le maléfique en question est femelle" Citation de Kate Millett. Quand la pornographie offensive ou dure, menace l'équilibre des relations hommes-femmes, des références à la torture, aux phantasmes de femme nueservante-objet, la femme propriété de l'homme influence l'attitude et le comportement des garçons qui apprennent maintenant que nous désiront secrètement être violées; par de telles images

de douleur et avilissement diffusées, lues, entretenues par des modèles où l'outil est la propagande, la prolifération de crimes rattachés au sexe n'étonne plus. L'érotisme quand il exprime des désirs et des plaisirs librement partagés par des partenaires égaux assure une maturité émotionnelle.

L'image violentée de nos corps est la plus mauvaise éducation sexuelle qui soit, parce qu'elle bloque le développement de la sensibilité: manifestation de mépris, du sexisme au machisme, misogynies agressives. Les injures verbales, physiques au sein de la famille n'ont plus de place. Nettoyons nos maisons de tout matériel porno, discutons en avec nos enfants, nos amis, nos parents. Rejetons le "More scary than sexy" et parlons de sexualité de manière constructive comme l'expression de l'amour entre deux personnes égales, consentantes. Gérer notre croissance et remettre en question la justice sociale, le droit familial. Faisons le point dans nos vies.

Je fais confiance en l'avenir pour

Les Aventures d'un grand voyage singulier ou

Wite Course of the Articles 1-

Tout ce qui est possible de faire, enfin!

Il a bien fallu me rendre à l'évidence qu'annoncer incidemment à mon entourage mon désir de partir du Québec pour le Manitoba en a surpris plusieurs, surtout plusieures!???

Faut dire seule, avec trois fillettes dans un camion, ma voiture attachée derrière, j'enverrais des bye-bye tout au long des 1,616 kilomètres de notre excitante expédition, avec pour toute présence rassurante mon ange gardien...

PETIT CONTE A LA TRAVERSE

à Julie Savard à Marie Premier épisode

Malgré la discrétion trop marqué du soleil par ce matin gris du "Ottawa-Nepean" au camping municipal près de l'autoroute, l'âge et la finesse des enfants, notre déjeuner en Ontario fut pour moi un ravissement d'autant plus inoubliable que je nous versais aux yeux toute l'émotion d'être dans un autre endroit au pavillon neutre, transcendant ce trajet comme l'exil.

Je ne cessais de penser avec étonnement à la journée de la veille, toutes deux fins seules — Marie et moi — y entassions meubles, malles, valises,

Petit conte a la traverse

boi tes de vaisselles, boî tes comme la dizaine de déménageuses d'ici peuvent vous le dire, avec nos bras et le plan de remplir le camion de seize pieds et le reste, etc. . . La joie valsant au coeur pas le temps de me voir quitter pour la première fois mon lieu natal — aussi le sentiment de regarder la nostalgie me sauter à la gorge de me séparer de Marie en face de moi, je luttais de me départir de celles, des amis et vers cette amitié j'envoyais toute l'énergie de ce changement vif mais réfléchi dans ma vie.

Je m'accrochais désormais au fil des inconnues la destinée chérie des trois jours et demi de ce voyage forcément aventureux: à la vérité de cette expérience commune traversées comme la lumière d'un médaillon transparent, une série de "Sun Dancers", la dimension de la relation mère-filles, elles s'appellent Marie-Louise, Marie-Pierre, Marie-Claude, Marie quand je les crie, démontre une composition de couleurs très particulière. Nous pouvons vivre la nuance et l'harmonie de nos gestes quotidiens, ce grand voyage nouées, retrouvées en plein chemin!

J'avais décidé de rouler à la vitesse régulière indiquée tout en sachant la fragilité de mon système d'attache du long camionà lavoiture et j'avais pressenti ce jour là si couvert un pépin de parcours: un des côtés de l'équipement découvrir et changer notre image parce que nous représentons le pouvoir sacré en donnant naissance d'une évolution en ce siècle de la vidéoculture, notre pouvoir de nous organiser dans de différents réseaux à l'éducation des femmes dans l'avenir: challenge de se créer une image d'estime par le ralliement de la force collective des femmes.

"On nous a préparées par notre éducation à dépendre d'un homme et à nous sentir nues et terrifiées si nous en sommes dépourvues. On nous a appris à croire que nous, femmes, sommes incapables de nous tirer seules d'affaire, que nous sommes trop fragiles, trop délicates, que nous avons besoin de protection."**

Je remercie le groupe Pluri-Elles pour les recueil d'informations.▼

- *The Mistaken Choice, Chap. 8. The Feminine Mystique, Betty Freidan, Dell Publ. Co. Inc. 1974
- **Le complexe de Cendrillon, Colette Dowling, Ed. Grasset & Pasquelles, 1982.

s'était détaché au camping, m'obligeant ainsi à ne pas rouler trop vite, trouver un garage au plus tôt un matin trop frais à mon goût; tout d'un coup, dans cette tranquilité de matin sur la route le pneu droit de la voiture éclata sans que je ne le vois dans mon rétroviseur à cause de la largeur du camion, le remorquage, le budjet des complications "au cas où". . . et là, la rencontre fortuite d'une autre famille, combien soulageante et réconfortante.

Ce one-way to Winnipeg en tout cas. j'avais conscience de la témérité quand même heureuse dans ce déplacement on est libre d'être à soi comme la clé de musique donne à sa portée toutes les notes se défilant à leur rythme. Péripétie. Vigilante je nous tenais dans la sécurité je prenais à moi seule la rose et le journal de bord de nos réveils à la route, j'ai tenu même un soir à conduire jusqu'à presque nuit. Assurer une atmosphère de détente en tout temps. Située entre deux provinces avec mes amours j'assumais tout au long du parcours que les repas se terminent en fêtes et en chansons animées avec parfois du chocolat: promise au Manitoba.

De villes en villes, je ne compte pas, de maisons en maisons, je ne compte plus.

En cette fin de printemps, neuf juin, dans ma trentaine, deux autres nuits à traverser avant l'arrivée.▼



Janya Lester

In 1927, when Judge Emily Murphy decided it was time for women to be legally considered 'persons' so they could be appointed to the Canadian Senate, she discovered that an order-incouncil petition for a Supreme Court of Canada ruling on the matter required five signatures.

Murphy's allies, in the now famous Person's Case, then included Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney and Henrietta Muir Edwards. But, perhaps the trump card in Murphy's hand was Irene Parlby.

For, with Irene Parlby's signature on the petition, the Person's Case had in effect won support from the Alberta government of the day. When Parlby walked to Murphy's home to join the others in August, 1927, she entered as Minister without Portfolio in the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) government. She carried the unofficial title of Minister for Women's Concerns and was later nicknamed Minister of Co-operation.

During her three terms in office. Parlby was responsible for the passage of some of the most progressive legislation the province has ever known. Her advocacy of women's and children's rights were instrumental in the passing of 18 acts. To her credit was the enactment of the Domestic Relations Act, Alimony Orders Enforcement Act. Maintenance Orders Act. Minimum Wage for Women Act and Child Welfare Act. But it was when she sponsored the Children of Unmarried Parents Act. Parlby told a reporter that "because I did, a man wrote me that I was 'no lady'!"

Harsh words to be hurled at a woman who had been born, according to Grant MacEwan in . . . And Mighty Women Too, with the "proverbial 'silver spoon in her mouth." Born Mary Irene Margaret Marryat in London, England in 1868, Parlby was educated by governesses in India, and in Swiss and German finishing schools.

But it was reported that she "gladly gave up the life of ease... as it seemed to her — (one) of futility" when the opportunity arose to join family friends who were ranching near Buffalo Lake. Alberta. In 1897, a year after she immigrated to Canada, she married Walter Parlby and they settled at a ranch in Alix where they later raised a son named Humphrey.

In Canada, Parlby eventually embraced a philosophy that would have made her governess shudder. Cooperation became this former aristrocrat's solution to all the world's problems. Concerning universal peace, Parlby believed a co-operative political and economic system would ensure the death of militarism.

"This is another avenue women must explore if they would 'seek peace and ensue it," she wrote. "It will bring them face to face with the crude facts of economic imperialism, economic nationalism, the whole ugly warfare of a competitive capitalist system and its fight for markets, its ruthless methods of exploitation and its claims for the pro-

"It would be unfortunate if in co-

tection and intervention of governments, when its methods lead to trouble in countries to which it penetrates."

Influenced by what she witnessed during visits to Denmark and Ireland, Parlby was instrumental in establishing

the Alberta wheat pools but urged the people of her province to view the co-op movement in more than merely eco-

"If the seed of co-operation has been sown on the stony ground of economics alone, it will wither up and die: in other words the man who has no deeper conception of co-operation than as a movement to bring in greater profits than he would otherwise receive, will be liable to fall by the wayside in his disappointment at its temporary failure to live up to his expectations," Parlby cautioned. But as a staunch advocate for women's rights, Parlby knew the movement would not succeed if women were prevented from participating in it on an

nomic terms.

equal footing.

operative work, as in so many other phases of life, sex disqualification should be allowed to creep in," Parlby warned. "Men, of course, find it terribly difficult to slough off that superiority complex, which they have carried around with them for so many centuries: but the time is past when they can achieve the greatest good for society by continuing to use women as a kind of eternal Ladies Aid. Women are by nature greater co-operators than men . . . Co-operation needs women; it needs their intuition, their idealism, their willingness to sacrifice their individual interest, their willingness to give service without thought of personal gain, all qualities which have been learnt through generations of voluntary effort for home and church and community."

Parlby's public "voluntary effort" for and with women began with the inception of the United Farmers of Alberta. In 1916, after delivering a speech on "Women's Place in the Nation," she was elected UFA president for the Women's Auxiliary. It was renamed the United Farm Women of Alberta (UFWA) because she insisted upon its independent status under the auspices of the UFA.

The name change proved to be symbolic of the UFWA members increasing confidence in their own abilities. Parlby wrote about the women's growing recognition of their talents in areas such as vegetable canning, meat curing and gardening. She communicated their need to educate themselves on matters outside the household sphere. Later, Parlby wrote of the farm women's strength in their struggles to overcome isolation and hardship as they worked to ensure medical and educational accessibility, establish community halls where cultural events could take place, and push for co-operation among farmers.

"The farm women are looking fearlessly into the future: they have been building castles in the air for many years, they begin to see that through their organisation the building of some of those castles may soon be begun on earth." Parlby explained in the *Grain Growers Guide*.

In 1921, her share in this vision led Parlby into provincial politics, running on the UFA ticket. In the Alberta Legislative Assembly, she and Liberal MLA Nellie McClung often crossed political lines to caucus on women's issues.

During her years in public office, Parlby's passion for gardening led one reporter to draw an analogy between her horticultural skills and her political success. "To the management of provincial affairs she brings a mind keenly alive to the difficulties of pruning, weeding, grubbing in the dirt — but with the constant vision of the blossoms at the end," wrote journalist Barbara Villy Cormack.

But in 1930, Parlby fell ill on the return trip from a mission for peace to the Assembly of the League of Nations in Geneva. Her doctors advised her to quit politics, although Parlby continued to do speaking engagements, wrote a gardening column and worked on scrapbooks documenting the important events of her time. She became the first woman honoured with an Honourary Doctor of Laws from the University of Alberta.

Today, feminists can identify with Irene Parlby's work for peace, her staunch belief in the need for cooperation in all areas of life to bring about women's equality, her solidarity with farm women while working with them at a grassroots level, and the 16 hour work days that produced so much women's rights legislation. It is for inspiration that women like Irene Parlby should be remembered.♥

Tanya Lester is a Winnipeg writer with a special interest in the foresisters of the contemporary Women's Movement. She has recently published a book of profiles of Western Canadian writers called Women Rights/Writes.

PROSE

The Confused Flour Beetle and the Canadian: A Comparison

SARA ELLIS

Appearance

The confused flour beetle (tribolium confusum) is brownish in colour, cylindrically shaped and about .5 cm long. The Canadian is variously coloured, about 2 m. long and comes in two styles. Shape often difficult to determine due to heavy outer casings.

Habitat

The confused flour beetle is found in stores of food — corn meal, cereals, dried fruits, dog food and flour. The Canadian has various habitats including beer parlours, discount tire stores, and the floor of the House of Commons.

Life Cycle

The life cycle of the confused flour beetle has four stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult beetle. The life cycle of the Canadian has five stages: superbaby, breakdancer, spotty, RHOSP, and RRSP.

Activities

The confused flour beetle enacts all major functions — mating, egg-laying, hatching, moulting, and eating, directly on its food. Although it can fly, it rarely does. The Canadian also performs many essential functions in close proximity to food but it does exhibit some migration patterns, notably south in the winter and laterally all through the year. The latter behaviour pattern is exhibited mainly by those of the species seeking to escape unemployment or their provincial government.

Enemies

The confused flour beetle has no ene-

mies except man. The Canadian has no enemies except man.

Defence

The confused flour beetle defends itself by emitting a toxic irritant mixture. This fluid is poisonous to other insects as well as to its own kind. The need for this elaborate defence system is not fully understood. The Canadian exists in a symbiotic relationship with a related species, the American. The Canadian will test the American cruise missile and generally exhibit polite behaviour. In return the American will continue to develop weapons to destroy life on earth, including its own kind. The need for this elaborate defence system is not fully understood.

Reaction to Radiation

The confused flour beetle thrives on radiation. Its average life span of one year is extended by 16 per cent if the beetle is given massive daily doses of gamma rays. The Canadian does not thrive on radiation. A massive daily dose will kill the Canadian in a few weeks.

Conclusion

The future of the confused flour beetle seems fairly secure. Not only does it react favourably to radiation but it has a means of quick adaptation to temperature changes such as those to be experienced during nuclear winter and it effectively limits its population when food is in short supply. The prospects for the Canadian are poor. Observation suggests that the resources that have contributed to its survival in the past, intelligence and compassion, are now largely in abeyance or inadequate. ▼



In Women's Experience of Sex

SHEILA KITZINGER;

he is standing on the stage, very tall and blond, a Nordic goddess with a smiling face and she is asking leave of the audience to put on her "magic scarf". Six hundred people have assembled at the University of Guelph for the opening day of the Seventh Annual Conference on Human Sexuality. The audience, mainly composed of therapists, nurses and social workers are somewhat taken aback by the request; but they applaud politely as the speaker drapes a multicoloured stole around her shoulders and then, standing back from the podium, opens her arms wide to display the designs that she and her daughter have batiked. The scarf is patterned fulllength in variations of the birth symbol. a diamond shape with two tiny hooks on each end which, she says, is found in women's weaving from Anatolia right

JOAN BARIL

want to be a channel for women to speak to each other about things we all know but haven't the confidence to speak out loud." Sheila Kitzinger



through to the Pacific Islands and is still often seen in the borders of carpets.

She tells them, "These signs are the symbols of women's power; the representation of the creative vagina." After that remark, the keynote speaker has her listeners in the palm of her hand.

For many years Sheila Kitzinger has symbolically held the hands of countless women in childbirth. Her books on birthing are international best-sellers and from a woman's point of view, deservedly so because the information they contain is rooted in our own experience, the "lived life" as Kitzinger calls it, rather than in the male/medical perspective.

Learning from other women rather than prescribing to them is a first principle of Kitzinger's. Most of her titles contain the word "experience" as in *The Experience of Childbirth* and *The Experience of Breastfeeding*. To her, the word underlines the fact that she is not producing advice manuals or books on how to do something or how to do it better.

When I met with her the next day she said, "My books are not about me dishing out information or telling people what goals they should strive for. I want to present a whole range of experience for women. I want to be a channel for women to speak to each other about things we all know but haven't got the confidence to speak out loud." And indeed, her books produce an eerie sensation in the reader who is constantly finding things in them she has always known but has never before seen in print.

Kitzinger began as a cultural anthropologist working among poor women in Jamaica. Her studies of sex, pregnancy and childbirth led her to childbirth education, a field which "didn't really exist when I started out." After nearly 25 years of work and writing on birth and related subjects her publisher suggested a departure — a book about sex.

"They wanted it about both men and women but I refused to do that. I wasn't prepared to do another *Joy of Sex* even though it would sell well."

She had made clear her opinion of sex manuals to the audience. "Most books on sex are written by men, even those intended for women. Very often they are written by doctors who haven't any special training to understand women's sexuality or indeed anyone's sexuality." The focus is on "how to please a man and there are still a great many (books) which make that assumption." She mentions the popular writer who says, "It is all about giving a man cherries jubilee instead of rice pudding."

Then there is the current emphasis on the Big O. The theme of many books is "how to get a good orgasm every time. These books tend to ask the question 'Is your performance good enough?' They are performance oriented."

Instead, Kitzinger turned once more to what women knew about themselves. She spent two years talking to women alone and in groups, close to 700 women in all. She wrote an article for *The Guardian* in which she asked women who had had hysterectomies or mastectomies to write to her. She also ran a questionnaire in *Parents'* magazine. The result, *Women's Experience of Sex*, was published by Penguin Books in 1983.

The book is a winner. At present it is ranked second on the non-fiction charts in Great Britain. One sex therapist attending the conference told me, "I hand the books out like candies whenever couples come into my office. I tell them 'Now sit up at night and read this together'." Another remarked that many people are giving copies to young males so they can learn about women. She herself was given a copy by her daughter. Shortly after Kitzinger finished her address, the hundred or so copies in the book display were completely sold out.

What did Kitzinger learn from women about sex? First, that women had a wider definition of sexuality, a holistic view as opposed to the mechanistic masculine view which focuses on the sex act. "Sex," Kitzinger says, "isn't about where you put what. It is about feelings and also about values." To Kitzinger, the anthropologist, our sexuality is embedded in our culture. "Sex is natural, instinctive, and yet it is as much a product of our culture as our economic or religious system . . . It is about the relative worth of men and women and their places in the system . . . In our society it reflects a social system in which women serve men's needs, bear and rear their children and nurture their families." Again and again she emphasises we cannot talk about sex without talking about the social setting which affects how women see themselves, how women define their sexuality and how partnerships are formed between a man and a woman or between two women. People who wish to step outside the socially prescribed pattern in matters of sexuality must be consciously aware of what they are doing and also must work at it very hard and persistently.

She castigates the 'popular culture of the orgasm'. "Orgasm has been set up as

Sheila Kitzinger

ON SEXUAL FANTASIES:

Our sexual fantasies, particularly those which make us feel ashamed, provide clues to a predominantly male view of sex, one associated with dominance and violence. [This view] is imposed on us by society and I think internalised by us. It seems to me that sexual fantasies are often a caricature of the way society is... I think it is very important that we look at our fantasies and see the values expressed in them. I used to think that we weren't responsible for our fantasies but I've come to see that instead of being stuck with whatever comes into our minds... it is really possible to change our fantasies creatively, mold them into a new shape... and not let them take charge of us.

ON THE STRUGGLE FOR IDENTITY:

Because we see ourselves reflected in the eyes of men, I think it is incredibly difficult to come to the sense of our own worth to create our own identity apart from that reflection. It struck me as I was talking to women that it was a very arduous and painful struggle in which women often felt terribly alone.

ON HOME BIRTHS:

Very few women in Britain have their babies at home now, under two per cent. I think there should be about 25 per cent home births because then you get a good, viable system where women find it easy to get home births and attendants feel confident about them.

something a woman must strive for if she is to be a whole person or do herself real justice. It is also the gift a man must be able to offer a woman and regular orgasms are often seen as proof of a successful relationship." Instead, she found there were many different types of orgasms. Very often, she met women who were not sure if what they were experiencing was really an orgasm. Then too, women stressed that a purely mechanical orgasm can be very unsatisfying. It was not a thing to be triggered off. Many women felt orgasms were not a major

ON THE CANADIAN PRACTICE OF HIRING A MIDWIFE TO HELP WITH THE BIRTH:

If she doesn't do the delivery, she is not performing the midwife's function. A midwife is fully trained to take complete responsibility for normal pregnancy and childbirth. The general practitioner may want to be present but otherwise it is the midwife and perhaps her student. She isn't just a birth attendant who hangs around giving comfort. She is the person who is responsible for shepherding the woman right through the labour and for catching the baby and for care afterward.

ON MARGARET THATCHER:

She hasn't done anything for women's causes, not anything. The women she approves of are the executive types, not the poor woman in the poverty trap. There is evidence that poverty is getting worse in Britain with a greater gap between rich and poor. There are people living the Yuppie lifestyle and others very close to the bone - like in a South American country, Women spend a long time in lines waiting to pick up benefits. They are not allowed to do this by post: they have to show up. The main problem is that getting benefits has been made so complex that people don't get what they are legally entitled to. This is particularly serious in maternity services. It is almost twice as dangerous to have a baby at the bottom of the social scale, for example a teenaged unmarried mother or an immigrant in a city area, than if you are in the professional classes.

> experience in their lives. "They tended to melt into the background against other significant experiences and other expressions of their sexuality."

> On the topic of the penis, women had little to say. They don't really care about it. "We live in a penis worshipping society and men certainly seem to be enamoured of their penises. When women described to me the kind of lover they wanted, the penis took a small part. They were not interested in size. They are not like men who can give descriptions and bust measurements of women

they want. Women want someone who is caring and listens. And in lovemaking, they want him to slow down."

In her book, Kitzinger speaks of a 'delicate web of deceit' spun by mothers for their daughters. Even though the older women have unhappy experiences with sex or marriage, they indoctrinate their daughters with the romantic myth and the conjugal dream. Sheila says it is a dream of possession, "being possessed by the White Knight who kisses the girl awake and then she can start to live." Mothers feed the dream for their own souls' sake. "Life is pretty grim for many women. If they were really open and honest it would be as if a chasm had opened beneath them. They would think 'My God! What's it all for'. I think women can only face these things when we have the strength and support of other women."

Because a predominately male view of sex has been imposed on us, we need, according to Kitzinger, a woman's language about sexual feelings. "The language of sex is almost exclusively a male language" which does not describe the breadth of women's experience. Here Sheila Kitzinger uses the language of experience to describe women's sexuality:

For women, sex is not the drama of the clitoris. It involves the deepest, most passionate feelings she has toward those to whom she is closest — all her loving tender relationships — and every occasion in which she reaches out to nurture and heal. Being a mother is crammed with experiences which don't just pull our heart strings but twist our guts... and release a tremendous flood of feeling and with it hormones which pour through the blood stream...

Sex cannot be discussed with any meaning without reference to the extraordinary changes through which the body passes at different phases of her life - puberty, pregnancy, childbirth, the post-partum experience, the menopause and the years of aging and also her menstrual rhythms. . . Men don't experience these changes. They are more static. A woman ebbs and flows. She is enlarged and diminished. Even the self she sees in the mirror is constantly changing. Her life is all mutation and movement. Her body boundaries are open. Fluids flow from within and every now and then a new living being bursts from her body. For many, perhaps most women this is the essence of what sex is all about.





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An African woman attired in a traditional bright yellow and turquoise wraparound khanga approaches a levis clad Swedish peace activist. They exchange greetings, smile and saunter off to join others lounging around the university of Nairobi's lawns. It is a typical encounter as the NGO Forum that officially ends the UN Decade for Women gets off to a

From Nigeria to Nepal, from Iran to Instart. donesia, some 12,000 women have arrived from over 150 countries, complete with an invigorating sense of optimism. power and commitment to ensure that the struggle for the advancement of women doesn't stop. They will accomplish this over ten days through a thousand workshops ranging from the rights



of housewives, to women in the antiapartheid movement in South Africa. The resolution for the Decade for

Women was passed in 1975 at the World Conference of International Women's Year held in Mexico City. The main goals of Development, Peace and Equality were adopted at that time and later supplemented with the sub-themes of Health, Education and Employment, ratified at the Mid-Decade Conference in

In the past ten years substantial prog-Copenhagen. ress toward the equality of women has been achieved." said Leticia Shahani, Secretary-General of the UN Women's Decade Conference, at the official opening of Forum '85. With few exceptions, governments have created constitutional or legislative provisions guaranteeing equality of rights for women and men, and abolishing legal discrimination. In this regard the Decade has clear-

ly played a major role as a catalyst in the achievement of legal reforms and overall legal authority.

The Development aspect has meant "the total development of women in the overall political, economic, social, cultural, moral and intellectual growth of nations," declared Shahani, adding that inroads have been made in many

The past decade has also seen a subcountries. stantial increase in the number of women entering the labour force, and a shift away from the traditional role of woman as wife and mother. Furthermore, educational opportunities for girls and women have widened at all levels of schooling.

The linkage of Peace, Equality and Development is self-evident. Said Shahani: "Peace is not an absence of war and conflict, but the positive use of resources to improve living conditions and health in an environment free of violence and

The Secretary-General warned deleconflict. gates to face the past Decade's achievements with a mixture of constructive criticism and praise. She cited a UN questionnaire that shows many obstacles toward women's equality remain: traditional men's attitudes which have not been shaken, the low priority given to women's concerns by governments and the worsening economic situation the

Developing nations comprised 50 per world over.

cent of the Forum's delegations prompting Dr. Edda Gachukia, chair of Kenya's NGO organising committee to stress the need to confront the issues of women in developing countries.

Women in the Third World toil not only for themselves but for their families and country's benefit." She called on delegates to listen. learn and share their knowledge with women from other

The struggles of women the world nations. over transcend all barriers, suggested Dame Nita Barrow, convenor of Forum 85. But problems and pluralities exist so "one woman's liberating truth can be another woman's destruction." Thus, consensus is not possible during the meeting "but an understanding over the many issues that affect women worldwide is," she said.

African women singing, as they await entrance to the Kenyatta Conference Centre for the opening of Forum '85.



Issues at the Forefront:

he Arab-Israeli Conflict

The debate over the politicisation of Forum '85 and the UN End of the Women's Decade Conference held in Nairobi was not new. Neither was the main bone of contention. At the first Women's Conference held in 1975 at Mexico City the equation of Zionism and racism first entered the annals of UN history. In 1980, at Copenhagen, the phrase was hotly debated and wide-spread support for it ensued. But the End of the Decade Conference in Nairobi '85 saw the Zionismracism statement erased from the final document of the UN Conference.

In a last minute about-face, Arab and East bloc countries agreed to drop the statement naming Zionism as an obstacle to the development of women. and replaced it with the words "all forms of racism" in the final document. entitled "Strategies for, and Obstacles to, the Advancement of Women to the year

Throughout the final plenary session. intense lobbying on keeping the "Spirit of Nairobi" alive took place, headed most urgently by African nations who feared their Conference was in jeopardy. At the Conference's outset, a Canadian resolution calling for consensus was approved, implying that resolutions could only be passed unanimously. Therefore the strategy of Pro-Israeli countries to vote against the anti-Israeli paragraph, and if it was passed to not vote the final document into the record, had to be

Eventually, the desire to end the UN's Decade for Women on a positive note for the good of women world-wide prevailed. Africans pressured Arab countries to drop the anti-Israel phrase and eventually they, including the PLO, backed

down. Only Iran stood firm and alone. The previous week at Forum '85. clashes between Arab and Israeli wom-



Delegates to the Nairobi Conference meet informally in the courtyard at the University of

en occurred almost daily in workshop sessions. Accusations against Israel's invasion into Lebanon, and the situation in the occupied territories were repeatedly presented. Every workshop given by Arab organisations and their supporters, regardless of the slated title. turned into a political slaughter of

On one occasion police had to be called in to a workshop involving Arab and Israelis, when Jewish women were allegedly pushed and shoved by PLO sup-

Sessions involving Arabs and Jews were characterised by heated political showdowns as Arabs made allegations against Israel and Jews replied against them. An example of an Arab charge is when one woman said: "Palestinians are force-fed in prison — and when they die from the forced feeding, their bodies

are refrigerated until the jail sentence

At the opening of the UN End of the Woman Decade Conference, Kenyan President Daniel T. Arap Moi proclaimed: We will achieve little for women if we allow politics to intrude into the deliberations of the UN Conference." He called on women to unite and said, "Let there be an act of faith ... we owe to the women of the world to come up with a final document which will prove that the journey to Nairobi was not in vain."

The resulting consensus on the "Forward Looking Strategies" document marked the Nairobi Conference as successful. But true advancement for women in the Decade's themes of Equality. Peace and Development, and subthemes Employment, Health and Education, will only be revealed once governments stop talking and start doing.



Betty Friedan:

Betty Friedan addresses delegates outside at an open forum.

ower and Motherhood

by ilana simon

It was no ordinary fig-tree. Under the broad leafed, towering arbor next to the Forum's Peace Tent, sat Betty Friedan, a foremother of feminism whose book *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) is said to have started the modern women's movement.

Ms Friedan, who attended Forum '85 as participant and workshop leader was delighted with her allocated space. "So many people have been coming to see me about their concerns about the women's movement. I thought it would be good to have a tree where 30 or 40 women could meet everyday in a freeform dialogue."

Values of women, feminism and pluralism and future directions of the feminist movement are just some of the areas Ms Friedan touched on in her daily noon-hour open discussions. Friedan also dealt with the evolution of family, the theme of her latest novel, The Second Stage.

According to Ms Friedan, the world is now undergoing a transition where men are no longer the chief breadwinners. Today there are families of two wageearners, single parent families, and the woman is more aware of her rights, duties and choices.

As a result, more attention must be given to the family. "It needs more commitment," she says, "there is no substitute to the family and divorce will not continue to increase." She added, "We must recognise the reality of the evolution of the family, of two pay cheque homes and raising children, and of the different forms of family life."

In the first stage of feminism career always came before family, but Ms Friedan maintains the value of motherhood as a feminist issue. "The whole move of women to equal rights is not against the family. It is strengthening the family. We should be moving into the second stage. There are so many women in the child rearing years who are in jobs. There is no retreat from that because of economic necessity and the evolution of work. The women's movement should be filing for child care, for maternity leave. But the women's movement has to spend its energy to defend what we've already won," she said.

The two main stumbling blocks facing working women are the lack of child care and the inflexibility of working hours. As well, figures indicate that if policies are not changed a new underclass - families headed by women will continue to grow. The 'feminisation of poverty' forecasts that a high percentage of households headed by women will continue to fall below the poverty line. Today women in the U.S. still earn 62 cents to every male worker's dollar and if divorced, women have the responsibility of children. While a man's standard of living increases by 80 per cent one year after divorce, a woman's standard of living decreases by 80 per cent during the same period.

In developing countries, the issues facing women differ, for instance access to literacy. And when development does come "the technology comes to the men."

Ms Friedan welcomed the Nairobi Conference as an opportunity for networking and communication to occur. She saw it as a time for sharing concerns and for women to unite and insist their governments take action on women's rights.

"There is a new burst of creativity here — an explosion of creativity. That is germaine to Nairobi — the articulation and celebration of the values of the female experience to all society," she said.



COU

Women do two-thirds of the world's work, receive five per cent of the world's income, and own less than one per cent of the world's assets.

These figures computed by the International Labour Office in 1980 are frequently cited by Selma James, founder of the Wages for Housework Campaign in Britain in 1972; and led to the item on this international organisation's agenda: to petition every government to count the contribution to the economy of all women's work, so that it's recognised and reflected in every Gross National

"Women are always counted as work-Product. ers in the home, factory and office, in the fields and as volunteers everywhere. But our work is never counted and recognised, especially if it is unpaid. Therefore we are demanding that governments acknowledge our economic contribution on an international level. We want them to recognise how much we do," James said

The Gross National Product is supposed to be the total value of goods and services produced, but until now included only those goods and services exchanged for money. Women's unwaged work, estimated in some countries as providing as much as 50 per cent of the GNP has been left out.

Women's pressure internationally has borne some fruit however, according to Sylvia Salley, a member of the sister group Black Women for Wages for Housework. "We brought our 'women count - count women's work' petitions to Nairobi and gathered thousands and thousands of signatures and we triumphed!'

The UN Conference to Achieve and Appraise the Decade for Women adopted the resolution to include women's work in the GNP, and inserted it in the Conference's final document entitled "Strategies for, and Obstacles to, the Advancement of Women to the year 2000.

Salley attributed the success this time around, as compared with Copenhagen in 1980, where the same resolution was not passed, to the overwhelming support garnished by Third World women and global collective pressure exerted on governments.

Another push for the recognition of the unpaid work that women do, is the planned world-wide housewives' strike set for October. Tens of thousands are expected to participate in the event, which coincides with the October 24th 10th anniversary of a countrywide house-

wives strike held in Iceland.

" 'Time off for Women' will show that without women everything comes to a halt, because women do the majority of work," said Salley.

lames wants governments to put a price on a housewife's work - which she estimates to be worth more than \$793 a week in the West for an 84 hour week. Women in the developing countries work even longer — 100 hours a week.

The GNP in First World countries would rise by 50 per cent if wages for housework were included in the accounts. Salley maintains that by counting women's work, it would become clear just how much women contribute to the economy and society.

"Men are taking us to be suckers," says Jenny Mijoso, a Zimbabwean housewife and mother of five. "It's the people with the money who have all the say. If we demand a monthly salary, we can participate more in the decision-making

As a wage-earner, Ms Mijoso says she process." could learn how to budget, make her own decisions, and buy something like a dress without having to consult her husband. But as long as he holds the purse strings, Ms Mijoso feels like "his subject.'

She concluded: "We're doing much more work, looking after the men, children and house - taking care of their lives. Why shouldn't we be considered as persons who are working?"



The Uncut Version of The Nairobi Conference:

gainst all odds

Suzanne Pope

The troubles of the NGO Forum in Nairobi have become the stuff of feminist legend. For every woman who attended, there's a story of dishonoured hotel bookings, lost deposit cheques and official gags placed on Forum activities. As organisers of the NGO Filmforum, we were spared the practical miseries suffered by many: we had hotel rooms from start to finish, and we didn't have to pay for them twice. But our work brought us to Nairobi with a team of twenty delegates and more than 200 women's films and videos, and that fact brought us in line for all the disasters and triumphs of the Forum as a whole.

Hannah Fisher and I arrived in Nairobi on June 22 as the advance team for Filmforum staff (Hannah is Harbourfront Film Co-ordinator). There, I discovered a city in which phones don't work, officialdom moves slowly and clerical people seem enamoured of administrative procedures that are so intricate as to defy explanation. We were prepared to deal with minor frustrations but it was hard to feel the same sangfroid about problems we hadn't counted on. Take, for example, accommodation, that war cry of countless NGOs. We went to inspect the rooms provided for us in our confirmed hotel booking, only to discover that the management there hadn't heard of us, didn't have a shilling of our deposit money and had no rooms to spare during July. The news forced us to begin a daily vigil on the accommodation floor of the Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC). People

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Toronto writer Suzanne Pope.

Suzanne Pope works for Harbourfront, a Toronto culture and recreation centre that joined the National Film Board of Canada in presenting films and video at Forum '85.

there took a special interest in our plight and, within ten days, we had firm bookings at a government-owned hotel. "Before you came, you were just pieces of paper," said one of the women at the KICC. "Now that you're here, you're real people to us and we have to take care of you properly."

Pieces of paper seemed to be at the core of Nairobi's troubles as conference time drew near. The scene at the KICC was one lifted straight from a nineteenth-century model of clerical protocol. There were no high-priced consultants here, no personal computers, not even enough electrical typewriters to go around. Here was a string of small offices, staffed by young men and women who ploughed valiantly through stacks of application forms, cheques, money orders and hand-written letters in foreign languages. The clerks used giant ledger books to enter and cross-reference thousands of names, organisations, available rooms, deposits, cheque numbers and special requirements. And in the midst of all this paper, accommodations supervisors were just beginning debate on some very basic issues: for example, although the Jacaranda Hotel had been designated as housing for all disabled NGOs, they wondered - was it discriminatory to segregate a woman from able-bodied members of her group housed elsewhere?

Much later, we were told that our case was the first to tip off authorities to the flaws in their housing plan for NGOs. But the Filmforum had time on its side, and that was a blessing. We had time to take tea with the accommodation staff, "Worrying about eviction drained much of the energy central to the success of the Forum itself."

and to argue our point in a friendly, lowkey way. That option wasn't open to NGOs who arrived in early July. Women started coming to the KICC, angry women who had followed official instructions, paid substantial deposits, received confirmations and arrived at Jomo Kenyatta Airport at two in the morning to find themselves packed off to a grubby bunk at the University of Nairobi. The feeling of betraval was palpable, and it grew worse as the government began evicting NGOs from hotels to make room for incoming UN delegates. If one needed proof that the government had a weak grasp on the import of the Forum, it came in quantity with this abrupt policy change. The coming days brought news of hundreds of NGOs whose vital work at the Forum was disrupted by their forced removal from hotels. The distress of these women wasn't lessened by the government's bovine assurances that everything would be fine if delegates would only cooperate.

The inconvenience of moving during the Forum was only half the problem for NGO delegates: the energy expended by so many of us in merely worrying about eviction drained much of the energy central to the success of the Forum itself. And, not surprisingly, the fight for rooms superseded the content of the Forum in the eyes of the local and international press. The story here wasn't of subtle discourse in the workshops — it was about a pack of feisty American women who wouldn't quit their rooms.

The problems of accommodation at Forum '85 are the problems most of us will remember best, but the broken promise of Nairobi went far beyond issues of comfortable lodging. Everyone, whether housed at the University or at the Hilton, had to contend with government-imposed sanctions that cut deeply into the spirit and progress of the Forum. The authorities had prohibited the assembly of NGOs outside campus grounds, and we'd heard of government plans to pull down the Forum Peace Tent, plans abandoned only under pressure from NGO Convenor Dame Nita Barrow. But from our perspective, the most serious intrusion upon NGO territory took the form of extensive and often illegal censorship of films and videos.

The time spent with the censors in March had brought results: the government agreed to waive its standard fee for censorship, a fee which, in this case, would have topped \$100,000 (Cdn). Along with this welcome news, though, came the government directive that every film and video be censored in its entirety. And so the members of this volunteer censor board, accustomed to previewing the likes of Ghostbusters and Breakdance 2: Electric Boogaloo, now spent eight hours a day slogging through films on Senegalese schoolchildren, Sri Lankan textile workers and Australian women with work-related maladies. Their plight would have been laughable had they not be so overGod, these people are actually sentenced to the screening room." The effects of overwork took their toll on the censor board's one bleary-eyed projectionist: by the time Forum '85 began, he had mown through the sprocket holes on one film, subjected another to an unauthorised cut and returned a few more to the wrong cans.

It's hard to be angry with people who are, as they say, just doing their jobs. But in dealing with the special occasion of the Filmforum, the censors went well beyond the call of duty. Until Forum '85 was half over, the board refused to approve unsubtitled films in languages other than English. The policy contradicted the international_spirit of the



Forum '85 delegates protesting the censorship of Leila and the Wolves on the steps of the Kenya National Theatre.

whelmed by their task. The first of us to see the censors at work was Gerry Rogers, a producer with Studio D of the National Film Board of Canada. She recalls, "My first reaction was one of disbelief. This tiny projection booth was crammed with stacks of film reels piled up on the floor, outside of their cans. And the projectionist looked so tired. He was working at a rewind table that wasn't big enough, and he was using a splicer that was so dirty, so primitive. that I wished I'd brought a new one to make his life easier. And when I saw the censors sitting there in that hot, stuffy room watching our films, I realised, my

Forum, and effectively banned the work of the Third World women who could not afford the high cost of subtitling. The irony of Kenya's hobbling developing nations grew more poignant with the government's response to the Filmforum video program. Kenyan law currently provides no mechanism for the censorship of videotapes, and that lack has created inconsistency: the kinds of films that could never play theatrically in Kenya are available under plain wrapping in dozens of video shops. We found that the government's hands-off approach to video stopped where the Filmforum began. We had a screening

location and scores of tapes, but six days into our scheduled program, not a single tape had been approved by the board. The videos fell victim to a memorable catch-22: the board demanded to see the tapes, but never quite got around to it because it had no video player. And each day, hundreds of women were turned away from cancelled video screenings at the Goethe Institut Nairobi, a venue that had never before suffered restraint in public showings of film or video. Bitterness over the cancelled screenings was felt deepest by guest filmmakers from developing nations.



Accommodations Committee staff processina NGO hotel applications in their office at the Kenya International Conference Centre.

These were the women who were making video realise its potential as a tool for social change, who were forced by economic necessity to choose it over film. And these were the women who had raised money through their governments or private funding bodies to finance their travel to Nairobi with the express purpose of showing their video work to Forum delegates. The Forum delegates were angry, too: the films listed in our glossy, four-language catalogue were seldom released by the censors in time for their scheduled screenings. Delegates had to look out for hand-drawn signs around campus to find out what had been sprung.

The outrage of the filmmakers and the steering committee was quelled for a time by the government's teasing assurances that a solution was at hand. The committee finally aired its grievances at a July 15 press conference, a session that let the hitherto-silent delegates speak publicly about the kinds of sacrifices they and their colleagues had made in the years and months leading up to Nairobi. Women attending Forum '85 now had more than rumours about the Filmforum, and the local press reacted with surprising sympathy. Going public was a cathartic experience, certainly, but it was also disquieting for a group that had come to Nairobi with nothing more radical in mind than showing good movies.

From the start, Forum '85 seemed to be viewed by the government as a kind of poor cousin to the official UN conference; events of the closing days made it clear that this poor cousin was feared as much as disdained.

Take the case of Lebanese director Heiny Srour, who came to Nairobi to present her deeply personal account of Arab women's history. Her film, Lelia and the Wolves, had the rotten luck of being scheduled just a couple of days after the well-publicised disruption of a workshop by guarelling Arab and Israeli delegates. Leila and the Wolves had long since been passed for public showing by the censors, but its screening was cancelled when nervous government officials confiscated the print. Heiny Srour organised a protest against the confiscation, spoke movingly on the issue in the Peace Tent and won the support of Dame Nita Barrow in retreiving the film for a screening on the Forum's closing day. The film became the subject and symbol of hot controversy, and a large crowd came to the National Theatre to see it. They were greeted on the front steps by

Kenuan Police outside the Kenua National Theatre during the July 19th screening of Leila and the Wolves.



a phalanx of armed guards who revised by the minute the conditions under which they would permit the screening. Women assembled there, waving banners and singing "We Shall Overcome" while Filmforum organisers frantically negotiated for a start of the screening. The show eventually did go on, 45 minutes late, with only women permitted to enter, and then only after being frisked by women police officers.

Temporarily at least, Nairobi kept Leila and the Wolves from the door, but the security didn't come cheap. Events of the closing day seemed fittingly symbolic of disruptions and harassments that were endemic to the forum. At times. goodwill between delegates and their host government was at a premium. Rumours flew, not about happenings within Forum '85, but about our very ability to continue participating in it. And one could not help being puzzled by the contradictions embodied in our host. Here was a government wishing to be hospitable, but using force to empty hotel rooms. It was a city concerned enough about its reputation to clear out prostitutes and beggars, but not sensitive enough to resist sending members of the international press to the dorms. It was a host country committed to a successful Forum, but seen closing as many doors to the event as it opened.

From all this trouble though, came real achievement. Workshop Co-ordinator Anita Anand measures Nairobi favourably against the Copenhagen Forum, and takes pride in the products of her own event: "A seed was sown, and I think the point was made that there must be more of a relationship between film's users and producers. It's not just an art form. It's a powerful tool, and we have to start dealing with it on those terms. Let's make something that we can actually use to get people excited about things." To Gerry Rogers, the accomplishment of the Forum came in the lessons it taught: "One thing I've learned is that we've been censored and silenced for so long, and we have to make sure that we can see each other's work, that we won't be silenced anymore. It's become so clear to me how important film and video are, and I've realised what kinds of wonderful things women are



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Lebanese filmmaker Heiny Srour, addressing Forum delegates and media inside the Peace Tent at the University of Nairobi.

producing at such great cost, at such personal risk. And these aren't foolish or naive risks, they're informed risks that show how hard so many work to communicate with women across all kinds of barriers." Hannah Fisher agrees: "The experience of showing films here has changed the way I view the medium. Women from all over the world came to the screenings, and their comments, their reactions, reaffirmed my belief in the ability of film to change people's lives. Coming here meant working in a completely different cultural milieu, and at first that was difficult for all of us. But the bottom line is that everyone wanted the Filmforum to work. We're all very different from each other, but our goals and philosophy about the project were always constant, and I think that's what made our work successful. The spirit of cooperation was really remarkable.

It was the women themselves who made a success of Forum '85 in terms both real and symbolic. Ultimately, most of the films were shown and well-received. Regional meetings held in prepara-



tion for Nairobi led to the formation of groups that will work and grow long after 1985 is over. The workshops run by Charlotte Bunch and Anita Anand drew full houses and formed the basis of plans for an international women's film distrubution network. And our problems with censorship, as divisive as they could have been, created an uncommon unity between women of all colours. classes and political leanings. Kenyans have intense respect for the notion of harambee, a Swahili word meaning, roughly, "let's pull together." Harambee established itself as the unofficial motto of Forum '85. When the hotel crunch began, women in our group and others doubled up, offering to share their rooms with complete strangers. And when censorship threatened the Filmforum's success, hundreds of women spoke, marched and lobbied on the program's behalf, indicating that, in this case at least, delegates to the Forum were of one mind. At Forum '85, women got much less than they were promised but gave back more than anyone dreamed.



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HERIZONS

FICTION The Secret Apartment

HE OUEEN STREET CAFE reminds Annie of "Der Schwartzer," a student cafe she knew in Berlin. This cafe is slightly more pretentious, although its pretention falls short of adequate heating. In spite of her cold and damp feet. Annie secretly likes the chill. Like an undercover salute to the Berlin cafes, the refrigerator ambience reminds Annie of their doors which constantly blew open and shut, letting in muffled young men and January gusts.

It is Annie's secret cafe. She comes here alone, a double agent defecting from the past. She wears her hat low and comes armed with notebooks and newspapers. Sometimes she even brings maps. She spreads them out on her table like a disguise of herself in a foreign city. She will be a stranger here, just as she was in Berlin, this time last year.

She knows she won't run into David here. He took their split last year as a signal to pack his bags and move uptown. He no longer comes here to eat as they often did two years ago when they were always broke but nevertheless regularly forgot to do the grocery shopping. She knows her decision lacks substance beside other women's charges of philandery, alcoholism, financial ineptitude, drug addiction or battery. But to Annie it doesn't matter: David ignored the evening skies, he missed the bemused faces of old men behind dusty Chinatown windowpanes. David overlooked these things most precious to Annie in favor of the sidewalk, the escalator, success.

For the moment, Annie prefers to be alone. She knows it is the times which offer her this choice, that her aloneness is a luxury, a bauble in the eves of history. But it is also an experiment, and although Annie sometimes feels like evolution's guinea pig, she doesn't care. She sees things, things that keep her company.

Annie sees things everywhere. She frames and files images like a squirrel storing nuts away for winter. She draws on them later, in Friday bank line-ups and doctor's waiting rooms. In her bank Annie keeps a wealth of bright red mailboxes, of mongrel dogs and razor blades, of sugary shoe store windows and telephone poles from which the wind

URSULA PELUG

tears remnants of posters advertising last year's parties. She sees things in paintings that other people don't see. She has always done this, but only lately has it begun to pay.

In the cafe there is a new show every month by one of the many young artists who live in the neighbourhood. To Annie these paintings are significant in a way that drifting relationships always seem to miss; the images are possessed by a solidity that human beings lack. Annie can tell by the shade of blue the artist uses whether she should make business phonecalls or lay low till the end of the month when the paintings will be exchanged for something more auspicious.

Today there are large, nervously scribbled portraits of the Queen, the Queen's mother and the Queen's corgis. Annie identifies with the corgis. They are dreamy and sarcastic at the same time. Their large dark eyes remind her of Lily.

Annie orders tea with lemon, a genuflexion towards her cold. She fishes guiltily in her bag for cigarettes, knowing that in the corporation of her body the employees are on strike, and that their only terms for resumed services consist of fewer of the nasty things. But in Annie's life, cigarettes, like notebooks, Lily, and a constant supply of new things to look at, are filed in a drawer marked "DO NOT GIVE UP"

Annie's notebook currently resides between the teapot and her cigarettes. She will write a letter to Lily, a letter she will most likely never send, but always writes.

"Dear Lily," Annie writes, "I am sitting in a Queen Street cafe, writing to you. This cafe reminds me of "Der Schwartzer." a cafe I liked in Berlin. There are paintings of dogs hanging here, dogs which have eyes just like yours.'

Sometimes the letter to Lily goes like this:

"Dear Lily, one day I'm going to gather up all the letters I've written to you and never sent; I'll tie them all together and wrap them up in a great big package busting at the seams, and then I'll walk over to the nearest bright red mailbox and stuff it in, addressed to you . . ."

"Dear Lily," wrote Annie at her table

in "Der Schwartzer," "...dreamed of you last night, drinking with you in a small dark bar, you perfect as ever. smoking long brown cigarettes and drinking cognac . . .

could bind time into a looseleaf notebook, most of the pages would be letters to Lily. She writes them in her columnist's steno-pads. Lacking steno-pads she writes them on napkins, in cafes, in waiting rooms and in her head. Annie's Perpetual Notebook, changing

But she never does. Still, if Annie

weekly its size, shape and pricetag, is in reality a surrogate Lily, a pastime used to fill the long stretched out moments the two women spend apart. At night, Annie dreams of her friend. In dreams Lily is small, dark, perfect and effervescent as soda pop. Conversely she is sometimes pale, hollow-cheeked and so thin Annie can feel her ribs even through the bulk of her thick winter sweater as she carries her friend up the stairs. Annie's dreams don't lie. In real life when Lily is scared and nervous she overlooks eating and sometimes falls down stairs. When Lily is happy she emanates a peerless stylishness that Annie would like to sit with forever. sharing jokes.

hey first met when they were in high school, in a coffee shop one afternoon, both cutting classes. They were drawn to

one another, both being small and odd. They traded ideas like they traded tshirts and high heels. They are no longer the same size but in those days everything about Lily fit Annie like the long lost missing piece of a jigsaw puzzle.

It was in coffee shops and bars with Lily, ten years ago when they were both too young to drink, that Annie first found a home in the world. Sometimes she feels as though it's still the only home she's never lost or given up. The other homes, the David ones, the alone ones, even the family ones, all are kept in a drawer marked "TIME WILL TELL." Time invariably does tell all, and sometimes its confidences are surprising, like the time in Berlin that told Annie she missed Lily more than David.

In Berlin, where Annie was alone, it was Lily's small bright face that would appear to her, admonishing her to write.

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Annie finishes the last of her tea and repacks cigarettes and notebook into her bag.

On the streetcar she thinks she sees Lily, but Annie is used to such tricks of memory and desire. The apparition of her friend turns into a schoolgirl, her face too sharp and youthful to be any other than the face that wishful thinking wears. Still, it arouses in Annie the same pleasure that an unexpected letter might. Lily's correspondence has a better batting average when it comes to actually arriving at the bright red mailboxes, and it tends to be funnier than Annie's own as well.

Once she sent Annie a photograph of a very fat naked lady that she'd found in the street and cut up into tiny interconnecting pieces, like the flip side of those Centerfold puzzles sold as novelty items at sex shops around the world. Annie goes home to her secret apart-

Annie goes nome to her secret apartment. The secret apartment, like the secret cafe, circles around Annie like a defence lawyer considering the case for mistaken identity. Annie pretends the apartment is her own, that she is a recent arrival in this city where she has lost so many homes, that she is a refugee from a nameless somewhere else.

In real life the apartment was lent to Annie by an artist whose work she had favorably reviewed, and who she subsequently befriended. The artist, a tall, pale boy named Ronald, had given Annie the key in exchange for the usual cat and plant services, while he went to spend January in Vancouver with his family. "You need somewhere quiet to work," he told Annie, "where you won't be interrupted."



nnie disagreed. She never had any trouble working in the lively Kensington Market household she shared with her

friends Janice and Carol. Sometimes she even carried her typewriter to the kitchen table in the evenings so as not to miss out on the conversation. Nor had Annie ever had any trouble working when she and David were living together, even when he had been hopelessly unemployed, watching the afternoon soaps for hours while she typed.

Annie didn't need a quiet place to work — what she needed was a secret apartment. She reveled in its anonymity. She didn't give out the phone number, pretending she had no one to give it to. The apartment fit Annie like a trenchcoat, like a fedora pulled low, like a fast car crossing a border at night, its trunk stuffed with contraband. The unfamiliar room held all the mystery of romance for Annie, and none of its complications. Like a lover, the apartment had secrets to reveal if she was only patient.

While she waiting for secrets, Annie worked. She was writing a review of a young woman painter's portraits of famous multiple murderers. From the gallery walls had leered the faces of David Berkowitz, Charles Starkweather, and Canada's own Clifford Olson. The scotch had been flowing freely that night, and by the time the doors were closing Annie could no longer see any difference between the faces of her friends and those of the mass killers. Perhaps, hypothesised Annie, that had been the woman's point.

Annie stares from the frosty windowpane to the photograph of a painting portraying the Yorkshire Ripper. "Dear Lily," she writes, "is it supposed to be funny?"

he walls are hung with Ronald's scratchy litle drawings of razor blades awash in coffee cups. They are mean, nasty little drawings, but Annie likes them for that reason. Besides, Ronald is right. It's been years since people didn't carry razor blades everywhere.

In the parking lot outside the window, people are slamming the doors of their cars, returning home from work. How many of them carry razor blades? How many keep razor blades under their pillows, ready to slice up unsuspecting lovers? What about the razor blades in their wallets, right where the snapshots of the wife and kids are supposed to be?

"Dear Lily." Annie writes, "is it supposed to be funny?"

In the evening, after dinner, Annie plays "Conquistador," an old song by Procul Harum. It's a song that she and Lily liked, a long time ago. She plays it three times, something she could never do at home, where the girls, who listen to bands with names like "The Psychedelic Furs," would tease her mercilessly.

They only see one another two or three times a year now. They stay up all night talking, just as they always did, and sometimes, when the sky turn electric ultraviolet just before dawn, Lily will play that song.

The machines are in the basement of the building. In the elevator Annie worries about being cornered by one of the Razorblade People. On the door of the laundry room a sign is posted explaining who to contact if one is having problems with mice. Annie pictures the mice commandeering the elevators, their little pockets bristling with razor blades.

Other people, when they do the laundry, include a white wash; Annie does a red wash. It's a red wash swimming, stewing and subterfuging with red socks given to her by Lily. Annie can never remember how it began, but Lily has been sending her red socks for years. She thinks Lily does it so that Annie will think of her, and giggle instead of grimace over the laundry.

When the laundry is finished there is still too much of the evening left. Perhaps she didn't bring enough clothes with her.

She calls David. They will meet for a drink. Annie dresses carefully. It is always important to give the impression to old lovers that one is doing well. She wears red leg warmers over her clean jeans: red leg warmers given to her, of course, by Lily.

David is already seated at the bar when Annie arrives, kicking the snow from her new black boots. They have both already decided to be friendly, to be civilised. They will spend the evening in an ad for imported beer where everyone wears new boots and has perfect smiles. David has always been handsome; Annie has often thought that he should have gone in for modeling. In real life David is currently working as an art director in a small uptown advertising agency. He sits behind a desk in an office and talks on the telephone, where nobody can benefit from his perfect teeth, his luscious hair.

"In dreams Lily is small, dark, perfect and effervescent as soda pop"

Annie and David drink imported beer and admire one another's new boots. Appraising one another, each decides their ex is doing okay, as only new boots can ascertain.

"Do you ever see your friend Lily?"

"She's in New York." Lily is in New York, working on something. Annie is not sure what. Lily changes careers like other people change their socks. Red socks. When Lily comes back she will have red socks and stories for Annie. She remembers the first night she took David home. There had been a photograph of Lily pinned to the wall, staring at the unfamiliar lovers until David had asked, finally, "Who's that?"

"That's my friend Lily."

David thought her beautiful, and would have liked to sleep with her, except that he was suspicious of too beautiful women, and besides, she was a photograph. He was suspicious also of their friendship, perhaps knowing that when the two women saw one another again, they would most likely discuss, in detail, his talent or lack of it between the sheets. His talent proved sufficient for him and Annie to live together for three years, during which time Lily was always his biggest competition.

"She makes me laugh."

"What?"

"She makes me laugh."

"Oh. Lily."

They go home together anyway, to David's apartment. Once there, Annie checks out the record collection, looking for "Whiter Shade of Pale." It isn't there. Just as she had suspected, David had ditched it after she left. At least the sex was fun. Sex with David is always fun, even it it always reminds Annie a little bit of playing soccer.

David wakes her up in the morning with a breakfast of Eggs Benedict, fresh O.J. and coffee. David always understood that breakfast was a man's job. His breakfasts had flair. Annie sips her O.J., smiles at David, counts her bruises.

"Four, David."

"Four what?"

"Four bruises." They both laugh, but Annie is thinking of walking along the beach with Lily, watching the sun go to sleep into the lake like a kid into its bowl of soup.

David goes to work, Annie goes to drop off her copy.

"Pretty weird stuff," says her editor, a bespectacled still youngish man, while inspecting the photography of the Yorkshire Ripper portrait.

"I think it's supposed to be funny." "Weird sense of humour."

"I guess."

Annie's next assignment is to cover the first one man show by a young artist who appears to be enamoured with large polka dot canvases. The press release informs her that the polka dots are representational of viruses. Viruses. Annie takes a cab back to the secret apartment, wondering whether David has caught her cold.

The apartment, like a watch spring, coils and uncoils around Annie. She almost understands, and the secret slips from her again, like the tadpoles she used to catch at the cottage when she was ten.

In her dream she and David are at the bar. David drunkenly proposes, Annie looks to the floor and realises to her horror that his boot toes are growing razor edges. But so are her fingernails. She turns to him, scratching his face. Her nails leave imprints of typewriter keys on his smooth shaven cheek.

When she wakes up she calls the Kensington Arrangement for messages. Carol has a new boyfriend, Janice has new boots.

"You should get a new boyfriend too," says Carol.

"Why? She's still got David," says Janice from the other extension.

"Huh?"

"Yeah, he's called three times today already."

"He must be spreading himself thin, he was just in my dream." Annie signs off and dials David's office. The secretary wants to know who's calling. "Tell him it's his wife," says Annie. She looks suspiciously at her fingernails. She counts the seconds she's on hold.

"Hi, Annie!"

"Thirty-seven, David."

"Thirty-seven what?"

"Seconds on hold."

"Oh. I'm glad it's not bruises again." They will go to the Virus Opening, and to dinner.

At the gallery only scotch is served. Annie smokes, drinks scotch, makes notes. David doesn't smoke — he gave it up, like so many other things, after she left — drinks scotch, checks out the women. Annie checks out their boots.

Over dinner David explains that he would like to live with her again. "We could even get married if you like."

Annie looks into her glass, at her fingernails. She wants to stick her head under the table and check out his boots, but is afraid of arousing his suspicion. She has nothing against marriage, really. The idea of a reception, of a fluffy white dress, has always appealed to her. She likes churches, probably because her father gave up religion a generation ago. She likes David. She even loves him, sometimes — a percentage that Annie hears is quite good these days.

"Do you ever feel this confused?" she asks of her ex-cum-fiance.

"When Michael got married last year he said it made him feel more committed to working out the problems of the relationship," says David, beaming like a lizard on rollerskates.

"That's just great, David. I wonder how he was spending his time before they got married?" She remembers then that David will not admit confusion, that he would rather admit marriage, hemmorrhoids, anything.

35

At the secret apartment she stands for a long time in front of the window, with the lights off. The panes rattle, sheets of snow flash by. Headlights of cars blink on and off in the parking lot below. People coming home from the bars. How many of them worry about the Razorblade People? How many of them are married because of it?

Annie imagines she has a date with the head honcho of the Razorblade People. On the way she is full of trepidation, wondering whether she should have called the police, but as it turns out he's kind of cute. He rattles his razor blades in time to the music, and, after they have spent the night together, he cooks her Eggs Benedict for breakfast.

t is almost three. Annie goes outside. Standing in the middle of the parking lot she stretches out her arms. The snow has stopped, there is a deceptive warmth in the air, a pretend spring. Weather as con artist.

They are like the portraits of the mass killers, they're like Carol and Janice's faces after a hard day, a day when photography editors and art directors stomped all over them. They are tired faces, and not unintelligent. The only difference between the Razorblade People and you and me is that for them the hole just got too big to step around anymore.

If Lily were here, what would she advise? Something funny.

Annie got together with David when Lily was away, when Lily had a man. That was the year all her friends were getting married. This year everyone is either breaking up or having babies.

When Lily comes back from New York, she will have red socks and stories for Annie. They will laugh and write one another lewd and humourous letters which they will pass back and forth across coffee shop tables. Annie will feel at home then, maybe even at home enough to get married to David. When she and David are married, Lily will come over to help with the laundry. It will be the funniest laundry in the world, giggling with red socks. When Lily goes away again, as she always does, she and Annie will rack up enormous long distance bills, they will send each other their notebooks in the mail. and Lily will send red baby booties she has knitted for the baby, who will be a girl. On the other hand, maybe Annie will get married to the head honcho of the Razorblade People, who has a taste for menages, and, as everyone knows, had a vastectomy years ago.

a a vasicetonity years ago.

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POETRY

The following poem, which appeared in the JULY/AUGUST issue of HERizons contained errors which altered the intended meaning. Below, the poem appears in its entirety, as the poet originally intended. HERizons apologises for any inconvenience to the poet.

MISS CHATELAINE

In the movie, the horse almost dies. A classic for children, where the small girl pushes a thin knife into the horse's side. Later I am sitting in brightness with the women I went to high school with in Calgary. fifteen years later we are all feminist, talking of the girl in the film. The horse who has some parasite & is afraid of the storm, & the girl who goes out to save him. We are in a baggage car on VIA Rail around a huge table, its varnish light & cold. as if inside the board rooms of the corporation; the baggage door is open to the smell of dark prairie, we are fifteen years older, serious about women, these images: the girl running at night between the house & the barn. & the noise of the horse's fear mixed in with the rain.

Finally there are no men between us. Finally none of us are passing or failing according to Miss Chatelaine. I wish I could tell you how much I love you. my friends with your odd looks, our odd looks. our nervousness with each other, the girl crying out as she runs in the darkness. our decoration we wore, so many years ago, high school boys watching from another table.

Finally I can love you.

Wherever you have gone to, in your hidden marriages. When the knife goes so deeply into the horse's side, a few seconds & the rush of air. In the morning, the rain is over. The space between the house & barn is just a space again. Finally I can meet with you & talk this over. Finally I can see us meeting. & our true tenderness emerge.

© Erin Mouré. Montréal, Québec


PROFILE A Symbol for Women

"I remember that she sang unaccompanied, just her own clear, pure, still voice and her hands clapping, her body bouncing and swauing, her eyes closed, and her face a moving picture of expressions ranging from wryness to vulnerability. But it was the songs themselves which stirred me up. . . She sang about the contents of my female life - girlhood, love, madness, dreams, family - and somehow endowed them with the urgency of mass protest that I was committed to, right there, with all the women. It was unforgettable."

This is the way Myrna Kostash remembered a performance by Rita MacNeil in Toronto in 1972. She recalled this moment in an article she wrote about Rita in the book Her Own Woman, published in 1975. That same year, Rita released her first album, Born a Woman. It was a powerful, energising collection of songs which called attention to the inequalities between women and men, between the workers and the rulers. Historically speaking, Born a Woman was the first album of Women's Music released in this country. Her music made us proud, as Rita put it, to be among the people we were warned about.

Her latest albums, Part of the Mystery (1981) and I'm Not What I Seem (1983) continued the MacNeil tradition of honouring those people whose contributions have gone unnoticed. Rita spent a few years in Toronto and Ottawa, but since 1976, her home base has been her birthplace, Big Pond, Cape Breton, where she lives in a renovated school house with her two children. Laura 19. and Wade. 15.

Almost two weeks of every month is spent touring the provinces with her arranger and accompanist Ralph Dillon, and when she's home, they do mini-tours in the schools in Nova Scotia. Rita has spent this past year preparing for the release of her fourth album. She also performed at the International Women's Day celebrations in Yellowknife, N.W.T. and at the Canadian Pavilion at EXPO in Tsukuba, Japan.

On her return home, Rita made a brief stop-over in Vancouver where she performed outdoors to a transient audience at the EXPO Centre. Although this venue was quite different from the event Myrna Kostash recorded ten years ago.

CONNIE SMITH

Rita MacNeil still made me feel proud of my sex and proud of my class.

Our conversation took place at a table near a concession stand. Despite the obvious distractions. Rita generated an atmosphere that was incredibly intimate. Connie S: Tell me about your home.

Rita M: Cape Breton Island itself is quite beautiful. The little village I live in has about 175 people. It's right on the Bras d'Or Lakes and it's just a gorgeous place to live. It's very inspiring. It gives me a definite sense of peacefulness. Unfortunately the area itself as far as employment is very economically depressed. But I think I stay there because it's such a place of inspiration and such wonderful people.

Connie S: And your children . . .

Rita M: They're really neat. I really love them. I hope I did all right by them. I think so. They're very independent. I always treated them very individually. I think I gave them a lot of respect as far as not treating them as possessions. I learned a lot through the women's movement about raising my children. I learned a great deal. I learned how to treat them like individuals because of it. Connie S: So it's true, then, that you went to a women's liberation meeting in Toronto and then went home and wrote your first song, Need for Restoration?

Rita M: Yes, it's the very very truth. I always loved music, but I could never stand up in front of an audience without falling apart. So it was quite a thing when I found I couldn't speak very well on the issues, but for some reason I could write about them. I certainly received an awful lot of strength from the women's movement. I learned an awful lot. And it gave me a great deal of confidence to keep speaking the way I needed to, through my music. I know

Rita MacNeil



lots of times there wasn't often work for me, and lots of women would get together and create a situation where I would be hired so that I could get some money. I've lots of fond memories. Learned a lot. Took a lot with me. Left some behind.

Connie S: I understand your mother was a great inspiration to you.

Rita M: Well, she always believed in my music, and I wrote a song about my mother long ago. It's on the first album. The line, the dream she had and the life she led were all lived for others, was true. She always wanted to see me sing. She used to stick a broom in front of my face to get me to pretend it was a microphone. She had an incredible belief in my singing.

I could never — I always felt guilty because when I first went home she was dying, and I wanted to tell her about my music. I can remember she was in the hospital, "Oh, Rita, for god's sake, you've got to stop singing that stuff you wrote. Why don't you sing something like Green Green Grass of Home," and that song that was popular, (she loved it then), I'm the Happiest Girl in the Whole U.S.A. She said, "Now there's a song you should be doing." So I was always very sad she died before she heard my music evolve and change and grow, and I felt very very bad about that.

Connie S: What do you want to say to people in your music?

Rita M: One of the songs I wrote a little while back is called In the Spirit, and it speaks about the Native Indians in the Maritimes. It has quite a punch to it. Quite. It all depends. Now, today. I'm singing love songs, because I felt a lot of love for someone. It all depends, you know. I think I'm just trying to communicate and sometimes things really feel strong inside me, whether it's about rights or wrongs, or love.

Connie S: What would you say have been the three biggest influences in your life?

Rita M: The women's movement would be the first. Moving back to Cape Breton was the second. I'm still waiting on the third.

Connie Smith is the producer and host of CFRO radio's Rubymusic and writes a monthly music column in Kinesis.

WISE WOMEN'S WORDS In Search of a Crone's Manifesto

If the history of women tells us anything, it tells us we have not been encouraged to prepare for aging. We have been too busy serving the present, too unselfish to serve ourselves and too timid to complain about it. To see aging as the end of something without recognising it as an opportunity to begin something else is a mistake we cannot afford to make. As we shift into this transition period in which we evaluate our health and change our priorities from those immediately around us, the view takes on a little excitement: we find we are more alive than even we suspected. If we have given more of ourselves to the comfort of others around us than anyone has a right to expect of us, we will give ourselves permission to say "enough already" without a shred of guilt. The gift of age is a new rage against docility: we no longer have time for compromises that drain this new energy.

We will have discovered the state of our feet is more important that the bloom in our cheeks, and the state of the world more engrossing than the ingredients in our best casserole. Food as a matter of fact becomes a lesser preoccupation as our need to serve diminishes. From the vantage point of a sheltered life the changes around us can be terrifying. but our spirit and our mental health demands that we understand and participate in those changes. As aging people we must insist on the opportu-



GERT BEADLE

nity to be as useful as our health will allow and as loving to others as the spirit demands.

We must recognise and project what is beautiful in the nature of survivors, the strength to insist, the courage to resist every obstacle to our own belated development. someone decides she is of no more use. Usually that someone is the person she has poured her life into: thus we kill softly, first the spirit, then the mind. These are the two elements that allow us to age with humour an die with grace. My generation and those before me have been socialised to accept financial dependence as a fact of life, our capacity to trust a virtue, the unwritten law not to



My background is that of fierce old ladies in a rural setting where survival took all your skills and energy and where nobody retired, just wore out and were buried with the whole community - men, women and children - paying their last respects. My closest confidants and teachers were a series of elderly women who nurtured me in the absence of a mother and taught me to knit, sew. cook, garden and raise chickens. By the time I was 16, I was as confident about my ability to survive as they seemed to be. I never lost that confidence and I approach aging in much the same way they did, a petty irritation that deserves no special consideration.

I inherited the same independent spirit of my maternal grandmother who was still splitting her own wood when wellmeaning relatives descended with the proper authorities and put her in a home for the aged. She lived to a hundred and hated every minute of her confinement. It is an enigma to me how all that strength of survival could not defend itself against a society determined to make decisions out of some mistaken sense of obligation to prolong life while robbing it of it's flavour.

The rural woman never retires unless somebody or something retires her. Her usefulness comes to an end only when question, and the result is that aging women make up the greatest proportion of the nation's poor, undervalued and ignored.

Gert Beadle

In our frantic desire to be useful we have in many cases assumed the burdens that properly belong to another generation: raising our children's children in many cases, feeling responsible for those to whom responsibility is an aberration to be avoided at any cost.

Will the future aging woman appreciate the changes the women's movement has set in motion, will she take hold of the new awareness of her value to the society as a strong voice for peace and justice? Will she prepare herself to face the truth of her existence and refrain from that sticky role of being the glue that holds the patriarchy together inspite of it's obsolescence or will she continue to be the part of the clean up crew for man's excesses?

At no time in our lives, does independence set more beautifully as in the posture of that aging woman who has heard all the bullshit and seen all the posturing and felt all the pain inherent in the paternalistic madness that has brought us to this point in time as captives to the system.

Having said all this I implore my contemporaries to nourish a keen sense of humour: the ridiculous is everywhere and we are the natural dispensers of satirical wit. We have been much too kind, our image of sweet patience is an affront to sanity, we must support our young sisters who struggle to take control of their own reproductive systems, and encourage them to be a voice in our governments from civic to Federal, we who were conditioned to trust must finally invest that trust in ourselves and each other when we are finally in the positions of having nothing to lose but our own ignorance, we who were conditioned to serve must serve our own purpose finally, we who were conditioned to less must rage for more, more consideration, more appreciation, more recognition. Let it be said that we kept the country and them men together through a depression and a war and only we know how difficult that was and how many panic stricken, anxiety ridden stingy men came out of that little episode and how much of our blood perished in the face of man's violence in Europe, and let it be said we did not give them up willingly to do the thing they had to do. And let it be said that it gives us no pleasure to know that power mad egomaniacs are bringing us closer every day to a universal holocaust. If we can raise our voice in defence of a pittance in our pensions, we ought to howl the roof down at this insanity. And let it be said finally that we are glad there are no secrets anymore, that we can no longer pretend that we are protected from violence in our own homes or that our children are safe from abuse, and let us confess that we senior women have always known it but our loyalties were with the abusers and denial was the better part of valour. So let us be glad it's all out there as part of the process and the good man is a good man still and we thank god for him and hope his brother learns from him for the sake of the future. Let us say further from the vantage point of our years, that fairness was engrained in our generation and the woman's struggle for independence and equality must have integrity as well as compassion to satisfy our standards. We have been entrusted with a generous capacity for love and lovalty, and have an honest commitment to a more just society for women where women are truly persons and not subjected to any other classifications

Gert Beadle is a Thunder Bay-based poet and author, activist and recipient of the 1984 Persons Award, in recognition of her work in improving the status of women in Canada.



TORY



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SATIRICALLY YOURS Egged On by Paranoia

LYN COCKBURN



In the past year, I have noticed an alarming increase in the number of brown eggs for sale in supermarkets. I've mentioned this phenomenon to my father, my sister and all my friends, none of whom seem the least bit concerned.

Therefore, I feel it is my duty to bring this insidious increase to the attention of the public before it is too late.

It used to be that brown eggs were in the minority and in their place, off in an unobtrusive corner of the supermarket cooler. In fact, there were many grocery stores in which nary a brown egg was to be found.

Then the bleeding heart liberals in health food shops began preaching that brown eggs, which hitherto everyone had accepted as inferior to white eggs, are actually healthier. Unsuspecting consumers, half of whom were already swallowing alfalfa, unpasturised milk and bean sprouts by the ton, swallowed this nonsense too and began buying brown eggs.

Before long, supermarkets gave in and began stocking up on brown eggs in order to stay in competition.

Without anyone except me noticing, white eggs were soon shunted off to one side of the grocery store coolers. They were in effect, given inferior housing. And unless something is done, the coolers of the nation will soon be largely populated by the mediocre brown egg. White eggs will retain but a small corner of what was once all theirs.

What started out as a health food fad has become a national trend. It was all right as long as brown eggs knew their place — health food shops. But no, having gained a small foothold, they immediately aspired to greater things. Not content with their proper position as a curiosity in specialty shops, they pushed their way into mainstream consumerism, aided by mushy thinking health food freaks who are unwittingly signalling the imminent demise of the white egg by promoting the idea that brown eggs are as good, if not better than white eggs.

Brown eggs are not as good as white eggs. How can they be? They're brown aren't they?

And then, not satisfied with their growing numerical superiority, brown eggs seized the initiative by offering themselves at a lower price than white eggs. White eggs, long accustomed to garnering a certain price were, of course, unable to cope and rightly so. No self-respecting white egg would stoop to selling itself at a price beneath its dignity, even during a recession. Brown eggs, on the other hand, never having had anything to feel dignified about, were concerned only with taking over the market.

Thus, through a combination of claptrap rhetoric peddled by left wingers and unfair competition, brown eggs are taking over the coolers of the nation, leaving white eggs out in the warm, so to speak.

Fortunately, I am no longer alone in my dismay. Just this morning. I received a letter from an organisation called WASE in New Orleans which is not only lobbying to outlaw brown eggs in supermarkets, but has acquired enough money to set up a scientific foundation which will prove once and for all that white eggs are superior to brown eggs. In addition, the White Anglo Saxon Egg organisation intends to develop a white egg which also has a white volk, because there's a growing suspicion, well founded I might add, that year by year, the vellow yolks are getting larger and may eventually take over the white part of the egg.

Unless something is done soon, it is possible that in the very near future, the only eggs available will be brown on the outside with completely yellow interiors.

Therefore, I urge you to join WASE today before it is too late; before the Aryan Egg is a thing of the past. \bigtriangledown

GOING PLACES Finding the Female in Mexico

HERIZONS

Mexico was one place I had no desire to visit. The impression I had of it was of a country of aggressively macho men and silently subservient women. A place where women's lives are so circumscribed that they are essentially invisible. Recently, though, several of my women friends have made trips to Mexico and returned with a much more positive picture. It made me want to investigate further.

On taking a closer look, I found Mexico full of women of strength, from the powerful goddesses of the ancient legends, to the contemporary women folk artists who design, create, and distribute their own work. Here are a few of the places I'll be visiting when I go to Mexico:

TEOTIHUACAN. All of Mexico is dotted with ruins of Pre-Columbian civilisations. Most of these ruins glorify the violent militarism of those cultures. But one is a refreshing exception. At its high point. Teotihuacán was one of the world's largest cities, and as such enjoyed a stable and peaceful society. The religion of the people was based on worship of the goddess of the moon, the god of the sun, and the goddess of water. The two main structures of the ruins are the Pyramids of the Sun and Moon. Several magnificent statues of Chalchiuhtlicue, the goddess of water, which were found near the Pyramid of the Moon, are now kept in the Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City.

FRIDA KAHLO MUSEUM. One of Mexico's truly great painters. Frida Kahlo (1910-1954) has until recently been recognised more for being Diego Rivera's wife than for her own work. Their home in Coyoacán, outside Mexico City, has been made into a museum for her art and personal possessions. Her paintings are surreal, dreamlike scenes, done in strong, vivid colours. Much of her imagery is derived from her lifelong physical suffering from an accident in her teens. In her many self-portraits she often used elements of her own life as symbols for the Mexican people. At times her works are painful to view, but they often include humour and are always unique. Few artists wield the emotional impact that Frida Kahlo does.

SHRINE OF GUADALUPE. This shrine on the outskirts of Mexico City is one of the country's most important Christian

GAIL BUENTE

sites. In this location, an early Christian convert was visited by the Virgin, who asked that a shrine be built there in her honour. This miracle, however, is not the most interesting part of the tale. It seems that this spot had, prior to that time. been a place of pagan worship of the powerful Aztec goddess, Tonantzin, whose name means "our mother." It's a prime example of how the power of Pre-Christian religion was usurped by missionaries eager to convert. And it's worth noting that the virgin mother, who is held in especially high esteem in Mexico, may have inherited that position directly from the goddesses worshipped by the early Indian cultures.

OAXACA AREA. The Oaxaca area is the main crafts centre in Mexico. The largest, liveliest open air market is in the city of Oaxaca, where Indian artisans from the surrounding countryside come to sell a wide variety of crafts. The women potters of nearby San Bartolo Coyotepec make the trademark black burnished ware. Several individual artists are well known for this work, the most famous being the late Doña Rosa. Many of the best-known women potters of Mexico live in the state of Oaxaca. In Ocotlán, Josefina Aguilar makes her beautiful clay chess sets. Teodora Blanco of Santa Maria Atzompa is internationally recognised for her sculptural works. Unlike artists in North America. most of these artists are happy to have visitors, and it would be worth a side trip to any of their towns to watch them at work.

TEHUANTEPEC. Throughout Mexico the marketplace is where you'll have the most contact with women. Everyone from little children to grandmothers takes an active part in the outdoor markets found in most Mexican towns. But in the small southern centre of Tehuantepec, the women do more than participate - they run the markets. A nearly matriarchal society exists here, where the women take part in local government and commerce, while the men work in the fields and do some of the domestic work, such as sewing. Tehuantepec was also the home of Doña Juana Romero, a peasant woman who became politically influential when she

was the mistress of the president/dictator Porfirio Diaz. Her home still stands in the village, and there is a bronze statue in her honour.

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SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS. This mountain village is another market centre worth seeing. The women here make woven serapes and exquisite embroidered blouses. The marketplace is small and less touristy than most. San Cristobal is also the location of Na Balom, the courtyard hacienda of Gertrude Blom. widow of archeologist Franz Blom. The Bloms moved to Chiapas in 1950, and devoted their lives to studying and preserving the artifacts of the Lacandón Indians of the region. Part of the Na Balom is now a museum, which Gertrude Blom opens to the public part of each day.

RESORTS. Mexico has many seaside resorts on both coasts. But who could resist one called Isla Mujeres? The name was bestowed by the Spaniards, for the innumerable female idols they found when they landed there in the I6th century. Lying off the coast of the Yucatan Peninsula, this is probably the most remote of the resorts. Its sister island, Isla de Cozumel, is larger but still one of the quieter resorts. In Pre-Hispanic times, Mayan women made the arduous journey to this island to pay homage to the fertility goddess, Ix-Chel.

So much for my picture of Macho Mexico — these women have got me ready to pack up and go! \bigtriangledown





REVIEWS



Stories By Canadian Women Edited by Rosemary Sullivan, Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1984, \$10.95

"It is clear that the writers in this collection have learned to write confidently and eloquently of their own experiences as women. And it is not of crabbed eccentric situations they write, but of universal experience," states Rosemary Sullivan, editor of *Stories By Canadian Women*. And yet on the very same page, she writes that women have been given a "colonial status" within the real (read male) world which renders any depiction of their own experience too female to be acceptable.

Unfortunately, I understand why the editor, a female scholar charting new ground in a hostile territory, might feel the need to pledge that these stories are indeed universal and therefore, "real literature." But I plead with her not to disguise their valuable female sensibility and "otherness" in an attempt to lessen the subversity of women articulating the "femaleness" in literature.

Stories By Canadian Women is a broad selection of short fiction by women like Mavis Gallant, Alice Munro, Margaret Atwood and Margaret Lawrence, writers whose craft in this particular genre is known worldwide. Also included are stories by writers generally known for their work in other genres: Ann Hébert, Ethel Wilson, Jane Rule and P.K. Page. The anthology, which is arranged chronologically by the ages of the writers, spans almost one hundred years of writing by Canadian women (with the majority of the writers born just before or just after World War II). It was exciting to see that Sullivan included stories by Aritha Van Herk and Dionne Brand, two young writers in their late 20s and early 30s. Their work gives the reader faith that this tradition of quality short fiction by Canadian women will continue to grow.

While the characters and situations in this collection vary from the old habitant servant and her brutal husband in "La Gothe and Her Husband" by Robertine Barry to the wit of Ethel Wilson's "Mrs. Golightly and the First Convention," several shared themes are evident. Particularly striking is the number of stories that deal with a situation of entrapment: Hélène Ouvard's angel trapped in a woman's body in "The Angel"; the snare of secrecy and denial in the small town world of Alice Munro's "The Peace of Utrecht": a desperate response to the trap of an unhappy marriage in Elizabeth Sepncer's "I, Maureen"; and the entrapment of a young, sexually abused girl within the self-righteousness of small town mores in Sandra Birdsell's "The Wednesday Circle". Other themes - children who are unwanted, welcomed, or met with indifference, loving and sexuality, friendship, growing old and growing inward - can be found. Particularly wonderful was Gloria Sawai's strange "the day I sat with Jesus on the sundeck and a wind came up and blew my kimono open and he saw my breasts", which makes use of a rich oral tradition in women's storytelling, and also introduces a playful humour not usually found in serious Canadian literature.

While it was refreshing to see that Stories By Canadian Women includes works by a number of lesser-known writers and by women not necessarily known for their short fiction, I was amazed by the number of well-known writers not included, women like Adele Wiseman and Marian Engel. Also, to my dismay Stories By Canadian Women is lacking in Third World women writers. And, while a number of more established French Canadian writers are included. I missed the fine experimental prose of Québécoise writers such as Nicole Brossard, Louky Bersianik and Gail Scott. Another disappointment was the fact that only one story portrayed a lesbian theme and while Jane Rule's "Invention for Shelagh" is impressive, it is only one story out of twenty-nine.

Despite these omissions, *Stories By Canadian Women* is still a valuable and necessary book. By providing stories that depict a variety of literary styles and, in many cases, a common-ness of theme, this collection is an essential text that introduces the rich tradition of short fiction by Canadian women writers.∀



A scene from DES Uncertain Legacy. L to R: Joyce Bichler, American DES activist and, Harriet Simard founder of DES Action (Canada).



DES: An Uncertain Legacy. Directed by Bonnie Andrukaitis, produced by Studio D of the National Film Board, 1985.

DES: An Uncertain Legacy draws the portrait of a drug as it appeared and continues to reappear in women's lives. This production from the National Film Board's Studio D makes a case for DES as a post-war phenomenon by describing how DES, a synthetic estrogen

HERIZONS

THINGS THAT GLOW IN THE DARK

when I was four I wanted to believe in that disembodied energy

that glows without heat, without emphasis not needing the complication of electricity; a green-white underwater hum, like the tender luminous swelling of a shoot just as it parts ground

now I lie next to where you are lying, and the moon smooths the brief marble of tangled sheets all along the length of your warm sleep

I am not looking for anything as unblinking as words

but I want to believe I want so much to believe

© Barbara Carey Kingston, Ontario

PALLBEARERS

a black and slow walking across fields, we learned it well enough, the box, the hole in the ground, the six men.

for us, when it is our time, let it be women who carry us, as they did once, swelling their bodies around our new lives, as they did once in their arms, us reaching endlessly up for that perfect surrender of being lifted, carried. let it be women who hold us again, when the long pulling up into life is over, women, bearing down now our women's bodies to the earth.

© Leona Gom Surrey, B.C.

POETRY

THE EMPTY DESK

He died too young, that was the general consensus about the boy in my grade seven class killed on his bicycle (an ironic birthdày gift).

Pride in ownership, riding a shiny new ten-speed down the country road, crunch of tires, arc of glass and boy and bike and suddenly nothing left but silence in a subdued grade seven class as the teacher stared at the empty desk and broke down shoulders shaking, sobbing.

Some of us went to the funeral homethe wax-white, silent-still, starch-suited youngster there wasn't our classmate, he was some stranger.

Steve was gone.

Not many years later, our teacher died too, and I wondered, had she known then about the cancer slowly gnawing, did she see her own terror, mirrored in the empty desk?

© Lisa Timpf Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia

NO CONTEST

In your immaculate kitchen machines gleam whirr I drink afternoon coffee black a restless ivy circles the window

You flit from fridge to counter your success spins webs fine-wired around me

Dinner party for twelve velvet drapes hand sewn daily attendance at spa three children chauffeured here and there they collect trophies for flute and hockey break bowling records

I find no loophole in this onslaught clumsy with panic I break through your barrage flee

frightened and too tired to attempt one rhyming couplet

© Sarah Klassen Winnipeg, Manitoba



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*deadline for December issue: Oct. 10; Jan/Feb issue: Nov. 15; March issue: Jan. 10th. which had been proven both dangerous and ineffective, could enchant the general public and the medical world and make its way into general use. From the 1940s until the early 1970s, DES was regularly prescribed to pregnant women to prevent miscarriages.

The legacy to which the title refers is the terrible side effects of DES that lie sleeping in the bodies of DES children. Filmmaker Bonnie Andrukaitis, herself, a DES daughter, chose to make a film that focused on Harriet Simand, the founder of DES Action Canada, after meeting her in 1982. As the film follows Simand through a multitude of media engagements, we watch her describe the effect the drug has had on her own life. Simand underwent radical surgery and radiation treatment in 1981 after she was diagnosed as having the cancer.

"I hadn't really planned to tell the entire country that I have cancer, but if it'll do good to anyone to go out there and prevent this from happening again, I mean someone's gotta do it," she explains.

That work that "someone's gotta do" is to increase public awareness of the use and effect of DES. It is a message aimed particularly at women who know that their mothers had high risk pregnancies between 1941 and 1971. Andrukiatis hopes the film will be used as a companion piece to discussion groups with its bevy of information on a topic that affects many but is known to only a few.

Indeed as a film, one could criticise Legacy for being information and text heavy and for being overly inclusive. I would have traded many thoughtful inclusions for some candid conversations with DES daughters and mothers, hoping for less of a compendium and a more intimate film.

Pointing a finger at the profit motive of the chemical companies, Legacy also examines the way advertising campaigns manipulated the cult of motherhood and preyed upon a doctor's perceptions of himself as a heroic provider of healthy children, in order to sell their drug. Surprisingly the film avoids addressing how the use of DES and other drugs is a way of furthering men's control over women's bodies. The male dominated medical world could hardly resist chaperoning a woman's entire pregnancy with injections and pills that promised to prevent miscarriages and, incredibly, to make "normal pregnancies more normal." As Simand's mother Shirley spoke of her doctor, "I believed him. I mean why wouldn't you believe a doctor?" Yet despite the appearance of Harriet's cancer, he insisted that the injections he gave Shirley Simand were not DES, and he refused her access to her medical records.

The baby-mania of the post-war era which venerated motherhood confounded many women's lives. At that time escalated use of drugs in pregnancy represented a crisis of confidence in a healthy woman's ability to produce healthy children. It had tragic results. The legacy of DES continues to unfold. Yet the life and work of Harriet Simand and other women like her demonstrates how the experience of disease can, with courage, form the root of politicisation. This film can further the process of women informing themselves about their health and perhaps inspiring them to seek control of their own bodies.

BEHIND THE VEIL: NUNS Reviewed by DOROTHY KIDD

When Studio D's film — Behind the Veil: Nuns — came to Vancouver, Dorothy Kidd, spoke to Margaret Westcott, the director and Gloria Demers, the writer and narrator. They discussed the film from its first concept as a document of one of women's oldest professions to its final print as a testimony to the primary role Catholic women have played in combining spirituality and social activism. They also talked of how the material was chosen and presented to give a strong feminist perspective on the Catholic patriarchy from the beginnings of the Christian era.

Dorothy K: How did you come up with the idea of making this film?

Margaret W: Gloria and I were driving in the car one day and heard something on CBC radio, that there were no calls to be nuns anymore, and Gloria said, "Margaret, with your background of going to a Catholic school and being trained by nuns, you better make a film quickly because they're probably a disappearing breed." And we found out they weren't and there was really quite an exciting history underneath of women's achievements that had been secreted from our lives.

Dorothy K: One of the things it says in your press kit is how nuns, because they live separately from men, probably have a different perspective on the world and on the world's problems. What do you think you learned about that during the

making of the film?

Margaret W: In a sense nuns reflect all women in society who live apart from men. They reflect in some sense the lesbian community, in that they are more autonomous than women who have gone through the traditional system of marriage. We felt, in the monastery, we might find some record of what women had done, that had been hidden due to the anonymity of women who had married and raised families. We found out that it was so...

Dorothy K: I'd like to ask you especially about the narration. In the film you were saying something that I had never heard before. You were talking about the church from a feminist perspective, and I'm not Catholic so that was a very radical thing for me to hear. The narration is third person singular so it sounds like a very authoritative presentation. One of the things that struck me was I was hearing history from a very different perspective but in the same style that mainstream history is presented . . . I wondered if you considered doing a more questioning style of presentation. Gloria D: I think a lot of the narrations that are done for other films should be done in a questioning style. But when they are done authoritatively, or saying that this is so, or this is the way it is, you believe it, rather than come away wondering. We wanted to say we believe in what we are saying and we want people who see the film to believe it as well . . . Margaret W: Anytime you're trying to convince someone of something you believe you have to make a convincing ar-

gument... Sometimes people would say, "Oh, my god, you haven't mentioned him for a long time, there's too many "she, she, goddess, this" and in a sense we had to be careful not to overdo it the way that patriarchy does with their films. We had to think, yes, maybe there were men, but it was a lot of fun.

Dorothy K: Was it in any sense a transformative process doing all the research? Did your ideas change from the beginning concept about presenting the role of women in the Church?

Margaret W: I think it changed from our idea of what the role of women is in the church and became more a sense of women's spiritual contribution in western society. It didn't seem to matter whether it was in the goddess period or patriarchal times. There was that long line of continuity that we share as sisters of having a spirituality and a need to express it, whether in that contemplative part, the quiet part of ourselves where we sit under a tree and are grateful or whether it's activity that is needed to help transform a world which is very one-sided. I think that was the transformation that I experienced as a woman working on the production.

Dorothy K: In Winnipeg, a woman asked why the radical nuns tended to be American. You get the sense that the Catholic Church is very conservative for the most part and yet in your film you represent several women from the liberation theology wing of the Church and they happen to be American. How did you choose the people you interviewed?

Margaret W: For one thing the American sisters, and I might add there's an Irish sister who's a liberation theologist and a feminist in the film, were very open with sharing with us. I'm sure there are such nuns in Canada, but our budget is very limited at the National Film Board for films by, for and about women. It's only eight per cent of the English production budget. So whenever we went to a location we looked for women who shared with us some of the same ideas. . .

Also in the last 20 years in Canada, since the reforms have been brought about, the bishops seem to have had a more liberal attitude and the women may be more satisfied with their situation. The bishops in America are much more reactionary having forced many of the American women to take more responsibility for themselves . . .

Gloria D: The research was begun in 1980 and at that time we had money and didn't have much time to do a great deal of research before going out to shoot. The obvious place to begin was in Chicago where we already knew a lot of sisters were speaking out . . . They were talking publicly about the controversies in the Church so that was the place to begin. It was literally a goldmine. We found several outspoken, wonderful women and at that time in Canada they weren't as outspoken. We didn't know of anyone who would express the opinions expressed by the Americans. Perhaps today it would be different. We met some women we are sorry are not in the film, but we didn't even know they existed at the time. .

We set out to make an international film as we believe in Studio D that women did not make the borders. We didn't really think of it as we have to include Canadian content. It's a film about women...

Dorothy K: I understand that there will be another Studio D film on spirituality, on the story of the witches. When I saw the film I wondered why it stops about 1200 AD, and I wondered if that's



because this other film is going to be made.

Gloria D: Yes we were pretty sure this other film was going to be made. There is such a wealth of material and the story of the witches is so important that to try and include that as well just seemed wrong . . .

Margaret W: The confines of the film is restricted to women in the Roman Catholic Church, women who had decided to stay nuns...

Dorothy K: knowing everything that the film talks about, the problems of the patriarchy, why would anyone choose to be a nun today? How do you feel about this?

Margaret W: I'm not a nun and I've never felt the calling and I don't understand it either. On the other hand when people ask me that, I say that I work within a patriarchal government organisation. Without working within that system, I don't know whether I would have been able to get the resources. I know the women exist to work together to make a film like *Behind the Veil*, but would we have been able to get the financial resources? . . .

Dorothy K: So what you're saying is that you compare yourselves to the nuns in the film in that you work within a patriarchal organisation, the National Film Board, and theirs just happens to be a larger one, the Roman Catholic Church?

Margaret W: I think that's what I'm saying. When the day comes when it's impossible for me to be honest as a filmmaker and a woman, then it would be time for me to leave. Some of the nuns we have interviewed say that they do think about leaving, and the day may come when they can no longer express their commitment.

We talked to one of the sisters interviewed in the film, Sister Donna Quinn. She was one of the 24 who took out an ad in the *New York Times* expressing the view that the Church has a wide diversity of opinions on the right to life, prochoice, whatever. She was asked by Rome to rescind her views. She refused and was told she would have to leave her order.

Her community was so strongly in support of her (these are some of the ways women have learned to work together as community in the last 20 years and no longer be dominated by the patriarchal forces), so powerfully supported her that Rome just backed off and she stayed with her community. That's the kind of changes we can do within the system or outside the system; however, if we work together as women . . . ∇

Dorothy Kidd has worked in a number of media, including film, to promote the interests of women and other groups who are seldom represented in the mainstream media. She is presently employed as a curriculum designer.



HERIZONS



TWO COCOONS Reviewed by LOIS ANDERSON

While women have made some advances in casting off the stereotypes which define their lifestyles and personal potentials another segment of society has become increasingly subject to negative prejudices. That group is our senior citizens. One doesn't appreciate how completely we have accepted society's view of the elderly until amovie like *Cocoon* strikes down the expected images of cuddly 'n comical grams, or conversely, of crotchety old geezers, and replaces them with fully-dimensional adults addressing some of the most serious questions of their lifetimes.

Cocoon does not flinch away from opening a dialogue about what it is to face deteriorating health, the loss of a lifelong mate, and ultimately the loss of one's own life. It explores the ties between generations, and our ties to this planet. By doing this within the context of an adventure story that offers humour and the exhilaration of risk-taking, the producers are able to offer a platter of entertainment on which to take home some food for thought.

Cocoon marks Lili Fini Zanuck's first co-production with the eminent Zanuck /Brown Company. It was she who discovered an unpublished novel by David Saperstein, saw its potential, and developed it for the screen. Her work reflects a clearer understanding of relationships and human nature than is apparent in the recently released paperback.

Author Saperstein concentrated on the antics of, in his own words, "four old farts," and on gadgets and aliens with superhuman abilities. Symptomatic of the confusion experienced by modern male writers, he first carefully developed the characters of each of the wives, then left them playing the mah-jongg on the balcony for the duration of the book.

In Zanuck's *Cocoon*, it is still the old farts who are running the show. But their wives are at their sides, challenging them, supporting them, enjoying sex, attending exercise classes, scuba diving, being rejuvenated and fearlessly meeting aliens.

When one husband resumes his extramarital philandering, his wife is forced to deal with a problem that has plagued their marriage from the earliest years. The resulting crisis makes the audience aware that old or young, people are the product of a lifetime of experiences. Another husband forbids his wife to participate in the rejuvenation. She accepts his decision and pays for it with her life.

While Saperstein seemed unable to fathom that not everyone wants to travel in space, the producers of *Cocoon* were more astute.

"Nature dealt us our hand of cards, and we played them," says Bernie. "Now you're looking to reshuffle the deck." He later concludes, "This is my home. It's where I belong."

Likewise, Joe confides to his wife that if he has to choose between facing death on earth with her, or living an eternity without her, he would prefer to be with her.

Ironically, it is at this crucial point that the filmmaker's insight begins to fail, and it is the point at which Saperstein can legitimately cry foul. The author made it clear that his seniors are not in search of eternal youth, but eternal usefulness.

In the film, even though the aliens offer them productive lives as students and teachers in new civilisations, none of the characters picks up on that. Ben tells his grandson, "What is important is that we'll never be sick, we won't get any older, and we won't ever die."

This, coupled with the smug funeral epilogue, leaves the viewer with a cynical feeling that the producers' ultimate solution to our social problems would be to ship the aged off to another planet so we would no longer have to deal with them. It also leaves the impression that the elderly themselves see little of value in the experience of aging, but embrace instead the popular dogma that "youth is all."

Fiction aside, the reality that the movie's stunts were performed by the elderly actors and not stunt people leaves this viewer with an optimistic outlook toward aging. Perhaps if I live to be 77, I'll be able to break dance as well as Don Ameche.√



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WOMEN'S LEGAL HANDBOOK: The Rights of Women in Manitoba, by Lisa Corne and Deborah Carlson is a 55 pp. booklet available from the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women, 16-222 Osborne St., Winnipeg, MB (204) 453-3879.

CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION CENTRE CATALOGUE, Spring 1985 is available from 965 Bloor St. W., Toronto, Ontario, M6H 1L7 and list unique and alternative educational materials on racism and immigrant settlement.



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