

# Broadside

Volume One, Number Six

\$1

## For Whom the Bell Toils

by Deena Rasky

When you get your monthly Bell Canada bill in the mail, you'll notice that the envelope cheerfully informs you the company is celebrating its 100th birthday. The image Bell would like to convey to its customers is of wise old Alexander Graham Bell creating his invention, of smiling operators and of phone users marvelling over modern technology.

But instead of celebrating, 7,400 operators and dining service attendants across Canada were on strike for two months without a contract. 100% of the Bell workers have been exploited, 95% are women. The top wage an operator in the major cities such as Toronto and Montreal could expect to make, regardless of how long she'd been working was \$194.29 weekly. The cafeteria workers made only eighteen cents more than the Quebec minimum wage. Most of these workers are new Canadians and a considerable number have been working part time at an even lower wage.

The operators and dining service attendants are members of the Communications Workers of Canada (CWC). The union was certified in 1979 but its members hadn't received a wage increase since November 1977 when the company declared a wage freeze. Before certification of the CWC, the operators were members of the Traffic Employees Association (TEA). TEA had been fabricated by the company to avoid walk-outs and to muscle out unions such as the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, who had been soliciting on Bell territory for new members. Bell continues to use such tactics to keep their employees in line, at the same time trying to give the impression that these workers have some say in the workplace.

The 15,000 clerical workers at Bell are members of the Canadian Telephone Employees Association and during the recent strike received a substantial wage increase. This political manoeuvre was designed to prevent the clerical workers from getting any ideas about joining the CWC. The ploy wasn't entirely successful — the clerical workers showed support for their striking co-workers by donating money to the strike fund.

It was hard going for the strikers. Standing outside in freezing weather is no picnic. The CWC coffers were low to start with, since the technicians, installers and linemen went out on strike last year. The operators and cafeteria workers were offered an emergency \$20 weekly food allowance and that was about it. Meanwhile, the managers who filled in for them at Bell made a flat \$23 an hour overtime. It's been reported that some managers made \$900 a week off the strike. The cost to Bell has been estimated at a minimum of \$1 million weekly.

The company can easily afford it. In 1979, Bell Canada's net profit was over \$433 million. Their total assets were over 10 billion dollars. These figures surpass any of the other "biggies" in Canada, including General Motors and Imperial Oil. Statistics Canada shows that Bell deferred taxes in 1978 to the tune of \$933.9 million. George Newton, the company's manager of operator services, justified this amount by stating Bell is a capital intensive operation and needs the money for computers, silicon



chips and the like. Another spokesman for the company said this money will be used to create new jobs.

Bell's one hundred year history has seen the company opt for automation that has been paid for largely through government grants and remissions. There are several government programmes in Canada that subsidize businesses with high technological components. Bell, which has subsidiary outfits such as Microsystems and Northern Telecom, has taken full advantage of what the Canadian government has been giving away freely. Bell has also been working closely with the US giant, AT&T, throughout the years to plan its strategy carefully and profitably. Or as Robert Scrivener, chairman of the Canadian affiliate Northern Electric, stated in 1976, "I'll sing the Star-Spangled Banner if its going to help my sales by \$100 million."

Throughout the years, the trend toward automation has done much to reduce the size of the company's roster of employees. During the Depression, Bell blamed their staff reductions on the financial crisis, when the real culprit was advanced technology and a forced increase in productivity. Bell shareholders in the meantime barely noticed the Crash. As one observer stated in 1939 at a Communications Commission: "It will be significant to tell the shareholders that every dollar of dividends per share received during the Depression was at the expense of leaving at least 18,000 people on the relief rolls."

Today in Toronto the computerized system TOPS (Traffic Operator Position System) has been instituted, reducing the number of operators by 40%. The whole operation is fed through the computer, the calls are sent directly through the operators' headphones instead of the old switchboard. The computer indexes how many errors are

keyed and how often the operator switches the terminal off to go to the washroom. This allows the supervisors the opportunity to find out at their whim an individual's Average Work Time by the touch of a button. The operators are handling 750 to 1,000 calls per shift on the TOPS system, over 50% of what they were used to dealing with on the switchboard. The scabbing managers were being measured by the same computer and the word is they were not too happy about it, even at \$23 an hour.

When the Communications Workers of Canada stepped in to represent the workers, management refused to negotiate and requested a conciliator from the Ministry of Labour. Bell then created a first in the Ministry's history by refusing the conciliator's report, even though the union was willing to accept it. Instead, Bell wanted the union to accept an offer that was significantly inferior to this report, going so far as to try to take away what the union had already won. The issues on which Bell would not budge are basic ones: vacation time, union security, and dismissal with just cause. It's obvious that Bell was out to break the union.

### BELL CRACKED

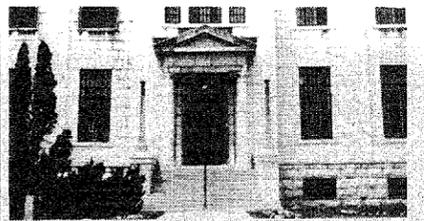
As *Broadside* goes to press, the ratification vote is being tallied at the Communications Workers of Canada headquarters. Ann Newman, VP of CWC local 50, said the outcome of the vote is hard to judge.

But the strike is *not* over as far as she is concerned, because the contract will expire November 24, 1981. And while management eventually accepted most aspects of the conciliators' report, the actual gain for workers was minimal.

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### NEWS

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## Broadside

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# Volley number six: A Sugar-coated Pill

In this issue we tell the story of the Nestlé corporation's attempts to encourage Third World women to administer the Nestlé formula to their young babies. The fact that these women haven't the facilities to sterilize the bottles, the fact that the instructions for the dilution are remarkably vague, the fact that this has caused a near epidemic of malnutrition among Nestlé-fed babies, has not prevented the huge Swiss multinational corporation from continuing its rigorous campaign to sell the formula all over the world. Nestlé has steadfastly refused to accept corporate responsibility for the abuse of their product.

The Nestlé case is not an isolated one. 1700 Puerto Rico women were plied with oral contraceptives in the early sixties. They were human guinea pigs, never aware of the dangers of the experiment. And this phenomenon of keeping women in the dark about such matters hit closer to home when the oral contraceptive, our supposed saviour, was placed on the market in North America. It was at least six years after the birth control pill's appearance on the scene that the rumblings about side effects were heard. Even then doctors insisted that their patients, complaining of depression and leg cramps, were hysterical and had read too many newspaper scares.

The drug companies forged on, flogging oral contraceptives, advertising that the pill was safe. Naturally, since two drug com-

panies, Ortho Pharmaceutical (a division of Johnson and Johnson) and Wyeth (a subsidiary of American Home Products) monopolize 70% of the oral contraceptive market in Canada. The profits from the oral contraceptive in 1976 were two and a half times higher than the profits of the drug industry as a whole. What this means is that the pill is "marked up" two and a half times that of any other drug. This demonstrates very simply a cartel, a gentlemen's agreement among drug companies to keep the price up. So we can see why we have heard so many assurances from the pharmaceuticals that the pill is safe — it is not in their interest to tell us otherwise.

More on the drug front. Valium is the most heavily prescribed drug in North America. Its sales volume is the highest of any drug in Canada. It is prescribed to women two to three times as often as to men. Hoffman-LaRoche, the Swiss pharmaceutical that first developed the drug, boasts sales of well over two billion dollars for valium and librium alone.

What we are seeing through these examples of corporate irresponsibility is a syndrome in which women are actively infantilized. Nestlé knows that their consumers believe the bottled formula has magical powers, that the bottles are filled with soda pop by mothers who hope that some of the magic will rub off. Ortho and Wyeth at least have doctors administer oral contraceptives, doctors who press the packet into the hands of women and send them of with

a pat on the back and assurances that all will be well. And how much more accepted a form of infantilization than when women are numbed by valium into a false sense of calm so that no questions need come to mind?

The news is not all bad. In fact there have been developments that are promising indeed. The Nestlé boycott is an example of the efforts being made to make corporations accountable. And whereas in the past it was felt that women were so desperate for an effective birth control device that boycotting was not an option, the number of prescriptions for the oral contraceptives filled by pharmacologists in the US dropped 25% between 1975 and 1978. In particular, the number of prescriptions for Ortho's brand filled that same period plummeted 43%. (N.B. Prescriptions for diaphragms between 1975 and 1978 skyrocketed 140%). While Hoffman-LaRoche is struggling in court to defend itself against a charge of undercutting the price of valium, that drug is on the decline as well.

What all this suggests is that in spite of the efforts of corporations to abdicate responsibility for the quality of their products and the way that they are used, women are finding out the crucial information, absorbing it, making choices and taking action. And we are hitting the multinationals where it hurts, at the bottom line. Ultimately that's the only way to put an end to the syndrome.



FOURTEEN WOMEN WERE ELECTED TO PARLIAMENT IN THE FEBRUARY 18TH, 1980 ELECTION. THEY ARE:

Eva Côté.....Liberal/Québec  
The Honourable Jeanne Sauvé•Liberal/  
..... Québec  
Céline Payette.....Liberal/Québec  
The Honourable Monique BéginLiberal  
...../Québec  
Thérèse Killens.....Liberal/Québec  
Suzanne Beauchamp-Niquette•Liberal/  
..... Québec  
Judy Erola.....Liberal/Ontario  
Aideen Nicholson.....Liberal/Ontario  
Ursula Appolloni.....Liberal/Ontario  
Coline Campbell•Liberal/Nova Scotia  
Flora MacDonald.....PC/Ontario  
Pat Carney.....PC/BC  
Margaret Mitchell.....NDP/BC  
Pauline Jewett.....NDP/BC

## LETTERS

Dear *Broadside*,

It is important that a publication such as yours not alienate segments of the population unnecessarily. I think the article "Resurrection of God" by Susan G. Cole has probably done this. It was unnecessary because the subject, admittedly an important one, could have been dealt with in a more mature and perceptive manner.

Many of Cole's points are well taken; e.g. the dangers inherent in any mass movement, particularly an institutionalized one; the psychological dimension of religion (i.e. religion as opium, the need to have "God on our side" etc.); the crippling effects of infantile religiosity on the development of social and political awareness. However, she seems to have totally missed a fundamental point. That is that for some people the religious dimension is quite simply a fact of their lives — it is the source of all meaning, and provides a perspective for dealing with the fundamentally important

question, "What must I do — How ought I to live my life?"

I know many people who arrived at their anti-sexist, anti-racist, anti-capitalist, anti-militarist positions through a radical understanding of the Christian message. (Sadly, they are far outnumbered by those who continue to take their weekly fix of opium.) And I know others who, having rejected religion in an honest endeavour to be true to the spirit of scientific rationalism, continue to be driven by the compelling message of radical Christianity, which they received from their often unwitting parents and priests. It may be that those in the latter category may also be offended by the xenophobic attack on religion of Cole's article.

The dilemma of either person is acute. I use myself as an example of the former. Every day in my job, I encounter blatant sexism, racism and the championing of cap-

italism. Doggedly, I do my little best to counteract these forces, and when things get rough, I take comfort in the knowledge that I have friends who share my positions. But then I read *Broadside* and feel as alienated from you as I do from those I work with.

My point is: Can *Broadside* risk losing those who share my dilemma? I have many friends within the Voice of Women who live and act in the profound conviction that life and human destiny are bound, in mystery, to the divine. Some are Quakers, some Unitarians, and still others radical Catholics. However, we never discuss religion. (Probably because we're too busy with other things.) We came together in our concern about peace and justice. This concern unites us in fighting all the systems which we find intertwined with militarism and war: capitalism, sexism, racism and systematic suppression of freedom.

Although I can certainly not argue the fact that most Churches, and especially the Church of Christendom, have, throughout history, been used as mechanisms of oppression (economic, psychological, sexist, etc.), it is also true that for many people, a mature understanding of their faith is a liberating force — liberating them for action. For example, there is Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement, Phil and Dan Berrigan and many of their fellow workers in the peace movement, Dom Helder Camara in Brazil, the priests and nuns in Latin America who are dying in their pursuit of justice. Martin Luther King, the Quakers, Development and Peace, the people who publish Catholic New Times here in Canada, and yes, Theresa Kane.

Theresa Kane is a feminist precisely because she is a Christian. Christianity, by its very nature, is opposed to sexism and all the

# This is Broadside

With this issue, *Broadside* has been publishing regularly for six months (not counting our introductory issue last May). We would like to know what you, as readers, think about the paper. We would also like to know who you are and what are your concerns. We will be holding another public meeting in May — we'll announce time and place next issue — but in the meantime, write us.

Sharon Batt, a collective member of *Branching Out*, writing about feminist publications in the latest issue of *Status of Women News* said: "...*Broadside*, still less than a year old ... began with an editorial policy designed to attract a wide audience. Its announced intention is to 'create dialogue among women — not only among politically active feminists.' In financial terms the intention of the publishers is to succeed as a commercial venture with enough subscriptions and advertising

revenue to support printing costs as well as paid staff eventually. The newspaper is distinctive in its clean layout and the consistently upbeat writing style. The point of view is unabashedly feminist, but the bias in favour of women is applied to a wider range of topical issues than is usually the case in most feminist publications.

"I think *Broadside* has a better chance than any other feminist publication in Canada to break the circulation barrier (2500 is the average maximum subscription figure). It is based in the most populated area of the country, its collective includes women with experience in writing and publishing, and because it is a newspaper its production costs are relatively low. Even with these advantages, however, its success as a mass market publication is by no means assured. I suspect a poll of *Broadside* readers would show the majority to be committed feminists. In two or three years it should be clear whether *Broadside* is the

first commercial success story in Canadian feminist publishing or whether it is another face on the existing prism."

What do you think?

As to editorial content, we want to maintain the dialogue among readers. Write to our "Letters" section with your reaction to articles in *Broadside*, pro and con. If you don't like something we print, say so. If you have more to say on the subject, let us know. And get in touch with us about story ideas.

Along the same lines, we are trying to build up a photo file. If you're a photographer and have photographs you think *Broadside* may be able to use (black and white glossy, with cutline and photo credit) send them to us. You may see your pic in print soon. Photo subjects we're interested in include women in the news,

women at work, anything with a general application.

If you are interested in working with the *Broadside* collective, an ideal way to get involved is to come to our production weekends — Saturday and Sunday afternoons, last weekend of each month — where you will meet other workers, get a feel for the paper, learn (or teach) some skills. Call *Broadside* to confirm the date and get directions (our office is situated in the upper reaches of a tangled maze of a warehouse deep in downtown Toronto). Any woman (of any age) is welcome.

*Broadside* announces this month two new collective members: **Jane Hastings** is a Vancouver psychologist and community worker who spends a good deal of time in Toronto. **Jean Wilson** was the co-ordinator of the recent *Room of One's Own* "Dorothy Livesay" issue and is currently working as an editor at the University of Toronto Press.



Women march for "Bread and Roses" on International Women's Day, March 8, 1980 in Toronto.

other isms I have mentioned. All the exposure of the institutionalized sexism within the Church can't change that fact. It is a truth which transcends institutions and systems that sustains Kane and others in their faith, in the fact of the institutionalized evils they find within their churches.

But this isn't intended to be an apology for Christianity or any other religion. It is suggesting, though, that you re-evaluate your staunchly anti-religious attitude (which is oppressively self-righteous) in the interests of solidarity, fairness, and responsible journalism.

Bernadette Maxwell,  
Halifax, NS.

(Note from *Broadside*: In a future issue we will be covering the topic of religion and feminism in depth.)

*Broadside*:

I'm moved to respond to Eve Zaremba's recent column, "Stick It In Your Era" — if there is room for me in *Broadside's* pages.

You wrote: "Unfortunately for American women, insistence on Equal Rights as a constitutional prerogative permits no strategic flexibility. In law, 'equal' inevitably means 'the same'...In order to be consistent, ERA feminists have to support registration for women along with men..."

I am one ERA feminist who doesn't agree at all that we have to. I've just written the following letter to Eleanor Smeal, NOW's president; and a number of other women from Monroe County, Florida, signed the letter with me:

"We are distressed that you have felt it necessary to say that if men are conscripted women should be conscripted too. We are

demanding equal rights under the law. But conscription is not a right. It is an un-right. It is involuntary servitude.

"It's true that if men are conscripted and women are not conscripted, men should argue that they have been treated unfairly. But they shouldn't argue that women should be conscripted too. They should argue that men, too, should be exempt from conscription. They should argue that conscription is unconstitutional.

"Some will chide us: Along with rights go responsibilities. But in the first place, we haven't yet won our rights; and in the second place, to make war or to prepare to make war in the nuclear age is not responsible but irresponsible.

"In point of fact, if women were drafted, we wouldn't even have been given un-equal

rights. We have no voice at all (have even less of a voice than most men have) in the decisions as to whether or not war will be waged. We are also especially vulnerable to sexual harassment in the military — as women who have enlisted have been finding out. A job in the military one can't quit at will. We must at least demand the right to choose or not choose such service. As draftees, we would suffer a double servitude — like men, treated by the State as though it has a right to our bodies, but also treated by the men who would be our fellow slaves as though they had a right to our bodies, too. Our bodies belong to ourselves.

"We appeal to you to reconsider your position — and to call for extensive discussion of this issue among all NOW chapters."

Barbara Deming, Florida

EVE ZAREMBA

# Freedom to Oppress

*The Body Politic*, a magazine of Gay Liberation, is facing another trial on the same charges for which it was acquitted in February 1979. On paper, the defendants are Pink Triangle Press and three of its officers, but of course it is *The Body Politic* which is being hounded to possible extinction.

The facts of the case are not at issue. An article entitled *Men Loving Boys Loving Men* was published in *The Body Politic* in December 1977. Pederasty, a highly provocative and controversial topic, then became the pretext used by the Crown (i.e., the province of Ontario) to try to put BP out of business, through police harassment, confiscation of office files and the financial drain of a court case. In spite of the Crown's best efforts, Judge Sydney Harris found BP innocent of obscenity. Appeals for funds were answered and BP survived, after over a year and \$40,000 in costs. Now it's in jeopardy again.

TBP's wisdom in publishing the article has been hotly debated ever since it appeared. It does seem odd to hand your enemy a weapon of this calibre. It is legitimate for those who have been asked to support TBP to question how and why it got itself in this situation in the first place.

It seems to me that there is a difference between editorial and political strategy decisions. A bad editorial decision is just one of the hazards of publishing a newspaper and it's reasonable not to expect any dire consequences from it. The case is somewhat different if the decision to publish the article was a deliberate act on the part of TBP, designed to flush out the enemy and demonstrate to the politically apathetic gay community the tenuousness of its position in this society. It's OK to take risks oneself but not if it might involve others who have not been part of the decision.

But whether through miscalculation or deliberate policy, TBP found itself in trouble and turned to other segments of progressive political opinion, including feminists, for help and support. It is because we are again being asked to help save TBP that I am raising the issue of cause at a time when many people would say that we should be concerned only with effect.

No feminist, heterosexual or lesbian, would have chosen to take a political stand on the issue of *Men Loving Boys Loving*

*Men*. Not because it's controversial but because the topic is quintessentially male and wouldn't have occurred to us, and because to most of us the inherent inequality between a male adult and a child precludes the possibility of the relationship being anything except exploitative. We can never be comfortable with chicken hawks.

So having had no hand in creating the situation and being ambivalent about the issue, here we are again being asked to contribute money, time and effort in the name of freedom of the press. Is it any wonder that many of us feel that we have been manipulated?

I want BP to win this case in spite of my disagreement with many of its policies and tactics. It's important that the homophobic authorities lose.

But I wonder at the public relations defence strategy being employed. The cry of 'Freedom of the Press!' will doubtless draw a reasonable crowd even in these chicken-shit times. But will it work? What good will it do?

It is surely naive to believe that Ontario-powers-that-be are unaware of the 'freedom of the press' implications of their actions and unprepared for the furor. I assume that Davis, McMurtry and company have the measure of any civil rights opposition that might threaten their 'divine rights', and don't give it a second thought. Is it not probable that, in this election year, it could be an asset for a provincial politician to be seen as staunchly anti-homosexual?

You and I and Alan Borovoy may see it as a civil rights/freedom of the press issue but who are we kidding? For most people, even most 'good' people it is a simple choice between simon pure heterosexuality and nasty, perverted homosexuality. The possible demise of *The Body Politic* strikes them as totally justified, even necessary. For the fact surely is that same-gender sex is not acceptable to community mores, even among the so-called 'enlightened.' Government has every popular support for selectively picking on TBP for obscenity while leaving violent, anti-woman pornography alone. The latter is after all, part and parcel of our popular culture, our social habits. Homosexual acts, no matter how loving and consensual, are in a different category.

*The Body Politic's ad in the Globe and Mail, February 1980.*

**We urge the Attorney-General of Ontario to drop the appeal against The Body Politic.**

In January 1979, *The Body Politic*, Canada's national gay liberation journal, was tried on a charge of using the mails to distribute "immoral, indecent or scurrilous" material. The paper was found not guilty.

Although the court battle was both lengthy and costly for the non-profit community newspaper, supporters of freedom of the press and of minority rights were justifiably pleased by the verdict. In his judgment, Judge Sydney Harris remarked on the basis of the issue before him, that *The Body Politic* is a "serious journal of news and opinion."

Some weeks later, however, the Attorney General of Ontario, Roy McMurtry, decided to appeal the verdict and force the defendants in this case to face still further legal proceedings.

This decision to appeal is an attack on the freedom of a minority to express its views. It will drain the energy and financial resources of the gay community's principal newspaper and will further weaken that community's capacity to make its views known. Moreover the effect of this appeal, whatever the intention, will be to punish people who have been found not guilty in the courts.

We urge the Attorney General to drop the appeal and to restore the reputation of his department for the fair and equal treatment of minorities.

**Not guilty means not guilty.**

This advertisement was paid for by the signatories and placed by The Body Politic Free Press Fund. Affiliations are given for the purposes of identification only. If you wish to help you can send donations to The Body Politic Free Press Fund c/o Lynn King in Trust, Cornhill, King and Sachs, Barristers and Solicitors, 111 Richmond Street West, Suite 320, Toronto, Ontario, M5H 3N6.

Ontario politicians are safe from any real civil rights campaign precisely because the issue is *not* freedom of the press, but homosexuality. Papering over this fact and presenting the issue in a manner acceptable to liberals is a delusion which will not stand

the test of the first gay-baiting attack. Only a political coalition fighting homophobia, that is defending homosexuality and not freedom of the press, can have any basis in reality.

The best evidence that homosexuality and not press freedom is the real issue is the lack of concern about the whole matter among the mainstream press. These gentlemen know what's what: it's not a dangerous precedent; their freedom is in no way threatened. The government is merely out to destroy the Canadian voice of Gay Liberation, an action which most of the press more or less silently applauds anyway. After all they all belong to the same clubs, subscribe to the same values and share the same power. With the mainstream press on their side why would the authorities worry?

Is it actually possible to conceive of a coalition powerful enough to do any good which would take a strong, reasoned stand against heterosexism? The majority of 'progressives' don't even admit it exists, never mind fighting against it, in society or themselves. Others, many gay people among them, would lack the stomach to get involved in a close-to-the-bone fight like that. Marxists still like to avoid the issue by claiming that homosexuality is a bourgeois hang-up unworthy of the class struggle. There sure would be no rush of support!

So we are going with the 'freedom of the press' number again. It may work to help get TBP off the hook once more but what will it prove? Will it make this society one iota less homophobic?

I wish I could believe in Santa Claus. But I cannot.

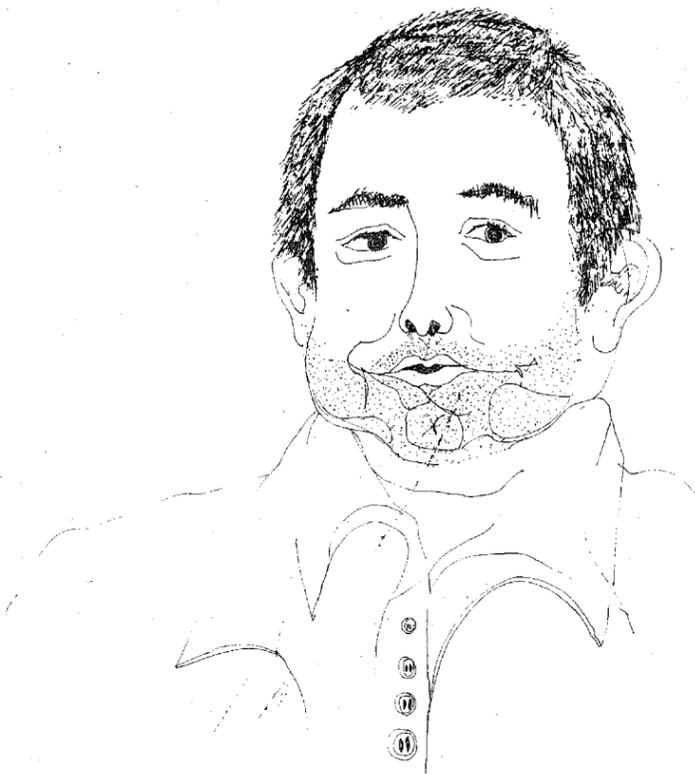
now open in York Square  
146 Yorkville at Avenue Road  
Toronto

# Mr. Canada Pageant

by Susan G. Cole

Poor Joe Clark. He has no chin and he sometimes demonstrates what seems to be a spastic hand. These are his tragic flaws. Were he a man skilled in negotiation, a man able to blend the talents of his Cabinet members, if he were the quintessential statesman, it would make no difference. He has no chin and he sometimes demonstrates what appears to be a spastic hand.

Pierre Trudeau has a chin and a way with words. He has flair arrogance and a pretty face. He shrugs a lot, willingly conveying a "Gee, damned if I know" attitude that less secure politicians would do their best not to display publicly. Faced with the choice between Trudeau's shrug and Clark's nervous titter, Canadian voters preferred Trudeau. It did not matter that Trudeau's government had overseen years of inflation, that the Liberal team had been trimmed by the resignation of Ministers who had some bad habits like phoning judges and signing hospital documents (See "Broad-sides" this issue). The fact of the matter was that Pierre Trudeau had a chin and a way with words.



Throughout the campaign the key word was leadership. "We need a strong Prime Minister, a leader with conviction," and so on. Watching as the nation became leader-obsessed one wondered what country we live in. It is almost as if there were a collective craving to elect the President of Canada. But we were not electing the president, we were electing a government. This should theoretically render Joe Clark's spastic hand irrelevant and the roster of potential Conservative Cabinet members vitally important. But it didn't turn out that way. Instead we have just passed through a \$60 million personality contest.

The trend toward presidential politics in Canada may be related to the public's general ignorance of Canadian civics, in which case the CBC ought to give a crash course on the Parliamentary system during the National news broadcast. The problem is that the Canadian television networks are much to blame for the public's fixation on political figureheads. Both national networks have been covering Canadian party leadership conventions as if they were just like the Republican and Democratic party extravaganzas. Lloyd Robertson becomes Roger Mudd, Don MacNeil does David Brinkley. That's how Trudeau got his start.

The 1968 Liberal convention was the first to be covered extensively by the networks. (The assassination of Martin Luther King in the middle of the convention only added to the impact of what was a major media event.) You'd think the Liberals had elected a monarch.

It may be a sign of reactionary times, this search for *der fuhrer*, this need for a single leader (male, of course) who will lead us out of the darkness. It does not bode well for the Parliamentary system. It allows the likes of Trudeau to glide through a campaign without uttering more than four sentences containing concrete platform content. Make that three. He changed his mind about the price of oil per barrel after the election.

There would be a ray of hope if the public established some solid criteria for their leaders. If we were looking for intelligence, political skills and the like, the leadership game would be less painful to play. But alas, we're still looking at Joe Clark's chin and his spastic hand. At this rate the best political advice anyone could give to the leader of the opposition can be summed up in three words: Grow a beard.

Patti Johnstone

## Women in the Economy Vision Obscured

by Patricia Carey

The second of the "Visions" colloquia sponsored by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) held in Toronto on March 2, followed the format of that tired joke: "First the bad news...then the bad news".

According to five panelists who addressed an audience of about 150 feminists, there are neither statistics nor economic trends to suggest that women's economic status relative to men's has improved significantly in the past decade or will in the decade to come. We have been deceived, it appears, by tokenism and by the general expansion of the labour force into believing women are making advances within the workforce.

Carole Swann, an economist with Status of Women Canada, began the forum with a grim statistical history of women's involvement in the paid labour force in Canada. Current figures are the most disheartening. In every province, women's employment now exceeds that of men's. The wage gap remains relatively static: full-time women employees earn an average of 58% of the annual income of male workers. In 1977, when Labour Canada surveyed 90 occupations, it discovered that 87 of them paid women less than men for identical work. In half of these occupations the wage gap had increased from 1976 to 1977.

Swann closed her address with a prediction of worse statistics to come. The dismal state of the Canadian economy coupled with the introduction into non-unionized female job ghettos of word processors, micro disc technology and automated tellers spells even greater unemployment for women.

Marjorie Cohen, a professor of Economics at York University, helped explain the statistics. Women are hired during periods of economic expansion like the early seventies to pinch hit where there are labour shortages and to ensure male wages don't increase too rapidly. The moment economic hardship begins, she said, "the rules of chivalry apply: women and children go first." Governments do not cut military spending or corporation tax credits, for instance, but they do cut social services.

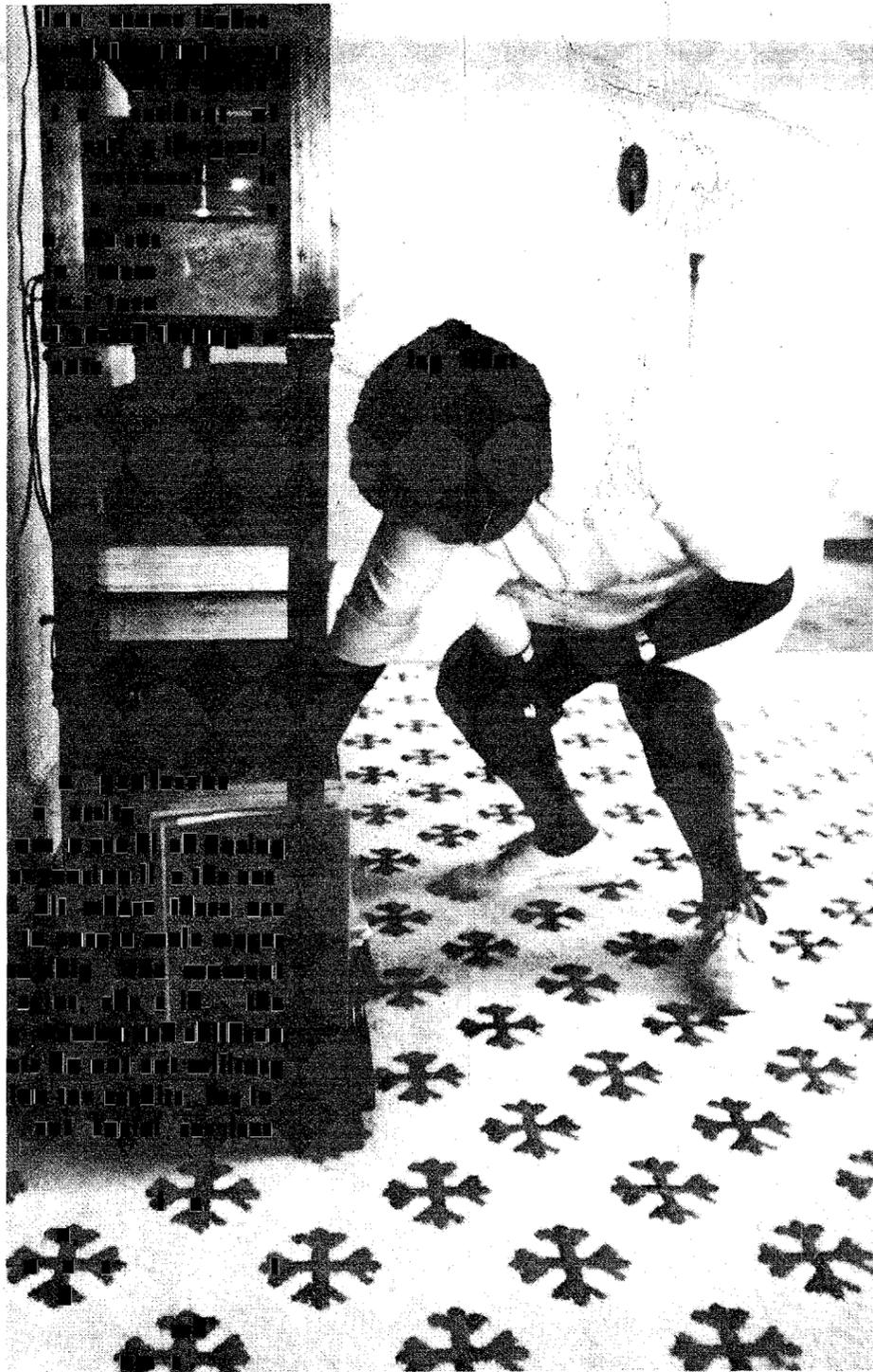
These services, of course, not only employ large numbers of women, they also help women find work (women's employment and retraining services), help women keep work (child care) and help women who lose work during economic slowdowns (UIC).

In the last two years both the Liberals and Tories were quick to axe social services and benefits to women. It's unlikely we'll see a reversal of this trend.

Cohen and economist and author, Lukin Robinson, emphasized that the Canadian economy as it is currently structured guarantees ever higher unemployment and deficit financing (i.e. use of 30% of every tax dollar to pay foreign debts, not to improve social benefits). This in turn guarantees continued government and industry inaction on improving economic opportunities and rights for women. The weaker our economy, the more likely we are to hear that equality is too expensive to consider at this time.

Canada's growing trade deficit based on our export of cheap raw materials and import of expensive manufactured goods hurts all Canadians, but hurts women first.

• continued page 18



Domestic worker on the job.

# Milking the Third World Formula for Profit

by Beverly Biderman

In the fall of 1979, a meeting of UNICEF/World Health Organization (WHO) urged that all promotion of infant formula cease. In this article *Broadside* discusses the background of the WHO recommendations, how they could affect the promotion of bottle feeding in North America, and the boycott of Nestlé products in particular.

There is a cemetery in Zambia where infants' graves are decorated with empty formula tins and bottles. The mothers tragically believed these to be their babies' most valuable possessions.

The trend away from breastfeeding to bottle feeding began about fifty years ago in industrialized nations. But in the past ten to fifteen years birth rates in these same countries have declined, and more middle class mothers are returning to breast feeding. Disappointed by those market trends, the baby food industry has extended its promotion of infant formula to developing countries.

As a result, infant formula has been aggressively pushed as the "modern way" in communities where there is no clean water to mix with the concentrate, no facilities to sterilize nipples or bottles, no means of refrigeration and no money to purchase the proper weekly regimen of formula. Free samples are given to new mothers, whose supply of breast milk then tragically dries up because the baby is given the breast to suckle.

At a health clinic in Central Indonesia recently, mothers were asked for a sample of the bottle milk they were giving their infants. One third of the samples were diluted more than twice as much as they should have been (to make it last as long as possible) and three quarters had bacterial counts more than one hundred times the normal amount.

The consequence of this misuse is a well-documented increase in malnutrition in Third World countries. Dr. Derrick Jolliffe, head of the Department of Population, Family and International Health at the University of California, estimates that at least ten million Third World babies succumb annually to "commerciogenic" malnutrition. In some African hospitals, sick infants lie in beds marked "Lactogen Syndrome" after the Nestlé company's brand of infant formula.

When breastfeeding was more widespread in these poorer countries, malnutrition was widespread as well, but it usually did not become severe until the second year of a child's life. Now, the OAS *Inter-American Investigation of Mortality in Childhood* reports that deaths from malnutrition reach their peak as early as the third or fourth month of life. And even if a child is lucky enough to survive severe malnutrition at this young age, some mental retardation can be expected.

Against this backdrop, church and secular groups in North America have been working for several years to force the baby food companies to modify their aggressive promotion of infant formula in Third World Countries, if not to stop it entirely.

The current Nestlé boycott was started in 1977 in Minneapolis by Infact (Infant Formula Action Coalition), a coalition of

secular and religious groups. The boycott campaign was originally to last only six weeks, but it caught on so well that it continued, spread to Canada last year, and now to England, Australia and other countries. To Infact has been added several other endorsing groups and individuals ranging from Dr. Spock and Ralph Nader to the YWCA and the United Church of Canada.

Nestlé, according to boycott literature, has been chosen as the target of the boycott for three reasons: it is the largest of the baby food companies operating in the Third World; it has been the most resistant to modifying its promotional tactics; and, as a Swiss-based multi-national corporation, it cannot be pressured by North American shareholder resolutions as can the American-based companies. Nestlé does not market infant formula in North America so only those Nestlé products sold here are being boycotted. (See list attached.)

In 1978, Senator Edward Kennedy chaired a US Senate hearing on the marketing and promotion of infant formula in developing countries. The information that came to light was sufficiently disturbing that the Senate requested a WHO/UNICEF investigation. This inquiry resulted in a surprisingly strong (considering the vigorous industry lobby) condemnation of the promotional methods of the formula companies.

"There is no way the infant food industry can get away with what they have been doing in the past and say they have our stamp of approval", said Dr. Halfdon Mahler, the Director-General of WHO. WHO recommended that there be "no sales promotion, including promotional advertising to the public, of products to be used as breast milk substitutes or bottled supplements and feeding bottles". In the area of promotion to the health profession, industry was urged to provide only factual information for "consideration of product composition".

The WHO recommendations were couched in the form of general principles. A specific code of conduct for the baby food industry will be drawn up by WHO in May. Then it will be up to each country to pass legislation ensuring compliance with the code. The legislation, of course, will be very difficult to enact in view of industry lobbying, especially in poorer countries where the jobs and revenue offered by baby food in-

dustries are hard to resist. Several countries, however, have already enacted legislation to restrict importation of infant formula. In Papua, New Guinea, for instance, feeding bottles and nipples, which some mothers think have magical properties and so fill them with tea or soda pop, are available only by prescription.

Although the Nestlé boycott is the largest non-union boycott in history, it is not as well known as, for example, the United Farm Workers boycotts. According to David Hallman, boycott coordinator for the United Church of Canada, the boycott is relatively low profile because the organizers do not have the same tools and resources as the unions. Also North Americans feel more removed from the issue. Nestlé does not market infant formulas in North America, so only those products sold here are being boycotted. (See list attached.) The boycott organizers have not yet resorted to secondary boycotts and pickets at supermarkets but both tactics are under consideration and could be used if Nestlé does not comply with the boycott demands.

The boycott groups are not asking that infant formula be taken off the market. The Nestlé boycott is unique in that its grievance is with the promotion of the product and not with either the product itself or its production methods.

The aggressive promotion of infant formula has opened up the whole question of corporate responsibility. When asked point blank by Senator Kennedy about Nestlé's responsibility for the proper usage of the formula it markets, the president of Nestlé Brazil stated bluntly, "We cannot have that responsibility Sir." According to consumer advocate Ralph Nader, the Nestlé role in denigrating and replacing breast milk could become a major cause in the corporate responsibility movement throughout the world.

Nestlé, one of the three largest multi-nationals in the world, has annual worldwide sales of \$12 billion. Of these sales, infant formula accounts for approximately 2%. Infant formula sales for all companies combined is a billion-dollar-a-year retail business in developing countries. Brazilian figures show that the profit margins can be as huge as 72%, or about three times the rate for the average retail product.

For those women who cannot breast feed and where hygienic and financial conditions make bottle feeding dangerous, nutrition-



ists have designed nourishing vegetable oil-based breast milk substitutes that require no refrigeration and need limited cooking facilities. These products could be made available, at one quarter of the cost of typical commercial formula, but they are not.

Ray Peterson, the Director of Public Relations for Nestlé in Canada, complained recently to the *Globe and Mail*: "We're there because malnutrition exists in the Third World; the implication from them (boycott organizers) is that malnutrition exists because we're there."

The literature from Nestlé's Office of Corporate Responsibility claims that bottle feeding is partly responsible for a decline in infant mortality rates in the Third World. But about this inference a Nepal community health worker says, "Gross distortion is too mild a term to use." Although infant mortality rates have in fact declined, childhood mortality studies show that there has been a markedly downward shift in the average age of death from malnutrition.

Nestlé also claims that breast milk should be supplemented by formula milk for health reasons, especially in the case of the malnourished mother. However, a brief of the US Consumers Union states when supplements are required: "except in cases of severe maternal malnutrition, breast milk by itself is usually adequate to sustain growth and excellent nutrition in an infant for four to six months."

Nestlé further argues that infant formula is needed in Third World countries to enable women to leave the home and work. However, several studies showed that no more than 6% of women in these countries gave work as their reason for choosing bottle feeding. In any case, many women working in rural areas nurse their babies in the field.

In spite of its defensive rally, Nestlé is clearly being hurt by the boycott. A decline in sales convinced the Norwegian makers of Jarlsberg cheese to drop Nestlé as their North American distributor. The president of Nestlé Switzerland has been personally involved in talks with boycott supporters. The company has stepped up the promotion of its product lines in North America, and increased its distribution of cents-off coupons. While direct consumer advertising of Nestlé infant formula is lessening, there is much evidence that the company continues to use other forms of promotion ("milk nurses" — company representatives who dress up as nurses and visit maternity wards singing the praises of infant formula to new mothers, free samples, promotion to the medical profession) despite the WHO recommendations.

But what about promotion of infant formula here in North America? A study of 5,598 children in isolated Native Canadian communities in Manitoba turned up a sad correlation between modern consumerism and health: bottle-fed babies were hospitalized ten times more often than fully breastfed babies. In another study, bottle-feeding was strongly implicated in the startling 50% jump in the Inuit birthrates in the Northwest Territories. (Breastfeeding, which inhibits ovulation in the mother, has a contraceptive effect.)

And are mothers and health professionals in industrialized societies considered somehow immune from the effects of the commercial promotion of infant formula? Is a paternalistic distinction being made here between what is permissible in "less

• continued next page

# Kate Millett Basements of our Lives

by Annette Clough and Krin Zook

Basements are dark, moist, womblike. Basements are places where children hide from adults. Basements are where many of us had our first sexual experiences as children. Basements are where we diverted our childhood sexual energy into thrilling games of murder and terror and learned early to connect sexuality with the forbidden, the dangerous and the violent.

Kate Millett, speaking at U.B.C. recently, took us on an exploration of the basements of our collective experience as women in a violent world. Her topic was "Women and Violence". We already know that all women live in fear of male violence. We know that the bottom line of patriarchal oppression is the rule of force. Millett was asking us both to understand violence in the context of male control of women and to see how we as women internalize this violence, act out our violence on each other and teach the next generation through violence to conform to the standards of femaleness imposed by patriarchal values.

Kate Millett's book, *The Basement* is based on the true story of a sixteen year old woman, Sylvia Likens, who was imprisoned in a basement of a suburban house somewhere in the American midwest and tortured by a middle aged woman, her son and other neighbourhood young people. Sylvia Likens died in that basement, a virgin, the words "I am a prostitute and proud of it" carved on her body by the son.

The story, reported in the press and forgotten after trial by most people, haunted and obsessed Millett for fourteen years. She knew that this could not be an isolated incident of "craziness", which is the way most people dismissed it, but was somehow a paradigm, a tale of our times, which would make sense if seen in some larger context. For fourteen years Millett thought about it, talked about it, made sculptures about it and wondered about the psychology of evil.

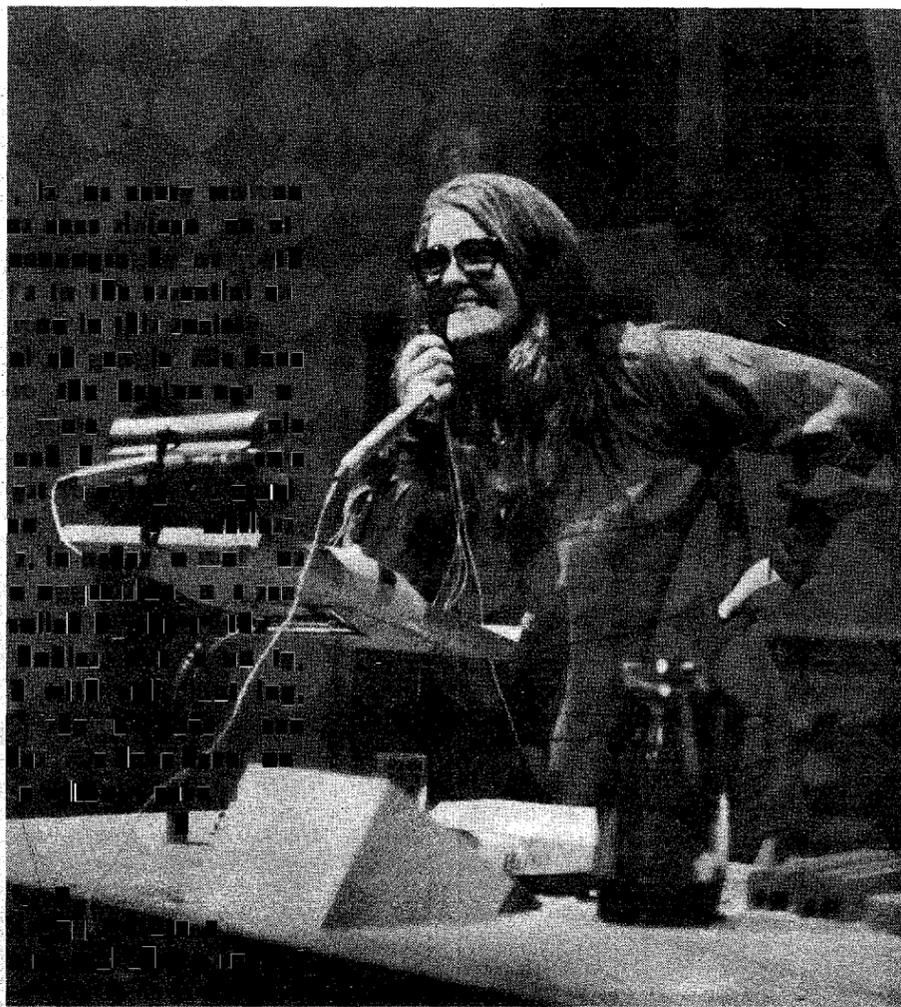
Now she has written a book which is not only a factual account of the story but an exploration of the attitudes and the passions and the values which played themselves out through the actions of Sylvia's tormentor and her accomplices.

This book, she says, is for every woman who is sixteen or was ever sixteen; an attempt to put into iconography or myth this tale which speaks to the essential experience of every woman in this society.

Women are a colonized people. We have been controlled from the beginnings of patriarchy by fear of male violence. Male power, male status and heterosexual role behaviour keep the system going. As a colonized people, women are kept powerless. In order to control us, in order to make us collude with our own oppression, our sexuality has been controlled by the myths of the patriarchy. Our bodies, our sexuality, have been associated with evil, loathing, disgust. Guilt and shame have been stamped on our psyches. We have been controlled through shame without even knowing what it is we are supposed to be ashamed of. Our choice is to be "good", meaning passive and obedient, or to rebel and be called "evil." Either way we are victims; either way we are denied real choices about our lives.

Sylvia Likens was sixteen, pretty, nubile, sexual. Her tormentor was middle aged, living on welfare with her children, broken, bitter. Her goal and her role was to perpetuate archetypal patriarchal principles and break this young woman. Sylvia learned her lesson well; she could have escaped and tried to but no one believed her story. Neighbours heard her cries but did nothing. Millett assumes they thought it was just another child getting some punishment she deserved.

Controlling children through physical violence is acceptable in our society. Looking closely at the forms this violence often takes exposes the sexual sadism underlying the physical punishment of children. The act of pulling down the pants and exposing their genital area to pain is one of the ways that children learn to link violence and shame with their sexuality. The crucial issue is this imposition of sexual guilt and shame which conditions our sexuality for life. We are told by our mothers, "If I don't teach you to walk with your eyes lowered, beat you down, break you, some one else will, so it's for your own good." Thus is the lesson of patriarchy carried out by women with no hope on young women who still possess some hope. Women become the agents of patriarchy, passing on its message of joylessness and passivity from generation to generation.



Kate Millett at UBC, February 1980.

Annette Clough

*The Basement* is the story of our victimization and our potential for sadism carried to its ultimate and logical extreme. Sylvia Likens was punished for being young, female, sexual and with hope by a woman who had no hope. *The Basement* is not a story of random psychotic behaviour; it is a parable of our times. Pornography is the same story: women being degraded for being female told for fun and profit. We need to look at the roots of violence in patriarchal values and then investigate how that violence is perpetrated not only by men but by ourselves. We need to look at the ways in which we allow our shame to divide us,

mother versus daughter, lesbians versus women-in-nuclear-families, poor versus affluent. When we recognize the commonality of our experience and convert our rage into collective action, we can begin to work together to create real alternatives for ourselves.

"When we hear of violence to women," Kate Millett said, "deep down we know that one of us has been done in by one of them. We have been pretending there is no meaning in our deaths, and if there is no meaning in our deaths, then there is no meaning in our lives either."

## • Nestlé, from preceding page

developed" and "more developed" communities? The answer is, simply, no. The WHO recommendations oppose the promotion of infant formula in all countries. By ignoring their "corporate responsibility" in the Third World, the infant formula companies may have stuck their necks out just a little too far, and tempted the hang-man. Unfortunately for the industry, more attention is now being turned to the advantage of breast feeding even in modern hygienic societies.

The Nutrition Committee of the Canadian Pediatric Society in 1978 issued a statement in support of breastfeeding which recommended that "all full-term newborns should be breastfed except in the few instances where specific contraindications are present." The report pointed out that breast milk helps protect infants against infection. Indeed a 1977 study in New York found that middle ear infections and gastroenteritis were twice as common, and pneumonia and hospital admissions nearly ten times as common for bottle-fed than for breastfed babies.

But in spite of the evidence, the promotion of infant formula in Canada continues to outweigh that of breastfeeding. Most hospitals in Toronto (and 95% of hospitals throughout Canada) routinely distribute free "Gift-Pax" to new mothers. Although these promotional handouts no longer contain free samples of baby foods, they do contain advertisements pushing infant formula. Needless to say, everything in

the "Gift-Pax" carries the persuasive implication of hospital endorsement.

Advertisements in the hand-out bag claim that formula milk is "just as nutritious" as breast milk; that "supplements" to breast milk may be required; and that the new mother's "ability to supply a good supply of milk" may be in doubt. A refund coupon in the Gift-Pax for the Playtex (Bottle) Nurser Kit infers that at some point all babies are bottle fed: "...whether you start your baby on a bottle or wean him from breast to bottle later..." Margaret Bennet-Alder of La Leche League denies the necessity of weaning to the bottle, or of supplementing breast milk with formula milk:

"It was normal and prevalent for mothers everywhere, until recently, to breastfeed from two to three years. At about 6 to 8 months the mother would supplement her milk with table food that she pre-chewed or mashed up for the baby. This was the norm in India, Africa and Nepal...it was the norm for pioneer women in our own country a century ago."

No one is arguing that formula feeding is necessarily bad for all infants, or that there are not some mothers (about 5%) who physically cannot breastfeed for some reason or another. My own son was adopted as an infant, and baby formula in that absence of "wet nurses" proved to be a life saver. What is at issue, however, is the combination of aggressive and subtle promotion of bottle-feeding breastfeeding.

New mothers are not always getting all the information they should be getting even in our modern society.

However, the infant formula companies may see more regulation of their formula promotion after the WHO code of conduct is drawn up in May. Sale of infant formula by prescription only, according to boycott spokesman David Hallman, is a possibility.

The current drive to promote breast feeding could be seen as a male-backed chauvinistic attempt to put women back into their place with *kinder kirche kuche*. But from another perspective, one of the reasons for any decline of breastfeeding is the embarrassment that often attends breast feeding in public, and the modern view that the female breast is something reserved exclusively for the sexual enjoyment of males.

There is no doubt that an increase in the prevalence of breast feeding in modern society will require changes in attitudes and structures. The Canadian Pediatric Society recommends that more education about breast feeding be given in schools to boys as well as to girls. It also recommends that to encourage breast feeding, governments and industry provide day nurseries close to places of work for mothers who wish to breastfeed their infants at work.

Where do we go from here? The Nestlé boycott has brought together many diverse groups on the issue of infant nutrition. While these groups are now focussing their energies primarily on the Nestlé boycott, should the boycott succeed (as it appears

likely to) these groups are then prepared to turn their attention more not only to the universal control of infant formula promotion, but also to the encouragement of breast feeding and the necessary concomitant social, cultural and economic changes.

The baby food industry's activities in the Third World may yet lead us to a healthier society — the hard way.

### BOYCOTT DEMANDS

- A specific and enforceable end to promotion of Nestlé infant formula (which is not marketed in North America)
- An implementation plan
- A monitoring system

### PRODUCTS BOYCOTTED

Nescafé, Encore, Decaf, Taster's Choice, Nestea, Nestlé's Quik, Libby's, McNeil & Libby, Souptime, Maggi Soups, Crosse and Blackwell, Wispride, Cherry Hill Cheese, Swiss Knight Cheese, Old Fort Cheese.

### CONTACT

NESTLÉ BOYCOTT/INFACT  
85 St. Clair Ave. E., Toronto,  
M4T 1M8.

### NESTLÉ CANADA

1185 Eglinton Ave. E., Don Mills,  
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# Custody Battles - not Child's Play

by Kate Middleton

"When we found out he had the kids and wasn't going to return them to their mother, we had a meeting with some other women. There were thirteen of us. We decided to go and get the kids back. A cop stopped us en route; there were seven people in one car. We said we were going to a Tupperware party. The husband had changed the lock on the door, so four or five of us went through the side basement window. He punched me in the face and broke my glasses. We pushed him up against the wall and then the largest woman sat on him while we made our escape out the window."

The mother took her children, two sons aged four and five, and ran, staying with friends, moving from one place to another. The children were constantly upset and she was afraid her husband would find them and kidnap them. Meanwhile, he began proceedings to sue for custody on the grounds of the mother's homosexuality. His sister, he said, had found his wife and another woman in an uncompromising position, naked in bed. In fact, they had been drinking tea, fully clothed.

One day the husband simply went to the children's school and took them back. Later, in court, the wife gave him custody. She was unwilling to fight him because of his threats and brutality, the fact that he had a rifle, and the negative effect the whole experience was having on the children. "The quality of time I have with the children is better now," she declared. "I had no time to nurture the kids before. Now I can."

There have been only a handful of lesbian custody cases reported in Canada. Underlying the above case was the mother's fear that the court wouldn't let her have custody of the children. She had not heard of any case in which custody of male children had been given to a lesbian mother. She had heard stories about other women who had gained custody and then lost it in ensuing appeals. In this case, the husband's 20-page affidavit, among other things, described fantastic events such as a "weird ritual" in which the children sounded like progeny of Charles Manson. In fact, they had been painting themselves with magic markers, a fairly typical thing for children to do. And, as the mother pointed out, she hadn't lived long enough to do all the things the husband listed in the affidavit.

Whatever the facts, she capitulated, settling on open access to the children. She

seems satisfied, at least temporarily, with this arrangement. However, listening to her retell the story and to her friends' interpretations of it is disquieting. The husband still has his rifle and the kids; she has lost some rights.

Information on custody cases, passing from one uninformed source to another, builds up the myth that the courts are an extension of the husband and that the wife is always the victim. Lesbian mothers generally approach the legal process shakily, primarily as a result of lack of information about either the legal process or their own rights.

According to B.J. Danylchuk, who specializes in family law in Toronto, "the judges have seemed to avoid saying *per se* that a homosexual parent means an unfit parent. The framework in a custody case from a legal standpoint is that the custody decision is made in accordance with the best interests of the child, not necessarily of the parents."

Custody decisions consider a variety of circumstances. Special attention is paid to the parent's character: is the parent a good one? Are there weaknesses in her/his character? How does the parent complement the child? For example, if the child is hyperactive and one of the parents is too, the court may place the child with the calmer parent. It is important, in the court's view, that the child have a stable home environment. Spouses who fight, whether homosexual or heterosexual, are looked upon with disfavour.

The child must be allowed to relate to the "mainstream," traditional society, although a lesbian mother who participates in political demonstrations or belongs to political organizations *may* still get custody if she allows her child to join such approved groups as Brownies or other church or community-sponsored groups. "The issue is not how radical the mother is, but how she conducts herself," states Danylchuk. "This can mean the mother is not in the closet, but has respect for herself and her sexuality, and therefore has the respect of her neighbours."

The 1979 custody case of *Bernhardt v. Bernhardt* in Manitoba is an example of one lost by a lesbian who denied she was having a lesbian relationship but also drank excessively and fought with her "roommate." The case was first presented to me as another "we're so oppressed" story, with the emphasis on the plight of a poor woman who had lost her child to the

patriarchy.

Upon investigation, the story changed. The woman initially had gained custody of her daughter in August 1977. A "friend" had moved in in September, with whom the mother denied she was having a lesbian relationship. Police were called in that month to investigate a complaint by the mother that her "friend" had indecently assaulted the child. As well, police were called in twice as a result of the couple's drunken behaviour.

A judge subsequently awarded custody to the father. In discussing this case, James G. McLeod of the Faculty of Law, University of Western Ontario, stated: "The question of whether a homosexual parent is a fit and proper person to have custody of a child is one fraught with emotive overtones. What is important is not the conduct and habits of a spouse or parent in the abstract but rather the effect of such conduct and habits upon the child. So long as a parent is able to instill in her children the basic social values of the community at large, it may be questioned whether the sexual preferences of the parent are material factors in a custody decision."

On February 21, 1980, Frontenac County Court Judge Peter Nasmith ruled that a Kingston area woman living with her lesbian lover could have custody of her 10-year-old adopted daughter. The judge said there seemed to be no harm in the mother's living with a 21-year-old woman who used to be the babysitter, and who slept in the same bed as the mother. In his conclusion he stated: "Whatever significant risks remain in the area of (the child's) necessary adjustments to our homophobic society, they are too esoteric and speculative for me to attach much weight to them. I think they must give way here to the more concrete indicia of 'best interests'."

One point considered in reaching this decision was that "the mother's partner had a reasonably good relationship with the child." In the Manitoba case, lack of a good relationship between the mother's partner and the child was a point which influenced the judge to award custody to the father.

However, other factors in the Kingston case must be considered. The mother is not militant and does not flaunt her sexuality. She is unbiased about her child's sexual orientation and assumes that the child will be heterosexual. Unlike the lesbian mother

in Manitoba, there is no overt sexual contact between the mother and her partner, apart from their sleeping together.

There is no consistency in whether or not the behaviour of the average "good" lesbian mother is acceptable to a court. Probably, as lesbian custody cases are presented in courts, more variables will arise and precedents will be established. As well, a case may come up where a lesbian mother is militant and still leads an "acceptable" life. The scenario for the future is not as bleak as it may seem.

An important tactic in custody cases is for the mother to demonstrate acceptance of her lesbianism. If all parties in the case know she is a lesbian, it is less easy for the husband's lawyer to use the woman's sexuality against her. The custody case then depends on the more important issue of choosing the most capable parent.

A husband may resort to forcing his wife out of the closet, which is another reason for the woman to accept her sexuality. It is hard for a husband to blackmail his wife emotionally about her sexuality if she accepts it. Besides, a point not considered by many husbands is that the very issue of lesbianism may prolong court proceedings, thus adding considerably to his own costs, whereas the wife may be receiving legal aid to fight the case.

Another point to consider is the support the mother receives from her lover during the case. The court may be suspicious of a woman whose lover refuses to appear in court. The same is true in heterosexual cases. If the parent's new partner is hesitant to appear as a witness, the court may question the strength of the relationship and decide that it is unsuitable for the child to be placed in the midst of what seems to be an unstable relationship. The issue to be determined, remember, is what is the best home for the child.

A husband may use dirty tactics in which case a mother would be advised to seek counselling for herself and the child, though not necessarily therapy. The important thing is to register her reaction and arguments with a professional whose opinion would be respected in court.

Custody battles are emotionally and physically draining. In fighting one, a lesbian mother needs, above all, the support of her friends and her community, as well as a good lawyer. It's a lot easier to have a lawyer handle a husband. Midnight raids and Tupperware parties may be exciting, but in the long run they cause too much grief.

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# MOVEMENT MATTERS

## ONTARIO NDP WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

"The Political Facts of Life" will dominate the second annual women's conference of the Ontario New Democratic Party to take place in Kitchener on the weekend of April 12-13. This location has been chosen in recognition of the significant contribution made by the Waterloo NDP Women's Committee (our first regional committee) to the high profile on women's concerns in that community.

As the theme implies, this will be predominantly a policy conference. At its first annual conference in November 1978, ONDP women examined the "Economic Facts of Life" — the barriers which still prevent women from playing their full role in the workplace, in the political arena and in society in general. That conference marked a new and important departure for women's activity in the NDP.

The revival of the women's movement in the late 60's spawned a decade of equality resolutions, debated and adopted into party policy at conventions. They were good policies, and (with the same old government still in power in Ontario) are as urgently in need of implementation as ever.

Implementation requires strategy. The '78 conference called for a complete review of all existing policies dealing with sexual discrimination — not just to up-date them or fill gaps — but to bring them together in a comprehensive program which could provide a real basis for action. It is this program which will be debated at the April conference.

Saturday morning's agenda will begin with greetings from Ontario NDP Leader Michael Cassidy, followed by keynote speaker Pauline Jewett, M.P. Policy discussion will first take place in workshops, then in a plenary session. Workshop topics include: labour, child care, social policy, education, health, consumer affairs, housing, energy/transportation, and women and the courts.

The rest of the conference will be taken up with an assessment of the role of the women's committee in the NDP: the activities of the past year, and strategy for the next 12 months in the context of long-term goals.

For further details of the conference, please contact Marianne Holder at 415 Parkside Drive, Toronto M6H 2Z7, or at (416) 965-5948 (office).

□ Marianne Holder

## CO-OP HOUSING FOR WOMEN

Representatives of several Toronto women's hostels are recruiting members for a Board of Directors which will found a housing co-operative for a wide range of women, including a substantial number on low or moderate incomes, or with various types of problems.

If you would like to help found the co-op, please contact Janet Howard at 367-

7916 or write to her in care of Alderpeople's Offices, Toronto City Hall, Toronto M5H 2N2.

If you can't manage the time commitment for full Board membership, maybe you would like to work on one of the committees which will be planning this exciting new concept.

*Broadside untangles and reprints 'Gay Community Appeal' and 'Co-op Housing for Women', with apologies for last issues' mixed messages.*

## IWD — TORONTO



Marchers converge on Toronto City Hall

International Women's Day in Toronto was wet and snowy. It might have been miserable too, but spirits were too high and numbers too great. Over 2000 noisy, exuberant women (and a scattering of men) chanted and sang their way along the mile-long route up University Avenue and along College Street to King Edward School. The parade was organized by The March 8th Coalition, which chose the theme 'Bread and Roses in the Eighties: Jobs and Rights for Women.'

A highlight of the parade was the demonstration in front of Bell Canada's office building on University Avenue. The Communications Workers of Canada had been on strike against Bell for seven weeks.

After a brief speech by a union representative, an enormous cracked cardboard bell with the slogan 'Help Crack Bell' on it, was burned, to the delight of marchers and passersby alike.

Following the parade, a well-organized women's fair was held at the school. There were theatre, poetry, and music events, a Wen-Do demonstration, political workshops, information booths, and refreshments. This is the first time such a fair has been held in Toronto following the IWD parade. Judging by the enthusiasm generated among marchers and others who attended, it's an event well worth repeating.

An all-women's dance attended by several hundred women rounded off the day.

□ Jean Wilson

## WOMEN'S LEGAL CLINIC

The Women's Legal Clinic, operating out of the YWCA Women's Resource Centre, provides legal advice and assistance to women who fall through the cracks of our current legal assistance structure. We offer an alternative to the costs of a lawyer for the woman who is not eligible for the Ontario Legal Aid program because of the nature of her legal problem.

Although we act only for women who are unable to afford a lawyer, the clinic also provides information about legal rights to women in any income bracket. Often our clients have not decided upon legal action and are merely seeking to determine their position with respect to a particular problem.

Women's Clinic is one of a number of legal aid clinics run by Toronto Community Legal Assistance Services. Staffed exclusively by women law students from the University of Toronto, with close supervision from TCLAS staff lawyers, the clinic attempts to stay in tune with the legal problems and needs facing women today. Students act for clients in a wide variety of areas including family and criminal law, Small Claims Court actions, immigration matters and landlord/tenant disputes. Usually these are areas where Ontario Legal Aid is not available. If the legal problem faced by a client is beyond the capacity of a student, referral will be made to other community resources.

Since our clinic opened in 1973, students have gained extensive experience in the area of family law. We have dealt with the pleasure of adoptions, the difficulties of separations, the conflict over custody and support and the very traumatic problems of the battered wife. The woman working at Women's Clinic has a commitment to dealing sensitively and effectively with these most painful legal problems. The emphasis is on realistic, understandable information and efficient, effective resolutions.

While we can't offer years of legal experience (though our supervising lawyers provide that) as practising lawyers have often complained, students bring both enthusiasm and extensive preparation to cases.

The Women's Clinic is located at 15 Birch Ave., off Yonge Street just south of the Summerhill subway stop.

Clinic hours: Monday 5-8

Tuesday 2-8

Wednesday 10:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Thursday 5-8.

We operate by appointment only, for the convenience of students and clients alike. Appointments can be made by calling 925-1154. Emergency situations can usually be booked on the same day. There is no charge for the services provided by clinic workers.

□ Cynthia L. Zinck

## GAY COMMUNITY APPEAL

Recently approved as a fundraising organization, the Gay Community Appeal of Toronto will officially begin its appeal toward the end of March, 1980.

Formed last summer around the United Way concept, the group received proposals for a variety of projects from Toronto lesbian and gay men's groups which were reviewed by the Appeal's board.

Proposal categories range from educational programs, counselling services, and health clinics to legal clinics, defence funds and cultural and recreational projects. So far, 15 proposals with an average dollar figure of \$1000, have been accepted for funding.

The primary fund-raising mechanism of the Gay Community Appeal will be an audio-visual presentation highlighting the projects for which the Appeal is seeking financial support. Volunteers from the Appeal will present the show at "Support Our Selves" social evenings, held in the homes of lesbians and gay men.

In addition to providing funds for existing centres and groups, GCA aims to support the creation of new services and organizations and to find new sources of revenue for the lesbian and gay communities. Through its fund-raising efforts GCA increases the gay public awareness of community services and activities.

Gay Community Appeal needs the support of the whole community to be as successful as possible. Right now it is looking for more writers and photographers for the audio-visual group and women and men for the management group and newsletter committee.

Lesbians and gay men who want to serve as host for an SOS evening are also needed. For further information, contact Karen Prins at 922-8744 or Don Morden at 598-3159.

□ Karen Prins

## WEN-DO

Wen-Do is a system of self defense designed for women — a very efficient form that teaches awareness, avoidance, and reaction to attacks. Wen-Do was developed in Toronto in the early seventies by the Paige family from a combination of martial art and street fighting techniques. It is constantly being revised and updated by the instructors for the needs of women. The course is from twelve to fourteen hours long and is usually taught in an intensive weekend or for two hours each week for six weeks. Wen-Do includes mental and physical exercise with special breathing.

Wen-Do offers ways to deal with harassment on the street, in public places, at parties, and with physical and sexual assaults. The length of the course makes it more practical than training in a martial art. An advantage this self-defense course has over others is the emphasis on women, their socialization and conditioning and their needs. It is taught by women and only women attend the classes.

The mental aspect of the course is equally important as the physical. Often the most valuable thing that originates from this course is the feeling of self-confidence, the belief in oneself. To realize that you are not

helpless that you can be effective in your environment, in your life, is a definite asset. Women have stated that taking Wen-Do has enabled them to be more active in their lives. Instead of staying indoors at night they can participate in many activities. Until now women have had no concept of attack situations; they have had no concept of their self-power. Through Wen-Do women have been discovering this power.

BASIC CLASSES AVAILABLE THIS MONTH IN TORONTO:

\* April 1 - May 6, 7:30-9:30 pm: Northview Heights, North York Board of Education, 223-5020.

\* April 5, 6 9:30 am-5 pm: Neill-Wycik, New Steamer Room, 96 Gerrard Street East;

\* April 28-June 2, 7:30-9:30 pm: Dixon Hall, 58 Sumach St.

\* April 30-June 4, 1-3 pm: Dixon Hall, 58 Sumach St.

For more information, or to register, call: Marilyn Walsh — 368-2178; Wen-Do Inc. — 366-7127.

## Word from the Inside

*Beverley Whitney, 31, is presently serving a sentence for a drug offence. She works on Tightwire, the Kingston Prison Women's newspaper. All mail going in and out of Kingston is read, and sometimes censored by prison staff. The following letter to Broadside from Whitney was received opened.*

"After careful consideration, I feel that we have more freedom here than is possible in any other prison or reformatory. And although within the prison population during the past year it seems that there has been a high level of physical violence, some of it resulting in serious stabbings, still the per capita per population is no different from a large city. In fact it's like any community where if you mind your business, and do your time, you won't become involved. Women here tend to have a few close friends and do everything together. This strict code of being solid ensures little involvement of the staff in our lives. You generally get the feeling that the staff only really expects you to be polite and do your time.

"An average day here begins at 7:30 wake up, when the wheel turns and the officer opens your cell. Usually I take a shower and get dressed. At 7:45 we go to the hospital area for medication. At 8:00 breakfast is served, then at 8:30 you report to your assigned area. Everyone has a C.O. who helps you make plans for passes, use the phone, finalise parole plans, etc.

"A number of clubs exist. There is guitar class, International Cultures, Discussion Group, Seven Steps, A.A., Native Sisterhood, Bible Study and Chapel Group. There are Church Services, organised games, really a lot to do if you're interested.

"Two programs do exist, both of which I've been in, which are very instrumental in allowing a person to change: DELTA Drugs and Life Skills. The Elizabeth Fry Society also comes in for dances and Bingo. We have two TV's on the range, one for general viewing, the other for sports.

"The Pen is not rule oriented at all. You're expected to be polite, which ensures that the staff doesn't mix with you. You're charged only for illegal activities: being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, violence, or escape. You have no reason to allow any of the staff to know your business, and thus, can keep any interaction with them at a very superficial level.

"A lot of women seem to prefer the Prison for Women to any other Canadian jail. Personally, I found the rules and regulations at Vanier unbearable and child-oriented. It seemed as though the Vanier program was geared to the needs of the juvenile offender. As a lesbian, it bothered me that I couldn't be affectionate without being on charge for body contact. Generally, the custodial staff there was extremely uptight. But in the Pen there is not that same sense. You're allowed to move freely within the institution and most of the women who work here just seem to be doing their job.

"One of the major problems which has not been considered or worked out is the one of returning to the outside world. I don't feel that they really phase you out into the community. One day your parole decision comes through and you're out, with little or no preparation. It's like a complete culture shock to return to the community after being here any length of time."

...

## Our Sisters' Keepers

by Jacqueline Frewin

*The following is an interview with Donna Clark, Chairperson of the Ontario Parole Board. Ms. Clark has done family counselling, has been superintendent of Vanier, Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee on the Female Offender, and Director of Dixon Hall Community Centre.*

**Jacqueline Frewin:** What is your general perspective on why people come into conflict with the law?

**Donna Clark:** There are a lot of individual considerations which must be kept in mind, but the richest people are not sitting in prison. People who are already disadvantaged are the ones in prison, and probably women more than men. I think it's harder for women once they come in to conflict with the law. For women who get into trouble with the law there is much less acceptance than for men. It relates to the picture that people have of women. If the feminist movement was the strongest voice in our society, women offenders would be having less of a hard time. Their situations would be less convoluted by the layers of negative sanctioning.

There are many individual reasons for people being in prison. Some are there to escape the situations that they have to deal with on the street — particularly those involved with addiction. Also, some women have run away from family scenes. The sad thing is that going to prison is the only way these women are able to cope.

We hear about it being tough in prisons. But sometimes it's tougher on the streets. At least if it gets hard in prison there are some automatic protections built in — certainly more than on the street.

**JF:** It is debated whether the function of prisons is to act as a deterrent, to hand out punishment, to rehabilitate offenders, or to protect the public. What do you think prisons are doing?

**DC:** It is a very costly business for any institution to have a real effect on the individual. Many people are not getting put into the prison system now at all, but are being streamed into community programs. The per diem rate in a half-way house is not nearly as high as in an institution. A community based program is cheaper partly because there are fewer trained staff. Many times the half-way houses deal only with a select group, not one which is representative of all offenders. That makes it a vicious circle, because then prisons end up with a much harder core population. When you have a mixture of people within an institution, the atmosphere is much more receptive to change.

A lot of different approaches have been tried over the years. But I'm not sure any of them has been given a fair shot, because of the constant shifting of economics and politics. We seem to be able to produce research that will prove anything, but I'm not sure the results get tested very adequately.

**JF:** You were the superintendent of Vanier when it first started. Vanier was a modern facility with the emphasis on counselling and rehabilitation, rather than on security and control, but it appears that the policy there has become one of control.

**DC:** I have the impression that with the emphasis on community has come a limitation on work within the institution. Dollars are now moving into community programs: what seems to catch on politically at one time doesn't catch on at another, and the institution is directly affected by this.

**JF:** Because the attitude in the 60's was more pro-mental health, Vanier was then geared to counselling and treatment. But now the social climate has changed again, so where is the prison system heading now?

**DC:** We tend to think in terms of one answer solutions, particularly in mental health and human problem areas. Very difficult human issues are not going to be solved with any single answer. We've got to have some spectrum of services and choices, and even then we may not solve a lot of the problems. However, I do see a difference: there are more choices for offenders than there were ten years ago — that's a healthy sign.

But it's a very convoluted system and I don't know that we've thought very creatively about the offender. It seems everybody gets frustrated after a while and ends up simply responding to the frustration — we don't have the answers, so put them away. It's a circle, and I don't know how clearly we have attempted to look at the basic fabric of our society which produces the problem.

**JF:** Statistics show that between the years 1965 and 1975 the number of women in Canada charged increased by 84%, whereas males increased by 49%. Do you think that women's consciousness, or the women's movement, has had an effect on these women, the court system, or the police attitudes?

**DC:** It's hard to gauge the effect upon the individual woman. My guess is that four or five years ago when the women's movement was really upfront in the media there was a direct effect on the attitude of the courts and the police. I think there was a tendency on the part of some judges and some police to say "You want equality? Well, that's how we'll deal with you in the courts, and that's how we'll deal with you at the point of arrest."

I can recall that for a time in the media there were articles such as, "Judge says, it doesn't matter whether a woman is pregnant or not, she'll go to prison. What's good for men is good for women." This was obviously a kind of reaction or response that was being made about women generally. Because of the small number of women involved in the prison system it wouldn't take much to affect the statistics. Those small numbers also pose problems for these women generally. In terms of money and programming, they can be more easily sidestepped or short-changed.

### TIGHTWIRE

*Tightwire* is published by women at Kingston Prison for Women. Its latest issue included: a House of Commons Debate on the Persons Case; an article by Germaine Greer; a Women Against Violence Against Women flyer; lessons on how to crochet; book reviews; graphics. Subscriptions: \$4/year. Write: Tightwire Publications, PO Box 515, Kingston, Ontario, K7L 4W7.



**JF:** I assume that that has been the case with the Kingston Penitentiary for Women. In 1976 you were the chairperson of the National Advisory Committee on the Female Offender. Your report contained many recommendations improvements, and in fact, stated that the Kingston F should be closed. What has happened to that report?

**DC:** The argument has gone on for years and the thing is that it may go on for many more years. Part of the difficulty is sorting out jurisdiction between the federal and provincial governments. And what makes it easier for a question of women not to be settled is that it is such a small number involved, whereas when dealing with men's issues there are a huge number of problems. So women can wait for a while. I think there are some basic disagreements around what should happen with women. Community agencies have differing views and so long as the people who are pushing for change don't agree, then the government either deliberately or because of the situation, can sit back and not make any decisions.

**JF:** Many women tend to be arrested for drugs and petty theft. Is this a reflection of classism within the system?

**DC:** If you look at the kind of thieving that goes on in "normal" society we don't put a negative sanction on it, I guess is that it outstrips a lot of the petty crime that goes on. We have a society that sanctions certain kinds of behaviour in one group and punishes similar behaviour in another.

**JF:** With the ever increasing economic pinch there are going to be people with no jobs, no skills, and a fixed income. How is the prison system going to deal with the unavoidable repercussions of these socio-economic hardships?

**DC:** One of the thrusts in the prison system now is toward self-sufficiency that can be built in because the costs are running so high. There will be a swing toward work programs and whether or not the rehabilitation dynamic will be part of that is in question. Things seem to have come full circle. I can remember when I first came into the system there was a lot of money going into work programs. Then the programs were phased out because education and treatment suddenly became the focus. Now that's out the window and we're heading back toward the work system.

# the Range

## Women Shut Up

by Darlene Lawson

It is only when the media sensationalizes riots like those at Attica or the New Mexico State Penitentiary that most of us are forced to think about prisons at all.

Our society has attempted to lock away anyone, male or female, who deviates from norms, and who is vulnerable, into mental institutions, hospitals, handicap facilities or prisons — there, preferably, to forget about them.

In "good times" liberal attitudes are more prevalent. The 60's saw important changes in law and prison reform. But in periods such as the present, when economic recession causes social service cutbacks everywhere, rehabilitation becomes a costly frill and concepts such as civil liberties are out of vogue. Reflecting the public's attitude of caution and restraint, the government allocates less money to corrections. What resources are made available are earmarked for "law and order" and security. Criminals and prisoners as people are not a priority.

The problems and needs of women generally have been overlooked for centuries. It is not surprising that when any discussion about prisons does take place, it invariably relates to the situation of men. Certainly the very small number of generally undisturbed female inmates in this country, (about 700 in all provincial and the federal institutions, compared to over 21,000 men) and the much smaller number of females than males who come into conflict with the law on any basis (in 1972, 545,112 men were charged in Canada compared to 60,560 women) contribute to the neglect of the female offender.

But a more critical reason for her low visibility is the culturally dominant definition of what is female. Men have viewed women as inherently secretive, strange and even dangerous. Fueled by the beliefs of men like Cesare Lombroso, the first criminologist, and Freud, women have been defined as well-adjusted when they display an image of sweetness and purity and adopt a role of dependency and passivity. The theory has it that female deviants have not managed, due to psychological or physiological factors unrelated to the world around them, to overcome their intellectual and biological inferiority sufficiently to conform to society's expectations of what is female. Thus, women, well-socialized by this definition, have come into conflict with the law in small numbers, and usually for "female" crimes related to prostitution and abortion.

In addition, the entire legal system has treated women more leniently than men. For if crime is seen as a rebellion against established values, and if women are labelled too frequently as criminals, women would then be rebellious. The carefully controlled balance between the sexes would obviously be breaking down. A better solution has been to prescribe dissatisfied women prescription drugs or admit them to mental institutions.

There is evidence, however, that the patterns are changing. Between 1964 and 1974, the number of women charged with Criminal Code offenses increased by 176%, while for males the increase was 74%. In those 10 years, the number of females charged has increased in a higher percentage than men in every offense category except for rape and other sexual crimes. The largest increase in females charged occurred for offenses against property — namely fraud (up 306% compared to 59% for men), breaking and entering (up 278%) and theft (up 276%).

For males, the most significant increases (though still lower than the increase in females for similar offenses) occurred in violent personal offenses — attempted murder/wounding (up 146%), murder/manslaughter (up 140%), and robbery (up 123%). Drug offenses increased by 2,713% for women and 13,158% for men, though these statistics also reflect changes in the law and in recording systems.

The women's movement has had an impact on the consciousness of every level of womanhood in North America. The vision of middle-class feminism has been that women too can become stock brokers, pilots and executives. Women have aspired to those roles of middle-class men which bring economic gain and status. It is known that men who come into conflict with the justice system are predominantly poor and come from backgrounds which place them in a disadvantaged position to compete legitimately in society. It may well be that the rapidly increasing number of women who are charged with criminal offenses come from similar backgrounds, but have no longer accepted their traditional role as the wife/mother who holds the household together, and are now emulating the male roles to which they are daily exposed.

While it is disturbing to see that violence as a reaction to their environment appears to be increasing among women in the same proportion as men, clearly given the type of female crime primarily on the increase, women are chiefly interested in improving their financial circumstances. Female offenders are *women* and as such experience the same discrimination in employment and training which affects women in general and women in lower socio-economic and minority groups in particular. It is little wonder that they have broken into the ranks of illegitimate capitalism.

Conviction rates too for women have increased. In 1949, the proportion of arrested women who were subsequently

convicted was 79.4%; by 1966, the conviction rate had risen to 90.26%. Between 1968 and 1972 the conviction rate for men and women charged with criminal offenses was identical — 88%. The only discrepancy is found in conviction rates for offenses under the Narcotic Control Act and for offenses against property with violence, where the rates for women are lower. But the gap between men and women convicted in the latter category has narrowed from 20% in 1968 to 12% in 1972. Not only are police more willing to arrest a female offender, but judges too are prepared to convict. When the social fabric is threatened by unemployment and crime, it seems that the system will sacrifice the myth of what is female to maintain social control.

Non-incarcerative sentences are increasing for both men and women. Between 1968 and 1972, 80% of all females convicted of criminal offenses received dispositions such as fines or probation. This trend is at least partially a response to the high price of incarceration. In 1977 it cost \$101.30 each day to keep a woman in the Vanier Centre, Ontario's facility for women given any sentence under 2 years less 1 day. Also, light sentences are in keeping with the type of female crime; in 1975 80% of female theft charges were for shoplifting.

There is only one facility in all of Canada for women sentenced over 2 years less 1 day, the Kingston Prison for Women. Kingston has a cell capacity of 168, and Vanier has a capacity of 130. There are over 70 federal institutions for men. Limited cell space too has an effect on sentences. Nevertheless, whereas 93 women were on the rolls at Kingston in 1970, 200 women had federal sentences in 1977. The proportion of male federal inmates to females was 77:1 in 1966 and 48:1 in 1977. Despite the alternatives, with higher crime rates there are bound to be more women in prison.

The belief that prisons are necessary to protect the public from lawbreakers is an illusion since most offenders are not in prison. But of the women in the Kingston Penitentiary in December 1977, 37 were convicted of narcotics charges, 17 for fraud, 16 for robbery, 6 for break and enter and 19 for other crimes. Only 32 women were convicted of "dangerous" crimes: 19 for manslaughter, 9 for murder and 4 for kidnapping. So 90% of all female prisoners are no more of a threat to society than the thousands of other offenders (both convicted and never caught).

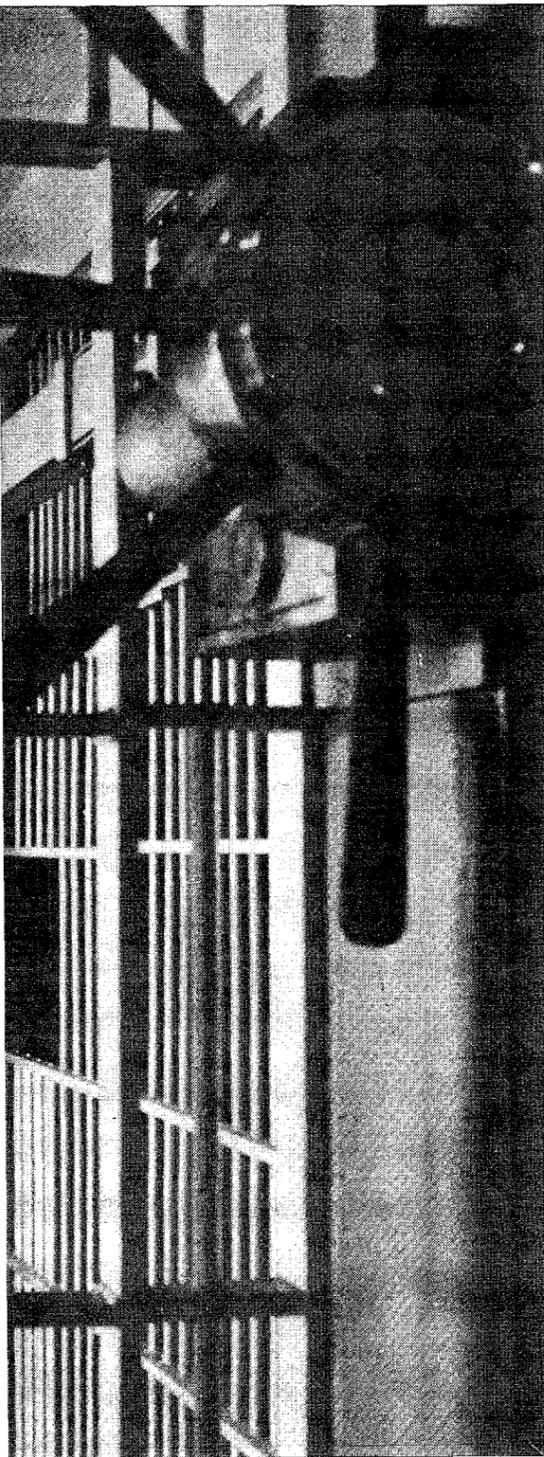
Prisons do not rehabilitate: social service workers have been cut back; institutional work programs are largely irrelevant. Women from across Canada are forced away from their families to Kingston. When they leave, they are often totally unprepared to function successfully on the street. For too many, life inside becomes easier. They know the staff, have their friends, are fed, clothed and understand the expectations. They return. In 1977, 56% of the Vanier population was under 24 years old; the 2 year recidivism rate determined in 1974 was 37%. Prisons do not deter — the rate of crime is increasing.

Prisons *do* function as a form of punishment for a handful of women. By making an example of those most desperate and sometimes damaged few, prisons act as a vehicle of political coercion and as a weapon against the poor. Who is caught is not an indication of the extent of the crime. As middle class women become executives and managers, it follows from the data that they will also become embezzlers and party to such moral crimes as environmental pollution. But they will not be sentenced to prison. Women who come into conflict with the law, particularly those who are imprisoned, are those with few options. These most disadvantaged women are, as women have always been, the victims and scapegoats.

Has the goal of the women's liberation movement simply been to overthrow stereotyped female roles to allow women to share equally with men ulcers, status, high incomes, criminal activity, arrests and convictions depending on one's class? Crime will not be eradicated without a radical change in our values and a drastic restructuring of our social and economic institutions. Prison reform necessitates a reduction of prison population, the restoration of human rights and a reduction of authority. Money is available in our society — it is a question of where it is going. Public pressure is needed to bring about the recommendations of the many reports written since the Kingston Prison opened in 1934 — the Archaibeault Report of 1938, the Ouimet Report of 1969, the Report of the National Advisory Committee on the Female Offender of 1977. Funds must be allocated to community agencies working with female offenders to find housing and jobs, and for counselling in social skills. And those very few who must now be segregated because they are dangerous require a much more appropriate facility.

Women who go to prison have demonstrated their unwillingness to remain in traditional roles, in relation to their social context. They are stigmatized for their social class. Labels such as convict, applied to increasing numbers of women, can insidiously reinforce limits of what is acceptable behaviour for females. Women as a class remain in a very tenuous position and cannot afford to be divided along socio-economic class lines. We cannot afford to misunderstand the struggle of other women. The politics of prisons is far more complex than symptomatic riots.

The women's movement is the most powerful social force today because it is founded on the premise of creating options for all women, and men, to live the most fulfilling lives possible. A critical gauge of its success is in what way we are indeed our sisters' keepers.



Courtesy Elizabeth Fry Society

At Vanier, our basic approach was the concept of 'therapeutic community' and the use of the staff in relation to the needs of the people coming into that system. Some could respond to that approach and others couldn't. Some needed that and others didn't. If you could be flexible with it, it worked. I think self-sufficient work within an institution can be quite a healthy dynamic if the staff know what they are doing with it, if it can be fitted in with a lot of other approaches.

**JF:** Do you think work will be used as a social tool or simply to make money and keep people busy?

**DC:** That's a danger. The monetary restraints are becoming quite prodigious. It's much harder to get money for prison programs than for mental or physical health programs. It's the difference in tags! We have a society that will respond to physical health care, probably be mediocre in its response to mental health, and be much less adamant was a real hue and cry when health insurance premiums were going up, the same with cutbacks in hospitals. You don't hear nearly the same cry when that happens in corrections.

**JF:** Who is responsible for public education in the corrections field?

**DC:** I think the government tries to do something about education up to a point, although that's always suspect because the government tends to react to public opinion, rather than be the descriptive, creative interpreter. So public education is left to private agencies or community groups. The media has a rather substantial effect on public opinion. Many times the only thing that hits the headlines is so highly charged it is detrimental. Because of the negative coverage of one or two cases, a whole successful program may get shot down.

**JF:** So, what are your predictions for the next five years?

**DC:** I think that the move to community programs will continue because it makes economic sense. That depends on how much the "hard line" holds sway, which it tends to do when economic times are severe. If we get tighter and tighter economically, we may see a swing towards "lock them up and throw away the key." But even if the human element can be disregarded it is not a good investment. That may be enough to keep the "hard line" somewhat flexible.

# BROADSIDES

by Susan G. Cole

## FOX POPULI

Well, naturally the big election news was the revival of Pierre Elliot Trudeau. And we can suppose that his return deserves miles of newsprint space. But have you noticed that there has hardly been a whimper about the return of another politician who theoretically had had it. Remember Francis Fox? He was the one who put his John Hancock on an Ottawa hospital document, giving a physician the right to give a woman an abortion. That's the way they do it at this particular hospital. A woman cannot receive a therapeutic abortion without the consent of her husband. Except that Francis Fox was not the husband of the woman who wanted to terminate her pregnancy. Fraud, maybe. Some vague kind of wrongdoing to be sure. Nobody could figure out quite what to call it. Whatever it was, it provoked Fox to resign his Cabinet post.

Mr. Fox is back with us in Parliament now, back with us in the Cabinet in fact (as Secretary of State) and he trundles back to Ottawa with a whopping majority's support. True enough, most Liberals had an easy time of it in Québec this time around, and Fox has always been enormously popular in his constituency. But the fact remains that Quebeckers (Catholics mostly) ushered Fox back into his post in spite of the fact that he participated underhandedly in the delivery of a service that is supposedly such anathema that the Liberal Government consistently refused to fashion legislation that would make safe abortion legal and accessible to all women (and not just to paramours of government ministers).

The new government should take the case at face value. Abortion is not the political hot potato the Liberals have always said it is or Francis Fox would not presently be a Member of Parliament. For goodness sake, the Prime Minister can't honestly think it is or he would not have named the only slightly sullied Francis Fox to a Cabinet post.

The present abortion legislation allows hospitals to create quotas for the number of abortions performed. It leaves Therapeutic Abortion Committees the right to deny women the service. It even allows hospitals the right to do no abortions at all. The result is an eight-week delay between the time a woman discovers she is pregnant and the time she can terminate her pregnancy. The longer the woman has to wait, the greater the risk to her health.

The signature required by the Ottawa hospital in question is but another patriarchal idiosyncrasy: under provincial legislation, hospitals are permitted complete prerogative to choose their own abortion policies as long as they comply with Federal abortion legislation. Fox was a member of the government that settled for an abortion law which posed bureaucratic problems of exactly the kind he encountered on that fateful day at the Ottawa hospital. Fox was hoist by his own petard.

Now that he's back, it's reasonable to expect him to take the lead in changing the abortion law. The government's hypocrisy on this issue is a bit hard to swallow.

## HOT TIP

*We are always ready to hear from you if you have experienced or heard something that deserves to be Broad-sided. Our first guest Broad-sider, Debra Martens, tells the story of what it's like being a member of the waiting class.*

I am working as a waitress this year in order to save money for my last year at University. My employer pays me \$2.50 an hour, and allows me to keep my tips after he deducts almost fifty percent. He enforces this deduction by giving managers control of the cash at the end of the shift. Fifteen percent of the tips is first given to the busboy, which is fair. The manager then takes from the tips three percent of each waiter's total sales for himself. He gets paid \$6 an hour to act as host and bartender, and he does not get affected by whether or not the patrons are generous with their tips, because his cut always comes out of the total sales.

Theoretically, our wage is low because our income is supplemented by gratuities. There is no legislation guaranteeing that the waiter will receive the gratuities. The law does say, "No deductions can be made from an employee's wages except required by law, or those agreed to by the employee in writing." But gratuities are not considered an employee's wages, except in theory, certainly not legally. Moreover, if the waiter were to request such a written agreement, he would probably not get hired, being regarded as a troublemaker. Waiting persons are expected to be servile in more respects than one. The employer, therefore, can take all the tips and use them to pay the hourly wage. Waiting persons are not guaranteed a ten percent tip at all.

Certainly the justification for a low wage isn't that our work is easier than most. It is harder. The better the restaurant, the more pressure for the waiter. I work from 5:30 to closing (1:00 to 2:00 am), non stop. There is no coffee break, no chance to sit down, no "lunch hour". The nature of the work dictates that one cannot stop or the patrons will have their evening disrupted and so get

a trifle upset. No doubt I've walked hundreds of miles while continuously serving.

The absence of any sort of union makes the owner a tyrant. When he began deducting from tips for the management's sake, all the waiters where I work walked out. He fired them all, and hired new staff. No one complains because everyone is dispensable. There is no concept of rewarding loyalty or good work. Quite the opposite. If you are a good waiter, you are the first called to fill in for someone who didn't show up. If you refuse to work extra shifts, you find yourself on the blacklist, getting the worst hours and the most incompetent co-workers. Further, there is no paid sick leave. In fact, you are lucky to get time off.

The owner and managers smile benevolently while you laugh off obnoxious men who flirt, who grab. If you do not laugh, you will make a scene. If you make a scene, the owner will take you aside and give you a warning, with a lecture on the necessity of always being pleasant. And what of the owner's straying hand?

Finally, the owner of course takes advantage of the law: "The Act no longer requires employers to provide private transportation for female employees finishing or starting work between the hours of midnight and 6:00 am..." When 2:00 rolls around, the subway is long closed, and you, who are so tired you can hardly walk, never mind fight off muggers or rapists, find yourself throwing away your \$2.50 an hour for taxi fare.

I return to the government's participation in this pact. If a waiter is forced to collect Unemployment, the rate received is based on the hourly wage, not on the waiter's total earnings. It is the total earnings, however, which the waiter is expected to declare for federal income tax. While the Ministry of Tourism treats tourists royally, the Ontario Ministry of Labour gives the waiting class a royal screw.

□ Debra Martens

## DEW LINE OR BLUE LINE?

You have seen your faithful Broad-sider sing the praises of organized sports in other pages of this newspaper (Volume I, Number 1). I had said that pushing, shoving, tackling, running and slugging on the football field (or whatever arena) was better than war and a relatively benign method of keeping aggressive types off the streets and away from guns.

While the American hockey team was beating the Soviets at the winter Olympics in Lake Placid, a partisan sports fan commented that the Soviets were playing as if they knew they shouldn't be in Afghanistan. Indeed that hockey match was fraught with political overtones and could have served as a splendid method of solving international conflicts. In fact, Americans responded as if that was exactly what happened. They went berserk with glee, not just in the arena but all over the country, when the victory was reported. According to folks in the United States, innocence and justice — the underdog — had triumphed.

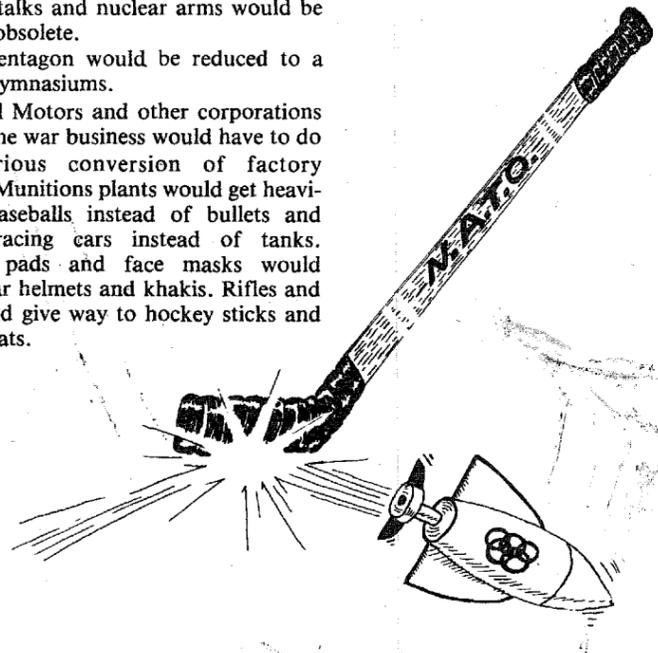
All this nationalism is hard to swallow but a hockey game does beat tanks and nuclear warheads. Just think what could happen if that hockey match and others like it had been set up as a means of negotiating world crises.

1. SALT talks and nuclear arms would be rendered obsolete.
2. The Pentagon would be reduced to a maze of gymnasiums.
3. General Motors and other corporations active in the war business would have to do some serious conversion of factory facilities. Munitions plants would get heavily into baseballs instead of bullets and develop racing cars instead of tanks. Shoulder pads and face masks would replace war helmets and khakis. Rifles and guns would give way to hockey sticks and baseball bats.

4. The issue of the draft would cease to divide the women's movement.

5. Canadians would never have to worry that our leaders will get infected with war fever. Anyone who knows anything (let's give our politicians the benefit of the doubt) is aware that Canadians seldom finish better than eighth, and with that kind of record, our government will do its best not to get mixed up in any foolish hostilities. There is one exception, the matter of fishing rights, in which instance it would be wide to send in our hockey players. They're fairly reliable.

6. The recent American victory over the Russian hockey team would have forced the Soviets out of Afghanistan. This would have been a good thing, not for any partisan political reasons, but because it would have put an end to the American boycott of the summer Olympics in Moscow. Which would allow the summer Olympics to be the ecstatic event it should be instead of the half-hearted contest among the eastern European countries it could very well turn out to be. As it stands now, the American boycott has sunk this sports fanatic into a fit of depression.



## MINE SHAFT

Wonderful, isn't it. We have women in the Cabinet. There is a hitch or two. Judy Erola (MP Nickel Belt) was named Minister of State for Mines but she must report to Marc Lalonde, Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Now before your feminist minds go haywire and you assume that Ms. Erola does not have the confidence of the Prime Minister, you must understand that Ms.

Erola shouldn't take this matter personally. There is a larger issue here.

Federal legislation does not permit women to work in underground mines under federal jurisdiction. This certainly makes the new Minister of Mines' job tricky. It's nice that the government has covered itself by making sure that it's Mr. Lalonde who actually goes down into the mines but plainly, Judy Erola should work to change that legislation. Maybe it would make her job easier.

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# Soft Correspondence

In this column **Mary Hemlow**, *Broadside's* woman-on-the-hill, attempts to catch up on some of her more pressing correspondence . . . . .

Dear Ms Hemlow:

What is "sexual orientation" and why is everyone talking about it?

Wondering

Dear Wondering:

Sexual orientation is, quite plainly, having/watching/dreaming of/ sex with people in or from the Orient. The term may also be applied (although not absolutely correctly) to having sex with anyone at all in the Orient or in an oriental atmosphere. Everyone talks about it because governments and Human Rights Commissions are against it and, of course, because everyone likes to talk about sex anyway. I hope this is helpful to you.

In Sisterhood,  
MH

Dear Ms Hemlow:

I'm having a child in a few weeks and I'd like to name him or her after the new Minister Responsible For the Status of Women. What is his name?

Summer Blues

Dear Summer:

His name is Lloyd. I suggest you think it over.

In sisterhood,  
MH

Dear Ms Hemlow:

The other night some *Broadside* women were saying that Ottawa was setting up a Cabinet Minister sperm bank. Is this true? How can I gain access?

Yetta Scurl

Dear Ms. Scurl:

Well, I understood the government was going in for *cloning*, but the women at *Broadside* seem to know everything so it's likely true. However, there is no access to

anything in Ottawa for people who do not live there. Just forget it.

In sisterhood  
MH

Dear Ms Hemlow:

What is an *orgasm* and why does everyone want one? Is it something Ottawa gives out only to rich people?

Confused

Dear Confused:

An *orgasm* is a state of violent excitement or rage — the height of veneral excitement, for example. It is important that you not confuse this with *orgeat* which is a cooling drink made from barley or almonds and orange-flower water, although perhaps the two could be experienced together. As far as I'm aware, there are no *orgasms* in Ottawa, but you could try your provincial government. *Orgeat* is available here

though and is very popular with public servants, rich and poor.

In sisterhood,  
MH

Dear Ms Hemlow:

What is a role model?

Amazing Grace

Dear Ms Grace:

A role model is a woman with a terrific job with a huge salary, a big car, a luxury apartment, spiffy clothes and all that. Other women are supposed to try to get the same kind of job (or even *her* job, if they're smart enough) as soon as possible. The idea behind all this — the goal — is that eventually Canada will be completely populated by women with huge salaries, big cars, luxury apartments, spiffy clothes and all that. As there are no jobs, the plan was bogged down a bit, but likely it will all work out as we march together towards equality. Best of luck.

In sisterhood  
MH



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# ARTS

## Framed Again

by Susan Sturman

Two recent posters have spawned a mini-controversy in the local alternate press. It seems that feminists are once again the bad guys, unwittingly siding with the right-wing forces of repression and censorship, and the forces of truth and beauty have taken it upon themselves to slap our hands for it.

One of the posters was an advertisement for *Fireweed's* National Women's Playwriting Competition, the other for a feminist art series, *Six of One*. Both featured images of women that some found to be exploitative and sexist; women expressed criticism to the organizers of both events and in some cases refused to display the posters. Both David Roche in *The Body Politic* (December 1979/January 1980) and Elizabeth Chitty in *FUSE* (January 1980) take women to task for our criticism of the posters; they claim the response is "anti-sexual" rather than anti-sexist.

Like so many others who have appointed themselves guardians of "freedom of expression", of "anti-censorship", Chitty and Roche condemn women who are questioning patriarchal assumptions behind (hetero) sexuality and reclaiming our sexual power as women. They mistake a creative, transformative politics for a reactive one, and dump on "feminists" as the naive "tools" of "neo-puritanism", instead of addressing patriarchy as the perpetrator.

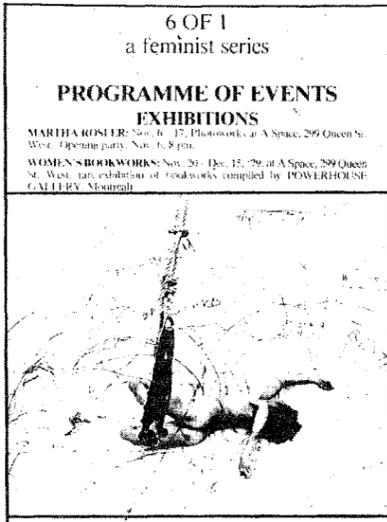


*Fireweed's* poster features a large woman hiding her naked body behind an IBM Selectric, her hands caught in the typewriter and her feet in wobbly stiletto-heeled shoes. Her blonde wig is tousled and the expression on her face could be either one of surprise or fear; it's hard to tell. If threatened, she is certainly trapped; if surprised, she may be ashamedly clutching the typewriter over herself as fig leaf to cover her body. This image, coupled with the cutesy slogan "But can she write?" parrots the worst in "enlightened" sexist advertising, which gives a facetious little nod to the women's movement while it goes on to exploit women in the same way it has been doing all along.

When Roche asks, "Can't anyone take a joke anymore?", it sounds suspiciously close to what I used to hear from men when I refused to laugh at their sexist jokes. We have been told for a decade that the women's movement has no sense of humour. Women don't respond to those remarks with a raunchier version of the same joke to prove that we do have a sense of humour ("just one of the boys").

The second poster, produced for the feminist performance art series *Six of One*, features an image of a nude woman, her back to the viewer, hanging from a leather harness in front of a wall covered with writing. Many women saw the image as being disturbingly masochistic, and criticized its representation of woman's body as object. Chitty chides "the feminist community" (whatever that is), from which she clearly holds herself at arm's length, for making "spontaneous, superficial judgements" on the poster.

"Few were interested", she says, "in the content of the art piece being represented or any ramifications the image might have in a broader context." Hogwash. A poster is generally meant to be taken in "spontaneously". Nowhere on the front of the poster is the information supplied that this is a picture of artist Carolee Schneemann performing her art piece, "Up To and Including Her Limits", nor does this information shed any new light on the image. Does the fact that it's removed to the level of "Art" somehow make it different? What "broader context" is Chitty talking about? Schneemann herself has written: "I use my nude body in 'Up To and Including Her Limits' as the stripped-down, undecorated object".



If the image was meant to convey something else and doesn't, it is perhaps the fault of its creator, not the viewer. We do not necessarily know when we look at the *Fireweed* poster that the woman in the poster is artist Tanya Rosenberg, and that the image is part of a series of photo cartoons she created called *Super-secretary*.

Perhaps if we saw each of these two art pieces for themselves they would convey different meanings, but they have been placed in the context of advertising, and that is what we see. One may argue that a failure to see beyond the objectification in these two woman-created images constitutes an *acceptance* of our patriarchal acculturation to see women as objects, and is therefore anti-feminist, but the fact is we are surrounded by the image of woman as object every day. There is nothing particularly new or feminist inherent in this presentation simply because it is made by a woman.

To be really creative and positive in a feminist sense is to be sensitive to the complexities of patriarchal acculturation and social stereotypes and to create (dis-cover, invent) something totally outside of them, not simply a mirror reversal of or a knee-jerk reaction to patriarchal modes. It is the presentation of an alternate reality or possibility that is incendiary and ultimately liberating.

Both Chitty and Roche accuse feminists of "puritanism", of being "anti-sexual" in rejecting these images. If we don't accept them with a sense of humour, we are, according to Chitty, turning the struggle against the sexual exploitation of women into "a tool of anti-sexuality and repressive puritanism".

Both Rosenberg and Schneemann contend that they are challenging the "anti-sexual" attitudes of society by expressing their sexuality aggressively in their images, and that it is especially shocking for women to do so, when they are expected by men to be beautiful but passive sexual objects. That is, they are prepared to express *heterosexuality* aggressively. The patriarchy is all for aggressive heterosexuality, especially from women, not that the so-called Sexual

Revolution has shown men how they can have more of a good thing. Schneemann has described her piece as "celebratory", about "flying", "freedom". It seems ironic that she should "celebrate" her "freedom" in bondage, but then, that's what it's all about. Heterosexist oppression of women continues, as self-exploitation is accepted as "sexual freedom".

We've seen this movie before — remember *Snuff*? Women were accused of supporting the right-wing Clean Up Yonge Street campaign and of supporting repressive state censorship when we sought to close down a film which featured the brutal murder of women for sexual titillation. Both the libertarian porno-pushers and the repressive state commit violence against women. Welcome to patriarchy.

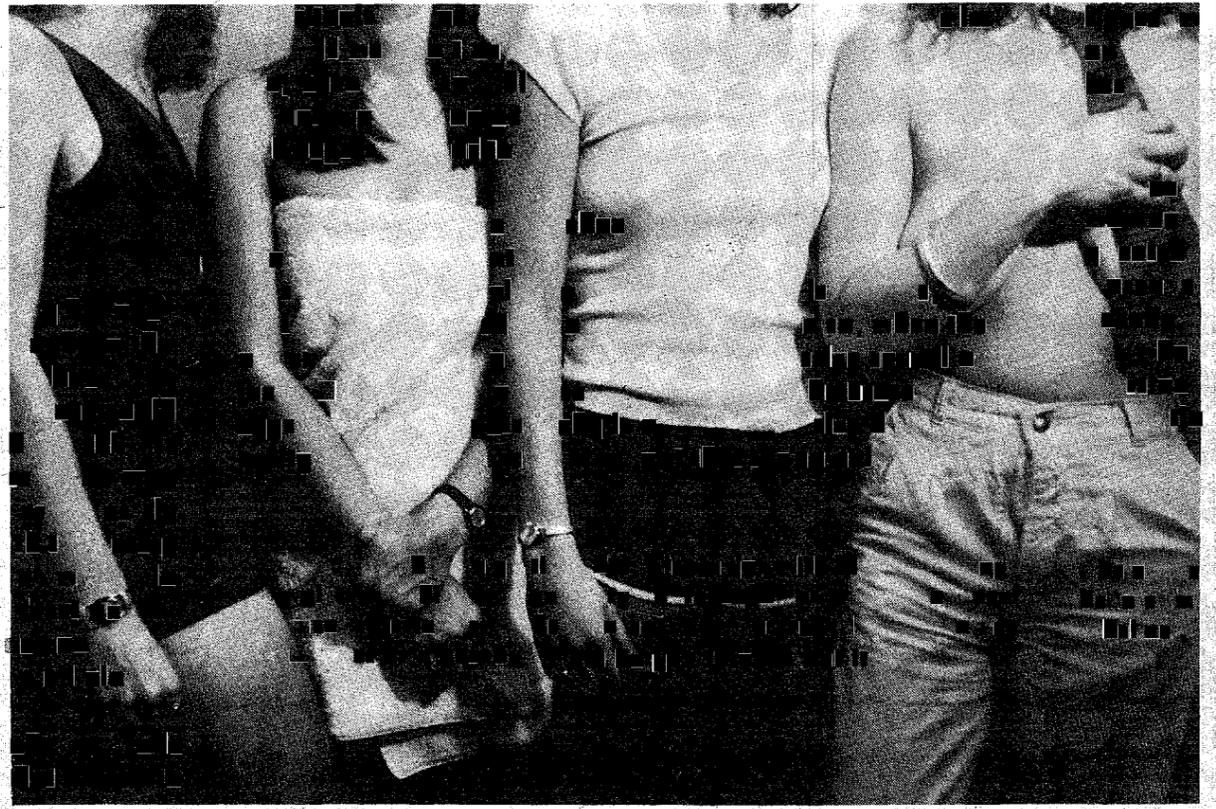
Yet women are constantly being guilted into embracing our sexual exploitation at the hands of men as "freedom". Otherwise we are labelled "uptight", "frigid", "reactionary", or just plain "dykes". Roche advocated the "Embrace Your Stereotypes" philosophy of early Gay Liberation. I'm afraid that for women the stereotypes are still too real a symbol of our oppression; it's hard to laugh at that. And anyway, do we really *want* to reclaim stiletto heels?

It is thus not surprising that a negative response to the poster images would come from women who choose to define our sexuality outside of the institution of heterosexism, not in response to any male challenge. We have suffered oppression by that institution as a result of that choice. A lesbian/feminist artist, like filmmaker Barbara Hammer, whose art centres around woman-directed and woman-defined sexuality and eroticism, cannot even bring many of her films across the border; they are too threatening to heterosexist patriarchy.

Yet a blatantly exploitative, violent and false definition (by men) of lesbian sexuality in *Windows*, *The Killing of Sister George*, or any soft-core porn flick is admissible. Women's sexuality and reality are already being censored and distorted; our response to that violence is not censorship. It is a struggle to overturn the exploitation.

A woman's use of her own body image in art (or even self-promotion) is bound to be controversial and problematic; it crosses so many lines. As Lucy Lippard has noted: "We are raised to be aware that our faces and figures will affect our fortunes, and to mold these parts of ourselves, however insecure we may feel about them, into forms that will please the (male) audience. When we use our own bodies in our art work, we are using *ourselves*. However, there are ways and ways of using our bodies, and women have not always avoided self-exploitation. A woman artist's approach to herself is necessarily complicated by social stereotypes." This is certainly true of Rosenberg's "self-image" in the *Fireweed* poster. It may be parody, but one has the uneasy feeling that it is not the artist who gets the last laugh. Flaunting (hetero)"sexual expression" as a form of protest in the face of a male-defined perception of female sexuality is not essentially a challenge to that perception; it may only serve to reinforce it.

And, as a parting shot, I leave you with the accompanying picture, which is a publicity photograph for a group of local women entertainers. The concept was devised by the women themselves as a parody. What do *you* think about it?



# Lorna Glover Of Scales, Screams and Dream-houses

by Deena Rasky

When Lorna Glover says she's had a terrible time with the critics, you know she's not exaggerating. Lorna has been playing the violin with a variety of groups across Canada, including The Toronto Symphony, Cabaretta, the National Ballet Orchestra and the New Chamber Orchestra. She has given numerous solo performances including her own compositions and has introduced many Baroque violin pieces to appreciative Toronto audiences. Yet the critics have avoided her, effectively making her and her wonderful music invisible. Feminists know her from all-women events such as the Champaign, Illinois Music Festival and have read of her performances in *Paid My Dues*, the women's music publication; but there is scarce mention of her in the mainstream media.

Sitting in her Toronto home with her cat Cloë draped around her shoulders, she offers some explanation. "The critics don't write reviews about the concerts, they're writing to sell papers. They don't perform their duties as critics. They don't tell their readers what's happening."

Nor has the male music hierarchy been overly helpful to women. Lorna bitterly tells of one conductor in Toronto who was known for hiring women "because he was a lech. He wanted women in the string section because they're nicer to look at." At university, Lorna encountered the same attitude. Her instructor openly told her that he would prefer male students "because the males were supposed to be the breadwinners." Times have changed considerably — there are in many cases more women than men in a symphony orchestra. Still, the conductor is male and if a section isn't playing loud enough, as Lorna recently experienced, it's promptly told: "Don't play like girls."

Regardless of these obstacles, Lorna continues to be a dedicated musician, one who has worked hard and practised often for many years and performs exceedingly well. She clearly remembers how on the thirteenth of September at the age of seven, she had her first violin to play. "I was so happy about it. I really wanted to do it. When I was a kid I practised a lot. I would run into the house and play for ten minutes and then my arm would get tired and then I would run outside again."

Before moving to Toronto her mother would play for the local dances in Maple, Ontario or play the organ at church. She gave this up and worked as a secretary so that her daughter could study violin in New York and Indiana. Lorna also has an elder sister who performs choral work in Edmonton.

Lorna's first instructor was Jack Montague, a good friend and assistant to the legendary violinist, Kathleen Parlow. When Lorna was in her early teens and giving recitals, Parlow would give her tutoring in her home.



Deena Rasky

was a world renowned musician in the early 1900's and revered in Canada until her death in 1963, but memory of this exceptional woman is not as widespread as it should be. During her teens, Parlow was sponsored by Lord Strathcona to study in St. Petersburg under Auer, teacher of such greats as Mischa Elman and Jascha Heifetz. Parlow later toured the world with her mother as companion, even during the world wars. Her playing was often considered comparable to Heifetz', who was a number of years her junior.

Parlow settled down in Toronto with her mother (she never married) to teach advanced students. Some of Parlow's students include Morry Kernerman of the Toronto Symphony and Giselle Mackenzie, a child prodigy on the violin who later became a TV singing star. Parlow spent many years performing for CBC radio with her string quartet. Her cousin wrote a biography entitled "Kathleen Parlow: A Portrait."

Lorna recalls with fondness going to Kathleen Parlow's home in Toronto for her tutoring. "Her walls were like museums. She had Chinese wall hangings and a whole wall of miniatures collected from all around the world. She gave me a couple of these. And some letters". One of the letters is from Leopold Auer when Parlow was a child.

When Lorna played her all-Bach concert on the baroque violin at Hart House in Toronto last month, she was reminded of how Parlow performed there many years before her. "She once reserved seats for my mum and me. When we got there, we didn't know they were for us. The usher said 'Oh, you can't sit in these seats, they're reserved!' Afterwards, we found out that they were for us. That place really impressed me as a kid. It's one of the few places in Toronto like that." Hart house has been "a dream house with a certain elegance" for Glover ever since, and she jumped at the chance to play there.

The baroque violin, with its shortened fingerboard and robust sound, differs radically from the violins we are accustomed to hearing today. Only a handful of dedicated musicians deal seriously with the instrument. Lorna, though she has been playing the baroque fiddle for a number of years, is still actively studying it and took last summer off so she could study under a specialist in Brussels. She compares the switchover to painting. "It's like painting in oils for a number of years and someone asks you 'now, paint the same in water-colour.'"

The change wasn't too traumatic as the instrument itself guides you to change your technique or, as Lorna puts it, "The more time you spend playing with it, the less you treat it like a modern instrument. If you try to put the lush constant vibrato on it for in-

stance, you kill the sound. It has qualities that are just as beautiful, but it's different."

Lorna feels perfectly at home with 18th century music, so much so that she includes little 20th century music in her repertoire. Her feelings about modern music are brief and to the point. "To me, it's like an intellectual game. When you have complicated rhythms, you have to count. In a way, it's fun, but it doesn't touch my gut. No, I couldn't care less about it."

She knows that she would be quite content to work on Bach baroque pieces for the rest of her life if it also paid the rent. Since it does not, she stays with the National Ballet orchestra and does occasional studio work when it comes her way. She also performs light classical music such as Strauss and Gershwin in the trio Cabaretta but is not able to take a total diet of that genre of music.

As for rock and roll, Glover can understand how people relate to its simple rhythms and enjoys dancing to the occasional hit song, but feels its very loudness makes a sad comment about the world today. "The volume increases as people need to get out of themselves. I think our whole society is screaming."

It would be false to state that Lorna Glover plays no 20th century music. After all, she herself is a composer and enjoys performing her own creations. She never studied composition formally, other than the harmony and counterpoint courses at Indiana University under Josef Giugold. With the encouragement of some close friends when she was 31, she started com-

posing music. She showed me a duet she was working on for violin and viola while explaining briefly how the music evolves.

"It comes from how I could make certain notes more intense. I'd write down notes to correspond with how I was feeling. It mulls around in my head for awhile, not even consciously. Then I sing it over and over and what comes next is a certain flow. It doesn't have a preplanned form such as a concerto or sonata form."

She compares writing music to writing poetry, but she says she hates doing it because she never knows how long it will take. "I don't know if it's going to take me 5 hours, a week or every day for a month." In the end though, it works out like a jigsaw puzzle and provides some ideas for compositions in the future.

When Lorna Glover plays her own compositions, one is overwhelmed by the intensity of her rapport with the violin. The same holds true when she is playing Bach on the baroque violin. It's a feeling that is not forgotten quickly or easily.

It is the same kind of rapport that Lorna's mentor Kathleen Parlow poetically described to one of her students many years ago.

"The violin is an exacting jealous magician who will not yield the melody to those who question with idle, loveless hands:

*Its secrets it will not tell  
to those who cannot question well  
the spirit that inhabits it.  
It talks according to the wit  
of its companions and no more  
is heard than has been felt before."*

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Kathleen Parlow

Kathleen Parlow, born 1890 in Alberta,

# Reeling over the Assumptions

by Barbara Halpern Martineau

In previous issues of *Broadside* I have focussed on dramatic feature films and their implications for feminism. Films, especially dramatic films, work on the level of attitude and image — the presence or absence of women or men in strong or weak roles, their clothes, tone of voice, surroundings, lighting, music, all affect not only our reactions to characters, but our attitudes to what they represent.

If we only saw movies where all the bus drivers were women with short curly hair, we would probably assume that driving a bus is "naturally" a woman's job, and we might look at women with short curly hair and wonder if they were bus drivers. Of course, if this clashed decisively with our life experience in which all bus drivers were always balding men we would question the movies' assumption. But, like other mass media, movies generally work to reinforce assumptions which are already widespread in the culture.

In other words, they support the dominant ideology. It is more difficult to challenge a dominant ideology than to support it. One is likely to be accused of being dogmatic, shrill, narrow-minded, unrealistic, etc., if one, say, makes a movie in which there are no strong male characters, a happy and stable lesbian couple raising children successfully, and a conflict which consists of an unreasonable and bureaucratic judicial system trying to take the children away from their mother and "award" them to their alcoholic father.

It is at this point in the thought-process that film makers interested in challenging the dominant ideology may turn to the documentary mode as a solution. After all, we all know that truth is stranger than fiction. So if very few people would believe the outline suggested above in a dramatic film, why not find some actual happy lesbian couples successfully raising children and film that? Get the children to talk about their experiences and their feelings, show them playing, talk to the mothers, check out the legal situation. A film night, in fact has, resulted which strongly suggests that living with their lesbian mothers is very often in the best interests of the children.

Let's go back to the example of the bus-drivers for a moment. Suppose there was a law, or maybe just a strong cultural assumption that only men could drive buses. Suppose then that women who really wanted to drive buses, or who desperately needed the job, or who had a crush on the dispatcher, whatever, disguised themselves as men, with fake moustaches, beards, paunches. And in fact there were lots of women driving buses, but everyone believed that only men could, and movies showed that only men did.



Frances Reid

Then a movie came along, a documentary which showed that women could and did drive buses, and liked it, and did a good job, and deserved to belong to the busdrivers' union, and demand daycare for their children, and get maternity leave if they needed it. I think such a movie could properly be called political, and educational, and documentary in the root sense of the word the Latin *docere*, which means to teach.

There is a wide range of opinion nowadays about what documentary films can or should be like, what they can accomplish, to whom they are addressed and so forth. I myself tend to take on challenges routinely, and so when I set out to make a documentary about the experience of children in day care, I thought of how I could question and perhaps change some deep assumptions: that small children are best cared for at home by their mothers; that our society values children and takes an active interest in their well-being. While the day care film was in production another group of women in California were approaching the issue of childrearing from a different, related perspective.

*In the Best Interests of the Children* makes the point, clearly, strongly, and from the mouths of professionals, mothers, and

children, that the child's well-being is often the last consideration in custody battles. *Good Day Care: One Out of Ten* makes the point, through historical analysis and present-day testimony by teachers and parents, that children have traditionally been used as pawns in economic class games, and their fate has been linked to the exploitation of their mother's labour, as during World War II, when day care magically became available so that women could join the workforce. When the war was over the centres magically disappeared.

Although children as well as their mothers have suffered and continue to suffer from government indifference, yet we persist in the belief that our society cares for children, in fact centres itself on them. We also tend to believe that our society honours and cherishes motherhood.

Simply to argue against deep beliefs is not usually effective. Documentary film technique offers some effective methods of persuasion, a kind of grass-roots alternative to the mass sentimentality produced by a feature film like *Kramer Vs. Kramer*. At its best, documentary can provide a balance between the realistic depiction of people "like you and me" going about their lives, and intelligent comment from those same people about the issues which affect them.

So, in *Best Interests of the Children*, the most powerful persuasion is the presentation of the children's own testimony, a happy child singing with her (lesbian) mother, a calm statement from an older child that "if my friends won't accept my mother for what she is, then forget them," footage of a family picnic. This is put in perspective by the remark of a woman social worker that: "When we go to court with the case of a lesbian mother, somehow the burden is on us to prove that the lesbian mother is not only a fit mother in her own right, but a superior mother in every aspect... and the truth of the matter is that the lesbian mother has as much right to be a mediocre mother as any other mother does."

In *Good Day Care* the statement by a day care worker that "we actively combat stereotypes — boys and girls are encouraged to express their emotions — this is part of what the parents expect from the day care" is supported by scenes of a little boy crying and being consoled by another little boy, girls hammering and sawing, and finally, a comic explosion. Lindsay, talking about how boys play with dolls to learn to be good daddies is asked, "Are you going to be a daddy when you grow up?" and he replies "Nope. A fireman!" It's hard to argue that that clear small being would be better off spending his days at home while his mother waxes the kitchen floor.

A criticism levelled at both films is the lack of negative vision — the undeniable horror stories of child abuse linked to both issues are hinted at but not explored in either film. I was recently in California and spoke with the producers of *Best Interests*, Liz Stevens and Frances Reid. We agreed about the reasons why we had, independently, come to the same conclusions — that an essentially positive vision offers hope and motivation to people to work for change; there is need to acknowledge and respond to abuse; and, the knowledge of a positive alternative makes it easier to keep going.

"My way of being political is to be hopeful." — Liz Stevens, Berkeley, 1980.

*In the Best Interests of the Children* was produced by Iris Films (Frances Reid, Liz Stevens, and Cathy Sheutlin); 16 mm, colour, 53 min., USA.

*Good Day Care: One Out of Ten* was produced by Good News Productions (Barbara Halpern Martineau, Lorna Rasmussen); 16 mm, colour, 28 min, Canada.

Both films are distributed by DEC Films, 121 Avenue Road, Toronto 416-964-6901. *Good Day Care* is also distributed in Vancouver by IDERA, 2524 Cypress St., 604-738-8815; and a French version is available from Cinema Libre, 2394 E. Sherbrooke St., Montreal, 514-526-0473.



# As the World Gawks

by Patricia O'Leary

Is Margaret Trudeau a nut? a bitch? or an ordinary woman whose identity crisis at 28 was acted out in full glare of a world gawking?

And what about Pierre? A coldly reasoning Machiavelli? an irresponsible tyrant chauvinist? or a locked-off, nobly pathetic, deserted husband?

A play currently running at the Theatre Passe Muraille in Toronto, and shortly to tour Canada, explores the life of our Golden Ex-Couple. Lynda Griffiths, an enterprising and talented actress, has researched, written, and acts all the parts in *Maggie and Pierre*, an inventive and fascinating look at the Trudeaus.

Griffiths calls the play a fantasy. She and director Paul Thompson have put together a series of vignettes that describe the changes Maggie & Pierre have undergone publicly in 11 years. Some of the scenes are factual, such as the famous confrontation between Pierre and the CBC's Tim Ralfe in October, 1970. Ralfe had asked Trudeau how far he was prepared to go to stop the violence of the FLQ, and Pierre replied: "Just watch me." Other scenes, like the one where Margaret changes from perfect daughter to flower child, come from Griffiths' imagination.

Griffiths' changes from character to character are smoothly done. Besides Margaret and Pierre, there is also a journalist who can't help still being fascinated by the pair even after all these years. All three characters are well-defined, and the

sketches fit well together. The treatment is generally sympathetic to the subjects, interspersed with wry humour at their foibles; the Trudeaus are not ordinary, but they are human, and we are invited to appreciate this.

Lynda Griffiths is best as Pierre; she captures his tones of voice and his supercilious look perfectly, but she also makes him a bit pathetic sometimes. Maggie is harder to characterize and Griffiths doesn't quite catch her. In real life there is a slightly harder and more unlikeable edge to Margaret than Griffiths gives her — she plays Maggie more like Diane Keaton.

But the things Maggie says are devastatingly right. We can see not only that Margaret Trudeau is an undisciplined little spoiled brat, but also that she is caught in a public bind with an old-fashioned, undemonstrative husband whose refuge in cold reason would make anyone trying to work out her emotions appear silly, weak, crazy and bad.

Henry, the journalist, serves to tie the show together. His naive cynicism gives an interesting picture of the press that alternately revered and hated Trudeau, loved and was disappointed by Margaret, and played a large part in presenting a Trudeau persona to the public.

*Maggie & Pierre* will be in Saskatoon in late March, Toronto again in April, Vancouver in May and June, with a possible tour through Ontario in the fall, ending with Ottawa and then Montreal.



Courtesy Theatre Passe Muraille

Lynda Griffiths as Pierre Trudeau in *Maggie & Pierre* at Theatre Passe Muraille.

## Angi Vera: Anti-Dogma

by Jean Wilson

*Angi Vera* Directed by Pál Gábor. With Veronika Papp. A New Yorker Films Release, 1979.

When I first described the Hungarian film *Angi Vera* to a friend, I said it was in black and white. It isn't. It's shot in sombre shades of grey and green and brown, and it's set in dreary institutions where most people either mouth the party line or are afraid to express themselves at all. It is the very narrowness and bleakness of these people's lives and the depiction of how an individual sacrifices her personal life for political reward that made *Angi Vera* black and white in my memory.

This is a powerful and moving film with many levels of interpretation. Directed by Pál Gábor and released in 1979, the film has won several international awards and for once there seems to be some justification for such recognition.

*Angi Vera* (the title is the name of the main character, her names being reversed in the Hungarian fashion) is based on a novel of that title by Endré Vészi. It is set in 1948, when the postwar communist regime was being established in Hungary. The various trade unions in the country have recently been amalgamated and selected citizens are being given three-month indoctrination courses in dialectics and self-discipline as part of the regime's attempt to strengthen its support.

Initially, one's North American vagueness about this political situation and Hungarian history is disconcerting. On investigation, it seems that *Angi Vera* is in part an attack on the regime of Mátyás Rákosi, the Stalinist ruler who came to power in Hungary in 1949 and was ousted in 1956. Ultimately, however, the viewers' lack of specific knowledge isn't all that important because the situation depicted as infinite variations and occurs whenever there are people, under whatever political regime:

The actual story of the film is centred on a young woman, Vera Angi, who evolves from being a shy, politically naive, and passionate eighteen-year-old to being a dedicated and ambitious communist. Veronika Papp, who plays Vera, develops this character with enormous subtlety and compassion. Her controlled, wide-eyed, calculating Vera is physically and intellectually haunting. When, near the end of the film, at a meeting of her colleagues and party representatives, Vera confesses her brief affair with the gentle, vulnerable instructor of the indoctrination course, one is shocked at her compulsion to confess — the confession will obviously have unfortunate consequences for him if not for her as well — and yet one is persuaded that she is doing so in utter sincerity, however wrong-headed it may seem. Vera rarely verbalizes the intellectual changes she is experiencing in the course of the film, which is partly why her confession is shocking. One's instinct up to

that point is to sympathize with her in her affair with André István, played by Tamás Dunai, and in most of her relations with other course members, towards whom she seems to be compassionate rather than judgemental.

Erzsi Pásztor as Vera's mentor, Anna Traján, a former Resistance fighter and a dedicated party journalist, and Eva Szabó as Mária Muskát, the outspoken, earthy peasant communist with whom Vera comes increasingly in conflict because of Vera's increasing sublimation of her emotions, are also memorable supporting characters.

I think this is an important film, not only because it has been made with such craft — it is beautifully edited, acted, filmed, and directed — but also because it illustrates the self-destructiveness inherent in being doctrinaire on any philosophical, political, or religious grounds.

*Angi Vera* is not simply about how a young woman denies her emotional needs in order to be a cog in a communist machine. It is about the need to preserve individual integrity with as much intelligence and awareness as possible in order to avoid limiting oneself to a narrow and self-destructive point of view. It is obvious at the end of the film that Vera Angi will go far in the communist party in Hungary, but it is tragic what she sacrifices in order to achieve that goal.

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• NAC Vision, from page 5

A healthy economy depends on a flourishing manufacturing sector because this sector employs far more people than the resource industries and because the service industries — for instance, finance, insurance, real estate, public administration, utilities and communications — feed the manufacturing sector. When manufacturing slows down, the service industries which employ 81% of the paid female labour force decline.

Because both our resource and manufacturing industries are largely foreign owned, it's in the interest of the parent plants to pressure us into selling them cheap resources, raising our domestic oil prices to reduce our competitive manufacturing edge, and instituting free trade agreements which hurt precisely those industries that employ the most women (as a cheap and therefore internationally competitive labour pool).

If there were any good news to counter this vision of hard times ahead for women, it would have to be the ascendance of a federal government opposed to free trade, higher oil prices to the manufacturing sector, massive exports of raw materials, foreign ownership and deficit financing. Given their past record, the Liberals are unlikely to be such a government. A majority Trudeau government is also unlikely to be receptive to lobbying actions by concerned women.

The two final speakers attempted a more positive tone by outlining what feminists can do to improve women's economic status. In light of the economic future painted by Cohen and Robinson, it's difficult to have faith in either vision.

NAC President Lynn McDonald listed proposals around which we should lobby: compulsory industrial arts training for girls in the public schools; more job-sharing and flexible work hours; better maternity benefits; equal pay for work of equal value legislation (condemned in a Globe and Mail editorial March 10, and now stalled after second reading in the Ontario legislature); more and better child care; effective affirmative action programs within the civil service and within institutions that receive government funding.

All very well and good, but according to Cohen, when Trudeau met with NAC in a closed door session prior to the recent election, he rejected outright NAC's proposals on improving women's status and intoned that reforms are costly and the 80's will be times of restraint.

Madeleine Parent, Secretary Treasurer of the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union predictably argued women's only hope lies with the union movement: "Whatever their faults and limitations, unions are still the best vehicle to protect women in their place of work." The moot question, of course, is how well unions protect those 677,000 unemployed women (the official and hidden unemployed) Robinson cited from figures available for the last three months of 1979? And how will unions help the 81% of women in the service industries — the banks, big business, and food industries?

Parent, too, listed terms organized women should push for: fair wage classification structures; shorter work weeks and voluntary overtime; seniority clauses; and maternity benefits. The catch is that union organizers have not historically pressed for such benefits unless union women pushed them to it with strong representation in the union hierarchy at the local, provincial, and national level. How does the woman with family obligations spring the time to nag union bosses toward affirmative action within the union?

It's considered good form to conclude reports on feminist forums with some consolation or cause for optimism. It's not enough merely to name the enemy — though nothing gets done before that step is taken. (has been) "Visions" II poses a real puzzler in this regard. Literally the only proposal I heard which comforts me is organizing an income tax boycott by women in the paid labour force. Let's do it by the book. We'll continue to lobby governments and unions and industries through officially accepted channels, continue to cite statistics and enlightened theory, continue to remind the powerful that women are 52% of the population. Women should also contact the Feminist Party and sign the petition requiring 10,000 signatures to permit the Party to become legally constituted.

Meanwhile, as you fill out your income tax form in the next few weeks, or as you glower at dirty dishes fantasizing about a time when homemakers will be filling out tax forms and employed women won't be declaring inequitable UIC benefits as their total income, devote serious thought to a tax boycott demanding redress from the public servants who give so little thought to us. It's a vision breathtaking in its simplicity and its gut satisfaction.



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# MOVEMENT COMMENT

## Bill 3: False Rumours of Equal Pay's Death

In the hallway outside Committee Room 1, Toronto City Hall, reporters press Robert Elgie, Ontario Minister of Labour, for some answers. He doesn't say yes but won't say no. He performs verbal acrobatics, trying to avoid the red banner headline that nevertheless appears in the *Toronto Star* the next day: "Tories Turn Thumbs Down on Equal Pay Bill".

It is media coverage the provincial Conservatives dreaded last May when the federal election was just days away. Who needs that kind of headline in key Toronto ridings when you think you have a chance to unseat the Trudeau Liberals? And so, they let Bill 3 pass through Second Reading — very unusual treatment for a private member's bill.

Now it's March 6, 1980. Before meeting the reporters, Elgie makes a presentation to the Parliamentary Committee that has just passed the amended Bill after extensive public hearings. Elgie describes *equal pay*

for work of equal value as "an idea whose time has not yet come". Goodness, it that an echo?! In 1974 former Labour Minister John Macbeth said, "It's an idea the public has not accepted yet." And in 1977 John Scott, head of the Employment Standards Branch said, "It will take some time. It's somewhere in the future."

Nor should we depend on the media to do the job. Some of our fairweather "supporters" will start disappearing into the woodwork just about now, as women's right to decent wages is attacked on every front by those who believe women can be ripped off in the name of financing a sick economy. One need look no further than the *Toronto Star*, which faithfully gave editorial support for "equal value" legislation until January when it switched to a "Delay Equal Value Law" stance, favouring the "equal opportunities" and "improved enforcement of existing laws" that were bandied about by the Government as diversions from the issue at hand.

But, as we know, there is no innocent haste or procrastination in politics when money is involved. When it comes to wage controls, for example, the federal and provincial governments acted with due haste, refusing to put off until tomorrow what they could axe today.

No, it would not do for us to sit back and wait for Time to bring us more effective standards in our equal pay laws.

The Conservatives will hardly be an easy lot to convince. Although they know full well the extent of public support for tougher equal pay laws (even their own PC Women's Association having joined the chorus), the party is ever mindful of continued financial support from business organizations like the Canadian Manufacturers Association and the Chamber of Commerce in any coming provincial election. They may even hope to get some of the traditional small business support for the Liberals who after all supported the NDP's Bill 3, having themselves introduced

a similar private member's bill previously.

The Liberals can properly worry about financial support from groups such as the Canadian Organization of Small Businesses which has said "To put it mildly, we're delighted (the Bill) didn't go through."

And the NDP, even if it wanted to, could not alone topple the Government on issues of women's liberation. The fight, while focussed on legislative changes, will not be won if the legislators under the present setup are left to their own devices.

Clearly, our job is to rally and build the support that has shown itself to date. We must constantly remind the Conservatives that the same public sentiment they feared in May 1977 is alive and well. Letters, as a minimum, are in order. The National Action Committee on the Status of Women submitted a petition which was signed by the 300 delegates from women's organizations across the country gathered at its annual meeting. We must plan for a massive demonstration to support such legislation. And we must plan for this as an election issue.

□ Equal Pay Coalition

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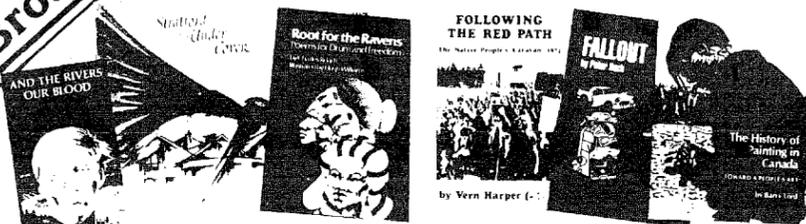
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