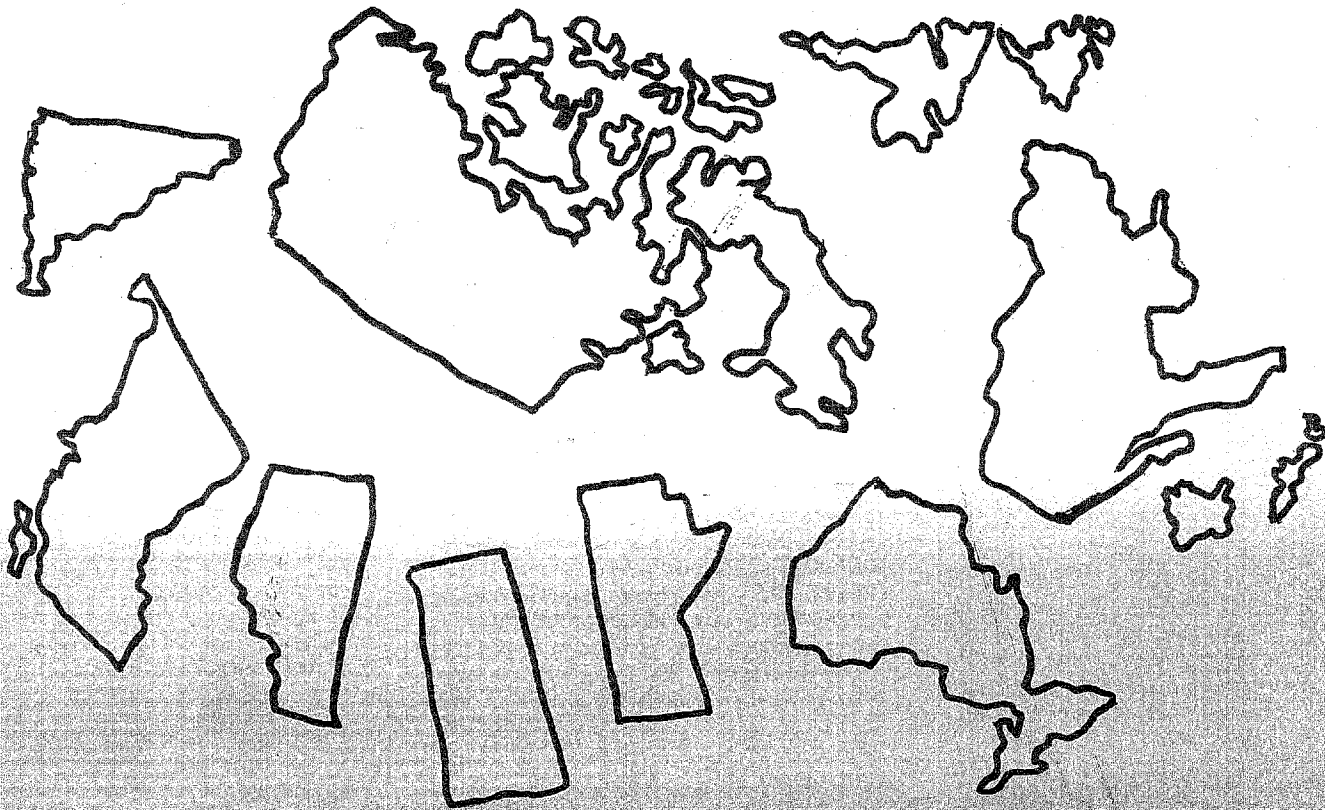


Broadside

Volume One, Number Nine

\$1



Susan G. Cole

Deconfederation

by Eve Zaremba

The Quebec referendum is over: federalism won; Canada is safe. Right? To which I say: so what?; which federalism?; and, not at all.

I have always been highly ambivalent about Quebec becoming a separate nation-state. Not because I have ever doubted that Quebec is a nation. It has a viable indigenous culture, and in that respect is not and never has been 'a province like the others'. But every nation needn't be a separate state. My ambivalence arises from a number of factors, among them a general lack of faith in the efficacy of statehood. I am highly sceptical of the proposition that setting up yet another state will somehow solve problems. In the case of Quebec, it seems to me that its culture and language flourish without 'sovereignty' and there is no evidence to suggest that national control of the economy is likely to increase under 'association' (or even without it) by more than some window dressing.

The drive towards further break-up of old empires is perfectly understandable on emotional grounds. Unfortunately, lack of real popular commitment to economic independence makes these new states all the easier for new imperialism to gobble up. Without a strong economic and cultural basis the continuing fragmentation of the world into weak and mutually hostile states appears to me to be regressive.

On this score my concern is not only, or even primarily, for Quebec. It's for the rest of us, Canadians outside Quebec. My fear is that Quebec separation would remove the last remaining bulwark against the centrifugal force affecting all parts of Canada. Remove the key-stone which is Quebec, and

Canada might well fly apart.

At specified intervals during the next year or so we will be privileged to witness constitutional conferences at which our masters will be deciding the future of Canadian federation and incidentally our fate. We will be anxious spectators to the muscle-flexing of nine anglophone provincial bosses protecting and expanding their power over their fiefdoms. We will see the federal government give up some of its powers piece-meal to men who will use it no more wisely and even less consistently and equitably. Surely our provincial leaders are no improvement on federal politicians. They provide no reason to believe (or even hope) that a fragmented Canada will be any better, better off or better governed.

So, selfishly, I am glad that Quebec is still part of our political structure. With Quebec out of Confederation I can envisage the following scenario...

It starts with a rump federal government being controlled by non-federalists if not anti-federalists: government too weak to provide any realistic opposition to the total dismemberment of Canada. There would be no overall power to mediate the inevitable confrontation between Central Canada — where the people are (a fact seldom noted these days), and Western Canada, where the scarce resources are. Without a concept of communality greater than our respective narrow self-interests, why would we stay together? My scenario assumes that the men who decide these things are at bottom motivated only by money and the sort of power that money will buy.

A separatist case for the West is simple. Classic Adam Smith capitalism calls for buying cheap and selling dear. Western Canada has oil, natural gas, coal, potash, uranium, timber, wheat, fish... In a world of scarce resources, the old saw about hewers-of-wood and drawers-of-water takes on a very different, very affluent cast. An economic colony need not be poor. Japan, rich yet lacking natural resources of its own, is avidly seeking to secure supplies. It will pay top dollar for everything Western Canadians care to draw or hew. With this wealth Westerners can buy all the manufactured goods and exotic luxuries on the world market at the lowest prices going. Unless cut short by nuclear or environmental disaster, Western Canadians, unencumbered by the price of federation, can live off the fat of the land for a generation, maybe more.

This may sound far-fetched. But is it? Our resources have been for sale for so long that there is no historical or psychological reason for any Canadians to turn down a 'good deal.' If Canada as presently constituted has had problems building an identity strong enough to avoid absorption, what chance would any fragment of Canada have on that score?

Should Canada fragment, the Maritimes would probably turn to the USA. Connections with New England states are already strong. Perhaps Americans could be persuaded to accept them into a common market and eventually grant them statehood. Maritime population and industrial base are too small to markedly affect the power dynamics within the

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The Church's One Foundation...

Humankind has yearned for spiritual fulfillment since before history has been recorded. Whether we have found it in a sense of eternity, in the force of creativity, in the institutions of the organized church or even in the act of love, that desire to give life meaning beyond the physical has been with us. This yearning invariably defies rational thought and has been scorned by those who are proponents of the ideology of our scientific age. Nevertheless most of us have experienced a moment — watching the moon rise at the women's festival in Michigan, discerning within a chaotic human-made environment an order in the nature of things or hearing a piece of music — that there is a spiritual "essence" worth searching for.

Broadside approached "feminists of faith" and asked them to tell us about the personal journey that takes them to a life within the Church and their responses form the centrespread of this issue. They are moving accounts, each of them evoking a sense of commitment to values all of us share. The critical question is why these women have chosen this particular way of exercising spiritual belief. Shelley Finson and Bernadette Maxwell, both with keen feminist consciousness, and the feminists who have accepted Jewish religious practice, all vilify the Church for its corruption of "the essence" and are determined to set

right the institutions that have made a travesty of the Gospel or of the Covenant made between the Jews and the Divine.

We wonder whether they will ever find satisfaction at the end of their journeys. The choice of spiritual practice is a political one. When Bernadette Maxwell writes that the Church has parted ways with the "essence" we disagree. The institution of the Church was always separate from the essence and is political, as is any other institution which provides a framework for countering the Divine. And this particular framework has been set up in the interests of a particular group which does not and never has included women. As such, it can never be the "essence", it merely provides the means for a certain interest group to come to terms with what Maxwell calls the Real Thing. The Big Questions to which Maxwell refers still remain, and the way in which Christianity seeks to answer them is patriarchal. Our quarrel is not with the matter of "essence" but with the choices women are making about practice.

In fact, both Maxwell and Finson have written that in many ways they really had no choice. "It (the Church) is part of our skin. We were born into it. It formed us," writes Finson, and these sentiments are echoed by feminists of Jewish faith who have felt strong ties with the Jewish people

since an early age. To deny the Church, according to these women, is to deny a part of themselves. In the face of such compelling words, we realize it is difficult to ask feminists of faith to shed their skins as easily as blankets shrugged off in the summer months. But patriarchy has formed us, like the Church has formed Finson and Maxwell, and yet we must slough off that patriarchal skin in order to survive.

The struggle against male dominance has to take place on every battleground. Given the excesses of the Church, given the way the institutions have been used as powerful weapons against women (see our review of *The Lark*, Anouilh's assessment of Saint Joan) and against those who in the institution's eyes are lost sinners (see "Broad-sides" re: Anita Bryant) it is probably to feminism's advantage that feminists of faith have not given up their struggle within the Church. The Church has clout and these feminists want to undermine it.

They may find that by taking a course of feminist action from within the Church, they are actually in the process of dismantling the institution itself. On the other hand, they may find it immutable.

□ The Broadside Collective

This is Broadside

Broadside is taking a summer break after this issue. It will appear again in September. Barring accidents, regular features will return — film reviews by Martineau, Ottawa humour by Hemlow, idiosyncratic columns by Cole and Zarembo, profiles by O'Leary and Lawrence, a law column by Zinck and others. We are preparing articles on diverse topics such as female sexuality, the situation in Jamaica, implications of sociobiology, the politics of oil, and new initiatives in abortion.

Charter subscriptions start running out this fall. Prompt renewals would be appreciated since reminders are expensive and time consuming to send out. We would rather be working on making *Broadside* a better paper than mailing subscription reminders. So please help by renewing well in advance of the expiry date on your address label.

In the 1980-81 year *Broadside* subscriptions and sales have to double. If every current subscriber would give or sell just one extra subscription, we would be sailing. It would help greatly if we could count on all friends of *Broadside* in this way.

Just before the paper went to press we received a letter from Vancouver Rape Relief (see Letters column) taking us to task for our editorial in the May issue (Vol. 1 no. 7).

Communication between feminists is vital. We need to know and understand what activist groups are doing and why. We need to set up networks of exchange and support. We need to learn how to use the mainstream media rather than be used by it. We need to appreciate the role that our own feminist press can and must play. We at *Broadside* want to go into this area more extensively in future issues. Right now all we can do is assure all concerned that we have nothing but the highest respect for the women at Vancouver Rape Relief and for the work they do. It was never our intention to imply otherwise. We merely set out to illustrate one of the kinds of problems which we as a movement have not learned to cope with adequately.

It saddens us to report that *Upstream*, a sister feminist paper from Ottawa, has decided to suspend publication. For five years it served feminism well with lively, incisive coverage of women's issues and feminist politics. We are sorry to see it killed (temporarily, we hope) by the chronic shortage of resources which is endemic to all such endeavours. Papers especially tend to be shoestring operations sustained by the dedicated work and enthusiasm of the women involved. These qualities are necessary but unfortunately are not sufficient. We must face the hard facts of the economics of publishing. No paper can exist without sustained financial support from the community. Without working capital no enterprise can survive long.

To the women who have worked so long and diligently on *Upstream* we extend our appreciation and best wishes. Good luck in whatever you now choose to undertake. We look forward to seeing the *Upstream* banner and familiar by-lines again soon.

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LETTERS

Broadside:

We would like to take exception to the recent review of the Feminist Film Festival by Barbara Halpern Martineau.

Ms. Martineau had a lot to say about two feature length films, and a short word about a few other 16mm films, and some remarks on the workshops. Her perceptions on this limited range are accurate, if a little pedestrian.

She seems to feel that the festival as a whole was rather ho-hum, but she is glad it happened. Her only mention of Super-8 films, which comprised more than half the festival, was that there was "undeserved appreciation for some of the less well-conceived Super-8 films."

She suggests that if we had known what we were up against we might not have attempted such a project. We would hate to see other women discouraged by such statements. In fact we brought to the festival a wide range of organizing experience and knew exactly what we were up against. Nor do we feel that we "wouldn't do it again". As a collective we still exist and are planning future projects. We hope that the Feminist Film Festival will happen again and are interested in taking an active role in its planning. Any *Broadside* readers who would like to take this on, please contact us.

We never conceived the Feminist Film Festival as an attempt at the sort of traditional film festival that Ms. Martineau seems to have in mind — a showcase for the distaff side of the film industry. So we do not share her view of it as a poorly-organized affair. It could have been better, of course, but there was nothing in Ms. Martineau's review that was helpful in the way of criticism. Even the format — running the review as the second half of an article about "All that Jazz" made her biases clear. In our opinion "All that Jazz" was a piece of patriarchal film-industry fluff that hardly warrants notice in a feminist paper. From the *Globe and Mail* we would expect such a review. From *Broadside* we expected more.

We would like to explain, for *Broadside* readers, some of our philosophy in putting on this festival.

We did not put an emphasis on carefully-produced, expensively created films. Most women do not have access to this sort of technology. What we wanted to explore was the full range of women's use of the medium of film. To us, this includes everything from home movies to slick feature films.

For example, Marg Moore's film, "Labrys Rising" brought a packed theatre to its feet. Perhaps Ms. Martineau thinks this was an ill-conceived film. We suspect it wouldn't win any awards at Cannes, as much for its subject matter as its "artistic" merit. We aren't in the business of teaching industry-defined "discrimination" to women. If a film works, then it's good. If it doesn't, then we have all learned something.

Anyone who managed to attend a portion of the festival left it with some idea about the possibilities of film as a feminist tool. This is what we wanted. And it happened through viewing films, not through an academic lesson on film theory. In our opinion, this is feminist process.

Of course, we have nothing against feature-length, technically excellent films. It is important that women make these. But they are not what every woman filmmaker is aspiring to, nor should they be. As feminists, we are committed to the de-mystification of all art forms. We wanted to promote the idea that a movie camera is something that

any woman can use — to document her life, to explore her world, to make a point. There are many ways to approach this, and film school is only one among these.

Ms. Martineau suggested more discussion with filmmakers present. We agree that more discussion would enhance such a festival, but do not feel that this should be mainly among filmmakers. It is easy for filmmakers to focus on the more technical aspects of their art. But without an organic dialogue among the viewers, who are themselves potential filmmakers, it is easy to slip into the values and definitions set by a largely male-controlled film industry.

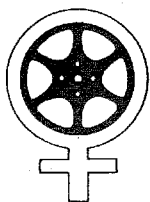
In a future film festival we would like to see more of the sort of film that Ms. Martineau describes as "ill-conceived", both Super-8 and 16mm, because this is where women are actively changing the definitions and values, and creating an art form that speaks to ourselves.

We would like to applaud all the 'minor' filmmakers who had the courage to show their films at this festival, and who have been once again ignored by the 'critics', even in a feminist newspaper. Those of us who worked on the festival had varying opinions on the films shown. But we all agreed on the fact that women are exploding the boundaries of traditional film criticism. It would be a shame to see this process pushed into the closet once more by those who ascribe to the 'showcase' theory of feminist art.

We would like to see further discussion in *Broadside* about the ways that we view ourselves on film, and the way that we can fight the patriarchal definitions of quality that serve to diminish art.

Thank you for the opportunity to say our piece.

Jacqueline Geering
Marg Moores
Nancy Nicol
Anne Quigley
Judith Quinlan
Meg Thornton
for the Feminist Film Festival Collective,
Toronto.



Broadside:

Bravo to Anne Cameron for her piece on the musical misadventures at the Toronto anti-nuke benefit of April 26 ("Acts of Folly"). There seems to be a marked trend in this city of late to stage political or quasi-political benefits featuring performers with little or no political consciousness. A recent case in point, aside from the anti-nuke fiasco, was a Prisoners' Relief benefit featuring the notorious Viletones (along with several other non-descript middle-of-the-Wave bands). Steven Leckie, leader of the Viletones and formerly known as Nazi Dog (it was just a phase he was going through, right?), warmed up the largely politically conscious crowd by announcing how pleased he was to be there in support of all those "rapists and murderers". A few months earlier, a band named *Ripper* outraged an audience of lesbian-feminists and leftists with misogynistic songs at a Rock Against Racism benefit.

Since these events are benefits, performers are not motivated by filthy lucre to participate. One would presume, then, that they volunteer their services because they

support the particular cause. However, the extreme political insensitivity and lack of regard for the audience displayed by Diane Heatherington, Mendelsohn Joe, Mr. Dog, et al, makes one skeptical. Most appear to do it for the exposure, or because it's presently fashionable for musicians to support a cause (witness the MUSE concerts). New Wavers get special Brownie points for doing "political" benefits; it adds that little touch of British *savoir faire* that complements a skinny tie perfectly. Unfortunately, Anarchy in the UK pales somewhat crossing the Atlantic.

Surely it is the responsibility of the organizers of these kinds of concerts — and they are obviously a politically aware lot — to insure that the performers they ask to play are politically sympathetic to the cause they are supporting, or, at least, to demand they be sensitive to the type of audience and choose and present their material accordingly. But although organizers (and some performers) may be politically correct on every other count, sexism just seems to be one of the little blind spots in their considerations at these concerts. At the risk of mixing visual and aural metaphors, I would suggest that we all be prepared, like Anne Cameron, to call that blind spot to their attention at every opportunity by making as much noise as we can!

Susan Sturman,
Toronto.

Broadside:

I've not missed reading an issue of *Broadside* since the first "Introduction" came out last May. I've been impressed with each succeeding issue, the breadth and scope of the articles, the diversity of subject matter and issues covered. I believe everything and anything that affects our lives — political, cultural, environmental, educational, etc., etc. — is a 'woman's issue' and it is refreshing/inspiring to read feminist analyses, impressions and comments on all of these.

I've followed the articles/letters discussing religion with particular interest, especially the ones dealing with the pronouncements of the Patriarch of the Catholic Church. Having grown up in a very Polish, very Catholic family/community, I know how insidious and destructive to women's lives and 'souls' this doctrine is. "As it was in the beginning...and ever shall be, world without end, Amen." Gross exploitation, suppression/repression, keeping women in as ignorant a state as is possible — these are the foundations upon which the Catholic church has been built.

I applaud your courage in exposing this institution in your pages. Feminist publications have tended to ignore the church, and religion in general, in favour of other more obvious manifestations of patriarchal power, yet it is religious indoctrination and brainwashing of masses of women which has kept so many of our sisters "in their place."

I look forward to many more issues of *Broadside*. Though I may not always agree with what I read in your pages, I am always stimulated, and I've had many growing discussions arising from this or that article, including some fairly heated debates. Good luck in the future!

Wiesia Kolasinska,
Toronto

Broadside:

I was shocked and offended by the editorial/collective statement in *Broadside*: "Press Repressed" (Vol. 1, no. 7).

Certainly the question of how to create dialogue among women and how to share

our theories, strategies and tactics with other active feminists is a crucial one. On that point I am in agreement with your statement. However, "Press Repressed" does little to stimulate such discussion. There are several inaccurate and completely untrue statements in the article, and the tone is clearly a tactic to "bait" Vancouver Rape Relief. Both these tactics have been, and are being, used by the straight media to invalidate and misrepresent women and women's work. I did not expect the same from a feminist newspaper!

I am disappointed that the Broadside Collective did not, as I had suggested, contact Vancouver Rape Relief directly with your questions. "We would like to have been able to discuss Rape Relief's position with its members and presented readers with an up to date and comprehensive report on the whole issue"...why didn't you discuss Rape Relief's position with its members?

As some of you know, I was not in a position to "formally" discuss Rape Relief's confrontation of rapists with *Broadside*, not because of the stricture against the media, but because I was in Toronto as BC Regional Representative for the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault centres, not as part of Vancouver Rape Relief's media committee.

Being a collective, you will understand that our collective passed a policy in March designating 2 members as media contacts to respond to questions about confrontations — they are the only women who speak to the press about this issue. Perhaps a real article on the problems of using any form of press and media as a vehicle to communicate and teach various feminist tactics could have resulted from direct contact with these media spokeswomen. I hope for more accurate reporting in the future.

Yvette Perreault,
Vancouver.

Broadside:

Just read your paper for the first time. Made me both glad and sad.

Glad to see such positive woman support in a newspaper. Sad that — again, it seems — it reaches a limited 52% of the population only. We've got to branch out at this point and include the other 48% in the human race somehow. I really feel testosterone poisoning can be cured.

Apparently Myrna Kostash missed Betty Friedan's prediction for the 80's (front page news here) that it would be the time of "men's liberation". I think to be a programmed male in this society is as painful as the programmed male position. I've spoken to a couple of males who are angry with their Pavlovian response to the female body.

I'm also sad that the anti-American frustrated fury that I left 17 years ago still flourishes in Canada (my country still). Yes, we're all creepy in some way, even me I suppose, but to waste that much energy on a numb giant — wow! Anyway, there's always the off chance that the Christians are right and we only *do* live once...in that case I want my energy for *me*.

I can't be sure your paper will always get to the Left Bank Books so please send it to me direct.

Noel J. Wickman,
Seattle.

Feminists of Jewish Faith

Daughters of the Covenant

by Susan G. Cole

For Jews, the socialization process is very intense. So when it comes to the question of feminism and Judaism, it's tempting to inject some of the patented Jewish humour, to be a feminist Joseph Heller for a day, to make women forget the tirades of Philip Roth and to celebrate the joys and woes of being a Jewish Canadian princess. I could talk about Matza balls and golf clubs. I could expose the contradiction between having my achievement motivation cultivated assiduously in a middle class family while at the same time attending Jewish weddings and having to face the inevitable question: "When is it your turn?"

The Jewish cultural tradition is so rich that many feminists, or radicals of any stripe, have been able to say that without setting foot in a synagogue we could maintain a Jewish identity. Simple: have dinner with your family on the Jewish New Year; fast on Yom Kippur as a gesture of unity with a people who have a common and often painful history; have a potato latke on Chanukka (you're correct if you understand that food is a vital aspect of the Jewish identity); go to the seder on Passover; harbour an intrinsic fondness for New Yorkers. But, as one feminist who identifies with the Jewish faith has said: "Bagels and lox will last forever — but they won't stay Jewish".

For the purposes of a discussion of feminism and faith, she's right — chicken soup simply does not say it all. For Jewish feminists, that is, those who engage in the practice of the *religion* and not just the *tradition*, life does have some spiritual content. There is a life-transforming possibility, a vision of human existence that goes beyond the mere physical and the struggle to eke out a living. And to deny that spiritual aspect and opt for the cultural approach is, according to these "feminists of faith", something like reducing feminism to the question of equal rights. This need for spiritual fulfilment is a personal one, and if as feminists we can accept it, *tolerate* it, as would be the case for some of the more vituperative opponents of religious "beliefs" of any kind, then it is safe to move to the next question: Why Judaism? Why not meditate twice a day for twenty minutes? There are so many variations on the religious theme, why choose the Jewish one?

To begin with, most Jewish feminists don't view it as a matter of choice. Apart from the cultural tradition, the history of the Jewish people binds them together in a very specific way. The personal denial of one's Jewishness doesn't necessarily translate to the general community. You may wish to say you're not a Jew, but a society that wants to call you one, will. History proves it. Those who were certain that they were assimilated Germans were stunned to discover that within the context of an anti-Semitic culture, an identity as Jews was imposed on them, from the outside. There is a parallel between this experience of the Jew who is identified as one whether she likes it



Courtesy Lilith magazine

or not and the experience of the closeted Lesbian who refuses to come to terms with herself, but who is *perceived* as a Lesbian and who is treated accordingly.

One of the crucial aspects of Jewish life is that it is lived out on a day to day basis. Being Jewish doesn't just mean praying to God, but is a total lifestyle. Just as we would say that being "feminist" doesn't involve simple attendance at women's meetings, Jewish feminists find the "totality" of the experience very important to them and the fact of the "total experience" is one that feminists ought to be able to understand.

At the root of the Jewish faith is the Torah, the law and the interpretations of the law that have been developed through history. There is a strong ethical basis to the law, best illustrated by the rationalization for Kashrut. Kashrut are the Jewish dietary laws. They are not a set of arbitrary rules designed merely as a test for Jews to make life for them as difficult as possible. Their source is philosophical, ethical, based on a perspective of the nature of things.

For example, Jews have always had an uncomfortable relationship with meat, as if the consumption of meat threatens the bond between human and animal life. This is why the specifications for the slaughter of meat have been so detailed, so as to make the killing as humane as possible. It is useful to note, and Jewish feminists do, that this reservedness toward meat eating is something that the feminist spiritual movement has similarly seized upon. These spiritualists may protest that their vegetarian mode comes from a completely different perspective, from a set of politics, in fact, but they've still ended up in much the same place as their Jewish sisters. And the law against mixing milk and meat is not only the product of health considerations. It comes from an ethical viewpoint, that there is an essential order, call it natural, call it sacred,

that is ruptured when a mother's milk is ingested alongside the child's meat.

Interspersed and intertwined with everything in Judaism is the value of intellectual life. Jewish theology, expressed through the Law, has been interpreted and reinterpreted through a process that is awesome in its intellectual rigour and which makes for a fluidity, almost a flexibility in the very foundations of Judaism. This means that even in its most Orthodox form, Judaism can never be as "fundamental" as its Christian counterpart. Judaism's "creed" is the product of a process that is intellectual — that is human. Without the value of intellectual life, it is safe to say that there would be no Judaism as we know it. Blu Greenberg, in an article in *Lilith* (Vol. 1 No. 1) explains how important the value is:

There is something inherent in the Jewish intellectual process that is intensely spiritual and emotionally rewarding, that binds a Jew more closely to the Jewish past and present. It is not simply an intellectual exercise, rather it is a genuine means of encountering God and explaining a rootedness in the community.

As such, the Jewish tradition seems benign. The crux of the matter is that women have absolutely no access to this splendid process. Women have been excluded from study. Ours is not the task to interpret Torah and the law. We cannot even count ourselves among the "minyan", that group of ten that legitimizes prayer to God. It is our duty to maintain Kashrut, but what that means is that we "facilitate". We provide spiritual comfort for men who can be content that the household is being run according to custom, and we do so at our own expense.

The covenant made between God and the Jewish people promises to Jews a special

relationship with the Divine and it is the covenant that is at the core of Jewish theology. When the Jews received the law it was for them the primary evidence that the promise would be kept. But God made the covenant with all Jews, not just men.

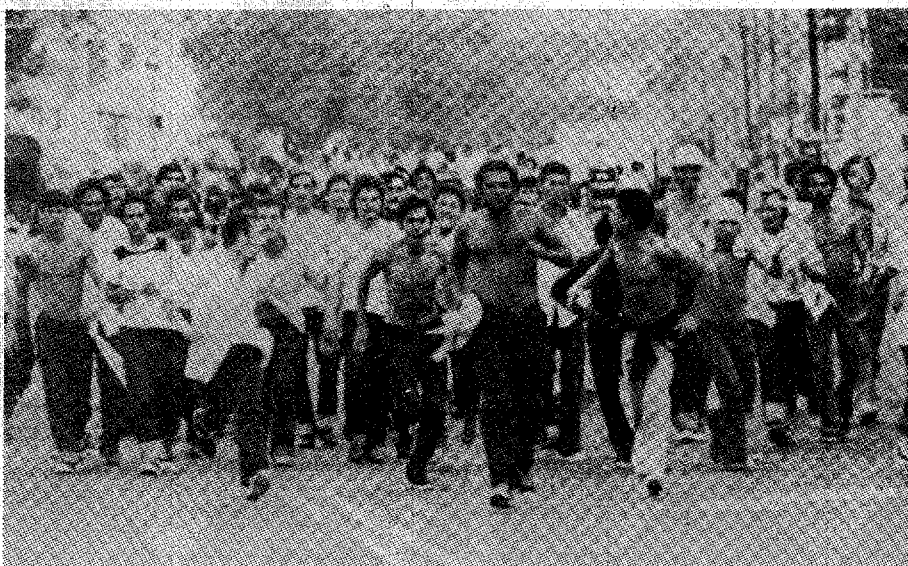
What Jewish feminists are saying is "We want in", and they are of a fervent belief that Judaism can make room for them. They argue that tradition has a stronger hold on Jews than Jewish law, that although nowhere in the Jewish law does it say women's proximity to Talmud will pollute it, culture — that is, Patriarchy — has been at the basis of the tradition that has excluded them.

Jewish feminists look at the Hebrew teaching and note that the human relationship to God is not defined in male/female terms. God does not have to be seen as Father or King and all of humanity as child or royal servant. Judith Plaskow Goldenberg, in an issue of *Response* (Summer, 1973) that sought to address women's issues within the Jewish faith, writes that among the myriad interpretations of the law is the notion that "we can characterize the divine-human relationship in endlessly different ways, as lover and beloved, as fire and water and earth, as trees roots and branches." She and others like her are saying that the law is not so rigid, it is the tradition, fed by patriarchal bias, that has kept women down. Break down the tradition, they say, and we will find the means of getting what has been denied to us — recognition in the eyes of God.

That the intellectual process is so crucial to Judaism, that Jews have made a constant attempt to make rational their beliefs, gives feminists of faith room for optimism. The editors of *Lilith*, a magazine of liberation for Jewish feminists, make a point of studying Jewish law, of showing how it has been distorted so that women can be shut out by men who don't understand that it was never the intention of the Divine to negate women.

Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto, one of the most powerful Reform Jewish Congregations on the continent, has recently hired a woman rabbi. After a furious debate, the Conservative Jewish movement has decided to accept *on principle* the idea of women in their rabbinate. But for most women who have embraced Judaism, the only time they are exposed to ideas or to the law comes when they pray at synagogue. Consigned to a seat behind the partition that separates women from men, even as she can hardly see and certainly cannot touch the essence of Judaism, the Torah, the Jewish woman finds a temporary haven of peace and calm. For her, it is the only moment when she is not giving of herself. And if that is true, Jewish feminists committed to change in their institutions are heading down a rocky road. I wish them well.

Cuban Refugees in Florida



by Jane Gapen

I live near Key West, Florida. One day during the flight of the Cuban refugees I and a visiting friend, Leah, obtained press passes to the refugee centres, now being administered by the Feds and mostly invisible to the public.

First we go with other press to Trumbo Point, a large property fenced off and used by the Navy for housing and lots of other

things. Entering the huge hangar there, once used for seaplanes, the first people I see are some boys, wide awake and eager to be noticed. Beyond them are rows of cots with adults asleep in their clothes. It is late morning. As I take photos of the boys I say "nice teeth", tapping my own. I am impressed to see such big white strong teeth in little kids — 'til I realize these smallish boys have their second teeth and are much older than they look. A toddler pops up under my nose where I lean over the carpentered half-

wall and says "nize tee." We all laugh joyfully at this. Then I notice the sleeping mama on the cot where he's bouncing. I go shush and motion sleeping mama. But nothing will wake her, the shepherd of these sparkling-eyed handsome boys! All the Cuban blood lines must run in their veins — Spanish, Indian and African, forming an amalgam that is beautiful.

Leaving them, I talk to a young man in the next section around the corner, all men. He speaks good English, worked in an embassy. As I write down a phone number he asks me to call for him, other young men come up and discreetly ask too. I have them write their names and numbers in my notebook. One of the marines comes over to warn me that if I start doing this then everyone will want me to phone for them. His warning annoys me. Only four men have asked me to do this and when I say it's enough, no more ask.

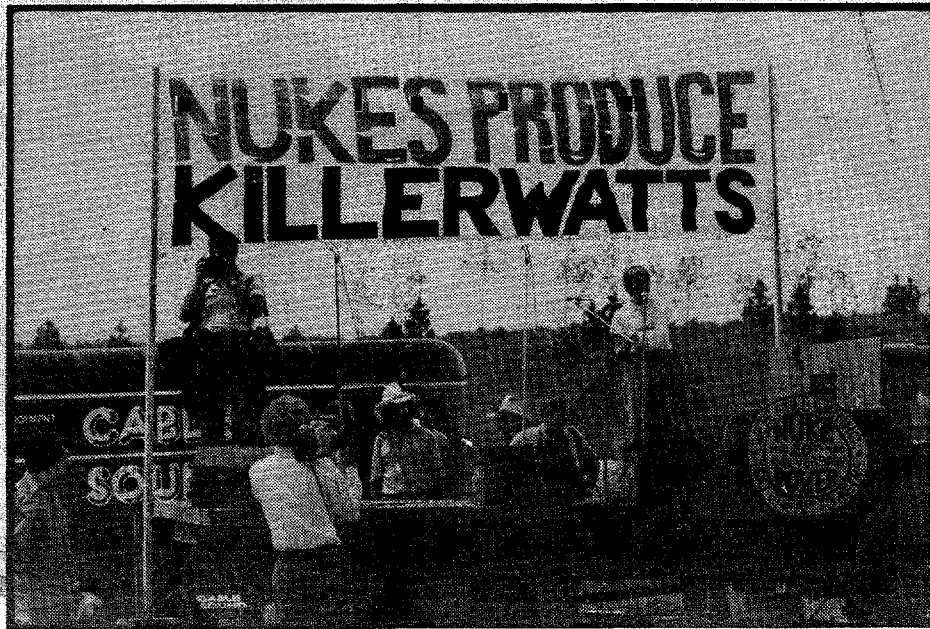
Carpentered half-walls separate the cot sections from the wide corridor where marines gambol or stand or stalk about,

depending upon their age or rank, I presume, and now I notice small groups of women being escorted by a marine — to the bathroom, no doubt. (There's no wandering in the corridors for refugees.) Some visiting nuns are bustling around a platform behind me.

Back to the young men. I ask them "Are you gay?" "No." "Are gay men treated as badly as we've heard?" "No, though they may be arrested if they misbehave in the street." (I assume they mean swish around and solicit.) "Why have you come?" These three or four men in their early twenties are in agreement, one pitching in one idea, one another, so that through gestures, their intense expressions and my interpreter, I get this message: If you aren't gung ho (my slang) for the revolution, if you show an interest in American culture, like music — "You mean Rock?" "Yes." — if you join any school clubs which aren't communist, you are under suspicion and you *don't* get ahead.

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Nuclear Power: Child of the Patriarchy



Demonstration at Darlington, Ontario nuclear site.

by Judy Lietschultz

About one thousand people gathered at the site of the proposed Darlington nuclear plant near Bowmanville, Ontario, on June 7. They came in cloudy weather to protest the building of the power station and the nuclear future to which Premier Bill Davis has committed the province regardless of consequences.

The first draft of this article was mainly concerned with the tone of the crowd, the music and speaking agenda, the entry into the site and the arrest of the occupiers. But upon reading the draft a friend asked why I didn't get down to talking about what I was hinting at: that Darlington was a wash-out as a feminist event.

Over half the people at the demonstration were women. There were Feminist Party of Canada members, Witches Against Nuclear Technology members, women who

form part of the predominantly female Darlington task force, active feminists, and women who simply realize nuclear power is the most life-endangering invention of the world to date. The interesting line-up of speakers covered the economics of nuclear power, due process under existing environmental assessment legislation, irresponsible government, the relationship of nuclear power to nuclear war, and health hazards. But despite strong feminist presence in the movement, not one speaker addressed nuclear power as the ultimate death dance of the patriarchy, or even as a product of the military-industrial male establishment that can be used violently against anyone who threatens business as usual.

Rosalie Bertell, a cancer researcher and dedicated non-nuke activist from Buffalo,

New York, did speak about stillbirths, spontaneous abortions, and other effects of addiction — ones that statistics don't document because they haven't caused death yet. Like Helen Caldicott and other physicians and scientists in the movement, Bertell sees the health effects of low level radiation already beginning to unfold. She is working with people who were irradiated during the above-ground bomb testing in the US in the 50's. She is also working with Navajo Indian tribes in the southwestern US concerning the effects of uranium mining on both miners and women in the community.

"Yes," Bertell answered later in an interview, "nuclear power is clearly a feminist issue. The male establishment that has produced this has never had to nourish life. The neutron bomb is a good example. It is designed to "only" destroy people, not buildings. Men build buildings, women build people." Bertell noted that the general population has no way of being monitored for the effects of radiation, nor is there compensation for these effects even in the workplace. "We're geared to infectious diseases, not chronic diseases like the ones nuclear power is causing," she said. "There is no way to handle this hazard under our political-social system."

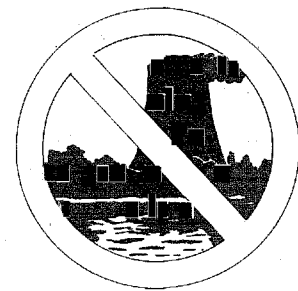
So what did Darlington mean for life-giving, what does the movement mean for real change? Many women were at the demonstration because nuclear power is a as visionaries of a world without the violence and aggression that nuclear power embodies. If ever there was a child of the patriarchy nuclear power is it.

Some change is taking place, some women-energy is beginning to be felt. While the occupiers were going over the fence, a group of women supported them by performing a hex on the plant. They formed a circle and gathered their energy to direct it against the plant. They called upon the energy of the earth that is being destroyed to stop the plant from working, then spoke about peaceful alternatives to nuclear

power. They grounded themselves with each other to have the energy to go on.

Rosalie Bertell is changing the hierarchical structure of her research group to "clusters" where people work together in small groups. She is trying to start a registry of women who want to give birth in order to document the health of the children, particularly in high risk areas. It has been found that reading the palm of the child or adult can reveal what has affected the fetus during the first three months of gestation. Blood chromosome testing is another method being investigated. Women in mining communities all over the world are rising up to work on this issue.

Perhaps next year at Darlington the women who occupy and give their energy to the fight will explain nuclear power as a feminist issue, and feminism as the central movement for lasting social change. Rosalie Bertell's final statement to me was "nothing will change until women take to the streets. Life as usual has to stop."



The Non-Nuclear Network (NNN) continues the fight with a speakers' bureau, slide shows, lobbying, and organizing of groups all over Ontario. To join, help or get more information, contact the Non-Nuclear Network, 121 Avenue Rd., Toronto, 968-3218.

Elizabeth Goudie:



by Judith Lawrence

Elizabeth Goudie was born in Labrador 78 years ago. Her father was a trapper, descended from an English settler who had married an Inuit woman. Her mother was descended from French Canadian, Scottish, English and Inuit people. When she was 18, Elizabeth Goudie married a trapper whose ancestors were Scottish and Cree. And so Elizabeth Goudie likes to call herself a "typical Labradorian". During the winter months Mrs. Goudie lives in an old folks home in Happy Valley, but as soon as the spring comes she goes back to her own house, where she can grow the flowers she loves, and live her own independent life. Elizabeth Goudie loves to talk about her life on the Labrador coast, and the story she tells is a fascinating one.

"A woman had to do the hunting and fishing as well as her home work, and take care of her children. When I started my family I had the first two one year and nine months apart. The next two were one year and six months apart, and then I had a baby every two years, until I had ten children. I was 25 years old with small children and babies; I nursed them all. I never used bottles. I brought them up on the breast. I also had to hunt and fish. In a usual day of hunting I'd get half a dozen rabbits and three or four partridges and that'd last through a whole week. And if I'd get a good tide for fishing I'd go out and I might get 75 or 100 fish, trout, not codfish. I'd make that last until the next time I could go hunting again.

"I had to carry my water from the river to the house. Before I went to fetch it I'd take the small children that could have hurt themselves, and put them on a blanket spread on my table, and I'd put the table in front of the window so they could watch me bringing back the water. So that's how life was in that time.

"Every year my husband went away trapping. His first trapping trip would last three months. We never heard from him for most of that time, and we could only hope he was still alive and not killed or drowned or hurt. He trapped the height of land beyond the Churchill. He'd come out about the 20th of January and have a month's break and then go back again for two more months. In the middle of April all seasons were closed and we'd get him back for the summer."

"The trappers, when they'd go up the river, well we'd never hear from them, and wouldn't know if they were dead or drowned, or what, for the months they'd be away. There's what they call a hundred yard 'no man's land' between one trapper and the next. No one sets traps there. So they had a pound baking powder can fixed and tied to a tree, and a trapper could leave a letter for his family in that can. That's how they would get a letter down the river and we'd get the letter about two weeks before they'd return home. That would be the first news we'd hear about them.

"We lived in a very cold house. I'd get up at six o'clock and light the fires, and sometimes it would be 30 or 40 below zero. I'd have to break ice in my bucket to put in my kettle on the stove. I'd get the older children up for breakfast, and then I'd wait for ten o'clock to bath my baby. I couldn't do it before because it was too cold. You didn't only have to learn to housekeep and care for your children. You also had to learn to make their clothes and their boots. So your hands was going. I'd go on through the day, and the chores of bringing water and mixing bread and doing the cooking and making boots or deerskin moccasins, something to put on my children's feet.

"I didn't ever wear slacks in my life, I wore denim skirts. I wore long black knitted stockings, and a dickie, and a shawl around my head. This was my fishing rig.

"I had other fishing friends who used to dress the same way. I remember once we went across to Mud Lake in what we called the big channel, and we had a nice tide that day for fishing, but it was so cold. We held the little smelts up in the air to shake them off our hooks, and before we got them shook off their tails would be freezing. That's how cold it was. I'd come home in the evening after fishing all day with my hands swollen so much I couldn't hold onto my fork and knife to eat my supper. This was the kind of life I went through. I learned to live with it because I thought a great deal of my husband. He was a very fine man, and he was a good healthy man and I was a healthy person too."

How Life Was In That Time

Goudie talked about education in Labrador: "Well, the Dickie Lumber Company had a teacher in Mud Lake, so I started school when I was five years old. I got as far as Grade 3 in the Old English Reader, and then we moved. We got a travelling teacher of our own, a Labrador girl. She had to make calls on three places, so we only got her for two and a half months a year. I finished up my Grade 4 with her. That was as far as I got in school. We had a grammar book we used to call it, but we didn't have half the books we have now. The first part of my family didn't have very much education, Grade 4 I believe. But from Bill down, they got their full schooling, as far as Grade 11.

"My husband was four years off work with a heart condition before he died. And he said to me when he came home in the evening after he's been told he couldn't work, 'What are we going to do about the boys?' And I said 'We're not going to take them out of school. As long as I can manage they'll stay in school and get their education.' I said, 'I didn't have a chance, and you didn't, but we'll give our children a chance!' and he said, 'Do you think you can manage?' And I said 'I can manage some way. I'll take in a boarder if I have to.' But one of my sons, Chris, he couldn't be contented to that. He was just ready to go into Grade 10 when his father took sick, and he said 'Mom, I can't leave you and Dad home, I'll have to come home.' So he came home and lived with us until his Dad died, and he lived for 11 years after his Daddy died. So that was one son I learned a lot about."

In Labrador fifty years ago there were very few medical facilities. Elizabeth Goudie bore her 10 children with the help of a midwife. "But some poor women didn't have that luck, so they managed the best way they could. A couple of the older women had had babies alone. One was living at the mouth of Goose River, and she already had two sons. Her husband was caught away on his trapping lines in bad weather, and she knew the baby was going to come that night, so she told the boys to bring in firewood and fill all the corners of the room. She told them to keep the kettle boiling on the stove, and both of them to sleep by the stove in case she needed them. So they did that. Children in Labrador was easy to correct you know, and they weren't bad ever to come against you to speak against you even. So they did all that she told them, and at last the baby was coming, and she asked for them to bring her scissors and cotton twine for tying the cord because

she wanted to get them in boiling water.

"So the boys boiled the water and filled her basin with it. She lay down on the bed and she knew the baby was coming any time, so she told the boys they could go to bed now, and they went to bed, and she borned her baby. She waited a few seconds to get her strength. She didn't know whether the baby was alive or not, so she rose up enough to see that it was alive, and then she laid back again for a few seconds. She got the twine and tied the cord and cut it. She took the baby up and had it crying, and still the boys were asleep. So she called them in the morning and told them she had a little gift for them this morning; they had a baby brother.

"And this was the way life was. And my husband's mother had one alone like that, too. The Indians, they could have their babies on the trail. If there was a woman expecting a baby, when she went into labour, they put up a camp for her, and had the midwife there, and the crowd would go on and build up the night camp, and about six hours after her baby was born, four or five if she was strong, she could walk to the camp."

People in Labrador in those days heard very little news about the world outside: "We knew nothing about cities. We heard nothing of the First World War, nothing whatsoever. The war ended the 11th November 1918, and we never got the news that it was over until the 1st of February. So everything lacked in Labrador in the way of news. My mother used to get a paper, the Family Herald from Newfoundland. She got it in the summer through to the fall, when it would stop, and that's the last we would get until the next Spring. And that was the only paper we knew about.

"The radio never got into Labrador until the second war was going on. So we got a radio for our school, and we'd go and listen to that, especially the news. Then my father got one — he had a few spare dollars, so he got a radio. And not till we came to Happy Valley did we get television.

"Down deep in my heart I'm a very old-fashioned person. I've lived this quiet life, and I've enjoyed it very much I've enjoyed the country, and the beautiful river. We've a great wide country here. You can go anywhere in it and you can enjoy it because the wild animals are there. You can feel relaxed. So that was my life, and I really enjoyed it."

This is the first in a series of interviews designed to bring our readers in touch with some of our unwritten history. It is history that exposes a tremendous diversity among women who have lived in the varied environments of Canada. We will be listening to women who have lived completely different lifestyles from our own. Their cultural backgrounds, their ethnic roots may be French, Native, English or Inuit. Whatever the case, they prove that wherever and however they have lived, women have always been doing things.

Most of our interviews will be done with older women, women who have seen Canada change. We are presently experiencing a deep economic recession that has meant hard times for women. One of our goals in

presenting these articles is to show a different kind of hardship, that women can live through with a special kind of stamina.

Elizabeth Goudie is the first of these women who talked to us. Hers is a story of intense struggle. But even now, as she spends the winter in Padden Home she can't wait to get back to her own house in the springtime. When all is said and done, Elizabeth Goudie would not trade her life experience for that of any other.

*This interview gives only a glimpse of her experience. If you would like to know more you can read Goudie's personal account of her life in her book **Woman of Labrador**, published by Peter Martin Associates Ltd., 1973.*

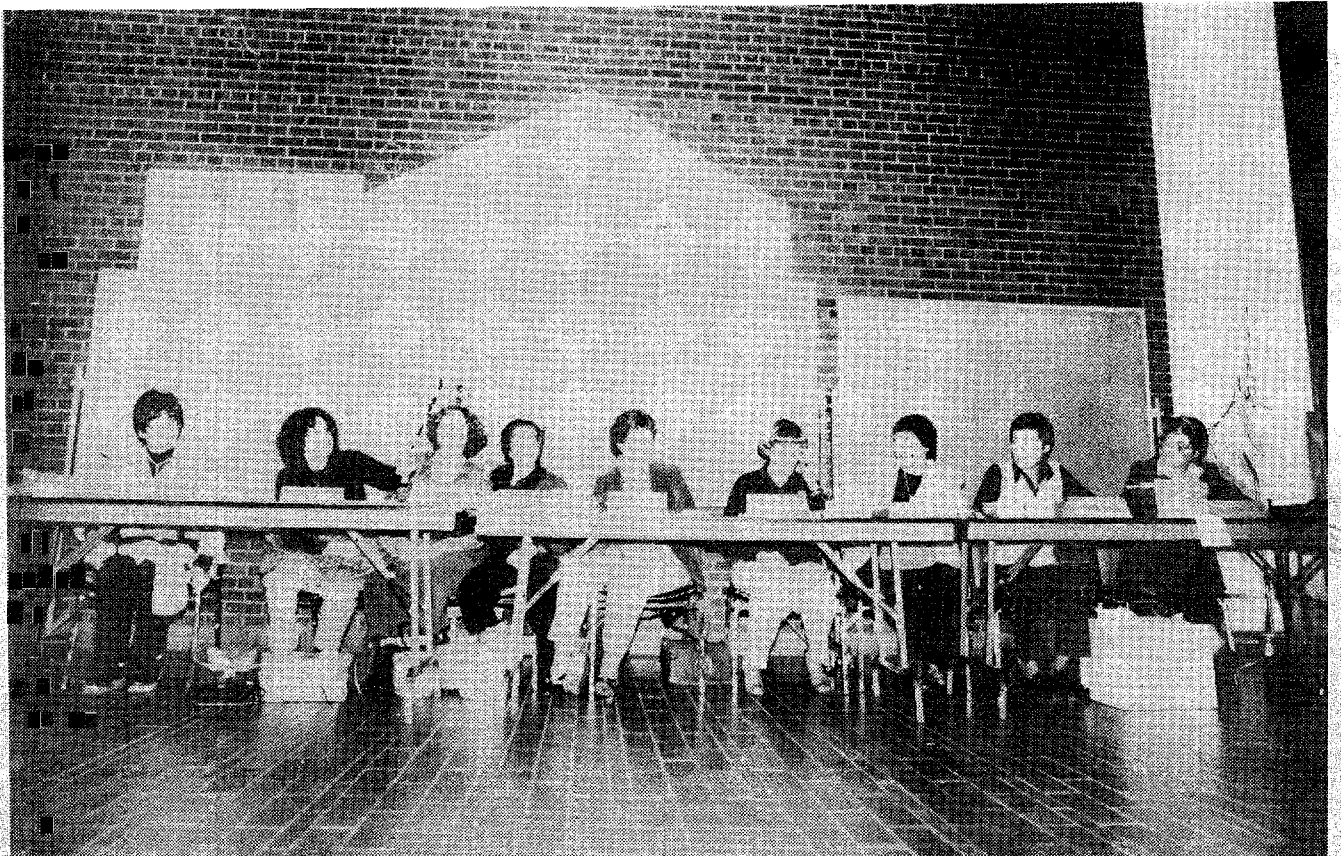
FPC: Growing Pains

by Sheila McIntyre

In February 1979, a group of Toronto feminists began meeting to debate the best route toward real political change for women in Canada. Ultimately they concluded that women's best interests would be served by the establishment of a formally constituted political party rather than a political caucus or yet another feminist lobby group. On June 10, 1979 the first public meeting of the Feminist Party of Canada — Parti Féministe du Canada (FPC—PFC) was held in Toronto. Its founders outlined why they believed the Party was needed, detailed its goals and constituency and signed up members and volunteers for committees in the anticipation of a founding convention then proposed for the summer or fall of 1980.

To commemorate that first public meeting last June and to account for a year of activity, the Party held a first anniversary celebration this year in Toronto on Sunday, June 8. Approximately 300 women and a sprinkling of children and men spent the afternoon listening to speeches by Party members, liberally punctuated by poetry, music and dance by women.

Something of the promise of this party was symbolized in the opening of the celebrations. Margaret Atkinson performed a "War Dance" which she dedicated to Lizzie Tomlinson, the six-year-old recently raped and murdered in Toronto. The dance depicted the process of a woman channeling anger into action, and self-effacing feminine charm into bold self-assertion.



Women across Canada deciding policy for the Feminist Party of Canada.

Next, following readings of feminist poetry in both French and English, FPC—PFC member Patricia Hughes summarized the philosophy of the party and its activities to date.

The Feminist Party, Hughes explained, is in the process of developing strategies which will go beyond lobbying for reforms within the existing political structure and towards fundamental change in the way society is organized. Its concerns will be reproductive and creative in the broadest sense: it will be based on non-violence; dedicated to the protection of the environment; economic production based on community benefit rather than individual profit; active in lobbying for progressive, adequate child care, safe contraception, equal pay and the protection of minority rights. Above all, it will be a Party as committed to the quality of the process by which change is achieved as the achievement of change itself. Feminist principles will be honoured before pragmatism.

While the process of establishing policies and programs continues, the FPC—PFC

will follow the pattern of the past year in responding to specific political issues on an ad hoc basis. In Toronto, for instance, party members have represented feminist concerns on several fronts: members challenged candidates for the recent federal election on issues of concern to women; pressured City Hall to refuse to send delegates to conferences in U.S. states which have not yet ratified the Equal Rights Amendment (such a by-law has been passed, though watered down); presented a brief at the CRTC hearings on sexism in the media; protested Metro Toronto's decision to invest in elaborate technology to register pregnant women on a computer system identifying high, medium, and low risk mothers (see *Broadside*, volume one, numbers 3 and 8); and marched under the FPC-PFC banner at International Women's Day and anti-nuclear demonstrations. The Party has also opened a Toronto office, registered members in every process and begun the groundwork to run a candidate in the forthcoming municipal elections.

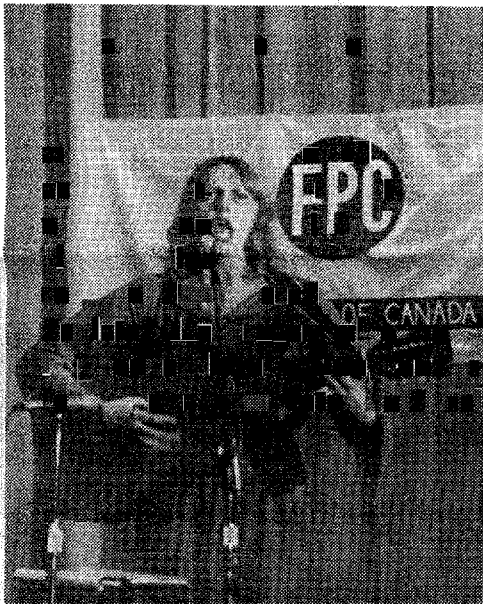
Hughes closed her remarks by urging the audience to act on the understanding that

women's low socio-economic status has political roots. Our oppression has nothing to do with our emotional or psychological makeup, but with the political system governing our lives. The only way to improve our status is through political change, change instigated, directed and implemented by a feminist party.

The second speaker, Mary O'Brien, was charged with defining the "creative bureaucracy" by which the Party intends to govern itself. As O'Brien focused on the process of decision-making, she implicitly addressed those members and those outsiders who criticize the fact that the FPC-PFC has not yet formulated an official plank or set a date for its founding convention.

Traditional bureaucracy, O'Brien maintains, is the "efficient public face of power". The creative bureaucracy favoured by the FPC-PFC, however, is based on a division of energy and on trust, not power. Instead of a hierarchical structure of promi-

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Eileen Samuel performs at the celebration.

Common Law Relationships

by Cynthia L. Zinck

In the next five issues, I will be discussing matters of concern to women. Many women are not aware of their legal rights or of potential legal responsibilities and problems. Since the passage of the Family Law Reform Act and the Children's Law Reform Act, there has been a substantial change in the legal aspects of the marital relationship. In coming times, I will discuss the nature of the family relationship under the headings of Common Law Relationships; Marriage; Children; Separation and Divorce. It is vital to know what the law is and its implications for your situation. If you don't know your rights, you cannot protect yourself.

An increasing number of couples are making the decision to live common law

rather than to marry. Common law relationships are often the result of the belief that legal ties are irrelevant, concern about the difficulty of extracting oneself from a legal marriage in the event of a breakdown of the relationship, or the fact that one or both of the partners is already legally married to someone else.

Common law relationships can offer advantages to spouses who are fully economically independent. But the real benefits of a common law marriage go to the spouse with the higher income — which means that most common law marriages benefit the men in them and offer little protection for their spouses.

Contrary to what has almost become a folk myth in this country, there is no legal status for common law relationships. The Family Law Reform Act does acknowledge that some common law relationships may impose an obligation on the spouses but the legal obligation is very limited and in no

way approaches the protection given to married spouses. Under the Act, individuals who have lived together for at least five years or have lived in "a relationship of some permanence where there is a child born of whom they are the natural parents" may make a claim in the courts.

But the claim is limited to support only. Support must be based upon demonstrated need by the person claiming it and the ability of the other spouse to pay. What this means is that the only legal obligation that a common law spouse has is to support the other.

The Family Law Reform Act does not make any provision for the mutual sharing of assets accumulated during the relationship. If one spouse has worked full time while the other has remained at home caring for their children, the working spouse could order the other partner out with only his or her personal possessions. Even after a lifetime relationship, a discarded spouse

can only claim the support which the other party is able to pay.

By contrast, the Family Law Reform Act states that all family assets accumulated during a marriage are the joint property of both spouses regardless of who paid for them. In the event of a marriage breakdown, assets will be divided equally between the spouses unless the court sees good reason to divide them otherwise. The position of the common law spouse under the Family Law Reform Act is similar to the position of married spouses before the act.

Common law spouses should be aware that regardless of the intent of the partners, if a common law spouse dies without a will, his or her assets will automatically go to the legal next of kin. The common law spouse will only be able to assert a claim under the Dependent's Relief Act.

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MOVEMENT MATTERS

WOMEN IN TRADES

Industry, the military, the government all liked Rosie the Riveter during the second world war. She and a whole army of women were *needed* to fill all those vacancies left by men who were off fighting and to become the backbone of war industry, building ships or planes, making weapons. Rosie certainly proved she could weld or rivet or do just about any previously male-dominated occupation. Women's capability was proven over 30 years ago.

A few women fought to stay in trade jobs after the war, but most went back to the kitchens as directed, giving men back the jobs, and allowing men to use them to build a depleted population. Today women are more than ever looking again for opportunities in skilled trades, semi-skilled, technical and mechanical areas, crafts, and other so-called blue-collar jobs. They want to do things which are not boring and low-paying. Women need to work to support themselves and families. And although many fronts have already been broken through, like electronics, auto repair, printing, cabinetmaking, aircraft maintenance or locomotive parking and on and on, it is not easy.

Why? Because patriarchal governments do not yet see the "need" for women to be trained in skills. Women are still expected to either stay home or work in service areas clerking or waitressing and staying on or below poverty-level incomes. And it is very hard for a sole-support mother to try to get through a year on a Manpower Retraining Allowance, even if she had been given a chance to find out which course was really for her.

Attitudes towards women who arrive for non-traditional on-the-job-training range from horror to laughter (we don't have a women's washroom in the place!). And women have often not learned to be assertive enough to fight for their rights and can easily be discouraged in their isolation from other women if they make it that far. Sexism and sexual harassment occur on the job in every type of work, but much more so if you have invaded new territories.

One of the more positive actions of Canada Employment has been sponsorship of 8-week courses for women to explore trade-type areas. INTO (Introduction to Non-

Traditional Occupations for women — one of these courses at Seneca College, Sheppard Campus) has been running two or three times a year since 1977 and from it women often choose courses or training with some real knowledge about the job area, what to expect, and some ways of coping with problems. The course deals with self-assessment, life skills, women in society, and provides college tours, hands-on experience, industrial tours, women speakers who work in non-traditional areas, and more.

The course is a good beginning, but what happens later when a woman is refused job or promotion simply because she is a woman? Not enough support from woman to woman exists even with the help of some union workers or the Ontario Federation of Labour Women's Bureau. Hence a Women in Trades Association is now being formed in Toronto. In the first meeting women expressed ideas for what we can do. They want chances to meet and form communication networks for help in finding jobs after courses, support for dealing with various problems like hiring, sexual harassment, a speaker's bureau (which could for example do high school outreach), a newsletter, fund-raising and promotional activity.

The Manitoba Women in Trades Association (which is holding a National Conference in September) does all of the above as well as lobbying with the government for affirmative-action programs, offering courses and workshops for the public, working for non-sexist education etc. We in Toronto need to form a strong base to build a sister organization to be, as Manitoba women state, "dedicated to the promotion of women as a working and as an essential part of the Canadian economy", being "living proof that tradeswomen are alive in Canada."

If you are interested in joining or helping build our Women in Trades Association, we need your support. For information, contact Kathleen Keenan at Seneca College, 223-9661, Gloria Geller at 537-6498, or Karen Henderson at 977-4805. Mailing address is Times Change Women's Employment Service, 932 Bathurst St., Toronto, Ont., M5R 3G5.

□ Karen Henderson

SPRING FUN RUN



Ellen Agger

For many women, the words 'fun' and 'run' could be properly juxtaposed only on the page of a rhyming dictionary. The 150 exhilarated participants in Toronto's May 25 Spring Fun Run at Etobicoke Olympium would disagree. The event was sponsored by the Women Teachers Association of Etobicoke and embodied the noncompetitive spirit of the growing everywoman's fitness movement. While objective excel-

lence was rewarded with traditional medals for the swiftest times in each age category, less ambitious runners and neophytes were eligible for a number of draw prizes of sporting equipment. Canadian Olympian Abby Hoffman presented the prizes with welcome words of encouragement to the runners, joggers, and walkers who completed the 5 and 10km courses.

□ Flora Macquarrie

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF WOMEN IN TRADES

The first National Conference of Women in Trades — involving women currently employed, seeking work, or training in non-traditional occupations, employers, union representatives and individuals from provincial and federal agencies — will be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, September 26, 27 and 28th, 1980.

The intent of the conference is to share information, to develop effective strategies for increasing the opportunities for women entering the trades and to create an ongoing communications network. For too long, women's groups, and Women in Trades Associations, have worked in isolation in their attempts to assist women who want non-traditional employment. The conference will serve as a catalyst in developing supportive links between groups.

Given that Women in Trades Associations do not exist in all provinces and territories, Labour Canada has agreed to have regional and district offices serve as distribution centres for conference registration. Individuals interested in attending this conference are urged to contact their local Labour Canada office to obtain a registration form. Since the conference is limited to a maximum of 150 participants, pre-registration is essential. A limited number of subsidies will be available from the National Ad Hoc Planning Committee to assist with travel costs for individuals who cannot afford to come to the conference on their own.

For additional information, contact Dawna Pritchard, (204) 949-6340.

SCHLIFER CLINIC

Only recently is violence against women being recognized as a serious situation and prevalent crime. Even now, assaults on women in domestic situations are treated lightly by both the courts and the police. Rape within marriage is still lawful in Canada. More often than not, even when the occurrence of rape outside marriage has been established, the woman is seen as the cause of the crime, rather than its victim. Indeed, violence against women is largely condoned by our society.

In the early hours of Friday, April 11, 1980 a young woman was sexually assaulted and murdered in the stairwell of her Toronto apartment. Barbra Schlifer, 33, had just the previous day been admitted to the Bar of Ontario as a lawyer. She was a feminist, who, in both her personal and professional life, had committed herself to

redressing actions and attitudes which violate the dignity of women. With some of her colleagues she hoped to provide a combination of services which addressed both the social and legal aspects of problems confronting women.

In her memory a group of her friends are working to establish to ensure that her vision is not lost. They are planning to establish a clinic for Toronto women who are faced with domestic and street violence. The clinic will be unique in that it will provide the multi-faceted services that Barbra Schlifer envisaged. To be successful, this project requires the financial support of all women. Please send your donations to the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic Fund, c/o Helen LaFountaine, 2949 Bathurst Street, 2nd Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M6B 3B2 and indicate if you require a receipt for tax purposes.

ORGANIZED WORKING WOMEN ORGANIZE TRADES

This summer Organized Working Women (OWW) is sponsoring a project on women and skilled trades.

Women who are interested in working within these trades encounter a number of discouraging problems. They have to get the training to become a skilled tradesperson first. Then they have to convince an employer that they can do the job. If they do get the job, isolation in the workplace, sexual harassment and similar problems become issues for these women. The list goes on and on.

I'm a student who was hired to help OWW with this project. My task will be to contact women who are already working in the unionized skilled trades. I'll be collecting information from these women about their jobs, the issues they encounter and

how the unions are helping them. I'll also be contacting various union leaders and union women's committees to find out what approach they are taking to obtain trade skills training.

The goal of the project is to enable OWW to develop realistic policies and strategies that are necessary to increase the participation of women in the skilled trades, especially in unionized skilled trades.

At the end of the project a report will be submitted. It will form part of a background paper for an OWW conference.

If you are interested in meeting with women in the trades, or if you feel you have experiences and information to share, please contact me at the OWW office at 447-7462.

□ Margaret Campbell

BROADSIDES

by Susan G. Cole

Sunkist Marriage goes Sour

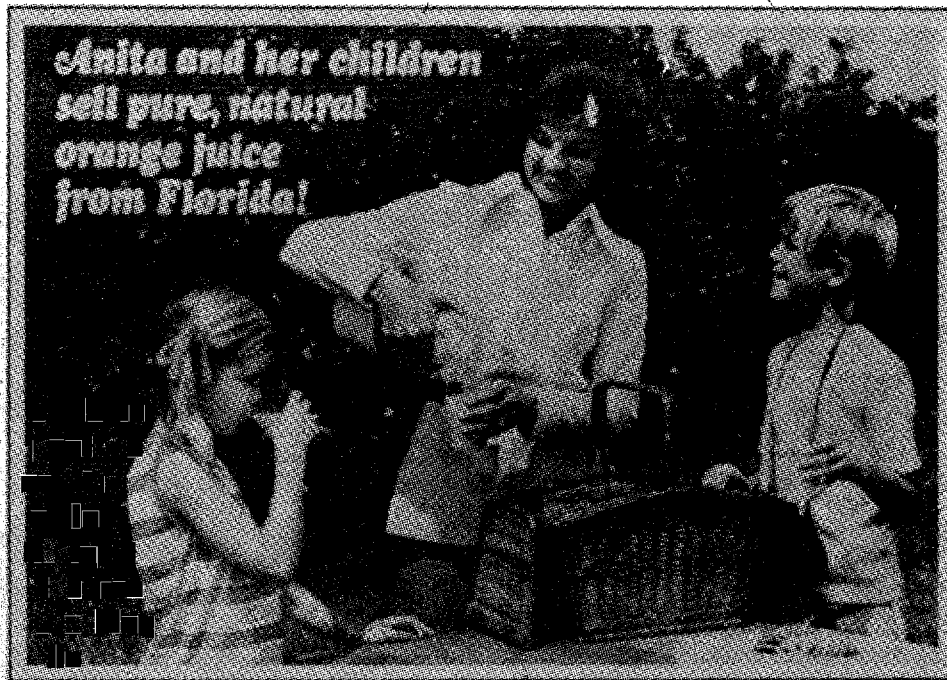
When the front pages of the dailies trumpeted the news that Anita Bryant was seeking a divorce from Bob Greene, it was the temptation of feminists to feel a kind of vindication. It was especially gratifying to hear from Bryant's own mouth the sentiments that she had been used. According to her press statements she was filing for divorce because her husband had co-operated "with certain staff members who conspired to control me and use my name and reputation to build their personal careers instead of my ministry."

These are practically the very ideas feminists were uttering even as Bryant was in the thick of her anti-gay campaign — that she was an instrument of the male establishment, that she was being controlled by Greene. During that famous pie-throwing incident, while splattered with cream, she had joked that at least it was a fruit pie. Greene, not happy with her response, had dug in and said "Let's pray for them, come on let's pray". He was seen standing behind her, muttering instructions throughout her encounters with the media. Adrienne Rich wrote about it lucidly. She said in effect (*On Lies, Secrets and Silence*) that it behooved the right-wing patriarchal authority to get a woman out there to do the dirty work. And Rich was right. Of course it would end up being a woman who made a fool of herself, the one who got pie in the eye.

The feminist community in Toronto was uneasy about Anita Bryant. It would have been so much simpler if the chief crusader had been male. At the first gay liberation rally sparked by the Save Our Children movement, effigies of Bryant were burned and some members of the gay male contingent were getting downright nasty. "Cunt", "bitch" they fumed as they marched down the street, and one got the sense that Anita Bryant was being used as a convenient target for what was plainly unadulterated woman-hating. For my part, it didn't matter a damn whether it was the fundamentalists who were willing to serve her up as sacrifice or whether it was the boys venting the anger at woman-kind. It was all the patriarchy to me. It was never as simple as gay liberationists wanted it to be. Of course, Bryant's recent discovery of her own situation hardly makes her an ardent feminist. She merely got a partial handle on what was going on.



Anita and Bob



When the divorce news got out, I knew it was the kind of tidbit that was perfect for this page. The question was, how to produce something that wasn't cruel and that didn't have inherent in it the "she got what was coming" attitude. Some *Broadside* collective members suggested that I go through the material I had collected on Bryant, cull all her paeans to the nuclear family and to the pure love she and Bob Greene had together, juxtapose them with her decision to part with her husband, and leave it at that. However, in all the articles, including the extensive interview she did with *Playboy*, there was plenty about love for Jesus and precious little about love for dear Bob. There are pictures taken of her praying with her husband and children but not a line about the wonders of family life. Quite the contrary. She's the product of a divorce and so can't personally celebrate the virtues of the family, and from the stories she tells, Bob's been quite the pain in the ass.

It's worth noting all this because it proves what Bryant was saying all along — that there were myriad assumptions about her views that had nothing to do with what she thought and that the media had been guilty of gross distortion. I don't believe it's being too generous to Bryant to agree. And I think it may be that feminists have been falling into the trap of stereotyping Bryant just as misogynists, gays and her Bible-thumping followers have done for the past few years. People have been assigning to her opinions that have been convenient to their own causes.

Although I found no nifty "till death do us part" quotes that fell from the lips of Anita Bryant I did find some interesting material that suggests that none of us should have been particularly shocked that she and Bob Greene have parted company. I'll leave you with Bryant's own words. They are taken from her interview in *Playboy*, May 1978:

Bryant: I don't know, but I just think that a woman has the capability of submitting. I really thought in my younger days that I could do anything that Bob could do and probably better, and for a time, maybe I showed that I could. But I had a limit. I could take only so much whereas God has equipped men to take much more responsibility. He made them to be head and He gave them a certain ability. Women come at things from a much more emotional point of view...

Playboy: If Bob told you to do something

right now that was against the grain of your thought, would you simply submit to him?

Bryant: I might rebel against it — and I have many times — but Biblically, I would submit, yes.

Playboy: You've gone against your own better judgement?

Bryant: Oh yes. For me to learn to submit was one of the most difficult things in the world, because from the time I was a little child, I was a very hard-headed, independent little being. Yet God showed me my weaknesses, showed me where I was the weaker vessel in many respects, and I still didn't want to recognize that. It was in real submission, when I was able to let Bob take

over, that I really realized I was usurping his authority by not allowing him to be the person God meant him to be...

I am not intimidated by being called the weaker vessel, because I know that in many areas I am the stronger vessel. I mean, for a long time, I really would have been in agreement with the feminist movement, particularly for the anger I had toward my father that I transferred to Bob. I usurped Bob's authority in many ways for many years and our marriage was rocky, really rocky, until I recognized that I was in rebellion against God, and I got right and submitted. I'm not saying it was easy...

I never realized before then (she refers here to a quasi-nervous breakdown she'd had in 1974) how I dominated Bob, but fortunately he was stronger than I and we were able to work things out. The main problem we had in our marriage was that, because of my father, I basically had a hate for men. I mean, there were times when I literally hated my husband — I couldn't help it. But I was responsible because I allowed it to fester and I didn't take it to the Lord. And divorce wasn't in my vocabulary, because I'd suffered the scars of divorce as a child and I knew what my children would suffer from it. But above all I knew it was against God's word. Bob and I still have our ups and downs, because I'm not a goody two-shoes. I know now I'm a human being, just like anybody else. If it weren't for Jesus Christ in my heart and in my life, I probably would have married — several times. I probably would have slept around with guys and whatever, I always say that I'm just a sinner by grace.

A Rape is a Rape

Robert Eugene King, a 24-year-old convicted sex offender, was sentenced to 1700 years in prison by a Tulsa, Oklahoma county judge. It was the longest prison sentence ever meted out by such a body. King's crime was hideous enough. He had been invited into the home of a 51-year-old nun so that he could use the phone. Instead, he beat her, raped her and ran off with \$4 from her wallet but not before throwing her, bound at the hands and feet, onto a pile of burning clothes where he hoped she would die. The victim was rescued, King was brought to trial and the courts doled out the extraordinary punishment.

The intention in sentencing King to 1700 years was to incarcerate the rapist for good. It became evident to the jury that it was the only option, since King had been released from prison where he had been serving time for another rape conviction just three weeks before. King was typical in many ways, a rapist who repeats his crime and one for whom a prison sentence did not deliver much in the way of rehabilitation.

But there is something unnerving about the jail sentence. It may be that the fact that the victim had been offering assistance

prompted the jury to be so harsh, but in other rape cases solicitousness on the part of the rape victim has worked against her, not in her favour. The key factor cannot really have been the victim's age, which is not particularly high as far as rape victims go. It was obviously the fact that the victim was a nun, chaste and inviolate, that exercised the people in Tulsa.

Without trivializing the heinousness of this particular crime, it is safe to say that there is something dangerous about administering punishment on the basis of the sexual history of a rape victim. Sexually active women have as much right to protection against sexual assault as do those women who choose celibacy. What if it had been a woman known among the townspeople to be what they might call promiscuous who had agreed to let King use the phone in her apartment? What if it had been a former lover of King's? Would we have seen the same kind of outrage? Probably not. And until we can be sure that Tulsans would have slammed the door as decisively on the rapist of one not quite so "pure" there really can't be that much satisfaction derived from knowing that Robert Eugene King will be in jail for a long time.

The King of Love . . .

The following article by Shelley Finson was written from notes taken at a discussion with Christian feminists. Finson is an ordained minister of the United Church of Canada, and works full-time as Field Education Director at the Centre for Christian Studies, Toronto.

by Shelley Finson

Recently we followed a friend through illness and death. We sat with her during the long hours of waiting and comforted her family and friends. Our small group of women gathered around her to give her companionship as she died. We stayed trying to express our faith that we must be beside the powerless and the broken. We all knew that the Church had loomed large in her life. She desperately wanted to be ordained. She had spent years preparing. The Church refused to ordain her. Her pain from cancer was heightened by the hostility and rejection of the Church. We raged with her. We loved her. We held her. And we were thrown again onto the question of why? Why do we stay in the Church? Why did she want so much to be part of the Church? Why are we Christian?

At the time of the burial we wrestled and argued with the institutional Church for a funeral that would express our anger, grief and hope. We fought the funeral parlour for the chance to be pall bearers. We again encountered insistent unbending patriarchy. As a group we felt both our powerlessness and our power as we carried the weight of our friend's coffin and we took away the hands of male officials.

It was out of our need to be together, our need to continue the bonding that we went off for a weekend of talk, play and rest. We took with us the question posed to one of us by *Broadside*: Why do feminists stay in the Church?

The eleven women ranged from a full-time employee of the Church to a long-time drop-out. All of us have an ambivalent relationship with the Church so that the question is not an unfamiliar one. Every time we discuss it we know we get in touch with our ambivalence and struggle.

As we talked we wondered who we were talking to. We were aware of the integrity of the question. We respond to it as a genuine search, by some, to understand another group of women. It was important to us to be honest with ourselves and with our audience. We wanted to share our reflections as a means of seeking solidarity through understanding. Generally we do not want to fall into a position of defending the Church yet we do want others to understand why we call ourselves Christian feminists.

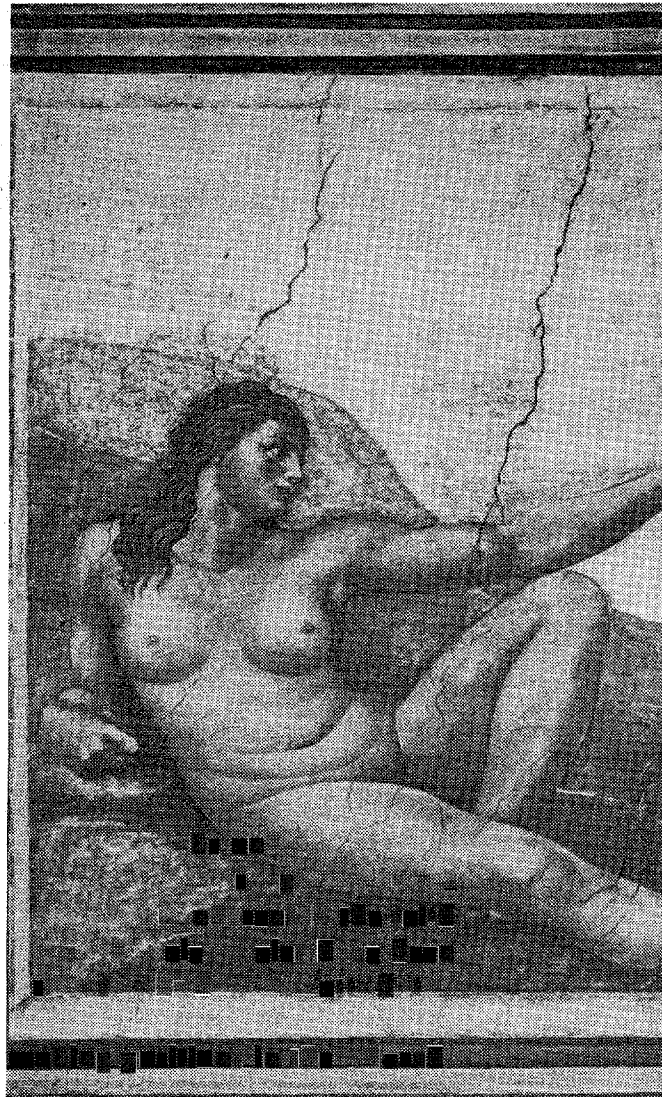
We recognize as members of a pluralistic society that Christianity offers only one alternative for questions of faith. We hope that *Broadside* will ask for dialogue with feminists of other faiths and traditions as a way of affirming the links between us.

We have read and discussed the books and articles that expose the patriarchal nature of Christian religion. We are aware of the contradictions for women inherent in the faith and theology. God has been called male. Males have been held up as our saviours. The sin of pride has been attributed to women when in fact it speaks of male experience. Women are rarely in decision-making positions in the Church. We are called sons, mankind, brothers and chairmen. So why do we stay in the Church? Most of the time we feel excluded, alienated and angry. Our energy goes into keeping ourselves from raging like lunatics. We have to plot and plan strategies to survive encounters within the Church. We work feverishly at developing networks to give ourselves support and encouragement. Why don't we leave the Church?

Quite honestly most of us cannot leave. It is as much a part of us as our skin. We were born into it. It formed us. It is the base we return to and go out from. We refuse to leave. The Church must change.

Our belief is that God is active throughout history (herstory) and has a total commitment to humanity. God works through the people who are broken and through institutions, however sick they are. Feminist writers have guided us as we identify the disease of patriarchy that plagues the institutional Church. Our feminist insights have moved us to understand our spirituality in new ways and our biblical heritage as including women, not just men. As we weave a theology from our experience as women who are oppressed but nevertheless know that we are chosen too, we understand in new ways the gospel that calls for the liberation of all human beings. We know that the Christian message has been taken over and distorted to serve false gods like racism, classism, sexism and ecological destruction. We know that the institutional Church, like every other institution in society, is capable of evil and must be challenged.

The gospel message as we understand it calls us to examine ourselves and the Church. Christian feminists work consciously at both these endeavours. We must slough off the peculiar identity the Church has put on us and we must challenge the Church to be truly the Church. As Christian feminists we acknowledge that our feminist roots are seeded in our Christian faith. We believe the institutional Church has forgotten the radical message of its faith, which affirms the equality of all and justice for all. Our feminist perspective on our faith has brought us to the consciousness



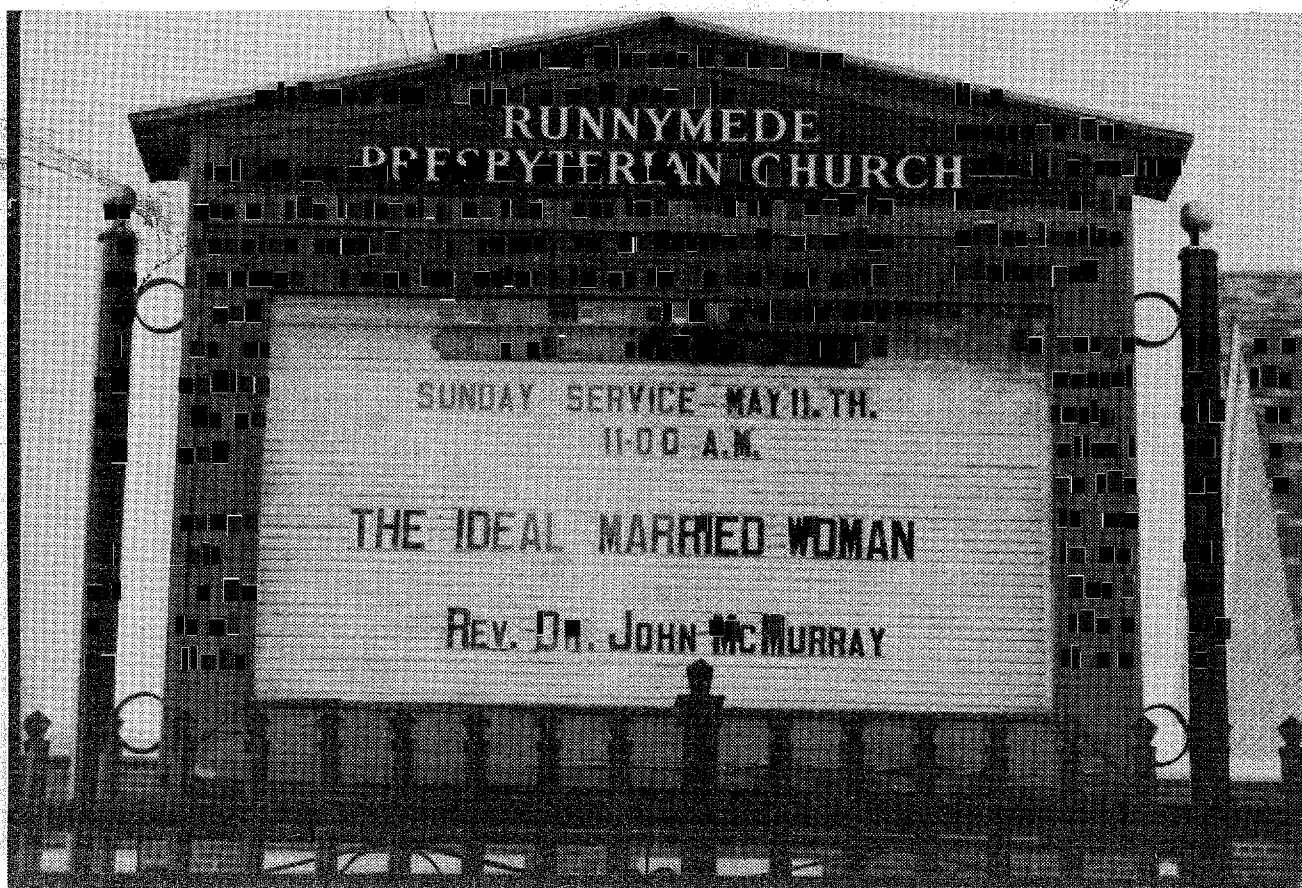
that in a sense we are already 'out' of the Church...at least on the steps! Most of us do not feel we fit. In fact we are glad about that. The question for us is not why do we *stay*, but how do we deal with the fact we are forgotten, refused, overlooked, made to feel invisible. We ask ourselves why do we bother. Even though we are aware of the contradictions, we believe we must be identified with the Church even as, at the same time, we are confronting it.

Our identification with the Church that continues to fail to be what it should be is not a decision of reason, rather it is a faith stance. We have faith in the smile on future's face. Our faith is that God is faithful. Essential to the decision to be identified with the Church is the commitment of Christian feminists to challenge the Church with its own gospel. We are like the "remnant." We hold up the meaning of the faith. We are like prophets; we demand that love, justice and mercy be the style of Christian life.

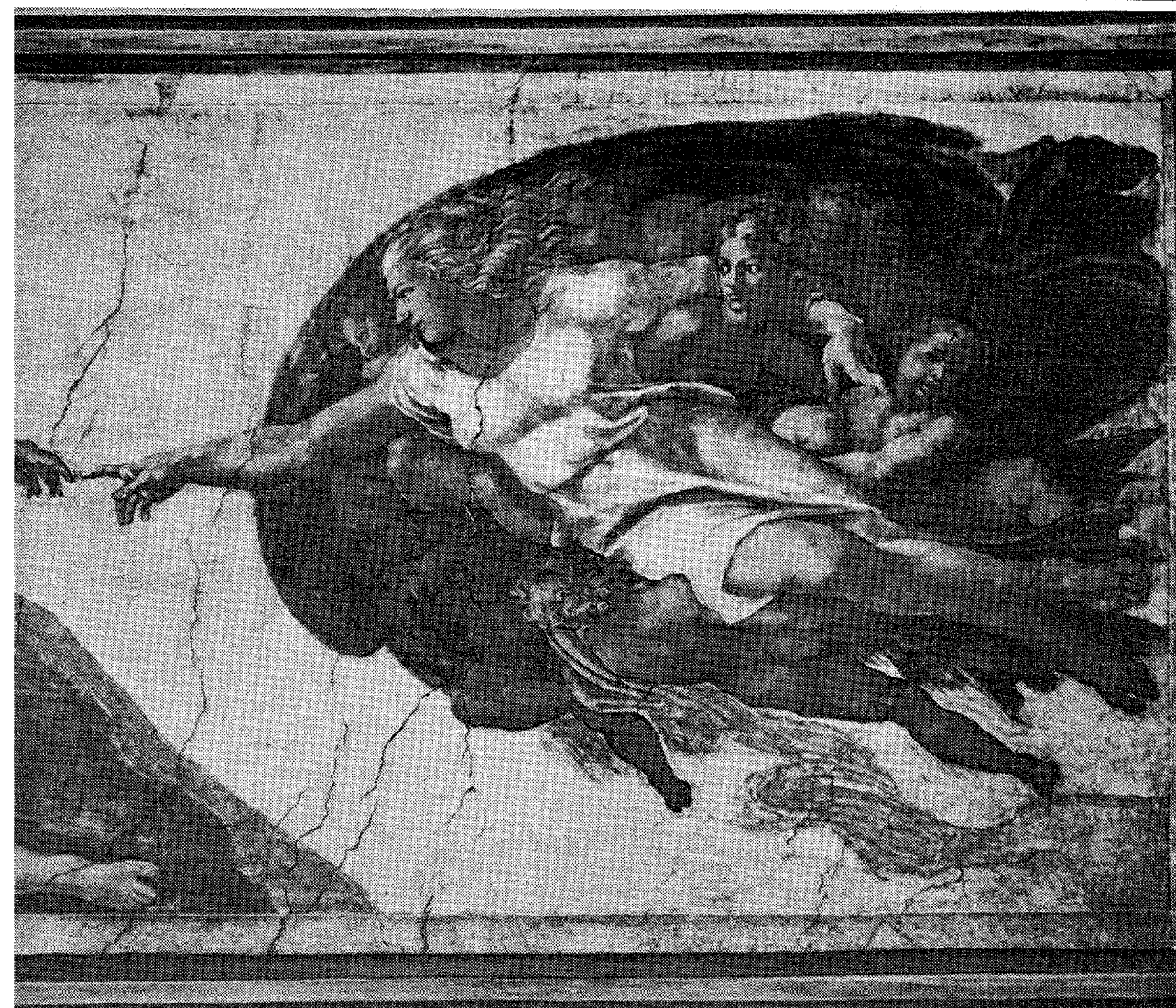
Why should we leave? We are the Church. The institutional Church is wrong. We know we have alternatives. Some of us already have left and have joined women-identified groups. Some of us hang in by a thread that says: we are here now but that is all we know. For many of us our involvement in the secular women's movement is a means of staying in touch with the Spirit. With you we feel the energy and hope on such occasions as the Take Back the Night rally, the International Women's Day march or the union gathering of women demanding a just wage. Among secular women we often experience faith in action. We experience a profound sense of belonging, and the possibility for a better world is glimpsed. We know we are not alone. We return to our task of challenging ourselves and our Church with renewed courage and clearer vision.

Slowly we are working out new forms for the institutional Church. We often look to women in industry, education, health, etc. as a way of getting insight into what works and what are effective systemic change models. We are claiming our right within the Church to be ministers, to express our uniqueness as women and not to fit into the rigid and unimaginative roles of the past. Whether we are ordained in orders or lay, we talk about what is menas to be called 'the Church.' We seek clarity and honesty as we search for ways to stand with the powerless and hurting in our world. We are experimenting with non-hierarchical worship that begins with our experience and celebrates God in our midst. New songs, images, myths and language make up our women's culture. We are at different stages in the journey. Some of us have not begun to move. Some are called radical and others liberal. We emphasize different priorities such as attitudinal change, biblical feminism or systemic challenge. What is crucial to us is that we affirm our differences and take comfort in our commonalities. We know we must trust the process of our own unfolding stories. We often think of ourselves as journeying people, in a desert looking for some promised land. We know that, like our friend who died in the middle of her struggle for justice for herself and her sisters, we may not live to see the land where justice rules with mercy and where love is law's demand.

Deena Rasky



ur Fathers



Women who define themselves as both christian and feminist are victims of a double whammy. They are considered a lunatic fringe within their churches and ignored by the Women's Liberation Movement, which views christianity as incompatible with feminism.

When these feminists of faith try to communicate with other women they are often met with a wave of deep-seated resentment. The emotional reaction to wrongs perpetrated against women by and in the name of christianity is perfectly understandable. However, it is totally inaccurate to assume that christian feminists are unaware of the misogyny prevalent in all levels of christianity, and wholly unfair to vent justifiable anger on them as if they were somehow responsible for patriarchal oppression rather than being its victims. While we may never agree, we must hear each other out respectfully.

In this spirit Broadside asked a number of women to tell us about their respective journeys within the church and how they reconcile their feminist consciousness with their faith. Feminist consciousness flourishes under many guises and in all manner of unlikely places. No group has a monopoly on it.

... Our Shepherd Is

by Bernadette Maxwell

I am a feminist because I am a Christian. Sexism is incompatible with Christianity. *Any* system or structure of power which exploits or oppresses people is incompatible with Christianity. It is perfectly simple.

Because Christianity proclaims the supreme value of the human being, the Christian is not permitted to treat people in any manner which denies this essential worth. To *use* people is to treat them as *things*. In a sexist structure women are *used* — to support the economic order, to do undesirable jobs, as sex objects, as scapegoats for the guilt of others, and so on. The evil of sexism lies not so much in the consequent suffering of women as in the *fundamental distortion of the relationship between human beings*. It is not merely inappropriate to treat people as things; it is wrong.

In an exploitative structure both the exploited and the exploiter are dehumanized: what is specifically human is our reciprocal relationship. Anything which dehumanizes human beings is quite clearly contrary to their nature. But Christians speak about wanting to become *fully human*, to live according to their nature.

I am asked to describe my 'personal journey' to this position. How do I reconcile my feminism with the sexism of my church? Indeed why am I a believer at all? While I'm a little uncomfortable with personal journeys, I recognize the validity of the request.

I grew up in the cold embrace of the Catholic Church. My parents were both converts — my father from orthodox scientific atheism, and my mother from agnosticism. The embrace was cold because it didn't provide any real mothering comfort, any absolute assurance of acceptance. I worried constantly about dying in the state of mortal sin — one never knew when one might be run over by a bus on the way to school. But it was an embrace. It claimed me.

There was a pervasive exclusive-club mentality at my Catholic girls' school which fostered a self-righteous attitude among us. We had a sort of condescending pity for those who weren't of the One True Faith. There was a lot of pomp and ceremony — just the sort of thing young girls thrive on — and many pious tears were shed in the darkened chapel, which always smelled mysterious and holy. My religious life, then, consisted of adhering to a prescribed code of behaviour (in which eating meat on Friday was equally as dangerous as lying) for fear of losing my immortal soul, and indulging in a superficial, cloying piety.

This kind of religion just doesn't stand up when you're a young woman coping with an unhappy marriage and a vague sense that all is not right with the world and your position in it. So eventually I drifted away, as they say. Although I never thought of myself as a 'fallen-away'

Catholic, I did not, in fact, believe in God — though I might have tried to argue that I did. The God of my childhood was not to be encountered in the reality of my life. That God was remote and other-worldly, not involved in the life of the world. He was, in fact, a 'false god,' an idol. I didn't even have to smash him; he just crumbled and disintegrated from sheer lifelessness.

Later, when I came to faith, I wrote: *Ungraspable, inexpressible, ever-present mystery. It is unnameable and yet we give it a name, simply because it is ever-present. And in naming it we ascribe to it all the things which usually go with a name — a sex, a list of attributes, a personality. It is this God who speaks to empty hearts and minds in hollow churches, leaving them empty still. Because he is dead — truly dead in that he never lived.*

I suspect that every thinking believer goes through a process similar to mine. One must 'put away the things of childhood.' But then one must find something to replace them with. For some, a cause presents itself, inspiring them to commitment and action, a life of purpose. And, if they are lucky, they may integrate that cause into a larger, evolving philosophy of life. Others trek wearily through the dark night of the soul and the existential void, as I did.

Emerging from a neurotic and sexist marriage, I found I had a new sense of purpose, although I couldn't quite identify that purpose. During the next couple of years I read a lot and thought a lot. I wanted the Real Thing; answers to, or at least an acknowledgement of, the Big Questions: What does it all mean? Where do we fit in? What should we do?

I hesitate to speak of my 'conversion,' especially when 'born-again Christians' are a dime a dozen, and sects and cults of every conceivable stripe abound. It would be incorrect to say that I 'came back to the Church.' What happened is that I came to a radically new understanding of the Christian message and the mystery of God. And at the same time I found that all the things I had begun to care about (the peace movement, liberation from sexism and other oppressions) find their full meaning and value in the Gospel. Furthermore, if I was to be a Christian I could not *not* care about these things — because the fundamental teaching of Christianity is that God is love, and we are children of this love. Hence all that is not of love is not of God. Love is not a sentiment at all, but rather an attitude, a way of living. This attitude involves respect and active caring for all human beings.

So, now that I am 'back in the Church,' how do I deal with the obvious problems — dogma, political conservatism, sexism? Dogma, which used to be very problematic for many Christians, is becoming increasingly less so. Even the word itself seems to be falling into disuse. Quite right

too, because dogma is static while Christianity is an evolving mystery understood by each generation in new and more profound ways. To free oneself from the pedagogic approach of the old catechism and hard-line dogma is to open oneself to all that is living and true in the Christian faith. The Scriptures are rich beyond telling, full of wisdom and wonder, fresh insights and the pulse of life.

The established Church has a long history of close ties with right-wing governments and of reluctance to change the status quo. Many might find this embarrassing, and go to great lengths to justify it. But the fact is, it cannot be justified. My position on this is that the Church, like any other human institution, is prey to human weakness and corruption. (I even know one woman who feels very much at home in the Church 'because it is such a wicked Church.')

But there have always been women and men of faith who find in the Gospel a truth which has placed them in opposition to their church in many respects. In the light of the Gospel and current political and philosophical understanding, they find ways to fight against their Church's corruptions, distortions of truth, misdirection and ossification. Those who 'lose' their faith because of the wickedness of the Church have a rather meagre faith to begin with. Indeed, it would be better termed a naive trust in human institutions. There is now a Theology of Liberation, composed of several branches, which seeks to redefine the role of the Christian community in the evolution of society and the liberation of all people. It is in communities where people are actively seeking the truth and attempting to live the Gospel that Christian faith lives and grows and enriches the lives touched by it.

Rosemary Reuther, a Catholic writer, has written extensively on the subject of sexism within the Church. The Church's sexist attitudes and structures are indefensible. But this is not a sufficient reason to abandon her (the Church). She needs enlightened women and men to help her grow in truth, love, and effectiveness. And the fact is that slow but real progress is being made. I read an article the other day in a mainstream Catholic publication entitled "Was St. Paul a Closet Feminist?" The article was written by a priest who feels his "gorge rising" at the injustice done to women over the centuries. While he finds it rather difficult to make a case for St. Paul's feminism, he points out that whatever Paul's opinions were regarding correct behaviour for women of the day, he stated clearly, and as a matter of dogmatic fact, that "there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." I find that the feminists I like best are Christian feminists. Their feminism is part and parcel of something much larger — larger than their sisterhood and their aspirations for one another. It grows out of a vision of a truly Christian world.

ARTS

Princess Leia Strikes Back

by Barbara Halpern Martineau

From the Toronto Sunday Star, June 1, 1980: "[George Lucas] came away with an astounding \$51 million from Star Wars, or, according to Time magazine, 40 per cent of the \$128 million in net profits. And now, ... the young director... could make up to \$125 million... If Empire hits the jackpot, what is Lucas going to do with the cash? Well, he's got seven more Star Wars movies to make, and he also wants to get as far away from the 'sleazy, unscrupulous' Hollywood types as he can and start a film makers' ranch."

June 1, 1980
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critics say Zbigniew Brzezinski
to plunge the U.S. into world war.
"Power is there to be used," he retors.

**Brzezinski:
Jimmy Carter's
Darth Vader?**

Jim Klartfeld Newsday
SPRINGFIELD — A mock-up of
an and Soviet interconti-
nestic missile stands on a
Zbigniew Brzezinski's
in the White House.
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ing what appears
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Also from the Toronto Sunday Star, same day: *Headline: "Brzezinski: Jimmy Carter's Darth Vader?" "A mock-up of American and Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles stands on a bookshelf in Zbigniew Brzezinski's corner of office in the White House. Beside the missiles is a small, black, plastic figure holding what appears to be a sword. It is Darth Vader, the dark warrior of Star Wars... From the beginning of the Carter administration, Brzezinski believed that it was his role to add bite and backbone to the President's foreign policy. His display of the Darth Vader statue next to the nuclear missiles reflects not only his sense of humour but also his belief that somebody in the administration has to play the tough-guy role."*

Even darker days have fallen upon the Empire since Star Wars. Young Luke Skywalker, having rashly ignored the extremely clear advice of his Jedi master, Yoda, and his spirit mentor, Ben, left Yoda before his Jedi training was completed and rushed off to save his friends Han Solo and Princess Leia from the clutches of Darth Vader. He arrived too late to save Han from the carbon freeze machine, found himself in hand-to-hand battle with Vader, lost his right hand, and learned that Vader is none other than young Luke's father. Gasp. Princess Leia saved Luke almost in spite of her new friend Lando's "assistance" (like frozen Han, Lando is a lovable macho scoundrel, also the film's token Hispanic). Tenacious little R2D2, the androgynous Droid, fixed the ship over the whining of robot C3PO, and Leia, hearing Luke's call for help, now heads the ship back to his rescue.

Now, with Vader determined to wipe out his erring son and all the rebel forces who fail to yield to the strange lure of the Emperor and his "dark side," and with young Luke minus a right hand (even though he's got a spiffy artificial one), it's time to remember the ambiguous words of old Yoda to Ben, just after Luke took off on his foolish mission. Ben said, speaking of Luke, "He's our last hope" (against the Empire) and Yoda, looking absolutely blissful, lifted his green face to the swamplight and proclaimed, "No, there is another."

My goodness gracious, where can we turn? The evil lord Vader is Skywalker's father — will left-handed Luke get it together to kill his own father? Such a patriarchal dilemma! (And his father is such a popular villain!) And if he does kill him, what won't the Emperor do? Probably the Emperor is Luke's grandfather. The Emperor is getting very cross with these rebels — they persist in using his own technology against him and, unfortunately for them, they haven't yet figured out how to render the very technology invalid.

Now, there is someone who understands all this, but he is not about to leave his Force-filled swamp. He will teach a worthy student, though, and when Luke reappears in the swamp with his good friend Leia, Yoda recognizes a true

vessel of the Force. She will learn well to be quiet and passive — she's been learning that all her life. She will never use the Force to attack, only in defence of life, and she won't be diverted by mistaken loyalties — she knows only too well what a bunch of blundering boobies she's left out there to withstand the Emperor's wrath.

Yoda, of course, is right. Some time later Jedi warrior Leia emerges from the swamp and takes off into the stars, accompanied only by the faithful R2D2 (Lefty Luke is still standing on his head in the mud learning patience). Leia's mission: to find out if any of the rebel forces remain, and if so, to form a last bastion of defence against the Empire.

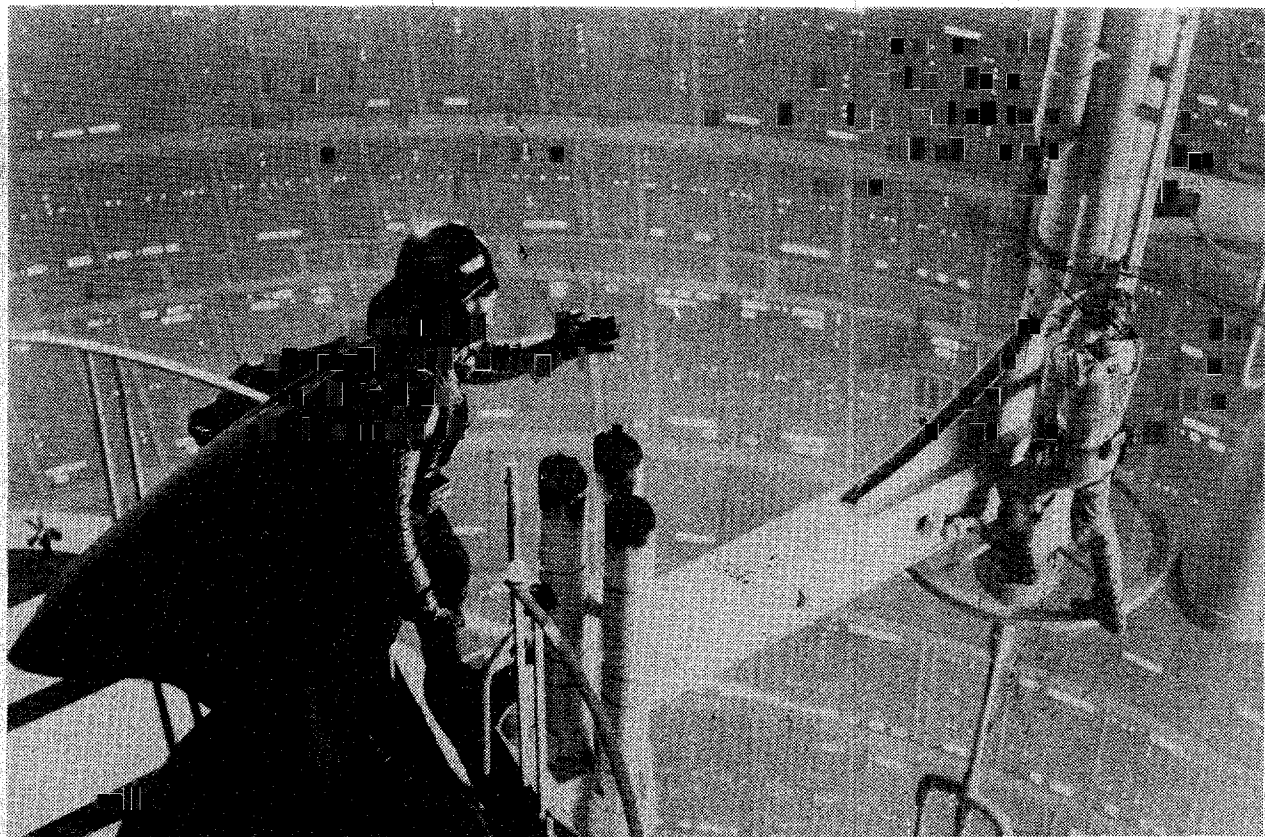
No sooner is Leia out of the gravitational field of the swamp planet than she finds her ship being pulled irresistibly into another orbit, by something her instruments can't measure. R2D2 is quite perturbed, but Leia remains strangely calm. She says, "There's a familiar feeling here — as if I've dreamed it before." Gently the ship is pulled to a landing on a planet unrecorded on any map, which Leia's instruments still refuse to measure even when she has landed.

This planet is green but not swampy — rather it is grassy and treed, with rolling hills and sparkling lakes. Leia is now sure she's dreamed this all before — is she dreaming now? she is certain the Force has brought her here. The Force is

here. From behind a tree someone giggles softly, answered by a chirp from another tree, and a call from another. As they step onto the soft grass Leia and R2D2 are surrounded by welcoming women. Leia has never known another woman. Suddenly she realizes that she was the only woman in the Empire. How odd. "So this is where you all are."

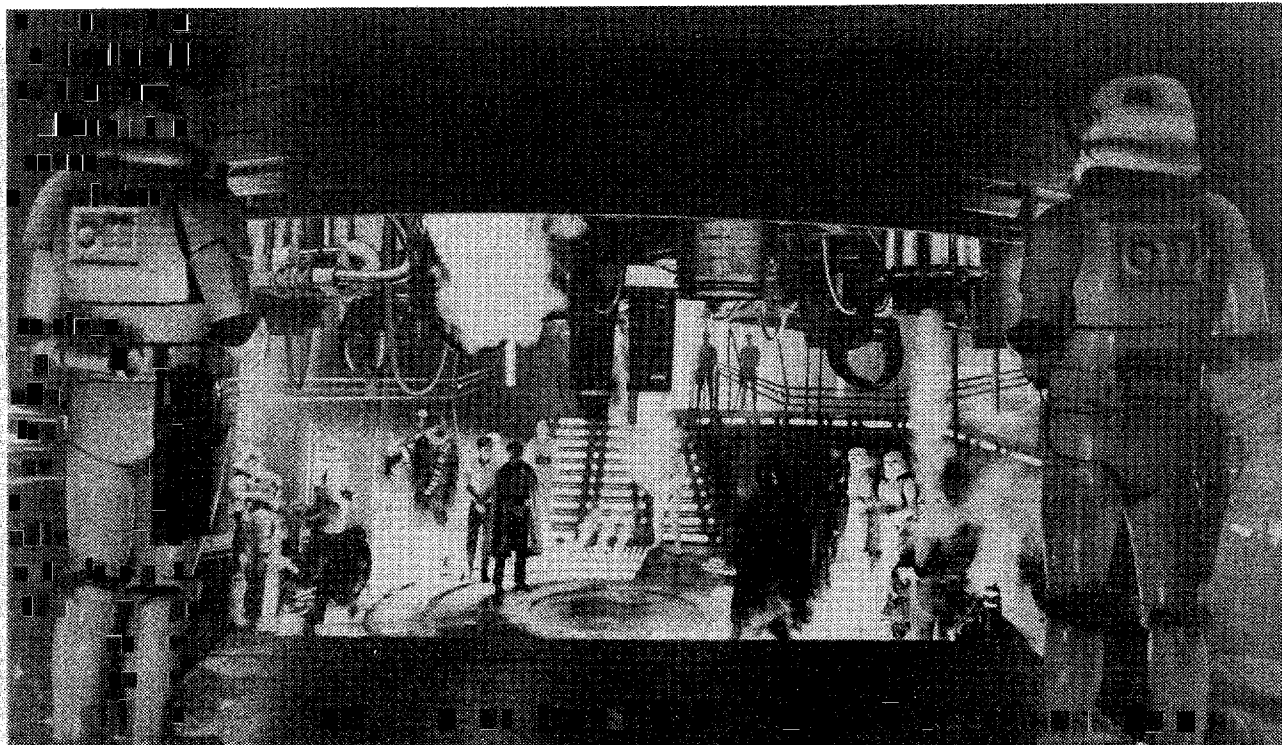
Meanwhile, back in the Empire, general freakout and pandemonium. It has finally occurred to the Emperor that Luke Skywalker, standing on his head in the swamp, is not his worst threat. The Emperor has noticed that there aren't any women anywhere. Recently, it has been brought to his attention that the egg banks have been emptied. (Princess Leia, Jedi warrior, has accomplished her revised mission.) Soon the Emperor will be ruling with absolute control over an Empire of Droids. Even the Wookie women have disappeared. (On the hidden planet, the song "I may be only a Wookie, but baby just look at me now" is a source of great merriment and pleasure.) Having never paid any attention to the Wookies, the Emperor wonders if perhaps some Wookie men have taken off too, but he's not sure. Taken off to where? He scans the universe, sends probes everywhere. He becomes uncomfortably aware of a major change in the Force. It seems to him that the Force is laughing at him. Darth Vader commits suicide in a bunker.

What about it, Lucas old man? If you make \$125 million, after taxes, on *The Empire Strikes Back*, you could sink a few of those millions into the Saga of Leia and the Hidden Planet. Why not?



Darth Vader traps Luke Skywalker. Princess Leia comes to his rescue.

20th Century Fox



The carbon-freezing chamber; end of the line for men of the Empire.

20th Century Fox

Top Dogma Wins

The Gnostic Gospels

BY ELAINE PAGELS

by Susan Higgins

The Gnostic Gospels by Elaine Pagels; Random House, 1979; 182 pages.

Whether devout, indifferent, or anti-religious, nearly everyone who grew up in Canada feels the influence of Christianity, spiritual, social, political. The government recognizes Christian holy days as political treognizes Christian holy days as political holidays (Christmas, Easter). Parliament opens with an appropriate personage intoning a prayer. Ontario's public schools require fifteen minutes of religious (read Christian) instruction per day. And for girls and women, Christianity's message is doubly oppressive, for not only are we born in sin but we are the ones who caused it. But did we really cause it? Or does the answer lie deeper than the orthodox dogma of a patriarchal religion?

Elaine Pagels, a Gnostic scholar, presents a thought-provokingly different account in her latest book, *The Gnostic Gospels*. Intended for a general reading audience, the book interprets and analyzes ancient texts found in 1945 at Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt — texts which Pagels herself helped edit. The texts are Coptic translations of earlier gnostic writings, which range from secret gospels, poems and quasi-philosophic descriptions of the origins of the universe to myths, magic and instructions for mystical practice. Pagels mainly deals with the texts relating to the life of Christ, but reference is made to apocalypse and creation stories, as in "The Hypostasis of the Archons." The gnostic creation stories describe Eve as waking Adam to a spiritual awareness with assistance from the serpent, which often was a symbol of wisdom in ancient times.

And the spirit-endowed Woman came to [Adam] and spoke with him, saying, "Arise, Adam". And when he saw her, he said, "It is you who have given me life; you shall be called, "Mother of the living" — for it is she who is my mother. It is she who is the Physician, and the Woman, and She Who Has Given Birth"....Then the Female Spiritual Principle came in the Snake, the Instructor, and it taught them, saying, "...you shall not die; for it was out of jealousy that he said this to you. Rather, your eyes shall open, and you shall become like gods, recognizing evil and good."....And the arrogant Ruler cursed the Woman...[and]...the Snake.

The "arrogant Ruler" in the above passage is the orthodox Christian god of the Old Testament: god the creator, the jealous god, the god who expels Eve and Adam from Eden. The gnostics believed this god of creation is a demiurge, a lesser deity worshipped by persons who are not mature enough to know the higher authority. Above the demiurge is the all-encompassing true god, "the ultimate source of all being".

This distinction between the "God of Israel", the orthodox god of the Old Testament, and the god which is the ultimate source of everything (including the demiurge's power) severely threatened to split forever the early Christian church, for the gnostics held themselves above those who worshipped the demiurge, including the bishops.

"For when gnostic and orthodox Christians discussed the nature of God, they were at the same time debating the issue of *spiritual authority*," states Pagels. To justify and validate their position as leaders in the Church the bishops, deacons, and priests insisted on a divine chain of command which became the pattern for apostolic succession. Therefore they labeled the gnostics heretical for failing to recognize the supreme authority of the bishops and successfully removed all gnostic teachings and writings from the orthodox church.

Pagels presents the theological arguments between the orthodox and gnostics clearly and then goes on to place those arguments within the political and social context of the first and second centuries. A well-respected gnostic scholar, she writes here for a much wider audience than her fellow scholars. Her style and organization are straightforward and readily understood. Pagels illustrates the relevance of these historical controversies for us today. She states her intention unequivocally in the introduction:

By investigating the texts from Nag Hammadi, together with sources known for well over a thousand years from orthodox tradition, we can see how politics and religion coincide in the development of Christianity. We can see, for example, the political implications of such orthodox doctrines as the bodily resurrection - and how gnostic views of resurrection bear opposite implications. In the process, we can gain a startlingly new perspective on the origins of Christianity.

One issue of continuing interest centres on the position of women within the church, and by implication, within society in general. Several gnostic writings describe god as androgynous, as a dyad composed of both female and male. They worshipped God the Father and God the Mother. Within most of the gnostic groups all members participated equally with no sexual distinctions. Even some orthodox writers of the time supported the strength and wisdom of women. Clement, writing c. 180, brought the orthodox and gnostic views together in a reasoned argument for the full inclusion of the feminine element of the diety through to the full participation of women in the community, in the church, in philosophy, and in the arts. He tells of a woman philosopher, Theano, in a marvelously relevant passage.

What shall I say? Did not Theano the Pythagorean make such progress in philosophy that when a man, staring at her, said, "Your arm is beautiful", she replied, "Yes, but it is not on public display."

There are several quotations from prayers to and accounts about the feminine aspect of the diety, variously referred to as God the Mother, Wisdom, Silence, Intelligence, the Voice, the Invisible One within the All. One of the most exciting and remarkable passages is the gnostic poem entitled *Thunder, Perfect Mind*, which contains a revelation spoken by a feminine power.



Elaine Pagels

I am the first and the last. I am the honoured one and the scorned one. I am the whore, and the holy one, I am the wife and the virgin, I am [the mother] and the daughter...I am she whose wedding is great, and I have not taken a husband...I am knowledge, and ignorance...I am shameless; I am ashamed. I am strength, and I am fear...I am foolish, and I am wise...I am godless, and I am the one whose God is great.

Besides the questions of the nature of god and the relation of the feminine element within the diety, Pagels explores the gnostic interpretations of the resurrection and Christ's passion, the definition of the "True Church", and the teaching of self-knowledge as knowledge of god. The gnostics lost in their attempt to establish a separate religion or to influence the orthodox Christian church and passed into near oblivion. But the discovery at Nag Hammadi sheds new light on the old controversies. As Pagels writes in the conclusion to *The Gnostic Gospels*:

It is the winners who write history — their way. No wonder, then, that the viewpoint of the successful majority has dominated all traditional accounts of the origin of Christianity. Ecclesiastical Christians first defined the terms (naming themselves "orthodox" and their opponents "heretics"), then they proceeded to demonstrate — at least to their own satisfaction — that their triumph was historically inevitable, or in religious terms, "guided by the Holy Spirit".... Today we read them [gnostic texts] with different eyes, not merely as "madness and blasphemy" but as Christians in the first centuries experienced them — a powerful alternative to what we know as orthodox Christian tradition. Only now are we beginning to consider the questions with which they confront us.

That these questions produce uneasiness today with the powers that be is obvious. The principle that might makes right may work for secular controversies, but Christianity's teachings argue for a more reasoned approach. But the knowledge of the suppression of the gnostics through theological, political, and social persecution by the early "orthodox" Christians threatens to expose the hypocrisy upon which many aspects of the modern church rests.

The review of *The Gnostic Gospels* by Raymond E. Brown in the January 20 issue of *The New York Times Book Review* is condescending and patronizing. Brown tries to discount the validity of the material presented in Pagels' work by attacking small details of scholarship and by a subtle misreading of various passages. In a final attempt to discredit the work Brown reveals his sympathies clearly by suggesting that perhaps "that crusty old Ireneaus [a principle attacker of gnostics] was right, after all, to regard the gnostics as the crazies of the second century." The February 17 issue of the same publication contains a reply by Pagels and a rebuttal to the reply by Brown. The April issue of *Ms* magazine has a more sympathetic review by Kenneth Pitchford. Clearly these are just the opening arguments in a controversy as old as Christianity itself.

The Gnostic Gospels is a well-written, highly informative, and timely book. Pagels gives those concerned about reforming the Church, especially women, new ammunition with which to bombard the fortresses of the church fathers, from the Pope on down. And for those outside the Church, she provides an insight into the political power plays behind the theological arguments and allows a glimpse of the very human manipulations hiding behind the mask of divine authority.

CALLING ALL ARTISTS

Dear Sisters and Friends,

I am conducting a research project for Status of Women Canada regarding the relationship of women artists, art students, art teachers and art gallery employees to the art establishment. Some of the questions being studied through questionnaires to the art establishment relate to who is making the decisions concerning distribution of public funds to artists; who is defining what art is; sex differentials in student bodies; which courses women are being channeled into; who's doing the teaching; exhibition opportunities, etc.

As part of the research I am sending questionnaires to all art-related women I can locate through sleuthing, the Womanspirit Art Research and Learning Centre files and a lot of help from my friends. The questions are powerful ones, the results could be very challenging and to make an impact I need a good response. If any of you out there have not been contacted and want to help by filling out the questionnaire, please write me: Sasha Hayman, 237A Dundas Street, London, Ontario, N6A 1H1.

Tempest in a Tin Drum

by Anne Cameron

On my way home to Vancouver Island from Toronto I stopped in Vancouver to see a movie that the appointed guardians of morality of the citizens of Ontario will not allow their charges to see: *The Tin Drum*.

The film opens with Oskar's grandmother working in a potato field, a scene so well photographed, so textured, it looks like a classic oil painting that moves and lives. Mud, overcast skies, and the smoke from a smouldering fire in which the peasant woman is cooking potatoes. A man fleeing two uniformed soldiers with guns staggers up to beg her help. She hides him under her four skirts, squatting by the fire, eating burnt fire-roasted spuds, the charcoal and soot marking her mouth and fingers. The soldiers arrive, she tells them the fugitive went that-a-way, they don't believe her and hang around spearing bayonets into baskets. Their quarry, safe under a woman's skirts, takes advantage of the situation — and her.

What can she do? Expose him? The soldiers will kill her. So she sits, choking on her potato, eyes glittering. The soldiers finally leave, she finally rises, and Oskar's grandfather grins up at her. They walk off, her in front, him following, carrying but clumsily spilling some of the potatoes. A year later Oskar's mother is born, the soldiers finally appear again and the grandfather disappears.

Already there's a lot for the system to censor. People in the movie avoid and evade the authorities, refuse compulsory military service, tell lies, fornicate, and, horror of horrors, the woman accepts the consequences of her act, keeps and loves her child, even feeds its father for a year on potatoes. But we can't ban that, it would be too obvious why we're doing it. Besides we have to make it appear this is a moral, not a political decision. What could be more moral than sex? What could appear less political than sex?

Oskar's mother is attracted to two men, two very different men, and rather than choose between them, she chooses both of them; marries one, remains sexually involved with the other, emotionally involved with both. Nobody ever knows for sure which of the two men is Oskar's actual biological father: harsh and stern "papa" or gentle and indulging "uncle Jan".

When Oskar is born it is only after his mother's verbally expressed promise that she will get him a tin drum for his third birthday that he decides not to return to the womb. Already he doesn't like the world of adults. Bare seconds old and he is burdened with the knowledge he will be expected to get a good education and inherit the store. However, the promise of the tin drum tempts him; he doesn't fight his way back into the womb; and, as promised, on his

third birthday, he gets his red and white enameled drum.

At this time, wearing his beloved drum, he takes another critical look at the behaviour of adults and decides to hell with it, he won't grow, not so much as another centimetre. He doesn't like what he sees, rejects everyone else's plans and expectations for him and insists on remaining a child.

Oskar ages, Oskar's awareness broadens, Oskar remains a gnome, an indulged freak, pampered and excused because of his baby appearance. When stern father tries to force Oskar to give up his beloved drum, Oskar discovers his talent. His scream can shatter glass. When he discovers the regular Thursday trip to the toyshop where he is allowed to stay with the gentle and loving proprietor is a trick, a ruse so his mother can meet with Jan for a brief but satisfyingly explosive sexual interlude, Oskar's rage at being used explodes in shrieks that shatter windows and tie up traffic for blocks. Oskar isn't even in the room, so the excuse this scene has to be cut because we must be protected against a combination of sex and children is garbage. Yes, it's a very explicitly sexual scene between two consenting adults who are both obviously enjoying themselves and each other. I've seen more explicit, more titillating scenes in films to which the Ontario censors did not object. There is no violence and no romanticism in

this scene in *The Tin Drum*. There is no shame, no guilt, no hard or soft rape. Two adults are enjoying their own and each other's sexuality, free of hangups and free of role playing. They are not in traditional missionary position. She is on top, the active or "dominant" partner. Again the patriarchy is flimted and threatened. But it can hide its political prejudices under the skirts of morality because this scene is sexual, it is healthily sexual. So it must be cut, else we will all demand healthy, non-exploitive sexual attitudes.

Another of the cuts demanded involved a scene in a bathhouse between Oskar and his companion-babysitter. Oskar is the same age as the girl, both sixteen; but he is still as small as a three year old. He is sixteen, and short, and in love with a sixteen year old girl of regular size who smells of vanilla. He wants to know why she smells as she does. Two kids undress in a bathhouse cubicle. And short Oskar discovers the source of the scent that intrigues him. Womanscent. He buries his face in the source of his fascination. Buries his face in full innocence, almost reverently. The scene is shot over Oskar's shoulder. You see his back, the back of his head, her bellybutton, her hands on his shoulders. Oskar might well be kissing her belly. Oskar might be doing damn near anything. The horror felt by the

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The Lark: Set-up Saint



by Patricia O'Leary

Many people have played Joan of Arc in many ways — as a saint, or ephemeral nymph, or a pale, frail girl in the grip of a romantic religious fervor, unable really to control events.

In a recent Toronto Theatre Plus production of Jean Anouilh's *The Lark* (adapted by Lillian Hellman), actress Lynne Griffin played Joan as a sturdy young peasant with a mind like a steel trap, who knew exactly what she wanted and how to get it, and who honestly believed that her voices were guiding her to victory.

The play's action is the trial of Joan. Ostensibly Joan is being tried by the Church for heresy, but really it's a trumped-up political circus arranged by the English to prevent any more pesky French peasants from uniting the French forces against them. The time is 1431, the era of the Hundred Years War; Joan is 19. We realize that the outcome of this trial is predetermined; even though there is a semblance of justice we know that the political powers-that-be cannot let her live. She must become an example.

Joan is forced to relate the circumstances series of flashbacks showing how she persuaded her way into the command of the French army, and even though the Church officials urge her to renounce her voices and save herself, she has to be put out of the way. In a moment of weakness she does recant, but luckily for the authorities, changes her mind and so martyrs herself.

The Lark is Aristotelian: it takes place all in one day and in the same place; it deals with the inescapable conflict of Joan's inability to recant (her fatal flaw); and it's all

talk, like a soap opera. Joan is on stage almost all the time, and the focus is completely on her. Her concentration must be complete, or the attention of the audience is in danger of wandering. If Joan is not effective, *The Lark* dies.

The play works in this production because the direction is fluid, the rest of the cast is generally good, and Lynne Griffin holds the focus with power and ease. Griffin is 27, has done stage plays all over the country, including *A Doll's House*, in which she played Nora, and *The Glass Menagerie* (Laura). She started in TV as a child and I had always liked her work. A few days after the opening of *The Lark* I had a chance to interview her over lunch.

We met in a small Greek restaurant near the St. Lawrence Centre where the play was running. Lynne looked full of energy, in spite of weeks of rehearsal, several nights of performances and numerous interviews. She obviously thrives on the life. She is not a conventionally pretty woman but has a delicate face that is alternately child-like and mature. She has a beautiful voice and speaks articulately, has lots of ideas about the part she plays and has thought intelligently about the techniques of acting.

She doesn't like to do too much research before doing a part such as Joan; she feels it gets in the way. Rather, she will spend several weeks before rehearsals start, just relaxing, doing things for herself, going over the lines, keeping the script with her all the time; living with it. The director of *The Lark*, Marion André, had culled some information about Joan which he gave Lynne to read, but otherwise nothing more. When she was in rehearsal she was obsessed, as always, by the part.

•continued next page

Lynne Griffin (l) and Kay Hawtry in *The Lark*.

Coming Up for Air

by Emma Vigier

Diving Deep and Surfacing, by Carol P. Christ; Fitzhenry and Whiteside, Toronto, 1980; 159 pp.

Diving Deep and Surfacing begins with a statement which may cause some readers to place the book back on the shelf. Mercifully, Carol P. Christ quickly goes beyond the simple observation that "women's stories have not been told" to reveal the profoundly crippling effect of being without female-defined stories and models in a patriarchal culture.

Without their own stories, she says, women often live out inauthentic ones, starving their beings and making up sensations and perceptions in order to squeeze themselves into traditionally male-defined designs. Consequently, the new literature being created by and about women offers a much-needed genuine orientation for women by reflecting women's quest for respect, equality and freedom in society and by documenting women's awakening to the profound nature of their souls and to their place within the universe.

Christ examines women's fiction and poetry to explore the intricate relationship between the two dimensions of questing, social and spiritual. Viewing these works collectively, she traces a pattern of female spirituality characterized by, first, nothingness, then awakening, insight and new naming whereby the subject uses the force of spirituality to support and guide her social quest. Each woman's work does not follow

this pattern in the same way, nor do all the characters pass through each stage in the same way. Christ has organized her book so that successive chapters tend toward completion of the spiritual quest which terminates in a new naming of the worlds where all else begins.

Initially, the reader encounters protagonists who do not harmonize their spiritual insights and their social reality. In Kate Chopin's novel, *The Awakening*, the protagonist is unable to name her self in her environment, chooses to return completely to the primary medium of her awakening and drowns her self. Similarly, Margaret Atwood's novel *Surfacing* trails off at the point of naming, although the protagonist vows to use her spiritual power to name her social reality.

Next, Doris Lessing in *The Children of Violence* series approaches the moment of naming fully. However, she presents such an apocalyptic vision that Christ is unable to accept it, believing that "it is possible that women's new naming of self and world can stem the tide of violence and disintegration Lessing so convincingly depicts (p. 73)." Finally, Adrienne Rich and Ntozake Shange give substance to the life-affirming possibilities of women's new naming: Rich by reclaiming women's traditional understandings in *Diving into the Wreck* and *The Dream of a Common Language* and Shange by affirming black women's colour and sex in *for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf*.

•continued page 16

"I don't do anything else when I'm rehearsing a play," she says. "My friends say I should go out, go to a movie or something, to get my mind off it. But I don't. And when the play is running I don't like to do anything much during the day, just get ready for the evening." Sometimes her friends realize she isn't quite with them; she's off somewhere with whatever character she's doing at the time. In the case of *The Lark* she says Joan is not her, so a great deal of living with her is needed.

She appears to love acting so much that she's barely aware of the intense discipline she imposes on herself, and sometimes on others. Backstage during a performance, she insists on silence.

"I have a sign in my dressing room", she laughs, "because there are always people there, and I really do need quiet. The sign says: 'Lynne Griffin is communing with Joan. Please do not disturb her.'" And if another actor is doing something that makes it hard for her to relate to that character honestly, she believes that she should discuss it, openly. The performance is the important thing. "I don't feel that there is any room in this business for people to be sensitive. I myself want to know if something doesn't work, and why."

We talk about how the audience can affect the performers. "One night, we were just coming to a very intense scene, and a doctor's beeper went off". And many people talk to each other in the theatre as if they were at home watching Kojak on TV. "They just don't realize that this can disturb the performers." Teenagers are particularly unpredictable, but can also be very intelligent, and often more honest in their reactions than an adult audience. "I was

doing a production of *Twelfth Night*", she says, "and the student audiences were amazing. They caught some of the nuances that adult audiences seemed to miss. And young audiences react to love scenes or anything risqué with great gusto, which is fun."

She speaks about how to "draw the audience in" if their attention is wandering, which usually happens when the actors have lost the purity of concentration necessary to keep the audience with them. She tries to bring them back by becoming softer, more "focussed". To try and become louder or more "dramatic" in an attempt to grab the audience only leads to disaster.

Griffin doesn't get terribly nervous before a performance, especially if she feels the play is ready for an audience, the way *The Lark* was. But a few years ago she did a production of *Equus* in Edmonton, and had to play a scene nude.

"I'm very uptight about nudity in the theatre anyway; I don't even like to see it because it embarrasses me, and I was absolutely terrified in Edmonton. My knees were literally knocking together, and there was no way of hiding it!" Since then she hasn't been nervous at all on stage. "I think to myself, no matter how bad it might seem, at least I don't have to take my clothes off!"

And in *The Lark*, she found it a calming influence that she had to be on stage, chained up in her prison cell, for 20 minutes before the show started, in full view of the audience which was filing into the theatre.

"All those smiling faces made me realize these people were friendly and I didn't have to worry; it gave me a lot of strength and courage."



Courtesy Carmen Callil

Carmen Callil: Fleet Street Virago

by Margaret Atwood

At a time when large publishing houses all over the English-speaking world are losing money hand over fist, cutting back on their lists, and scrutinizing every potential acquisition through slitty eyes, there's one publisher at least who's expanding. Carmen Callil of Virago has recently increased her staff from four to seven and her list of new books from 43 in 1980 to a projection of over 50 for the year following.

Some would say that's up from zero. Virago, a small independent British feminist press, is hardly big business. It operates out of one room three floors up on Wardour Street, London, in the heart of the dubious strip-and-massage district, and its books and employees are so crowded together in the limited space that it's a wonder the latter haven't murdered each other with the former. But Virago has a lot of clout relative to its size. Its productions are widely and respectfully reviewed, and it can get more coverage for a paperback reprint than some long-established houses can command for first publications.

The clout comes partly from its advisory group, which includes such high-powered names as Germaine Greer, Angela Carter, and the Spare Rib Collective, and partly from the list — Virago publishes, among others, Adrienne Rich, Tillie Olsen, the Russian feminist Alexandra Kollontai, Stevie Smith and Grace Paley — but the driving energy behind the operation is generated largely by Carmen Callil herself.

I came to know Carmen, quiet simply, because she wanted to republish my books in Britain. She got hold of *Surfacing*, which had never been picked up there by a paperback house, and made me an offer. Like a lot of people at that time I had never heard of Virago, and like a lot of people since I was somewhat dismayed by the company's name. But a look at the list convinced me that I would be in excellent company. Carmen herself turned out to be less intimidating than I'd expected. She's a powerhouse, true, but she's also warm and very funny, and she made me feel a lot less lazy than I'd expected. She works from her home as well as from the pressure cooker on Wardour Street, and I was relieved to see that her living room was only slightly less messy than mine. She's a hard-headed businesswoman — she wouldn't have ach-

ieved what she has without considerable tough-mindedness — but she goes about her business in what is, to me, a very attractive way.

She's an anomaly in the world of British publishing, where editors are likely to be women, but those who make the final decisions are likely to be men. This world still runs largely on gentlemanly agreements, gentlemanly assumptions and old-boy networks. In some ways it's an advantage not to be a gentleman in such a milieu. Carmen is no lady either: she's much too forthright and clean-edged. She's an Australian rather than an Englishwoman, which may explain the drive: any woman who's been able to make it out of Australia, which ranks even below Scotland in its ponderous treatment of women, would have to be fairly resilient to begin with. Resiliency has been a help: before founding her own company, Carmen was fired from some of the finest publishing houses in Britain. "I had trouble working for people," she says now.

"So how did you do it?" I asked her in the middle of a zebra crossing. (Most of our conversations have taken place on streets, as she is always rushing off somewhere.) I was referring to the fact that many recent attempts have been made to start small quality paperback houses like hers, but almost none have succeeded. "I was willing to do anything," she said. "And I've done everything. When men break away from big companies to start their own, they're used to having a secretary, to having someone make the bloody tea for them. So they over-hire, and that's the end of it. I was willing to staple, send out brochures, do my own typing, and work twenty-five hours a day. And make the bloody tea myself if I had to."

Another reason for Virago's success is that, partly by luck, partly by good promotion and partly by the judicious mixture of titles on its list, it has managed to break out of the back-of-the-store ghetto often reserved for feminist books into the general-reader marketplace. Which does not dismay Carmen Callil at all. Virago is dedicated to publishing books like *Of Woman Born* and *Lesbian Peoples*, but its managing director also realizes that unless feminism can be integrated into society at large it will fail in its aims.

•Tin Drum, from page 14•

patriarchy could only come because Oskar is doing whatever he is doing with respect and gentleness and joy. By God, we can't have that! Kids exploring and enjoying other kids, free of adult interference, free of shame, violence, or pressure. A sixteen year old boy respectfully kissing the lower belly of a sixteen year old girl? Ban that. They can only gang rape and sneer, as in *Saturday Night Fever*. Besides, if anybody lets the cat out of the bag about Woman-scent not being putrid, an entire industry will be shown to be useless, shelves of vaginal deodorants will remain unsold and pelvic and vaginal infection will plummet as will the sale of yet more stuff to fight the infections. Ban the scene.

Well, what about the scene where Oskar and his babysitter are in bed together, apparently in the very act of sexual congress? Well, what about it? They're sixteen years old, in bed, in the missionary position, covered by a sheet. More explicit, more offensive stuff has played on screens without anyone dying of cardiac arrest. Again it isn't the sex, it's the politics. Again, two equals are coming together without shame or violence, without degrading the woman or oppressing or manipulating her. By God, it is not to be endured! Women shouldn't

want sex with a freak. Good women shouldn't want sex at all! Ban the scene.

True Tory Blue patriarchy can survive a lot, can overlook rape, pillage, and plunder, can allow the blatant carnage of *Apocalypse Now* or the not-too-subtle sexism of *Kramer vs. Kramer* (and two adults naked under a sheet), it can even allow to pass unnoticed the rape of a 13-year-old girl by an adult male (*Coal Miner's Daughter*) but none of this other thought-provoking attitude-altering feminist perspective crud is going to be allowed to infiltrate and possibly infect the notions of the film viewing public, by God. What if those disgusting ideas take root? How will you continue the mental, emotional, physical, sexual, and political exploitation of women and children then? How will you continue to economically exploit them? They'll all be taking responsibility and refusing to enter your world and resisting all the old games and their shrieks of enraged protest will shatter all the glass walls that separate men and women and children and make communication impossible on any real level. And in the name of stern Papa Jehovah, that must not be allowed!! The Empire and the Patriarchy must Strike Back! Grab the scissors, Hiram. The Farce is with you.

•Diving Deep, from page 15

Christ's book touches upon the possibilities of secular spirituality but her analysis is, at times, maddeningly thin and overwhelmed by the narration of the works discussed. In conveying an adequate framework for the reader, she unfortunately reduces her own views to summary phrases, depriving her readers of a thoughtful analysis. For example, at the close of the chapter entitled "Refusing to be Victim: Margaret Atwood," she says: "It seems to me that women must positively name the power that resides in their bodies and their sense of closeness to nature and use this new naming to transform the pervasive cultural and religious devaluation of nature and body" (p. 53).

How did Christ arrive at this understanding? What does she mean by positively? What is the power of the body? Do all women experience a closeness to nature? If so, why? If not, how can this be a basis of female-defined spirituality? How can women use new naming to transform patriarchal views of nature and the body? In short, more needs saying. It can be argued that such questions are simply polemical and that certain principles can

now be accepted as given within the feminist tradition. However, we need only reflect upon the insidious creation of dogmas to realize the importance of exposing and questioning the belief matrix which informs and permeates each text we read.

While Christ effectively challenges the substance of traditional theories of spirituality, she leaves untouched the dynamics operative at the interface between spiritual and social visions. Her articulation of the interaction between social and spiritual quests implies that spiritual quest precedes and shapes social quest and uneasily reminds me of patriarchal religion's habit of imposing constraints upon social being in the name of a god. It is, for example, difficult to perceive the difference between "Women's spiritual quest provides orientation for the women's social quest..." (p. 11) and "Since the Spirit is our life, let us be directed by the Spirit (Galatians 5:26). We are left to wonder whether this dynamic, if preserved, could restrict the breadth of spiritual and social quests even though a change in substance might initially be sensed as emancipating.

An absence of discussion on dynamics is also markedly present in Christ's search for a "new-language" to accommodate women's spiritual and social visions. Looking primarily towards "new themes" and "new metaphors", she deals only briefly with the linguistic manifestation of this "new content". While an author should not be faulted for defining her subject matter and holding to her point, it is important to call attention to the inseparability of form and content in expression which Mary Daly has actively and accurately demonstrated.

Although Christ does not explore the significance of dealing, in the same breath, with an idea and the linguistic structures which give it form, the works themselves affirm the value of attending to *what* is being said and to *how* what is being said is being said. This is evident in the works of Rich and Shange, who have located the focus of women's spiritual and social questing and whose texts predictably embody a native female form. Their visions of female-defined spirituality and of new naming are accompanied by a loosening of formal syntactic structures and are contained in forms which elicit activity from the reader.

Rich's readers encounter words which gain in richness by being read aloud; Shange's choreopoem also comes to life by savouring its sounding. Further, its full presentation on stage demands that the reader/participant transpose her self within a setting defined by the work itself, where the reader/participant contacts the flesh and blood of the words. In their presentation, these works give speech to each participant, reflecting and emphasizing their content, and abandoning a silent and solitary novelistic tradition.

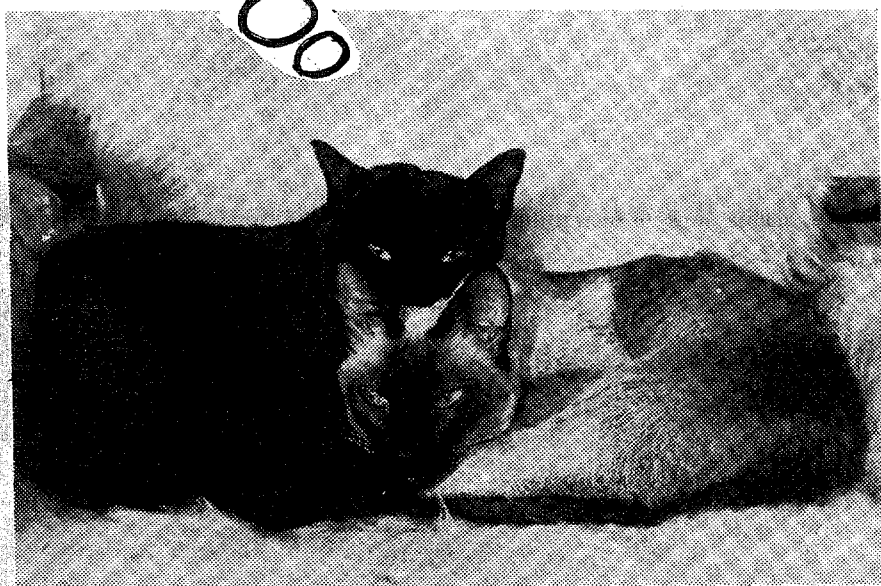
Almost instinctively, Christ refers to art and music in her closing chapter, regretfully saying there is not enough space to discuss these forms in one chapter. Although she again restricts her comments to content, she steadily proceeds towards forms which display a dynamic appropriate to the content she is proposing. Christ has modeled women's spiritual quest on the qualities of nature: flux and continuity. She also stresses the importance of individual being in the collective process. Considering this basis, it is unfortunate that she does not realize that these concepts contrast with the kind of language which edifies a silent and remote place and which endorses an unchanging and homogeneous view of being.

Not quite attaining the quality of new naming, *Diving Deep and Surfacing* testifies to the difficulty of locating the strength and clarity needed to create new visions of individual and shared existence. By communicating her moments of nothingness, awakening and insight, Christ facilitates our individual and collective quests. Her gift of Self is respectfully and carefully received.

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•Cuban refugees, from page 5

They want to get away from it, to another life, are fed up with the revolution, it was phony. And there isn't enough to eat and it's rationed. One of them had suffered being in jail for nothing he'd done wrong he said, and his face as he spoke was resentful and hurt. In each of these men, boys to me, I sense great worry about their present, as if indeed they had burned their bridges behind them and were not at all sure of the next ones, were very reassured to be talking to friendly me.

Singing has begun on the platform behind me. There's a sound system and I pay no attention to it 'til I'm aware that a great many of the sleeping people have come suddenly to life and are pressing at the edges of their sections to sing. It is a Mass and I slink away, yet take a good look at the few women (among many men) with their fervid expressions. This is no ordinary Mass. The young marines gambol and the older ones look pompous and all's well with the world on this Sunday morning — yet I am suspicious of it all, for I sense the psychic separation that the marines have from all these others, who are so vulnerable.

As we leave the hangar we stop to talk to a young marine who had helped Leah interpret, and ask him how many other marines speak Spanish. "Oh, two or three". In all that gang! I take a last long look at this huge erector set building with its high shade and great square space above a cement floor covered with cots. It is cool here and the breezes, constant in the Keys, sweep through from the far side of the hangar. I take more pix, then remind myself that taking them may be obscuring my sense of reality, for I feel I'm not really experiencing this extraordinary event, so much obtruded upon by the marines, mostly young men in camouflaged shirt and pants, with their great shiny boots and belts full of things, bulging flasks most notable. There's a marine officer, very keyed up and jolly. We like him and he seems to want our companionship or approval. PR may be his task. We are the only women among the visitors this morning. And we are funny looking, I reckon.

Let me say before I forget to that I love the idea of revolutionary Cuba, and Castro is a sort of hero of mine. Yet here are all these Cubans with only the clothes on their backs and they look like ordinary people. What happened? What happened? So I'm grateful to be asked by *Broadside* only for my impressions, for of course I don't know what happened.

We go next to the docks across town and spend most of the afternoon there. It is Truman Annex, a huge piece of land (for Key West) which until recently belonged to the Navy — with a deep water port, naturally. The Feds are using a portion of the dock to receive flotilla boats and do the first screening. We pass a lot of moored sailing boats and then need our press pass for a guard. We meet again the nice major who listens graciously to my silly hope to find my lost exposure meter. But suddenly I'm all eyes for the dock — for there is a launch recently arrived. I can tell, for all its passengers sit right next to each other on the tiny deck which surrounds the shallow hold. A marine is called to escort us and as we pass a band of refugees walking toward us, I say my "bien venita" which I've been saying all along. We are near the chain fence where yesterday from the other side we watched this scene. Local folk bring chairs and umbrellas and wait all day for, perchance, a relative who passes.

But I'm all eyes for this launch several feet below us, (the tide is out) and I raise my arm in greeting to all these men — and they all see me without any recognition whatsoever. What is the matter? I'm taken aback for I've gotten used to the others being pleased at my greeting, needing it. After all, who else would say this to them? Not the marines — no, I've not heard one marine say it. As I write, it has just occurred to me, that these men may have been stupefied by a scary crossing. The deck and their behinds are no more than 2 feet above the water. I had thought that they might be the jailbirds we've heard about, on their best behaviour, you bet, with all these military men still giving them orders. As I turn the corner on the L shaped dock, they are given the order to leave and they do so just right — not too quickly, not too slowly, whites of eyes flickering as they go.

We pass a little house where people are being processed by scribblers at tables. Here too is a stand with orange juice and Pepsi, free, in plastic cups. I drink and then we go at once to sit next to people who've arrived and are resting on the beams at the dock's perimeter. It is our first chance to behave like people with people. We're right out in the sun and it's hot but nice and some begin to haul out their precious phone numbers.

Now I look to see who these people are and to marvel at how clean some of them have kept their outfits. And how ragged some are in undershirt and pants, very dirty with bare feet. I become aware that most of these people are men. Their faces are more characterful than American men's, I think. The average guy is maybe 33, 5'3", stringy, with good teeth, quite white, in tan, lined faces. I like these faces but remember only a few. There's a golden African one with plumpish body, taller than the others, a charming familiar look. There's another young man who has befriended an older woman and translates for her. These two have a look of suffering, or is it plain fatigue? Surely they are all very tired from what I saw in the hangar. Or is the consciousness of affliction in these two? Leah and I are drawn to them. The others don't look all that conscious. They're ready for the next scene, are hopeful if not wildly pleased.

What happened next struck me at the time as a climax, what I was leading to, and I was able to take in the reality at last. The charming African is looking down at another one of those boatloads of silent men and now he makes a finger whistle, very piercing, his own sound. All the guys near him and in the boat look about eagerly. A great shout goes up from the boat men, spontaneous, and in unison. That's all. One big shout, and it's my big moment, so to speak, and theirs perhaps. Now, all regain composure.

We hear singing from across the water, where people are lined up in front of a building. They are being greeted in Spanish by a Key Wester using a bullhorn.

Before leaving the dock I ask the older woman's age. She is seventy. She is very ladylike, a retired teacher, her lips pressed together, a bitter expression, taller than most. Her friend quotes her "I could tell you a lot." Her demeanor makes me sorrow for her. It is tragic, so it seems to me, to leave one's country to die, far from home. Yet she has preferred it this way.

As I write this last bit I think, maybe some of them think it's more like a visit, a vacation and it isn't all that final. Oh if only that's the way it could be.

•FPC, from page 7

ment leaders and an invisible executive committee making all policy decisions, the FPC-PFC has chosen a vertical structure of autonomous chapters and committees that report to the Strategy Committee, each with equal authority and responsibility. Instead of the efficiency of centralized power far removed from the majority of voters, the FPC-PFC is prepared to risk a less efficient organization which will integrate the concerns of all its members and be sensitive to individual differences, regional autonomy and the eclectic needs and interests of women. This route, sometimes confusing, always time-consuming and absolutely dependent on an actively committed transnational membership, will result in a truly representative and egalitarian democracy.

Sculptor Maryon Kantaroff had the last word and, unfortunately, didn't take full advantage of her rhetorical position. She recounted current evolutionary theory on the natural origins of sex roles and the division of labour by sex to argue the time is right for women to take history into their own hands. The gist of evolutionary theory is that homo sapiens' standing upright instead of on four legs shortened the gestation period of human infants, thereby binding women longer to child rearing. The vulnerability of women and infants while men were off hunting also bound women into co-operative communities, the earliest "networks". Kantaroff's punch-line was a version of the dancing dog theory: it's not the skill of a dancing dog one so admires as the fact of its dancing at all. Highlighting some of women's creative contributions through history — the development of weaving, pottery, agriculture, animal husbandry, and later the women artists who produced despite the social sanctions against such expression — Kantaroff claimed that the beauty of women's history is not that we made these contributions despite natural and social laws limiting our survival, but that we survived at all. Now, she claimed, we have the numbers, the need, and above all the highly evolved intelligence to shape history rather than be shaped by it.

The question, alas, is how to take history into our hands, how, in fact, to make the fundamental changes on which the future survival of our species depends. The June 1979 FPC-PFC meeting didn't really address the sobering issue of nuts and bolts practical matters: where do we get the money, the expertise, the human resources to have the clout and political savvy of, say, the gun lobby effectively blocking licensing of hand guns? The gap between the heady

vision of a political party run by feminists to bring about what O'Brien termed the politics of the good earth, and the practical problems of governing without leaders, without a fixed party plank and without the wealth native to the powerful was reflected by a difference in the climate of the meeting last June and the one this June. In general, though entertaining and informative, the June 8 celebration lacked the passionate mix of hope and defiance that infected us last year.

It didn't help that there were no decriers in evidence this year to galvanize and provoke the audience into a "we'll show 'em" spirit. Last year's meeting featured speaker Laura Sabia and several members of the audience suggested the FPC-PFC didn't stand a chance: women could never organize themselves well enough to launch a viable political party; existing political parties were showing signs of responding to women's needs; women would be alienated by the word "feminist" in the party's title. So insulting and patronizing were these claims that the need for a feminist party was patently demonstrated.

This year we lack a tangible enemy to rally us into opposition. Further, we have no leaders to follow or tidy little campaign planks to generate specific responses. The really hard work has begun, difficult questions are being posed, the inefficient but necessary process of collective democracy is in motion. Most members are rank amateurs in this era of high-tech and slick politicking. We don't just have a massive social and economic system against us, we have our own internal procedural principles slowing us down. It's no surprise the audience left on June 8, not in a state of euphoria like last year, but subdued, exhausted by the thought of the frustrating groundwork still to be done.

The moral of the story is that if we want a political party to represent us, we'll have to do more than scorn the Chrétiens who would redefine rape laws to "prove" the victim didn't consent, more than decry the Labour ministers who admit that equal pay is too expensive for our economy, more than criticize the Toronto aldermen who fear that boycotting anti-ERA states might lose Toronto some revenue. We'll have to work on FPC-PFC committees, start local chapters outside Toronto, circulate copies of the petition requiring 10,000 signatures to grant the party official political status, and if we can't afford the time to do the heavy lifting of organizing, will have to donate funds instead. Decide what contribution you can make and send in your \$5 membership fee: FPC-PFC, Box 5717, Station A, Toronto MSW IAO.



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Common law, from page 7

Children born in a common law relationship are not treated differently from children born inside a legal marriage. The Children's Law Reform Act passed in 1977 stated that "...for all purposes of the law of Ontario a person is the child of his or her natural parents and his or her status as their child is independent of whether or not the child is born within or outside of marriage." The Act is, however, limited to laws passed by the provincial government and therefore children born outside a marriage may be treated differently by the federal government. In fact, they are treated differently by both the Department of Employment and Immigration and Revenue Canada. The Ontario Act does ensure that all children are entitled to support from both parents and that parents have equal rights with respect to their children.

Custody of children born outside of marriage is no longer as straightforward as it once was. Either parent may not claim custody and the court will be concerned only with what is in the best interests of the child. Thus a natural father may be awarded custody over the birth mother if he is able to demonstrate that, in the best interest of the child, he should have custody. Where one partner is given full custody, the other will normally be given access rights regardless of the nature of the parents' relationship. If, at birth, the child is registered as the natural father's child and the child is

given his father's last name, it may be difficult for the mother to effect a name change without the father's consent even if the father is not meeting support obligations or seeing the child. Similarly if the parent wishes to have the child adopted by the legal spouse, she or he will have to seek the natural parent's consent. The general tone of the legislation is to recognize the mutual rights and obligations of both parents for their children.

Spouses who live common law and wish to acknowledge their mutual responsibilities and obligations to one another can draw up a legal contract according to the needs of their relationship. Provisions regarding the ownership of assets will be treated in court in the same manner as any other contract. A contract can provide protection for spouses in the event of a breakup and may be the most logical method of ensuring that later antagonism does not prevent an equitable settlement.

There are advantages to a common law relationship if both parties are self-supporting. Separation can occur without the need for legal action. Parties are entitled to take out of the marriage what they put in and thus a frugal spouse is not penalized for the extravagance of a more carefree spouse. The tax department also provides a benefit to nonmarried spouses — single parents can claim one child as the equivalent to a spouse and thus take a large tax deduction which is unavailable to working married spouses.

The decision whether or not to marry is of course an intensely personal one and is made for factors which have little to do with economic well-being, but the individual who is deciding to live common law should be aware of the limits of the common law relationship. Where that person will be totally financially dependent upon the good will of the other party, special contract provisions should be considered.

NOTE: Copies of the Family Law Reform Act can be obtained by writing to the Ministry of the Attorney General for Ontario or from the Government of Ontario Bookstore, 880 Bay Street, Toronto. The Government Bookstore also stocks copies of the Succession Law Reform Act and the Children's Law Reform Act at prices from \$.75 to \$2.

CASE HISTORIES

CASE NO. 1 — Ms. X sought legal assistance because her common law spouse was refusing to work and was beating her and the children. Although both spouses had signed the lease, Ms. X had been the only one to make rent payments for the last six months. The apartment was a desirable one with reasonable rent, close to Ms. X's work and near the children's school. She wanted the court to order her husband to leave — she would continue to assume responsibility for the rent and even sign a new lease.

RESULT: Ms. X cannot take court action to order her spouse out of the apartment. Only married spouses can bring an action for exclusive possession of the matrimonial home. Where a couple is living common law, they are in the same position as any other tenants. Each spouse is equally entitled to stay.

CASE NO. 2 — Ms. R and Mr. W lived together for seven years. During that time, they had two children. Mr. W was close to both his sons and was very involved in their care. Both he and Ms. R worked full time so the children were in day care. When the couple decided to separate, Mr. W commenced a custody action for the children, who were in the care of their mother. When Ms. R came to see us she was convinced that her common law spouse had no rights to the children and she was reluctant to go to court.

RESULT: Despite the fact that Ms. R is the birth mother of the children and is capable of caring for them, Mr. W has an equal right to custody of their children. The court is only concerned with what is in the best interests of the children. If it feels that they will be better off with their father, that order can be made, despite the fact that the mother is willing and able to care for them.

CASE NO. 3 — Ms. S lived with Mr. J for over twenty-five years until his death. Although he had always promised to provide for her, Ms. S found herself left out of the will. Since she had never worked outside of the home, and since the couple had always needed all of Mr. J's pension benefits to live comfortably she is concerned about her rights after his death.

RESULT: Despite the length of their relationship, Ms. S will not be entitled to company pension benefits under most pension plans. Unless the plan specifically allows the pensioner to allocate the beneficiary, she will not be able to make a claim. If the policy is for a spouse, only a legally married woman will be able to collect. If they were living together at the time of his death, she will be entitled to claim survivors' benefits from the Canada Pension Plan.

CASE NO. 4 — Ms. T and Mr. F lived together for over twenty-five years. During a part of that time, Mr. F worked as the building superintendent for a large company. Although the company would only hire married couples and despite the fact that Ms. T did help out with the work, the payment was made out only to Mr. F. While the couple worked for this company, they purchased land from a brother of Ms. T. The price of the land was very low since the brother wished to benefit his sister. The couple built a cottage on the land. After they separated, Mr. F refused to give Ms. T any rights in the cottage, which was solely in his name. When she came to see us, she was outraged that her common law spouse now had a large cottage up on her family's traditional vacation spot. She felt that in view of her long relationship and her work she should be entitled to a share of the cottage.

RESULT: Since Ms. T could not prove that part of her husband's salary had in fact been earned by her labour and since she made no financial contribution to the purchase of the cottage, she has no legal right to a share of the value of the cottage. Common law spouses stand in exactly the same position to one another as strangers and the court has not recognized the fact of the relationship as giving the partners any special rights.

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Under our democratic system, elected representatives, regardless of their gender, are responsible to all their constituents. Yet the record shows that they have regularly failed to respond in an adequate fashion to those concerns which determine the lives of more than half of those they are elected to serve.

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•Deconfederation, from page 1

American union.

Newfoundland is more likely to revert for a time to a state of semi-independence based on its British connection and its oil reserves. Most of its energies would be consumed in squabbling with Quebec over Labrador.

Which leaves Ontario, the Heartland province as it likes to think of itself, and the place everyone else loves to hate. This is where the people are. Half of all English-speaking Canadians live in Ontario. The population of Toronto alone is greater than all of Alberta or British Columbia. With Canada in dissolution Ontario loses protected markets for its manufacturing industry and its central role as the financial and service hub of an independent country. It probably stagnates slowly; the long established Wasp element emigrating to other parts of the continent, some others back to Europe. The poor and non-European would most likely remain, having

nowhere better to go. Perhaps they could find the energy and vision to found a new nation. But how likely is that, given the common language and drawing power of neighbouring America? Ontario could try to negotiate statehood or at least territorial status. Maybe Americans could be persuaded to absorb within their body politic millions more urban, industrialized people demanding jobs, social programs and services.

At this point in my scenario I like to get creative. Let's suppose that Ontario and Quebec (which is still there, right next door and has problems of its own) decide that to avoid economic stagnation and cultural absorption they need each other. To hang together so to speak. Let's suppose they unite into one independent country. Let's suppose they call it Canada; Upper and Lower Canada....

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MOVEMENT COMMENT

Feminist Fall-out



Many women even argue that we should not involve ourselves in the nuclear issue at all. They see it as a distraction from the many specifically feminist demands, like abortion and equal pay, that we have still not won; or as a potential siphon of activist women into the energy-draining internal exploitations of mixed political groups, or perhaps as a battle already lost.

As a feminist who believes that we must get involved, I see several aspects of the problem for us to face in the next few years.

As most of the "experts" predict economic recession, reaction and conservatism in world political leaders, and increasing threats of war, there are only a few whose outlook on the 80's includes a warning about the dangers of nuclear development. But for those of us who have even an elementary understanding of the issues, it is clear that the problem is a staggering one. It is also certain that if anti-nuclear forces do not react with speed and effectiveness in the next decade, our chances of survival, even until the year 2000, will not be good.

Most of the feminists I know, including me, are in a conflicted and indecisive frame of mind about how exactly to proceed.

The enormity of the truth about military and non-military uses of nuclear power can be paralyzing. I found that even a limited exposure to the facts sent me into a process of denial, depression, anger and hopelessness that lasted several months. It is surprisingly easy, sometimes even desirable, to rationalize, to understate or to forget. This is a problem that already plagues anti-nuclear organizers, and feminists are not immune to it.

Secondly, the idea that we should choose to fight the abortion enemy, or the equal pay enemy, but not the nuclear one does

not stand up under much scrutiny. We are perhaps just starting to see the size of the muscles on the octopus, but the politicians are the same ones (Davis' nuclear plans for Ontario are almost beyond belief), and the big business issues do not substantially change. As feminists, we are fighting a comprehensive anti-life, pro-profit mentality which has developed to a point that it threatens our freedom and our existence. We do not have the luxury of choosing one front over another.

The most important challenge to feminism in the nuclear issue lies in the implicit testing of our autonomous politics. By choosing to involve ourselves in struggles very explicitly related to women, we have been able to gloss over the distinctions between an autonomous and a separatist direction. Consequently the danger to our health, our families and our very lives is not seen as a feminist issue. However, while we fight our struggle separately, the devastation of the planet obviously does not stop. My understanding of the politics of autonomy is that it provides us with a perspective on our need as a broadly based movement to grow and develop outside of the influence of male domination. We



choose to work and create politically with women because that is the source of our strength and our wisdom.

We can also choose to work with women in nonwoman-specific struggles, or to ally ourselves with others, on our own terms, to oppose the common enemy. In the face of the potential power of our solidarity as a movement we are no longer victims, but a tremendous political resource. The talents and experiences of feminists could not only inform, but should inspire us and direct the pro-life movement of the 80's. Let them worry about joining us.

Debra Curties

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