

Broadside

A FEMINIST REVIEW

Volume 2, Number 8

June 1981

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'Writers in Dialogue' — American lesbian/feminist poet Adrienne Rich (top l., bottom r.) and Quebec lesbian/feminist poet Nicole Brossard.

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Photos by Beverley Allinson

INSIDE BROADSIDE

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MANAGEMENT

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LETTERS

Broadside:

As I was "the representative from Studio D" mentioned in Barbara Martineau's article ('Independent Images,' April 1981), I would like to straighten out one fact about the panel discussion on the National Film Board that took place at the University of Toronto last March.

The representative from Studio D (me) did not concede she knew nothing about distribution, she only said that there was a person in the audience who knew a lot

more, and I quickly referred the question to Barbara Janes, Director of Canadian Distribution, the No. 2 in the Distribution Branch of the NFB.

I don't feel that Ms. Martineau's repetitive and unfounded criticism of Studio D in any way helps the women's film community in this country.

I love reading *Broadside* and I wish you a very long existence.

Thank you,

Diane Beaudry
Filmmaker, Studio D
NFB, Montréal.

Broadside:

I was really impressed with Joanne Kates' article (May 1981) on the pseudo-sexual revolution. I think, however, that she didn't touch on some very important points that affect many self-respecting (heterosexual) feminists who do not go to bars, who have known for years that one-night stands are not worth the trouble, and who find themselves with men who agree. These men think of themselves as progressive, are in sympathy with feminism, don't pick up wo-

men in bars, and insist they have sex only with "friends" in the context of equality. I'm talking about the men who are most likely to drive intelligent feminists crazy. With the result that a lot of energy that could go into fighting patriarchal society is siphoned off into confusion and heartache. This emotional malnutrition is often a shameful secret among feminists.

Sincerely,
Jacqueline Swartz,
Toronto.

Broadside:

Judith Quinlan's article *The Cancer Crusade* (*Broadside*, April 1981) is the most incisive and informative that I have read on the destructiveness of the patriarchal culture and the myriad ways in which its agents are taking us with them on their death trip. I agree that blaming the victims and putting our faith in a one-legged saviour to finance research for a cure for cancer obscures the real obscenity of the callous manufacture of death in this society.

I want to add one piece, though, and that is to address the ways in which we, knowing

all this, still collude with them. It saddens me to see women who work hard to organize and demonstrate and go to jail to try and stop the destruction of our beautiful planet polluting their own beautiful bodies with cigarettes, junk food, too much coffee, alcohol, dope. As we work together to transform the world, we must simultaneously be working on transforming ourselves. Transforming ourselves means not only changing our attitudes and behaviour and expanding our awareness; it also includes taking care of and healing ourselves physically. The split between mind and body is a legacy from the patriarchy; we do not have to perpetuate it by continuing harmful practices in the areas of our lives over which we have control right now. In these times we need all our mental, emotional and physical strength to fight for more control of our lives. If we don't practise at the most personal level the kind of integration of mind, body and spirit that we want to see in the world, our chances of creating that better world are diminished. Our precious tenet, the personal is political, becomes hollow if our lifestyles contradict our politics.

Annette Clough,
Vancouver

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EDITORIALS

Religion as Politics

As Pope John Paul II lies in hospital recovering from gunshot wounds, a myopia seems to plague both the mainstream media and the international populace. The attitude nurtured by the daily media accounts of the pope's condition is one of shock, repugnance, dismay that a religious figure, the divine and beatific Holy Father, can be vulnerable to the base design of a would-be assassin. "Is nothing sacred?" has been the typical response to the attempted murder.

Assassination attempts are always unsettling. But why has everyone steadfastly refused to recognize this deed as a political act? *Broadside* has always been of the opinion (see 'Papal Bull', Vol. 1, no. 2) that the Pope is not the benign religious presence his public relations department in the Vatican likes to foster. On the contrary, his insistence that women be consigned to a

second class status in the church and his intransigence on the issue of birth control has made him a political adversary of women in particular.

Nowhere has this been more clear than in Italy, where the Pope took on a high profile as in the abortion referendum campaign in an attempt to convince Italians to vote for repeal of abortion laws. Feminists in the country had been frustrated by the Pope's stance, claiming that he was undermining the separation of church and state, using his religious clout for political purposes.

It is no coincidence that the gunman who took the shots at the Pope, Mehmet Ali Agca, is a Moslem extremist. Islam has become over the past few years an increasingly politicized force. The Catholic Church is perhaps Islam's strongest rival,

or at least the most visible, and Agca, driven by his own fanaticism or by filthy lucre, and likely somewhat mad, still knew a political enemy when he saw one.

None of this is to say that *Broadside* hopes Pope John Paul II dies of his wounds. We don't believe that assassination is a political solution. Besides, one Pope is always succeeded by another, equally committed to the values of the Catholic Church. The point is simply that we consider the Pope to be of this earth, a man, a political animal whose role as head of the church is wholly political. Agca's attempted assassination was not the deed of someone who craved celebrity status via the slaying of a beloved and harmless saint. His was a political act.

Clear Choice

After at least a year of depressing political developments that saw the rise of Ronald Reagan, the moral majority and new counter-insurgency measures in Latin America, finally there has been a development that we can embrace wholeheartedly. Italians went to the polls and voted overwhelmingly in favour of keeping its abortion laws, among the most liberal in the world, intact.

The victory is a tribute to the efforts of feminists who were able to mount a campaign against Italy's reactionary forces. Not the least of their opposition came from the Catholic Church as Pope John Paul II, sometimes even to the embarrassment of the Vatican, launched an aggressive campaign that was cut short by an attempt on his life. Pro-choice feared a vote in favour of repealing the abortion laws, a vote that would express sympathy for the wounded Holy Father. But sentimentality gave way to good sense and abortions will continue to be made available (on demand to all women over the age of eighteen).

This is the second setback for the church, which fought to oppose the right to divorce in Italy's 1976 referendum on the issue and

lost. Italians seem to be saying that they insist on the separation of church and state and will not let the leaders of the church dictate the laws of the land, not even those that govern personal conduct. The church is

losing ground.

The results of the referendum are a welcome contrast to the world's otherwise dismal reactionary climate. For a change, we have some cause for celebration.



Courtesy Effe magazine, Rome

The West and the Rest

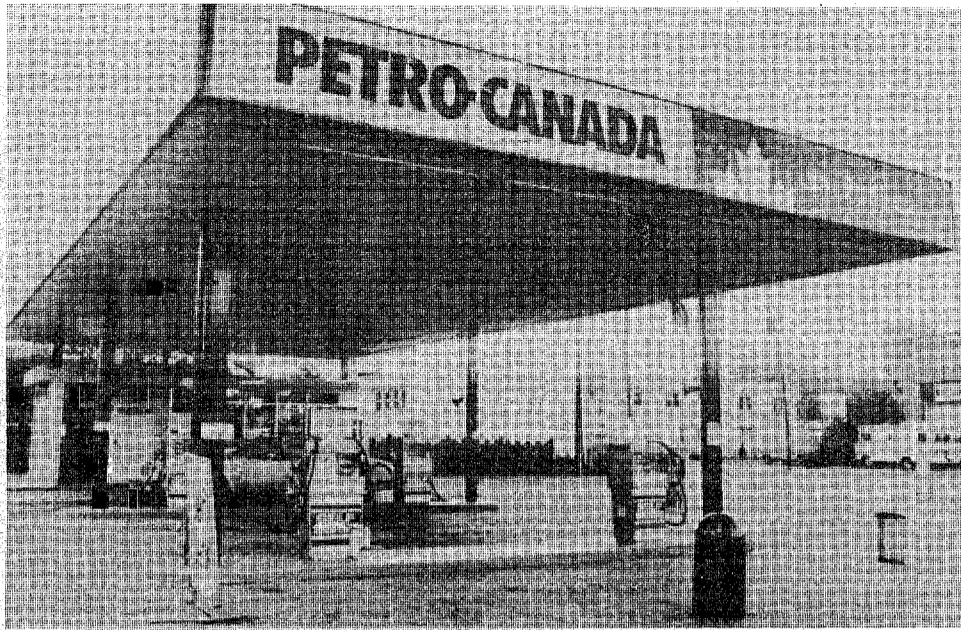
by Eve Zaremba

Now that the dust is settled from the presidential assassination attempt, the papal assassination attempt, the flight of the space shuttle and other exciting world-scale events, it behooves us to turn to our own dull Canadian doings.

Actually I don't find our politics boring at all, especially not lately. The cosy myth that nothing worth getting excited about ever happens in Canada has long been an excuse for political passivity in this country. This comfortable assumption could cost us dearly in future.

Three major items are of special interest and enduring national importance. I am referring, of course, to the Quebec election, hassles over oil and the Constitution. Each merits separate discussion at length but this short column can only touch upon some threads common to all three — the struggle of federal versus provincial powers and divergences between different parts of the country, especially the West versus the Rest. Confusions, dilemmas, and ironies abound in this typically Canadian scenario.

Within a year of the referendum on sovereignty-association and shortly after giving the federalist party — the Liberals — all available parliamentary seats, Quebecers confirm the anti-federalist PQ in provincial power. It seems that Quebecers have caught on to a system long practised by the canny Ontarians, who like to support a strong federal government in power while voting in a different provincial party, thus making sure of a loud voice in national government while always having a countervailing force on hand. The Quebec provincial government has been given clear direction by its citizens: it can't dictate where it wants to take them. The liberals have also been told in no uncertain terms not to take Quebec for granted.



Quebeckers political sophistication should not be lost on Westerners. They have long beefed that Central Canada hogs all the national power and runs the federal government. This undoubted fact has somehow seemed 'natural' as long as the Western provinces were relatively poor. On the whole people realize that having a good case is not enough: governments are not neutral. Now the newly rich Westerners find it perverse that their wealth has not bought them what they want. Prevailing wisdom equates wealth with power. But it turns out that even money is not enough, at least it does not immediately and automatically confer power. (Women have long known that mere numbers plus a good case confers nothing at all.)

It's not that Alberta's oil dollars, for instance, do not have an impact on Ottawa. The problem is that the impact is a negative one. In the long run, for sure, money would finally triumph but will there be a long run?

Western frustration is compounded by the fear that since their wealth is mainly based on oil, a non-renewable resource, it will not last. If they don't grab the national brass ring now, as good an opportunity might not come again. In ten or twenty years the oil will be gone and coal and potash depleted. Thus, within these few years Alberta, Saskatchewan and BC must diversify their industrial bases and take their rightful place in the councils of the nation. It's one thing to be wealthy suppliers of raw materials to central Canada, the US, and Japan and quite another to return to being poor and dependent hewers and drawers.

Viewing the federal government as a permanent barrier to their ambitions, Western governments have consistently treated it as the enemy, ensuring constant and painful confrontations. To the extent that these governments (Manitoba included) are motivated by rational long-term economic consideration, I believe they are wrong; wrong in their assumptions and wrong in their strategy.

The assumption that Ottawa is the 'enemy' is self-fulfilling and self-defeating. In a federal system such as ours the central government can be had and must be had — a fact which Quebecers apparently long understood. They never allowed their national aspirations to push them out of Ottawa. Quite the contrary. At the height of separatist sentiment Quebec remained well ensconced in the seat of federalism. In the event, Quebec is de facto sovereign and de jure associated: the best of both worlds. A neat trick and one Western Canada must

hurry up and learn.

Voters of Western Canada took all their marbles out of the national game and handed them to narrow regional and industrial interests. Now they are captives of these interests and have nowhere to go. The West excluded itself from federal affairs just as it had begun to have some potential clout. It would have taken time, it would not have been easy but it could have been done. The West could have had its legitimate interests (and illegitimate ones, for that matter) represented in Ottawa.

Instead, Alberta and its allies have painted themselves into a corner on the issue of oil. Of course the price consumers pay for oil in Canada is too low. Of course, the feds are wrong to keep it low and subsidize it to suit the voters and the manufacturing sector. It's OK to press for an increase in the price of oil. But holding out for an enormous share of the proceeds, just when the rest of the country and the federal government were badly strapped financially, was to blow it politically. And that is what the oil provinces, led by Alberta, did. Someone in Edmonton lost grip on reality. The present one-day flow of dollars from east to west could not be increased unless and until the West has the political clout to make it happen. The western provinces have neglected to obtain that clout. It's naive to make a demand like that before acquiring the means to make it stick.

What in fact stuck was the National Energy Policy. It hadn't come out of an Easter egg. It was Ottawa's answer to what it perceived as a threat to Canada's fiscal and industrial stability; a threat not so much from OPEC as from Alberta, its allies and the US-controlled oil companies. The Liberals' wonderful conversion to nationalist economic policy was as much the doing of Lougheed as of Trudeau. For the feds it amounts to a policy of national self-preservation. All this time the provinces have done and said nothing to contradict significantly the view that they are not to be trusted. On the contrary, by cutting oil production, holding up oil sands development and getting into bed on the Constitution with Lévesque, an avowed separatist, they badly undermined their credibility.

How can they do these things and still claim to act for the good of Canada? The feds case is that on constitutional change the views of the provincial premiers are equally tainted — narrow, self-serving and hypocritical. It's not a bad case.

In patriarchal politics, where only winning counts, the eight dissenting premiers have been outclassed and out-maneuvred. Now, barring a major upset by the Supreme Court, we will have a new Constitution in Canada by summer. Not to mention Petro-Canada gas stations coast-to-coast.

Who said the Canadian political scene was dull*+/?!

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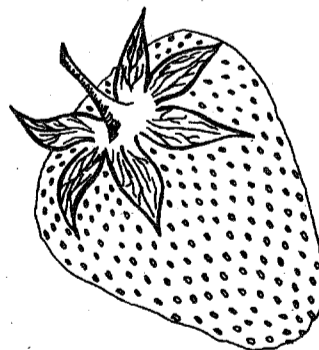
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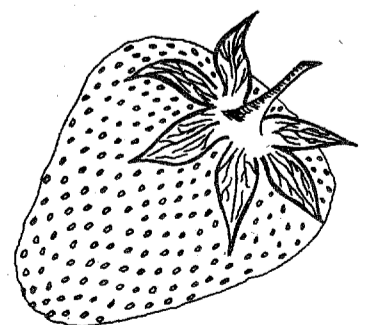
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'Y' and Why Not?

by Eve Zaremba

Workers at Metro Toronto YWCA are up in arms over proposals contained in an April 1981 Planning Report to the 'Y' Board. These recommendations include the elimination of the 'Y' Resource Centre and Community Education Department. The Committee Against Cutbacks of CUPE local 2189, the union representing workers at the Metro Toronto YWCA, has issued a general call to the community for help in preserving those two projects and the jobs that go with them.

The union describes these are the 'only overtly feminist programs' at the Metro Y, with considerable visibility and impact on the community — yet they have been designated 'low priority.' Although the Union statement deals only with those two programs, it appears that next on the chopping block is YWCA housing: Stop 86, a transient hostel and possibly MacPhail residence, which is for young women.

The YWCA was founded in 1873 with a very wide mandate. There is nothing surprising in that the perceived and actual constituency and goals of the agency should change. Over the years, as costs have risen faster than income, some YWCA services and programs have had to be cut. Some doubtless deserved to be abandoned.

It would appear from current circumstances, from documents and interviews, that the present Board of the Metro Y is engaged in a major effort to redirect the agency onto a new path, which the Board deems both necessary and appropriate in the present situation.

Like many a similar organization, the Metro Toronto YWCA is under severe financial pressure and has been for some time. Being a member of United Way has its drawbacks. It makes it harder to fundraise independently. Yet United Way supplied less than one-third of the current budget and its year-to-year increases in no way even cover inflation. Government grants and other payments from that source contribute barely 17%. Over 50% of the 1980 budget was generated directly by the agency itself, largely in fees for service, i.e. payments by the women served. It is not surprising that the Y sees in fees for service from its clients the best prospects for the future.

Metro Toronto YWCA has in the past ten years sold off a number of valuable properties in Metro. Among them was the 21 McGill Street building, now a private and expensive women's club. It still owns Stop 86 Hostel, North Program Centre, the Woodlawn Residence, its Bongard House headquarters and two camps, one of which is also slated to be sold. It administers MacPhail Residence on behalf of Ontario Housing Corporation, runs daycare centres, fitness and educational programs, services for immigrant women and others re-entering the work force. It rents the upper floor of 15 Birch for the Women's Development Centre where the doomed Resource Centre



The first Y residence, opened in 1892, on Elm Street.

Courtesy Toronto YWCA

and Community Education Department are located. The lease on this space will not be renewed. Other Development Centre programs will be relocated.

In an interview with *Broadside*, Ellen Campbell, Executive Director of Metro Toronto YWCA, described the situation thus:

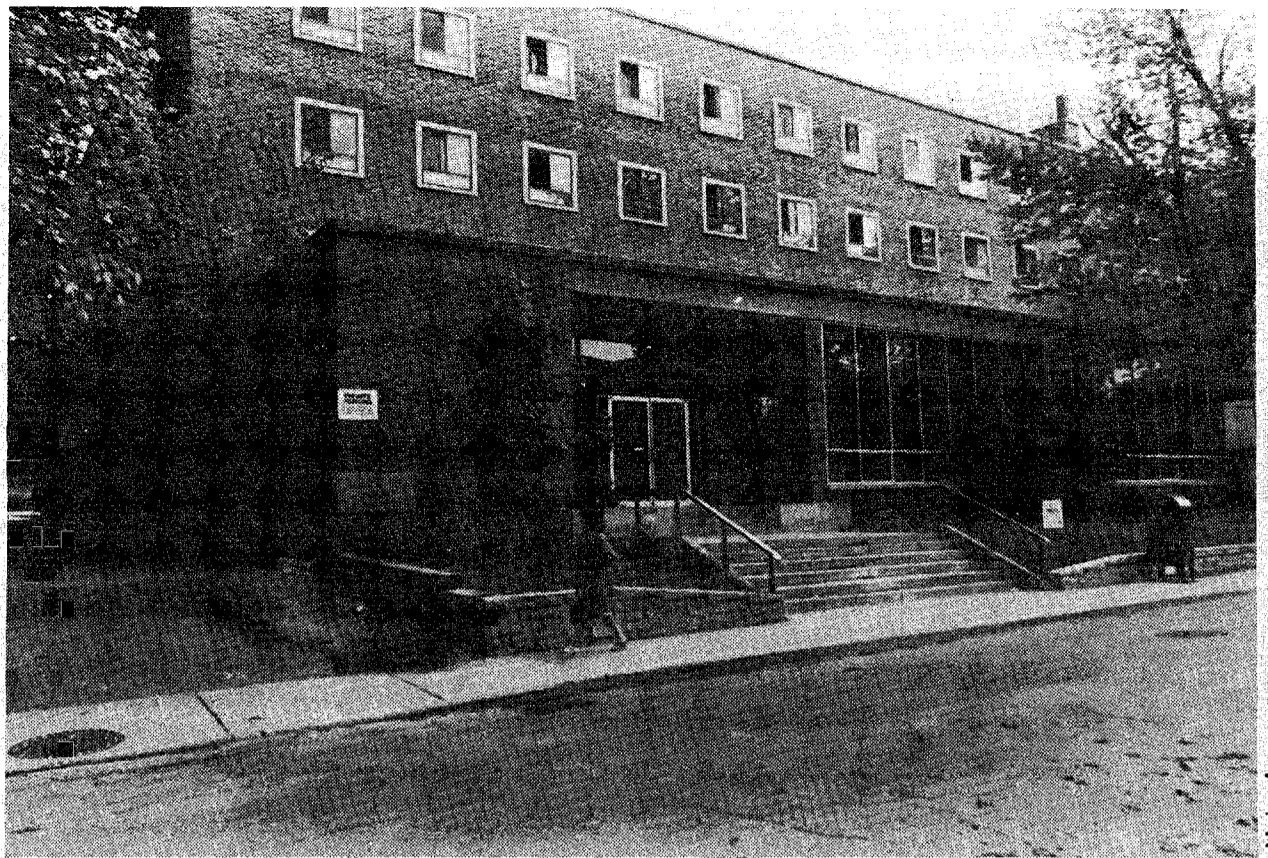
"Initially we wanted to meet every need we perceived in the community. We tended to stretch ourselves a little thin. We went out on a financial limb to accommodate needs which we saw." Campbell states that the Board of Directors decided they (the YWCA) must "make better use of resources and control our future." No longer could the Y go on reacting to need.

A firm of management consultants, P.S. Ross, was called in, a committee structure was set up, and goals were established. Out of this effort has come a Statement of Mission and Goals, the recommendations in the Planning Report, plus other structural and organizational changes designed to make the operation of the Y more efficient and more in line with the goals of the Board.

The documentation provided by the Y does not make clear on what basis the two programs in immediate danger — the Resource Centre and Community Education — have been given such low priority. On the surface they are eminently worthwhile and cost relatively little. They could be viewed as core support programs, essential underpinnings of the Y concept, and useful for PR purposes besides. Apparently they are not so perceived by YWCA management. A problem, of course, is the fact that neither lends itself to becoming self-supporting financially through fees or grants. But suspicion remains that they are being killed because these two programs are actually, or potentially, the most political, the most feminist.

In seeking to privatize itself so totally, the YWCA shows no understanding of how useful feminist political action can be in dealing with various levels of government.

It is instructive that two housing services share this low priority. Here the case is somewhat clearer. These services are 'trouble.' The crux of the matter lies in the type of service provided and the kind of women who receive it. The economic situation of marginal workers in Toronto has deteriorated; the provincial government's policy of de-institutionalizing mental health patients has taken effect. This has put additional burdens on underbudgeted and understaffed agencies such as the Y. It is hard to blame Y management for being concerned; they do not have the resources to cope. The Y is obviously not in a position to help the increasing number of women with economic, mental, social and often police problems. It is ultimately the responsibility of tax-based institutions to cope with the flood of walking wounded produced by our society.



Present YWCA residence on Woodlawn Avenue, Toronto.

Moira Armour

However, more than a tactical, temporary withdrawal from an untenable situation is involved here. The low priority is not due to any immediate emergency. What is happening is a systematic redefining of the goals of the organization away from service of the poor towards the middle-class, and a progressive abandonment of commitment to the needs of 'problem' women — unless they have money. In its place is an added emphasis on upward mobility and attainment of leadership positions for women. It would seem that the truly operative goal involves organizational maintenance: 'to attract women with discretionary income as members and participants.'

Questioning this orientation and the decisions it has prompted is all well and good. Perhaps it's a cheap way to feel righteous. But supposing that the survival of the Metro Toronto YWCA is ultimately at stake, perhaps these decisions are pragmatically justified. Nobody would be better off should the Y collapse. It goes on doing excellent work for women — daycare, help for teen mothers, help with employment, fitness, education. These changes, unpalatable as they are, might in fact be necessary in the long run.

I would be willing to grant all the above if I were persuaded that the change in emphasis, the decisions which it has spawned and especially their implementation will in fact do the job. Not only am I not persuaded that what is currently happening at the Y will lead to its maintenance and renewal, but I am *convinced* it won't.

There are two connected reasons for my conviction in this respect. The Metro Toronto YWCA has long suffered from management problems. I don't believe this has been resolved. After years as a church-related volunteer agency the Y is experiencing a bad case of schizophrenia in its management style. Its top management has traditionally come through the ranks — from affluent, do-gooder volunteer, to staff, to management. This makes for abysmal management. It isn't hard-nosed, efficiency-oriented, professional management appropriate to a large, unionized organization, neither is it the new-style feminist, flexible management used to working collectively on a shoe string, renewing and changing as the community changes. Either of these would be preferable to the current situation. Prodded by necessity and management consultants, the

YWCA Board and top management have been trying to take on some of the trappings of so-called professional management, hoping thereby to render a social institution of long standing miraculously into something else altogether. But trappings are not enough. Cranking out long-range planning reports, making decisions based on 'bottom-line' consideration, excluding union staff from these, or communicating by memos do not good management make. There has to be a real substance behind it; this substance must be communicated in a non-defensive manner to the staff — the people who must make any change work. Without their understanding and co-operation all that the current situation will produce is low morale, bad staff relations and a lack of faith in management. These are not the attributes of a successful organization of any sort. I don't believe that all of the Board or management people really understand what is happening, or what they are doing. And this shows.

My second guess for doubting that any good will come of all this lies in the fact that the public relation rhetoric, both internal and external, verges on the absurd. Years of saying the right thing, regardless of the circumstances, plus virtual paranoia with respect to its reputation among funding sources, have not helped Y management to deal honestly with reality. All organizations want to present the best possible face to the world at large. But there must be some relation between what is said and perhaps even believed by the speaker, and the actual situation. In this case the gap is enormous. Its rhetoric is so unconnected with the obvious facts that faith in Y management can only be eroded further. Let's hope it's only kidding the rest of us. I am afraid it is fooling itself. Either way there's not a great prospect for success.

The Metro Toronto YWCA — a fine, valuable and necessary organization — cannot continue to cut services, sell off property, abandon its commitment to women who need it most, and withdraw from the movement of women without suffering a real loss of credibility. If the present Board feels obliged for one reason or another to shift the Metro Toronto YWCA away from women's services, women's needs, women's community and the movement for the betterment of *all* women, it should at least acknowledge to itself and us that this is what it's doing.

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Toronto Women's Credit Union: Merging Ahead?

by Philinda Masters

Step back seven years in history. The women's movement is largely funded by the government — particularly Secretary of State's Women's Programme; women's centres' 3-year funding is about to run out and the centres are expected to run on volunteer labour; women ask government for capital to buy property rather than overhead money to pay for services and don't get it; the first phase of setting up essential women's services is passing and years of hard work ahead is envisaged. All this takes money.

In 1974 a group of Toronto women looked into setting up an organization which would provide a financial base for the activities of the women's movement, an organization into which women could funnel disposable, discretionary, excess income (if any) and use it for our own ends: co-op housing, a women's building, money for education in non-traditional occupations; generally to fund a political movement without relying on government grants to do so, government interests and feminist goals not being exactly in tune.

After exploring a number of possibilities — trust funds, foundations, investment syndicates — it was decided that the credit union philosophy was most compatible with feminist principles of collective, non-hierarchical organization.

In November 1975 the Women's Credit Union opened its doors and the media picked up on the least important aspect in covering this financial novelty — that banks discriminated against women by not granting loans and a women's credit union wouldn't. But at the same time, the Ontario Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Relations was circulating a set of 'Guidelines' to combat discrimination against women in financial institutions. Soon, the perceived *raison d'être* of the Women's Credit Union was undercut, as banks recognized a potentially huge market and eased their loan granting and credit rating policies.

In those first years, the credit union set about to build up its financial base — its assets (which meant granting loans). In

1977 it approached Employment and Immigration's Local Employment Assistance Program (LEAP) for funds to set up a training program, a program which rather than contributing to the credit union's expansion, created a severe energy drain. When the funding came to an end in July 1980 it was obvious the credit union had suffered. Shortly after, the Ontario Share and Deposit Insurance Corporation (OSDIC) decided it should protect its interests and monitor the credit union's operations. In January, without warning, it put the credit union 'under direction', which meant that no major decisions could be made without OSDIC's approval. But instead of providing 'expert assistance' to get the credit union out of the red, as it had guaranteed, OSDIC decided that the Women's Credit Union deficit was so large and its loan portfolio so poor that, in effect, there was no choice but for the credit union either to merge with another credit union or to close down entirely.

OSDIC had a stake in amalgamation: its stated goal is to have only five or six large credit unions in Ontario by 1999, and the trend is in progress: 300 credit unions in the past year have closed or merged. Ontario's credit union league (League Central) also has a stake in a merge — closing down is bad for business and would tarnish the credit union movement's reputation. And in the middle of it all is the Women's Credit Union's computer — \$30,000 worth. No one wants to lose sight of the computer. OSDIC won't let the credit union sell it, it's too good a bargaining tool with any other interested credit union. League Central would not like to see the computer being lost to the credit union movement — it has an on-line system that's not nearly as complicated. The government (LEAP) has a lien on the computer until July, at which point the Women's Credit Union will own it outright. But the credit union makes use of only about one tenth of the computer's capacity; either the computer's too big or the credit union's too small. Selling the computer would at least cover the credit union's \$25,000 deficit. In any event, if the credit union closes, savings will be returned to members and loans will be payable to OSDIC; if the credit union merges with another, all operations will automatically be taken over by the new credit union.

At the annual general meeting in March 1981 the members gave the Board direction to pursue the possibility of amalgamation with another Toronto community credit union. The Board, with of course the approval of OSDIC, approached TorCity (formerly Davisville — a credit union that is a conglomerate of 14 others and provides extended services including regular chequing and 24-hour loans). At the beginning of May the TorCity members voted to go ahead with the merger.

In July, Women's Credit Union members will be asked to attend a meeting to vote approval of the amalgamation. This meeting will be the last time members will have a say — immediately after that, either amalgamation or dissolution will take place, depending on the vote, and the Women's Credit Union will be no more.

There is a feeling, to an extent reflected by some members of the Board, that the Women's Credit Union is a feminist organization, a feminist financial institution, in no way connected with the credit union and co-operative movements. There is, therefore, no political rationale for joining up with another credit union and continuing to support the co-op movement. Certainly the women who started the credit union were allied with the women's movement, not with the co-op movement. But in starting a credit union they unintentionally hooked into a long established co-op tradition. This tradition is not necessarily a politically radical one.

Credit unions started in Europe as a kind of middle class noblesse oblige as a rising bourgeoisie began to feel pangs of guilt and felt the need to lend money to poor people. In the US, credit unions were seen as a way to beef up a sluggish post-industrial economy by turning low-income people into potential consumers with easy access to credit. And the co-op movement got its impetus in the Canadian west from displaced middle class Ontario farmers who weren't used to bad conditions and ill-treatment by government and the CPR and who banded together to form grain co-ops.

A feminist credit union may just be a contradiction in terms. First of all, the co-op movement — known as the 'third sector' (the first sector is government, the second private enterprise) — operates on a basis of volunteerism. It is a principle based on necessity: the third sector doesn't generate money through tax or profit and can't afford to pay for its labour. But it is a principle that for obvious reasons is problematic for feminists.

The Women's Credit Union in particular has always been plagued by paradoxes. A credit union must make its money on loans, but the Women's Credit Union has always had a political contradiction to deal with in this respect — who to lend money to, and for what purposes. Credit unions must increase their assets by judicious investment, but investment in a capitalist system is another problem for feminists. A credit union must also attract members with money to invest, but the Women's Credit Union has always shied away from making a blatant pitch to attract these particular women. Instead it has aimed itself at women with very little money, which may be politically sound but financially deadly. And, ironically, the Women's Credit Union became reliant, to its detriment, on government funding, in absolute contradiction to its original aim to be financially independent.

It could be argued that a credit union was not what the women's movement really needed in the first place, and was in fact bound to fail according to its own mandate — which sounds like an argument to close down the credit union and have done with it.

But people don't usually keep their money in socks, and saving money in a credit union, any credit union, is one giant step better than helping the shareholders of banks get richer and richer off our hard-earned dollars. If the Women's Credit Union members vote to amalgamate, my shares will be much happier at TorCity than at the Toronto-Dominion bank.

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Get Your Ass Out

by Anne Cameron

There are many names for the enemy. The Patriarchy. The Oligarchy. Totalitarianism. For me, it is the Enemy. The old, cold evil. We disciples of the soft power have been locked in combat with this enemy for centuries, and part of the unrest and confusion coming down on us all today is because Time has come full and another period of trial is underway. The Enemy, the old cold, is attacking again.

There was a time witchcraft was the dominion of women. The term "male witch" is a contradiction in itself. Women knew the secrets, women used the soft power to heal, to teach, to improve. Men could ask the wise women for help, and it would be given them, but the power remained with the women, passed to daughters, sisters, students. Men envied the women this power, and instead of trying to tap their own sources of power, they moved insidiously to co-opt the covens, infiltrate and steal the knowledge.

Less than ten per cent of the population of the world has ever have perceivable power. The physically strong, the ones who could command armies, control the wealth, manipulate the politicians, use the club, the sword, the gun, the bomb have been considered "powerful". Their power has always been handed down to their firstborn son. The son. The inheritor. The immortality. At first only the firstborn son was taught to read and write; the secret language of the tree fort, the inheritors of power talking to each other. Then second sons were taught to read and write; the powerful became aware of the possible use of the church as a furtherance of power. The warlords, the priests, the killers, the saviours banded together and controlled and presented as "truth" the philosophy of the lordly few. Eventually, the secret language of academe spread and soon all the sons of the wealthy, the powerful, could read and write. Marginally. A "library" might contain three or four books.

And all this time the men envied the wisdom of the women. Wisdom we did not scratch on rocks or mark on paper, wisdom we handed to the young women by example, by song, by prayer, in an oral tradition. The scribes, the powerful, the patriarchs spoke of how easy it is for oral teaching to be lost, how necessary that teaching be preserved. A few young women, impressed with the seeming importance of Academia, listened.

Perhaps it was a brother speaking softly, perhaps a cousin, or a lover, but we can be certain that it was a "nice" man who wanted to "help". A gentle man, a kind man, a man who seemed not to abuse or mistreat or look down on women. A secret here, a secret there, a song, a prayer, and soon men were allowed to serve the covens, as students, then acolytes, then as disciples.

Today the three biggest and most powerful covens are controlled by "male witches". I suggest it wasn't until the sons of the Enemy were allowed to infiltrate the covens that there was a split between "black" and "white" magic, "black" and "white" witches.

It wasn't until the split between the true followers of the soft power and the co-optors that the witchhunts began. It wasn't until men were in the covens that we were exposed, burned, murdered, defiled, almost erased.

It wasn't until those who said they



Illustration by Anne Quigley

WILL THE REAL ENEMY PLEASE STAND UP...

wanted to "help" got involved that we needed any "help". Until then there was no threat we couldn't overcome. Out of the ivory tower of patriarchal academia came the teachers, the physicians, the doctors, the psychiatrists, and psychologists.

At a time when very few women were even admitted to medical schools, the brain-shrinking rules were established and you had to be a medical doctor before you could study to be a psychiatrist. With few women doctors, there were, of course, even fewer women shrinks.

In the same way the scratching on rock symbols and secrets of the inheritors of the clubs and spears became literature, art, culture and academia, the fevered babbling of Freud became the ground rules for a new "science." And from the swamp of misinformation, misinterpretation and sexist bullshit, came therapy. From therapy came do-it-yourself peer group grope and touchy-feely emotional masturbation.

All of it from a patriarchal perspective,

all of it from the old, cold enemy. We were taught we had penis envy, we were taught we were incomplete physically and knew it and this knowledge made us passive, weak, hysterical...and we said we needed Feminist Therapists.

We never stopped to look at the true roots of bullshit and ask ourselves if we needed it at all; we accepted, because we've been conditioned to accept Academia as Learning, that all we needed was a womanfocus to this rafflebaffle, and we'd be fine. We never said, Hey, that's your shit, might be fine for you but it hasn't got anything to do with us...we'd been conditioned too well. Sometimes even by our own sisters, the ones who had been skillfully co-opted generations earlier.

Women were discontent and looking for new ways, new directions, new futures. Without precedents we were fumbling, but putting enormous amounts of energy into our "liberation movement". Some of us fell into the marxist-trot-leninist-socialist

recognized political trap. And found even these brave new words were rooted in sexism. Few of us still think there is any direction for us in those philosophies.

Talking, talking, talking

Confused, frightened, and increasingly tired, those sisters of the first wave of this tide of women's movement looked for help. And for a while it seemed there was help available. Sharing. Taking Time. Clearing.

We're all talking, talking, talking, getting in touch with clearing, sharing, talking, crying, questioning...along lines set in the cesspool of the historic enemy. The powerful, the brutal, the rich, the educated, the less than ten per cent whose ancestors envied the soft power of women and co-opted the covens. Instead of forging ahead at the rate we were forging, we've come to a dead halt, and we're running around in ever-de-

of the Fox Trap

creasing circles, going to workshops the way we used to feel obligated to go to church to worship the patriarchs, talking in catch-phrases and jargon until the words mean nothing. I can hear what you are saying. Thank you for sharing with me. My process is somewhat different from yours. I must get in touch with myself.

I suggest we don't need this bullshit. I suggest we stop saying we need feminist therapists and face the fact that we've been had. Again. Had the way we were had when we thought traditional politics had a solution for us.

My grandmother never saw a shrink in her life, she worked hard, raised six kids, then had to help raise her kids' kids, and she was, by anyone's definition, "a strong woman". She taught me "you don't get good fruit from a rotten tree."

The tree from which the many branches of therapy grew is rooted in the shit of the patriarchy. We ought to be cutting it down, not trying to graft feminism onto it.

We have all the historic and traditional examples we need. The patriarchy has its main thrust and power in the old world. Here, in the "new world" it has had less time to establish its ugliness. The people who were here before the European patriarchs arrived with smallpox blankets and venereal disease, lived and thrived in a soft matriarchal, matrilineal society that saw all babies, male or female, born into full social and civil equality. Neither women nor children were chattels to be bought, sold, traded, used, abused, or killed. Until the patriarchy arrived with physical, mental, emotional and spiritual poison.

Power wasn't a problem

The sisters of the secret society never had to spend time and tears struggling with the question of "power." Personal or political, actual, perceived or imagined, it was not a problem. Everyone had it. If you didn't know how to use it, best you find out for yourself before you get much older.

A woman with a problem — any kind of problem — would go to the circle, take her place, tell her problem. It was expected she would be able to say what was bothering her without taking all night about it! It was expected she would have done some work *herself*, and not waste everyone else's time rambling in circles. It was expected everyone else in the circle wanted to *help*. Because "power" was not a problem, there was no need for anybody to put anybody else down, no need for trashing sessions. Power was seen as a burden, a responsibility, a lot of damn hard work, and most women accepted power only when the other women made it clear that some one woman had been chosen as the one to carry the burden of power.

The circle would not tell a woman to fuck off, you're puny and we don't want you in the circle. The circle would listen, and it was known and believed that the circle would listen with love. The circle would comfort. The circle members would give examples from their own lives of what had hurt them, hindered them, and what they had done about it. The circle would be willing to do this three times for the same problem. The fourth time the same woman sat and mewled the same sad litany of woe the circle members would rise, silently, move to another place, re-form the circle and leave the weak nelly with her litany of grief; because she who does nothing deserves what she does.

This didn't mean a woman could only go to the circle four times in her life. A woman could go as often as she needed. But she was expected to get her head out of her ass and take some responsibility for herself, her life, her future.

There are times in every woman's life when the best thing to do is Nothing. When those times come, and the crap is flying from every corner of your life, and nutsiness seems the rule, it's okay to sit in the circle and get support and love. You just tell the sisters in the circle it's a "Nothing" time, you don't have a focus on what is giving you shivers, you're just bummed out, depressed, moody, and sad. That's not whining. It is expected that when you know what's got you in that state, you'll do something about it.

I know women who have been groping in groups for years now, and they aren't *doing* anything, they aren't making any changes, they're just sharing, clearing, self crit'ing and boring themselves and everyone else to a state of numbass, trying to pick fruit from the patriarchal tree, recurrent non-occurrence.

I spent most of last year in Toronto, working unremittingly hard, trying to get together enough money to get a workspace for myself and be sure I could feed my kids. I was away from my family, away from my extended family, away from my community, the island, the sea, the mountains, away from the elder sisters who have shared their knowledge with me. I have good friends in Toronto, supportive women who make me feel good just by being around, and yet I wound up so mindraged I could barely hold it together. I know, when I left, that I had to come back here immediately, one more week and I'd have been in the Clarke Institute in a restraint jacket.

I began to feel that the only way any of us could get any kind of "help" or "support" was to deliberately dump our shit out of the bags we'd worked all our lives to get it together in, join the 'losers' and be deemed Politically Correct. At the height (or depth) of my despair I re-read Sharon Riis' book "The True Story of Ida Johnson." There's a line in there that gave me enough strength to finish what I'd gone there to do. "Blessed are the meek, the weak, and the creepy." Lucy/Luke says this to describe the christian church, I took it to describe the gropers, the euphemism-speakers, the 'losers.' Blessed are the meek, the weak, and the creepy.

At the same time a friend of mine (one of those PI strong women!) referred to "The Tyranny of the Weak." We had some macabre fun listing the Tyranny of the Weak, it kept us sane a few extra days. It's so easy to blame someone else. Easier than admitting you've got your ass caught in a fox trap. Again. Easier than getting your head out and doing something. Easier than taking the time to realize "we are never cured, we only learn to endure."

Secret society fell

Before the patriarchy arrived on Vancouver Island women were warriors on an equal basis with the men. No woman who was pregnant or nursing an infant was allowed or expected to put her life, and the child's life, in jeopardy. Once the child was weaned, it was the woman's own choice, and if she preferred not to go to battle, her choice was respected. Nobody can be fully effective in an emergency if half her attention is elsewhere. Not all women warriors were members of the secret society of women, but all members of the secret society were women warriors. The patriarchy arrived, saw the power the women had, and moved quickly against the secret society. "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" and with the cross of the Prince of Peace held high, they murdered the women, put the girls in christian schools and so mindfucked them with thou shalt not's and shame centered on their biology and bodies, that in-

side two generations there were few girls eligible for membership in the society of women.

And when the secret society fell, the warrior women were scattered, their ranks not renewed because the girls were conditioned into believing they were frail, helpless little things, passive creatures capable only of puny temper tantrums, incapable of anger, rage, or vengeance, so out of touch with their own bodies that the granddaughters of women who rowed open dugout canoes to Hawaii now fail the Canada Fitness Tests. Young women whose grandmothers, as part of a puberty rite, swam miles in the cold sea, now can't qualify for their red cross lifesaving certificate. The granddaughters of warrior women who defeated three galleons of Conquistadores now are unable to defend themselves against rapists on city streets; like most of the rest of us!

After four generations of inactivity, kept alive barely by a few now-ancient elder sisters, the women's warrior society is reforming. And the warrior society is not restricted to native women. The warrior society has come forth, left the reserves, and is recruiting from among Women. Not just red women, not just white women, not just black women, not just asian women. Women. The last few sisters of the secret society are sharing what wisdom of Old Woman remains, and because the sisters of the secret society have taken that leap of faith, the women of the warrior society have joined them.

Power no shame

Power is not the enemy. There is no shame in being a strong woman. There is no shame in having and using your personal power. It is the use to which power is put that determines if it is good or bad.

The weak have power. I truly believe they are using their power to sap the strong women, make strong, strong women feel there is something shameful in having and keeping personal power, personal control over our lives. The Tyranny of the Weak is shameful power, shameful misuse of power, shatneful, insidious, and dangerous abuse of power.

I suggest it is time we moved our circle. The sisters of the secret society found out about patriarchal power. They were abused, tortured, killed, but their power was never extinguished. The patriarchs can put you in jail, or in a mental hospital, but they cannot make you agree you ought to be there! They can take away your house, your land, your money, but only you can throw away your personal power and see your economic poverty as a shameful thing. They can rip your vocal chords out of your throat, they cannot make the song stop in your head. They can refuse to publish your poems and stories, they cannot make you stop composing them and playing them, reciting them to your sisters, your daughters, your sons, your lovers. They can control the film and television industry, they cannot make you believe it is for your betterment.

They can say, directly or indirectly, that strong women, women who hang onto and use their personal power, are Politically Incorrect. But they can't make me believe it.

Recognize the Enemy

There is nothing inherently wrong with "success." If a woman can make music and get that music to a million other women, she hasn't "sold out" or "gone commercial," she has defeated the patriarchy. The

woman who makes music that doesn't get out to a million other women has not "failed", she is merely still battling the old, cold evil. And those of us who have power and are not afraid to use it, have the obligation to help get that music out to a million women.

And we all have the obligation to believe, to make the leap of faith, that those who work with us, live with us, join our circle, are there for good reasons, for moral reasons, and are worthy of our love, our trust, our respect and our support. Right up until the time it is proved otherwise.

The women of the warrior society must be able to recognize the enemy and be willing to *do* something to support the soft truth and defeat the old, cold evil. This is not a time to do Nothing. Within the society of women, within the warrior society, women argued, bitched, complained, nagged, yelled, fought and loved; and goddess help the foot from the outside who interfered. Remember when you were a kid, and you and your best friend would be going at it tooth and nail...and someone else would try to take sides and find herself facing a united fury? Every time a collective gets into group grope and starts to fall apart it's time for women to stand up and make a bid to join the warrior society, name the enemy, attack it ferociously, get rid of the weeping whining "weak, meek and creepy," and keep the collective intact. Otherwise, that old, cold evil racks up another victory. Let the losers and whiners leave the circle, or move the circle, but keep the collective, its aims and ideals alive. One of my adopted daughters has a philosophy the rest of us at first thought was a joke, then began to admire, and now are adopting: "fuck'em if they can't take it."

No initiation rites

Membership in the warrior society doesn't come easily. There is no initiation rite now; there used to be, but Time moves on, things change, and ritual was one of the first things to die when there were no longer enough women left alive to fill the circles. Those in the warrior society know who the other members are. Those who pretend to be of the society and wear the headband without the right to wear it may fool the uninitiated, but they will never fool the initiated.

Strong women, powerful women, recognize other strong, powerful women. And they also recognize the meek, the weak, and the creepy. And are apt to move against it by the simple method of walking over and removing the undeserved headband. On the other hand, you might be standing in a crowd, or swaying to the music at the folk festival, or getting yourself together after a test of faith, and someone will just as casually walk over and shove a headband around your forehead — "sometime, somewhere when you least expect it..."

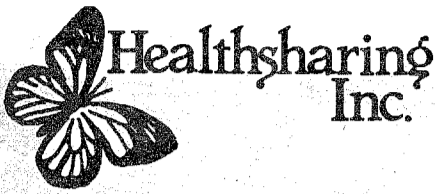
With every headband there is a "death cord." You are expected to design and make your own death cord. It is black, in memory of the sisters who died in defence of the soft power. It could be a ribbon...it could be a shoe lace. It is what it is, a cord of love and respect that links us to the sisters who died fighting the meek, the weak and the creepy. Mine slides through the knot on my red headband, and both ends of my death cord have four beads each, four is a magic number, four is a full number, four is truth, four makes it complete. Each bead has a significance, a magic, a purpose, and a power. With power comes obligation and responsibility.

*The face of the enemy is my own
The force of the enemy is part of me
The enemy lives inside myself
The enemy must not become mySelf*

MOVEMENT MATTERS

Movement Matters compiled by Judy Stanleigh

Regina Healthsharing



Early in the spring of 1980, a group of women got together to discuss their concerns about the lack of health services for women in Regina. At that time, their concerns centred mainly around reproductive health. Other interested women joined them, and today Healthsharing Inc. consists of a board of six women, one staff person and a membership close to 200.

Operating on a federal government Secretary of State grant since September 1980, the board and staff have researched the area of women's health and have identified the problems women face in health care. When Healthsharing members talk about health, they are talking about it as defined by the World Health Organization: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease." They believe that "as women we are subject to additional health problems that occur as a result of our status in society and the demands of childbearing. Therefore, we must have access to all information regarding our health including the risks, benefits, and options open to us. We must become active policy makers in the health system and be free to determine our own course of action."

Healthsharing believes that the health needs of women are not being met. This is evidenced by:

- the fact that the rate of unplanned adolescent pregnancies in Saskatchewan is the highest in Canada (each week in Saskatchewan, there are 64 known teenage pregnancies);
- the well-documented reports of over-prescription of mood-modifying drugs for women (in Saskatchewan, twice as many females as males receive tranquilizers and in the 20-29 age group, eight times as many females as males receive anti-depressants);
- the increasing evidence of violence against women (in a 1979 Winnipeg Rape Incidence Study, one in 17 respondents reported a rape and one in 5, sexual assault);
- the low numbers of families participating in prenatal programs (out of 16,977 live bir-

ths in Saskatchewan in 1979, only 4,000 families participated in some form of prenatal program);

— the inadequacy of sexuality programs in the schools (only 16% of Saskatchewan school districts have some form of family life education);

— the lack of native health care workers in Regina;

— the fact that an estimated 90% of women with drinking problems are not treated.

The long-term effects of these problems can no longer be ignored. One aspect of the solution as stated in Healthsharing's brief/project proposal to the provincial government, is the establishment of a Regina Women's Health Centre. The centre, controlled by women, would be committed to having women integrally involved in the provision of service at all levels. The goal: to ensure professionally supported, comprehensive health services for women and adolescents in Regina and district with the objective of reducing inequities within the system. The centre would have several components: a counselling unit; an educational unit; a volunteer unit; a medical unit; a consultant function; an outreach unit; information and research; community education; research and evaluation.

Healthsharing will be taking their proposal to government in May. The alternate funding committee is looking at funding sources and the outreach committee is compiling a directory of services for women that will be printed and distributed in Regina. Orientation meetings for new members are held regularly and general membership meetings are the last Wednesday of every month.

If you would like to join Healthsharing, or would like further information, contact Bonnie Johnson, Box 734, Regina, S4P 2A8, 586-9628.

—Laura Pettit,
Healthsharing.

(Broadside note: Regina Healthsharing Inc. is not connected with Toronto's feminist health magazine, *Healthsharing*).

Women in Trades and Industry Conference

The first Ontario Women in Trades and Industry Conference was held April 24-26 in Hamilton. Advertised as a provincial action conference, the action theme was apparent throughout the proceedings. The theme was evident in the accounts of the struggles of women as individuals trying to gain the skills to enter non-traditional jobs, endeavouring to obtain a job in the trade or industry they want to enter, dealing with being the sole woman on the job, struggling in and with unions. These women constitute many of those who have in the past year been organizing into Women in Trades groups which have sprung up across the province, in the north and in the south.

A second major group represented were those women who have organized to fight as a group to enter targeted industries such as Stelco, CN, Fleet and National Steelcar. Such campaigns have had a high profile and in the cases of CN and Stelco have had a dramatic effect. The campaigns have involved gaining union support, laying Human Rights charges against the employers, plus media campaigns. In the case of CN, not only were the women who laid the charges hired as apprentices, but they received monetary compensation for lost time.

The women who described their struggles, as individuals, as part of a campaign, in unions, in forming Women in Trades groups, used fighting language. They described themselves as fighters, as aggressive women and as determined women. The energy and determination of this potentially powerful force was combined over the weekend. A decision was reached to sustain the momentum by forming a provincial federation of groups and individual women who actively support the fight for the entry of women into non-traditional jobs in trades and industry. A second conference to be held in Northern Ontario is likely to occur within the year.

—Gloria Geller

Oshawa Solidarity Picket

Nine women who work at Tel-Air, a telephone answering service in Oshawa, have been on strike for a first contract for six long months. A solidarity rally and demonstration were held on Saturday, May 9, to show these courageous women that they have the support of other locals in their union (Communication Workers of Canada) as well as of the women's movement. Speaking for the International Women's Day Committee, Linda Yanz stressed the importance of unionizing and striking in small shops, since most women in Canada work in relatively small workplaces.

The rally also included short statements by a striker, other unionists, Oshawa MP Mike Braugh, and a delegate from Organized Working Women. Music was provided by the Red Berets. A four-mile march through the streets of Oshawa followed, culminating in a picket at Tel-Air. After the picket, the women strikers said they felt very encouraged by the support shown by the busload of feminists and fellow unionists from Toronto, and the supporters promised to return for the victory party.

Lesbian/Gay History

The Lesbian and Gay History Group of Toronto will hold its next regular meeting at the Canadian Gay Archives, 5th Floor, 24 Duncan Street at 7:30 pm on Monday June 8. For more information call 961-7338.



Maira Armour

Pro-choice and anti-abortion groups confront each other in front of Toronto General Hospital at last month's Mothers' Day march and rally sponsored by 'Women for Survival' and the International Women's Day Committee.

Newfoundland on the Move

The Newfoundland and Labrador Women's Institute's have been in existence in the province since 1935. They have 70 branches, with a membership of approximately 2000. The main purpose of NLWI is to give women the opportunity of working together to improve the quality of life in rural areas; and to provide for their fuller education through a wide variety of activities — from crafts to drama, gardening to community involvement.

The Newfoundland Status of Women Council began in 1968. It is based in St. John's and has a membership of approximately 300. The group operates a self supporting Women's Centre in St. John's which provides peer counselling, referral and information services. NSWC works primarily as an educational force and a lobbying force. It has been involved in issues such as women and addictions, day care, matrimonial property legislation, battered women and women in economic development.

These two organizations now co-sponsor a project funded by the Health and Welfare

Canada branch for three years — a Women's Health Education Project. It proposes to help women maintain and promote health for themselves, their families and their communities. To implement such a task they hope to develop a network among women involved in health care. From there is it hoped that verbal and written information will be produced and made available on subjects which women have identified as problems in their communities. A plan is also to evaluate the existing health systems and devise better ways of using them.

Since isolation and lack of resources and information are problems in general for women and health this project is an important step in trying to bridge the gap. The women in Newfoundland hope this project will generate a network that could evolve weekly radio programs, community Health Manuals and new or altered government and non-government programs. If you wish to lend support or want more information, write: Women's Health Education Project, Post Office Box 4192, St. John's, Newfoundland, A1C 5Z7.

Francophone Amnesty International

The Groupe francophone de Toronto of Amnesty International has recently been officially made responsible for its first case by the London head office. The case concerns Natalya Maltseva, a thirty-year-old woman, single mother of a small daughter, who was arrested on December 17, 1980 in Leningrad. She was charged with spreading anti-Soviet propaganda through her feminist activities and opinions.

The Soviet feminist movement dates from 1979, when a few women decided to study the evolution of the condition of women in the Soviet Union and to denounce what was unacceptable to them. Their first publication, titled *Women and Russia*, began to circulate unofficially in December 1979. Its three editors were immediately harassed by the KGB and forced into exile. However, the journal continued to be circulated.

Repression also continued and Natalya Maltseva is the second feminist within three months to have been arrested. The first has recently been sentenced to ten months in a prison camp for having 'circulated defamatory material.' Natalya Maltseva now seems to be the object of an enquiry by the KGB in Leningrad and does not know when her trial will occur. The charge against her carries a maximum sentence of twelve years in prison. She is in poor health and may have tuberculosis.

Soviet women have appealed for support from feminist organizations and democracies all over the world, stressing that the KGB will be reluctant to risk inciting strong negative opinion worldwide by sentencing feminists to prison or exile.

The Groupe francophone de Toronto of Amnesty International invites anyone interested in freedom of thought in general and in the cause of women in particular to support its efforts to free Natalya Maltseva.

For more information, call the Groupe francophone de Toronto at (416) 638-5015 or write to them at CP 6196, Succursale A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1P6.

Women's Camp — at Parry Sound

Full Week: from October 5-12th \$120 (Deposit \$30)
Thanksgiving Weekend: from October 9-12th \$60 (Deposit \$20)

For more information, call: Kye Marshall (416) 967-7118 or Chris Lawrence (416) 656-1213.

To reserve a space, mail deposit immediately to: Women's Camp, c/o Susan Power, 2-52 Admiral Road, Toronto M5R 2L5.

All women welcome

Lesbians Against the Right

by Lorna Weir

Approximately seventy-five women attended the Lesbians Fighting the Right forum held at the Church St. Community Centre in Toronto on May 9th. The forum had grown out of discussions at the 'Coming Out Is Not Enough' workshop at the GLARE (Gays and Lesbians Against the Right Everywhere) day last April. Lesbians attending the GLARE workshop had voiced concern over the lack of social space available to lesbians in Toronto. The folding of both the Fly by Night (a women's bar) and LOOT (Lesbian Organization of Toronto) over the past year had deprived Toronto lesbians of our two most important social and political institutions. Feeling the urgent need for action, given the increased violence against lesbians, police harassment and homophobic hate literature, since the rise of the new right, a committee was struck at the GLARE workshop to organize a day of political dialogue among lesbians.

Lesbians Fighting the Right opened with an ill-attended Crunch the Right Brunch. Moral: lesbians are not by choice early risers, so leave lesbian politics until after lunch. After an introduction outlining a few of the causes of the rise of the right and its impact on lesbians, a panel of lesbians active in a variety of movements — the women's movement, the gay movement,

trade unions, anti-imperialist and anti-nuke groups — made short presentations. Each member of the panel had been asked to focus her talk on the following points: why she became active in her group; how the group is organizing to fight the right; how lesbian issues are raised there; what personal and political problems lesbians have in her organization. The presentations led into a general discussion of lesbian politics today by panelists and women who had come to the meeting. We then broke up into smaller groups to deal with the topic of lesbians organizing politically.

The consensus of the meeting which emerged in the plenary was that a lesbian organization is needed in Toronto, that it should have a broad-based statement of unity, and that its first meeting is to be Wednesday, June 17th at 7:30 in the University Settlement House, 23 Grange Road. A committee was struck to suggest an agenda for the meeting, as well as to develop proposals regarding possible bases of unity for the organization.

In the sober political judgement of the participants, the day was an outrageous success. The talks by the panelists were of such high quality that it was the spontaneous sentiment of the meeting to recommend that they be published. Comments from women attending the general discussion and workshops were thoughtful and constructive. Women who had not spoken to each other in years because of political disagreements and personal arguments were giving each other bearhugs by the end of the day. Sweet breezes of excitement and

Speaking personally, and, to be honest, as one of the organizers of the event, I feel that May 9th marks a landmark in lesbian

politics in Toronto. At last we succeeded in recognizing that, although our politics *do* differ, we at the same time very much need each other and have enough in common as an oppressed social group to be able to work together productively and perhaps even happily. I had the sense of a whole sector of the lesbian community finally reaching political maturity after years of experience as activists. Given our usually individualistic and apolitical upbringings, working together politically is a skill which takes

years to acquire. The lesbian movement, which has been in existence for little more than a decade, has needed time to learn political skills: many of our early miscalculations can be attributed to a lack of political experience, in addition to the difficulty of developing a new mode of political organizing. Externally, attacks on lesbians from the right, and, internally, a process of political maturation, are combining to reconstitute the autonomous lesbian movement in Toronto.

'Movement Matters' is a section intended as an informational forum in *Broadside* for the women's community: new and on-going services, programs and activities for women. Since *Broadside* is distributed throughout Canada, we would like this page to reflect the many communities it now reaches, and more. We encourage readers to send us information and/or photos or projects, programs and services in your local community, c/o Judy Stanleigh at *Broadside*, PO Box 494, Stn. P, Toronto M5S 2T1.

Writers in Dialogue

by Ottie Lockey

'Writers in Dialogue' is one of the most noteworthy events in the calendar year for Toronto feminists. For three years now it has been our harbinger of spring.

'Writers in Dialogue' was a vision shared over dinner in 1978 by Marie Prins of the Toronto Women's Bookstore and Betsy Warland of the Women's Writing Collective. They wanted to present a dialogue presenting American and Canadian women writers to a Toronto audience. According to Prins, the purpose of the 'Dialogue' was to demonstrate the similarities and differences of experience for women writing and publishing in the two countries. Prins and Warland also shared a commitment to promoting a feminist dialogue on women and writing.

The first dialogue brought together American writer May Sarton and British Columbia novelist Audrey Thomas. The second Dialogue in May 1980 was between Canadian novelist/poet Margaret Atwood and American novelist/poet Marge Piercy. And on May 1, 1981 we were treated to the third and best dialogue of the series, between American lesbian/feminist poet/writer Adrienne Rich and Montreal les-

bian/feminist poet/writer Nicole Brossard. The 500 seat auditorium at OISE was sold out several days before the event, indicating the level of excited interest of the Toronto literati and feminist communities.

The format of the May 1 dialogue was individual poetry readings by Brossard and Rich followed by a question period. The moderator, Betsy Warland, asked Brossard and Rich how lesbian sensibility influenced the work. Their answers to this question and others from the audience demonstrated a strong rapport between the two women. Their mutual understanding growing out of their personal identification as lesbian feminists was evident to the audience, which responded with great enthusiasm.

'Writers in Dialogue' is organized by a core committee consisting of Patty Kirk and Marie Prins from the Toronto Women's Bookstore, and Charlene Sheard and Betsy Warland from the Women's Writing Collective. The organizers deserve credit for pulling together the most successful dialogue of the series in 1981, not to mention the cosy brunch with the writers at Major Robert's restaurant the following day.

'Writers in Dialogue '81' is going to be a hard show to follow, but I'm ready to buy my ticket to 'Writers in Dialogue '82.'

Deuce, Fault, Love — Oops

by Judith Lawrence

I have come to a deeper understanding of the words "strange bedfellows" over the past few weeks.

There was the spectacle of Billie Jean King, head on her hubby's shoulder, holding tightly to his hand, and admitting that she had "made a mistake" with Marilyn what's-her-name. A costly mistake, no doubt, because already the ad contracts are being withdrawn, not to mention whatever it will cost to get the palimony suit settled.

But what exactly did she mean by a mistake? Could she have meant mistaken identity? Did she take the wrong room key by mistake one night? Or was the whole idea a mistake? Billie Jean should know about mistakes — after all, serve a double fault at deuce in the match set, and that's what I would call a real mistake.

It's not surprising that Phyllis Schlafly has never taken up tennis. It's obviously an immoral game — it attracts all these people of dubious sexual identity, not to mention the sweaty head bands and abbreviated skirts. Good grief, I remember when Gorgeous Gussie Moran was titillating the tennis touts at Wimbledon; I remember her knickers, but I can't remember her game. Phyllis Schlafly is probably right — only the impure are sexually harassed. I can't remember when I was last whistled at by a man ... I think it was in Expo year. That obviously makes me pure as the driven snow. And the Yorkshire ripper knows — he said he only killed all those women because they were nasty, impure prostitutes, and they had mocked him. What with his wife nagging all the time, things were so bad at his house that he had to stay out late at night and kill prostitutes instead. Mind you, he slipped up on a few — they were not prostitutes at all. Probably just tennis players.

Of course American women are receiving guidance from the First Lady. I've often wondered, is Mrs. Bush the Second Lady, in which case, who is Jane Wyman? (You



may well ask). Anyway, the First Lady says ERA supporters are perverts — hippies, lesbians, tennis players, that sort of thing. And she could be right (well, we know she's Right). After all the ERA people are obviously supporters of lost causes, and that's becoming a lost cause in itself, so they might be immoral as well.

But the highlight of the last few weeks has been Prince Charles, no doubt about it. His search for a virgin with blue blood was beginning to seem like a lost cause. The field was narrowing down to 12 year olds, but fortunately Lady Di has passed the test, and if Charles can just stop falling off his horse long enough, they might even get married. Britain needs a spectacle, and what better than a royal wedding? Canadians probably won't see it on TV because of the sporadic CBC strike, but we can imagine it all. The Queen will be gratified; she must have been wondering if Charles was about to take up tennis. But then Lady Di appeared on the scene and saved the day.

It seems that H.M. ordered her ladies in waiting to place a pea under Lady Di's mattress when she was spending the night at Sandringham. However Charles was so anxious to prove that Lady Di could indeed be a *real* princess that he put one of his polo balls under the mattress as well. Next day Lady Di was sore, so it remained only for her to pass the virginity test. I'm not sure how that one was done. Queen Victoria never had need of such ploys — she could tell a real princess when she saw one, and she made damn sure that they all married young. But of course Queen Victoria certainly never played tennis; at the most she indulged in a game or two of croquet, a kind of slow polo without horses. And speaking of horses, the last word on sexual mores still belongs to the late Mrs. Patrick Campbell, who when told of Oscar Wilde's impending scandal, remarked that she didn't care what people did as long as they didn't do it in the road and frighten the horses. Honi soit qui mal y pense.

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Dialogues w

Adrienne Rich:

The Taste and Smell of Life

by Eve Zaremba

At the airport, we recognize each other immediately in the mass of arrivals from Zagreb, Jamaica, Buffalo, and Amsterdam. In the car we make a few tentative stabs at connecting through those first awkward minutes. She sits quite still and looks out at the city. Conversation is unforced. She needs a sandwich and a drink before sleep. I stop at a pub around the corner from her hotel, let her out, park and return. She's gotten a table somehow and waves at me across the room. We sit knee to knee surrounded by the crowd. By the time she gets bread and cheese, and bourbon with a beer chaser, I am grinning like an idiot over my beer. That grin will be with me for days, almost hurting my face muscles. It will appear on the faces of other Toronto women in the following two days during the 'Writers in Dialogue' week-end.

Next day three of us Broadside stand nervously in the hotel elevator on the way to interview her. I push the button marked 14. 'Great,' says Bev Allinson. 'She's on the 13th floor.' As it happens, we don't need any omens.

Bev fusses with her camera, Jean Wilson sorts her notes, I fumble with the cassette recorder; she sits still and looks at us. Time to test the machine. I switch on the microphone and say: "Toronto, May 1, 1981. Broadside interview with Adrienne Rich."

Adrienne Rich is probably best known to the world at large through her best-selling book *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*. To poets and lovers of poetry she is pre-eminently a poet, 'one of America's best poets' in the words of Margaret Atwood, a writer not given to uncritical admiration of things American. Of Rich's many books of poetry, *Dream of a Common Language, Poems 1947-77* has likely made the most impact on feminists and lesbians. However, more than anything else, through her poetry, her prose and her life Adrienne Rich is a source of hope and inspiration to the variety of women who are her admiring audience.

It is seldom indeed that the writer, the artist known only through her work, lives up to expectations on personal acquaintance. Perhaps our expectations are unrealistic, baseless; perhaps we tend to project superhuman qualities on our heroes. Whatever the cause of disappointment in other instances, I am pleased to report nothing of the kind occurred with respect to Adrienne Rich. Her visit to Toronto can only be described as a triumph. Both she and Nicole Brossard bowled over a whole lot of supposedly hard-nosed feminist activists, political dykes and more or less awed Canadian writers who were lucky enough to meet them and/or smart enough to skip whatever else they were doing and attend the 'Writers in Dialogue' evening.

Broadside had arranged interviews with both writers well in advance. The following profile of Adrienne Rich is based on a taped interview (a fragment of which, with more to follow, is transcribed verbatim below, and which forms the bulk of this article), some hours spent in her company over two days and an extensive reading of her work.

The segment of our interview reproduced below came late in the process. I start with it because it is the most overtly political/pragmatic statement made by Rich about matters which concern the political and perhaps personal lives of many of us. It is by no means the most interesting or most controversial segment.

At the start we had plunged right into her life, her past, and how she got to where she is now. Rich speaks in complete paragraphs with thoughtful pauses between. She really thinks about the questions asked her and knows what she is saying all along. Like many practiced interviewees she answers in her own way and will not be pushed into statements she does not want to make.

At first glance Adrienne Rich appears to be a small, brown-haired woman of indeterminate age. She is a small, brown-haired woman of indeterminate age, whatever that signifies! She has quite remarkably direct, clear dark eyes, freckles and a mischievous grin like a runaway urchin. During the interview, and later, she is relaxed and natural even

though she is surrounded by women she has just met and who are avid for her words and her attention. Rich is utterly approachable, without pretensions. She plays no role — no guru, no fragile object, no bored star. There isn't one iota of that patronizing stance or arrogance towards women who read and admire her work with which less secure artists keep women in their place. Apparently Rich does not fear being gobbled up by her fans. As a consequence, she is treated with the respect that only mutual respect can evoke.

We move from her life and her work — so central to feminism, to lesbian consciousness and the art of poetry — naturally into current feminist dilemmas. Clumsily I ask the inevitable: "Where should the movement, as an active political force, be going? What should women be doing? Who are our allies and how should we be dealing with them?" She ponders, answers: "An immense question." "Yes, we don't have any little ones." I grin and lean back. She ponders a little more, then starts speaking:

"And always the fear of 'shoulds!' But still, one has to make a stab at it. We are all talking about it all the time anyway."

(Pause)

What is happening down south (in the USA) is that there is an enormous pressure, a pressure I think on everybody, but certainly specifically on feminists, to yet once again shelve feminist issues, or what are seen as 'merely' women's issues rather than overarchingly human issues, and save the planet from nuclear holocaust, save the planet from extermination through carcinogens and pollutants and save the planet from localized wars, counter-insurgency, etc. This, in spite of the fact that ... it seems that it should make a difference ... that what is new about the New Right is that it is taking the Women's Movement as a target. This has never happened before. We are being targeted now precisely because we are very visible, precisely because of the kind of profile we have. We are being told from many quarters that we should march as women on the Pentagon, that we should as women demonstrate on Mother's Day against the war in El Salvador, against nuclear proliferation, etc. There has been a lot of pressure to join coalitions with gay men; to join coalitions with the left, the male left. I think that there is a lot of feeling that, after all, these are incredibly urgent issues. The statement that Helen Caldicott makes at the end of her book — that everyone black or white, male or female should shelve all other causes and join in the cause of saving the planet because otherwise other causes will have no meaning — is something which a lot of people are shaken up by. I guess the question is what is an appropriate feminist stance in the face of all that. I know that a lot of feminists and lesbians have formed affinity groups, acting as separate enclaves in the anti-nuke movement, participating in demos and actions, that they have felt that they were to a certain extent keeping their integrity by being in an affinity group situation, which is the way that the anti-nuke movement is structuring itself: 'I don't care what your politics are and you don't have to care what my politics are as long as we agree that we will keep this planet from being destroyed' or what have you.

I'm not sure what I feel about that. I do know that I have seen very interesting criticism of that from women who have been involved in the anti-nuke movement, saying that strategies used in the movement are not strategies that come from the feminist movement. No matter what your immediate alliance, you are up against the fact that these are strategies which came from the left or out of the non-violent movement and that they might be totally inappropriate for women.

(Pause)

Coalitions for women have always meant dropping issues that we have worked long and hard on, with relative lack of support from men or from any other political group, and being called in yet again to bolster and salvage movements built around other issues which are always described as somehow more universal.

I happen to think that women's issues are universal issues. I happen to think that they are issues which are directly relevant to what happens to the planet.

The temptation to make coalitions, where there is not any kind of two-way street and it seems where there will never be, seems to be greater now. There is a great deal of talk about it. Some women I have spoken to who have been through periods of militant separatism are now saying that the coalition strategy is the strategy for the eighties.

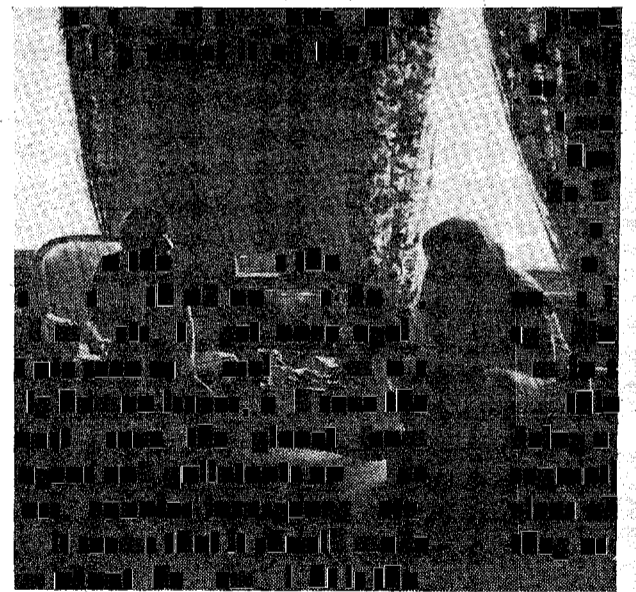
(Pause)

I think it has to be really, really carefully thought through: what kind of power base are we moving from? Are we moving in this direction because secretly, somewhere in the bottom of our souls, we think that our politics need not be taken seriously as some others? I almost feel that that is the bedrock question — How seriously are we taking our politics? Do we see it as the bottom line, the bedrock? And if we do, and if we can move in that clarity, then in given situations we may choose to join with others or not join with others, to make our presence felt or not to, or decide that's simply not an issue we can put energy into, or that we are somehow rubber-stamping.

I have been invited a number of times to speak at anti-nuke demonstrations. I have always received letters from men telling me that my voice would be so important in one kind of situation or another and I have always written back and said that far more important would be a male voice speaking against the misogyny of the male left and the sexism in the anti-nuke movement. I never get a response.

I think we have to figure those things. I really believe in being very pragmatic about this and in that sense I am not a separatist. But I also feel that, really, we have to be very clear about how crucial our politics are. And I believe that they are ultimately crucial. Ultimately and here and now.

(Pause)



Adrienne Rich (l.) and Eve Zaremba

I don't like the flavour of the notion that women must save the planet. I want women to be saving women. Also in all of this, the question that lingers with me is why is it anyway that only these threats or utter annihilation, of holocaust, are supposed to bring people together? Why does it have to be literally the destruction of all sentient life that has to be at stake before people can move? I think that women have been showing that we are moving, certainly about our own destruction and our refusal to go on being destroyed, but we also are moving about the quality of our lives and what we want on this earth. This earth!

I don't want to be moved by threats of death. I want to be moved by what I can taste and smell of life. That I want for every woman and really for every other being.

(Pause)

But I am not a humanist.

(More to follow in future issues of *Broadside*.)

th Writers

Nicole Brossard:

Fantasies and Realities

by Jean Wilson

Since the publication in 1965 of her first book, *Aube à la saison*, Nicole Brossard has been transforming both the form and the content of Québec literature. As well, she herself has been transformed since then by her personal growth towards a feminist consciousness and her acknowledgement and expression in her life and writing of her lesbianism.

Born in 1943, Brossard, 'like a lot of people,' wrote conventional love poems at first. However, when she was about 18, she began to take poetry seriously and after publication of *Aube à la saison* became one of the most influential young writers in Québec. In 1965 she co-founded *La Barre du Jour*, a literary journal whose purpose was to provide a place for young writers who were experimenting with language but had few outlets in which to publish. At that stage of literary development in Québec there were few literary journals and critics were speculating about whether there even was a Québec literature, just as critics were doing in English-speaking Canada. 'At that time, it wasn't even called, "une littérature québécoise," but rather "une littérature canadienne-française." We said, yes, there is a Québec literature, and you'll see it in our writing.' As well as publishing in *La Barre du Jour* Brossard and other writers also brought to public attention the work of early twentieth-century Québec poets already unknown to the new generation of poets.

In her own writing, especially after publication of *L'Echo bouge beau* in 1968, and in 'a more obvious way' in *Suite logique* (1970), Nicole Brossard was actively 'interfering' with traditional, bourgeois language, with what she would now call 'the patriarchal mentality.' Her aim was 'to break clichés through language, as a consequence of which conventional attitudes and habits would also be broken.'

In 1970, Brossard published her first novel, which was simply called *Un livre* and which has neither characters nor story in the usual sense. It is essentially a series of fragments of lives as observed by the person recording them, that is, the author. As she remarked in the conversation on which this article is based, Brossard had assumed previously that only poetry could express what was most important in life, namely 'extreme pleasure and extreme pain.' These two extremes are, of course, very difficult to describe accurately in any form. But Brossard realized that although she would never be able to describe them accurately, she was in fact not limited to poetry and would be able to write all her life because 'I'd try to write about those vital things and to travel through the infinite possibilities in language. That I published my first novel in 1970 is also due to the fact that I needed more space, even though in that novel there is really no story and my characters are only pretexts for experience.'

After *Un livre*, Brossard wrote two more novels and then returned to poetry with *Mécanique jongleuse* and *Masculin grammaticale* in 1974. About that time, her personal world began to change radically. She more or less simultaneously read such feminist writers as Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millett, and Ti-Grace Atkinson; she fell in love with another woman; she became pregnant. 'For me, my feminism and my lesbianism are related to those two realities — pregnancy, which united me with all women, and lesbianism, which revealed my own territory to me. As well as reading all those books and doing my own consciousness-raising, Luce Guilbault and I did the film *Some American Feminists* (NFB 1976). She and I also worked on *La Nef des sorcières*, a feminist play first performed in Montréal. And when I returned from making the film in New York I recognized that there was no feminist newspaper or magazine in Québec so I decided to start one.' The result was *Les Têtes de Pioche* (Pick-Axe Heads), a monthly feminist newspaper which was published from 1976 until 1979.

Brossard began to write *L'Amèr* in 1976. 'It was very hard to write because it was like trying to change the meaning of all the words we (women) were using and confronting myself with reality and fiction at the same time.' Because of its relevance to the experience of writing *L'Amèr* and her subsequent writings, it is useful to quote here Brossard's answer to a question asked at the May 1 dialogue: 'How has your feminist consciousness affected your use of language?'

As long as we view language as a mental space by which we can express, formulate, and explore new dimensions of our individual and collective realities, it is obvious that a feminist consciousness leaves traces in our practice of language. For me, the most important thing is that feminist consciousness creates new paths, new possibilities of being active and activist in language. When I say active, I mean producing and creating new dimensions of reality, new perspectives. When I say activist, I mean interfering with what has been taken for granted, with what is taken for granted in society and in language (both being patriarchal and sexist).

I have always been actively concerned with words, forms and language. I could say that this is my existential trademark. Things can happen in your body, in your skin, but as long as you cannot create a satisfactory syntactic environment for words of emotion you can be devoured by them. You can vanish in a sea of silence or disintegrate in a patriarchal society. For me to use words is not only a matter of expressing myself, but also a way to produce a new territory, a new space, a new environment for my body as a skin able to transform and be transformed by language. Feminist consciousness also makes it possible for a woman

to say we, and through that possibility of using the plural to concentrate more precisely on 'I,' or on 'us' as individuals.

*Feminist consciousness made me question reality and fiction. For example, when I was writing *L'Amèr*, I felt that I had to move reality into fiction because patriarchal reality made no sense and was useless to me. I also had the impression and the certainty that my fictions were reality — they are full of meanings — and that from there I could start a theoretical work. That's why I called that book 'une fiction théorique.'*

I think that when we are little girls, we perceive reality clearly, as it is: patriarchal. But we are soon told that our perceptions are mistaken. What is first perception becomes impression and then is called imagination, as in 'darling, you are imagining things.' In other words, our certainties slowly become fiction. This is the knot that stays in our throats, sometimes all our lives. And this is the knot that feminist writers have untied in their work.

For women, so-called reality is a fiction because it is not made up of their perceptions, their sensibility, their minds, their necessities. Reality is constructed, reproduced, and transformed by a patriarchal mind, a one-track mind. Let's name some fictions: the military complex, the price of gold, the television news, pornography.

On the other hand, women's realities have been perceived as fictions. Let's name some realities: maternity, abortion, rape, prostitution, physical violence. The newspapers will tell you that there are news items and not information. So if you are writing with a feminist consciousness, you suddenly find yourself writing at the edge, at the very limits of fiction and reality. You can use delirium to travel from one to another, entering a spiral, spinning.

To answer the question more concisely, I would say that my feminist consciousness affected my use of language in the sense that it made my texts more flowing, more evident in their syntax, for example. Also one's interior beat changes and so affects the rhythm of one's writing. You concentrate differently on words' meaning. You discover the meaning of words you thought you knew before — and some words disappear from your vocabulary altogether.

*I know that after writing *L'Amèr*, which was *ma descente aux enfers*, to write *Le Sens apparent* was just like surfacing and spinning. After that book, I think that my writing became more affected by a lesbian sensibility, that from then on my body became a skin able to produce la pensée de l'émotion et l'émotion de la pensée.*

Certainly *Amantes*, published in 1980, reflects a distinctly 'lesbian sensibility.' 'It is a love poem which gets into a new dimension, of the skin, instead of the body. My hypothesis is that since my body is not original or unique — there are and have been many women's bodies — it is collective. I am united with all women. Only my skin is me. No one else has my skin. J'ai un corps collectif et un peau individuel. In the years to come I'll concentrate more and more on what can be learned from the skin, from the surfaces. That is an important word for me.

As is 'spinning,' which became so significant with *L'Amèr*. 'The spiral is a form that I see in literature, especially in Gertrude Stein's and Monique Wittig's work. It's a form in which you say something and repeat yourself but in so doing advance a step. It's a very dynamic form of life that you can find from the bottom of the sea to the nebula. I've concentrated in my work on that form, which is related to lesbian sensibility. There's a lot of work to do on this subject and for me it's still an intuition, but I want to explore it. In traditional writing, everything is linear, a 'whole line, which can be very boring. The formalists questioned this traditional line, breaking it. But it was still a line. You can remake the line by replacing the fragments. Fundamentally, traditional forms don't change. But then comes the form of the spiral and a new dynamic and a new way of relating with the world in your mental space, a new way of being.'

Brossard explores in her writing how patriarchy affects women's minds and said that she is now particularly interested in analysing the import of such words as 'ideas,' 'abstraction,' and 'utopia', and expressing how women themselves have been and still are perceived by men as abstractions. 'In patriarchal minds there is a lack of imagination. They find it impossible and threatening to imagine

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Photos by Beverley Allinson



Jean Wilson and Nicole Brossard (r.)

ARTS

Cris Williamson:

The Changer Changes



by Susan G. Cole

The songbird of the women's movement would not warble the familiar tune.

Anyone who has had even a passing acquaintance with the women's community is aware of Cris Williamson's songs, especially those off her first album recorded by Olivia. They have become virtual anthems for lesbians trying to come to terms with their relationships. Williamson's appearance at Toronto's Harbourfront on April 22 was supposed to be the women's cultural event of the year, but it didn't exactly turn out that way.

Williamson, backed up superbly by Jackie Robinson on cello and bass, ran through a repertoire that gave as high priority, if not higher, to native rights, prison reform, whales, warriors and draft resisters as it did to relationships among women. Why, wondered many who came to the altar to worship, wasn't Cris Williamson behaving like the lesbian icon she's supposed to be?

She didn't want to. It's as simple as that.

And so Cris Williamson has a serious problem. Cursed by the conditions that beset most musicians — perpetual poverty, a stubborn will to get her music heard in spite of the odds against a singer-songwriter, against a female singer-songwriter especially, and the seemingly endless "paying of dues" in clubs on the road — Williamson tried to find artistic fulfillment and wound up in total conflict with her audience.

She started off as a folkie, playing in coffee houses when she was fifteen. As is usually the case in such circumstances she was making minimal money. But typical of musicians whose commitment to the art is total, Williamson would not be put off the artistic track by something as base as penury, and she carried on. In the sixties, it was rock and roll, an expensive enterprise, too expensive to pursue for too long. In the seventies, her writing started to develop to the point where she was making unique and compelling personal statements — the odd tune about her women lovers and a larger array of more conventionally political material of the anti-nuke, anti-war variety. It was music laden with a consciousness that touched enough people to create for Williamson a bona fide following.

The record business, being as it is, could not have cared less, with the exception of an enterprising group of women who formed Olivia Records. Their interest in Williamson was a refreshing switch from the indifference of the rest of the recording industry. But Williamson didn't succumb so fast. "I'm doing the same music I was doing before there was a women's movement," she said as she twanged mid-western style through an interview with *Broadside* before her performance here. "I joined the women's movement because there was need for me to be there. But I was backing off for two years, because I didn't want to be held and confined."

There was a need for Cris Williamson's music, a desperate longing to hear the words "sweet woman" over and over again, sung by that extraordinary voice that soothes and cries out at the same time. But Williamson needed Olivia as much as women listeners needed her. At age 29, still without a recording contract and prospects looking bleak just about everywhere else, Williamson saw no alternative. She signed with Olivia and the moment her

first album hit the stands, she lost control of her life.

It is one of the facts of life artists find most difficult to accept. It doesn't really matter how much love you put into a product, how careful you are to produce in such a way so that you're understood, how meticulously you plan an album, for example, so that it expresses your widest range, or how crazy you are about this or that song that you're sure is your best. Once the tapes are transformed into plastic, packaged and distributed, they're out of your hands. The public invariably interprets the work as it pleases.

And so whereas Williamson insists that there are only three songs on the first album that use female pronouns, and that the album reflects a political consciousness that predates the women's movement, in the aftermath of the album's release, she was no longer perceived as a hippy, a renegade artist, a humanist or any of things she wants to be. In the eye of her audience she became a lesbian symbol.

She hates it. Hers are not the moanings and groanings of someone who cannot handle sudden successes. There is no doubt a certain amount of discomfort in that feeling of having no privacy, no space. But there is a particular burden, and the word is used advisedly here, to being a star figure in the lesbian community.

We are without a culture. We tap our toes to the top forty, blanking out the words, or we avert our gazes when TV ads get too offensive. When we finally come in contact with an artist we recognize, in the sense that the art, hallelujah, has something to do with us, we behave like the culture-starved women we are. We scream and holler our approval, sometimes more for the fact the artist is female than for the quality of her work; we give her points for just trying when an artist's best efforts should be one of our demands. We tell our artists how terrific they are when they're not — all this in the spirit of being "supportive." It has been the nemesis of some performers who, after receiving a rousing reception in the women's community, have laid artistic eggs in the real world. It is a painful experience for them and many secretly wish the women's community would stop with the adulation and keep its critical facilities intact.

This tendency toward total acceptance was evident even at Harbourfront. Williamson sang splendidly. She laid her soul on the line, at least musically. Her patter on the other hand was diffident, except when she introduced her songs, at which point diffidence gave way to preachiness. She made slips in artistic judgement. The work in progress of children's songs was placed poorly at the end of the concert and gave evidence of something some of us have suspected for a while, that Cris Williamson has an emotive voice and can craft a skilful lyric but that she has only one or two melodies up her sleeve; she is dangerously close to being a "three-chord wonder."

She gave it everything she had at the performance level, but the whole package was hardly worth the standing ovation Williamson received. Maybe people rose because she had withstood a walkout by some fifteen members of the audience (see next page) but I suspect it was the old "we love you no matter what" syndrome that is the bane of women's culture and its development.

When we're not gushing like blithering idiots we get heavy instead. We crave more. It's not enough that Cris Williamson gave women a bit of lesbian content to relate to. Now she has to speak for women wherever she goes. Move away from the line and you're in trouble.

She doesn't want to speak for women. "I feel like wo-

men look at me as a strong person and that's good," she admits. "But they have blind spots. They see me through their needs and desires. I know what they want me to be." "And," she added, with a great deal of conviction, "I'm not that person."

She isn't what her fans, or even what her critics think she is. She isn't, to start with, making money hand over fist. The notion that Williamson is "making money off the backs of women," as it's been muttered, is that weird combination of wishful thinking (i.e., we have the power to make our favourite stars) and ill-informed nonsense. Williamson has sold 100,000 records which is good for six months' spending money. She came complemented only by Jackie Robinson because of dollars and cents. "The only reason I don't play rock and roll is because we don't have money for a drummer or to pay a band," she explained. "Getting a band on the road is a joke and record companies are cancelling tours right and left." They came without roadies. Nobody did the carting for the movement's songbirds, they did the schlepping themselves.

She isn't graced with miraculous powers. A woman claiming to have leukemia parked herself on Williamson's doorstep and refused to leave. She needed Williamson's light to heal her. Williamson doesn't want that kind of desperation around her. She doesn't want to be used. She certainly doesn't want to fulfil other people's fantasies, particularly those of women who fancy an artist who restricts herself to women's content and leaves the rest behind. She perceives that audience as "cement or anything that's stationary" and herself as a tree "cracking through the cement." Sometimes for Williamson the audience is like birds. "I look into the audience and I see those hungry mouths open saying 'feed me, feed me.' And they would eat you alive and still not know what they ate."

Quite frankly, it's not obvious why anybody got the idea that Williamson was a feminist. Her songs are hardly paeans to women's solidarity. The only quasi-feminist words she's ever breathed on record are "sweet woman," and anyone who thinks that's real feminist content is either too inexperienced to have encountered an a-political lesbian or is too blissfully caught up in a lover to encounter anyone else and wouldn't be engaged in feminist action anyway.

Perhaps the assumption of Williamson's feminism came from the fact that she signed with Olivia. To many, especially those women who came away from Harbourfront disappointed, baffled, or outraged, Olivia is the feminist distribution institution committed to putting feminists on record. Given the high profile Olivia has had at women's music festivals ("not very festive," is Williamson's comment on the subject — she has been notably absent from any such event); given the release by Olivia of the anthology entitled "Lesbian Concentrate"; given the fact that Alix Dobkin, Meg Christian and Teresa Trull, three musicians apparently happy with their respective roles, are Olivia artists, it's no wonder that Olivia has cultivated in some quarters, the image as the feminist arm of the recording industry.

But in other quarters, many, Williamson, among them, would argue that Olivia's role is to give not feminists but women, who otherwise would not get the time of day from record companies, the chance to record in first-rate facilities and to be heard. (Does anybody know Mary Watkins' politics? Do they matter?) That is obviously the motivation for Williamson's association with the company. It is a hap-

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Williamson's accompanist Jackie Robinson (l) with Cris Williamson

Photos by Barbara O'Kelly

Responses in Concert

1

by Moe Lyons

Well, wasn't that interesting, what happened at the Cris Williamson concert?

The evening started out rather well. Beverley Glenn-Copeland was emceeing and everyone seemed to like her quite a lot. Cris and Jackie Robinson came onstage and Cris started out being reasonably charming, although she did seem a little taken aback by the warmth of the greeting, apparently feeling it was a bit too much, too soon.

But the first odd note was struck almost immediately. She started a melody the crowd was familiar with and when she heard the response she said with a touch of asperity, "Wouldn't you be surprised if I played something else?" At first I thought the acerbic tone might be in my imagination. I'd read in the April issue of *Mother Jones* how Cris was feeling her audiences were too uncritical, and so accepting that she never got any real feedback and never really knew how she was doing. I was waiting to see if I thought this was a valid complaint and whether I would think she was experiencing what she had described.

As the concert went on, I found myself getting a little bored between the songs. There Cris sat going on and on, mostly in a monotone and in a not particularly entertaining or enlightening fashion. One could scarcely fault her for what she was saying; she had the right attitudes — she was for the whales and against nuclear power and in support of native peoples and wished we could all just love one another.

What she notably *wasn't*, in particular, was for women. I think once she said something about her sisters and she didn't actively avoid mentioning that she was a woman, but she gave us no more than many women performers from whom we have less reason to expect a feminist consciousness. It is, after all, the lesbian/feminist Olivia Records through which most of us have come to know her.

When she performed Waterfall, she became downright obnoxious. As soon as she got to the part everyone knows, the audience began to sing along. Maybe she was confused and thought Toronto was the

boondocks (I have to say this; I'm from Prince Rupert), perhaps she was hoping that she would find the fresh audience she has been looking for. In any case she didn't seem prepared for so much of the audience to know the music and to be able to carry it together. Soon she just played the piano and no longer sang, saying, "Why should I work?"; "Maybe I should just play my record and mouth the tunes,"; "Look, I'll just leave and they can pay you," and "You didn't even wait until I asked."

She was pissed off at the audience and at that point she held us in contempt.

Now it may sound liberal and wishy-washy, but I couldn't help but have a little bit of empathy for the woman. It must get boring to have to keep playing the same six songs (or whatever) wherever you go because the audience demands them.

But if she was going to insist on her right to control the music because she was the one paid to do it, the least she could have done was to be professional enough not to be nasty to the people who had come to see her and to share the Cris Williamson experience.

It was sort of embarrassing at the end of the first set to be part of an audience who was still so supportive, so full of adulation for this woman who had just been quite rude to us. She's right, I thought, she is uncritically accepted and it doesn't matter what she does.

She started the second set by strapping on her electric guitar. Now, it's still a treat to see a woman grasp yet another tool of male power, but when a couple of people hooted encouragement, she turned toward the sound with an arched and repressing eyebrow. "Settle down, there," she said, and proceeded to launch into "Hey, Good Looking."

Gee, I thought, maybe it's a joke.

But her friends really didn't look all that amused, and Cris didn't seem to be having that great a time, either. As a matter of fact, she seemed quite tense, rather combative. I thought, you know what she's doing, she's saying, I can make this audience take anything I give them, who cares what the content is, they'll eat it up. And she was right. I sat there not clapping, watching all these perfectly sane-looking women around me applauding a bad old song with sexist lyrics and thought, oh my, what have we done.

So the concert continued and we were just settling into putting up with Cris's ill humour in order to have her music when lo and behold! Something happened!

Suddenly a group of women got up from

the centre of the audience and started to walk out. At first Cris didn't know what was going on and made the standard joke: "Oh, was it something I said?" She shouldn't have asked. (I'm glad she did.) "Damn right!" one woman said. Another woman turned around and said, "I liked you better when you were a feminist, Cris."

Well, you had to warm to Cris in that moment because she reacted very, shall we say, organically. She made a rude striking gesture off the seat of her pants and wriggled her body in a theatrical way, saying, "Well! La-de-da!"

The women left.

It should be noted that these women were not the only ones to leave. I was sitting near an exit, and after the block of women left there was a fairly constant dribble of people going out the doors.

But most of the audience was putty in Cris Williamson's hands. Now she really wanted the love, support and admiration she had been scorning earlier on in the evening. She was obviously distraught, talked about how her heart was beating fast, milked the audience and got a standing ovation.

Now I'm not saying she didn't feel those things and didn't really need someone on her side at that point, but it certainly was interesting to see such an abrupt about-face. Suddenly she liked us, we were her friends, we were with her against those terrible women who had just hurt her feelings.

If those women accomplished nothing else, they certainly were the catalyst for a better concert.

But she still didn't play any particularly feminist or woman-oriented music (unless you count her stuff about Calamity Jane) and if you didn't know you'd never dream she'd ever had a lesbian experience in her whole life.

Then she disappointed many of us further by saying, in that peace-love-and-good-vibes style she'd been using all night, "I don't have any bad feelings toward those women at all." (I thought that was a lie.) "Maybe they just came here looking for something that wasn't here."

Yeah, I thought, and I wonder how many more of us there are.

And I thought some more about it. I wondered why there wasn't a signer at her concert, when every feminist musical event I've been to in the last several years has had signers. I wondered why her accompanist, who has such a beautiful voice and so much talent, always plays a subordinate role and never gets to do any of her own music. And I wondered whether Cris Williamson had changed or only my perception of her.

So I was grateful to the women who walked out. I marvelled at Cris's reaction when she actually got the critical feedback she claimed she wanted. And I left feeling a sense of loss.

I won't stop playing your music — but I liked you better when I thought you were a feminist, Cris. ●



Williamson and Robinson

2

At the Cris Williamson concert in Toronto on April 22, fifteen women left after intermission. This letter is an account of what we did and why we did it.

During intermission a number of women were discussing their dissatisfaction with Williamson's political statements and her attitude toward her audience. Some of us decided that it was important to make our criticisms known and that if we did not do so we would be contributing to our invisibility as women or as lesbians. We decided that we would not make any statement when we left but that our leaving would be a statement in itself. We did not expect Williamson to address the group and we realize now that we should have assigned a spokeswoman to answer comments from the stage. We made arrangements to meet later to write this letter in an effort to be accountable to the women within the community.

Cris Williamson, who makes her living from the women's, and particularly the lesbian community, has to be accountable to that community. Williamson has had a

love/hate relationship with her audience for a long time. In May 1980 she said in *Gay Community News* "I'm not going to stand up and sing womanwomanwoman for two hours ... it's about time I got national play." And in the April 1981 issue of *Mother Jones* she said that having her music on Olivia Records 'Lesbian Concentrate' album was a stigma and a hindrance. In that same article Williamson said that she loved the fact that 'The Changer and the Changed' sold 100,000 copies with no promotion. That sold because women know and trust the Olivia label. It was sold in women's bookstores — and the news spreads quickly when we find music that speaks to our experience. If Williamson doesn't want to "limit" herself to a "cult" following then why did she allow her concert to be promoted by Womynly Way Productions and allow it to be selectively promoted in the women's community? If she has changed she should take responsibility for those changes by not promoting her music on the basis of her past politics. Women attending a concert by Diana Ross have a clear understanding of what they can expect. Diana Ross does not promote her music in a particular community and does not try to play both sides of the street. The issue is not that Cris Williamson is not a feminist but rather that she continues to profit from the confusion she helps to perpetuate about her attitude towards women. Her ambivalent attitude is evident in her interactions with her audience, an attitude which is often patronizing and at times borders on disdain.

Throughout the concert Williamson was making political speeches before singing her songs. Her position was the traditional peace and love message of the new testament. The insidious appeal of the individualized peace and love message is dangerous to us as women (and more dangerous to those of us who are also oppressed by heterosexism, racism and classism). To suggest that change will result from an individual "restructuring of the heart" or from each of us "loving each other and killing them with kindness" ignores the reality of our lives and asks us once again to put our pain aside and nurture those who cause it. These statements deny our oppression, deny the existence of power structures, obscure the fact that we do have enemies and keep us from identifying our allies.

To preach a peace and love message to black South Africans would be considered grossly insensitive. Similarly for Williamson to talk in positive terms about Canada's treatment of native peoples is to ignore a long history of abuse and injustice.

Would it be appropriate to tell Albert Johnson's daughter to kill the police with kindness or to instruct lesbians and gay men to love the members of Renaissance Canada? Should a rape victim love her rapists? Can we expect straight, white, middle-class men to give up their power and privilege in an effort to "love us"? Williamson's message has been popular for 2,000 years because it does not threaten the status quo and because it individualizes oppression.

Anytime we know our invisibility is being reinforced we have a responsibility, as

women, to respond. Concerts are not structured to allow or encourage responses from the audience so our only recourse at Williamson's concert was to make our leaving a statement, thereby opening a discussion in the community that could be a step toward changing that invisibility. Not to have done so, when we so clearly believed this to be happening, would have been tantamount to complicity.

In *Women and Honor*, Adrienne Rich wrote: "Women have been driven mad, 'gaslighted,' for centuries by the refutation of our experience and our instincts in a culture which validates only male experience. The truth of our bodies and our minds has been mystified to us. We therefore have a primary obligation to each other: not to undermine each other's sense of reality for the sake of expedience: not to gaslight each other." At the 'Writers in Dialogue' in Toronto May 1, Rich acknowledged the need for us to criticize each other within our community as women. We are publishing this letter in *Broadside* because we believe criticism and self-criticism is an important part of our political and personal process as women.

Accountability within the women's movement is an important issue and we would like *Broadside* to be used as a forum for discussion. We are interested in the responses to this letter and we would like the discussion to broaden to include new ways for us to be accountable to each other.

—Laura Rowe, for the 15 women who left

Ever Loving — Is That All There Is?

by Sylvia Spring

"And she lived happily ever after." How many times were we, as girls, fed this line and myth? Along with a diet of sugar, spice and everything nice came *love*, prince charming and happily-ever-afters. All we had to do to ensure this happy "ending" (meaning the catching of Mr. Right) was to be loving — ever-loving.

Margaret Hollingsworth's play, *Ever Loving*, most recently played at Montreal's Centaur Theatre (April 16 — May 31). It begins with the myth of ever-loving, ever-afters as believed by three young "war brides." But the trip Hollingsworth takes these women and her audience on, from Europe to Canada and from war-fed fantasy to hard, cold Canadian reality, is anything but smooth or easy. Against a backdrop of Nelson Eddy and Jeanette Macdonald, Canadian sunsets and Hollywood's "Over the Rainbow" dreams, Hollingsworth sensitively and with a balance of humour and pathos interweaves the lives and struggles of three very different couples.

There is Scottish, working class Ruthie, who meets Irish-Canadian soldier, Dave, who overcompensates for the unheroic reality of his clerk's role in the army by feeding a dreamy Ruthie stories of his prosperous Canadian life. What she finds instead is endless childbearing, a live-in mother-in-law and an abusive husband whose neck reddens as he spends increasing time with the boys at the Legion.

Diana, an upper-class young English woman, meets Ukrainian-Canadian Paul and is intrigued by his radical politics. Although she shocks her conservative parents by marrying Paul, she is herself shocked to find that she is expected to endure a life of hardship on the barren prairies while Paul moves politically from left to middle, ending finally as a Liberal hack.



Maja Ardal and Louisa Martin in the Centaur Theatre production of *Ever Loving*

And Italian middle class Luce, while dreaming of a singing career in Hollywood meets Italian-Canadian Chuck at a piano bar. She marries Chuck, imagining that his country is as exciting as the United States. What she finds is a dreary Halifax flat, a father-in-law in the pizza business, and a husband with his machismo still very much intact. She finally leaves Chuck for the Toronto big time of ethnic radio broadcasting. She is the only war bride who manages to escape.

Ever Loving premiered last autumn in Victoria, BC, at the Belfry Theatre. It was a resounding success. The critics and public raved, and for good reason. Margaret Hollingsworth had captured those war brides' reality (and their husbands' for that matter) with a wonderful mix of fanciful farce "intercut" with chilly truth. I use the word "intercut" intentionally since the whole play flowed very much like a film. The scenes were short and tight and cut easily from couple to couple and from past to present. By using period music, played by the Italian, Chuck, and simple but effective lighting, the Belfry production presented a complex structure and theme with seeming ease.

I am relating this past success now because having seen and been so impressed by the Victoria première; I could not believe that *Ever Loving* could be anything but a successful play. But now, having seen the Centaur production, I realize how sadly easy it was to turn a deep and loving script into a shallow and gimmicky farce. Had I not seen the first production, I might not now be so critical of the Centaur's rendition. Despite a very bad and spiteful revue in the *Montreal Gazette*, the play enjoys a large and seemingly appreciative audience. But the real substance of Hollingsworth's message, for me, has been buried under layers of stage make-up.

Miscasting and a director who somehow misunderstood the substance of the play were the two big problems with this production. Two of the male leads are pathetically impotent in roles that require, as a bottom line, great machismo. One, the Italian, who was supposed to be a musician, was incapable of striking a harmonious chord on piano or guitar. But director Jane Heyman, for some reason, decided to overlook this fact, then provided the actor with a four-

week crash course in music. From what I heard, he learned nothing. In the Belfry production Chuck's back-up was the thread that effectively wove together the many short scenes. Without it in Montreal, the play felt choppy and discordant. Another gimmick used by Heyman was the projection of slides on the backdrop that illustrated the scene being enacted. However, these slides were small, difficult to see, and added nothing to the play. They just contributed to my overall impression of chopiness.

Although Heyman has directed two other Hollingsworth plays, she seemed to miss the intent of *Ever Loving* or was unable to translate her understanding to her cast. Since the play is full of fanciful dreams of the six women and men, Heyman's actors used these as if they were skits from a *Second City Review* and hoked them up so much that when a serious bit followed, it seemed drab and overly heavy by comparison. So the delicate job of pacing, which is crucial to films and to a play of this sort, was totally off. Instead the actors opted for the easy laughs from lines like, "Can you cook, Canadian style, Diana? Like pyrogies?" which Hollingsworth has sprinkled throughout the play. But these humorous bits were meant as a balance to the more insightful but difficult statements. Diana says during her long train ride to Lethbridge to a fearful Ruthie, "as long as we love them, nothing else matters." But they and we do find out, over and over again in *Ever Loving* that much else matters.

Heyman and her cast had trouble allowing the strong and not very romantic message to come through. In fact, had I not seen the Belfry production, I would have thought that the last scene was meant to end "happily ever after — despite all the struggles." The Italian couple are reunited as entertainers in the Gondola Room of a Niagara Falls night club. They sing for the other two couples who are having a reunion after 25 years of "married bliss." But Ruth is a dumpy, beaten alcoholic; Chuck is a brutal Archie Bunker type; Diana is busy with her volunteer organizations and not very connected to hubby Paul's political career. Hollingsworth is not showing us married bliss in this scene but variations on the marriage theme. Submission, detachment, and divorce. But for Heyman and

company the dream still lives and her characters end by dancing off into the Canadian sunset.

A second viewing of the play a week after the première showed it to be considerably improved, owing probably to Hollingsworth's explanations of how it *should* have been done. But it was still choppy and rang untrue to me.

The reason I am so insistent on productions staying true to Hollingsworth's voice is that she is one of the few Canadian playwrights who is creating believable, three-dimensional characters. Her vivid portrayals of women especially are needed in a film and theatre scene which is still full of superficial and sexist images. Hollingsworth has always written about women's inner as well as outer lives. Sometimes she does it abstractly, poetically, and psychologically as in her radio play *Apple in the Eye*. Broadcast by the CBC, BBC, and Australian and New Zealand radio stations and published in *Branching Out*, it consists mostly of the inner monologue of a middle-aged, married woman as she lies in bed next to her husband on a Sunday morning while he watches the football game and she works on a crossword puzzle. *Operators*, another early Hollingsworth play, depicts a group of women during their lunch break at some big, back-breaking factory. It was the first time I heard dialogue among women that captured the subtle dynamics of our conversations. And with *Ali Ali O*, her play about a lesbian relationship breaking up, Hollingsworth takes on a subject that is not only difficult but rarely dealt with on the stage.

Since Margaret Hollingsworth is herself a British immigrant who moved to Canada 13 years ago, she has been very sensitive to the differences and problems experienced by people like herself. Her play *Mother Country*, performed last year in Toronto by Taragon Theatre, takes on the subject of the English-Canadian conflict as experienced by a transplanted British matriarch and her three Canadian daughters. And now with *Ever Loving*, Hollingsworth has covered another female reality that until recently has been overlooked.

Many Canadian women, both actors and audience, are hungry for female roles that speak to us and for us. Margaret Hollingsworth's work is a welcome and needed addition to the bleak Canadian theatrical landscape. I hope her voice will continue to find encouragement and a place on our stages.



Margaret Hollingsworth

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Celebrating Heather Bishop

by Deena Rasky

Celebration (WRC1-1404) by Heather Bishop. Mother of Pearl Records, Inc. Woodmore, Manitoba. Available at your local Woman's Bookstore.



Celebration is Heather Bishop's second album and could be blazing the trail for other Canadian women musicians who want to make it on their own. Not having the resources and woman-power of Olivia Records in the United States and not wanting to succumb to male-dominated record companies, Heather Bishop, with her manager Joan Miller, formed her own record label. In 1979, Mother of Pearl Records released Bishop's first album, *Grandmother's Song* (see *Broadside*, Vol. 1 No. 1). Pleased with the success of reaching a wider audience and strengthening her musical credibility, *Celebration* was launched to coincide with Bishop's two-month cross-country tour. It is a pleasure to listen to Bishop's bluesy form of feminism on record.

Even though most of the songs are written by others, Bishop has reached the point

in her career where her own style and individual flavour weave through all the melodies she sings, such as the woman's community chestnut — Dory Previn's *Did Jesus Have A Baby Sister?*, or the more hoary *Cry Me A River*, *Fever*, *Am I Blue?* or the rock and roll hit from the 60's, *Please Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood*.

The most dramatic song in terms of transformation is the last mentioned piece and as an experiment I listened to three versions of *Misunderstood* back to back; from the Animals' *Best of the Animals* album, to the little known 1974 recording by Eric Burdon called *Sun Secrets* to Heather Bishop's. The song was introduced in 1966 by the Animals, one of the many boys' bands exuding a raw male (hetero)sexuality that teenage girls were supposed to swoon over on command. The song's presentation is confessional in tone, complete with an echoing organ and Eric Burdon's boys sweetly humming in the background. The song's aura is heavily laden with male insecurity and guilt. You know this guy has done something wrong and when he sings about having a joy that's hard to hide Eric Burdon muffles his voice, sounding very self-conscious about admitting to such an uncool emotion.

The Animals didn't catch the same gravy train as the Beatles or Rolling Stones, with Burdon releasing an album every year or so, trying to recapture some of the limelight. When he released *Sun Secrets* in 1974, *Misunderstood* underwent some changes. It's goodbye guilt but now unfortunately it's hello Led Zeppelin. The feel of the song is less physical, the fear of Burdon beating his woman is reduced. However, there is a strong sense of woman as property when Burdon huskily croons "Baby, you're mine, you're mine" while the hard rock guitars assault your eardrums.

Back to the present and Heather Bishop, thank goodness. Considering the abuse this song has been through, Bishop breathes a

lot of fresh air into it. She injects the melody with an upbeat reggae tempo. Gone is the vengeance and aggression, replaced with optimism and a smiling cheerfulness. With a sparkle in her clear alto voice, she gives you the impression she genuinely feels remorse over not always being an angel. Her joy is indeed hard to hide. The emphasis is on reconciliation and the understanding is that in relationships we're dealing with human beings, not divine creations. The keyboard replaces the church-associated organ and the piece is further improved by being stripped of the boys' band technical "wall of sound" wizardry. Because of its universal message and its application to alternative relationships (e.g. lesbian), don't be surprised to hear this song again in the future on the radio.

Two compositions on the album are written by Bishop — *A Woman's Anger* and *The Northlands*. *A Woman's Anger* deals with sexual harassment at the workplace. The woman depicted is a machinist who reacts with anger when a male co-worker wants to show her "what a woman is really good for". The boss's treatment of her is no better.

When the boys come round to take a look at this place, he always brings them by and shows me off. My papers came through to say I'm a Level II Apprentice, only 2 more years to go. 'Stead of shaking my hand he just slaps me on the ass, says, "Well baby do you think you're going to make it?"

The chorus is rousing and anthem-like:

Hey buddy what you're looking at now is a woman's anger.
Boys what you're seeing right here is a woman's pride.
And if you had half a lick of sense you'd realize you could learn from me.

So turn your head around, you'd be a better man to change your view.

On the one hand, the collective of woman's voices in the chorus suggests strength and hope for change. On the other, the song ends in a very unresolved fashion, indicating that more than anger and pride can truly discourage harassment.

The *Northlands* is a plea not to destroy the land that's "young and wild" and whose spirit's "still free." On the surface the music recalls Gordon Lightfoot, but Bishop's lyrics have a deep feminist philosophy, again underscored by woman's voices (Daisy DeBolt & Lauri Conger). The piece sways and sways, meandering up the scale and then chromatically descending, which adds fun to the listening.

The title song, *Celebration*, is sung unaccompanied (other than the occasional finger snapping) and deals with women's herstory, encouraging us to "kick up our heels" since it wasn't too long ago that "those dancing feet were bound and sold." Musically there is a lack of fluidity, but with some minor adjustments the piece would be more effective and listenable.

My personal favourite is *Madame Lonely*, written by Connie Kaldor, who also contributed to the 1979 *Grandmother's Song* album. It is with this number that Bishop's musical sense really shines. Blues are usually associated with despair, but Bishop's treatment is sensual as her strong voice soars with its cry. By personifying loneliness, the imagery becomes surreal as *Madame Lonely* "squeezes my heart" or when Bishop sings "I'm going to die in *Madame Lonely's* arms." This intimate knowledge of being alone can lead to a positive acceptance of solitude and the strength that is its by-product. When Bishop sings that *Madame Lonely* only wants to hear her sing the blues, deep down inside you agree.

Focus on Focus

by Martha Keaner

Introspection; personal revelations visual and verbal; mutual inspiration and exploration of ideas; all these were shared in JEB's workshop following her presentation *Lesbian Images in Photography* in Toronto on May 9. The next day, fourteen lesbians met with JEB to spend an afternoon delving together into the nature of this aspect of our culture.

The workshop opened with each woman introducing herself and describing her involvement with photography. A wide range of experience was represented, from hobbyists to students to professionals. A common concern that emerged was the difficulty experienced in working in various phases of the mainstream. In certain situations, such as photography schools,

woman-identified images are often ignored or dumped on. JEB suggested that groups such as workshop's can provide support against the frustration of "having it knocked out of you."

Motivation is essential to the impetus to continue working with lesbian imagery, and this can be generated and nurtured by shared activities such as publication in feminist periodicals and group exhibitions. An awareness of the archival value of documenting women and our activities is also vital.

Further discussion flowed from the practical to the philosophical. Pragmatic concerns such as the design of a woman-identified style of model release were examined. The role of language in our perceptions of the essence of photography was considered. JEB postulated that photo-

graphy has been male-identified, both in its somewhat phallic machinery-oriented nature and its language, which uses words such as "take" and "capture" that ascribe an aura of power to photographer over subject. She advocates a new thinking around mutual participation in the process, with the photographer "embracing" the "inspiration."

The topic of lesbian erotica resulted in a consensus that, by and large, it is not specific graphic images of body parts that turn women on. Rather, it is less tangible qualities such as evocation of strengths in women, and communication between women.

The presence of a lesbian sensibility in successful photographs is a combination of variables. If the lesbian community is the source of a photograph, and the photographer, her inspiration and her viewer are lesbians, the photograph may be said to express a lesbian sensibility. JEB suggested that Adrienne Rich's idea of the lesbian continuum is a useful concept in the description and practise of a lesbian sensibility in photography. As we progress along the continuum, our definitions change, and we are increasingly able to "see through our own eyes," which are no longer "clouded by patriarchal muck."

The workshop culminated in a sharing of participants' works. JEB has evolved guidelines for such sharing. The artist does not talk about her photographs until everyone else has expressed her reactions. There is not a technical critique; rather, our emotional, intuitive response to a photograph is the basis of the discussion.

The group plans to meet again to share further work, experiences and ideas.

JEB's slide presentation 'Lesbian Images in Photography' will be reviewed in next month's *Broadside*.

Martha Keaner is a photographer who works with *Womanspirit Gallery* in London, Ontario.



Martha Keaner

Workshop participants with JEB (second from r) relaxing in Toronto recently

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Mudpie in the Schoolyard



by Mary O'Brien

A progressive press cannot sustain a democracy, but it can help to keep it honest. No one knows this better than the powers that be, whose commitment to democracy is sometimes something less than devoted, and whose commitment to a free press generally means that the press shall be a bastion of private enterprise. For these reasons, the progressive press leads a very tentative existence. Papers tend to collapse from fiscal starvation before they can get their show really on the road. Unlike the conventional press, they are not government supported: we don't find (or want to

find) expensive ads extolling the greatness of Ontario in *Broadside*, and we don't find them in *Mudpie* either. However, *Mudpie's* latest edition celebrates its first birthday, and it is appropriate to take a look at this serious, cheeky, intelligent, irreverent, well-put-together and passionate advocate for better education for Metro Toronto kids.

Mudpie holds the view that the people who matter in education are, in order of importance, kids, parents and teachers. It also recognizes that this view is not shared by the Ministry of Education and the satellites of that body. About trustees the jury is usually out, but *Mudpie* has firm ideas about what trustees ought to be doing: they should be working with kids, parents and teachers to provide realistic and humane education, to banish class discrimination, sexism, racism and homophobia from the classroom, to show kids what the real world is like and to give them the tools to understand and make their way in this world. *Mudpie* knows very clearly that these are political aims, and is very downright and practical with regard to concrete strategies. It keeps readers informed on neighbourhood issues, such as the current efforts of Toronto bureaucrats to throw the kids, parents and teachers of Keele Street and Runnymede schools into an antagonistic relation. The Keele Street parents took seriously a Toronto Board endorsement of the concept of Kindergarten to Grade Eight programs, but their community action has resulted in the Board reversing its approval and closing the K-8 question for two years. If *Mudpie* has its way, the Board might not find this so easy to do.

Mudpie's regular contributors include

Merylie Houston, who writes a down-to-earth column on mothering, Abby Hoffman and Bruce Kidd, who write on Sports and Recreation, Bruce Macpherson, who covers teacher activism, and James McQueen, who has a "Dear Jim" feature which exhorts students and parents to mobilize their political power. In the current issue, McQueen offers to a parent who wants to know how to keep a recalcitrant kid in school the advice to take him out: "You can lead a horse to water," McQueen says with typical *Mudpie* earthiness, "but all he may do is pee in the stream."

Mudpie's birthday edition is, however, fundamentally serious. It deals with the intervention of the right in education affairs, noting that Renaissance and other right wing groups have no doubt at all about the political importance of controlling schooling. *Mudpie* suggests activist strategies to combat the hate propaganda generated by these groups, and feminists will be interested in the documentation of the activities by which fundamentalists and rightists in general get "Right to Life" points of view into classrooms. In fact, reading *Mudpie*, one wonders why feminists have not become more involved in the local politics of education: there does seem to be an important struggle in this area. *Mudpie's* political colouring is generally left-NDP, but this is probably because the NDP, whatever its failings (and *Mudpie* documents these too), has consistently understood the importance of community participation in educational matters, and regularly runs good candidates in trustee elections.

Mudpie is also fundamentally sound on

women's issues, to which it gives a lot of space. In its January edition (Vol. 2, Issue 1) the paper published an excellent and well-documented critique of the misogynist antics of Professor Edward Shorter, which are published by the *Toronto Star*. The piece was written by Ester Reiter, Barbara MacKay and Meg Luxton, and *Broadside* readers would find it very congenial. Daycare has a regular feature column, and the inequities visited upon female kids and teachers are consistently reported. The paper has also reported on and supported the passage of the clause in which the Toronto Board, after a bitter confrontation with the right, secured a guarantee of non-discrimination against gays in the school system.

All in all, *Mudpie* is a welcome addition to the ranks of the progressive press, and one in which women who have an interest in schooling from any perspective will find information which is not readily available elsewhere. So: Happy Birthday, *Mudpie*, and keep up the good work!

MUDPIE: GROWING UP IN METRO. One year (10 issues) — \$10. Donations tax deductible.

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Mary O'Brien teaches at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Playing in the Streets

Robin Belitsky Endres, a Toronto playwright who wrote "The Black and Blue Review" about child abuse and "Ghost-dance" about the Métis rebellion, has organized a community theatre in the St. Claire/Oakwood area, called Pelican Players. The group is funded by Employment and Immigration Canada, and is performing, free of charge, its first plays in June: "Reflections in Red" directed by Robin Endres, and "Pathello" directed by Endres' partner Bob Reid (for information, call 654-0350).

Endres talked to Gay Bell about the reasons for setting up the theatre and its plans for the future:

By Gay Bell

There were no urban-based peoples' theatres in Canada or, as far as I know, in the US either. There were peoples' theatres based in regions, such as the Newfoundland Mimmers Troupe and peoples' theatres based on certain ethnic groups, such as the Teatro Campesino, the grape workers theatre; but they tended to be romanticized by urban theatre professionals who were looking for forms of political theatre. And I really felt strongly that there was a basis for using some of these kinds of theatres for a model, but in a completely urban context.

I couldn't really find many people in the theatre who shared my ideas and I couldn't get my plays produced. Everyone was very eager to workshop them and to teach me how to re-write my plays, even when I was on my eighth script. I felt that there was the typical Canadian perpetual adolescent apprenticeship thing happening to me as a writer. I'd been through that on too many other fronts so I wasn't going to go through it as a playwright. I wanted my own theatre where I could do my own plays the way I wanted them done.

I wanted the play to be in my neighbourhood because I have a child. It's very difficult to be involved in theatre at all with a



kid because when you're involved in practical theatre you have to work long hours. You lose all sense of time and you have to work around the clock, and you can't do that with a child. It occurred to me that other people were similarly deprived. Often people have to make the choice of being in theatre or becoming a parent. That seemed to me really unjust. So I wanted a theatre where, when my child gets older, she can come there and just hang out in the evenings.

I wanted it to come from and be for different constituencies which now do not have access to theatre either as audience people or producers of art. I wanted to develop a different audience and a different group of performers and practitioners of theatre. That's a really tall order. Similar theatres have been set up but they've been set up by existing professionals. In the first place, I couldn't find a group of existing professionals who gave a damn for doing professional community theatre, people's theatre in the city. And in the second place, I wanted to give a theatre to people who don't otherwise have an opportunity to produce. A lot of the skills for training actors are really techniques to open people up creatively, so I'm in the process of adapting those techniques to use for writing as well as

for acting. What I learned studying clowning I now adapt as writing exercises to get people to write. That's the most overrated skill and the most mystified skill and the skill where people feel the most intimidated. I believe that everyone can write and everyone can act and everybody wants to have that opportunity.

So, in preparation for starting up the theatre, I went into an elementary school in my own neighbourhood and put on a play on a multicultural theme, with 125 children.

•continued page 17

Moving?

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• Williamson, from page 12

py one, by the way, in part because Williamson is Olivia's best-selling artist and because, as she puts it, "I'm the chair, Olivia's the table. We need each other."

But is she a feminist? "How can we define these things," she said when asked. "Can men be feminists? Is it a philosophical thing? Is it a way of life? I guess it's finally evolved into a philosophical stance. In that case, if a feminist is a person — a person — who looks to strength, who seeks individual strength before merging with other people, so that you're self-contained, self-initiating, a caring person, a fostering person, then yes."

One is loath to make these kind of judgements but that's a definition of humanism and a humanist is precisely how Williamson sees herself.

This will come as a shock to her die-hard fans, but Williamson isn't really interested in an all-woman audience. It was because she wanted to avoid it that she balked at a contract with Olivia. "We were held back by other people's unimaginative imaginings of what should or could not be," she said. "Some people just want to have their own little girls' club and that's it. That's heaven. But it's not heaven for me. And they make an assumption that that's what I am...The Changer and the Changed. I called it that for a reason. But a lot of people don't want me to change. They just want to be in a little camp. If they had their way, there'd be a world with no men, but that's not the way it is. So what are we to do?"

Williamson cares a good deal what she does politically.

She has been active in the prisoners' rights movements, native rights, Water for Life activists groups and the anti-nuclear movement. She is not a social sinecure. "To me the most revolutionary thing to do is to get to the hearts of men. If they're the ones with the money and they're the ones with the bombs, it's a bad game that's been going on for thousands of years. That's what's got to change."

In keeping with her personal political strategy, Williamson wants as wide an audience as possible. "I wanted to come to Toronto," she said. "I was really happy to come through Mariposa because I love the Mariposa folk ideas. It's very old, as old as my work is — since before the women's movement. And it really appeals to a wider audience. And that's what we want."

• continued page 18

• Endres, from previous page

They each had a speaking part, usually just one line, but the nice thing about it is that they wrote it themselves. It was all like television. That's all they're interested in — television, everything was television. There was a certain amount of disapproval on the part of the adults that the play was one big television show; but the kids really liked it and they did it for their peers as an audience. I don't think they'd had that experience before. I don't even think children in children's theatre have that experience. And although there were 125 kids in the play, the play was structured in such a way that they controlled the action from inside the play. An older child would be in charge of 10 or 12 younger children and after a while they got the idea that they were literally running the show. I felt very good about that. The show was unpolished, but I thought that I'd really made some breakthroughs.

I want to have as part of the community theatre, theatre by children and for children, and that gave me the idea that I should look at other constituencies in the neighbourhood, like housewives, who sometimes go in the mornings to local

schools and to ESL classes or they go to daycare centres, mother-child drop-ins. Why not train them to do theatre, and then any actors we have on staff can put in one or two mornings a week running a daycare. It seems to me the housewives would do a unique kind of theatre put on primarily for other housewives, but secondarily for everybody else in the community. And likewise the senior citizens — go into old folks' homes, use the techniques that I've developed working with children and adults, the techniques of collective creation, and do shows by and for and about old people.

The St. Clair-Oakwood area of Toronto is a very multicultural neighbourhood. It's racially mixed and it's ethnically mixed; and we're trying in the theatre to reflect that, not just in the bodies in the cast, but in some of the issues we talk about onstage using artistic means.

I acquired a partner, Bob Reid, a man who's worked for the last dozen or so years in professional theatre and for whom I have immense admiration and respect. He was the only person whom I'd met in three years working in theatre who was really interested

in the ideas I had and was able to extend them in all kinds of areas I find really stimulating and exciting. We mirror each other a lot. It is quite extraordinary to have a partner in the first place and in the second place to be able to work with a man who is sympathetic to women's issues, and who sees eye-to-eye on a lot of theatrical questions as well.

I think it's significant that we did not go to the Arts Council for funding. We wouldn't have got it anyway, but we're looking for alternate sources of funding and we've got a grant from Employment Canada. They advertised the jobs for actors in all the employment centres in Toronto so we got about 60 people auditioning. About half of them were graduates of theatre

schools: we hired none of those. We hired people who just happened to be in the employment office and saw the notice, and thought maybe there's something there and I'm going to go and check it out. We've hired 12 people who have astounded us with their creativity, their willingness to work, their eagerness, their enthusiasm, their sophistication, and their understanding of a lot of different issues. That was almost arbitrary: they seemed exceptional and extraordinary but the fact that they just came, more or less at random, from employment offices confirms my belief a theatre like this can be used by all kinds of different people, and my belief that everyone's secret is that they're secret artists. I think everyone's in the closet as an artist.

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• **Williamson, from previous page**

So after all that, she is a most reluctant songbird for the women's movement. If you came to Harbourfront to bliss out on lesbian love, if you came to hear a strong commitment to feminism, if you came to hear an artist who revels in the celebration of women being together, you came to the wrong place. If you wanted to hear a beautiful voice, singing about varying kinds of oppression, an artist who will go her own direction, a writer who is committed to change but defines it in her own terms, perhaps you left the hall satisfied.

"Women in the women's movement feel freedom they've never felt before. Well, I've always had freedom," she insists. In fact for me, now that there's a women's movement, it's the other way around — shackles and chains. And I'm sure they'd hate it, but I want them to know that that's what they're doing to me." The message couldn't get forth more clearly than that.

"If they're coming to see me and what I do best, it's like taking your car into a mechanic. You don't tell the mechanic how to fix it. If you don't want to trust the mechanic with your car, then fix it yourself."

It takes a great deal of courage and sheer nerve to be a performer. Performing is a particularly delicate exercise when the material is your own and by singing it you display publicly your most personal values and needs. The artist who speaks totally with her own voice takes an enormous risk by getting on stage, if only because by doing so she says that she has a story to tell. But that doesn't mean an artist should work in a vacuum, that she is like the mechanic who works the car on her own, that she should be unfettered and pursue her artistic goals without a social conscience or that an audience should sit, listen and absorb, enraptured by the artist's mystical powers.

Instead, every musician who gets on stage is making a pact with her audience. "I know what it is you want to hear," she might say, "and I'll give you some of that — because I need you. But I'll always be working on something new, and I may grow away from the music that touched you. But listen and see what you think." No doubt, Williamson has a social conscience, and wants to make that kind of pact — but not with the audience that came to hear her in Toronto.

• **Brossard, from page 11**

women together and not simply as symbols. If we go beyond this lack of imagination, we will formulate that new territory, or mental space, where we can be together, producing new ways of existing in a social reality. We must never forget our *anger* at the deprivation women have suffered because of patriarchal attitudes. If we relax too much, we will fall back into patriarchal values. We can do lots of important things in politics, economics, and cultural matters, but if we can't change the patriarchal imagination we'll always lag behind. For example, what drives some male critics crazy in *Amantes* is not the lesbian content but the fact that in that book they don't exist. The fact of not existing for a man is the worst thing that can happen to him. But that is just what men have insisted about women, that they don't exist. We need to legitimate our own existence."

Gradually, Brossard believes, this feminist consciousness is being circulated in Québec and changing the course of literature there. One of the main ways in which this is happening is through such literary activities as Collection Réelles, a feminist fiction and non-fiction series published by Editions Quinze. In the works, for example, are books on the history of women in Québec, one on the Québec patriarchy, and one on women involved in politics in Québec, including the 'Yvettes.' Like most literature from Québec, this series is not well known or distributed in the rest of Canada because of the language barrier, nor is literature in English well known in Québec. Gradually this situation is improving, owing to the efforts of such small presses as Coach House Press in Toronto, Talon Books in Vancouver, various small literary magazines such as *Room of One's Own* and *Fireweed*, and anthologies such as *Landscape* and Nicole Brossard's *The Story So Far 6*. And there is an expanding network of writers, critics, and translators exchanging information and ideas on both sides of the Québec border. A particularly important occasion on which such an exchange will occur in Toronto later this year will be a conference at York University on criticism and translation of women's writing. (See future issues of *Broadside* for details about this conference.)

But above all, for Nicole Brossard, the essential way in which she is now attempting to transform Québec literature is through her 'lesbian sensibility' and it is most appropriate to end this article with her own explanation of how she thinks such a sensibility contributes to shaping contemporary literature:

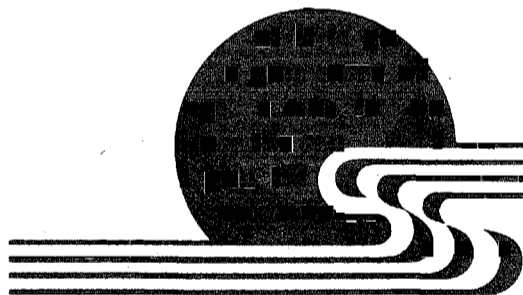
Lesbian sensibility contributes to shaping contemporary literature by influencing my reading, my thought, my writing. It is needed by all lesbians, visible or not, as well as by any woman questioning 'reality.' It means exploration, travelling through cities and myths, through memory, through the future, and, of course, this is done through language. And that is a voyage that starts with your skin.

Lesbian sensibility can propel a woman writer in time and space in such a way that she cannot avoid creating a new mental territory with her skin, imagination, and the words that go with them. What is important for me is how reality and fiction are questioned with words and how they can excite the mind in a way that you step into what you thought was unimaginable.

For me, what is working most in lesbian sensibility is the skin. The skin provides the thought and the thought affects the whole surface of the body. It is through the skin that you catch and transmit energy. The skin is tactile memory. It protects your interiority, your integrity. Your skin works like a synthesizer, transmuting words, emotions, and ideas. We have the imagination of our bodies, of our sex, and most of all of our skin, which synthesizes time and space. Imagination is travelling through our skin, all of its surface. A woman's skin sliding on a woman's skin creates a slipperiness in the meaning of words and makes a new version of reality and fiction possible. It gives what I would call a tridimensional vision. It introduces the possibility of understanding how the patriarchal system works subliminally and therefore how it is so effective in hypnotizing women.

*Lesbian sensibility shaped Gertrude Stein's *Ida*, Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood*, Adrienne Rich's *Dream of a Common Language* and *On Lies, Secrets and Silence*, Mary Daly's *Gyn/Ecology*, and Michèle Causse's *Lesbiana*. It shaped Monique Wittig's work. It is shaping Jovette Marchessault's work. It is shaping my mind and my work every day. And this is contemporary literature.*

Thanks to Coach House Press for providing copies of books by Nicole Brossard translated in their Coach House Québec Translation series; to Giselle Izier for her help in arranging an interview with Nicole Brossard; and especially to Nicole Brossard herself, for an enriching afternoon of conversation and for providing her notes read at the May 1 dialogue.



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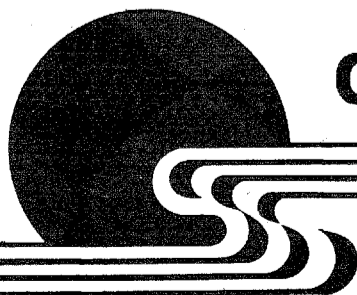
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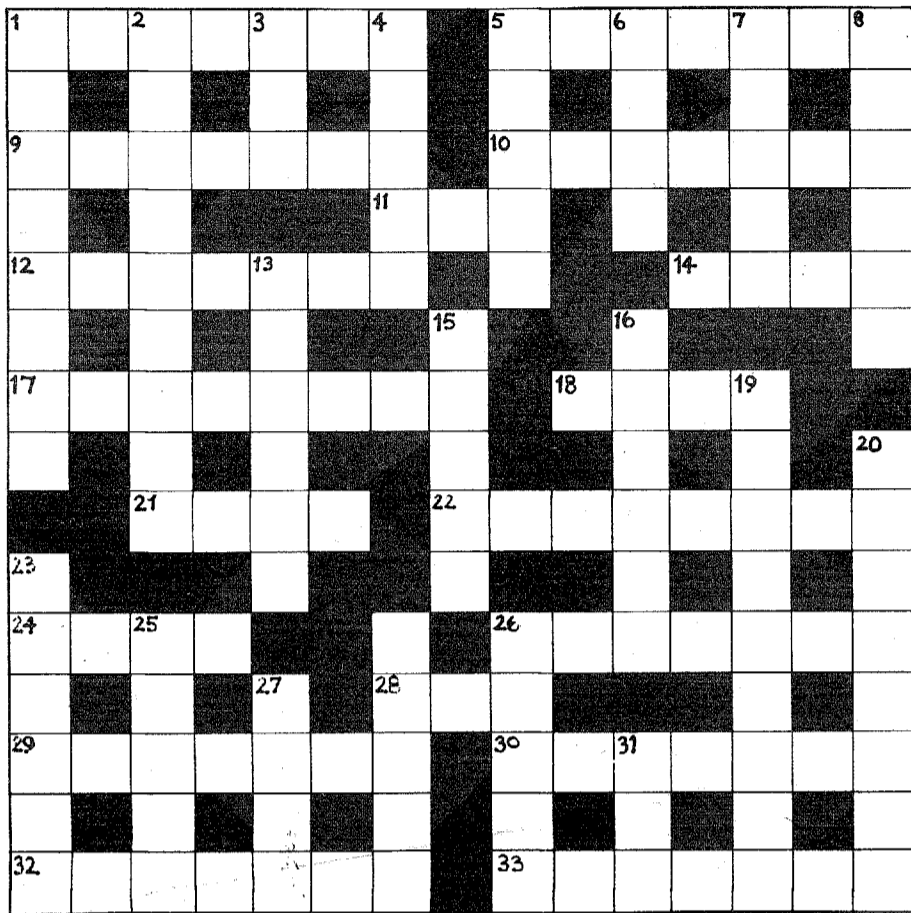
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MOVEMENT COMMENT

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by Mary O'Brien

ACROSS

1. Large room in unhealthy mess symbolically masculine (7)
5. Mother of pride (7)
9. Don't confide in him! (7)
10. Old wheel politician to go again (7)
11. I'm in the modern age. Help! (3)
12. Lie lady in a philosophical way (7)
14. Regrets, this miss (4)
17. Toe start, perhaps, but leaves (8)
18. Constructive for a spinster, not so for a carpenter (4)
21. She has vision (4)
22. Move a bundle, by sea presumably (8)
24. Peeping cats? (4)
26. Not its own beginning, real mixed up later. Sad business (7)
28. Novel woman (3)
29. Juice to take out (7)
30. After this, you have to deal (4, 3)
32. Occasionally a synonym for 1 ac. (7)
33. Once she meant justice, but men made her vengeful (7)

DOWN

1. Irishwoman protests, gives birth to nationalists (8)
2. Professionals who play (9)
3. Jewelled woman (paste, no doubt) (3)
4. Wander from a big fish without confused spirit (5)
5. What men think they are universally (5)
6. Men swear it, don't necessarily keep it (4)
7. Choose your woman, the best (5)
8. Point to confusedly staid madman (6)
13. In a position to plead error (like Trudeau or Clark) (6)
15. Crease or uncrease (5)
16. Occur in mishap pending (6)
19. In favour of lots, draws out (9)
20. Praises a saluted form (8)
23. Literally a motherless child? No, mythologically (6)
25. Ancient woman's cap religiously appropriated (5)
26. Lawbreaker attacked, we hear (5)
27. What women are of earth, season (4)
31. If mother's are backward he'll be everybody's uncle! (3)

• Answers in next month's *Broadside*.

Lesbian Mother's Defense Fund and Gay Youth Toronto announce

SPRING INTO SUMMER DANCE

**Saturday, June 20
519 Church St., Toronto
9pm-1am**

Free Buffet Full Cash Bar

Tickets \$4 in advance at Women's Bookstore or Glad Day. \$5 at door.

WOMEN IN MUSIC

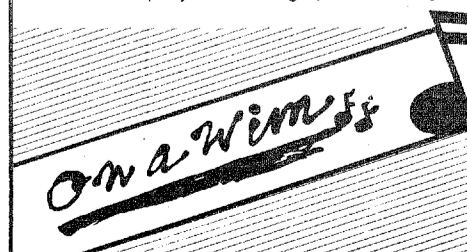
A **Women in Music** research project is being conducted by Lorraine Segato of Mama Quilla II.

The aim of the project is to define the status of both feminist and non-feminist music in the larger music scene in Canada by compiling information regarding background, education, marketplace and sensibility. Your participation will be most appreciated.

The data collected will be used to make specific recommendations to arts organizations, government agencies and the government that will ensure their continued support of women's musical activities in Canada.

L. Segato also hopes to use the respondents as a basis for setting up a Women's music network in Canada.

This project is being sponsored by Status of Women Canada.



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Broadside

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