

Broadside

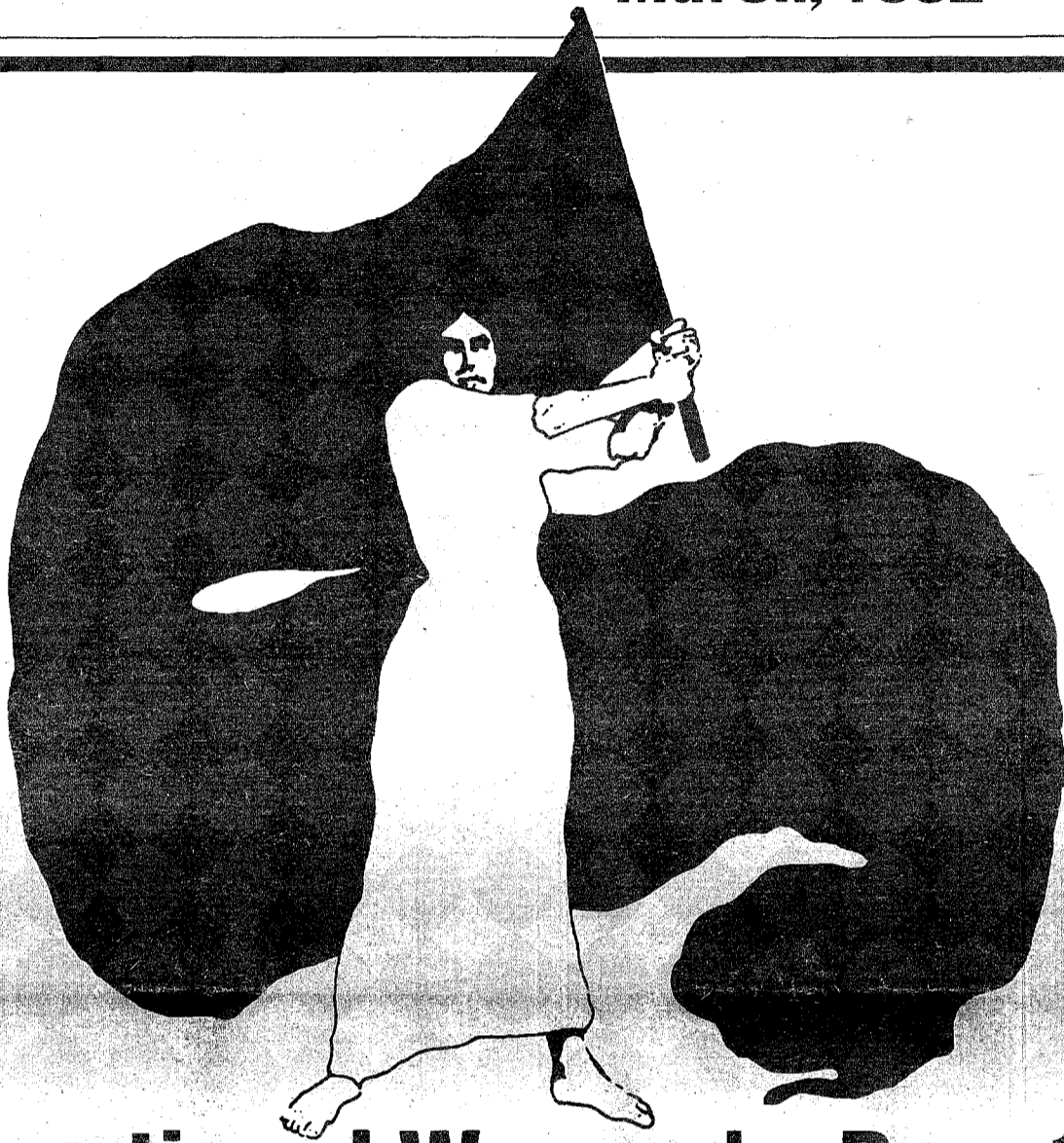
A FEMINIST REVIEW

Toronto Women's
Calendar Inside!

Volume 3, number 5

March, 1982

\$1



Courtesy IWDC

International Women's Day, 1982

INSIDE BROADSIDE

FEATURES

LOST CITY: In the early stages of human social development, the matriarchal city, based on integration and inter-relation, was displaced by the patriarchal city, based on isolation and alienation. Judith Quinlan describes the process and explains why there is no future for the patriarchal model. Page 8.

COMMENT

HELEN'S BUSY: At a recent anti-nuke conference, the line-up of women speakers was nil. The excuse? Helen Caldicott couldn't make it. Dorothy Rosenberg describes her experience at the conference, and provides *Broadside* readers with a women speakers list as preventive medicine. Page 5.

HEMLOVIAN RESPONSE: Mary Hemlow, *Broadside's* woman-on-the-hill, is back with some of the letters she's received in recent months at the nation's seat of power (that's Ottawa). Does *she* want to become a Supreme Court judge? Page 7.

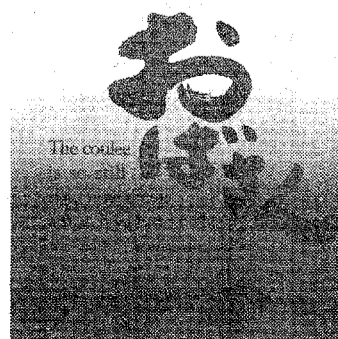
ARTS

RAGTIME UNSYNCOATED: It's not that Ragtime's director left parts of E.L. Doctorow's novel out of his film that bothers Barbara Halpern Martineau, it's *what* he left out; namely, all the connections that place the action in a political context, particularly for the women's roles. Second of a two-part review. Page 10.

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Jean Wilson reviews three books about the experience of Japanese Canadians sent to internment camps during World War II, and particularly recommends Joy Kogawa's novel *Obasan*. Page 14.

OBASAN
JOY KOGAWA



ATHLETE'S FOOT:

Personal Best, a film about two women Olympic athletes (who have a lesbian relationship, in brackets) is not bad for Hollywood, says Susan G Cole, but it leaves one itching for more. Page 11.

WET HENNERY: Monique Mercure talks with Gay Bell about her struggles to become an actor, her role in *The Saga of Wet Hens*, and her work with *Saga's* director Michelle Rossignol and author Jovette Marchessault. Page 12.

GOLDEN OLDIES: As the first of a series of 'Classics Revisited,' Mariana Valverde reviews Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, and finds its analysis of women's oppression clearer than much current feminist work. Page 13.

EDITORIALS

Something Newsworthy

In the February issue of *Broadside*, we published a letter from Lesbians Against the Right (LAR). The letter took us to task for failing to provide coverage of 'Dykes in the Streets,' Toronto's first lesbian pride march, held on October 17th, 1981. LAR wrote to us in the spirit of breaking down communications barriers that seemed to have been built up in the feminist community. In fact, the communications barriers have already begun to break down. The *Broadside* collective met with representatives from LAR before LAR's letter was submitted to the paper, and we explained our situation to them. We thought we should share the substance of our conversation with our readers.

Broadside describes itself as a review, not as a "newspaper" per se. We have a number of reasons for describing ourselves as such. To begin with, we publish monthly, which means that much of the news we could cover is literally passé by the time it's printed. Apart from that, if a news event does not occur at an appropriate time in our publications schedule, it is often difficult to

get the story written and to the typesetter in time to meet our press deadline. The 'Dykes in the Streets' march posed precisely this problem for *Broadside*.

However, *Broadside* would be the first to confess that our news coverage is lacking generally. This has to do, for the most part, with the fact that we simply don't have enough writers to cover all the events, even if they occur early enough in our publication schedule. Not everyone in the *Broadside* collective identifies herself as a writer; and for those who do, that resource is tapped every month in such a way that any more demands made on them would likely cause them to collapse.

We discovered from our meeting with representatives from LAR that they believed we had met as a collective and decided not to cover 'Dykes in the Streets' because we disagreed with the politics of the march. *Broadside* held no such meeting and so the assumption that our silence was a statement is really quite false. Our silence was an indication not of our opposition to LAR's goals but of our inability to provide

much news coverage in general.

As it is, the 'Dykes in the Streets' march was not left invisible to our *Broadside* readers. Aware as we are of our difficulties in covering all news and cultural events, *Broadside* makes a point of announcing meetings and political gatherings and carrying advertisements for concerts and plays so that the community is aware that they are happening. The LAR political action was no exception. We printed the LAR flyer in full as the lead story in the Movement Matters section in October: we played our role in making our readers aware of our goals and actions of Lesbians Against the Right. We hope 'Outside Broadside,' our new calendar of women's events, will be a useful vehicle in future for keeping our readers informed of all events relevant to the women's community.

LAR has expressed the belief that our mandate is to cover important and significant events and issues and so we have invited LAR to help us achieve that mandate. A liaison has been designated to keep *Broadside* informed of LAR's activities. We

also believe it important to publish articles tracing the development of the Lesbian movement in Toronto. LAR is the group most likely to know who is best equipped to write such articles and so we have urged them to provide us with an account of the significance of the 'Dykes in the Streets' march in the context of feminism and gay liberation. We hope we will be publishing such an item soon.

In the meantime, we continue to rely on people outside of the *Broadside* collective to supply us with material and to assist us in production, and we are trying to develop a core group of writers who will help us solve some of our problems with news coverage. If any of our readers feel that an issue or event is getting short shrift from *Broadside*, please let us know. It would be particularly helpful if we can be contacted before the event takes place. Of course, the ideal situation for us is still one in which someone volunteers to cover an event for us.

We regret it, but the fact of the matter still remains: The *Broadside* collective can't be everywhere. ■

Broadside

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The *Broadside* Collective does not necessarily share the views contained in any article, even if the byline belongs to a collective member. Views of the Collective are expressed **only** in editorials, and essays signed by the Collective.

Broadside is published 10 times a year by Broadside Communications Ltd., P.O. Box 494, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2T1. (416) 598-3513. Member: Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association. This issue: March 1982; Vol. 3, no. 5

Typesetting: PinkType
Kornagraphics
Printing: Delta Web Graphics
Second Class mail registration no: 4771
ISSN: 0225-6843

Next production date: March 27, 28
Copy deadline: March 8

Broadside Bulletin

Item: First, business: our advertising rates have gone up. It's the first increase in three years and, since we set our original rates before we started publishing, the new rates reflect much more directly the actual cost of putting out a newspaper. We still offer a discount on multiple insertions — you can take out a 3 x 5 inch ad for as little as \$34 (ten-times rate). While we're at it, please patronize our advertisers and make it worth their while to support *Broadside* by buying ad space. Tell them *Broadside* sent you.

Item: Next, pleasure: On February 13, *Broadside* held a benefit Talent Show at the Heliconian Hall. It was a hit, and the audience demanded that it become an annual event. For those readers who were unavoidably detained elsewhere, you missed a bassoon-piano duet, a contrabassoon solo (the only one), a Chopin Ballade, a stand-up routine by an ex-stripper, a short story,

folk-songs, a *Broadside* skit called 'Feminist Faust,' and one of our collective members disguised as Lillian Russell singing "I wonder who's kissing her now?" We would like to express our appreciation for the generosity of the donors (who covered the cost of the hall and refreshments), the good spirits of the audience and the efforts of the performers. Stay tuned for next year's *Broadside* Talent Show. (PS. We made money.)

Item: As part of the Reel to Real Film Festival, *Broadside* screened "The Power of Men is the Patience of Women," a West German film, on February 21. We had a good turnout and managed to introduce the newspaper to a whole new audience. We urge you to attend more of the Reel to Real screenings, which continue on Sunday afternoons until April 4 (see 'Outside Broadside' for details), as we share the entire fes-

tival profits equally with the other Toronto organizations who are co-sponsors.

Item: Our next fundraising event will be a Yard Sale on Saturday, May 15 from 11 am to 3 pm at 382 Brunswick Avenue in Toronto. Come see the display of bargains, antiques, curiosities, and collectibles. There may even be a Bake Sale and entertainment — Jane Hastings playing her bassoon (\$2 to play, \$10 to stop).

Item: Because our May issue is a "Sampler" rather than a regular edition, next month's women's event calendar, 'Outside Broadside,' will cover two months. So if you want to list events happening in April and May, get them to us by March 15, either by mail, by phone, or by dropping them off at the Toronto Women's Bookstore. This is your first and final notice. ●

This Was No Gong Show



Broadside's Talent Show: (top left) bassoonist Jane Hastings and teacher/accompanist Elizabeth Brickenden; (top right) Karen X. Tully and Lois Fine; (bottom left) humourist Nancy Oliver; (right) Judith Lawrence and accompanist Lois Pearson.

Photos by Gail Kenney

LETTERS

Broadside:

In response to your editorial "Drumming Up A Storm" (Vol. 3, no. 4):

First of all, it is obvious that the issue we raised was that of a woman-only event on New Year's Eve, a positive pro-women issue, not as the article implies, a controversy, making men the major focus.

The fact that Womynly Way, *Broadside* and Mama Quilla II are not exclusively for women is again, not the issue. The issue is, rather, that these three groups took upon themselves the sponsorship of an event which has for the past five years been a women-only event, an achievement which took some ten years of struggle in Toronto, and is an affirmation of Lesbian Feminist culture and politics.

Most, if not all of the women from these three groups have been present for at least one of these events during these years and ought to be aware of the significance of the occasions. The fact that they chose to end this hard-won tradition is the issue. It is true that none of them is exclusively for women, but it is also true that each of them has been very much built on the support and energy of the lesbian community. The Fly By Night Women's Bar continually gave its support to *Broadside*, in the form of encouraging sales and regular large costly advertisements. Mama Quilla II made it through its early public performances and won a radio listener's contest on the strength of its lesbian following. A large portion of the audience of Womynly Way Productions is lesbian. For these three groups to make the choice they did was a slap in the face to their lesbian supporters — and it is, to say the least, ironic that *Broadside* chose to describe this struggle in the editorial without even mentioning the word lesbian.

What words does *Broadside* use to describe the struggle around the issue? The so-called "intimidating tactics" were, if the organizers did not change their position, to stand outside the door silently with a written statement expressing our concerns

about the absence of women-only events in Toronto. Our intention was not to "picket" nor to "hassle" anyone at the door. Neither these words, nor the actions suggested by them, were ever considered or employed.

Members of *Broadside* and Womynly Way were certainly "confronted personally" — they were the organizers. They were not "put in a position" of having to pick between two bad choices — they made a decision which resulted in them receiving feedback from a number of women. To say they "respected the position" of those who expressed discontent and chose not to attend, begs the question of the organizers' accountability for why women were not attending. Then there were those of us who chose to express our discontent by making a political statement outside the dance; in dismissing us as destructive bullies, the editorial once again gives no attention to the content of our position.

"Take off eh, ya panty-hosers!" Name-calling has always been and still remains a cheap tactic to invalidate another's position without having to discuss it on its merits. In particular, innuendos about man-hating have always been used to discredit "out" lesbians and to keep feminists in line. One wonders whether bully is a polite term for bull dyke! We feel deeply and strongly that we should not be subjected to such abuse for the simple act of believing in and fighting for the existence of women-only events.

All of us have known and worked with many of the organizers for years in the movement. We have not been called bullies for starting all-women's hostels, we have not been called bullies for making a very strong presentation that International Women's Day be a women-only event, nor for calling attention to the movie *Snuff*, which led to the birth of WAVAW. These struggles were seen as and supported for being feminist. But a women-only dance is lesbian, not feminist, and therefore our concerns are dismissed as "particular interests," rather than respected as a thoughtful politic.

The most extreme instance of disrespect is shown in the organizers' treatment of the difficult position which Linda Jain, the drummer for the band, found herself in. She had agreed to play, assuming as did many others, that the event was just for women. She found out that this was not the case just three days before the date. Her decision was uniquely difficult because of her personal involvement in music and her fear of being musically ostracized if she took a position true to her own personal/political convictions. Instead of receiving support and respect for her position, Linda Jain encountered from the band responses which constitute a blatant disrespect for her own integrity. It seems that it is beyond the realm of imagination of the three organizing groups to understand that some people's political convictions go deeper than the financial success or failure of a function.

The organizers of the New Year's dance made a mistake in not recognizing that they were sponsoring an event with a community history and with community expectations.

To be confronted with such a mistake and to be asked to acknowledge it and attempt to rectify it does not seem such a threatening position for us to have put them in.

This entire issue, including *Broadside's* editorial, has evoked many strong emotions, anger being on the top of the list. Anger because we assumed we were struggling with the *Broadside* and Womynly Way collectives, not against them. Anger because *Broadside* utilized its journalistic licence to misinterpret the women's community.

And last but not least, sorrow. It is difficult to engage in such a deeply felt struggle with women who have been friends and co-workers for years. But surely our ability to continue with honest struggle is what distinguishes "sisterhood" and provides our capacity for growth and integrity.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Eileen Alexiou | Pat Murphy |
| Nancy Dodington | Ange Spalding |
| Barb Conyers | Vicki Trerise |
| Meg Hamilton | Louise Boychuk |
| Linda Jain | Jay McGillivray |
| Carol McLean | |

Broadside:

The first copy of my new subscription arrived yesterday and I was both pleased and excited. However, I thought you would want to know that my subscription has apparently been processed twice, as I have now received two copies of February's issue. I enclose both labels in the hope that you will be able to correct this problem and save some money.

I passed the extra copy on to someone who I know will appreciate it.

Joanne Collings
Collingswood, NJ, USA

(Ed. note: We are having problems in the circulation department, owing to computer software dysfunction (it really is the compu-

ter's fault). That means that some subscribers may receive two copies; others will be informed that their subscription has expired when in fact it hasn't. Please bear with us, things should be OK next month.)

Broadside:

Keep up the good work. The reviews of Reds ('From Rags to Reds' by Barbara Halpern Martineau) and of the show at the Museum of Textiles ('Diamonds and Toads Are Forever' by Elaine Johnson) in the February issue were excellent. I wouldn't want to miss the March issue, so I'm renewing my subscription now.

Pat Mills
Vancouver



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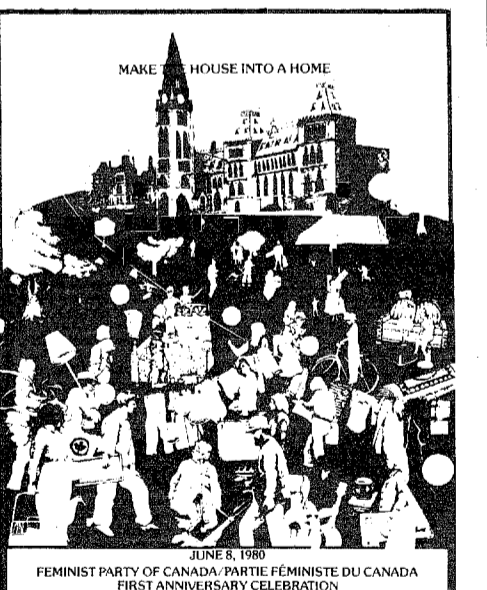
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A Committee For All Seasons



Leslie Coates

by Nancy Adamson and Kathy Arnup

"Where are you from?" I was asked. "International Women's Day Committee," I responded. "International Women's Day?" she said, looking puzzled. "I thought that was in March..."

"Well, it is ... I mean ..." I began, trying to explain the inexplicable.

International Women's Day Committee (IWDC as we are affectionately known) began in the late 1970s. During that period the media was full of news of the death of the women's movement. And certainly, in Toronto at least, there seemed to be no highly visible, ongoing women's organizations, apart from service groups like the YWCA. In the fall of 1977 a number of women in the Revolutionary Workers' League decided to approach other feminists about the possibility of organizing a celebration of International Women's Day on March 8, 1978. In response to their letter, nearly 200 women met in January to begin planning the demonstration. Calling itself the International Women's Day Coalition, this group organized a large and spirited rally at Convocation Hall and a march to City Hall through the snows of downtown Toronto.

At the evaluation meetings following the event, many women expressed a need for an ongoing group which could put into practice some of the ideas we had discussed during the building of the celebrations. The new group which formed took the name International Women's Day Committee. Despite some confusion between the committee and the annual organizing event, our name has stuck, as we have developed a reputation as IWDC within the trade union and women's movement in Toronto.

The founding year of IWDC was a busy one. We planned large public meetings on abortion and unemployment, organized a women's day of action at the Fleck strike (with Organized Working Women) and began to discuss plans for a series of educa-

tional in the summer and a province-wide conference for the women's movement. By the fall of 1978, we had realized that the conference was too large a task for us. Among other things we were still busy organizing support work — this time a benefit for the Wives Supporting the INCO Strikers. And March 8th was once again just around the corner. Again, IWDC was active in initiating and organizing the rally and demonstration celebrating International Women's Day, 1979.

After the round of debates, hard work and excitement which characterize International Women's Day, IWDC settled into a quiet, reflective period. We needed to define ourselves. These "internal" discussions took up much of the spring and summer of 1979. It was an extremely difficult period in our history, during which many women left the organization. IWDC emerged from this period with a basis of unity and, more importantly, with a renewed sense of the importance of action in our politics.

Our basis of unity statement defines us as anti-capitalist and anti-patriarchal. In simpler terms, we define ourselves as socialist feminists. We believe that the oppression of women touches every aspect of our lives and that our liberation will require fundamental changes in the structure of society. We are committed to working with other groups in the women's movement and in the trade unions, and in other areas, in our struggle for social change.

Perhaps the best way to explain what all this means is to describe what we do. One of our major commitments is to work with the trade union movement. We have helped to organize support for striking workers at Fleck, Fotomat, Puretex, Blue Cross, Radio Shack, Inco, Bell Telephone, Toronto General Hospital, the Post Office, and Irwin Toys Company. Last year we established an ongoing trade union subcommittee to strengthen contacts we'd made with individual trade unionists and to continue to carry out our work in this area.

Through the solidarity pickets and rallies IWDC has helped to organize, trade union women have been able to see that what the women's movement has to say is in fact relevant to them and that there is a group willing to do more than just talk about support. Many of these women have joined us on International Women's Day demonstrations. We feel that as a result of this exchange, the women's movement has more consistently taken up issues that are key to trade union women — the right to organize, the right to strike, the right to paid maternity leave, for example. Our work in strike support has been useful in breaking down some of the barriers between the women's movement and the trade union movement and, we think, puts an end to some of the misconceptions that the women's movement is really just for "middle class" women.

IWDC is active in a number of other areas. We have helped to organize demonstrations for abortion rights, day care, equal pay, and against violence against women. For the past two years we have been instrumental in organizing the counter-demonstration to the Right to Life's Mother's Day parade against abortion. We have co-sponsored forums with other groups on issues such as lesbians in the women's movement, capitalism and patriarchy, nuclear power, and the rise of the Right. IWDC is committed to providing a forum for public discussion and action on a wide range of issues of concern to feminists.

Despite our activist orientation, we have not given up on either talk or theory. IWDC is committed to striving for a balance between action and discussion. Of course, this is easier said than done, as we've often found ourselves rushing from event to event with little time to discuss what we are doing and why. To help solve this problem, we have instituted regular educational discussions within the group. Topics have ranged from sexuality to the role of the state in women's oppression. Last fall we held a series of talks on our "allies," with presentations focussing on the lesbian movement, the trade union movement, and the immigrant women's community. Because our experience as feminists and political activists varies enormously, we find discussions an important way of exchanging information as well as figuring out our politics and getting to know each other.

Within our own group we are committed to many of the principles of feminist organizing which have evolved in the women's movement over the years. These include a non-hierarchical structure, non-authoritarian methods of meeting, and a commitment to developing the talents of every woman in the group. While we have certainly had our share of wrangles with the "star syndrome" familiar to many groups in the women's movement, IWDC does not have any central "leader." A co-ordinating committee prepares the agenda for our bi-weekly meetings, and keeps track of the day to day running of the group of over fifty women. Smaller committees work on trade union outreach, integrating new women, planning educationals, and special events. We attempt to rotate as many tasks as possible, ranging from who chairs the meeting to who writes an article or speaks as a representative of the group.

Throughout our five-year history, IWDC has continued to grow and change. Our members are all feminists; many of us are trade unionists; many are lesbians; and some are all three. Some of us have been active in the women's movement for years. Others are new to political work. Many of us passed through or are still active in what were once called the "finishing schools of organized left political organizations." Others can't tell a Trotskyist from a Leninist from a Maoist.

In the light of our different backgrounds and experiences, it is not surprising that we've had our ups and downs over the years. From the "split" over the participation of men in 1978 to the Communist Party's departure over the issue of Poland this year, the coalition has been the scene of many heated debates. We try to provide support for working through personal and political differences. Educationals, small group discussions, and our "personal politics" days have provided us with a chance to talk about the problems of structure, leadership, personal conflicts, and direction. Social times like potluck suppers, summer picnics, and after-meeting drinks at

the local bar help to break down some of the formality that meetings can create and give us a chance to get to know one another better. While we have obviously not ironed out all our differences (and doubt that we ever will), we have created an atmosphere in which these differences can be aired and discussed without the fear of ripping the group apart.

Despite our efforts to make perfectly clear that we are not just the group that organizes the March 8th activities, at this time of year that seems like all we really do, as most of our members get caught up in the frenzy of planning and organizing for the day. Certainly a major commitment of IWDC is the organizing of the annual women's day celebrations in Toronto.

From the first year's experience of a few women initiating a meeting to this year's coalition of over 90 women, the tactics of organizing for International Women's Day have varied widely. In the early days, IWDC used to call a coalition meeting for early January. At that meeting we would make a very general proposal for the themes and issues of the day. The details of these issues were then discussed in great detail for the next few weeks, until everyone could agree on a leaflet. The character of these meetings — a combination of "left"-ese and craziness — meant that there was usually only a handful of women left to do the actual work of organizing the day. It also meant that we ended up with a shopping list of demands which attempted to incorporate the concerns of every single woman in the coalition.

For the past two years IWDC has changed its tactics. We begin by drafting a more detailed leaflet, highlighting particular themes and issues, and circulating it to a number of women's groups in the city. On the basis of the feedback we have received, we have altered the proposal, and the revised leaflet has then been presented to the January coalition meeting for discussion and change.

This year, we held discussions on the issues of Poland, nuclear disarmament, the rise of the Right, and the role of men on the march. These are not easy discussions, but by and large they have happened in an atmosphere of openness and co-operation. More than any other year, it feels like we are learning how to work in a coalition — how to argue our points of view and how to accept group decisions. The coalition has decided to focus on women's right to a job, women's right to choose, and women's right to independence. These three issues cover many of the areas in which we have been fighting and give us a sense of how interconnected all our struggles are.

Many women have felt that the time to hash out all our differences is not at these organizing meetings. Rather, these political discussions need to happen in the women's movement throughout the year. Thus, the coalition meetings have proceeded with the work that needs doing in organizing IWD celebrations. Most of the women who attended the first meeting are still turning out each Wednesday, working on the events, outreach, and publicity committees to plan for this year's celebrations.

On Saturday, March 6th there will be a rally, demonstration, fair and women-only dance. The rally will begin at 11 am sharp, inside City Hall. From there, we will march to Harbord Collegiate for the fair. Last year, over 5000 people marched on the demonstration and over 75 groups participated in the fair. We expect this year to be an even more powerful show of our strength.

Our work in the women's movement is challenging indeed. We feel excited about our work and about the level of unity and co-operation that has developed in the women's movement in the past five years. We hope that this year's International Women's Day celebrations will demonstrate our belief that the women's movement is alive and well and here to stay!

If you are a socialist feminist in Toronto and are interested in a friendly, hard-working group, why not look up IWDC? We can be reached at P.O. Box 70, Station F, Toronto, M4Y 2L4; or by calling Carolyn at 789-4541 or Nancy at 979-2319.

Nancy Adamson and Kathy Arnup are both members of IWDC, Toronto, and wrote this article to attempt to distinguish the Committee from the Day.



DIRECTOR

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Responsible Physicians?

by Dorothy Rosenberg

The Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) conference on the Medical Consequences of Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear War was held in Toronto last November. Unfortunately, not a single woman participated either as a panelist or in the chair. When pressed about it four weeks earlier, conference organizer Dr. Frank Sommers replied, "I invited Helen Caldicott but she was busy. Now the program is fixed."

His assumption was of course that Dr. Caldicott is the only woman in the world qualified to speak at such a conference, which included a whole range of subjects, medical, social, political, and military.

Voice of Women was founded 21 years ago because women felt the need to act on these concerns. In the past few years, we have seen a notable revival in peace and disarmament activities, most strikingly in the recent huge demonstrations in Europe as well as a clear commitment from many in the religious, scientific, medical and academic communities. In North America, as well as in Europe, a great many of these activists are women. Among them are Sister Rosalie Bertell, Dr. Ursula Franklin, Dr. Judith Lipton, Dr. Katherine Kahn, Dr. Patricia Lindorp, Dr. Berit Ås, political scientists Betty Lall, Jane Sharp, Randall Forsberg, Alva Myrdal, Mary Kaldor, and economists Emma Rothchild, Ann Gertler.

Et cetera.

The patriarchal conception and execution of the conference itself was evident in its top-down control. The one woman physician on the PSR executive does not feel that this is a problem; she in fact does the books and internal co-ordination for the organization.

The male dominance of the conference was evident as each chairman and speaker appeared on the stage. But the impact was reinforced during the panels following each of the sessions when all seven men were lined up together.

Ironically, during the afternoon session, several speakers referred to women in a variety of ways — the signing of the Partial Test Ban Treaty in 1963 was due largely to the tremendous pressure exerted by women in their participation in the Baby Tooth Campaign where women sent their children's first teeth to laboratories to be tested for Strontium 90; the 1950's nuclear weapons testing in the atmosphere, with its radioactive fallout and contamination, aroused the fear and subsequent activism of women all over the world; another speaker suggested that there was a need for the disarmament movement to take off with the same kind of effort and energy as the women's and the environmental

movements. Dr. Sommers himself referred to the sexual symbols of the macho nature of the men who run the arms race — their shiny armaments and phallic-shaped missiles.

At one point, I went to the open microphone, referred to the above comments, mentioned the Women's Pentagon Action in the US, where one of the slogans was "Take the toys away from the boys," and asked if anyone had noticed that 50% of the population is women; and where were the women speakers at this conference?

There was immediate applause from the audience and a nodding of heads in agreement from the panel. I then said that this was not the first such conference I'd attended: it seemed to be a common error in omission and if they included feminists on the planning committee the blunders would not occur again. I invited them to consult with women in the peace movement who could suggest qualified women in the various disciplines.

Upon my return to my seat, Dr. Sommers turned to me and whispered, "That was a low blow."

At the reception afterwards, many women, and men, came over to express how welcome my comments were. They were feeling the same pressure, but didn't know how to handle it. I remarked that a few years ago, I would have been too shy to do it but after years of educated frustration at conferences, I'd overcome my reticence.

Shortly afterwards, I was informed that I was not welcome at the private dinner which was to follow. Not only had I spoken out, but I was to be punished for it. (Shoot the messenger.)

The denial to the dinner was much more than a personal revenge. It was harmful to the peace movement in Canada. As part of the communication movement in this country, the lost opportunity to meet with the speakers (the main reason for my being there) meant that these groups were denied the opportunity to plug those speakers into our network on a personal referral.

So I had dinner that night with three concerned male physicians who were appalled at my story, who were most supportive and who helped to pass strong resolutions the next day concerning feminist participation in the future PSR policy.

Then at the Voice of Women national committee meeting, also the next day, a list of women speakers was compiled by those present. Your help is needed in expanding it. Please send names to: Terry Padgham, Voice of Women, 13806 101 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta.

Women, obviously, must speak out at these conferences to ensure that our voices and points of view are expressed. But we should be prepared with a list of possible speakers, in case they say: "We asked Helen Caldicott, but she was busy."

Dorothy Rosenberg is a Montreal educator and film consultant who is active in the women's and peace movements.

Camp Grounds Not Battle Grounds

by Kay Macpherson

Five hundred women met in Amsterdam late last November to exchange information and plan action and strategy for opposing nuclear weapons in Europe. Huge demonstrations were taking place in many countries and most of these women had taken part the previous evening in The Hague in a torchlight march of 10,000 women, ending in speeches and singing in front of the legislative buildings.

"If conflict can be solved peacefully, then it can be positive and constructive," said Yvonne Sée, veteran French peace woman and long active in the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, in a workshop at the Amsterdam conference discussing international treaties and the laws governing the conduct of war.

We had heard from Captain Stelling of the Dutch Royal Air Force, who had made an exhaustive study of all the laws relating to weapons which cause "cruel and unnecessary suffering," the protection of civilians in war and how international treaties are trying to control the inhumanities of warfare, and who had concluded that the use of nuclear weapons was a war crime and violated all the laws of war. He was now actively campaigning for his country and for NATO to renounce nuclear weapons: the laws are in place, many nations already subscribe to their provisions; it only remains for public pressure to require that the laws be implemented and kept.

As well as women from NATO countries, there were women in Amsterdam from the Warsaw Pact countries: the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Their presence gave an added dimension to the discussions, and women often discovered for the first time that, in spite of differences, the major concern of women everywhere is that a way be found to end the threat of war and nuclear destruction.

Much of the work of the conference was done in nine workshops, where a small number of women could get to know each other and work on their chosen topic. These included examining the policies and strategies of the nuclear powers, the progress towards disarmament, history and strategy of the education, media action and conversion of industry to peace time production. All aimed to come up with proposals for action.

At the first day's meeting we heard from two British women who had come from Greenham Common in Berkshire, where since the summer a group of women have been camping in front of the air base where cruise missiles will be situated. Their action started with a march from the Cardiff nuclear station in Wales, across England to Greenham Common in Berkshire. Women joined in, and came to meetings when they arrived at the base. The meetings turned in-

to a camp, with tents and trailers of the supporters, and the women have been there ever since. The press, which had initially ignored the march and camp, gradually woke up and started to take notice. Support came from all over, and now plans are being made for every one of the 51 air force bases planned for missiles to have protest camps. The conference women in Amsterdam were inspired by this example of grass roots support for women's action and over \$500 went to the women at Greenham Common.

This year, International Women's Day is to be the focus of thousands of European women in their determination to make their voices heard in the vital talks on disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war. In North America and round the world it is important that women take on this responsibility. Without our action, there may not be another chance.

Kay Macpherson is a Toronto activist, long involved in the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, in Voice of Women, and the world-wide fight for peace.

Speakers List

General

Ursula Franklin
Sister Rosalie Bertell
Judith Lipton MD, psychiatry
Helen Caldicott MD, PSR, Boston
Patricia Lindorp, Medical College, London, England
Katherine Kahn MD, PSR, Boston
Berit Ås, psychologist, Mt. St. Vincent

Political Scientists and Economists

Betty Lall, Cornell
Jane Sharp, Harvard University
Ruth Leger Sivard
Randall Forsberg
Mary Kaldor
Emma Rothchild

Peace and Political Education

Ann Gertler, economist
Seksuto Thurlow, social worker, Toronto
Kay Macpherson, former president of VOW, NAC
Nancy Pocock, VOW, Ploughshares, Quakers, specialist in southeast Asia

Marion Kerans, social worker
Shelly Douglas, Ground Zero
Muriel Duckworth, VOW, Halifax
Terry Padgham, geologist
Dorothy Rosenberg, Montreal
Susan Holtz, Soft Energy Paths and Bombs
Donna Smyth, Acadia Univ., VOW
Gillian Thomas, uranium mining
Alva Myrdal, economics, political scientist
Elizabeth May, lawyer
Mary O'Brien, Feminist Party of Canada
Kathleen Wallace, anthropology
Dorothy Thompson, England
Pauline Jewitt, M.P.
Inga Thorson, UN ambassador

Clergy

Lois Wilson, Moderator of the United Church of Canada
Bonnie Green, United Church minister, Toronto

(Addresses can be obtained from VOW in Edmonton)

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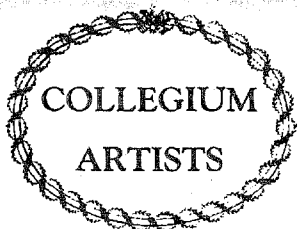
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International Women's Day, 1982

TORONTO — Since March 1978, when INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY came alive in Toronto, thousands of women and men have demonstrated and celebrated every year on the Saturday closest to March 8th. This year, the March 8th Coalition will once again sponsor numerous activities on that day — March 6th. Our activities will coincide with those of thousands of women and men across the country, and with tens of thousands of people around the world.

ACTIVITIES OF THE DAY

- 11 am: RALLY in the City Hall Rotunda
12 noon: MARCH from City Hall to Harbord Collegiate
1:30 pm: WOMEN'S FAIR at Harbord Collegiate (including workshops, displays and information booths, films, music, poetry, food, etc.)

Free daycare will be provided during these events. (Pre-registration is requested.)

ISSUES OF THE DAY

Women's right to a job — In these hard economic times, women are often the first to be laid off or to be denied a job. We're fighting for safe jobs at decent wages, for the right to unionize and the right to strike, and to abolish female job ghettos.

Women's right to choose — The quality of our lives depends on our right to make choices about how we live our lives. Women must have the right to choose whether or not to have children. When we choose to have children, we need maternity leave, daycare, and decent housing; when we choose not to, we need birth control and abortion. We also want the freedom to determine our own sexuality.

Women's right to independence — We want to be secure and independent. We thus need economic security, especially those of us who are single mothers or are over 65. We

also demand the right to live free of physical coercion. In our country, one in ten women is a victim of domestic violence: we want to end all violence against women. Sexism in the media and violence against women in pornography are less direct but equally pervasive attacks on our dignity and independence.

International Women's Day is organized by the March 8th Coalition, a broadly based coalition of feminist, trade union, immigrant women's and lesbian groups.

Battered Women

OTTAWA — The President of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW), Lucie Pépin, presented a brief in January on battered women, with proposals for federal action to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs presently holding hearings on family violence.

MOVEMENT COMMENT

Who's Responsible for Mary Hemlow?

Dear Mary Hemlow:

What's the story behind the new Minister Responsible for the Status of Women? Why does he call himself *Judy*? What is he, some kind of sissy?

Women Against Cosmetics

Dear WAC:

Oh dear, I knew there'd be confusion. Prepare yourself — the new Minister Responsible is a woman. Her name is Judy Erola and I'm here to tell you she's no sissy. Don't ask me how it all happened. Maybe they ran right out of men or maybe just as they were wondering who to appoint Judy walked by to go to the bathroom. You know who *they* are don't you.

Accidentally yours,
Mary Hemlow

Dear Mary Hemlow:

Please tell us all about the constitution.

Women Against Sexual Orientation

Dear WASO:

Okay. First they forgot women when they wrote the whole thing up, then when women yelled they put women in, then when we weren't looking they took women out, then there was more yelling — Erola (a woman) really yelled — and the Feds said they wanted us but the Premiers didn't and the Premiers said O my goodness no *they* wanted us but the Feds didn't. Then they put women back in again and gave the whole thing to Her Majesty the Queen. The Queen and her assistant, Ms Thatcher, decided the whole thing. Her Majesty, a woman, is on our side. Isn't that nice?

Yours in the rights sense,
Mary Hemlow

Dear Ms Hemlow:

Why is everyone in the women's movement so interested in pensions? All of a sudden, everyone's talking about *pensions*.

Women For A Warmer Climate

Dear WFWC:

Well, obviously, because we're getting *old*. Don't you remember us? We're the same folks who brought you all that talk about *youth* programs, a better deal for *young* women, abortion, childcare and more education programs. Doesn't time just *fly* by?

Geriatrically yours,
Mary Hemlow

Dear Mary Hemlow:

Do you think there should be a woman in the Supreme Court of Canada? Why? Who do you think it should be?

Battered Old Feminist Support Services

Dear BOFSS:

- 1) Yes.
- 2) Because women would look so nice in those cute outfits the judges wear and because the Supreme Court building is so nice. It's very serious looking and there's a great big park behind it and in the summer they have beautiful petunias in front. I hear the pay is good too.
- 3) Me.

Yours hopefully,
Mary Hemlow

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Ms. Pépin said: "The Canadian public has remained largely unaware of the magnitude of this problem. Efforts such as the investigation of this Committee bring the issue out into the open. It forces government and the public to confront the issue and seek effective solutions to such cruel and destructive abuse."

The brief was prepared for the CACSW by Debra Lewis of Vancouver. Ms. Lewis, who has a long history of work in the women's movement and is an expert on violence directed at women, works at the Vancouver Battered Women's Support Services, of which she is a founding member. Author of numerous studies on family violence, she also co-authored, with Lorenne Clark, the highly acclaimed book *Rape: The Price of Coercive Sexuality*, published in 1977.

Ms. Pépin said: "To improve the status of Canadian women is to improve the condition of our society as a whole. When women do not receive just treatment, all of society suffers and is diminished. Women battering is a case in point."

Quoting the brief, Ms. Pépin said that "the federal government has a responsibility to take a leadership role in formulating the kinds of advancements necessary to respond to what is, quite clearly, a country-wide problem of vast proportions."

CACSW Appointments

OTTAWA — The Federal Minister Responsible for the Status of women, Judy Erola, has announced the appointment of seven new members to the Canadian Advisory Council of the Status of Women and two Vice-Presidents for the Eastern and Western regional CACSW offices.

The Vice-Presidents are *Eileen Hendry*, Vice-President for the new CACSW Vancouver Office, who has developed women's career and financial education at the University of British Columbia and is highly influential in the Vancouver women's movement, founding the Vancouver Women's Network as one of her many accomplishments, and *Monique Jérôme Forget*, Montreal Vice-President and former Vice-President of La Fédération des Femmes du Québec, a well-known health services professional who has established such women's facilities as La Clinique des Femmes and a rape crisis centre.

The members are *Lynne MacFarlane* of Victoria, British Columbia, a stock-broker and lecturer in women's financial management at the University of Victoria and Camosun College; *Donna Tink*, a farmer and businesswoman in Grande Prairie, Alberta and a founder of two Alberta

women's organizations, one being the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee; *Patricia Cooper*, a former broadcaster from Calgary, Alberta, involved in women's affairs and at present First Vice-President of the Calgary YWCA; *Lynne Hammersmith*, a teacher from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, active in such women's community organizations as the Professional and Business Women's Group and the Saskatoon Teachers' Association; *Lucille Huot*, a Winnipeg, Manitoba entrepreneur and community worker who was a candidate for the 1980 "Woman of the Year" government and political category; *Irene Stayshyn*, a senior secretary with Dofasco Inc. in Hamilton, Ontario, and former Vice-Chairperson of the Hamilton Status of Women; and *Nicole Arbour* of New Richmond, Québec, a former teacher and small business owner who participates widely in women's issues and community affairs in the Gaspé region.

Women in Focus

Women in Focus, an arts and media centre in Vancouver, has now published its 1982 Catalogue of videotapes and films it distributes across Canada and internationally. Most of the 75 productions included

are by Canadian women artists, but Women in Focus has a growing collection of international works. (The Catalogue is available for \$2 from: Vancouver Women in Focus Society, Ste. 204, 456 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1R3; tel. (604) 872-2250.)

Women in Focus also organizes, along with women in the community, a great many events — art exhibits, video and film screenings, coffee houses, musical events and poetry readings. Women who are interested in getting on the Women in Focus mailing list (\$5 donation) or in contributing financially to help the centre survive may contact the address above.

Calendar

'OUTSIDE BROADSIDE':

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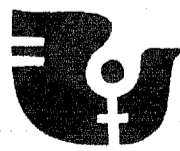
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Matriarchal City: Out o

by Judith Quinlan

History is not shaped by the slow tidal forces of progress, or dialectic materialism, or the mindless masses. These are the things that shape and affect our everyday lives at any point in history. Human culture is the sum total of human relationships, and history is merely a description of some part of what has happened before the present. No matter how intricate or far-reaching our investigations, our view of history is always incomplete.

There is nothing inevitable about the present — history did not 'cause' the present, although the present has risen step by step out of the past. There is nothing about either the present or the past that makes any particular future inevitable. All we can say for certain about the march of human culture is that at any one time, the reality we choose to admit affects the probability of a number of possible futures.

In other words, the present reality works in two temporal directions — into the past by focussing history according to the prevailing point of view (selectively drawing out some threads, ignoring others), and into the future by either limiting or expanding the number of perceivable possibilities.

A common feature of all patriarchal points of view is that they try to 'order' the events of history, attempting to explain (justify) the present reality through events they choose to observe in the past. Each mistakes the tiny ripples of its own present real-

The evolution of human culture can be roughly divided into three stages, with a short sub-stage in the second. The first stage is the age of savagery. This is the time of the ape-man, ape-woman, in an ape-eat-ape world. Or, rather, the stage when the primary unit of human interaction was the mother/child bond.² This bond is a biological inevitability, and so cannot strictly be included within the concept of culture, if we define culture as relationships between people that are not biologically determined. But that is an artificial definition of culture in any case. 'Man' did not rise above this biological bond. Human culture evolved directly out of this biological bond, and so it takes its rightful place at the base of cultural evolution.

The next stage was the tribal stage — the matriarchal kin-group. It was not inevitable that tribal culture was matriarchal, but considering that it arose out of the existing biological bond between mother and child, the probability that it would be matriarchal was high. And in fact, on this planet, that's exactly what happened. There is no evidence, and logic cries against it, that patriarchal tribes ever existed (except when a tribal culture met an aggressively patriarchal city-based culture, as happened in the Americas). From now on, when I speak of tribal culture, I am speaking of matriarchal tribes.

The last stage of human history is the stage of patriarchal civilization — the father-run city states. Theories abound as to the 'reasons' for the patriarchal takeover, and I will not dwell on them here. Basically they boil down to three possibilities: 1) that the nature of a city-based culture carried within itself the seed of the patriarchy (the dominant patriarchal view of historical inevitability); 2) that this seed was carried forward from the earlier stage of savagery (the reversion theories); or 3) that it arose separately out of an isolated set of special circumstances and 'blew in' at the time of the emerging matriarchal civilizations (the pure chance point of view).

Given the complexities of history, I'm not sure we can say which of these possibilities is true. In any case, the mechanisms of the patriarchal takeover have been described elsewhere.³ What I hope to argue in this article is that the first possibility — the inevitability of the patriarchal city-state — is false.

What hasn't been explored by feminists is the second sub-stage; the evolution of the matriarchal city within the tribal society. This is where we were going when the emerging (invading) patriarchy cut off the thread of matriarchal history. And if we are to rebuild a matriarchal future, the question of how cities weave into a basically tribal structure is one we cannot afford to ignore.

It would first be useful to describe what I mean by tribal culture. Obviously any description that lifts some threads out of the web of matriarchal civilization will lose some integrity in translation. I have chosen six factors for comparison with the patriar-

ity for the great currents of change.

There is no order to human history except for the order of time — one thing demonstrably happened after another. Each discrete event may have been a direct result of a preceding one, a synthesis of many preceding ones, or it may be an event that happened all on its own.

When we try to impose an order on the complex web of history, we limit our vision to only a few strands, and limit our future correspondingly. History, because it is a human matter, is essentially chaotic and non-linear.

This is not to say that there is no cause and effect relationship at all between historical events. But as we limit our perception of causes, then we also limit the effects. Nobody would seriously suggest that the complexities of physical evolution could be traced, for example, entirely to the reactions of the chemical, manganese. Surely it is equally absurd to boil down the evolution of culture to factors like the relationship with the means of production, or the level of scientific invention, or population size.

The patriarchal reality is severely limited by its perception of its own history. Within it, women are either completely invisible, or strangely incomprehensible.⁴ One would wonder, from reading the history books, whether we were there at all. This severe dislocation of the past and the present has made its own future impossible — there are no more patriarchal utopias.

chal city-state, but all these taken together are far from a full description of our rich matriarchal heritage.

1. *Home Rule.*⁴ Within a matriarchal culture, decisions were made and history was made according to the primacy of nurturance — nurturance of the body and the soul. This is the realm of social concern that anthropologists have relegated to the 'women's huts' and then systematically ignored. It is basically the rule of those things that emerge out of the expansion of the mother/child bond — the common need for food, shelter, protection of life, stimulation of creative and intellectual hungers, etc. It is the primacy of the requirements of life.

Non-tribal, patriarchal culture is characterized by the primacy of the concerns of the 'men's huts.' This is the dominance of concerns of personal identity-status, competition, power, wealth — at the expense of nurturance. It introduces a false dichotomy between the individual and the group. In tribal society the individual is neither dominated by the group (patriarchal socialism) nor pitted against the group (capitalism), but is fully developed within the tribal context. The rule of the men's huts, with its concern with identity, is the rule of the son over the mother — the development of the mass oedipal complex.

2. *Chaotic/Cyclical World View.* Aha. You knew I'd come back to this one. In a tribal world, history is not made, it emerges. There is a recognition that what is, is not what *must* be, and that what has been, is not what *must* have been. This is why there is little in the way of written (linear) matriarchal history. Time, for our foremothers, was much more relative than even the new physics has intuited in recent years.⁵ This view of time presupposes an organic, ecological relationship with the present — a view of reality that is fluid, expandable and cyclical. It allows for the greatest possible range of future possibilities.

Patriarchal science and philosophy demand a cause and effect relationship between events, and a linear time scale. They cannot allow the dominance of the natural cycles of birth, death and regeneration that are part of the tribal world-view.

3. *A Natural Spiritual Perspective.* The spiritual view of tribal cultures saw humanity as part of the environment we found ourselves in. It didn't insist on a separation between subjective and objective reality. It credited the viability of psychic (pertaining to the soul) links between all natural things. It saw human life as an integral part of the fabric of the earth and cosmos, and therefore demanded a much more responsible way of acting towards our environment. This spiritual view has survived in the matriarchal religion of witchcraft, and in the traditions of cultures that are less stridently patriarchal than that of the dominant white west.



With the splitting of the natural life/death cycle, the patriarchal city-state developed an essentially necrophilic spiritual view. Death became both feared and revered. This has been most eloquently described by Mary Daly.⁶

4. *Communal Ownership and Production.* Patriarchal socialism has gleaned its essential communism from our matriarchal heritage. Its basically ordered and linear view of history has translated this as dictatorship of the proletariat, but the traditional wisdom of women has kept true communism alive as a disconnected ideal within the constraints of material dialectics. For most of human history, private ownership was a conceptual impossibility. The tribe, being merely an extension of the biological mother/child bond, was a unit of group production and distribution. Times of plenty were times of plenty for all, and times of scarcity were times of scarcity for all. In lean times goods were distributed more frugally, with priority being given where individual or tribal need was greatest. (This meant that children, pregnant and nursing women, the old, etc., were given first shares.) Although popular patriarchal mythology supposes that hunters were given priority, it is clear that hunting was never more than a supplement to the basic tribal diet. Nomadic tribes were gatherers, and agrarian tribes were farmers. The tools that transformed human culture were women's tools — the carrying bag and the plough.⁷

an Ape-Eat-Ape World

nelled; thus civilization came full circle and returned to a new age of savagery.

6. *Dominance of Femininity.* This requires a little more explanation than the others. The yin-yang, active-passive, logical-intuitive, right-left, light-dark, hard-soft, male-female split that is essential to all patriarchal realities (*vive la différence*) is not really a difference at all. In fact, the history of the patriarchy has been a history of gradual masculinization of reality as a whole. The problem, for women, with patriarchy isn't merely a dominance of the 'male' principle. At certain times, in certain situations, it is to the advantage of the patriarchy to allow the 'female' principle to dominate. Both of these modes — male and female — are masculine, patriarchal modes. The blonde bombshell is no more feminine than the stomping bulldyke; they are both patriarchal inventions of the theme of 'woman.' All of the roles made available to women are masculinized roles.

In tribal culture femininity was not role-dependent. The complex nature of human life and the world we live in was repressed conceptually and actually in the feminine experience. This is often difficult for our split minds to grasp. There was no question of male and female as separate realities, to be either pitted against each other or blended into a humanitarian androgyny. Nature was sexless. And culture — including men — was feminine. It was the consciousness of mothers that initiated, maintained and monitored human culture. The cultural experience of the man was that of the son. The female was simultaneously daughter and mother, and was therefore able to develop a sense of generation — of history. Women invented time, and it is time (not the opposable thumb) that made human culture possible, that lifted us out of the age of savagery. Women were at the core of the nurturing bond on which human culture was built, and women were the 'actors and doers' in human culture.

It is this integration of humanity that is characteristic of the true feminine mode, as the dislocation of humanity is characteristic of the masculinized mode.

Within the matriarchal world, cities gradually evolved to serve a number of functions.

They were centres of intratribal exchange. The tribe can be defined as that group of people among whom one identifies the self — a social kinship group. As the tribes grew to fairly massive proportions, it became more difficult to maintain the system of empathy and taboos that guaranteed a peaceful interchange within the tribe. One does not kill a creature that one can identify as an equivalent of the self — to insure against aggression within the tribe it was necessary to have a fairly high level of communication. Materially, the tribe was a discrete unit of production and distribution, which was also threatened by growth. The city became a place where these tribal needs could be concentrated, a sort of nerve centre for a much larger area. Within the intratribal city very few people actually lived their entire lives. They moved in and out of it according to their needs. In this model the city serves as a sort of free university and open marketplace.

The second function of the tribal city was intertribal exchange. As tribes grew and expanded — usually to a natural limit such as a sea or mountain barrier — they eventually met up with neighbouring tribes. This opened up new possibilities for the exchange of goods and information, but also new dangers of aggression, as neighbouring tribes did not necessarily come under the tribal taboos against aggression. The city, in this case, provided a safe meeting ground at the interface of tribal territories, so that trade could be carried on peacefully. Aggression was channelled into such things as games and shared festivals. In this model, the city serves as a pressure valve between tribes and a restricted marketplace.

The third function, of both intertribal and intratribal cities, was that of storage and retrieval of information — social equivalent of the computer. As scientific knowledge and practical skills grew, as the diversity of available goods grew, as the traditions and history of a tribe grew, the city became the logical place for such things as guildhouses, libraries and temples.

None of these civic functions contain *per se* the seeds of a patriarchal city-state. In none of the matriarchal cities was there an independent governmental function. The tribal city was perfectly compatible

with the matriarchal reality, and in fact served to strengthen, not weaken, the tribal base.

Patriarchy is a form of culture that finds its foothold in the city-state, rather than the tribal condition, and so the functions of the patriarchal city were essentially opposite from those of the tribal city.

They were, first of all, centres of 'government.' They were centres of control over the surrounding agrarian or gathering cultures. In this way they became centres of conquest over the matriarchal tribes, since the patriarchal reality is incompatible with tribal culture. The city provided the means of policing the people.

They were centres for trade and commerce with neighbouring tribes. In a culture based on private property, exchange is the same thing as plunder, and from the patriarchal city-state campaigns of territorial conquest were launched.

They were centres for the hoarding of goods and information. This was dictated by the patriarchal need for power and control — wealth and information became both the prize and the weapon of a competitive society. There resulted a contraction, rather than an expansion, of the available pool of knowledge and wealth, the continuation of which we are still experiencing.

The culture that formed out of the narrow base of the patriarchal city-state was basically an inversion of the previous matriarchal tribal culture. As a historical configuration it is inherently unstable. Picture the matriarchal city as the point of a pyramid that rests securely on its tribal base. The city can only grow as the base grows, so the pyramid can become larger but remains stable. The patriarchy, on the other hand, can be pictured as an inverted pyramid, balancing, tip to tip, on the matriarchal past. Its outward expansion (growth) is limited by its fragile centre of gravity. Its link with the history before it is minimal — a mere point of recognition. It is forced to expand in a linear direction, like the Tower of Babel; patriarchal possibilities become thinner as time progresses. Fascism is the penultimate outcome of the patriarchal city-state, and its only ultimate end is destruction or stasis. The loss of a link with our tribal past has forced patriarchal society into an ever-narrowing worldview, with a resultant limitation of future possibilities. At this point the patriarchy can either collapse under the weight of its own instability or reach its zenith in the annihilation of humanity.

As women, as the mothers of human culture, we can no longer afford to sit back and wait for the tower of Patriarchal Babble to topple itself. It has already reached the point where annihilation is an "accepted" future possibility. (Futurologists don't debate *whether* this will happen. They argue about how it will happen and when it will happen.)

We have little to lose if the patriarchy falls — all the elements of our future vision are contained already in the matriarchal base that is still intact. We have only our masculinized perceptions to shed, and we are doing that.

Both these things — rebuilding on the matriarchal tribal base, and consciously feminizing our reality — form the backbone of a blueprint for feminist revolution. Together they can shake the foundations of patriarchy. We are not, as feminists, interested in 'planning' or ordering the future. What we are interested in is changing the present in such a way that future possibilities are constantly expanded. We must reclaim the matriarchal course of human evolution, for ourselves and for our children, because it is the last course we were on before starting the patriarchal plunge towards death.

Footnotes:

- 1 Sinister Wisdom No. 17. "To Be and Be Seen: Metaphysical Misogyny" by Marilyn Frye.
- 2 Evelyn Reed. *Woman's Evolution: From Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family.*
- 3 See bibliography, *Broadside*, Vol. 2, Nos. 1/2 and 3, "Matriarchy: The Way We Were" and "Patriarchy: A Failed Experiment." See also *The Origin* by Kristie Neslen, Venusian Propaganda, San Francisco.
- 4 Anna Perenna, "Towards a Matriarchal Manifesto," in magazine *Politics of Matriarchy*, Matriarchy Study Group, London, England.
- 5 Gary Zukav, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters*, Bantam.
- 6 Mary Daly, *Gyn/Ecology.*
- 7 Elizabeth Fisher, *Woman's Creation.*

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ARTS

Ragtime Is Ragged

by Barbara Halpern Martineau

"The misfortune of woman is not that she is unable to do the work of a man, but that she is wasting her life-force to outdo him, with a tradition of centuries which has left her physically incapable of keeping pace with him..."

Her development, her freedom, her independence, must come from and through herself." — Emma Goldman, *Anarchism and Other Essays*.

If I could only grasp the elusive connection between what is there and what is not there, I would have an analysis of mainstream film to offer to the women's movement. It is the connection between distortion and omission; between images of women glossy and bright, wounded and wonderful, which do and don't speak to my own experience; and the absent images, of women strong, witty, tender, self-sufficient, needy for each other, in our own right; the connection between exploitation and negation, between abuse and murder, pornography and censorship, titillation and silence, that connection, that pause, that space to be filled by a word not yet invented, a word long ago censored, erased from human memory, for which I search in the popcorn-scented dark of weekday matinees where never a whisper of forbidden words emerges from the Dolby sound systems.

Ragtime is the most interesting Hollywood film I've seen in a while, in terms of the ways it's put together, the weave of history and fiction, a central story with long literary antecedents used to reflect and illuminate several strands of history and current affairs, a use of music and actors and editing reminiscent of the old golden days when Hollywood was similarly enriched by early exiles of foreign oppression (Milos Forman, who directed Ragtime, came over at a time when Russian tanks were stemming the tide of the Czech New Wave). A number of people who've seen both Reds and Ragtime have commented that they went to Reds with high expectations and were disappointed by the lack of political sinew, whereas, going to Ragtime expecting light entertainment, a nostalgic period piece in homage to Scott Joplin, they were surprised to find complexity and toughness, a surprising sense of politics and social issues.

Milos Forman, who also directed One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (a film which deserved thorough criticism for its racism and misogyny, particularly in the portrayal of Big Nurse, which instead was rewarded with many Oscars), is nothing if not a humanist, with all the temptations and pitfalls humanism embodies. I expect that long before he came to direct Ragtime, Forman was familiar with the great humanist short story "Michael Kohlhaas," by the nine-

teenth-century German writer Heinrich Kleist, which was the source of E.L. Doctorow's story of Coalhouse Walker Jr. in the novel *Ragtime*. The story, based on an historical event of the sixteenth century, is about a man seeking retribution for injustice. With the complication that the woman who loves this man is killed as a direct result of his obsession and becomes the emotional justification for his subsequent revenge, the story fits perfectly into the rules of romantic narrative which produce best-selling novels and box-office hits. What makes the novel and the film so interesting to me is not this basic story of justice, revenge, and the woman as martyr, but the way that this story is presented as linked to other stories of other people, to newsreels and newspapers and movies and popular mythology. Doctorow's novel does this by weaving a number of narrative threads into a large social fabric — the story of Coalhouse Walker is one thread, not a dominant one. Forman's film follows the more conventional narrative pattern of Hollywood by focussing on Coalhouse Walker, but other characters and events are used to create a distancing, formal, stand-back-and-think-about-what's-going-on effect, recalling Brecht's work in theatre. Forman uses visual cues to relate his film to contemporary issues: for example, when Coalhouse and his men have occupied the Morgan museum and mined it, using the priceless storehouse of art as a hostage against their demands for justice, the men are carefully shrouded in hoods which suggest those worn by contemporary revolutionaries who resort to kidnapping and hijacking for causes often similar to Coalhouse Walker's.

I have little patience with the complaint that Forman left out so much of Doctorow's novel. Of course he had to choose which elements would cohere in a three-hour film — film can't be read for days and nights as books can; films work on dramatic principles of timing, pacing, the structure of audience involvement. It's what he left out that bothers me, the political sinew of the novel, the connections, the pauses, the thought-filled intervals which placed Coalhouse Walker's story in the context of Emma Goldman's crusade for women's rights, worker's rights, anarchism, and personal freedom for everyone. In the absence of such connections, the female figures of Forman's film are martyred by unnamed and hence invisible forces, flat figures in a world where patriarchy reigns imperceptibly. Sarah, the young black woman who agrees to marry Coalhouse and who is killed before she can, has a role unusual for a black woman in Hollywood film, sadly usual for white women — she is a beautiful, innocent, ignorant victim. Evelyn Nesbit is a pawn in a man's game, photographed, exploited, cheated, but unlike her namesake in Doctorow's

novel she is not named as such.

It is the act of naming, performed in the novel by the character called Emma Goldman, which gives to Doctorow's vision force and compassion and a sense that things could be different than they are. Only one character in Forman's film conveys anything like that sense: unexpectedly in comparison with the novel, it is Mother who quietly but implacably insists that alternatives be attempted; that she and Father take Sarah in with her newborn child; that she will not surrender that child after Sarah's death to uncaring "authority"; that she will not surrender that child without good reason to anyone at all. She does it in the face of Father, symbol of patriarchal pomposity supreme in the novel, more ridiculous and less overpowering in the film; in the face of the police, Kafkaesque goons who are not at all placed by the film in the context of political upheaval immediately preceding World War I so clearly delineated by the novel.

The nature of the patriarchal order against which Mother so surprisingly, admirably, effectively rebels is not clear in Forman's film — Forman is too much of a patriarch to make that connection. But somewhere between the clarity of Elizabeth McGovern's acting as Mother and the clarity of Forman's direction in terms of what he did understand, moments of truth emerge in which connections can be made, if one chooses, say, between Mother's genteel white woman's stubbornness over the care of a tiny black child and Coalhouse Walker's great black man's rage at the unjust desecration of his shiny Model T Ford. Lacking the analysis and revolutionary fervour of Emma Goldman's character, the film goes nowhere with these connections, but it led me to read Doctorow's novel, and then to reread Emma Goldman's essays and autobiography, and therein lies a treasure trove of connections.

The two women looked at each other. There was silence for some moments. Of course, your man is a pervert, a parasite, a leech, a foul loathsome sybarite, Goldman said. Evelyn laughed. An insane pig, Goldman said, with a twisted shrunken little pig's mentality. Now they were both laughing. Yes, I hate him, Evelyn cried. Goldman grew reflective. But there are correspondences, you see, our lives correspond, our spirits touch each other like notes in harmony, and in the total human fate we are sisters. Do you understand that, Evelyn Nesbit? She stood and touched Nesbit's face. Do you see that, my beautiful girl? — E.L. Doctorow, *Ragtime*.

(Second of a two-part review of *Reds* and *Ragtime*.)



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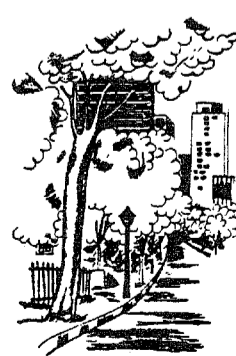
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Monique Mercure: A Dangerous Imagination

Monique Mercure is playing author Laure Conan in the English version of Jovette Marchessault's *The Saga of Wet Hens* at the Tarragon Theatre in Toronto until March 20. Monique played a different character, Gabrielle Roy, in the original French version in Montreal last spring.

Both English and French versions are directed by Michelle Rossignol, Monique's friend and colleague for 20 years (see February issue of *Broadside* for interviews with Michelle and Jovette Marchessault, the author of *The Saga*).

Interview and translation by Gay Bell

Gay Bell: I see in the magazine of the Théâtre du nouveau monde that you are a mother of three children. I know several mother/actors who have trouble pursuing their acting. How did you manage?

Monique Mercure: I began late. Ever since I was 4 or 5 years old I wanted to be an actress, but I didn't know how to do it.

I had an aunt who played the cello. Aunt Anita sometimes lived at my mother's so there was a magnificent instrument in the house and beautiful sounds fascinated me. I was unsure whether I wanted to get into music or theatre. When I was young, there was no place to learn acting. There were only schools of diction, but for me learning poems and how to recite them was not the same as going on stage and acting. So I played the cello between the ages of 11 and 18.

I started amateur theatre when I was 15. It was at a boys' school where normally the boys played girls' roles; but in this school the curé was enlightened and he said, "Well, certainly it would make more sense to have girls act the girls' parts." So I acted in that troupe for several years while I continued my music studies.

I married a composer and we used to do music together. I put my acting aside because, given that my husband was a composer, I couldn't have a parallel career. I had to be the one to help my husband develop his career, which was much more important than mine. I was the muse. And I was the one to make the meals, copy his music, make the coffee. So I brought up the kids and we left for Paris. My sister came along to help me with the children — my daughter was 5 and the boys, twins, were 3 — so that I could take some acting courses in Paris. I went to the Jacques LeCocq School and the school of the Théâtre national populaire.

When we returned from Paris my husband and I separated and I decided that I was going to make a career of acting. My first engagement was in a Strindberg play. I had to have maids and babysitters for the children and they suffered from my not being there. They finally got over it, but I felt a little guilty. Guys never feel guilty for having their own careers when they leave the kids with a maid or with their wives, but I did. I got over it too, but it was an important point. I never really succeeded in theatre until the children were independent. By 14 or 15 years of age they don't need sitters; they can get their own meals and take care of themselves.

That's why I started to do a little theatre when I was 30; but my career really started at 40. So it's really quite a young career.

G: Do you think there is a coincidence in your development as an actress and the development of the feminist movement?

M: At the beginning, no. When I began to do theatre I didn't even know there was a feminist movement. I had never read any

feminist writing. I had heard talk of suffragettes, but that was it. And it was only about fifteen years ago.

G: Did the development of your own art coincide with the cultural explosion in Québec?

M: It certainly did. I began to be, not exactly militant, but really active in theatre starting with the first Tremblay play that I worked on. That's when I first rediscovered theatre because the play resonated in my own experiences.

Before that, I didn't think about having Québécoise roots. I thought of myself as a person of the world, not attached to the land of Québec as I now feel attached.

This was in 1971. Michelle Rossignol and I were in *Les belles soeurs* and it was an extraordinary time for us fifteen women — a solidarity, a pleasure and work that went really deep. It's a play with an epic side to it where you step out of your character and address the audience. It's one of my most beautiful memories.

Before that, I had done Strindberg, Tennessee Williams, Brecht...

G: Racine?

M: No, I am not a 'classical' actress in the sense that I have never done the great plays of Racine or Molière.

However, gradually my career is moving towards the great classical roles. Next fall, I will play Agrippine in Racine's *Britannicus*, directed by André Brassard.

It's interesting because I am to some extent self-taught. I never went to a theatre school such as the Ecole nationale where Michelle teaches. I took classes here and there in actors' studios where you choose a scene and follow the Strasberg and Stanislavski exercises. And I studied in English.

G: Do you work in English by economic necessity?

M: No, never that. Playing in another language is enriching. Also the second language removes inhibitions as if it were a kind of screen or filter.

G: Have you ever played a male role?

M: Yes. I played Humphrey Bogart in a late night revue. In one of the scenes I played him with the raincoat and the hat.



'Wet Hens' cast and crew: (from top left) Monique Mercure, Louise Lemieux, Jennifer Phipps, Meredith Caron, Chappelle Jaffe, Michelle Rossignol and Diane D'Aquila.

G: What gave me that idea was that I read you had played in *The Diary of a Madman* by Gogol, which has a one-man cast.

M: It was an adaptation. I played Daria, the maid of Poprischin, who told the story of her master and how he was crazy, how he spoke to dogs and then she herself took on the madness of her master. By the end, she thought she was the princess of Spain.

It was an interesting switch because she looked normal at the beginning. I was all alone on stage with an unbelievable batch of costumes because I had to play everyone — the young girl Poprischin was in love with, the girl's mother, Poprischin's lodger, as well as Daria.

G: There are several male playwrights in Québec who have made a certain contribution towards the liberation of women. I'm thinking of Tremblay and Michel Garneau. Perhaps there are others?

M: Yes, there is Roland Lepage, who wrote *Les habits rouges*, which is a play about the Patriots of 1837 during the rebellion which took place when the 'red coats' razed Québec villages. Women were very important during this revolt. They encouraged their men and supported them. They fought and defended themselves as well.

In Michel Garneau's *Quatre à quatre* I played the old grandmother, the foremother. It was the first soft role I ever played. Until then I had done hard women, violent women, prostitutes. Rose Ouimet, whom I played in *Les belles soeurs*, is not a prostitute but she is an extremely violent woman.

In *Emilie ne sera plus jamais cueillie par l'anémone* (suggested by the life and poetry of Emily Dickinson), Garneau's new play, I acted with Michelle. Since Garneau wrote it for us and he knows us very well, the text is very close to women's preoccupations. Emilie is a person quite apart, lost, who has a kind of magnificence, but not at all pathological, schizophrenia. In my opinion, Emilie is a person who is moving towards her own equilibrium. It is not black or ugly but rather striking and luminous. She peels off anything that's pointless in her own life to make her way towards her own liberation. She is, however, a person who folds in on herself while the character whom I played, Uranie, lived on the outside.

G: Talking about Jovette Marchessault, you once said, "This incredible woman is discovering a new way of writing!" What do you mean?

M: Jovette's text of *The Saga of Wet Hens* is for me an extraordinary discovery, an amazing surprise. I have never seen, never read, images like that. For me it was an event, in theatre and in writing. Especially in the way that Michelle brought theatrical qualities to a script which at the beginning didn't seem possible to put on stage. But Michelle worked as a dramaturge with Jovette and she worked with Louise Lemieux to design the sets. Even if the images and the writing are magnificent, the play must be theatrical for it to work. Never before have I had the pleasure, the great happiness, of speaking as a woman, with the images which are close to me. Never before have I been able to talk about my mother as I did when I played Little Crow (Gabrielle Roy). It was a reconciliation with my mother — I had never appreciated her or loved her so much until I did that script. It was a great gift which Jovette gave me without even realizing it.

The way she talks about the earth, the sky and our natural surroundings and the relations between the women is very special. For example, in her play the characters have

conflicts but they are not final. We can reconcile these conflicts. It is a play of reconciliation, and of rehabilitation of all the images which have been badly treated by humanity, by male power. All of the 45 times I performed the play as Little Crow I was moved and surprised as if for the first time.

As an actor, I wasn't trying to be Gabrielle Roy. I was playing Little Crow, not a mythical character, but rather a creation of Jovette's. So I didn't have to copy Gabrielle Roy's way of being. I had to invent a new way of occupying space — I was lucky I could jump on the tables, and the bench, dance and swing from the chandelier. And the costumes of Mérédith Caron make us look like birds, and I feel like a bird.

In contrast, when I do a 'small talk' play I have to play the woman in the kitchen or the living-room taking a cup of tea. Then it's obvious that I can't liberate my body.

As for Jovette's words, they are like jewels in our mouths. It's a physical pleasure to say them, a very sensual pleasure.

G: I like Germaine Guèvremont's introduction of you as Laure Conan. She says you're "our first historical old maid."

M: I've read all the novels of Laure Conan. They're touching and they're funny. I can't say I like everything she's written ... she's a bit tearful. The heroines are always in love and it never works out.

G: As in the Hymn to the Lady Masochist?

M: That's funny, eh? It's easy for me to play Laure Conan because I am quite romantic like her. I go for love stories that don't work out and nature ... I am in ecstasy over nature.

When I was a little girl the imagination was called 'the fool of the house.' My 'sin' as a child was dreaming. When my imagination was all alive the nuns would tell me, "Tut, tut. Your imagination is dangerous." Because you could dream. You could, after all, construct theories that would make sense. But only the imagination of women was a sin.

The youthful Laure imagines that she's covered in fur and that she takes the form of a horse. I think she has enough sense of humour not to show she's timid and embarrassed at this meeting of authors where she doesn't feel up to the level of the others.

At the beginning of the play, Miss Félicité Angiers (Laure Conan was her pen name) comes to meet these three successful authors and she carries her past with her. She was snubbed all her life. She had to write letters asking Abbé Casgrain to be the censor and make cuts in her work. She was scared. She wanted to be published but when she wrote novels she was ostracized. So she wrote historical novels and included her little stories anyway.

The more I do this play the more I think she's really embarrassed because she didn't have the courage to cry out, "I will go against the (bookburners') fire!" Instead, she bowed her head, and said "No, I don't want to be burned so I'll do what they want me to do." I think that's why she feels badly, whereas the three other authors still wrote in spite of everything. She did too, but she remembers what she did when she was young and she doesn't excuse herself for it.

G: But she's older than the others, isn't she?

M: Yes, she needs the help of her three sister-writers, the women of her heart. (*Heart is the root-word of courage in French.*)

That's what's nice in the play. When Laure is afraid of whatever is iconoclastic it reassures the women in the audience who feel the same way. It's very clever of Jovette to show she bears no aggression towards those who are believers, that she's respectful towards people's beliefs.

It's beautiful the way Little Crow says, "But why are you shocked? The eucharistic bread is real bread. It's not necrophilia or cannibalism. It's real bread, our bread." And Laure blossoms after that.

G: Did some of the women spectators speak to you after the Montréal performances?

M: Most of the women — many of them old ladies — were really touched by this play. My mother, who is a practising Catholic, thought it magnificent, beautiful, healthy. Now she's really happy I'm playing Laure Conan.

Although I seldom get attached to plays, you can't imagine to what extent I love this play.

Gay Bell is a Toronto playwright, co-author of *Pink Triangle Tears*.

Hens Hatch on Stage

The Saga of the Wet Hens is one of the most exuberant, engaging, and iconoclastic plays I've seen. I recommend the production, which is playing at the Tarragon Theatre until March 20, directed by Michelle Rossignol.

As described in last month's *Broadside*, Jovette Marchessault's play features characters who represent four well-known French-speaking writers in Canada: Laure Conan, "The Ancestress," Germaine Guèvremont, "The Islander," Anne Hébert, "Clond Dancer," and Gabrielle Roy, "Little Crow." You don't have to be familiar with these writers to appreciate Marchessault's message: that, through mutual support and struggle, it is possible for women to "escape History," that is, to

reinterpret from women's point of view history as it has been told by the patriarchy.

None of the four characters is, strictly speaking, the woman whose name she bears. Gabrielle Roy, for example, may not in real life be given to dazzling acrobatics from a bar suspended over a stage, or be nicknamed "Little Crow." Laure Conan probably did not pretend she was a horse and prance around La Malbaie, where she lived confined by the Roman Catholic Church and social convention, as she does on stage. It doesn't matter. What Marchessault is doing is conveying the spirit of these women, outlining the story of their individual struggles to be writers either of poetry or of various kinds of prose, and weaving their stories together to show the bonds that

exist among them, and, by extension, among all women.

The friends with whom I saw this play on opening night, and I think most of the audience, were enchanted and delighted by it, contrary to what you might have read in the *Globe and Mail* or the *Toronto Star*. From the dialogue, which is a tour de force of humour and affection, to the ingenious stage sets and costumes (you'll never see more colourful or beautiful hers), to the superb interpretations of the characters by Diane D'Aquila, Chappelle Jaffe, Monique Mercure, and Jennifer Phipps, this is a play not to miss. "Wet hens" (poules mouillées) may mean "sissies" in "real" life, but not in this saga.

— Jean Wilson

Winsome, Lose Some

by Susan G. Cole

Let's face it. Hollywood has not been very kind to gays. The American film industry has given us a paean to the self-hating faggot (*The Boys in the Band*); an innuendo-bound film about a sergeant who harasses the apple of his eye — the sergeant is ambivalent (*The Sergeant*); scenes of boys getting it on because there's nothing else around (*Midnight Express*); and a violent offering about leather-laden creeps (*Cruising*).

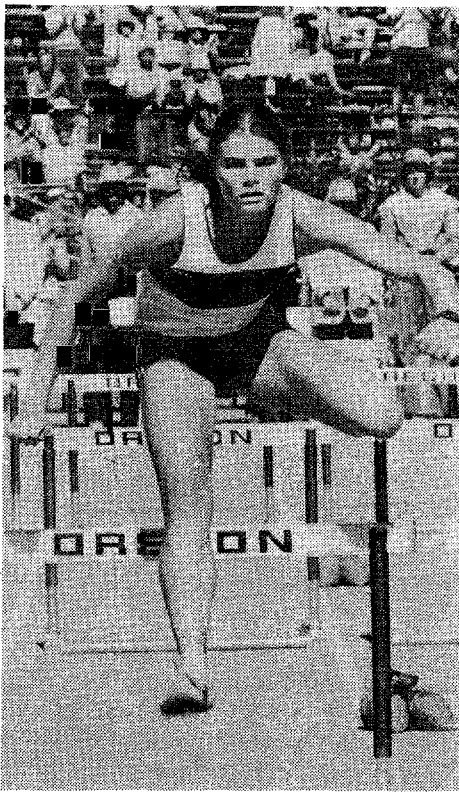
Hollywood has rarely broached Lesbianism for view on the silver screen, and when it has, the results have been horrifying. You can choose between Rachel Rachel, featuring a mild advance at Rachel depicted as the worst, absolutely the worst thing that could possibly happen to her, or *The Killing of Sister George* in which a monstrous virago terrorizes the ultimate femme. Elsewhere, Lesbianism has been handled in the same way as it's approached by girlie magazines — as the titillating idiosyncrasy of bored swingers.

So it is something of a relief to have seen *Personal Best*, a film about two female athletes trying to make the US Olympic team and who develop a r-r-r-relationship. Actually, it's a relationship treated with directness and no condescension. And that is, for the most part, good.

The story traces the conflicts in the liaison between Chris Cahill (played by Mariel Hemingway) a rawly talented hurdler and Tory Skinner (played by Patrice Donnelly) an experienced pentathlete. Tory watches Chris blow a lead in a race. Chris watches Tory win her event. Since the races are filmed in slow motion you get the sense that Chris and Tory are *really* watching.

At a bar the same night, Tory meets Chris, who's too drunk to get back to her own dormitory room. Tory takes her back to hers. There they smoke a joint and giggle. Tory claims that Chris doesn't have the competitive edge it takes to be a winner, and Chris, furious, challenges her to an arm wrestle which is foreplay to the foreplay, that magic moment when Tory kisses her lightly on the mouth.

They become lovers. Chris becomes a pentathlete. Therein lies the conflict. Lovers or competitors: which relationship will win out? We watch as Chris and Tory try to decide. Tory, who is encouraging at the start, appears to have second thoughts



about her support of Chris once Chris's raw talent gets translated into outright achievement. We're never sure though. We're never sure whether it's Tory who's responsible for the fact that Chris incurs a serious injury. Whatever the case, while recuperating, Tory meets Denny (played by Kenny Moore), a water polo player, falls in love and recovers from the knee injury in time to make the Olympic trials.

In fact, neither the love relationship nor the one fostered by the competitive edge seizes the day. The love relationship fades as the two women scrounge for spots on the Olympic team and Chris takes up with the polo player. They both make the team but neither competes where it counts because, you'll recall, the Americans never sent a team to the Olympics in Moscow. A friendship does survive however, and unless one insists that the water polo player is the villain of the piece, and that is hard to do, it makes for a happy ending.

The good news about all this is that the movie is not about the slings and arrows of lesbian relationships or about the victimization and stresses of lesbians in a heterosexual environment. The movie emphasizes the conflict between people who love each other and have the same goals. At no time, and this is a breakthrough, does the movie make a big deal about women loving women. So successfully does *Personal Best* convey the naturalness of women loving each other that there was nary a titter or heckle from the very mixed audience during the scenes of female intimacy (which by the way may not be plentiful enough for those who crave that type of thing; in a way, it's just as well: otherwise, the film makers could have been accused of voyeurism and pandering to the same).

Of course the real reason why the movie isn't about lesbianism is that writer/director Robert Towne is plainly more interested in the women as athletes than as lovers. Every sinew and fibre of the female jocks is caressed by the camera, as Towne shows the discipline and exhaustion that goes with training for the track. It's a bit surprising, actually. Robert Towne, who wrote the Oscar-winning screenplay for *Chinatown* and the screenplay for Oscar-nominated *The Last Detail*, is obviously adept at dealing with fundamental moral and political questions. Yet one gets the sense from *Personal Best* that his real dream is to direct ABC's *Wide World of Sports*.

While it's tempting to fall down on our hands and knees with thanks for a reasonable depiction of a lesbian relationship, we need not get carried away. There are still some tidbits of bad news. While trying to set up the conflict, Towne has various characters articulating points of view that are supposed to bring the issues into sharper focus. Occasionally, Towne muddies up the arguments instead.

Terry Tingloff (played by Scott Glenn) is the beleaguered coach who watches helplessly while the floundering relationship between his two best athletes adversely affects their performance. He wants to break up the lovers so that they can concentrate on winning. In doing so, he asks Chris, "Does Franco Harris (Pittsburgh Steeler running back) refuse to play because he's fighting with Terry Bradshaw (Steeler quarterback) and proceeds with a litany of similar questions, asking whether sports heroes mix feelings with playing the game.

The answer, of course, is no, but not because, as Tingloff implies, male athletes take their athletic goals more seriously than women. The difference between Franco Harris and Chris Cahill is not that Harris is a stolid male and Chris is an emotional female, but rather that Harris is a professional athlete with thousands of dollars on the line for each game, playing a sport with teammates who have a similar stake in his effort. Chris, on the other hand, is an amateur athlete, running in an individual event, who garners as reward for a triumph only the knowledge that she's won and that she's done her personal best. She's responsible only to herself which makes it a hell of a lot easier for emotional travail to get in the way.

Chris, not exactly an intellectual heavyweight, never calls Tingloff on the silliness of his comparison. Consequently, Terry, who's portrayed sympathetically enough as it is, gets away with more than he should.

Unfortunately, the athlete-as-lesbian is fairly dangerous ground to tread in the first place. Thanks to Billy Jean King's trials and tribulations, one of the only places in main-

stream culture lesbianism has reared its head has been in athletic circles. *Personal Best*, unfortunately, reinforces what is rapidly becoming a cliché — that women who know how to use their bodies — athletes, for example — and who have that celebrated control over the space around them, are inclined to be gay. One hopes Chris's experience will not discourage young athletes who are confirmed heterosexuals from entering the arena.

Speaking of bodies, there are plenty of them in *Personal Best*: four or five sauna sequences that illustrate, via some jocular dialogue, that athletes are a pretty randy bunch. One might think that this is a movie for anyone who likes women's bodies. But it isn't. It's a movie for people who like a certain kind of body: no tits please, we're athletes. Anyone who appreciates mammaries will be gravely disappointed.

This is not merely breast-ist cant. The relentless focus on boyish bodies tends to perpetuate the well-entrenched misconception that lesbians are testosterone-ridden hairy sorts (and there are lots of shots of unshaved armpits for those who like fur) and that lesbians don't come in all shapes and sizes. It's nice that Towne has made an inoffensive film about lesbians but it would be splendid if he made yet another. Only next time he should make the film about opera singers.

There is still a problem in *Personal Best* when the relationship is so obviously between women of different ages. Now it's true that Patrice Donnelly is a real-life athlete and that Towne wanted to use real-life athletes and that a real-life athlete who can act is hard to find. Similarly, Mariel Hemingway is a real-life actor, Towne had to use at least some real-life actors, and a real-life actor who can run, jump and throw is hard to find.

But it's also true that Donnelly looks well into her twenties, if not more, and that Hemingway doesn't look a day over 16. The element of the tutor and the tutee is already present in their relation to their athletic goals. Regardless of how tastefully and subtly Tory invites Chris to her bed, regardless of the fact that we know track athletes don't last much past 25 so these two women must be of similar age, the impression is that Tory is helping Chris get her timing down both on and off the field. The stereotype of the more experienced teacher seducing the naive ingenue is a factor in *Personal Best*. Not good for lesbianism.

The other danger in using the only actor around who has any athletic ability is that we have to settle for a middling performance by Mariel Hemingway. It should have been the other way around, with Patrice Donnelly as the weak acting link. But Donnelly holds her own. Hemingway, on the other hand, is in desperate need of voice training. She whines and screeches in so painful a way that one feels she deserves the male polo player instead of the heroine, Tory.

Taking the good news with the bad, women still triumph in *Personal Best*. Tory and Chris show that they have feelings quite apart from their obsession with winning; that there is such a thing as team effort even in individual competition; and that friendship is a valuable thing that ought not to be threatened simply by the need to come in first. It's tough to prove these points in the athletic arena and it's no conscience that Towne writes it so that women take the risk.

As for lesbianism, Chris may have gone straight; but Tory, who has the last word, doesn't leave the fold. And one out of two ain't bad — for Hollywood. ●

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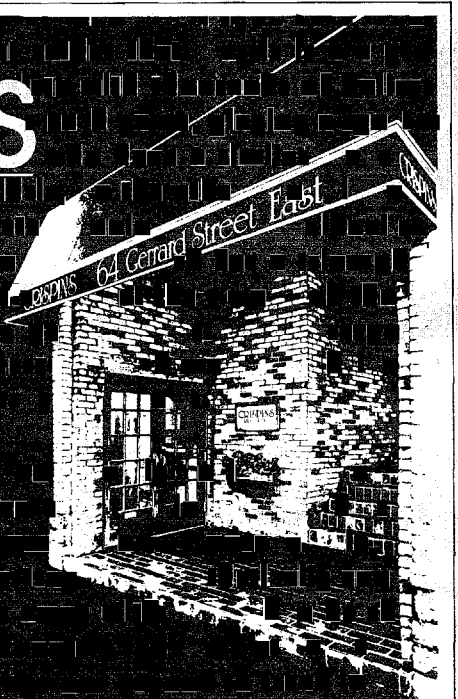
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Classics Revisited: 'Second Sex' First Rate

This review of *The Second Sex* is the first of a series of re-evaluations of important feminist and political writers and their major works published between 1950 and 1975.

Next month we will feature Juliet Mitchell's *Women's Estate*.

by Mariana Valverde

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*. New York: Vintage, 1952. Pp 814. \$4.95.

Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron, editors, *New French Feminisms*. New York: Schocken 1981. Pp. 282. \$11.65.

Feminist Studies, VI, 2 (Summer 1980). Special symposium in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of *The Second Sex*.

The French are famous for lionizing their intellectuals the way Americans lionize movie stars. And indeed, while Americans flood the world with Hollywood clichés, the French pride themselves on being the beacon of culture, the source of all originality in philosophy as in cuisine. Politically, the French have also been in the exuberant vanguard of most movements. Ridiculing Anglo concerns for pragmatism, moderation, and empirical data, they have periodically turned the political order upside down by means of revolutions. 1968 was only the most recent of such glorious episodes. When the French feminist movement began to take shape — not coincidentally, in the wake of the 1968 Paris uprising — French women were not immune from the national desire to be more radical than anybody else.

As early as 1970, there was an influential separatist group in Paris engaged in guerilla tactics, such as disrupting a Right to Life meeting by handing out pieces of meat. Although this passion for always going to the furthest limit often ends up in self-destruction (some groups were condemning street demonstrations as too male-oriented!), it has given French feminism an inspirational quality which more "down to earth," reformist feminisms lack. While Betty Friedan was exhorting American women to get in there and change things from the inside, French feminists were angrily denouncing "phallogocentrism" in all its forms and calling for the "destruction of all power by women" (Françoise d'Eaubonne).

This fearless critique of everything male was naturally easier to carry out at the level of culture than on the job and in the home. Thus, while millions of French working women and housewives remained largely untouched by the women's movement, a few daring souls were wreaking havoc in the intellectual and artistic establishments. (A popular work from the early seventies, a translation from Italian, actually, was called *Spit on Hegel*. It's hard to imagine Anglophone feminists caring enough about Hegel to bother getting angry.) Many of the most active feminists were writers, poets, and playwrights; some of them are now engaged in a feminist critique of the psychoanalytic school of Jacques Lacan, one of the trendiest subcultures of recent years.

Reading the recent anthology *New French Feminisms* confirmed my previous suspicion that, while a lively feminist culture continues to develop in Paris, the women's movement has not made many substantial changes in French society as a whole. As Michèle Le Doeuff argues in a recent article, there is a tendency among French feminists to "insist that because it is a philosophical discourse that lays down the law for all other discourses, the discourse of philosophy must first of all be overthrown and disrupted." Thus, brilliant women like Luce Irigaray devote themselves to a critique of the sexist ideology of Lacanian psychoanalysis, forgetting that most women are not oppressed by psychoanalysis but by their husbands and bosses (Michèle Le Doeuff, "Simone de Beauvoir and Existentialism," *Feminist Studies*, VI, 2). There are of course, hard-working women in the unions, and in socialist and communist parties; but they seem, if this anthology is at all indicative, remarkably economistic and out of touch with the feminist movement. While in England there is a lively integration of socialist and feminist concerns and ideas, and socialists have generally accepted the need for an autonomous women's movement, the French left seems quite backward. These mass organizations are thus contributing to the growing gap be-

tween feminist culture critics on the one hand and ordinary women on the other.

Sadly, the radicalism and the cultural sophistication of the French women's movement have remained largely theoretical. A good grounding in literature, philosophy, and radical politics has not sufficed to bridge the gap between vision and strategy, between writing and organizing.

Pondering this problem, I went on to read the recent interviews with Simone de Beauvoir that appear in *New French Feminisms*. It was, pardon the cliché, a breath of fresh air. Such common sense! and in Paris! Remarkable.

To explain why I'd be prepared to argue that Simone de Beauvoir, far from being "outdated," has more wisdom than ten feminists of my generation put together, I have to go back 33 years, to the publication of the remarkable feminist manifesto, *The Second Sex*.

In 1949, Simone de Beauvoir was an intellectual of some note. At forty years of age, she had published novels and theoretical works and was a leading light in the then fashionable existentialist movement. She was also notorious for her long-standing relationship with Jean-Paul Sartre, a relationship which was never allowed to settle down into a marriage. And in 1949, out of nowhere, she published the 1000-page landmark work, *The Second Sex*. This brilliant and systematic examination of the origins of women's oppression, and of the insidious ways in which women internalize men's images of femininity, would have to wait twenty years to gain an appreciative audience. Why did de Beauvoir, who already had it made as a token woman intellectual, spend three intense years researching this book on women? How did she, alone, without what we call a "support network," manage to provide what is still the most thorough examination of how our culture produces us as women?

Part of the answer lies in her appropriation of the philosophy known as existentialism. This philosophy of human freedom seeks to dissect everyday experiences, including those in the "private" realm, and to dissolve the seemingly solid and "natural" world around us. In this way we come to see that everyday habits and "facts" are really the result of choices, and that, therefore, nothing ought to be taken for granted as it is. This method of distancing oneself from everyday roles was very useful for de Beauvoir as she began to pose the question that no one, even feminists, had asked before: how does one become a woman?

Early feminists had generally taken the "essence" of womanhood for granted; they had accepted the myths of femininity while seeking to give these feminine qualities a larger scope of activity. But de Beauvoir asked the truly radical questions about this apparently natural and eternal essence: "All agree in recognizing the fact that females exist...and yet we are told that femininity is in danger. It would appear, then, that every female human being is not necessarily a woman; to be so considered she must share in that mysterious and threatened reality known as femininity. Is this attribute something secreted by the ovaries? Or is it a Platonic essence, a product of the philosophic imagination?"

In these ironic and lighthearted questions, de Beauvoir disposed of centuries of myths about women — in the very first page of her book. She was able to see that women are not oppressed just because their feminine attributes are not allowed to exercise their benevolent influence outside the home, but more fundamentally, women are oppressed by being imprisoned inside this notion of a feminine essence. Examining various economic and ideological systems, she then outlined the various ways in which this notion is constantly recreated, and detailed the ways in which the myth controls our behaviour and even our feelings. Women have been confined to the private sphere, de Beauvoir explained, not just out of a male whim, but as a logical consequence of the myth which holds that our essence is to be graciously and lovingly passive.

Thus, while agreeing with Marx and Engels that women's oppression is to a large extent rooted in male control of property, she added a deeper level of explanation that would account for the fact that there is male domination even when property is not at stake. Her socialism allowed her to see

through the illusory liberal dreams of equality, and to develop a social and collective explanation of a collective problem. But no socialist thinker before her had squarely faced those aspects of women's oppression that are not directly rooted in property or class relations. She also made no bones about the fact that one of the main obstacles of women's liberation is the way we have internalized our role; although she didn't use the word, she can claim to have invented the concept of self-oppression.

Her critique of femininity was devastating and, in my view, final; however, it seems that many contemporary feminists are now reverting to early delusions about the supposedly purifying power of femininity. They are giving the "feminine" qualities (nurturance, closeness to nature, etc.) a positive valuation, but they are leaving us imprisoned in the myth of what we are supposed to be. (Susan Griffin and Mary Daly come to mind, as well as many contemporary French feminists.) In a recent interview, de Beauvoir once more warns us about the dangers of the myth: "These 'feminine' qualities have their origin in our oppression, but they should be preserved after our liberation. And men, too, should acquire them. But we must not exaggerate in the other direction, to say that woman has special ties to the earth, the rhythm of the moon, the tides, etc. ... The eternal feminine is a lie."

Of course, the nice thing about the eternal feminine is that it gives us a utopia. We can speculate about a future matriarchy where all will be nurturance and ecological balance, and wish away all the "male" problems such as war, competition, and high interest rates. De Beauvoir's vision, more courageous and also more frightening, is profoundly anti-utopian. She does not offer us a feminized world, but rather a world in which women and men have broken the moulds of masculinity and femininity — not to revert to an equally vapid mould of "androgyny" — but rather to create themselves and their world anew. As she wrote in a 1945 work, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*: "freedom will never be given; it will always have to be won."

Despite de Beauvoir's profound commitment to socialism, the uniqueness of her vision is not so much her political advice as her ethical vision. In this constant dissection of the possibilities for freedom offered in any given set of circumstances, a painstaking analysis of the concrete is required. And she is a genius at such concrete analyses. Let's choose a small and appropriately trendy example: her analysis of sadomasochism.

Aggressiveness is not peculiarly male, she writes, and neither are pain and suffering peculiarly female. Both men and women can incorporate aggressiveness and a certain amount of pleasurable pain into their sexual activity, and this says absolutely nothing about male or female roles: "Pain has no greater and no less a place in woman's sex-

uality than in man's. Pain, in fact, is of masochistic significance only when it is accepted and wanted as proof of servitude Masochism exists when the individual chooses to be made a thing under the conscious will of others." Thus, even if a woman chooses to be largely passive in lovemaking (and many women do like being passive at least some of the time), this says nothing about her role in emotional or social relations. Being passive in lovemaking, de Beauvoir states, is no more masochistic than a certain amount of aggressiveness is necessarily sadistic.

In a few sentences, de Beauvoir sheds more light on the topic than most contemporary writers do in many pages. She simply notes that the physical experiences of pleasure, pain, penetration, or whatever, are not necessarily connected to any particular social role. And as a feminist, she is of course mainly concerned with the world of social roles, for that is the realm of freedom and unfreedom, of domination and submission.

I could give many more examples of how de Beauvoir's approach allows her to shed light on our experience, but I don't want this article to be a substitute for reading *The Second Sex*. Instead, I'll try to give some suggestions about how contemporary feminism can benefit from a rereading of this landmark book.

First of all, while informed by a thorough knowledge of European culture, de Beauvoir always keeps in mind that theory originates in, and returns to, experience. She does not waste her time on purely academic refutations of this or that sexist author, but rather redefines the questions posed by traditional disciplines in such a way as to make any particular refutation redundant. She is also mature enough to dispense with cleverly beating male academics at their own game, a temptation that young feminist academics are always being led into.

De Beauvoir also relies on the social problems, which sounds like a simple enough thing to do, until you try it. She also rejects all notions of a trans-historical essence of any kind. Marx had already put to rest all notions of an eternal human essence, but it was this feminist philosopher who forever put to rest all notions of male and female essences.

She also refused to predict what the future will look like, much less give moral imperatives about what it *should* look like. And it is this rejection of myths and goddesses, this insistence that there is no salvation, that we should try to learn from. If the eternal feminine is a lie, then we'll always need careful analyses of specific life situations. We cannot rely on an ahistorical myth about the struggle between patriarchy and matriarchy for our theoretical or practical needs. We need to deepen and expand the analysis begun by this courageous, lone feminist back in 1949, in order to give the movement for women's freedom a sound basis. ●

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Voices of the Nisei

by Jean Wilson

Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*. Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1981. Pp. 250. \$13.95 (International Fiction List)

Takeo Ujo Nakano, with Leatrice Nakano. *Within the Barbed Wire Fence: A Japanese Man's Account of His Internment in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1980. Pp. x, 126. \$12.50 (Social History of Canada Series)

Ann Gomer Sunahara, *The Politics of Racism: The Uprooting of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War*. Toronto: James Lorimer & Co. 1981. Pp. xii, 222. \$12.95 (pa.)

One of the worst manifestations of racism in Canada occurred between 1942 and 1946. In that period, approximately 21,000 Japanese Canadians — nationals, naturalized Canadians, and Canadian-born — were forced to abandon their homes, businesses, property, and in many cases their birthplaces in order to comply with federal government orders to leave the BC coast. It is a shameful part of Canadian history, and one little discussed in print until the last six years or so.

Three recent books document that history very well, particularly *Obasan*, the fine first novel by Joy Kogawa, who is better known as a poet. Her novel, read in conjunction with a unique first-hand account of internment in a POW camp and a well-documented study of the people and policies involved, makes the story of the Japanese-Canadian uprooting vivid.

In effect, Japanese Canadians during World War II were victims of virulent racism among certain sectors of the BC population and especially among a few highly placed BC civic and federal politicians who influenced dominion policy in this matter. There was also a significant racist streak expressed more subtly by William Lyon Mackenzie King and some of his cabinet colleagues and advisors who were not from the west but who held equally strong views about the Japanese "menace."

As Ann Gomer Sunahara points out in her disturbing book, *The Politics of Racism*, it was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 that encouraged a traditionally intolerant and extremely vocal minority of British Columbians to resurrect every racist charge ever made against Japanese Canadians. Before that date, military and police authorities had kept a watchful eye on Japanese Canadians, but there had been no attempt to confine them or dispossess them of their property and rights, such as they were — in 1941, Japanese Canadians were denied their right to vote and so had little voice in determination of their own affairs.

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, however, it took only 12 weeks for anti-Japanese opinion to persuade the federal Liberals that drastic action was needed to prevent collaboration between Japanese in Canada and in Japan. Rather than take the

advice of most senior RCMP and military officers, who opposed uprooting, and simplistically assuming that men like rabidly anti-Asian Ian Alistair Mackenzie, MP for Vancouver Centre from 1930 to 1948, represented public opinion generally in BC, King's government devised a hasty and insensitive plan to deal with the problem.

Initially, the government tried to reassure the BC public by arresting 38 Japanese previously suspected of being security threats, closing Japanese cultural centres, and seizing the valuable Japanese fishing fleet. Soon, though, because of public and private pressure, it was decided to intern all Japanese Canadians in BC. By February 1942, it was announced that all so-called enemy aliens — only Japanese Canadians, not those of Italian or German descent — were to be removed from the coast. They were to be removed and resettled as economically as possible, which meant that most — some 12,000 — ended up in hastily constructed, flimsy shacks in the cold BC interior and many others went to equally inadequate shelter and new lives as labourers on sugar beet farms in southern Alberta and Manitoba. Some men were interned in camps north of Lake Superior and families with enough money and influence resettled themselves even further east than Manitoba or in the BC interior.

To pay for removing Japanese Canadians from their homes and confining them in detention camps, the federal government forced sale of all their property and possessions left behind, including all of the fishing fleet and many prosperous Fraser Valley farms which were then bought at below-market value and reserved for war veterans. Few property sales anywhere were fair compensation for economic losses suffered, though proceeds from these sales were supposed to enable Japanese Canadians to survive in their new homes and indeed to relocate east of the Rockies. By April 1945, too few had voluntarily relocated, so a deportation policy was enforced. Inmates of camps were obliged to choose between "immediate, but not necessarily permanent, resettlement in eastern Canada, and repatriation to Japan at some unspecified date. To keep their jobs, to avoid another move, to hide from hostile Caucasians; in despair, in confusion, and in ignorance, 6,884 Japanese Canadian (males) over the age of 16 signed repatriation requests. With their 3,500 dependents, these potential deportees represented 43 per cent of Canada's Japanese minority" (Sunahara, p. 163).

When Japan capitulated in August 1945, the government tried to enforce these repatriation requests by order-in-council under the since infamous War Measures Act. By then, about two-thirds who had made the requests had changed their minds. King's government at first was immovable, but Canadian public opinion finally was aroused, in BC and elsewhere, on the side of Japanese Canadians and after a sustained public campaign and a long court struggle, led by CCF-ers such as Andrew Brewin and

Stanley Knowles and other civic and political leaders across the country, the government was forced to back down.

Because of news censorship, most Canadians apparently were ignorant of Japanese Canadians' plight until after the war. According to Sunahara and people I've spoken to, most had believed that Japanese Canadians were a national security risk, as they'd been told by their federal government, and most were unaware of the sale of Japanese Canadian property. Once aware of these facts and of the impending enforced deportation of 10,000 people, opposing public opinion increased dramatically. Ultimately, only 4,000 people repatriated to Japan, all of them voluntarily. Most other Japanese Canadians resettled on the prairies or in eastern Canada. By 1949, only 30 per cent of the original population still lived in BC.

One Issei (first-generation Japanese in Canada) who eventually settled in Toronto was Takeo Nakano. Based on diaries he kept at the time, Nakano in *Within the Barbed Wire Fence* describes his own experience of being uprooted. Before Pearl Harbor, he lived in a small lumber town north of Vancouver with his wife and small daughter. In the next 9 months, he was separated from his family, worked in road camps near Jasper, and then was interned in a former POW camp near Angler, Ontario, for resisting resettlement apart from his family. There Nakano was something of an outsider in that most men there were *gambariya*, the small proportion of Japanese in Canada who remained loyal to Japan after Pearl Harbor and most of whom did repatriate.

Although he was not that fiercely loyal to Japan, it was Nakano's homeland and he was naturally more sympathetic to it emotionally than to Canada, where he had come as a young man to earn his fortune but not necessarily to settle as a citizen. Only men were confined at Angler, and they were free to leave if they accepted work from Canadian authorities in designated places like Toronto. Women and children obviously were not considered a threat, just a nuisance. They were left behind to cope as best they could in the absence of the family wage-earner. Nakano was one of the few men who left Angler. His story is told simply and dispassionately and provides some

insight into what must have been an anguishing and frightening experience.

To best understand that experience and the effect of internment, the outstanding book to read is *Obasan*. This is an excellent novel, not only because it recreates an event in Canadian history so vividly, but also because it is so well-written. As well, it is a much more rounded story than that told by either Sunahara or Nakano in that the experience of women and children is given its due. The novel is based on Joy Kogawa's own experiences and on contemporary letters and documents.

The story is centred on the narrator's "obasan," meaning "aunt," and is told by a woman who is 5 when her world falls apart. In a series of well-co-ordinated flashbacks between the present in southern Alberta and the past of BC internment camps and southern Alberta sugar beet farms, Kogawa effectively describes the various responses to internment that occurred even within one family. The language she uses is so evocative that you *know* what it was like to leave a beloved father behind in Vancouver and live in shacks with other remnants of a once close-knit community in a resurrected ghost town in the BC interior, to be forced to move again with part of your family to the hostile physical and social environment of a sugar beet farm near Lethbridge, and gradually to establish a new way of life in an alien place.

At the beginning of *Obasan*, there is this declaration, which suggests the richness and force of Kogawa's language:

There is a silence that cannot speak.
There is a silence that will not speak....

Unless the stone bursts with telling, unless the seed flowers with speech, there is in my life no living word. The sound I hear is only sound. White sound. Words, when they fall, are pock marks on the earth. They are hailstones seeking an underground stream.

If I could follow the stream down and down to the hidden voice, would I come at last to the freeing word? I ask the night sky but the silence is steadfast. There is no reply.

Obasan releases the hidden voice. It is a reply to too many years of silence.

Delight of the Beckoning Stillness

by Patricia O'Leary

IKI is a Japanese idea: "That which is the gracious or pure delight of the beckoning stillness." Actor's Lab Theatre in Toronto has created a one-woman show by Dawn Obokata, called *Faces of the Moon*, which gives theatrical form to this concept. As director Richard Niococym says: "Theatre begins from an empty space where things come to be, from nothingness." Obokata's piece is an attempt to create something out of that interior "empty" space. She draws from her Japanese heritage to examine her very modern present-day experience, using voice, dance and mime to evoke an atmosphere, trying to discover who is she from the minglings of her past.

Actor's Lab is a perfect place to put on this type of play. The theatre itself starts as an "empty space," and the show is built out of the imagination of the actor and the spectators. The area is dotted about with candles burning gently in paper bags, suggesting a summer evening in a Japanese garden; there is a huge paper lantern glowing orange in the centre over a gnarled tree branch.

Into this traditional Japanese setting Obokata brings a present-day dilemma: how to find herself, how to work through

the anger and confusion she has discovered while trying to break through into the decade of her thirties. She has decided that she can no longer accept herself or the world; she is lost, she is angry: at the world, at men who have put her female self into an inferior position, at herself for accepting the strictures of society up to now. Through her confusion she is throwing old concepts away, trying to rid herself of things she *doesn't* like about her life before she can build the sort of person she is and live as she wants to.

This is an interesting production because it presents what must be a universal stage of adulthood in a specific and traditional ethnic setting. Obokata is a powerful performer who holds the audience's attention, especially during one passage where she recites the history of male dominance over women from biblical times to the present, where she ends by accusing herself for being so stupid as to accept it in the past. (How many of us have felt equally stupid when looking back at our earlier selves?) *Faces of the Moon* puts a general situation in a particular context so that it's possible for anyone, no matter what her background, to relate to it.

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OUTSIDE BROADSIDE

TORONTO WOMEN'S EVENTS CALENDAR March 8 — April 4, 1982

Week of March 8

• **Monday, March 8:** Anne Cameron reading her new work 'Daughters of Copperwoman,' sponsored by Toronto Women's Bookstore and Press Gang Publishers. Canadian Book Information Centre, 70 The Esplanade, Toronto. 7:30 pm. Free. Info: 922-8744. Tentative.

DAUGHTERS OF COPPER WOMAN



• **Monday, March 8:** The Saga of Wet Hens, play by Jovette Marchessault about four Québec women writers, continues at the Tarragon Theatre until March 20. 531-1827

• **Monday, March 8:** Lesbian/Lesbienne weekly meeting at 156 King Street East, 7:30 each Monday. 463-4322

• **Monday, March 8:** Women for Political Action sponsors a dinner at the King Edward Hotel. Speakers include Flora MacDonald, Pauline Jewett and Celine Hervieux-Payette, 6:30 pm. \$25.00. 924-0701

• **Tuesday, March 9:** Sanz Cuer, Songs of Medieval Women, Royal Conservatory of Music, 273 Bloor Street West, 8:15 pm, \$5.

• **Tuesday, March 9:** Lost Women Composers, Concert/Lecture Series, presents The Women Troubadours, 5:30 pm, Trinity United Church, 427 Bloor Street West; series of three tickets: \$12. Individual tickets: \$5. 920-9797.

• **Tuesday, March 9:** Lesbians Against the Right (LAR) weekly meeting, Metropolitan Community Church, 736 Bathurst Street, 7:30 pm. For information, call Lucie at 925-5697.

• **Wednesday, March 10:** Voice of Women sponsors the film "If You Love This Planet," Friends' House, 60 Lowther Avenue, 7:30 pm, free.

• **Wednesday, March 10:** Sanz Cuer, Songs of Medieval Women, Trinity Church, 473 Bloor Street West, 12 noon, \$3.

• **Wednesday, March 10:** Pianist Helen Hardy plays works by Canadian women composers, Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory of Music, 12:15 pm, free

• **Wednesday, March 10:** Slide show by Julia Lesage, "Daily Life in Nicaragua," sponsored by Canadian Action for Nicaragua. 8:00 pm, Trinity United Church, 427 Bloor West. Info: 964-6901.

• **Wednesday, March 10:** Mama Quilla II performs at the Cactus Club, 19 Toronto Street; also March 11.

• **Thursday, March 11:** Mama Quilla II performs at the Cactus Club, 19 Toronto Street.

• **Thursday, March 11:** Loving Women; songs, stories, poems celebrating women continues to March 14, Palmerston Library, 8:00 pm. 463-4279.

• **Thursday, March 11:** Lesbian and Gay Pride Day Committee meeting, 519 Church St., 8:00 pm. Info: 483-9449.

• **Thursday, March 11:** Canadian Images Film Festival. Screenings, seminars and workshops on women and film, eroticism, pornography and censorship from a feminist perspective, also film criticism. Peterborough, Ontario. For info, call 593-1808 in Toronto, or (705) 748-1400 in Peterborough. Until Sunday, March 14.

• **Sunday, March 14:** Reel to Real Film Festival presents "The Uprising," sponsored by Canadian Action for Nicaragua, Bloor Cinema, 2:00 pm, \$3.50.

Week of March 15

• **Monday, March 15:** Organizing meeting for Fight the Right Festival. All interested people or groups welcome. 519 Church St., 8 pm

• **Tuesday, March 16:** Judy Chicago book-signing at Toronto Women's Bookstore, 85 Harbord St. 5 to 7 pm. For further information call 922-8744.

• **Tuesday, March 16:** Lesbians Against the Right (LAR) open meeting, Metropolitan Community Church, 736 Bathurst Street, 7:30 pm.

• **Wednesday, March 17:** Women's Studies Lecture Series presents lawyer Mary Dunbar speaking on Women and the Law, 4 pm, Founders College, York University, 667-3198.

• **Thursday, March 18:** Planning meeting for a forum on women and the housing crisis, sponsored by Women's Housing Coalition. Everyone welcome. 6 pm at Times Change, 932 Bathurst St. For information, call 537-6498.

• **Thursday, March 18:** Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) meeting at 519 Church Street, 7:30 pm.

• **Sunday, March 21:** Reel to Real Film Festival presents "Witches and Faggots, Dykes and Poofers," sponsored by Gay Liberation against the Right Everywhere and Lesbians Against the Right, Bloor Cinema, 2:00 pm, \$3.50.

• **Sunday, March 21:** Mama Quilla II performs at the Isabella Hotel, 556 Sherbourne Street

Week of March 22

• **Tuesday, March 23:** Lesbians Against the Right (LAR) weekly meeting, Metropolitan Community Church, 736 Bathurst Street, 7:30 pm.



• **Thursday, March 25:** Womynly Way presents Teresa Trull and Julie Homi in concert at Harbourfront, Brigantine Room, 8:00 pm, \$6.

• **Thursday, March 25:** Mama Quilla II performs at the Cameron Club

• **Friday, March 26:** Canadian Artists' Representative, Toronto Women's Caucus presents "The Life and Death of Frida Kahlo" and "Never Give Up," and interview with Imogen Cunningham, Funnel Experimental Film Theatre, 507 King Street East, 8:00 pm. \$3.00

• **Saturday, March 27:** Lesbian Day of Action, sponsored by Lesbians Against the Right. 1 pm — workshops, 6 pm — dinner. Tentative location: Metropolitan Community Church, 736 Bathurst St. (south of Bloor). For confirmation, call 483-9449.

• **Sunday, March 28:** Reel to Real Film Festival presents "Donna" sponsored by the Cross Cultural Communications Centre, Bloor Cinema, 2:00 pm, \$3.50.

Week of March 29

• **Tuesday, March 30:** Lesbians Against the Right (LAR) weekly meeting, Metropolitan Community Church, 736 Bathurst Street, 7:30 pm.

• **Friday, April 2:** Women and Housing Forum 9 am - 4 pm. 519 Church Street.

• **Saturday, April 3:** Women in the Eighties, Work Technology and Change, a series (also April 17 and April 24) of day long workshops at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor Street West, 763-5141 ex. 57.

• **Saturday, April 3:** "Financial Management for Private Consultants and Counsellors." Weekend seminar. YWCA North Program Centre, 2532 Yonge St. Fee: \$10. For information call 487-7151. Also Sunday, April 4.

• **Sunday, April 4:** Reel to Real Film Festival presents "Deadly Force," sponsored by the Citizens' Independent Review of Police Activities, Bloor Cinema, 2:00 pm, \$3.50.

Next Month

Next month's calendar will cover two months! Let us know of April and May events by March 15.

Sponsored by
Women's Information Centre

with help from
Gay Community Appeal
and
Toronto Women's Bookstore

Compiled by Layne Mellanby

'Outside Broadside' is a monthly feature of the paper. To help make it as comprehensive as possible, let us know when you are planning an event.

In explaining your event (see coupon), keep it short — max. 25 words. Copy that is too long, or with incomplete information will not be printed.

We need to know well in advance: two weeks before the month your event's happening.

Fill in the coupon below and send it to *Broadside* or drop it off at the Toronto Women's Bookstore, 85 Harbord St., Toronto.

Calendar Information

What: (type of event) _____

Who: (sponsor, telephone) _____

Where: _____

When: _____

Cost: _____

