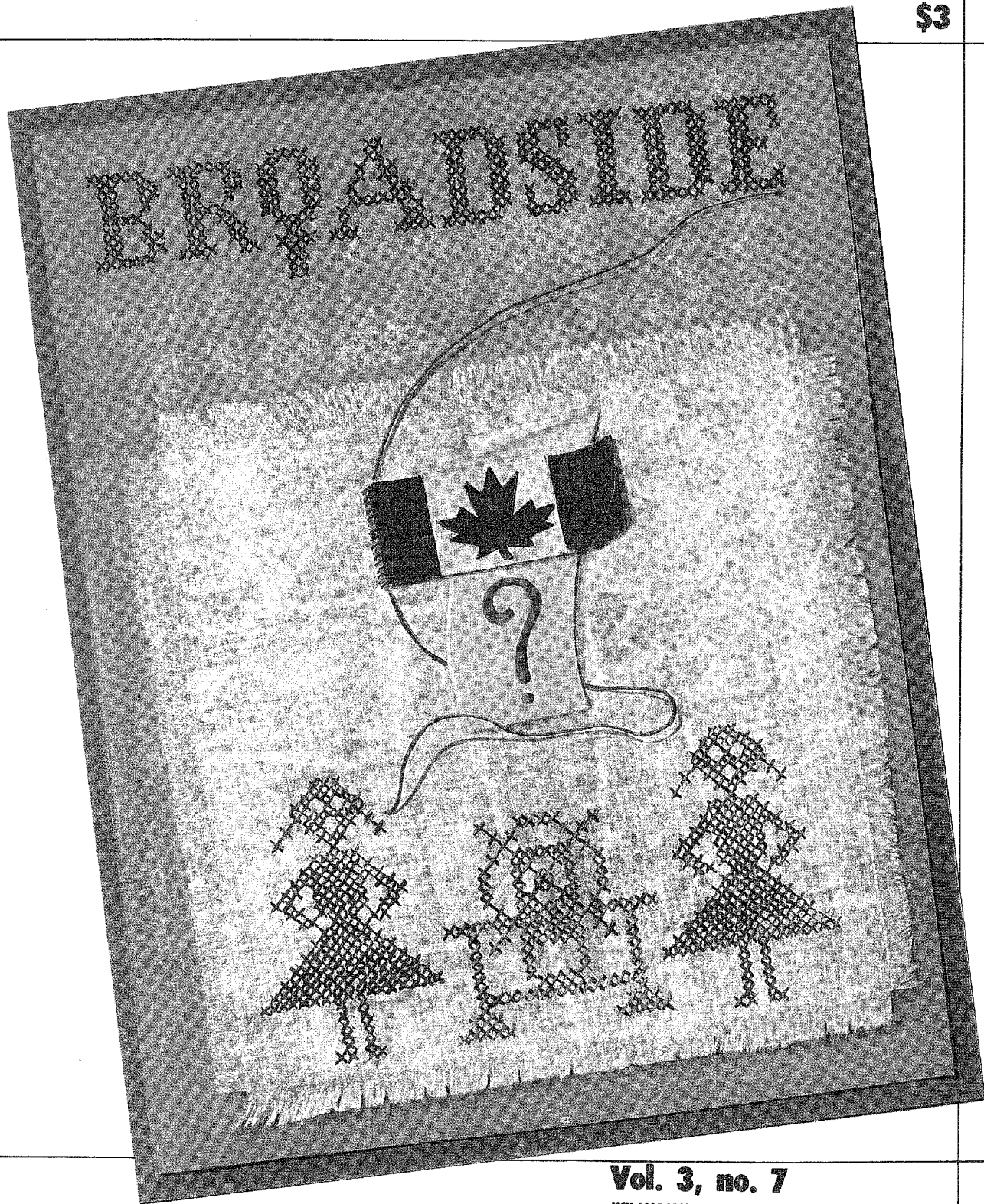


Broadside

+ A SAMPLER

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INSIDE BROADSIDE

At Home and Abroad

Eve Zaremba, Deconfederation/3
Beverly Biderman, Milking the Third World/4
Nicole Lacelle, translated by Lise Moisan, Minding our PQ's/6
Eve Zaremba, Jane Jacobs: Insights, No Answers/8
Myrna Kostash, Feminist Glaze on the Vertical Mosaic/11
Judy Liefschultz, Ain't Nowhere We Can Run/12
Annette Clough, Miso vs. Millirems/12

In Theory

Susan G. Cole, Reproduction from Plato to Nietzsche/13
Mariana Valverde, Picking Up the Pieces/14
Judith Quinlan, Matriarchy: The Way We Were/16
Ottie Lockety, Neurosis on a Sliding Scale/19

In Depth

Jean Wilson, Nicole Brossard: Fictions and Realities/20
Eve Zaremba, Adrienne Rich: The Taste and Smell of Life/20
Toronto Abortion Committee, Abortion:
It's Not Free and Easy/24
Alicia Dowling, Incest: Secrets All in the Family/27
Stephanie Martin, Island in the Sun: Violence of the Sons/28
Darlene Lawson, Home on the Range/30
Bernadette Maxwell, Faith of Our Fathers/31

Through Women's Eyes

Philinda Masters, May Sarton: Slow Recovery/33
Anne Cameron, Tillie Olsen: Reading in Requiem/34
Kye Marshall, A Classical Dilemma/35
Judith Lawrence, Ella Manuel: A Person in Her Own Right/36
Barbara Halpern Martineau, Fellini's Fears and Fantasies/37
Deena Rasky, Clare Coulter: One Woman Show/39
Patricia O'Leary, Lulu's a Loser/41
Susan Sturman, She Can Play, But Can She Hype?/42

On the Lighter Side

Susan G. Cole, I'm a Feminist, but.../44
Judith Lawrence, Deuce, Fault, Love — Oops/45
Mary Hemlow, Getting Blood from a Stone/45
Mary O'Brien, W—M—NLY W—RDS/48
Judith Quinlan, Crones and Spinsters/46

CONTRIBUTORS/47



The Broadside Collective displays samples from three years of publication: (top, from left) Eve Zaremba, Judith Lawrence, Philinda Masters, Jean Wilson, Catherine Maunsell; (bottom, from left) Deena Rasky, Susan Cole, Layne Mellanby, Jane Hastings, Beverley Allinson; (in front) Judy Stanleigh.

Editorial

In May 1979, a bold new publishing venture began in Toronto. The introductory issue of *Broadside* that month declared that the paper would be a review "uniquely and openly in favour of women" and would be an attempt to counterbalance the unacknowledged bias of the mass media in general." It would not be a house organ for women's liberation; *Broadside* would "explore the world and be the eyes and ears of women as well as a pro-woman voice. Often, what we see and hear will provoke anger, anger which we want to express freely, creatively, and with wit. *Broadside* will be tough, vivid, exuberant paper which, however it strikes you, will never be dull."

Three years later, *Broadside* has more than fulfilled its promise. This month, instead of the regular issue, we offer a sampler from the first two volumes. Our magazine format is not going to be a regular feature. It costs three times as much to print (therefore the \$3 cover price). Next month we'll be back to our tabloid format. The sampler has two main purposes: to celebrate the paper's survival in spite of the usual limited financial resources available to alternative publications, and to help in the endless drive to raise funds. As well, we've given recent subscribers the chance to see what we were up to in the first years. Long-time subscribers may reminisce a bit.

Broadside began as a publication with

clear goals. However, over the years it has had to forge its identity through practical experience. In our second year, we dubbed *Broadside* a "review," realizing that monthly publication made it difficult for us to make the claim that we were a bona fide newspaper. And this year, recognizing our role in a widening network of women's pursuits, we added our calendar of events of interest to women, the scope of which we hope will expand to the Atlantic and western provinces.

Throughout *Broadside's* history, we have published material that reflects both the interests of our own collective members and the interests of writers from outside the collective, in Toronto or elsewhere. We have been fortunate enough to publish the writings of women who have used *Broadside* as their forum and we hope they and others will continue to approach the paper with fresh and thought-provoking ideas. Photographs and graphic art have been welcome, too. Copies of review books have been supplied by publishers and writers. Were it not for all these contributions, *Broadside* could not publish so many perspectives on so many subjects.

Although this issue is longer than usual, it still does not include all we would have liked our readers to "sample." There simply was not enough room. However, what is included indicates the range of subjects,

comment, and authors for which *Broadside* has become well known in Canada and abroad. As promised in the introductory issue, you won't agree with everything that is said. The *Broadside* collective, as diverse a group of women working together as you're likely to find, doesn't agree with everything published in the paper either. Regardless of your opinions, you won't find the sampler dull. *Broadside* continues to be provocative, creative, and witty.

The sampler's distinctive cover is the fine work of Anneke Steenbeeck, who, when faced with *Broadside's* tentative enquiry as to whether she'd be interested in participating in this special project, responded with enthusiasm and imagination.

Of course, *Broadside's* greatest strength is all those women who over the years have given generously of their time, talents, money, and other support to ensure the paper's survival — women who have cast their lot with *Broadside* as collective members, writers, photographers and artists, subscribers, financial donors or labourers at production and distribution sessions. Most are not named in this issue, but to all of you from the *Broadside* collective past and present, many, many thanks. We hope you and all our readers will enjoy this retrospective exploration of our world. Welcome to it!

Deconfederation

Eve Zaremba

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Which leaves Ontario, the "Heartland" province as it likes to think of itself, and the place everyone else loves to hate. This is where the people are. Half of all English-speaking Canadians live in Ontario. The population of Toronto alone is greater than that of all of Alberta or British Columbia. With Canada in dissolution, Ontario would lose protected markets for its manufacturing industry and its central role as the financial and service hub of an independent country. It would probably stagnate slowly; the long-established WASP element emigrating to other parts of the continent, others back to Europe. The poor and non-European most likely would remain, having nowhere better to go. Perhaps they could find the energy and vision to found a new nation. But how likely is that, given the common language and drawing power of neighbouring America? Ontario would try to negotiate statehood or at least territorial status. Maybe Americans could be persuaded to absorb within their body politic millions more urban, industrialized people demanding jobs, social programs, and services.

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

(1, 9, July/August 1980)

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Milking the Third World

Formula for Profit

Beverly Biderman

In the fall of 1979, a meeting of WHO/UNICEF urged that all promotion of infant formula cease. Beverly Biderman's article, the first such analysis in a Canadian newspaper, discusses the background of the WHO recommendations, how they could affect promotion of bottlefeeding in North America, and the boycott of Nestlé products in particular. Two years later, in March 1982, Nestlé finally succumbed to public pressure and agreed to cease advertising infant formula in Third World countries.

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

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

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

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

When breastfeeding was more widespread in these poorer countries, malnutrition was widespread as well, but it usually did not become severe until the second year of a child's life. Now, the OAS *Inter-Amer-*

ican Investigation of Mortality in Childhood reports that deaths from malnutrition reach their peak as early as the third or fourth month of life. And even if a child is lucky enough to survive severe malnutrition at this young age, some mental retardation can be expected.

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

The current Nestlé boycott was started in 1977 in Minneapolis by Infact (Infant Formula Action Coalition), a coalition of secular and religious groups. The boycott campaign was originally to last only six weeks, but it caught on so well that it continued, spread to Canada in 1979, and now has spread to England, Australia, and other countries. To Infact have been added several other endorsing groups and individuals, ranging from Dr. Spock and Ralph Nader to the YWCA and the United Church of Canada.

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

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

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

mation for "consideration of product composition."

The WHO recommendations were couched in the form of general principles. A specific code of conduct for the baby food industry will be drawn up by WHO in May. Then it will be up to each country to pass legislation ensuring compliance with the code. The legislation, of course, will be very difficult to enact in view of industry lobbying, especially in poorer countries where the jobs and revenue offered by baby food industries are hard to resist. Several countries, however, have already enacted legislation to restrict importation of infant formula. In Papua, New Guinea, for instance, feeding bottles and nipples, which some mothers think have magical properties and so fill them with tea or soda pop, are available only by prescription.

Although the Nestlé boycott is the largest non-union boycott in history, it is not as well known as, for example, the United Farm Workers boycotts. According to David Hallman, boycott co-ordinator for the United Church of Canada, the boycott is relatively low-profile because the organizers do not have the same tools and resources as the unions. Also, North Americans feel more removed from the issue. The boycott organizers have not yet resorted to secondary boycotts and pickets at supermarkets, but both tactics are under consideration and could be used if Nestlé does not comply with the boycott demands.

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

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

Nestlé, one of the three largest multinationals in the world, has annual world-wide sales of \$12 billion. Of these sales, infant formula accounts for approximately 2%. Infant formula sales for all companies combined is a billion-dollar-a-year retail business in developing countries. Brazilian figures show that the profit margins can be

as huge as 72%, or about three times the rate for the average retail product.

For those women who cannot breastfeed and where hygienic and financial conditions make bottlefeeding dangerous, nutritionists have designed nourishing vegetable oil-based breast milk substitutes that require no refrigeration and need limited cooking facilities. These products could be made available, at one-quarter of the cost of typical commercial formula, but they are not.

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

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

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

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

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

the WHO recommendations.

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

And are mothers and health professionals in industrialized societies considered somehow immune from the effects of the commercial promotion of infant formula? Is a paternalistic distinction being made here between what is permissible in "less developed" and "more developed" communities? The answer is, simply, no. The WHO recommendations oppose the promotion of infant formula in *all* countries. By ignoring their "corporate responsibility" in the Third World, the infant formula companies may have stuck their necks out just a little too far, and tempted the hangman. Unfortunately for the industry, more attention is now being turned to the advantage of breastfeeding, even in modern hygienic societies.

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

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

Advertisements in the handout bag claim that formula milk is "just as nutritious" as breast milk; that "supplements" to breast milk may be required; and that the new mother's "ability to supply a good supply of milk" may be in doubt. A refund coupon in the Gift-Pax for the Playtex (Bottle) Nurer Kit infers that at some point all babies are bottlefed: "whether you start your baby on a bottle or wean him from breast to bottle later...." Margaret Bennet-

Alder of La Leche League denies the necessity of weaning to the bottle, or of supplementing breast milk with formula milk:

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

No one is arguing that formula feeding is necessarily bad for all infants, or that there are not some mothers (about 5%) who physically cannot breastfeed for some reason or another. My own son was adopted as an infant, and baby formula in the absence of "wet nurses" proved to be a lifesaver. What is at issue, however, is the combination of aggressive and subtle promotion of bottlefeeding and breastfeeding. New mothers are not always getting all the information they should be getting even in our modern society.

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

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

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

Where do we go from here? The Nestlé boycott has brought together many diverse groups on the issue of infant nutrition. While these groups are now focusing their energies primarily on the Nestlé boycott, should the boycott succeed (as it appears likely to) these groups are then prepared to turn their attention more not only to the universal control of infant formula promotion, but also to the encouragement of breastfeeding and the necessary concomitant social, cultural, and economic changes.

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

(I, 6, April 1980)

Minding Our PQ's

Nicole Lacelle,
translated by Lise Moisan

To provide English-speaking Canadians with a rarely reported view of the Québec situation in general and the May 1980 referendum on independence in particular, three Montreal feminists presented their perspectives for Broadside readers in June 1980. One such perspective was by Nicole Lacelle, a feminist journalist in Montreal. Her article was endorsed by ten women's groups in Montreal and originally published in Le Devoir. Broadside published a translation, made by Lise Moisan, also an active feminist in Montreal. Like the other two articles which accompanied this one, "Minding our PQ's" was written before the May 20 referendum. However, the dilemmas faced by Québec feminists did not change as a result of it and have not changed yet.

By the beginning of May, no autonomous women's group had as yet taken a stance in the referendum. But after the meeting of the 14,000 "Yvettes," which took place at the Montreal Forum in April, we gave the issues more than serious consideration.

To our knowledge, the event was without precedent in Québec. Without going into detail about the blunder which triggered this massive rally, let me remind you that it was Québec's cabinet minister Lise Payette's remarks in the Québec National Assembly which were sharply contemptuous of housewives and housework; she went so far as to say that Claude Ryan had married the "Yvette" of our grade two reader. (Yvette was the prototype of the submissive little girl who would grow up to be just like her submissive mother, whose name I happen to forget. Come to think of it, I don't think she had a name of her own in the story.)

At any rate, the "Yvette" phenomenon is very important. It demonstrates how the right has successfully managed to make a "no" vote in the referendum tantamount to saying no to the contempt shown for women (by the PQ, of course). The means by which this mental association has been created clearly indicate that a no vote is rapidly becoming based on a right-wing platform.

Madame Tisseyre, one of the grande dames of Québécois show-biz, told the "Yvettes" (to whom I apologize for so referring to them) that: "women learnt a long time ago to say no to smooth talkers, and we all know what has happened to those who didn't learn. It is my duty and my right to pass on an 'intact' Canada to my children." "Intact" is her exact word, as in a woman before her wedding.

Renaude Lapointe, former speaker of the Senate, asked the Yvettes if they wanted to lose their passports. There were probably very few women in the place, not counting those on stage, who could even afford a trip to Florida, but their applause shook the rafters. The right managed to exploit these women's dream of travelling, of getting out of the house, of taking a break far from their endless work and responsibilities. It put women from all over on buses, to go to an all-expense-paid political rally and then asked them if they wanted to lose their passports.

With this manoeuvre vis-à-vis women, the right has finally become a mobilizing force. It's been years since the right has enjoyed real popularity in Québec. Of course it has power, but it hasn't been "popular." So the right is now gaining extraordinary momentum.

The yes vote, for feminists, is fraught with contradictions, but a no vote, as outlined that night at the Forum, is a tidy package indeed. It is "travail-famille-patrie," a longstanding rallying call and slogan, edifying the fundamental values of the canadien-français "work-family-country." That's the alternative which the right offered women.

A no in the referendum is harder and harder to face because of this right-wing definition it has acquired. The right is playing on women's dreams. The longstanding contempt with which the Parti Québécois, as well as certain left tendencies, holds housewives is a useful tool for the right. The right gives "value" to women's subservience: to be "valued" is better than nothing. That's what 14,000 women answered that night.

Who were those women? Largely speaking, they were women between the ages of 30 and 45, full-time housewives, many of them anglophone and immigrant women. They are women generally considered to be the least "politicized," those who are the most isolated, but who listen to the radio and watch TV, those women always missing in the ranks of the PQ, and those on whom the PQ had virtually given up to in order to win the referendum. The right counts on them.

The PQ, much like the left, has preferred to court younger and older women than these, particularly the 39% of women who work outside the home. Women at home are seen as irredeemable or alienated. And yet, housework is at the very base of all women's exploitation.

The yes as well as the no votes are non-choices with respect to this exploitation. In each case it seems that housework is either

overvalued, as in the no camp, or completely devalued. It is no accident that this emerges in all its splendour over the Québec national question.

Exactly the same logic is inherent in the process of overvaluing or devaluing the fact of being Québécois. The idea is to play on certain so-called natural attributes and thereby enhance the popular appeal of being abused. We don't need our roles and our work either to be put on a pedestal or to be totally devalued. The value of housework to capital is already evident, and reclaiming the issue of housework through our autonomous struggles is another story which won't happen for a year or a day.

For many of us, our initial reaction to the referendum was a strong reluctance to be drawn into playing yet another game with a very stacked deck. The women's movement has always run counter to the state in posing our own political questions, so why should we suddenly start to reckon with an issue from *its* point of view? But it doesn't take that long to realize, particularly since the meeting of the Yvettes, that we've never succeeded in identifying the terrain. Witness the fact that the women's movement has never been able to bring together 14,000 women, be it in a hall or in the streets. It is unreasonable to us to imagine that we will be able to identify the terrain overnight or even in three weeks! To pretend among ourselves, particularly these days, that the state doesn't direct our lives, leads straight to the Forum.

The speeches at the rally reveal quite clearly *who* is behind the no vote and whose interests it would serve. We must always scrutinize the speeches intended for women, intended for us; they are always the most transparent because we are the ones who have the least power. And we certainly know where the work-family-country line gets us.

Some of us will write WOMAN on our ballots, to nullify the vote, others won't vote at all. But that is probably a result of the same feeling of powerlessness that the right creates and that the left fosters. It would be dangerous to underestimate the reactionary force which nullifying one's vote accommodates.

The yes I'm talking about is not a yes to the PQ, which has no other social program than the status quo — in fact it has no social program at all. It aims to serve white men; more specifically, an insecure and petulant petite bourgeoisie, those political kids who think they know what's best for everyone, who cherish power, and love to play with their computers. Be assured that if the

• continued page 40



International Women's Day March, Toronto 1980. Photo by Moira Armour. (1, 6, April 1980)

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Jane Jacobs:

Insights, No Answers

Eve Zaremba

I have been a long-time admirer of Jane Jacobs. My bookshelf testifies to this. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, subtitled *The Failure of Town Planning*, I got in London in 1966. *The Economy of Cities* I bought hot off the press in New York in 1969. Now a third volume joins them on my shelf. *Canadian Cities and Sovereignty Association*, the slim volume in the Massey lecture series, is a 63-page paperback published by the CBC for \$3.95.

Jacobs' latest work is narrower in scope and different in subject from her two major books on cities — in spite of its title, it's not about cities. Many of the admirable qualities are there, however. Jane Jacobs has one of the clearest, least pretentious writing styles around. Anyone who can read, can profitably read her work. She has the ability to present complex and subtle ideas simply, not simplistically. She doesn't appear to purposely avoid either jargon or technical language; she thinks the

way she writes. It seems there is little distance between the idea and its expression, and I cannot think of anyone I have read recently who gave that impression. So-called serious writing tends to be either stuffy-academic or smart-ass indulgent. Sometimes both.

The latest book on the topical subject of Quebec shows Jacobs' unusual understanding of human emotions and their importance in politics. Unlike virtually all men who write about Quebec (even the knowledgeable ones), she is perceptive about national feeling, patriotism, and chauvinistic self-identification without being sentimental or judgemental. She points out that the emotions which govern ardent federalists and convinced separatists are basically the same. Both identify strongly with a nation which for one group is Quebec and for the other a Canada which includes Quebec. For both, Quebec is vital. It is the "indifferent" who are truly different in this respect. How perversely misleading is the way in which this polarity has been presented. The issue cannot be viewed as conflict between federalists and separatists: the labels obfuscate reality.

This is especially evident through Jacobs' clear-eyed analysis of the rational inconsistency inherent in separatism: "If and when they win their way they always promptly forget their championship of self-determination and oppose any further separation at home." She mentions a string of examples, including the United States, and notes that de Gaulle, who said "vive le Québec libre," wasn't about to say the same for any province of France.

Jacobs sees this pattern as universal and perfectly ordinary.

That is the way nations behave, no matter how old or young, how powerful or weak, how developed or underdeveloped or how they themselves came into being. But this inconsistency is inconsistent only in the light of reason. The behaviour and attitudes are really quite remarkably consistent.

The consistency is emotional and unreasonable. Could a convinced, self-identified feminist have said it better?

Jacobs brings her exploration of the sovereignty association debate with a few words about the cities of Toronto and Montreal. Perhaps she or the CBC saw this as necessary to add credibility to her discussion on Quebec (the Massey lectures are broadcast over CBC's Ideas series on FM radio). Certainly her credentials as an expert on cities are unquestionable. However, this book adds nothing to them. In

THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE FEMINIST PARTY OF CANADA

Since women first obtained the right to vote and run for office, the number of women seeking federal office rose from four in 1921 to 217 in 1980. But the number of women who won seats in those 58 years rose only from 1 to 14. The dismal prognosis is that, at this rate, we will need another 842 years to achieve equal representation at the federal level.

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

Women's full participation in the political arena will bring a new perspective and a new direction to government in general. The FEMINIST PARTY OF CANADA • PARTI FEMINISTE DU CANADA is the political voice of our time. If you wish to participate in the formation of this national party, please complete the following and return it to our address.



FEMINIST PARTY OF CANADA
PARTI FEMINISTE DU CANADA
175 Carlton Street
Toronto. M5A 2K3

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Postal Code: _____

I would like to purchase membership in the Feminist Party of Canada at \$5.00. _____

Seniors, students, single parents, welfare or disabled at \$1.00. _____

Are you willing to help organize (or meet with) FPC-PFC members in your area? Yes No

Do you wish to be on our mailing list? Yes No

Non-members are requested to contribute \$5 annually for the FPC-PFC Newsletter.

I would like to participate in committee work. Please contact me. _____

Donation: _____ Total: _____

fact, discussion of the two cities, while interesting, contains nothing particularly new or central to the arguments that follow.

In them, Jacobs points out that over the years Toronto overtook Montreal as Canada's chief economic centre and thus became the focus of anglophone migration and immigration to the detriment of Montreal. As Montreal lost its role as Canada's pre-eminent metropolis it took on more and more the character of a regional Quebec-centred city. But it cannot afford to continue in this role if it is to sustain its vibrant economic and cultural life. "The chances are small that Montreal will be able to transcend the usual inertia of Canadian regional cities if Quebec remains a province of Canada." (Jacobs' critiques of Canadian economic characteristics are often worthwhile and pungent, but I suspect that the implication inherent in the above statement could give rise to some heated arguments.)

According to Jacobs, that is why "the issue of sovereignty, now that it has been raised, is not going to evaporate. The changes underlying that issue are not irreversible and they are not going to evaporate ... thus it seems to me that we'd better think about it, emotionally painful though it may be."

Jacobs then proceeds to help us "think about it" by describing in some detail the example of Norway's separation from Sweden. As a general analogy this has its limitations. For a start, Norway and Sweden are compact, European countries of very similar cultural heritage, each with a largely homogeneous population. This just ain't so about Canada and Quebec. However, if Jacobs set out to make three points — that peaceful, gradual movement toward sovereignty is possible; that such a change can release immense, hitherto unexploited creative energies; and that a relatively small population is no impediment to prosperity and progress, then she has made her case quite adequately. The most intriguing aspect is her exploration of what she calls the "paradox of size," a topic with which Jacobs has dealt in her other books.

While the glorification of large size for its own sake seems to have peaked, we are still controlled by the importance of quantity. At the personal level we may drive small(er) cars, have small(er) families, and sing that "small is beautiful," but at the political level we accept uncritically arguments about economics of size, the limitations imposed upon Canada by a small internal market, and generally the inherent advantages and superiority of large numbers.

As a people we are so prone to view ourselves in relation to the United States that it comes as a shock to realize that Norway has a population of four million to Quebec's six million and Sweden's eight million equals the population of Ontario.

Yet both Sweden and Norway must be counted as successful modern states economically and socially — certainly better places to live than most countries in this imperfect world. Most significantly, they invent, produce, and export more *diversely* than we do with our population of 24 million even though (perhaps because?) they lack our abundant natural resources. It is clear that, whatever the optimal size for a modern country, sovereign nations of (relatively) small size are perfectly viable.

Having proven that the usual economic arguments against Quebec independence do not hold water, Jacobs turns to the actual concept of sovereignty association. I have problems with the uncritical way in which she accepts the term itself and René Lévesque's definition of it. Her position, far from being based on realistic assessment of the present situation, is naive.

First of all, Jacobs copes with the dilemma posed by the term "sovereignty association" by viewing it as merely an acknowledgement of the reality in the human condition. That is, we are simultaneously alone and social creatures. Nations are both independent from and connected to other nations. If this seems like semantic quibbling, that's exactly what it is, in my opinion. It's not very useful to deny the very specific implications of the term and the questionable political purpose which it was designed to serve.

Then again, throughout this book Jacobs avoids as much as possible using the term "Parti Québécois." Yet she deals with sovereignty association as created and proposed by René Lévesque, whom she quotes and who is surely indistinguishable from the PQ as a political power. The reason for these manoeuvres escapes me.

Jacobs analyses Lévesque's proposals under the heading of "connectors" and "separateness." The former addresses the nitty-gritty of how travel, trade, defence, the St. Lawrence Seaway, and currency would be handled between a sovereign Quebec and Canada. Jacobs has no trouble

with most of it but in Lévesque's proposal for a common currency she identifies a major snag. "The trouble is that governmental powers which affect a currency are the very core of sovereignty." Of course she is quite right. As she points out, the two governments could co-operate on matters affecting currency. But "there goes independence."

One currency — which means a common fiscal and monetary policy — is consistent with "renewed federalism" but never with true sovereignty, which raises the question of just how serious the PQ really is. This is a question which Jacobs doesn't ask. Rather, she proceeds to the "separateness" aspect.

The "separateness" chapter, in many ways the heart of this uneven, idiosyncratic little book, is a grab-bag of insights, aphorisms, common sense, wishful thinking, and quotations from Virginia Woolf, A.O. Lovejoy, René Lévesque, and letters to the editor of the *Globe and Mail*.

On the second to last page Jane Jacobs sums up her position:

One of the hang-overs of the Enlightenment is the notion that inmutability is natural. Of course it isn't; everything changes. No government arrangements last forever. The best we can hope for is that changes be constructive and flexible.

This statement is not about our present arrangements, i.e. the Canadian confederation. It's made with reference to sovereignty association.

This book restates Jane Jacobs' life-long commitment to change and diversity. She has an instinctive grasp of the primacy of ambiguity in all human endeavours for which many of us strive and which we would be happy to match. Whether she is aware of this or not, Jacobs' insights are remarkably feminist in the most profound sense of that much misused and misunderstood word. I recommend this book to anyone interested in a unique mind, not political answers... (I, 8, June 1980)



Gay Community Appeal Campaign '82

Gay Community Appeal is presently preparing for Campaign '82 and is accepting applications for projects that serve the interests of lesbians and/or gay men. If you have a project idea, one that will add something to our community, call (416) 869-3036 for application and guideline.



Illustration by Anne Quigley. (1, 7, May 1980)

Feminist Glaze on the Vertical Mosaic

Myrna Kostash

"What was your book about?" "Ukrainian-Canadians. The first Canadian-born generation." "What about them?" "For one thing, I tried to write about the community as a feminist." "Isn't that a contradiction in terms?"

Ethnicity. Feminism. Popularly believed to cancel each other out. We think of the ethnic communities — Italian, Japanese, Pakistani, say — and decry the status of women within them. Ethnicity: patriarchal families, phallogocentric religions, the *chador* and the bound foot, arranged marriages, continual pregnancy, wife-beating. For a woman to celebrate, insist on, her ethnicity is for her to embrace her oppression.

Yes and no. Yes, for the above reasons; for the reason that ethnicity, for as long as it is an immigrant and beleaguered culture, can be a conservative, defensive, repressive, and even reactionary force. This can go on for generations, for as long as the group assigns primacy to nationality.

I was a girl in the Ukrainian-Canadian community in Edmonton. In the Greek-Orthodox part of it, that is (Catholics were held to be more Roman than Ukrainian and the Communists were — hiss! boo! — internationalists), which asserted itself as the only credible and authentic representatives of Ukrainianness. The prepubertal me accepted this as normal (wasn't everybody a Ukrainian?) but the adolescent rebelled: the language embarrassed me, the church infuriated me, the culture bored me. At age fifteen I severed all identification with the Ukrainian Canadians *as a group* and took up Anglo-American culture with a vengeance.

There were many reasons for this but the one that interests me here is the incipiently feminist motivation of breaking with ethnicity *at adolescence*. For the child there were no negative consequences attached to being ethnic. For the young woman there were, and I could see them coming.

Ukrainianness. Preserving the culture. The culture: transmitted by institutions. The institutions: the church, the language, school, the family. The Ukrainian family: authoritarian father, the dutiful (God bless her!) mother, the respectful children. This

was, of course, an ideal. Nevertheless, I intuitively figured out that at the heart of this ideal, of the concerned attempt to preserve identity and resist assimilation, of the revivalism that is ethnic pride, lay the oppression of women. To be a "good" Ukrainian I would have to renounce my ambitions for action Out There in angloland. To serve "my people" in their struggle for cultural specificity I would have to maintain the so-called tradition of the Ukrainian woman: she goes straight from her father's house to her husband's; she devotes her time to the rearing of Ukrainian children (for this the mother must be constantly in their attendance, or they will be socialized by the anglo world) and the keeping of a Ukrainian home (needlework, breadmaking, ritual observation); she provides her Ukrainian husband with an oasis of serenity, deference, and loyalty, and she goes to church, there to be reconfirmed in her chaste, selfless, and complacent Ukrainian identity.

I turned and ran. In retrospect, I dropped out of the Ukrainian community as an act of self-preservation. The fact that I have since gone on to become a feminist, a writer, a socialist, a Canadian nationalist, only confirms what I instinctively understood then: I had to choose between ethnicity and personhood.

Yes and no. No, because it's not that formulaic. There is a heartbreaking contradiction that confronts every ethnic woman. To save ourselves from anti-woman ethnic culture we take on the assimilationist culture of the ruling class male. The WASP. The racist, the chauvinist, the colonialist. It's called becoming a Canadian.

On my way to personhood I repudiated my class and ethnic origin (they are inseparable in the first couple of generations), I ridiculed my community, women included, I refused any historical memory. It's called self-hate.

Impasse. To defend herself from Coca-Colization the Ukrainian woman must subvert her feminism. To defend herself from Cossackery, she must subvert her nationalism.

Yet today I call myself an ethnic feminist. In Edmonton there are many women who are simultaneously ethnic and feminist militants. Each has her own biographical

route to that dual consciousness but certain experiences are common to us all. Political radicalization in the sixties: through support for the national liberation of the Algerians, the Cubans, the Vietnamese, we learned to take seriously the national aspirations of the Ukrainians, too. (It was another instance of my self-hate that I celebrated the Cuban struggle, say, but thought that Ukrainian resistance to Soviet imperialism was ludicrous.) Through the ecology and counterculture movements, through pro-Québec campaigns, through Red Power and Black Power, through union struggles, through regional consciousness, through the movement for the liberation of women, we developed a coherent critique of patriarchal capitalism and its culture and ideology (including a suspicion that anglo disparagement of ethnic social relations had a racist tinge to it). As feminists we discovered that a history of women's heroic accomplishments in Ukrainian and Ukrainian-Canadian society had been suppressed. There *was* an alternative model to the "good" Ukrainian woman.

Through the hullabaloo around multiculturalist policies we discovered that not every element of the ethnic community had been bowdlerized and co-opted. From the history of radicalism in Canada we learned that our people had fought back as farmers, workers, teachers, artists, as well as nationalists. In other words, all kinds of experience and awareness came together to convince us that not only was it possible to act from a fused base of radical ethnicity and feminism, it was necessary.

The ethnic without feminism is up against the patriarchal Man. The feminist without ethnicity is up against the colonialist Man. Either way, it's up against The Man. But the radical (i.e., anti-capitalist) ethnic feminist is potent and doubly critical. If you don't believe me, think of the women of Québec. Better still, think of Viet Nam.

Granted that ethnicity is not nationality. But let's not quibble. In this time of mounting ideological and economic assaults on the lives of women, the ethnic *and* the feminist are engaged within us to fight the good fight.

(1, 3, December 1979)

Ain't Nowhere We Can Run

Judy Liefschultz

Broadside since its introductory issue in May 1979 has published information about and analyses of the nuclear issue. Judy Liefschultz's review below, and the following list of tactics to combat low-level radiation by Annette Clough indicate some of the concerns feminists and others have raised and continue to emphasize.

"We have strong senses and feelings of what is important, and we struggle with the words to describe what we feel." At a time when the issues seem so complex we are often unable to speak, Susan Koen's and Nina Swaim's *Ain't Nowhere We Can Run: A Handbook for Women on the Nuclear Mentality* answers the dilemma well. There are better books to read about the medical effects of radiation, conservation, or the technology of a nuclear reactor, but none so simple and beautifully written as this small volume, none so good at helping to sort out what feminism and nuclear power mean to everywoman — and what we can do about it.

There are statistics (and good references) on how conservation can save us more energy and money than nuclear power can ever produce. There is a handy guide to different kinds of radiation and their effects. The health hazards of radiation for women and children are discussed and illustrated.

But the focus of the book is on "ecofeminism," that is, women's connection with life forces and how nuclear power threat-

ens them more than any other technology to date. Nuclear power's reflection of countless other rapes that have taken place in the name of progress is touched on in sections summarizing the social, political, and economic effects of the nuclear mentality. Atomic weapons, job losses, and centralization of energy sources and decision-making are examples cited for their snug fit with capitalism and nuclear power.

Women are asking how the fight against nukes can be won when the grip and the myth of the patriarchy are so strong, so pervasive. Is this an issue women should devote their energy to or is it merely another cause for the left? The authors of the *Handbook* tell the stories of Holly Near, Rosalie Bertell, Helen Caldicott, Karen Silkwood, and others as an answer to these doubts. The not-yet-so-famous Women Against Nuclear Development (WAND), the publishers of the book, also tell their tale.

WAND started as a group of women getting together to talk about nuclear power. Some became involved through the Seabrook, New Hampshire, anti-nuke actions, others through Three Mile Island, and still others through their nursing and science careers. They looked at the work of women like Winona La Duke, a native Indian who is leading the fight against uranium mining on Indian lands in the United States. Their stories tell how women in their jobs, at their daycare centres, and in their communities are opposing nuclear

power while acquiring knowledge and skills they need for the fight. Women are using vigils, speeches, theatre performances, municipal injunctions, and their local libraries to fight nukes and explain why this is important for women. These women are insisting that sexism, rape, poverty among women, and the health of our children take their rightful place in the anti-nuke movement. The feminist connection is beginning to take shape.

Virginia Woolf's books *Three Guineas* and *A Room of One's Own* are still two of the most concise treatises on the social and historical imperative for feminism. In them Woolf asks questions we have yet to answer. How will women prevent war? How will we gain influence and effect change? If we must enter the professions and accumulate wealth, how will we use our skills and wealth differently than the men before us? While I worry that there are not enough engineers among us, and too few chemists, biologists, physicists, and geologists, the *Handbook* speaks very well to some of Woolf's questions. We must stop nuclear power. We must be ready with the tools and know-how for a new future, and we must now be preparing and awakening each other to be part of that vision.

"At last, when the man has all but destroyed our species, our sister earth, our children that we made in our own holy bodies, at last we are beginning to be shrill as banshees, and to act." (Robin Morgan, *Sisterhood is Powerful*.)

(1, 10 September 1980)

Miso vs. Millirems

Annette Clough

RADIOACTIVITY: HOW DO WE GET IT?
Sources of man-made radioactivity: nuclear power plants which emit low level radiation and dump radioactive wastes into nearby water sources; medical and dental x-rays and radiation therapy; microwave ovens; colour TVs; florescent lights.

HOW DOES IT GET US?

There are many different radioactive isotopes, the effects of which are not all known or understood.

The radioactive particles, in the case of fallout, absorb the minerals from the bones and blood, leaving the body unprotected and unable to carry on normal functions because it has no means of repairing its cells. X-ray treatments and radiation therapy destroy vitamins A, B, C, and E

and essential fatty acids. Toxic substances are formed from the destroyed malignant tissue but the body's ability to deal with toxicity is greatly reduced by the lack of vitamins and minerals.

SURVIVAL TACTICS

1. Drink miso soup. Miso is a paste made from fermented soybeans. It contains all the essential amino acids (forming a complete protein) as well as enzymes, vitamins, and minerals.

2. Take enough Vitamin C, E, B-complex (especially B⁶), and F (found in vegetable oils); they counteract the toxic effects of radioactivity.

3. Take enough calcium (which protects against strontium 90), iodine (which reduces the danger of radioactivity collecting in the thyroid gland), and magnesium (which should be taken with calcium to

promote absorption). See a nutritionist to determine your personal daily dosage or these vitamins and minerals or make sure you are obtaining them from your diet.

4. Use kelp, which supplies minerals.

5. Use lecithin, which helps the liver and blood vessels detoxify the body.

6. Take bioflavonoids, which protect against the harmful effects of x-rays.

7. Include in your diet seeds which contain protective nutrients (sunflower, buckwheat, millet and sprouted wheat, alfalfa, and soybeans).

8. Take panthothenic acid, which protects against cellular damage.

9. Get adequate protein to build up the body's resistance.

10. Take brewer's yeast, which contains proteins, minerals, and the B-complex.

11. Join the anti-nuke movement.

(1, 3, December 1979)

Reproduction from Plato to Nietzsche

Susan G. Cole

An important new book published in Canada in 1980 was The Sexism of Social and Political Theory. Susan G. Cole describes the theories which it analyses and indicates how each contributor deals with them.

It is possible that a new feminist theory will come from the pen of one of the writers published in *The Sexism of Social and Political Theory: Women and Reproduction from Plato to Nietzsche* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1980). Using some of the clearest thinking that has emerged from our movement, each of these writers has made a rigorous examination of patriarchal thinkers — Plato, Locke, Rousseau, Hume, Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche, each of whom was supposed to have come up with important theoretical constructs and breakthroughs. In the course of their discovery of the shortcomings of these thinkers, the essayists have determined what would be the fundamental elements of a feminist theory.

This book is not a primer. It is also not light reading. It is intended for a reader who is firmly grounded in the political texts. If you are interested in an introduction to the major political theorists, this book is not for you. Few essays reveal the intrinsic value of each philosopher in his context, and the breakthroughs of each philosopher are not examined and used to develop a feminist theory. That is, we hope, still to come. Instead, the book focuses on what each philosopher had to say (or neglected to say) about women and/or reproduction and how these sexist views weaken each theorist's argument.

I am not suggesting that we excuse each theorist's sexist assumptions with the dreary blandishment that they were products of their time. I am saying, rather, that someone not familiar with the specific achievements of these thinkers might conclude that these writers had the "wrong line" on women and that we shouldn't give them the time of day. Such an approach would be disastrous for the future of feminist theoretical development. Anyone who has identified herself with a woman's community, or with any community for that matter, addresses by necessity the questions with which Locke and Rousseau grappled in their studies of the social contract.

And Plato: unless one understands that Lynda Lange's carefully reasoned analysis is part of a feminist debate that still rages — was Plato a feminist? was he putting us on? — one is tempted to toss him aside after reading her drubbing of his work. In fact, Plato is one of the few theorists who is willing to identify reproduction as "a central fact of political life." As we will see, this is a crucial requirement for a complete political theory, and so we must give Plato his due.

In the *Republic*, while dealing with the practical set-up of the state, Plato devotes the entire fifth book to a discussion of the communism of women and children. His purpose is to draw women, otherwise cloistered in the home and separated from political life, into the body politic, and he understands that this cannot possibly be achieved without radical changes in the institutions of marriage and the family. He is still a fanatic about class; his ideas for the perfect mating scheme are confounding and often his playfulness can be downright upsetting, but he makes the claim outright that the difference of sex is not relevant to one's political status. In attempting to turn the ideal into practice, he asked the right questions.

Finding the right questions is precisely the purpose of editors Lorraine Clark and Lynda Lange in the *The Sexism of Social and Political Theory*. They reveal in their introduction that "women are not political animals in the major theoretical models of political society." This, as Clark explains in her essay on Locke, is because most of the major political thinkers have made three crucial assumptions. The first, and most damaging to the possibilities of a complete theory, is the assumption of man's natural superiority over women. The second is that reproduction is not a central fact of political life and is of no value in creating a significant life for man. The third is that the family is not a political institution but a natural one. "The main purpose (of this book) is to demonstrate that their theories rest on these (sexist) assumptions and that they would be vastly different theories if these assumptions were not made."

Besides, the essential goal of much of the political thought examined in this book is the dismantling of certain powerful institutions, a goal theory must share. Locke, as

co-editor Lorraine Clark says herself, was prepared to challenge the deepest principles of English land law, specifically that the monarch has no right to alienate man's property eternally. This is the whole point of Locke's treatment of property — to give to people (unfortunately only to men) the right to something which no king or queen could take away. This was serious business at a time when the monarchy was not the feeble institution it is today.

The core of Rousseau's work was the inspiration of the French Revolution. An aspiring feminist theorist working towards revolution cannot ignore him. Or consider this statement of Hume's: "Celibacy, fasting, penance, mortification, self-denial, humility, silence, solitude and the whole train of monking virtues ... (are) everywhere rejected by men of sense...because they serve no manner of purpose, neither advance a man's fortune in the world, nor render him a more valuable member of society.... We observe, on the contrary, that they cross all these desirable ends." Obviously Hume's purpose, disguised as it had to be, was to deliver a fierce attack on church values. Karl Marx, whose influence was huge, has to be challenged. But without Karl Marx's vocabulary, Mary O'Brien, who herself understands that Marx developed a valuable methodology for a new revolutionary approach, could not have come up with her own splendid construct, the "alienation of the male seed." Put simply, the flaws in the work of these men are not necessarily fatal.

For example, Clark describes how Locke wanted to justify the argument that children should inherit property. In order to strengthen his argument, Locke explains that men are superior, not by law, divine right, or arbitrary convention, but by nature. What sounds at first like a reactionary idea is actually progressive in its context. It means that no king, law, or anything external gives men their rights, but that each man has what later became known as "inalienable" rights to power and property. The difficulties with the theory are plain from a feminist standpoint. Locke cannot make his argument without maintaining the inferior status of women within the institution of marriage, an association which Locke, in order to be consistent, must argue is also "natural." and while the

• continued next page

Picking Up the Pieces

Mariana Valverde

In this article, Mariana Valverde examines the impact of feminism on socialist theory, with particular reference to Beyond the Fragments, a book she thinks is essential reading for all feminists committed to social change.

Beyond the Fragments by Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal, and Hilary Wainwright (London: Merlin Press 1979) is a text originating from political practice, notably socialist, feminist, and community organizing in Britain. Despite the fact that it constantly refers to local experiences, it is being widely read in Britain, especially by women and men whose commitment to feminism has led them to question some hallowed dogmas of socialist politics. To understand why this long and sometimes dreadfully written book is having such an impact, it is necessary to place it in its historical context.

The feminist and community movements of post-1968, according to the three authors, have been successful in generating much healthy grassroots activity, changing the consciousness of various sectors of society and bringing about many specific changes. However, their very grassroots

nature and the lack of an overall theory and strategy prevents such movements (anti-racist, gay, and anarchist groups are here included, as well as feminist initiatives) from building a stable, ongoing structure to link up the various struggles and to provide for radical changes in the whole society. Many socialists would claim that the Leninist (or Trotskyist) party is just what we need to go beyond the fragments: but the three authors, especially Sheila Rowbotham, present a powerful argument for why socialists ought *not* to recreate Leninist organizations. Her argument is also a reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of feminist politics, and thus deserves to be read by feminists committed to social change, not just by disaffected ex-members of socialist organizations.

IN THE BEGINNING

Although isolated women had been rebelling against patriarchal privilege for centuries, it was only in the mid-nineteenth century that a movement was created to give individual rebellions a context and a history. The reasons why the women's movement began when it did help to explain its complicated relationship to that other nineteenth-century movement, socialism.

During the 1830s and 1840s, French and English women who participated in the birth of socialism quickly realized that the concept of oppression, which had been developed to explain the condition of the working class, was applicable to them as women, not solely as workers. Flora Tristan, who has a claim to being the first socialist-feminist, wrote in 1844 that "women are the proletariat of the proletariat." In the United States, women involved in the abolitionist movement came to realize that their own condition was comparable to that of the slaves, and in Russia the emancipation of the serfs had a similar effect on women's consciousness.

The early socialists — Owenites in England, Saint Simonians in France — were not members of parties with central committees and electoral programs. Their groups were loosely knit, easily formed and disbanded, and advocated all kinds of "utopian" schemes for the regeneration of society, of the body, and even of the universe itself. They wanted to replace wage labour and competition by co-operation; and they believed that the oppression of women and the repression of desire were slated to disappear. Women were often key members of these groups, and personal

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• Plato, from page 13

theory purports to strip power from the monarchy and to weaken the force of conventional law, the theory ultimately puts property under the exclusive control of men.

With equal skill, Lange shows how Rousseau's ideal state makes the refuge of the home a virtual necessity for the "citizen." Rousseau, in order to make his claim, must argue that the family is pre-social and pre-political, a difficult notion to defend even from Rousseau's standpoint, since elsewhere he argues that any "association" makes for a "political" relationship. This tendency to identify all things connected with women's place as "natural" is an indication of the lengths to which theorists will go to mystify the role of women. They do so even at the expense of their own theories, creating some baffling contradictions.

Hume was another great mystifier. Steven Burns (the only male writer published here) decries Hume's celebration of the chastity of women and is complemented by Louise Marcil-Lacoste's examination of the same theorist.

Patricia Jagentowicz Mills literally takes

Hegel apart. Hers is one of the most successful pieces in the book simply because she takes more time to delineate Hegel's theory and to give it some semblance of rigour. This is not the easiest thing to do with a prolific writer like Hegel, the quantity of whose work is matched only by his typically German fondness for the minutest of details. In any event, the care with which Mills approaches the theory makes one wonder how such a complex thinker as Hegel could be so simpleminded on the subject of women.

Only Christine Garside Allen's paper on Nietzsche seems to be based on thin ground. Allen calls Nietzsche's attitude toward women "ambivalence," which is a drastic misnomer. That Nietzsche cannot decide whether he wishes to place women on the pedestal or under the boots of his brothers does not make him any less a maniacal misogynist than he was. Even when he celebrates women's virtue, which he defines in whatever way is useful to him at the time, it is plain that the man was imbued with a pathological loathing for the female sex. This is hardly ambivalence, nor should it be taken seriously in the first place.

Mary O'Brien provides the book's most

pleasurable moments. With her customary wit and elegance (the title of her essay, "Reproducing Marxist Man," serves up the irresistible pun), she takes on the great granddaddy of leftism. It is somewhat frustrating to read what is clearly a working paper for a much larger opus, but the fact that one wants more is mitigated by the welcome use of a little humour.

Having seen where the major political philosophers are wanting, and as long as we understand at the same time the extent to which they had something important to say about oppression, we can begin to ask the questions feminists must ask in order to emerge with our own theory. Because Lange and Clark have identified what those questions are, *The Sexism of Social and Political Theory* is an enormously important book. Because it identifies which questions are irrelevant, Lange and Clark's collection helps to clear away some of the myriad obstacles strewn on the way to that ever-elusive feminist theory. In fact, this book, though it is hardly the end of the road, brings us a crucial step closer to the point where we no longer will be groping for the pieces of the theory puzzle, but will have put them together, neatly and comprehensibly.

(II, 1/2, October/November 1980)

politics had a prominent place.

The early socialist movement, however, came to a bitter end. In France, the massacres of 1848 and 1871 remain to this day a reminder of the cruelty of the bourgeois state; in the more polite England, the Owenites disappeared into Chartism, which in turn dissolved itself into the respectable trade unions of skilled (and therefore male) workers of the second half of the nineteenth century. By the 1880s, Marxist ideas about organizing began to replace the earlier libertarian approach. Although workers were rather slow to join the new, tightly run organizations, with their official intellectuals and their obsession with state power, the Marxist-Leninist approach eventually replaced all other forms of protest (except some quaint revivals of anarchism).

The rhetoric of orthodox communism was very much influenced by the need to combat the armed power of the state with effective methods. Each worker's corpse became an argument for centralizing socialism and imposing a discipline. The party was seen as an army on the eve of battle: its triumphant rhetoric concealed a profound bitterness over past defeats and a sad resignation to give up all personal hopes until after the Revolution had been won.

The militarization of socialism meant that many elements of early socialism had to go. The plan for communal meals and collectivized child-rearing, the speculations about what free sexuality would feel like, were all put away in a jar on a high shelf.

Women thus became marginalized from the movement they had helped to create. They were acceptable only if, like Clara Zetkin and Rosa Luxemborg, they dedicated themselves to building class solidarity and worried about "the woman question" only in their spare time. Such women got very angry at the chauvinism of socialist leaders, but since sisterhood took second place to class-consciousness, their anger remained just that; anger.

Alexandra Kollontai, the only high-ranking socialist woman to question seriously the Leninist abandonment of sexual politics and the anti-feminist implications of authoritarian party structures, was notably unsuccessful in her attempt to have the Bolsheviks incorporate the legacy of the past. The Bolsheviks did indeed pay attention to those issues condescendingly labelled "women's issues," but they could not take up the feminist challenge to Marxist-Leninist concepts of theory and organization. Only in the late 1960s did Kollontai's challenge, backed this time by a powerful women's movement and by libertarian trends within socialism itself, begin to affect communist parties.

FEMINISM AND THE PARTY

As Hilary Wainwright points out in her in-

roduction, the revival of personal politics called into question not only Leninism and Stalinism, which were already discredited — especially in feminist eyes — but even the supposedly trendy Trotskyist organizations. Trotskyists opposed Stalinist methods of eliminating dissent within the party; but, in their relation to the ordinary people outside the party, they continued to rely on the assumption that "the manipulation of people is justified by the supposedly superior knowledge which leaders of revolutionary groups presume to possess."

Feminism, in its struggle to validate the experiences and thoughts of all women, must reject manipulation. It can never hoodwink people for their own good. This is one of the reasons that has led many women to reject the Leninist concept of the "vanguard party," about which Sheila Rowbotham has a lot to say.

The vanguard party consists of a small number of dedicated militants who "intervene" in the struggles of the "masses" in order to transform everyday conflicts, such as strikes, into revolutionary situations. This type of organization arose out of a real need, insofar as any oppressed group in struggle has only a limited vision of society and often finds it difficult to generalize from its own experience.

However, Rowbotham rejects the vanguard party because it sets up a victim-saviour pattern, and also because it relies on a one-dimensional view of consciousness. Vanguard parties assume that there is only one road between the present and the future, and their theory is largely concerned with figuring out where exactly on that road everybody is. (Some Trotskyist groups acknowledge that women or racial minorities are sometimes more revolutionary than the orthodox winners of the race, the industrial workers, but the model remains unchanged.) Rowbotham denies that there is only one road, and that, even if there were, any small group could know where it was: "The feminist approach to consciousness perceives its growth as many-faceted and contradictory. The model of the vanguard doesn't fit into this way of thinking."

In her critique of Leninism and Trotskyism, Rowbotham does not merely use feminist arguments to point out the misogynist deficiencies of socialism. She uses her feminist consciousness to help her ask the right socialist questions, with the aim not of dismissing Leninism but rather of building a post-Leninist, feminist form of socialism. She also uses her socialist experience to ask some insightful questions concerning feminism.

WHAT NEXT?

Feminists, echoing the utopian socialists, protested against the rigidity of Leninism, the discipline of the one-party state, and the use of theory to intimidate people.

Feminists also rediscovered the fact that the laundry of experience does not sort itself out by an automatic process of sedimentation, and that the division between the "personal" white wash and "political" coloured wash is to some extent arbitrary.

However, having rejected the Marxist-Leninist concept of politics as too rigid, feminism has found itself without a clear way to generate theory, write history, and carry the struggle forward without having to reinvent the wheel at every meeting. Rowbotham writes: "Our debates have been grounded in real conflicts but it has been difficult to generalize beyond the particular. We have no means for placing them in any context. Experience which is not theorized has a way of dissolving and slipping out of view." This rings true to me: most feminist organizations lack mechanisms to pass on their hard-earned wisdom so that the next struggle can benefit from previous ones. Either you were there and drew your own conclusions, or you weren't, and then you know nothing.

This lack of a central structure and of a continuous theoretical tradition associated with that structure is seriously hampering the women's movement today: faced with a powerful right wing and with a disturbing rise in individualist career feminism, radical women are relatively unorganized and powerless. In this respect, *Beyond the Fragments* does not give much in the way of strategic advice. Sheila Rowbotham herself, when pressed for such advice during her visit to Toronto last fall, said: "Well, a lot of women in England are joining the Labour Party." If the rise of the right pushes us from the frying pan of Leninism into the fire of social democracy, I'm not sure we'll be any better off. It is clear that the women's movement needs both to organize itself better and to build solid links with allies; if the building of such links on a Leninist basis is rejected, we have to be careful not to build them simply on a liberal, social democratic basis. Coalitions can of course serve a lot of useful purposes, but it is yet to be seen whether they can really fill the void left by traditional socialist organizing.

In any case, despite its lack of answers, this book does constitute an important step in the building of a feminist socialism by raising some extremely important questions. And, as Plato said, one can formulate a question only if one has an idea of what the answer would look like.

(II, 4, February 1981)

Renew Today

If your copy of *Broadside* is stamped "Sub. expired," don't miss another issue ... Renew Today.

Matriarchy: The Way

This outline of some features of matriarchal civilizations was the first of a two-part article published in Broadside. In it, based on anthropological findings, mythology, and her own intuition, Judith Quinlan describes matriarchal civilizations. The second part discussed how and why these civilizations were repressed and the evolution of patriarchy.

Judith Quinlan

Popular myth would have us believe that the patriarchy has always existed — a leftover from the prehistoric days of Man the Hunter. In fact, for 100,000 years, human history was dominated by Woman the Gatherer.

In the Mediterranean area (the "Cradle of Civilization"), patriarchal history started around 6500 bc, when waves of barbaric northern tribes invaded the existing civilizations. Their advance was bloody, characterized by genocide, rape, and destruction. These primitive tribes lacked technological sophistication, but over the next 6,000 years they managed to steal the technologies of the peoples they invaded.

This patriarchal advance has continued until now. By about 1000 bc, it had spread throughout northern Africa. By 100 bc it had invaded all of Europe and Britain. More recently the war that is patriarchy reached the Americas, when Spaniards exterminated entire tribes and Jesuit missionaries burned thousands of women at the stake....

In many parts of the world the patriarchy is still not completely established. Especially in the minds of women.

THE GREAT MATRIARCHAL DEBATE

Patriarchal historians and pre-historians generally admit the existence of matrilineal and matrilocal cultures throughout the world. They do not agree on the existence of what they call "true matriarchies." This is because they define a true matriarchy as a mirror image of the patriarchal state, only run by women. Such a state has never existed and I hope never will.

As feminists, we no longer need to waste our time on this purely semantic argument. I intend to use the word matriarchy to define a system of social interaction that predated the patriarchy and that can be described according to certain characteristic features.

THE STRUCTURE OF PRE-PATRIARCHAL CULTURES

The first common feature of all matriarchal cultures was recognition of maternity as a means of identifying kinship. Since it is women who have babies, this is a logical system.

Patriarchal anthropologists have dealt exhaustively with matrilineage as it relates to the inheritance of property. At the same time, many of them have been puzzled by the apparent lack of concern for property privatization in these same tribes. In fact, this has become one of their yardsticks for "primitiveness." What they have failed to see are the other implications of matrilineage.

Matrilineage

In a matrilineal culture, the primary human relationship is that between mother and child. On the basis of this relationship all human experience of love is then founded. This bond is supportive and nurturing, creating a race of people free from the sort of rejection anxieties and compulsive dependence that characterize patriarchal bonding. It is difficult for those of us brought up in the Freudian Family to fathom the far-reaching results of this fact.

In matriarchal cultures there is a remarkable propensity for peace, which is part of the reason that they have been so easily destroyed by warmongers. Rape is unknown to such people, and the communistic dream of wealth-sharing seems to have been a reality for most of human history.

When kinship is never in doubt there are no "outsiders," and thus no "territorial imperative." When the tribal psyche is based on the consciousness of motherhood, people are able to maintain a perspective on life that extends far beyond a single lifetime. Decisions are made in full knowledge of the past and full acceptance of the future. Children are given every opportunity to learn and grow.

In fact, many of the "impossible utopian dreams" of present-day visionaries are nothing more than memories of our matriarchal past.

Matriarchal Spirituality

Religion is a patriarchal invention. Before the patriarchy, there was no split between the material and spiritual lives of people.

Philosophical and ethical considerations permeated the entire consciousness of living. So to speak of matriarchal religions is already to distort the facts. All the same, many symbols of pre-patriarchal thinking recur in different forms throughout the world. This is because the questions that people have needed answered are universal.

The first question a self-conscious being might ask is "Where did I come from?" The obvious answer is "from my mother." (The first question in the Baltimore Catechism is "Who made me?" The answer is "God made me." This has confused thousands of schoolchildren for years.)

A universal matriarchal symbol is the First Woman — the Divine Ancestress — the Great Goddess. She has many names and appears in many forms, but she exists everywhere. Hundreds of names for the Goddess have survived the ravages of patriarchal mythbreaking, and her stories are still being retold and remade.

From this single idea, our matriarchal ancestors developed a complex understanding of our place on this planet. I will try here to outline some of the richness of matriarchal symbolism, but first I must digress to the seemingly unrelated field of patriarchal exo-biology (the study of life in the universe).

Recent thinking within this very "new" science has formulated a theory about the pre-conditions for the development of life on any planet. There are four main necessities for life, according to these eminent scientists.

The first is large molecules, probably carbon-based. Carbon is the simplest element capable of complex bonding, and one of the most abundant elements in the universe. It also has the unique property of being able to form energy-absorbing structures (the benzene ring).

The second element of life is water. Again, it uses abundant elements. It is fluid in form, creating very mobile life forms. Water is bipolar — i.e., it is a good solvent for other elements and ions.

The third prerequisite for life is an atmosphere. Without the exchange of gases, the chemical reactions necessary for life would not be possible.

The fourth need is an energy source, since living things are, by definition, anti-entropic, i.e., they develop towards complexity, thus requiring energy to live. This energy source is ultimately obtained from

We Were

the nuclear reactions of the nearest star.

Back to matriarchal thinking. Life, according to our foremothers, is the complex interplay between four elements — earth, water, air, and fire. This sounds very familiar?

The Great Goddess is associated primarily with the moon, a rich symbol of life. The moon is always changing, and changeability is the essence of life. The moon goes through four phases every month, corresponding to the four elements of life. The moon's cycle corresponds to the menstrual cycle of women, the basic cycle of human creation.

Another digression. Before the invention of electric lights and before women hid inside at night, all women ovulated while the moon was full and menstruated during the dark of the moon. This is because small amounts of light at night stimulate the pineal gland and the hormonal changes of ovulation are triggered. This is another "new" discovery of patriarchal science that is being used now to treat women with irregular periods and dysmenorrhea. So the cycles of the moon not only symbolize woman's menstrual cycle — they regulate it, as they regulate the tides of the ocean.

This idea of cycling, spiralling life was symbolized in the different aspects of the Great Goddess: the different Ages of Woman.

First there is the daughter goddess. She is the learner and the Amazon. She is the new moon, and air energy, and she rises in the east. She is all hope and movement and new beginnings. She is like a knife — sharp-edged and swift. She is the springtime of the year, holding the memories of our youthful selves and the promise of the future. She is the dawning of the day. She is the feminist-activist. The Changer.

Then there is the full moon goddess. She is the creator and the mother. She is fire energy and mature sexuality, and she dwells in the warm south. She is the Great Mother of fecundity and fullness of living. She is like the bough of the tree — sprouting leaves and blossoms, patient and trusting. She is the summertime, when life has been realized, and the heat of the day. She is the feminist-artist, The Namer.

The waning moon corresponds to the Crone, the goddess of wisdom. She is the old woman, the hag, the oracle. She has accumulated the knowledge of living and she makes magic and spells with her power. She is water energy and she dwells in the west, where all things set. She is the dreamer —



Illustration by Lynn Crawford. (11, 1/2, October/November 1980)

full of subconscious knowing. She is like a full cup — brimming with the sweet wines of life. She is the setting sun, the harbinger of death, which is the path to rebirth. She is the autumn of the year, when the harvest is gathered. She is the feminist-visionary. The Seer.

The goddess of the dark moon is the earth herself — She Who Cannot Be Named. She is the menstrual goddess, carrying all the deep mysteries of life and earth. Her blood signals the possibility of conception; she is the healer. She is the mystical link between thought and matter — the spiralling power of women. She is the witch of the North, and the wintertime, when stories are told. She is the spinner of tales and truths. She is the nighttime. She is the lesbian-feminist. The Lover.

All four aspects of the Great Goddess are contained in every woman; all four elements of life are contained in every moment of being. Life is a constant interplay

among these energies, always different, always moving. This cosmic dance is the matriarchal vision of life.

Patriarchal mythology has split the many aspects of the Goddess, turning each to the ends of control and power over life. The daughter/amazon has become the perfect victim, the child-woman, the brainless blonde. She is the virgin pussy. Astarte has become Marilyn Monroe.

The full moon goddess has become the bland earthmother, the perfect housewife, kept on a sexless pedestal apart from her sisters. Hera has become Jane Wyman.

The Crone has become the bitch and the whore. She is the crazy baglady and the hysterical female. She is the temptress with claws. Hecate has become Mata Hari.

The dark moon goddess has become the killer — Elsa, she-wolf of the Nazis. The butch broad, the ball-breaker. Kali has become invisible.

• continued next page

• Matriarchy, from page 17

It is the splitting of the elements of life into those that are adored and those that are feared that has become the basis of patriarchal religion. That which is feared must be conquered, and in this game all the symbols are female. Woman and the earth must be controlled. Death-fearing is merely the other side of the coin from death-worship. The dis-united patriarch seeks death in his attempt to transcend fear. This is the philo-

sophical basis of misogyny. In patriarchal symbolism, the life-death spiral is a closed circle.

Pre-Patriarchal Sexuality

There is another "new" patriarchal science afoot, called sociobiology. In its present form, led by the King of Insects, Edward O. Wilson, it is merely patriarchal woman hatred buttressed by genetic rationalization. These boys state that over the course of thousands of years, human behaviour and needs can influence the course of human evolution. Their mistake is that they identify human needs as patriarchal-defined male needs only.

Given the fact that the major problem of human history has been dominated by the needs of women and the behaviour of women, we can formulate a very different view of human evolution.

The sociobiologists try to explain the fact that women have no estrus cycle by saying that this evolved from the woman's desire to please the man's innate need to fuck on demand. In fact, the release of the human female from the instinctual demands of animal heat has created a situation where women are free to choose their own sexual gratification. There is in the human no overwhelming mandate to fuck at all. Our sexual evolution has been a response to women's desire to constantly explore and expand our sexual natures.

The same can be said of the fact that women have no narrowly defined erogenous zones, that breastfeeding has become an orgasmic experience, that we are capable of sexual arousal during all parts of our menstrual cycle, and that we can sustain and repeat orgasms. According to the boys, each of these "phenomena" requires separate, elaborate explanations, thus breaking their own rules of scientific method — find the simple explanation first.

The sensual needs of women have pushed the physical boundaries of the race, becoming perhaps the single most progressive force in the evolution of human civilization.

In matriarchal societies, there is no unnatural fusion between love and sensuality. Our foremothers were not bound to the definitions of possessive love. Lesbianism was not only accepted, but was likely the primary sexual activity of matriarchal women. Men were honoured and enjoyed for their role in conception and for the pleasures they could provide women. The temple was the centre of worship to the Goddess, who was a symbol of life and therefore best honoured through free sensual living. The priestess of the Goddess, in patriarchal times, became the temple prostitutes, and the temple became the forerunner of the whorehouse.

Our foremothers took their sexuality seriously and joyously, unbound by the patriarchal splitting of heterosexual/homosexual, monogamous/polygamous, genital/

non-genital.

A Postscript on Parthenogenesis

Many researchers have reported in pre-patriarchal cultures a "failure to understand the link between copulation and childbirth." They attribute this oversight to the differences of the primitive mind in connecting an effect with a cause when they are nine months apart.

These same "primitive" women developed agriculture, the wheel, fire, astronomy, language, art, writing, mathematics, medicine, etc. In fact, every patriarchal technology is the result of a matriarchal invention turned to the purpose of war.

Our matriarchal ancestors could predict the eclipses of the sun and moon, occultations of planets, paths of comets, the behaviour of the weather, and the rhythms of the earth and the sea with an accuracy only recently equalled by patriarchal scientists.

Medicine was developed into a fine art, and the average woman was capable of very acute sensing and fine-tuning of the body's functions. Such women were in constant contact with the working of nature and would have observed countless copulations and births among animals with much shorter gestation periods than women. To suggest that these women managed to overlook something at the very root of their philosophy is, to me, ludicrous.

All the same, the fact remains that women often attributed pregnancy to the light of the full moon (when they ovulated), and many societies have been reported in recent times which do not link pregnancy with heterosexual coupling.

Parthenogenesis (self-reproduction) recurs in much matriarchal mythology, and was taken up later by the patriarchs, who espouse parthenogenesis in bestowing divinity to their son-gods.

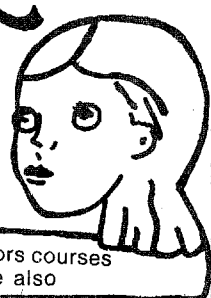
The biological workings of human parthenogenesis are not as complicated as one might imagine. Under certain conditions many animals display parthenogenetic capabilities (lizards especially, and lizards are common symbols of the Goddess). The change of the X chromosome to the Y chromosome is small and happens occasionally in human cells. Perhaps the myth of Adam and Eve is, after all, a reversal, and men were a later mutation among the race of women.

In any case, the biological working of parthenogenesis is a minor feat in nature, compared, for example, to the metamorphosis of the butterfly. The only reason that this possibility has not been seriously examined to date is because of the patriarchal bias that insists that heterosexual coupling is a "higher" stage of evolution and therefore basic to man. In feminist terms evolution is not a tree, with man at the top, but a web of possibilities and inter-connecting lives.

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Neurosis on a Sliding Scale

Ottie Lockey

It's time to question some assumptions and practices of the institutions of therapy. People with serious mental illnesses, if they find their way into the therapy maze, are forced to undergo some form of psychotherapy, whether in-patient, out-patient, chemical, or conversational. People with common garden variety problems of daily life may voluntarily enter into some form of therapeutic treatment, a situation in which one has a certain amount of freedom of choice.

People with no money have no choice. They are probed, drugged, and researched, proving the axiom that "working class" problems are psychotic and "middle class" problems are neurotic. People whose lives have been twisted by the poverty of their environment can't afford the luxury of neurosis; these people ignore minor problems and only those who totally "freak out" are forced into therapy by our courts and schools. Those of us fortunate enough to be able to choose a therapist complain about things like depression, relationship crises, and/or fear of flying. It's the latter group I want to consider.

The abuses of traditional therapy, meaning Freudian or neo-Freudian psychiatry based on some form of psychoanalysis, are well known. There's no point reiterating the readily available evidence which documents the destructive treatment women in particular have received at the hands of traditional and sexist therapists. (For a detailed description and analysis see Phyllis Chesler's *Women and Madness* and Dorothy Smith and Sara David's book *I'm Not Mad, I'm Angry*.) We know about all that.

In the attempt to transform therapy — to relieve pain, to raise consciousness, to make the revolution — feminist therapists have accepted the basic assumption that we all need therapy at some time in our lives. Remember, this is a modern phenomenon: therapy as we know it was invented within the last century, and most of its pseudo-scientific tenets are based on so-called clinical research (that is, therapists' belief in themselves as healers) which, to be honest, sound more like testimonials from reborn Christians I've known. Why should the stress and conflicts of our lives be presumed to be fodder for assorted experts in human relations and emotions?

What happened to friendship? I suppose friends get you through the rough periods when your therapist is otherwise engaged. Trust, caring, support, challenge, love, validation are qualities people look for in their

friends. In friendship, two women meet as equals and give and take these qualities as they meet to share work, play, or social events which are integrated into both their lives. Friendships take time and energy to build; they aren't instant events and there are no price tags. The therapy relationship begins the minute you (client or patient) cross the threshold of the expert's office: the arrangement is sealed by the exchange of money. Instant gratification as therapy replaces friendship.

Like many others in our society who are searching for alternative ways of coping with an alien society, feminists tend to forget that therapy is big business. The need has been programmed, cultivated, and researched in much the same way that a new toothpaste is designed. The product is prepared, people are trained in its use, and then the distribution begins. The increase in numbers of people signing up for therapy is astronomical; somebody out there is making money.

The variety of modern therapies, many of them discovered and developed by males trained in the traditional schools, is bewildering in its extent. One can choose to work with a therapist in any of the following ways: primal scream, gestalt, bioenergetics, transactional analysis, Jungian, Reichian, or Rogerian; one can beat pillows, talk to chairs, analyse dreams, or recreate the birth experience. All these options are available in individual or group packages — the price varies greatly, but is at least as expensive as taking up downhill skiing or sailing as a hobby. Dabbling in therapy has become for many people a recreational activity. Therapy junkies switch from one group or one variety of therapy to another searching for friends, lovers, and peace of mind.

Therapy as a lifestyle has replaced religion, politics, and friendship. A certain set of values accompanies most of the new therapies; this is the gospel: "do your own thing," "love yourself," "if you want to change the world change your head," "be open, nurturing, sharing, vulnerable and willing to work through problems." Unfortunately, the consequences of loving oneself and working through one's problems often leave no time for any kind of political commitment or concrete action. Many organizers and activists of the sixties have discovered Arica, Transcendental Meditation, EST, or a flavour of group therapy and have diverted their political energy into self-actualization. "Self-actualization" is short for total absorption in *me* and whatever makes me feel "high."

The new language of therapy, which has so quickly infiltrated the way we speak to each other, involves levels of meaning only initiates can fully comprehend. The jargon has been called "psychobabble" and owes its existence to equal parts of Freud, Madison Avenue, and computer "input/output." What we used to call "Freudian slips" bob in and out of our conversation, drawing together therapied people who understand the symbolism. For example, try talking about Nancy Friday's *My Mother/Myself* with someone who is deeply involved in therapy. Friday's reactionary book points the finger of blame for daughter's problems right back at mother: therapied women clue in saying "oh yes, you really have to get into your anger toward your mother." Sounds like Freud updated and swallowed whole by women who should know better. But anger is "in"; people are spending fortunes getting in touch with their anger. One of the so-called benefits of the new therapies is "permission to act out anger" with pillows and plastic bats. After that, who needs the revolution?

Therapy is the great liberal cop-out. The danger with the human potential movement is its narrow field of interest — the individual self. A kind of narcissistic absorption in the isolated self covers up all responsibility for the social, political, and moral issues facing us as members of a world in strife. This egotistical blindness is presented as a state of grace: "there's nothing you can do about infibulation in Africa or nuclear radiation at home, but you can grow as an individual through therapy." Individual "growth" at the expense of the human community as a whole. "I'm ok, you're ok" and its ilk are examples of rationalizing the status quo in the interests of our industrialized corporate society.

Radical therapy tries to avoid the liberal cop-out. Based on the motto "change, not adjustment," radical therapy attempts to integrate politics into therapy. But the problem remains that the therapeutic experience becomes addictive, and clients don't want to stop getting their fixes. Not to mention the fact that radical therapists, like traditional therapists, tend to be in perpetual therapy themselves. It's a kind of reaffirmation of the faith and a convenient escape from the world.

Another tenet of modern therapies is equalization of the power between client and therapist; to ensure this, a contract with time limits is often negotiated. The untouchable pipe-smoking, note-taking professor watching the patient vulnerably

• continued page 35

In Depth

In May 1981, Toronto feminists had a special treat: the opportunity to meet and listen to Adrienne Rich and Nicole Brossard, two of the most well-known and influential

lesbian feminists in North America. The following two excerpts are taken from interviews with these two writers.



Nicole Brossard. Photo by Beverley Allinson. (II, 8, June 1981)

Nicole Brossard:

Jean Wilson

Since the publication in 1956 of her first book, *Aube à la saison*, Nicole Brossard has been transforming both the form and content of Québec literature. As well, she herself has been transformed since then by her personal growth towards a feminist consciousness and her acknowledgement and expression in her life and writing of her lesbianism.

Born in 1943, Brossard, "like a lot of people," wrote conventional love poems at first. However, when she was about 18, she began to take poetry seriously and after publication of *Aube à la saison* became one of the most influential young writers in Québec. In 1965 she co-founded *La Barre du Jour*, a literary journal whose purpose was to provide a place for young writers who were experimenting with language but had few outlets in which to publish. At that stage of literary development in Québec there were few literary journals and critics were speculating about whether there even was a Québec literature, just as critics were doing in English-speaking Canada. "At that time, it wasn't even called, 'une littérature québécoise,' but rather 'une

Eve Zaremba

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

It is seldom indeed that the writer, the artist known only through her work, lives up to expectations on personal acquaintance. Perhaps our expectations are unrealistic, baseless; perhaps we tend to project superhuman qualities on our heroes. Whatever the cause of disappointment in other instances, I am pleased to report nothing of the kind occurred with respect to Adrienne Rich. Her visit to Toronto can only be described as a

triumph. Both she and Nicole Brossard bowled over a whole lot of supposedly hard-nosed feminist activists, political dykes, and more or less awed Canadian writers who were lucky enough to meet them and/or smart enough to skip whatever else they were doing and attend the Writers in Dialogue evening....

The segment of the interview reproduced below is the most overtly political/pragmatic statement made by Rich about matters which concern the political and perhaps personal lives of many of us. It is by no means the most interesting or most controversial segment.

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

At first glance Adrienne Rich appears to be a small, brown-haired woman of indeterminate age, whatever that signifies! She has quite remarkably direct, clear, dark

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

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

Adrienne Rich:

Fictions and Realities

littérature canadienne-française.' We said, yes, there is a Québec literature, and you'll see it in our writing." As well as publishing in *La Barre du Jour*, Brossard and other writers also brought to public attention the work of early twentieth-century Québec poets already unknown to the new generation of poets.

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

In 1970, Brossard published her first novel, which is simply called *Un livre* and which has neither characters nor story in the usual sense. It is essentially a series of fragments of lives as observed by the person recording them, that is, the author. As she remarked in the conversation on which this article is based, Brossard had assumed previously that only poetry could express what was most important in life, namely

"extreme pleasure and extreme pain." These two extremes are, of course, very difficult to describe accurately in any form. But Brossard realized that although she would never be able to describe them accurately, she was in fact not limited to poetry and would be able to write all her life because "I'd try to write about those vital things and to travel through the infinite possibilities in language. That I published my first novel in 1970 is also due to the fact that I needed more space, even though in that novel there is really no story and my characters are only pretexts for experience."

After *Un livre*, Brossard wrote two more novels and then returned to poetry with *Mécanique jongleuse* and *Masculin grammaticale* in 1974. About that time, her personal world began to change radically. She more or less simultaneously read such feminist writers as Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millett, and Ti-Grace Atkinson; she fell in love with another woman; she became pregnant. "For me, my feminism and my lesbianism are related to those two realities — pregnancy, which united me with *all* women, and lesbianism, which revealed my

own territory to me. As well as reading all those books and doing my own consciousness-raising, Luce Guibault and I did the film *Some American Feminists* (NFB 1976). She and I also worked on *La Nef des sorcières*, a feminist play first performed in Montréal, and when I returned from making the film in New York I recognized that there was no feminist newspaper or magazine in Québec so I decided to start one." The result was *Les Têtes de Pioche* (*Pick-Axe Heads*), a monthly feminist newspaper which was published from 1976 until 1979.

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

As long as we view language as a mental space by which we can ex-

• continued page 22

The Taste and Smell of Life



Adrienne Rich. Photo by Beverley Allinson. (11, 8, June 1981)

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

What is happening down south (in the USA) is that there is an enormous pressure, a pressure I think on everybody, but certainly specifically on feminists, to yet once again shelve feminist issues, or what are seen as 'merely' women's issues rather than overarchingly human issues, and save the planet from nuclear holocaust, save the planet from extermination through carcinogens and pollutants and save the planet from localized wars, counter-insurgency, etc. This, in spite of the fact that ... it seems that it should make a difference ... that what is new about the New Right is that it is taking the Women's Movement as a target. This has never happened before. We are being targeted now precisely because of the kind of profile we have. We are being told from many quarters that we should march as women on the Pentagon, that we should as women demonstrate on Mother's Day against the war in El Salvador, against nuclear proliferation, etc. There has been a lot

• continued page 23

• Brossard, from page 21

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

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

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

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

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

To answer the question more con-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lesbian sensibility contributes to the shaping of contemporary literature by influencing my reading, my thought, my writing. It is needed by all lesbians, visible or not, as well as by any woman questioning 'reality.' It means exploration, travelling through cities and myths, through memory, through the future, and, of

course, this is done through language. And that is a voyage that starts with your skin.

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

...

We have the imagination of our bodies, of our sex, and most of all of our skin, which synthesizes time and space. Imagination is travelling through our skin, all of its surface. A woman's skin sliding on a woman's skin creates a slipperiness in the meaning of words and makes a new version of reality and fiction possible. It gives what I would call a tridimensional vision. It introduces the possibility of understanding how the patriarchal system works subliminally and therefore how it is so effective in hypnotizing women.

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

(II, 8, June 1981)

• Rich, from page 21

of pressure to join coalitions with gay men; to join coalitions with the left, the male left. I think that there is a lot of feeling that, after all, these are incredibly urgent issues. The statement that Helen Caldicott makes at the end of her book — that everyone black or white, male or female should shelve all other causes and join in the cause of saving the planet because otherwise other causes will have no meaning — is something which a lot of people are shaken up by. I guess the question is what is an appropriate feminist stance in the face of all that. I know that a lot of feminists and lesbians have formed affinity groups, acting as separate enclaves in the anti-nuke movement, participating in demos and actions, that they have felt that they were to a certain extent keeping their integrity by being in an affinity group situation, which is the way that the anti-nuke movement is structuring itself: "I don't care what your politics are as long as we agree that we will keep this planet from being destroyed" or what have you.

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

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

somehow more universal.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

But I am not a humanist.

(II, 8, June 1981)

Nancy Jane Sinclair

Registered Therapist



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Abortion:

Toronto Abortion Committee

The Toronto Abortion Committee is a sub-committee of the Women's Services Network in Toronto. The committee was formed out of the realization that women's services and the public in general were unaware of the abortion crisis in Toronto. The sub-committee's purpose is to research and provide educational information on the law and existing local conditions, as in literature such as that which follows. Originally, the article was in two parts. This is an excerpt only.

INTRODUCTION

Fact: physicians, not women, continue to decide whether an abortion shall be performed or not. *Fact:* it is getting harder and harder to obtain an abortion. *Fact:* highly organized right-wing forces are working to limit the availability of abortion in Canada.

Despite the myth that abortion is widely available, many of us have to struggle against incredible sexism, discrimination, and humiliation (to say nothing of red tape) for the privilege of terminating an unwanted pregnancy. And our silence condones these struggles. With our silence we turn our backs on those women who need an abortion. As well, our silence endangers the paltry gains we have made toward reproductive freedom for all women....

Despite obstacles and setbacks, feminism is perhaps the most important social change force of our time. In this climate of change it is especially important for us to continue reminding women's rights advocates that reproductive freedom is the most basic of all human freedoms.

Our goals are clear: we want abortion to be removed from the criminal code; we want access to safe and effective birth control; we want free-standing women's clinics; we want abortion patients to be treated with dignity and respect; we want medical coverage for the abortion procedure and an end to up-front payments for abortion patients; we want reproductive freedom....

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

In the past 15 to 20 years there has been a worldwide liberalization of abortion restrictions, including Canada's 1969 Omnibus Bill, due to an international concern about population control, increased urbanization and industrialization, increased participation of women in the work force,

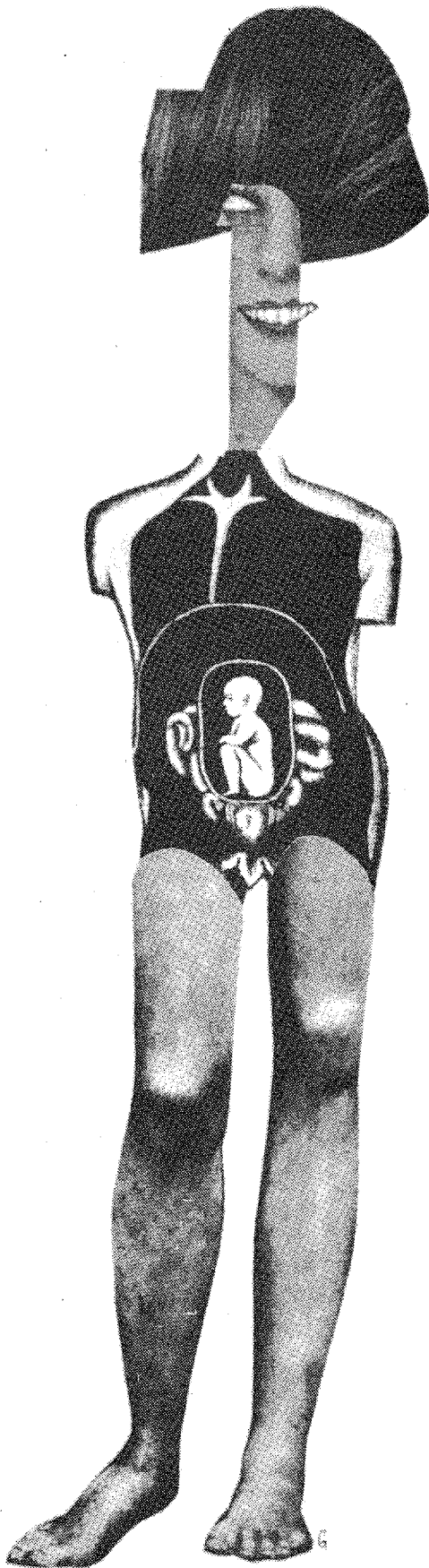


Illustration by Gail Gelter. (II, 5, March 1981)

It's Not Free and Easy

and relaxation of sexual mores. Of all the factors contributing to abortion and contraceptive reform, what has been noticeable by its absence is a concern for the individual woman's right to control her own fertility.

The ideology of population control and to a large extent the modern "birth control" movement have little interest in women's control of reproduction. Population control seeks a reduction in birth rates, an end that justifies some rather suspect means, including testing contraceptives on Third World women, dumping products, forcing sterilization, and approving unsafe contraceptives.

The current birth control movement was born out of socialist feminist struggles in the early 1900s to legalize contraception for working class women. In spite of women's involvement, the birth control movement has been co-opted, and to what end?

Although recent advances in birth control technology and liberalization of abortion restrictions in no way address the real feminist concern about reproductive control, that fact seems to have been obscured for many women who breathed more easily when it became possible to get a legal abortion. Abortion reform has given us some relief from the tyranny of our biology, but has offered only an illusion that we are close to achieving control of our bodies. Recent advances have done nothing to alter the status quo: control of reproduction, whether by sterilization or abortion, still rests firmly with medical, legal, political, and religious institutions.

The illusion of reproductive choice is beginning to shatter as the sociocultural pendulum swings from a high point of liberalism in the early seventies to what appears to be a dramatic and repressive swing to the right. We are now witnessing a tightening in abortion services and the threat of regressive reproductive health policies.

As our bodies continue to be buffeted by social forces, it becomes increasingly clear that our struggle for reproductive rights and indeed for equality itself has just begun. Reproductive freedom is the basic and essential condition for the equality of women. Until we control our own persons, no amount of tokenism, media hype, or social reform should mask the reality that we are not equal partners in this society....

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Globally, the availability of abortion is directly related to religion and the part wom-

en play in the economy. It is no surprise that countries which have very restrictive access to contraception ensure that women are trapped in the role of breeder whether it affects their health (from multiple pregnancies) or not.

- Early progressive abortion reforms started in 1929 in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. In 1946 the term "anticipated exhaustion" became part of the criteria for allowing abortions, as part of the physical and emotional health of women seeking the abortion. By the mid-1960s the Scandinavian countries started exerting tighter controls and women were forced to seek abortions in Poland. The Eastern Bloc countries had fairly progressive "abortion on demand" policies in the mid-1950s, but with the political upheaval in these countries in the early 1960s tighter controls began to prevent unlimited access to abortion.

- Abortion policy in China is strictly related to population control. When an abortion is performed within 50 days of contraception, a woman receives 10 days off work at a loss of pay — more an incentive not to get pregnant again than a benefit to women's rights. At least in China, contraceptives are more widely available than in other countries, and some male birth control methods are being researched.

- Not only is contraception unavailable in Ireland or Spain, but in the latter a recent law was approved whereby "all living things have a right to life." Women either leave the country to seek abortions or risk an illegal abortion.

- In Switzerland abortion is very costly and is available usually in private clinics. In some cases a woman is forced to see a psychiatrist.

- In the Caribbean, especially in countries which are still part of the Commonwealth, abortion is in the Criminal Code or Penal Code and the definition of physical and mental health is still a decision largely in the hands of male practitioners. This applies to the Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, and the Virgin Islands. On smaller islands like Antigua or a Central American territory such as Belize, abortion is only performed if the woman's physical health is at risk.

- In the world today it is estimated that there is one induced abortion for every three births, illegal abortions being a leading cause of death among women of child-bearing age.

It is a tragic irony that during the 1970s, several countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Britain, and Fiji undertook costly studies to see how abortion laws

were being applied. In many instances where it was shown that the law gave unequal access to abortion (as in Canada), or that hospital gynecological services should be upgraded (as in Britain), or that the father should have no power to veto an abortion (New Zealand), there have been no attempts to act on any of the recommendations.

In Canada, the woman is not present during therapeutic abortion committee meetings which consider her request for an abortion. If she is refused an abortion by the committee, she has no right to appeal the decision. Hospitals are not prevented by law from setting quotas, and the longer a woman must wait for her abortion, the greater her stress.

Another stumbling block in this procedure comes from determining who is responsible, legally, for requesting the abortion. Two-thirds of the hospitals with TAC's require consent forms signed by the spouse as well as the woman wishing the abortion. In some cases, even if a woman wishing an abortion is separated, mutual consent is required. This is a hospital policy, not a legal requirement. In September 1980, the Canadian Medical Association passed a resolution to ask hospitals to stop requiring consent forms for abortions.

Because of the arbitrary procedure in establishing and operating TAC's, abortion is not available to many groups of women. Rural women often have no access to safe abortions within their local communities. In larger centres, women from low socioeconomic groups are unaware of the complex procedures required to obtain an abortion and if their own doctor is opposed they are not usually referred to a doctor who is supportive.

THERAPEUTIC ABORTIONS AND THE LAW IN CANADA

Although an abortion under medically approved conditions is a relatively safe operation it is the most difficult one to obtain in Canada. It is a mistake to assume that abortions are unconditionally legal in Canada; the federal Criminal Code in 1969 made abortion "legal" only under certain conditions. In practice the interpretation and implementation of the law is left up to doctors, hospital administrators, and strong lobby groups such as the anti-abortion movement. The important issue of where an abortion can occur, under what conditions a woman may receive an abortion, and who shall decide whether she

• continued next page

• Abortion, from page 25

meets these conditions are all set out in the law. However, none of these important issues is determined by the woman and is basically decided by strangers. The abortion law allows for the formation of a TAC in "accredited or approved hospitals." The law requires that a woman prove that the pregnancy will endanger her life or health. These committees are empowered to implement the law by using a legal definition of a woman's "health" to determine whether she can obtain the abortion. The World Health Organization defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well being, and not merely the absence of infirmity or disease." However, each committee can arbitrarily determine what constitutes a danger to a woman's health.

A TAC consists of three doctors appointed by the board of governors of a hospital. Hospitals with medical staffs of three or fewer physicians cannot have such committees: of 1,348 civilian hospitals in 1976 in Canada, almost one-quarter were ineligible. Of those eligible, only one-fifth established committees — the law does not insist that hospitals set up committees. Hospitals which have not established TAC's generally have based their decision on religious, moral, and/or professional/ethical grounds.

Two-fifths of the population live in communities which do not have eligible hospitals. In Ontario, approximately one-third of the hospitals have set up TAC's. Of these, 21 have never approved or performed an abortion, another 81 performed only 136 abortions in one year, and the remaining 8 served the entire province of Ontario.

A fundamental question is, why are there not more hospitals providing abortions? In some cases, the answer is pressure exerted on publicly funded hospitals by anti-"choice" groups. In others it is lack of interest in women's concerns.

Once a committee is established, there are no guidelines for how often it should meet. In some cases it has never met, in other cases it meets infrequently. Since the physicians are appointed, they are not necessarily sympathetic to or supportive of a woman's choice regarding an abortion. These physicians are mostly male. Their responsibility for determining whether a pregnancy is a threat to a woman's "life or health" becomes awesome. They are being asked to act as advocates, judges, and surgeons, using professional, moral, and psychological grounds for their judgements....

The bureaucracy first confronts a woman when she must see a physician to confirm her pregnancy. Only a member of the medical staff at an "approved or accredited hospital" can apply to the TAC to request an abortion. If a woman's physician

is not a member, she must be referred to one who is. If the TAC decides more information is required, it may adjourn and request such information, thus further prolonging the pregnancy and potentially endangering the woman's health.

The law as it now exists not only results in long, red-tape procedures with vague, ambiguous guidelines, but it endangers women's health by the very nature of its structure. The process takes far too long to provide safe abortions. Many women do not know their legal rights and if a woman's personal physician is opposed to abortions she may never get past the first legal loophole. The bureaucratic nature and administration of TAC's results in a process that is unwieldy and puts the whole procedure in the hands of the medical profession, lobby groups, and hospital administrations, and out of the hands of women.

WOMEN AND MEDICINE

Traditionally, the doctor-patient relationship has been similar to that of parent and child. The doctor is seen as the god-like, all-knowing, all-powerful expert who dispenses cures; the patient is the grateful, passive recipient of the doctor's knowledge and skill. Feeling ignorant, vulnerable, and scared, especially during an illness, many people prefer to give responsibility for maintaining their health or curing their illness to the doctor. And, of course, many doctors are only too happy to fill this role.

Most often the doctor-patient relationship consists of a male doctor and a female patient. Only 7% of the doctors in the United States are women, less in Canada. In 1977, 26% of the medical students at the University of Toronto and 53% at McMaster University in Hamilton were women, an improvement over the past. But still most doctors in Canada are men.

As of 1978, in the United States, there were fewer than 2,000 female obstetricians-gynecologists out of 20,000 and almost no senior female faculty members training the current generation of gynecologists. In Canada, approximately 92% of gynecologists are men.

Although men are in the majority as doctors, women are in the majority as patients. According to a study done nationally in the United States, it was found that "women average 25% more visits to the doctor each year than men, and we take 50% more prescription drugs than men and we are admitted to hospitals much more frequently than men." Part of the reason we are prime consumers has to do with our relationship to pregnancy and childbirth and the effects these changes have on our bodies.

The image of the woman patient as an emotional, hysterical hypochondriac still exists in the minds of many doctors. The traditional concept of the weak female suf-

fering from the "sickness" of puberty, pregnancy, childbirth, and menopause has left its mark on today's medicine. A textbook on obstetrics and gynecology published in 1975 advises that "the traits that compose the core of the female personality are feminine narcissism, masochism and passivity"....

The issue of control is a major factor in many doctor-patient relationships. This is most apparent in matters of women's health — pregnancy, abortion, childbirth, birth control, menopause — where predominantly male doctors often make arbitrary decisions regarding women's reproductive lives. A male doctor has written that many of his colleagues have a strong desire to control women and that when it comes specifically to abortion, some of them feel threatened if women can dispose of the proof of male potency — the fetus — at will. This attitude is also reflected in how judgemental doctors can become about both the procedure itself and the women seeking abortions...

Negative, judgemental attitudes are often held by doctors who sit on TAC's. This means that many women may not be granted permission for an abortion, particularly in small hospitals. At the very least, male members of these committees often make very condescending or "humorous" comments about women seeking abortions.

patient is the attitude of many hospital staff. Some nurses go out of their way to treat an abortion patient with hostility or contempt. Often an abortion patient is placed in a room near the maternity ward or the nursery where newborns are kept...

In Toronto, other problems experienced by women seeking abortions include doctors who refuse abortions unless the woman agrees to be sterilized; doctors who insert IUD's without the patient's knowledge; doctors who sexually assault, harass, demoralize, or punish patients, and hospital staff who have negative attitudes towards abortion patients. There are some clinics which have stopped performing therapeutic abortions because the chief resident in gynecology appointed for that term has been anti-abortion. Finally, some hospitals will not allow a doctor to perform more than one abortion on the same patient, and different hospitals have different procedures.

THE NEW RIGHT AND 'ANTI-CHOICE'

There are forces, other than bureaucratic, which limit women's access to safe, legal abortions. It is no coincidence that anti-choice groups and other components of the New Right have consistently targeted abortion with well-organized, well-funded campaigns. The possibility that women might gain control of our own bodies is a massive

threat to the status quo.

"Right to Life" groups (or "anti-choice" as we prefer to call them) are well known for their blatant so-called "pro-life" attacks on women's right to choose whether to bear a child. They are politically aligned with other conservative forces that fight against nuclear disarmament, gun control, civil rights, homosexuality, and equal rights, and they put a lot of time and money into the fight. If they win, women are the ultimate losers...

Anti-choice groups try to create the impression they have many supporters. But in March 1979, a poll of adult Canadians indicated that only 5% wanted stricter abortion laws and 84% either favoured the law as is or supported its liberalization.

In a social climate of change and stress, where demands are being made on individuals to make new and difficult personal choices, anti-choice forces represent clear cultural identities, rigid sex roles, the nuclear family, and heterosexuality. Free access to abortion, the anti-choice forces argue, would do away with motherhood, love, and nurturing and all that these are dependent on. Women would become murderers, not nurturers...

Anti-choice groups have developed tactics to promote their philosophy on abortion in the community at large. They become a dominant voting force in a hospital and then elect an anti-abortion board of governors. Subsequently the TAC in that hospital is disbanded and no more abortions are performed. Local materials containing "life-like" aborted fetuses are published in flyers and booklets. Speakers often present high school audiences with their anti-choice slide shows, accompanied by discussions of how abortion threatens the species of man and causes male impotence, how one rarely if ever gets pregnant from rape, and why one should not go through an abortion trauma after a rape trauma, but should have the child instead.

On the political front, anti-choice groups harass vulnerable candidates, introduce in Parliament dozens of private members' bills that are anti-abortion, and lobby for legal guardianship of the fetus. United States President Ronald Reagan is pledged to implement a "human life" amendment to the constitution, which would ban all abortions in the US and confer the legal status of personhood on the fertilized egg. In Canada, anti-choice forces are lobbying to have the rights of fetuses recognized in our constitution. Everywhere it is the experience of women working in the women's health field that it is becoming increasingly difficult for women to obtain abortions. There is the fear that one day a woman may not be able to obtain an abortion in Toronto at all.

(II, 4, February 1981)

Incest: Secrets All in the Family

Alicia Dowling

Frightened, oh you bet your life I'm frightened to sit down and start this article. It means opening up a whole tender area for me that I would like to think I've dealt with. I am a twenty-eight-year-old nurse and I was involved in an incestuous relationship with my father for approximately 3 years — from the time I was eleven to fourteen years old. I am the oldest of five children in a middle-class blue collar family. Since my mother worked full-time outside our home, I cooked, did laundry, cleaned, and generally took care of my younger brothers and sisters and Daddy. Though occasional terrifying arguments punctuated my childhood, I remember it primarily as a warm, loving environment.

Always "Daddy's girl," I was accustomed to being physically close to my father as well. So it was not unusual one morning after my mother had gone out for me to make my way downstairs to the living room where my parents slept and cuddle up to my father. This morning I sensed something different, however; his voice took on a muffled, husky tone while he pulled me closer to him.

I wondered what the hard object was that seemed to be pressing into my buttocks but tried to ignore it and be comforted by Daddy's words: he was "so glad to have his little girl with him." As his hands ran over my body caressing me, I began to relax and believe that surely whatever Daddy was doing to me must be all right because he would always protect me and allow no one to harm me. This was the first of many times I was to repeat this litany during the next three years. I struggled to believe that Daddy was protecting me.

Early in the relationship I had no idea what label to attach to what was happening between Daddy and me. I knew instinctively, however, that this was a secret. I considered telling my mother many times, but realizing that I would break up the family made it impossible for me to act.

I knew that Daddy's touch on my body felt good but I was frightened by his glazed eyes, husky voice, huge erection, and his demands that I touch him. Although vaginal intercourse was not a part of our relationship, I participated in masturbation, fellation, and anal intercourse. I rarely needed to be physically forced; emotional blackmail was usually enough since I wanted to make Daddy happy.

As I grew older and sex became a topic of discussion with my friends, I realized that there was something terribly wrong with

what was happening between Daddy and me. I heard stories about women who asked for rape, and I decided that I must be responsible for this sinful relationship. I had seduced my own father! By this time Daddy and I had established a pattern. After he masturbated me to orgasm, feeling a mixture of guilt and pleasure, I would do whatever he wanted and get away as quickly as possible.

In order to do the things he asked, it was necessary to distance myself and blur the experience. It was an instinctive form of defence at which I became very adept. The ease with which I blur reality has haunted me for years.

The pain of the relationship eventually overshadowed the pleasure and I refused to be a partner for him again. But my guilt was so profound that I kept the secret for another five years. Although I had relationships with boys my own age I couldn't integrate sex into those relationships. I felt that sex was the only thing I was good for, but when approached I couldn't respond sexually. The boys called me a "cockteaser."

I told my boyfriend the secret I carried when I was nineteen. I confessed to a crime and I couldn't believe him when he insisted that it wasn't my fault.

Bringing all these long-suppressed feelings back to consciousness was like opening a floodgate. I felt responsible for a relationship which contravened one of society's strictest taboos. In my own eyes I was something lower than a piece of shit and I began to live a lifestyle consistent with this self-image.

In my job as a cocktail waitress it was easy to find men who wanted one-time-only sex with a young woman. Imagine how it feels to crawl out of bed with someone whose name you can't recall and try to remember where you are and how to get home. This promiscuity was a way of punishing myself for the sexual pleasure I had experienced with Daddy. I also overdosed on pills but without satisfaction: part of me didn't want to die.

Recovery was a long slow process. I approached three male psychiatrists — each one more interested in the details of the physical acts than in my feelings of worthlessness and pain.

At this time I began to understand that I was a victim. The extent of my anger and rage at my father frightened me. But on the outside I was successful in my work, attractive, intelligent, and nurturing. I had never felt more totally alone in my life.

• continued page 32

Island in the Sun:

Stephanie Martin

12:01 am, August 6, 1962. I was sitting on a mountainside in Kingston, Jamaica, overlooking the national stadium. I watched the Union Jack lowered and the Jamaican flag raised. There was a loud roar of excitement as Jamaicans cheered. The thrill was nationwide: independence from Britain; we were an independent nation. Most of us that night had no real concept of what independence would mean in our future and, except for those "British" who wanted us to remain a colony, we shrugged off any of the apprehension as a vestige of our colonized past.

But that apprehension was an intuitive warning that a country does not become independent overnight. The mind, colonized over centuries, remains so and the Third World remains at the mercy of an economic order that disfavors it. August 6, 1962 was the beginning of a new era, of national pride, of a sense of self as Jamaicans, the first official day of a distorted reckoning with a past history which set, and continues to play out, the harsh and violent scenario that now almost defines the reality of the island.

Jamaica became a nation with a population just under 2 million people, the majority of whom were black and poor. Like Canada, Jamaica is a country of immigrants (the Arawaks, the original inhabitants, were annihilated by the Spanish). Unlike Canada, however, the majority of Jamaican immigrants was forcibly removed from its country, Africa, and transported halfway across the world to supply the slave labour needed to advance the wealth of the other "immigrants" — the British.

Deprived of their culture, wrenched from away, and out of touch with their social base which was the African family, the new slaves became automatic victims of the English culture, and the insidious class system that British settlers willingly adapted to their new environment.

After 300 years of colonization, the Jamaican mentality continues to perpetuate typical colonial attitudes of self-hate and a national sense, hell-bent for destruction, that nothing can be achieved by us as a people. It was with this legacy of "poor black," "middle class," "privileged brown," and "wealthy white," the labels of mutual distrust, that Jamaica became independent.

Jamaica's economic structure as a plantation colony naturally was not designed in her favour. Jamaicans were not self-sufficient, as most of their needs were imported

and their resources exported. The bauxite companies (international), plundering one of Jamaica's primary resources, earned 27.5 million pounds in 1962 while the government received a 3.7 million pound handout for the product. In the same year, monies coming in from Jamaican emigrants totalled more than the revenue the Jamaican government received from bauxite. Essentially, even as an independent nation, Jamaica was still not unlike a colony, economically organized to suit an international market in an unbalanced world order that favours the rich and yearly increases the burden of the poor.

The political unrest of the 1930s, the forming of the two-party system that stabilized around 1944, and universal suffrage set the political scene as we know it now. The 1960s, under the Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) government superficially spelled economic progress, but the underlying problems — unemployment and the general dissatisfaction which began to stir protest among the people — made the economic scene a set of meaningless statistics. An active black consciousness began to emerge and a more political awareness of Rasta, strongly opposed by the government, began to develop.

In 1972 the People's National Party (PNP) under the leadership of Michael

Manley came into power with a majority mandate. Manley's platform of social change, egalitarianism, later defined as democratic socialism, inspired and excited many Jamaicans. His subsequent eight years in power have brought to Jamaicans a new political perspective and new insight into Jamaica as a country. At the same time, and tragically, Manley's years in power have also brought more unemployment, disillusionment, and violence.

The critical factor is that the two political parties are more concerned with the relationship between the factions than with the lot of Jamaicans. The preoccupation is with obtaining and holding power — at all costs — while Jamaica's economic problems continue to go unsolved. Whereas observers of history note that violence usually begins among the disaffected masses, in Jamaica's case the moral breakdown began at the top, among political leaders for whom the stakes, particularly after independence, were extremely high.

Political activity became closely linked to violence in the 1960s. Rumours of politicians arming men circulated regularly early in the decade and by the elections of 1967 and 1972 guns had become a part of political life and the tools of political terrorism, thus establishing a syndrome of the daily violence still going on in the island. It was



Photos by Stephanie Martin (I, 10, September 1980)

Violence of the Sons

obvious by 1972 that the employers had lost control of their political thugs. Gunmen are now considered an integral part of Jamaican society. Their victims? The poor, of course, and of late in larger numbers — women.

The city of Kingston is the area that seethes the most. While many Jamaicans emigrated to England and the United States in the past 30 years, women in particular leaving with the hope that children would join them later, a great number of Jamaicans from the rural areas sought refuge in Kingston, where they hoped to find work. Kingston teemed with the new arrivals and unemployment inevitably soared, the number of skilled labourers remained low, and the over-crowded city became a factionalized, ghettoized, political jungle. Within this jungle, women, almost entirely without political power, play a role that may be the source of their current status as the victims of violence.

Many of those who left the rural areas to live in Kingston were women. They came looking for work in the domestic service. Their relationships with men were either casual or based on the hope that a man might offer some financial assistance for the children that were born at unusually high rates. A woman by the age of 23 had an average of 4 children, and invariably supported them on her own or left them in the care of a female member of the extended family. The men, without work, invariably left the family, leaving women to eke out a living with a minimum wage of \$24 a week — in inflationary times — in an atmosphere of fear and violence.

A large percentage of Jamaican women have complete responsibility for their children. Absence of the father is in part a throwback to the slave culture, in which a father's place was never secure. He could be removed at any time and marriage was very much an institution for another class. Unemployment is the other large part. The father is now accustomed to being without work and sees this as a sufficient reason to abdicate responsibility for his family. In fact, siring children becomes almost a surrogate activity for work, and Jamaican men spread their seed almost cavalierly. But their involvement with children in practical terms ends there.

For the child, the only stable relationship s/he has is with the mother. Apart from being the breadwinner she is also the sole source of discipline and as the child gets older both tasks become more difficult (belying the old Jamaican saying that "a child costs nothing"). The lack of paternal influence and the excessive reliance on his mother has an effect on a boy child when he

becomes an adult. he may have no "role model" as we know them, but he is reared with the favour and deference accorded to sons over daughters.

He is literally served by his sister. The social bias, however, has no apparent explanation in an environment where the patriarchal model boys must look for to justify their dominance over women is nowhere to be found. In Jamaica, it is the inability of women to provide a reason for male dominance that men resent. She has not, either by her actions, her strength, or her frequently authoritarian control, redefined for her son's benefit male dominance as the natural order of things. As a consequence there is conflict between the symbol of authority in the home — woman — and her evident powerlessness in the broader society.

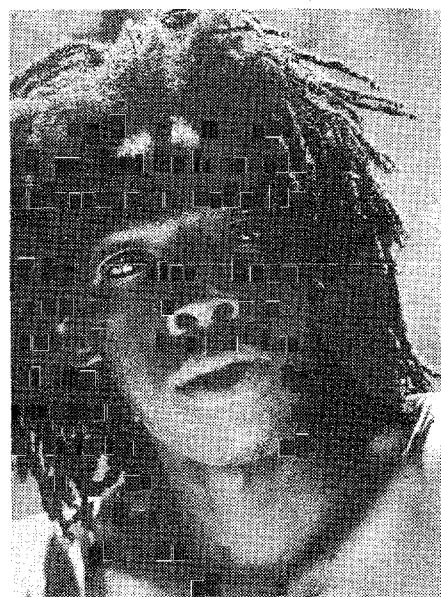
Research done in the 1960s on the abandonment of Jamaican children indicates that most women had the most difficulty with male children between the ages of 5 and 15. Women seem reluctant to take on the responsibility of boy children, understandably, given the obvious difficulties of socializing them. The implications are grim. Where are these boys now?

One can safely assume that with female migration to the cities and the ever-increasing hardships that accompany life there, many children born in the ghetto remain there. Growing up with violence and over-crowdedness, Jamaican youth is disenfranchised,



hardly educated, and with no apparent future. It is conceivable that we are looking at many of Jamaica's gunmen, now aged 14 to 18 years.

They see a Jamaica with over half its population in one city, with an economic situation worse than it's ever been, with much of its middle class leaving the island,



with unemployment at 30% nationally and an unbelievable 60% in Kingston, a Jamaica with an immense foreign debt that sucks 54 cents out of every dollar made in the tourist trade and from exports into interest and repayments, a Jamaica whose prime minister has called an election for September 1980 (which he lost), thus providing an excuse for gun-toting Jamaicans to go on a rampage. And a rampage it has been, as murders average 4 a day.

Many of those murdered heartlessly are the mainstay of the culture — women, many of them as old as 80 years, and children, perceived in these crazed circumstances to be dispensable. Nothing seems sacred. Those who carry guns prove the meaningless of their own lives. The phenomenal incidence of rape in the cities is the outpouring of misogyny that cannot tolerate the only source of stability on the island. It is tempting to rest with the notion that this is a hate war between ideologically opposed political groups. But many of the victims are not partisan.

I was 14 years old when I sat on that mountain watching the Jamaican flag raised. I was young and perhaps my aspirations for Jamaica were naïve. My more mature perceptions bring with them a certain bitterness. Independence brought to a collection of colonized men a craving for power that overwhelmed the needs of Jamaicans as a people. The few opportunities for economic development were squandered, giving way to the scramble for guns that has left Jamaica a battleground for the desperate and violent.

And women get caught in the crossfire.

(I, 10, September 1980)

Home on the Range

Darlene Lawson

"The Range" is the nickname given to the cell-blocks in which prisoners are kept. Below is part of a feature published by Broadside on women in Canadian prisons.

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

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

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

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

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

have come into conflict with the law in small numbers, and usually for "female" crimes related to prostitution and abortion.

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

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

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

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

While it is disturbing to see that violence as a reaction to their environment appears to be increasing among women in the same proportion as men, clearly, given the type

of female crime primarily on the increase, women are chiefly interested in improving their financial circumstances. Female offenders are women and as such experience the same discrimination in employment and training which affects women in general and women in lower socio-economic and minority groups in particular. It is little wonder that they have broken into the ranks of illegitimate capitalism.

Conviction rates for women have also increased. In 1949, the proportion of arrested women who were subsequently convicted was 79.4%; by 1966, the conviction rate had risen to 90.26%. Between 1968 and 1972 the conviction rate for men and women charged with criminal offences was identical — 88%. The only discrepancy is found in conviction rates for offences under the Narcotic Control Act and for offences against property with violence, where the rates for women are lower. But the gap between men and women convicted in the latter category had narrowed from 20% in 1968 to 12% in 1972. Not only are police more willing to arrest a female offender, but judges too are prepared to convict. When the social fabric is threatened by unemployment and crime, it seems that the system will sacrifice the myth of what is female to maintain social control.

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

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

The belief that prisons are necessary to protect the public from lawbreakers is an illusion, since most offenders are not in prison. But of the women in the Kingston Peni-

tentiary in December 1977, 37 were convicted of narcotics charges, 17 for fraud, 16 for robbery, 6 for break and enter, and 19 for other crimes. Only 32 women were convicted of "dangerous" crimes: 19 for manslaughter, 9 for murder, and 4 for kidnapping. So 90% of all female prisoners are no more of a threat to society than the thousands of other offenders (both convicted and never caught).

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

Prisons *do* function as a form of punishment for a handful of women. By making an example of those most desperate and sometimes damaged few, prisons act as a vehicle of political coercion and as a weapon against the poor. Who is caught is not

an indication of the extent of the crime. As middle class women become executives and managers, it follows from the data that they will also become embezzlers and party to such moral crimes as environmental pollution. But they will not be sentenced to prison. Women who come into conflict with the law, particularly those who are imprisoned, are those with few options. These most disadvantaged women are, as women have always been, the victims and scapegoats.

Has the goal of the women's liberation movement simply been to overthrow stereotyped female roles to allow women to share equally with men ulcers, status, high incomes, criminal activity, arrests, and convictions depending on one's class? Crime will not be eradicated without a radical change in our values and a drastic restructuring of our social and economic institutions. Prison reform necessitates a reduction of prison population, the restoration of human rights, and a reduction of authority. Money is available in our society — it is a question of where it is going. Public pressure is needed to bring about the recommendations of the many reports written since the Kingston Prison opened in 1934 — the Archangeault Report of 1938, the Ouimet Report of 1939, the Report of

the National Advisory Committee on the Female Offender of 1977. Funds must be allocated to community agencies working with female offenders to find housing and jobs, and for counselling in social skills. And those very few who must now be segregated because they are dangerous require a much more appropriate facility.

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

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

(I, 6, April 1980)

Faith of Our Fathers

Bernadette Maxwell

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

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

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

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

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

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

I am asked to describe my "personal journey" to this position. How do I reconcile my feminism with the sexism of my

church? Indeed why am I a believer at all? While I'm a little uncomfortable with personal journeys, I recognize the validity of the request.

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

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

• continued page 32

• Faith, from page 31

This kind of religion just doesn't stand up when you're a young woman coping with an unhappy marriage and a vague sense that all is not right with the world and your position in it. So eventually I drifted away, as they say. Although I never thought of myself as a "fallen away" Catholic, I did not, in fact, believe in God — though I might have tried to argue that I did. The God of my childhood was not to be encountered in the reality of my life. That God was remote and otherworldly, not involved in the life of the world. He was, in fact, a "false god," an idol. I didn't even have to smash him; he just crumbled and disintegrated from sheer lifelessness.

Later, when I came to faith, I wrote:

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

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

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

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

love. Hence all that is not of love is not of God. Love is not a sentiment at all, but rather an attitude, a way of living. This attitude involves respect and active caring for all human beings.

So, now that I am "back in the Church," how do I deal with the obvious problems — dogma, political conservatism, sexism? Dogma, which used to be very problematic for many Christians, is becoming increasingly less so. Even the word itself seems to be falling into disuse. Quite right too, because dogma is static while Christianity is an evolving mystery understood by each generation in new and more profound ways. To free oneself from the pedagogic approach of the old catechism and hard-line dogma is to open oneself to all that is living and true in the Christian faith. The Scriptures are rich beyond telling, full of wisdom and wonder, fresh insights and the pulse of life.

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

But there have always been women and men of faith who find in the Gospel a truth which has placed them in opposition to their Church in many respects. In the light of the Gospel and current political and philosophical understanding, they find ways to fight against their Church's corruptions, distortions of truth, misdirection,

and ossification. Those who "lose" their faith because of the wickedness of the Church have a rather meagre faith to begin with. Indeed, it would be better termed a naive trust in human institutions. There is now a Theology of Liberation, composed of several branches, which seeks to redefine the role of the Christian community in the evolution of society and the liberation of all people. It is in communities where people are actively seeking the truth and attempting to live the Gospel that Christian faith lives and grows and enriches the lives touched by it.

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

(I, 9, July/August 1980)

• Incest, from page 27

I met and married a gentle, sensitive man whom I felt would protect a weak frightened person like me. He was outraged at what my father had done but my growing anger at Daddy expanded to include my husband as well. We had many difficulties in the early days of our marriage, difficulties related to my inability to trust anyone lest that trust be betrayed again.

I began to talk with other women, hoping to find someone who understood my anger and could support my feelings. I found a friend whose father had abused her sexually. Something inside me cracked as I heard my fears and feelings in some other daughter's words. I wept. I was not alone any longer.

Still, my energy was spent in containing the rage that now threatened to erupt at any moment. I found a therapist whom I could work with. At last I had a safe place to allow the rage to surface. I fought with my shame, pain, and most of all, my hatred of Daddy.

With the help of the therapist I swore and screamed and hit out, telling my father my pain and anger. It was not important that he hear those words, rather that I articulate my childhood experience of hurt and bewilderment. Then I felt ready to let go some of the burdens of the past. I made lists, burned them and cried. Later I made a list of new feelings in red letters, feelings that I wanted to celebrate.

I celebrated with the therapist my belief in my own strength, worth, and beauty. My marriage has become a freely chosen partnership. And this summer I was able to touch my father and tell him I still care for him.

I still don't know if my mother was ever aware of our relationship. I'm past wondering why she didn't protect me, if in fact she knew. She is and always has been a loving, affectionate, and supportive parent. I choose to believe that a great deal of my survivor's strength is an inheritance from my mother.

(II, 7, May 1981)

Through Women's Eyes

May Sarton:

Slow Recovery

Philinda Masters

May Sarton is a prolific writer. She has produced at least 20 novels and as many books of poetry, plus several journals. Her latest work, *Recovering: A Journal* (Toronto: McLeod Publishing 1980) is a year in the life of May Sarton recovering from a depression.

Journals, as a form of literary pursuit, have limited uses. In the old days, people wrote journals, essays, and letters for other people's amusement, because fiction was not supposed to exist — *Gulliver's Travels*, written in 1726, was meant to be swallowed verbatim as a true confession. Novels were regarded as tacky and immoral. Jane Austen wrote biting of trashy gothic romances vs. high art novels in *Northanger Abbey* in 1818. But now that novels as an art form have been around for a couple of centuries, we're experiencing a resurgence in the popularity of non-fictional journals.

What makes a good journal? The best of them are gems of social history written by eccentric characters long dead, like Samuel Pepys: "Got up betimes, ate rack of mutton and quail stew for breakfast, had Sally pick the nits out of my hair, saw the king beheaded, watched the fire of London, supped with Oliver Cromwell's Chancellor of the Exchequer, and so to bed." How could he lose? Other good journals were written by Virginia Woolf. *A Writer's Diary* is a brilliant compendium of the pithy and profound thoughts Woolf had on the art of writing, and of being a writer. It helps that Virginia Woolf was an upper class Englishwoman who lived in Bloomsbury Square and who wrote and published experimental novels back in the heyday.

By contrast, *Recovering* suffers in that it has no form, except that of a chronology, it has no dramatic tension, no build-up or resolution, and it has no theme. In fact, it's hard to say what Sarton is recovering from.

That's my chief criticism of the journal. We are led to believe that we'll be treated to some insights, as Sarton struggles along the road from depression to recovery. But the struggle, let alone the resolution, is barely hinted at. It's mostly left unsaid, politely, as befits the well brought-up New Englander Sarton undoubtedly is. (Sarton herself talks about the trouble she has expressing her emotions, but that's not particularly satisfying in a book about struggling with emotional trauma.) We know that

she was recovering from a bad review in *The New York Times* of her last novel, *A Reckoning*, because she tells us so on page 20; that she is recuperating from a mastectomy (page 117); and that she is suffering from the end of a difficult relationship (pages 115 and 185). I don't want to make light of Sarton's pain, but if she's going to write a book about it she should let us know what it feels like so we can get involved. Otherwise, what's the point?

If there is a theme to this journal, it's that people who are recovering from whatever unnamed disaster need the daily humdrum routine of domestic life. On this, Sarton is exquisitely evocative. Her writing style is spare and clean, measured and soothing. Her tone is rational and controlled, like a light summer breeze rippling through the window into an orderly kitchen. Every day, Sarton roots herself in nature, in her environment — we end up knowing more about her garden than her personal, inner life — and proceeds from there.

From the third-storey study of her house by the sea, Sarton struggles with loneliness and eventually invites a friend to move in; she explores the daily necessity of writing

her journal and considers the nature of journals ("I find the journal form suspect because it is almost too easy. It is a low form of creation."); she writes of her hopes for having recovered the creative energy to start a new novel by the end of the year.

Sarton spends, by her own estimate, 80% of her working time responding to letters from her readers. It is these readers, mainly women — women who are suffering disintegrating marriages, who live alone, who've fallen in love with another woman at the age of 50 — for whom I suspect *Recovering* was written, and it is these women who will be most appreciative.

But in the end, Sarton has written *Recovering* for herself, as a salve to open wounds, to soothe herself into health. In the last entry of the journal she writes: "Rage is the deprived infant in me but there is also a compassionate mother in me and she will come back with her healing powers in time. In fact if I have learned anything in this year of recovering, that is what I have learned." I only wish she could have taken us along with her on the path to that insight.

(II, 3, December/January 1980/1)



MP Pauline Jewett, reading *Broadside*. Photo by Jane Hastings. (II, 6, April 1981)

Tillie Olsen:

Reading in Requiem

A memorial service for Chaika Waisman, mother of the writer Adele Wiseman, was held on April 12, 1980 at Trinity United Church in Toronto.

The event was unique in many respects. Tillie Olsen, American feminist and writer, read her novella, Tell Me a Riddle, to an audience of 150. The story describes the slow death of an old woman afflicted with cancer. Chaika Waisman died of cancer.

Tillie Olsen had recently read Old Woman at Play, Adele Wiseman's account of her mother's folk art of doll-making, and had wanted to meet both mother and daughter. She learned of Chaika's death in January 1980, and came instead to meet Adele, whose work (The Sacrifice and Crackpot) she had long admired, and to read her story as a tribute to Chaika.

A few friends were to gather in the Wiseman living room, but the list grew until it became evident that a different format was necessary. The result was a wide assortment of women, many from the literary community, and many from the Feminist Party of Canada, whose communication network attests to the strength of the feminist community in Toronto. One writer in the audience was Anne Cameron, whose account of the evening is reprinted below.

Anne Cameron

Tillie Olsen's *Silences* came to me as a Christmas gift from my agent and good friend, Nancy Colbert. The book arrived in my life at the precise time I most needed it and I devoured it the way I devoured books when words were new and fresh to me and both the world and I were younger and less tired.

I've been in Toronto most of the past year, working very hard and feeling increasingly homesick for the west coast, and when Liz Brady told me Tillie Olsen was going to be in Toronto doing a reading as a memorial to Adele Wiseman's mother, as an expression of her respect for Adele's work, a "thank you" for the profound effect Adele's writing had had, I knew I had to go.

Both before and after the reading, Liz Brady said she couldn't begin to imagine someone like Norman Mailer coming north to share with an audience of men because of Pierre Berton or Farley Mowat.

It was wonderfully and uniquely Woman. Woman Truth, Woman Sharing, Woman Response, Woman Love, and most of us wept, openly and even happily. Totally fitting that the experience happened in the basement of a church; I doubt the building

has been better used in the past fifteen years, and I know, the way I know that though it is raining as I try to write this, the sun will shine again, if not tomorrow, soon, it was a truly pure expression of the power of Love that moved us all so deeply.

Tillie Olsen is a small woman with soft grey hair and a face that mirrors her every emotion and reaction. A lifetime of hope and hurt, puzzlement and joy is written there. I felt as if I was falling into her very eyes and yet I couldn't tell you what colour they are. Her voice is soft, and she uses it to heal, she takes words and loves them with her mouth, tongue, and voice, gives them to your ears, to your heart, and makes you feel whole again. In no physical way does she resemble my grandmother, her accent is totally different, and yet many times during the evening I was again on my grandmother's lap being strengthened and loved. A room full of people were mothered, sistered, and they responded and gave back the love they were offered.

Tillie spoke of feeling very much in touch with and part of a stream, a force, an "arterial connection" with Canadian women, Canadian women writers. She spoke openly and simply of the feeling of connection she felt with the work of Margaret Laurence, Alice Munro, Marian Engel, and Adele Wiseman. She told us that coming over the border had been a tremendous emotional experience for her, and it felt wonderful to be here. She said she had only once before, years ago, been in Canada "and then just to BC" (JUST TO B.C.!! JUST?) Twice she said she was surprised at how much talking she was doing, that she wasn't by nature a voluble person but that being here, being with us, she wanted to talk and share.

It was an incredible night for me. I'm the one who has been trying for five years to compose a fan letter to Margaret Laurence, and there she was, sitting in front of me, openly weeping with joy, relief, and recognition while the soft voice of Tillie Olsen picked up words, phrases, sentences, and wove and re-wove her own particular vision through the threads and fibres of the fabric of our lives. Rhythm, cadence, speech pattern, and timbre played counterpoint to partial repetition and restructuring of words, and language again, for a brief time, became a living, breathing communication of sharing, blessedly free of linear structure and precise grammatical construction. Tillie Olsen writes and shares the love and reality of "ordinary" people; who are, of course, no more "ordinary" than any of us, but, like all of us, are each indivi-

dually unique and precious. In the challenge and frustration of common lives, she redefines for us the uncommon, the rare, the miraculous.

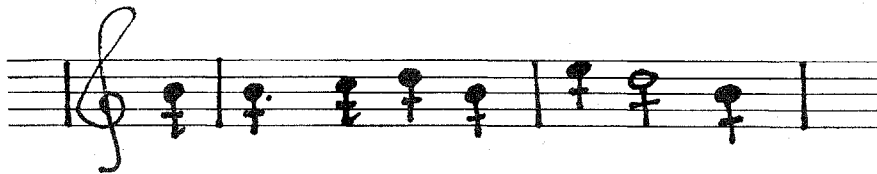
In the loving silence that followed the standing ovation, Tillie Olsen stood, deeply moved, holding a bouquet of flowers presented to her by Tamara Wiseman, Womanchild. The hands that have cradled and nurtured babies, washed dishes and floors, ironed and toiled, stroked and gripped, soothed and cherished, are now obviously the hands of a woman no longer young. They are not the hands of the skin cream advertisements or the nail polish commercials, they are not the hands of the pampered or indulged. They could be the hands of my mother, my aunts, my grandmother. They are strong, and capable. They touched, stroked, caressed, and accepted the flowers, stems, leaves, and made that bouquet of flowers a part of the woman holding it. And we all sat, eyes damp, being part of that, too.

I wish my daughter could have been in the church basement to see and experience the Womanbonding. I wish my sons could have been there. I wish my sisters, my mother, my aunts, my grandmothers could have sat with me in the flesh; certainly they were there in spirit. I know my mother would have wept with joy to see and hear the core of her life reality spoken aloud. Tillie Olsen is more than a writer, more than a wordsmith, more than a woman. She is the voice of Womanexperience, and she speaks bravely and honestly for centuries of women denied their voice.

There was no ego in that church basement. Tillie Olsen has the guts, the vulnerability, and the integrity to allow herself to become the medium through which the words happen, and the story she tells becomes the experience of which we all become a part, for it grows from our common heritage, our mutual reality.

Tillie Olsen will go with me, to be shared with the women in my life, the men in my life, the children in my life who will one day be men and women, each individually unique and precious, each very "ordinary" in that extraordinary arterial connection of which Tillie Olsen spoke. And in those long black nights when the typewriter does not seem to hold the words I need to infuse sentences with life, Tillie Olsen will be with me, reminding me of the gestation and healing in silence, the validity of waiting, and the loneliness will not be part of being Alone, as it once was.

(I, 7, May 1980)



A Classical Dilemma

Kye Marshall

Sophie-Carmen Eckhardt-Gramatté, a Canadian composer who died in 1974, once remarked that in Vienna she was asked what she was writing, while in Winnipeg she was asked to preside at tea.

It is difficult enough to be an independent woman; but to express one's independence by being a composer of classical music — in Canada of all places — is certainly a challenge.

Canada is a pioneer country. It does not have a tradition of art: the vastness, the ethnic diversity, discourages the development of a uniform community where art could flourish. With this lack of indigenous art, what passes for culture in Canada is mainly hockey, Group of Seven paintings, television, and imported pop culture. There is good music around, excellent folk, jazz, rock, country, but unfortunately our society surrounds itself with plastic music that is either sweet and addictive or so loud that the listener is rendered quite senseless. High volume can literally produce deafness, but it also destroys our ability to *listen* to what we hear.

So classical music is not a priority with the government or our educational system. Schools do not encourage creativity, nor do they even teach very well. As a result, most people grow up with no understanding of classical music and often with an actual dislike or distrust of it.

Given the limited exposure to classical music most Canadians have, it does not occur to many that becoming a classical composer is a possibility. And in many ways it is not. What would be necessary is a lengthy and costly education with little prospect of earning a living wage. There is a constant need for encouragement and moral support from friends, family, and community. The process is a lonely one. And the results — what is written — may not be understood or generally accepted. The time gap between what composers write and what it takes audiences to accept has become too long.

All these problems are magnified for women. Certainly, women as a group have less money for education and even fewer opportunities of sustaining a career. There are

few role models — we have been written out of history almost without exception. We have been actively discouraged by family and professionals. But it is the passive discouragement which is so insidious and deadly. Women are not considered capable of being creators of "high" art. It is implicitly conveyed by all we have learned that we may be able to write a few ditties but nothing of consequence. This is the biggest barrier of all because it is such a deeply implanted idea. It is extremely difficult to recognize it and even harder to de-program oneself.

It could be asked why someone would even try to become a classical composer against such odds.

I can only answer for myself. As much as I enjoy listening to and playing other kinds of music, I miss the abstract element which only classical music provides.

Music, as a reflection of our deepest experiences, by-passes problems of meaning caused by the use of verbal images. Music communicates directly. For me, classical music does so better and more fully than any other. It is the only art form I know of which combines the mental (or intellectual), emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects of our being. That, plus the enjoyment of the actual process of composing, is why it is worth working at.

In time, perhaps many of the difficulties faced by women composers will decrease as the women's movement expands and feminist musical culture develops naturally from the heightened consciousness of women.

(II, 4, February 1981)

• Neurosis, from page 19

stretched out on the couch has been replaced in the new therapy maze with casually dressed experts who use their first names and frequently encourage physical contact with their seated clients. Sexual manipulation of women by therapists occurs all too frequently and is almost never discussed for the same reason that rapists and wife-beaters get away with their violent acts — society blames the victim.

Even in the best of therapy encounters, the stakes haven't really changed at all. One person in this situation has something to give, another person needs that something and is willing to pay for it. The deck is still loaded — the person in the client position has to learn the rules of the game while paying for the privilege. It feels like handing over your head on a silver platter.

But if you have reservations about doing so, then obviously you need the therapy all the more to "work through" the real meaning of your resistance. Catch 22. Once you get into the maze, you may have a hard time finding your way out.

(I, 2, November 1979)

crispins

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Ella Manuel:

A Person in Her Own Right

Judith Lawrence

In November 1980, the Governor General presented the second annual "Persons" awards to Canadian women in recognition of their contributions to their communities. One of these "Persons" is Ella Manuel, a seventh-generation Newfoundlander who lives in Woody Point, at the entrance to Gros Morne National Park on Newfoundland's west coast. A woman of deep warmth and compassion, Ella has spent much of her life working for justice and peace. She is also a very private person, given to love of solitude and contemplation. She lives alone in a small hilltop house overlooking the village, with an ever-changing vista of sea, sky, and mountains beyond the windows of her book-lined living room. During a trip to Toronto she shared highlights of her life with close friends Judith Lawrence and Beverley Alinsson of the Broadside Collective.

I think from the time I was ten until I finally went away at 15, my whole family's life was geared to having enough set aside for me to have an education, and my sister, too. If I wanted something — and I remember I desperately wanted a fountain pen; I thought if I had a fountain pen I'd have 'er made — my father and mother would say, "We can't afford to give it to you to go to college." People said my father was mad, quite mad, to send two girls away to college. But we did go to college. I was sent to Boston when I was 15, but first I had to do a year of high school, because I had no sciences up until then.

When I was sixteen I entered Boston University, and by the time I graduated it was the depression and jobs were very hard to find in Boston. In those days Newfoundlanders never thought of coming to Canada. The idea of coming to Toronto never occurred to me — it sounded just too utterly boring for words. So I went home to Lewisport. I stayed there for a year and saved my money, working with my father in the store and teaching piano, until I had enough money to go to England.

I stayed with friends in London, and eventually got a job with Marks and Spencer as a welfare worker. This involved organizing canteens in the shops (there were 200 of them at that time) for the staff, most of whom were women. They could have a hot meal at noon for sixpence and tea for fourpence, and then we went on to seeing that they got free uniforms, and a raise automatically on every birthday. It ended up that we had a fabulous outfit: we had

doctors hired; these women got mostly free medical attention, free dental attention, paid vacations; we set up camps where they could spend their holidays — I remember spending almost all my holidays one summer in North Wales. It was a fabulous, marvellous experience.

Broadside: You married a man who worked for Marks and Spencer?

Yes, and this was around the time of the Spanish Civil War. We realized the need to do something about the Spanish children. We persuaded the British government to allow a certain number of them to come in if we could prove we could sponsor them. We all donated as much as we could of our incomes, and these children, mostly Basque children, were brought up in groups, and sometimes with their priests and teachers. They weren't necessarily orphans, but children who had no homes and were in great danger and who'd been under bombing. It was supposed to be a temporary arrangement, but a lot of them didn't go back. There were about 3,000 children brought in at that time. Some of them I met later in the most extraordinary ways — I met one years and years later in Greenwich, Connecticut.

B: When did you leave England?

It was after my first son was born. We went to the States just before the war broke out. We started working with the Jewish Joint Distributing Committee, organizing the placement of refugee children from Europe. When the United States entered the war my husband was offered an administrative job in the army in Washington because of his experience at Marks and Spencer. But I remember we told them we were peace-loving people who just wanted to continue being peace-loving, so we didn't do it.

B: So you were a pacifist back then when it wasn't too popular, weren't you?

Oh yes, I think we were definitely watched then, too, because the FBI would turn up in odd places. It was very strange, because we lived on Long Island Sound, on the Connecticut side, and we used to go for walks on the beach, and that was very suspect in those days, especially after sunset. We were always in some kind of hassle — never very serious. I would have been insulted if I hadn't been watched in those days!

B: Did you have refugee children living with you?

Yes, four teenagers. And my own two small boys. But my marriage was deteriorating, and I had to find a refuge. I realized that I had started to think of my parents' home in

Newfoundland as that refuge. I can't remember how I did it, but at some point I just packed up and went home, ostensibly for a holiday with my two little boys and just stayed. I never went back. We lived with my parents for a while but then I started looking for a way to support the three of us. We moved to Cornerbrook and lived there for four or five years. That's when I started doing radio work. I started gradually working my way up, and then Confederation came and I had, I can't remember now, some connection with Halifax and Toronto. Quite suddenly I became spokeswoman for Newfoundland and got all sorts of requests for "do tell us about this" and "what do you think of this" and somehow I had, with the things I had done with my life, a way of bridging the gap, knowing what it was that the other Canadians wanted to know about us funny people out there in Newfoundland. First I started telling children's stories, and then I was hired to do a once-a-week program, so I got to be fairly well known.

At that time people were always coming to me and telling me what was going on and how unhappy they were, and I would say: "For God's sake don't preach to the converted, go talk to somebody else." But there was no way they could talk to anyone else — the newspapers were throttled and very much censored so I went to Bowaters, the paper company, and asked if they would buy half an hour of radio time and I would run a citizens' forum, if you please — when I think about it now I blush. People were so ready for it that I could get hold of all kinds of people — heads of Bowaters, doctors, business heads, all sorts of people who would come and talk, and we discussed the things that were bothering people.

B: Newfoundlanders always seem to be Newfoundlanders first, no matter how long they are away or where they go and what they do — and not just your generation, but younger ones, too.

Absolutely. I think the ones much younger than I are just as bad (or just as good).

B: What is it that Newfoundlanders identify with?

We identify with the landscape and have a very, very unusual way of life, even now when we have roads and electricity and radio and CBC and all the other things. Our whole lives revolve around the weather and the sea and there is a sense of isolation. I can remember as a child, probably about 12, when in the winter the harbour would freeze over and the sky would be grey and the steamer would break its way through the ice on its last trip and blow its whistle

goodbye and I would stand on the verandah of our house and get the feeling that I was hidden from the rest of the world, that I was isolated there and that no one would ever find me or know we were there. It was a most terrible sensation of absolute isolation.

B: *And yet you broke that isolation with your lifestyle.*

Yes, of course. Nearly everyone who had any ambition or any curiosity did go away. But I also came back.

B: *You were the only person to have presented a brief to the Status of Women.*

So they say. I didn't know that. The brief was about the status of women in Newfoundland. I said I was speaking on behalf of the women in the remote villages who couldn't speak for themselves. And as I remember now my main thesis was that there was no earthly reason why women shouldn't have the same opportunity for education and re-education as men were getting. Men were being sent off to trade schools and vocational schools and paid their living expenses and nobody ever did a damn thing for the women.

B: *Did you have the satisfaction of seeing any of your suggestions bear fruit?*

Yes, but I'm not sure it bore fruit because of what I said; it was part of the whole movement. Oh yes indeed.

B: *When did you find out you were not the only person who had such heretical ideas and notions in her head as far as your status as a woman was concerned?*

When I heard about the Voice of Women. I was asked by Muriel Duckworth to go to a meeting and I'd never heard of the group before, but when I left I was the secretary of the group, or vice-president — I can't remember. But when I really came to myself was when I met you younger women — feminists — and you started feeding me all the feminist literature which I sat on the hill in Woody Point and read, and said, "Oh my God, you know the world is full of people like me." That is when I began to look back really without a sense of failure.

B: *But isn't it incredible that a woman — a person — who has achieved as much as you have should have a sense of failure? Everything you've told us about your life is triumph over adversity and tremendous accomplishment.*

I failed in the feminine role that was set aside for me and I didn't know anything about any other role. I'm infuriated when I think about the time I wasted feeling guilty and inadequate. When I look at young women today I'm amazed. They are soaring! Sometimes I catch myself and say "is my optimism the result of pushing seventy, or is it a result of being able to examine my own life?" But I don't think it is just that!

B: *You've just received the "Persons Award"; what did the citation say?*

That I was somebody who had worked in the women's movement and had worked for peace, and if you stop to ask me why I got it I still don't know why — I still think somebody made a mistake! You couldn't really call any of us notable — we are just ordinary women who had all our lives been doing this, probably without thinking about it.

B: *So what do they think of this back in Newfoundland?*

Oh, they couldn't believe their ears. Now, I tell you, they pay some attention to me when I say something. About time, too!

(II, 4, February 1981)

Fellini's Fears and Fantasies

Barbara Halpern Martineau

A man (Marcello Mastroianni) whose vocabulary about women seems to consist of "cow," "ass," and "bitch," whose only question prior to initiating sexual foreplay is "Are you married?" nevertheless survives his inadvertent entry into a country hotel taken over by a conference/festival/gathering of women, er, that is, images of women arranged, selected, presented by the teeming and well-funded filmic imagination of one Federico Fellini, the same Federico whose fears and fantasies of falling, and whose memories of his boyhood spent peeping through knotholes of bathing cabins and assaulting the family maid have been so lovingly and exhaustively documented over and over and over.

The *Toronto Star* ad for the film carefully eliminates any grounds for the charge that Fellini is pretending to "deal" with feminism — I therefore went to see the film fully prepared for another extravaganza of technical virtuosity, circling endlessly around Mastroianni (Fellini's surrogate) in relation to women in all the usual stereotyped ways. No surprises in that respect, and some nice visual bits, as when Marcello crawls under his bed looking for the source of a mysterious voice and emerges through a velvet funnel into a night sky and a neon cabaret — Fellini film unconstrained by any pretense of realism, fullblown fantasy, a stimulation to the editorial imagination.

What I wasn't prepared for was the travesty of feminism. The phenomenon of the

feminist movement, its amazing courage and persistence in the face of Italian machismo, the almost incredible fact that Italy now has the most liberal abortion law in the West and has just voted to keep it so, has obviously fascinated Fellini, and he couldn't resist the subject. Not being burdened with any doubts about his ability or eligibility to tackle it, he therefore waded right in.

I honestly suspect Fellini has no idea of just how destructive this film really is, although I also firmly believe it reflects his deep-seated resentment and distrust of women in general, mainly because, as he has several of them remark about Marcello in the course of the film, he is entirely incapable of understanding women. At some future date, the film will be invaluable as a document of patriarchal response to feminism — I'm sure we will be able to learn a great deal about the workings of defence mechanisms in male brains by studying the imagery and structure of *City of Women*. Why, for instance, is it repeatedly assumed by men, all available evidence to the contrary, that when women gather together their main and only interesting topic of discussion is sexuality, mainly with men, possibly with women? (In this patriarchal context, lesbianism is initially an allowable premise, explained as an understandable indulgence of women who either have no access to men or who are so insatiable that their lust extends itself in all available directions. Later in the film the terrifying — to

Fellini — implications of the lesbian "threat" are suggested.)

At an early point in the film Fellini goes so far, in his fascination with the contemporary phenomenon of feminism, to allow that (hetero)sexuality does have its consequences, and he seems to see the feminist point that it is women who carry the burden of childrearing as well as childbearing, while continuing to be sexually available to their husbands. Seeing a point is not the same as demonstrating it sympathetically or convincingly, and the Fellini vision of a woman dressed as a housewife, theatrically and exaggeratedly portraying the condition of most Italian women while an audience of women claps mechanically, is far removed from any experience of feminist theatre I have had. What Fellini's vision lacks is precisely the element of feminism, *awareness* and *analysis* by the artist and her audience, and *interaction* between them.

Apart from that single, woefully handicapped vision, the film is standard Fellini obsession with female sexuality and the mystery/invitation/menace it poses for his male surrogate, Master Inanity himself, affectionately and self-deprecatingly known as Signor Snaparaz (pun evidently intended). Not a hint of female creativity, ingenuity, inventiveness, not an inkling of the genius of feminism which has brought this panic-stricken century to a new sense of possibility. Only the boredom of "femininity," that patriarchal stereotype which

• continued next page

• Fellini, from page 37

repetitively relegates women's energies to matters of dress and innovation in sexual gameplaying. The apex of "feminine" achievement is demonstrated when Signor Superkock (yes!) commands his ten thousand "conquest" to do her trick, and the sweet little lady demurely spreads her legs and *wills* the gold coins Superkock flings on the floor to gravitate towards and into her vagina. So much for psychic power in Felliniland. This is prostitution as the patriarchy has established and maintained it over the centuries.

Why is this film destructive, not just boringly inept? Because Fellini brings to bear his considerable powers of filmic hypnosis, sharper wit expressed visually and verbally, effectively enhanced by the skills and expensive resources of the cream of the art-film industry to construct a vision which is technically superb, bound to be held up as an object lesson for film students and film buffs for years to come. Years of academic experience promise me that the implications and explications of the film with regard to women will go largely unaddressed or be complacently accepted by the patriarchal majority of film teachers and critics. In future, the courageous woman student who speaks up in protest will be patronizingly dismissed, discredited, discriminated against on the grounds that she is one of those strident, hyper-reactive young women's libbers, with tunnel vision and a one-track mind — you know the type. Besides, she didn't even realize that Fellini was way ahead of her — Superkock and Snaperaz are jokes, jokes on Fellini, who knows perfectly well he can't presume to explain feminism, and so doesn't demean himself by trying, just uses it as grist to his delightfully indiscriminate mill of satire.

Why is this film *so* destructive? Towards the end of this two and a half hour paean to male security, while waiting for Signor Superkock to dress for his party, Marcello Snaperaz amuses himself in Superkock's gallery, which consists of portraits of women in sexually inviting positions with buttons under them. Press the button — the portrait lights up and a tape goes on of the woman's exclamations during lovemaking (if you can call it that). Snaperaz is dazzled by the toy, impressed with Superkock's evident machismo. At the end of the gallery he finds, in the well-dressed elegantly lean flesh, his own wife, expressing her defiance of their stale marriage by her presence here, in Superkock's house. Later she dances decorously with one of the "lesbian" policewomen who come to end the party and inform Superkock that they've killed his favourite dog, a scene of lachrymose black comedy coyly recalling fascist antics, in which I found no humour at all.

The fear of female bonding is evident — the form that fear takes, endless, intricate objectification of female sexuality, finally epitomized in the image of the Ultimate Wo-

man as a deflating ballon crumpling threateningly over Marcello as he falls and falls — this sale of sexuality, not love between two consenting adults, I call pornography. The two young women, clad only in G-strings, who shimmy and slake for Marcello, tuck him lovingly into bed, breasts dangling over his face, and then teasingly leave, are pornographic images; the fat older woman who lusts for Marcello and pantingly presents him with her bare breast, which he spurns with disgust, is a pornographic image, the cheap and threadbare joke of her ancient scrawny mother attacking her for her immorality and kicking her through the fields, all the while apologizing to Marcello: "We're just poor people" — this too is pornography. It is the sale by a pimp of our own sexuality, a sale which tries to pass itself off as humour, but there is no compassion in this "humour," no understanding, no enlightenment. Only fear, resentment, and fascination, the fascination of a mongoose for a deadly cobra.

What is essential to bear in mind, and difficult, in the course of this film, is that the deadliness posited by Fellini has nothing to do with the realities of power in the world of men, women, feminism, and patriarchy. It's more like the accusation of witchcraft which served as a convenient excuse for the burning of millions of women, or the "threat" of international communism in alliance with the Jews which enabled Hitler to move so swiftly towards his "final solution," or the "threat" posed by the women's movement, the gay rights movement, and all other progressive movements to the New Right today, which is serving as an excuse to cut back on government funding, eliminate public services, and, in the US right now, to enact increasingly repressive legislation (Canada has no constitutional protections of civil rights, so it's not necessary to take them away). *City of Women* is simply another exercise in patriarchal fantasy that encourages such repression.

(II, 9, July 1981)

RAPE...INCESTUOUS ASSAULT...LESBIAN OPPRESSION...PORNOGRAPHY.....
 WOMEN IN PRISON...RACIST VIOLENCE...WOMEN AND POVERTY...PSYCHIATRIC
 ABUSE...SEXUAL HARASSMENT...BATTERED WOMEN...VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA...
 FORCED STERILIZATION...ADDICTED WOMEN...RAPE...INCESTUOUS ASSAULT...
 LESBIAN OPPRESSION...PORNOGRAPHY...WOMEN IN PRISON...RACIST VIOLENCE...
 WOMEN AND POVERTY...PSYCHIATRIC ABUSE...SEXUAL HARASSMENT.....
 BATTERED WOMEN...VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA...FORCED STERILIZATION.....
 ADDICTED WOMEN...RAPE...INCESTUOUS ASSAULT...LESBIAN OPPRESSION.....
 PORNOGRAPHY...WOMEN IN PRISON...RACIST VIOLENCE...WOMEN AND POVERTY
 PSYCHIATRIC ABUSE...SEXUAL HARASSMENT...BATTERED WOMEN...VIOLENCE...
 IN THE MEDIA...FORCED STERILIZATION...ADDICTED WOMEN...RAPE.....
 INCESTUOUS ASSAULT...LESBIAN OPPRESSION...PORNOGRAPHY...WOMEN IN
 PRISON...RACIST VIOLENCE...WOMEN AND POVERTY...PSYCHIATRIC ABUSE...
 SEXUAL HARASSMENT...BATTERED WOMEN...VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA.....
 FORCED STERILIZATION...ADDICTED WOMEN...RAPE...INCESTUOUS ASSAULT...

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Clare Coulter:

One-Woman Show

Deena Rasky

Clare Coulter is a nationally acclaimed actor who, among other roles in recent years, played Emily Dickinson in a Toronto performance of The Belle of Amherst. She has also played many other roles in such plays as St. Carmen of the Main, Le Temps d'une Vie, Toys in the Attic, Waiting for the Parade, and Damnée Manon, Sacrée Sandra, and Mother Country.

DR: In *The Belle of Amherst*, the role was originally tailor-made for Julie Harris. Was that role remodelled for you?

CC: No. I would like to do another Emily Dickinson. My choice of her poems and stories. But I won't do that for a long time because one-woman shows are really taxing. And I'm not that sort of actress. I'm a company actress...

DR: What is it about Dickinson that attracted you?

CC: Nothing attracted me about her at all. At that time it was a role that I was being offered and I thought it would improve my stamina because I hadn't had to do very much labour and this would really tell the tale. What I didn't realize about it was that a one-woman show is a personality stomp. It's not like acting with a company. The personality has got to come up to scratch all the time....

DR: There's one aspect of that play that has been mentioned in an article on you, the aspect of the seed-cake. You would have preferred Dickinson's publisher Higginson to be presented with a lily instead of a seed-cake.

CC: In the play, the seed-cake has nothing to do with the publisher. The words she uses are simply an introduction to the audience: "This is my introduction, forgive me if I am frightened, I hardly see strangers." It's a description of her first meeting with Higginson. After eight years of writing to each other, he came to see her and she held out two white lilies and said very low under her breath "Forgive me if I am frightened..."

Now what offended me originally, and I don't think it does any more, was how they could take that incident, which is full of intense feeling and vulnerability and fear, and change the lilies, which are very significant in the life of a woman like Emily Dickinson, to a black cake which would have a completely different significance, a domestic light-hearted significance. How could they take the very words she used under one set of circumstances and put them into another set of circumstances?...

They wanted to stay very close to the words she used. The play is supposedly conversation, but it isn't conversation, it's a patchwork of her letters, which is literature. The actual rhythm of speech is very difficult to lift out of the literary and into the conversational. Although it's presented as conversation it isn't that, it's extracts from her letters woven in, and very skilfully woven in, with little bits of colloquial this-that-and-the-other to make it sound like conversation...

DR: Emily Dickinson being the recluse that she was, a lot of her conversations were with a piece of paper.

CC: The whole business of her being called a recluse is almost superficial. Physically she stayed inside her house and when people she was fond of came she refused to see them.

She was unable to bring herself to meet her emotions, as they were affected by affection and people. One friend she begged and begged and begged to come to the house and visit and when he finally did she ran upstairs and wouldn't see him and sent an apology saying that the others could handle it much better than she, and that she got all she needed from just hearing his voice downstairs. She was a recluse in that she refused to see people, but she never stopped reaching out towards people to communicate with them.

Even though reaching out took the form of letters, it's not such an odd thing to put it on the stage as conversation, because there was definite communication from her all the time. I didn't realize it when I first read the script. I thought "This is ridiculous. How can you put a hermit on the stage?" But she was reaching out all the time, and that's what the play brings out with her black cake...

DR: Your mother was a writer, wasn't she? Your father, John Coulter, wrote *The Trial of Louis Riel*, but I'm not familiar with your mother's works.

CC: She started out in the twenties. She wrote poetry when she was young and then she went to England to have that published and thought she would be a poet in London. She was busy trying to get her poems published when she met my father. I'm not sure what he thought about her poetry. She suffered some setbacks, both from publishers in London and from him, I think. In the end, and this may not have been due to anything but her own nature, really, she preferred not to write for publication. She never gave up her own writing. She wrote about three or four hours every day. She never gave up feeling guilty that she wasn't

tackling the novel in the bottom drawer of her desk. The hours that she spent writing would go by making laundry lists, writing letters and journals. She left forty books of journals...

My father has just completed editing them. Also he has a book coming out called *Prelude to a Marriage*, about their love affair, which lasted about eight years because neither wanted to give up their independence.

DR: Did she talk to you about her work when you were a youngster?

CC: No. I can remember her saying: "Perhaps when I'm gone you'll read this..."

DR: How did you mother feel about you becoming a performer?

CC: She loved the idea from the start. She was just ready for the world. My father wasn't, though.

DR: Did your mother see you perform?

CC: Yes. Of course, she missed the good stuff. On the other hand, it's nice my father is the one who survived to see this because he never had much faith. Not exactly faith. He had suffered great setbacks and disappointments in his life which my mother never knew anything of. The real hardships in life. He was afraid for me, whereas she was never afraid at all. As far as she was concerned everything was possible and she didn't need to live to see it.

DR: You studied mime in Paris. Were you thinking at the time of working in mime?

CC: In the sixties I was terrifically fat and had all sorts of setbacks psychologically which turned me in on myself and made me reluctant to come out at all. Once I started on the road towards coming back out I knew that although I didn't want to make any sounds, I didn't want to speak, I would start with a physical awakening. I would spend a couple of years just silently awakening my body. Well, that didn't work because as soon as I got to Paris I suddenly thought "Oh! I can do it right now! I want to talk, I want to work, I want to be a professional and I'm getting right back to Canada" and I left after two years. But actually I wish I had spent the time. I got back to Canada and all that optimism absolutely went straight to the floor and I was the same silent introverted sleeping slef that had left to go to Paris.

DR: A newspaper article mentioned you longed for the role of mother and child-bearer. Was this the traditional fabrication or a twisting of facts?

CC: I don't know that I long for it. One of the things that I find difficult to grasp is that nature allows you certain things within

• continued next page

• Coulter, from page 39
a time limit. You've got to know within that time whether or not you want them.... When I'm doing very taxing performances I know that a lot of myself as a woman, everything that I feel in life, goes into them and I've come out exhausted. How could I be anything except some *thing* ready for bed, ready to crash out, and wake up the next morning ready for work again. So what normally makes a woman attractive goes into performances. That's something I'm afraid of....

It's odd, giving to people. When I was a baby there was a polio epidemic. I caught polio, then my sister caught polio, and my mother caught polio. The two babies recovered and my mother didn't. She was paralyzed. It meant that for nine months she wasn't able to move at all from her bed. There were nurses around. Then she had to learn to walk and that took most of my childhood, getting herself back on her feet. We had maids at that time.

The interesting thing is that my mother didn't really take charge until I was past the earliest years, which are supposed to be so important. A lot of the work of looking after me was done by other people. The wonderful thing about that period was that there were two influences in my life: there was the wretched person down in the kitchen who fought with me and told me that I couldn't have two bowls of soup if I wanted them and sent me up to bed and did this and that to me. Then there was that angel on the second floor. If things were really bad you could knock on the door and go in and say, "Pearl says I have to do this." Then she would say, "Well now, what Pearl says is right." You'd suddenly be quite happy.

It was as though there were two worlds: there was the Ultimate World and the Real World. Mother was the Ultimate World to me....

DR: Are you finding that you don't relate to the Real World now as a result of the fame that's come your way?

CC: No, I'm trying to hold on to the people that are my life, want to know me and share my life with me, and not be distracted by the people who surround me in my work and so on. I want to hold on to the people that are my life because it's very easy just to become strangers.

Now if I had a husband and children that whole thing would be intensified, that struggle. I would prefer it that way I think.

DR: What about the bonus of the approbation that you receive from the audience?...

bility of holding people's attention for two hours.... I used to wake up after we opened and think: "I can't do it today. I can't, I'm not up to it. I'm gonna phone a doctor and tell him I have some difficulty." So then I had this kind of breakthrough. One night I saw Janet Amos' mother in the audience and an actor and his wife who I know who love my work. And I came out facing this audience in my usual state of fear and not

feeling up to it at all. Then I said to myself, "Why shouldn't this audience, rather than being there draining you of every ounce that you've got from their critical withdrawn selves, why shouldn't they all be your Mother? With that amount of pride and pleasure in seeing you come out here to give them two hours? Why shouldn't it be just like that? ... I suddenly believed that 128 strangers in Toronto were all as absolutely proud as punch to see me out there and loved me as dearly.... I've felt much more secure about audiences ever since....

I remember the first time I actually had to talk to the faces right beside me. It was for Paul Thompson. I thought Paul was making me go mad. I thought, "Passe-Muraille's fallen to pieces and now he's trying to turn his actors mad." That wasn't what I was trained to do. I was trained to have a fourth wall up there and the whole thing was imagination that you were really talking to people. Then he was asking me to actually face these faces. Reality! He was asking me to bring imagination so close to my reality that it was making me go nutty.

DR: How long does it take you to get a character down?

CC: ... I have a sort of inside clock which will not come up with a character until a certain number. I think I'm about three weeks; a crisis happens and my character comes out in about three weeks.... Directors say to you, "Well, I'm not worried because I know what you can do." And you think, "Well, just a minute. It's happened in the past but it just might not happen this time." I mean each time it *looks* like it's going to be a disaster and each time it *could* be a disaster. There's a trap in saying "Oh, but it always comes out." Because then you're avoiding the actual pain which gives birth to a character. You've got to really feel that it might not happen to give it a chance....

... As I see it, a character is another person. You don't want to abandon the person

• PQ, from page 6

referendum is lost they'll be the first to blame it on "the women and the immigrants," because to them women and immigrants are scabs by definition. They don't try to figure out how housework and strike-breaking are integral and planned parts of capitalism, just as are unemployment, prison, and school for life. The right and too often the left have used women and immigrants, only to drop us when the job is done. We intend, in our turn, to use the Parti Québécois in order to check at least the right's plans for us.

I've often wondered why the PQ itself didn't adopt the work-family-country slogan. It would have been more normal, more logical, since the PQ is supposed to represent the strongest nationalism. But I know now that the answer is simple: the women of the PQ have been at their heels every inch of the way. It's thanks to them, and thanks to us too, for that matter, if we can vote yes. (I, 8, June 1980)

that you are in order to become this other person. You'd rather stay with the one you have. So I go through the readings and rehearsals in a terrible state of reluctance to say or do or feel or think or move in the way it's indicated. And a director who doesn't know me thinks: "She doesn't know *anything*. Is this how she's going to do it? It says 'giggle' and you can't even get a smile out of her. Is she an actress or what?"

Actually I'm just rejecting everything that is being presented to me, the invitation to become another person.... What I'm doing is getting to know the strange territory of what this person is. Then when I think I know what that is, it's safe enough to venture maybe two paces forward into that other personality. And finally when it says smile, I can actually smile without it being too dangerous because I can get back to myself. I know that smile goes just that far.

DR: How is it after you're finished? How does it affect your leaving that part?

CC: It's traumatic, absolutely traumatic. The night after we close I'm usually out for dinner somewhere. At about eight o'clock the play starts happening in my head. The lines start, I start thinking of getting up from the table and doing what I have to do. That goes on for three or four days. At the end of the fourth day it's kind of a rickety old record of the play. Then it's left me. But at the same time, I've lost the closest person in my life; just like that it's gone, never to come again.

I have an image in my mind of when I was a kid. I used to be very tidy with my toys and I used to put all my dolls and toys in shoeboxes. I would label the shoeboxes and put them stacked up in my cupboard in my room. And in my imagination I have this stack of characters in shoeboxes.

I just lay my character out, and put it away in a box. But I'll never get it out again. You can never come back to that person. You never do.

(Introductory issue, May 1979)

W—M—NLY W—RDS Answers

| | Across | | Down |
|----|----------|----|-----------|
| 1 | Phallus | 1 | Patriots |
| 5 | Lionness | 2 | Actresses |
| 9 | Tattler | 3 | Lil |
| 10 | Retread | 4 | Stray |
| 11 | Aid | 5 | Lords |
| 12 | Ideally | 6 | Oath |
| 14 | Otis | 7 | Elect |
| 17 | Testator | 8 | Sadist |
| 18 | Warp | 13 | Leader |
| 21 | Seer | 15 | Press |
| 22 | Shipload | 16 | Happen |
| 24 | Toms | 19 | Protracts |
| 26 | Funeral | 20 | Adulates |
| 29 | Extract | 23 | Athene |
| 30 | Last cut | 25 | Mitre |
| 32 | Ejector | 26 | Felon |
| 33 | Nemesis | 27 | Salt |
| | | 31 | Sam |

Lulu's a Loser

Patricia O'Leary

In the June issue of *Broadside*, Anne Cameron described a secret society of women who used their "soft power" to heal and teach. Men didn't have it and were not allowed to know its secrets. But they were threatened by this mysterious power, and jealous of it, and since they couldn't understand it, tried to twist it, to make it seem evil, and finally to destroy the women who had it.

Some men still seem to believe in the existence of an uncontrollable alien force in women which must be stamped out. Literature is full of these images of "woinanas-(insidious)-witch"; a belief in a sort of generic witch-woman has arisen, against whom there is no defence. The image has spread to become a stereotype of all women.

There are still plenty of instances of the stereotype in the arts. One of these recently appeared in Toronto at the St. Lawrence Centre, in the guise of a play called *Lulu*, an adaptation of two plays by the nineteenth-century German impressionist playwright Frank Wedekind. This is supposed to be a "morality play": all the characters are stereotypes and pretty ugly ones at that. Wedekind was a precursor of Brecht, with much the same stark cold flavour and black humour.

I didn't like it. I hated the premise: that Lulu, a sex-kitten dancer from the streets, was able to screw and whip her way to fame and fortune, leaving a trail of helpless, ruined men (and one lesbian) in her wake. Lulu is a "victim of her own sensuality" and her own egocentricity; even *she* is helpless against herself. Finally she falls on hard times and is reduced to hustling on the streets. She picks up Jack the Ripper one night; at least *he* is defence against her. He first kills her lesbian lover Countess Geschwitz (who has stayed faithful to the end, "monster" that she is), and rips Lulu to shreds which is, apparently, justice. The "soft power" is finally destroyed. Except that, seen through Wedekind's eyes, the power is anything but "soft": it is destructive and tragic.

I hated the idea that some people, seeing the play today, will still think that this is a caricature of the true picture; that women are all, by and large, like that. Maybe the play would have made more sense if it had been produced and acted with a bit more of the bitter flavour that must have been intended for it. But this production by Theatre Plus was lifeless and dull, as well as offensive. Most of the actors seemed straight out of high school, with the exception of Jennifer Phipps, who played Countess

Geschwitz, Neil Vipond as the one man Lulu really loved, and Donald Ewer as Lulu's down-and-out father. The direction was a bore.

Thank God I liked Jennifer Phipps, I thought afterwards, since I had arranged to interview her the next day. Phipps is a respected veteran of Canadian theatre, has acted all across the country, and has also directed. I wondered what she thought of it all, but in fact she didn't say much about the play; there wasn't much to say, and she is seemingly a discreet woman.

But we discussed the fallacy of the play's view of women; Phipps agreed that the portrayal of the women as stereotypes comes from a man's point of view. A man only sees what's happening from the outside; he can't understand *why* something is happening. As Phipps said: "A man only sees that Lulu is giving her body for the moment; he doesn't know the reasons for it." Perhaps Lulu learned that this is the only way to get through to a man; perhaps she has learned that the only way to get on in nineteenth-century society is to latch on to a man. "And of course," says Phipps, "men will take advantage of a woman like Lulu, but they will put her down for allowing them to do it."

We discussed the possible difference in production if there had been a woman director, someone like Pam Brighton, who directed *The Taming of the Shrew* last winter. Perhaps the characters would have been more human (if one can have "human" characters in an impressionist play). "This adaptation, by Peter Barnes, cuts everything to the bare bones," commented Phipps. There are very few directions for actors, very terse dialogue. Phipps felt that director Marion André directed with tremendous "purity"; that is, he stuck very faithfully to the script. But that meant that there wasn't much fleshing out of the characters.

Phipps thought Countess Geschwitz was potentially a more interesting character than Lulu. "In the original," she said, "Geschwitz was closer to being the lead. Wedekind had a feeling for those people who had to cope with society who were not 'normal'." Geschwitz was faithful to Lulu, not only physically but also because she was captivated by the woman's art. "She calls her 'my Star,'" says Phipps, "by which I think she means that her talent as a performer was above all others, that she must have been magnetic." She at least was not attracted only by Lulu's fatal sexuality.

Getting into this part was fairly typical of Phipps's method. She tries to feel the textures of things — clothes, furniture — as

they would have been in reality, instead of costumes and sets. When she is dressing she pretends her dresser, Nancy, is a maid of the times.

"You must create the place," she said. "And yet, you can't forget the audience, or it becomes psychodrama. As William Hutt once said, you have to remember that acting is a triangle. The words go from one actor, out through the audience, and back to the second actor." One can't get so far into the part that one forgets that process. I asked whether this was a temptation for an actor in real life: to be standing back watching yourself be emotional. "No, that is a fallacy about actors," she emphasized, "that they are not real people and can't really feel anything. And yet, the only time I remember doing anything like that was when I was about 8. I was in a state about something and I was crying, and I remember looking in the mirror and thinking, 'I have to remember this'."

Phipps had a lot to say about the intelligence of actors. "In the past, maybe in the very recent past, most directors didn't trust them as thinking people who could make a play go forward," she said. "But now I think people are beginning to realize that actors can work in a collective art form; that they can help to interpret the meaning of the play." She believes this is the major change in the Canadian theatre scene over the past 20 years. That, and the growth of the actors themselves as professionals.

In this vein, what Phipps wants from a director is "why" her character acts as she does, not "how." Telling an actor how to interpret a role, especially a professional who has a lot of experience, can be very crippling. But she would like the director to tell the cast, at the beginning of rehearsals, what his or her concept of the play is, so that the actors can do their part in the interpretation of it. "Sometimes I'll realize, part way through rehearsals, 'so that's what he wants,' but till then I've been of little use to him." She also believes that each actor is part of a chain. "We are the 'end-result' artists," she said. "The chain starts with the writer trying to get an idea across; we are the ones who have to do it, and we have to do it together. There really can't be any concept of the 'star'."

Jennifer Phipps is also preparing to play the lead in the fall production of Theatre Plus's *Philumena*, an Italian play which promises to be more fun, at least, than *Lulu*. It's about a man's mistress who gets him to marry her because she's on her deathbed, but who miraculously recovers after the wedding. No matter what the play is like, Phipps, at least, will probably shine.

(11, 9, July 1981)

She Can Play, but Can She Hype?

Susan Sturman

The rock industry honchos who brought us the "British invasion" of the sixties are announcing yet another cultural breakthrough in rock and roll — the Woman Invasion. It's taken them over ten years to catch on, but record moguls have finally discovered that "women are infiltrating rock" (as one local journalist puts it). Suddenly, aggressive young women brandishing electric guitars stare out from album covers and the pages of rock magazines. They represent, we are told, a new breed of woman musician who can really kick it out and at the same time challenge the macho image behind rock and roll.

Can this be true? Have the big record companies suddenly capitulated to feminists? Or have they merely stumbled upon another popular current to exploit? Certainly the women's movement has had some influence over the past ten years in opening up hitherto male-dominated fields to women, but the rock industry has been especially tough to crack. Not surprisingly, for it has long thrived on a glorification of sexism and sexual violence.

Despite the media hullabaloo, the "new" phenomenon of women in rock is not so new. Women have been battling their way in the male-controlled industry for years, and battle still. The difference is in numbers. As more and more women are getting into rock, it is becoming harder to dismiss the woman rock guitarist as a freak of nature or an isolated phenomenon. The fact that the industry now even admits the existence of a few female rockers is a major concession, and is indicative also of larger numbers still struggling.

For most women rock guitarists, the struggle has been against powerful stereotypes and the lack of role models, as well as the blatant sexism promoted by and within the recording industry. In the mythology of rock music, the symbol and tool of power is the guitar, and it has been wielded almost exclusively by men. One astute rock star actually took the metaphor to its extreme by having a guitar built into his costume, extending outward from the groin. The rock guitarist has become practically worthy of worship, or is at least the stuff of which adolescent male fantasies are made. Visions of superstardom dance round the head of any young boy who strums a chord or two. At parties or jam sessions, technical expertise on the instrument becomes a male competition, like sexual performance; it's a contest to see who can play the hottest licks. Rock is for men, so goes the myth.

Women can't play rock and roll, we are told, and this serves to enforce another stereotype, that of women as gentle folk-

singers, long-haired madonnas picking drippy accompaniment on acoustic guitar. Most of the best-known women guitarists in popular music have been in fact working in a folk-oriented style; Judy Collins, Joan Baez, Joni Mitchell, Joan Armatrading to name a few. All are known primarily for their singing and songwriting, but as guitarists they are all certainly good for more than a few chords. Listen to Joan Baez's flatpicking, or Armatrading's concert solo on "Back to the Night" (the Philadelphia bootleg album). Bonnie Raitt is one of the top electric blues players in the United States. Ellen McIlwaine is an extraordinary slide player. Yet, like most women in the field, their instrumental virtuosity has been obscured by their reputation as vocalists; they are considered singers first, guitarists second, if considered at all. It would be inconceivable to ignore the guitar work of a Ry Cooder or a Leo Kottke in favour of his singing.

Folk music may have provided up-and-coming women musicians with some solid heroines, but rock equivalents have been few and far between, especially for the children of the sixties. Sherry Shute, lead guitarist for the Toronto band Rock 101, has been playing rock professionally for ten years. But starting out was difficult.

"The idea of women playing rock and roll guitar was not accepted," said Shute. "When I was a girl I wanted to be a Beatle like everybody else, but there were no role models. I left highschool and started playing in an all-girl band. At the time, all-girl bands doing rock were still novelty acts. They expected us to wear gowns or go topless, to have some kind of gimmick. I was just interested in playing, getting better as a musician."

The gimmick problem is endemic to women performers. Even a classicial musician like Liona Boyd is required to cheese-cake a little for the sake of promotion. As Meg Christian, a feminist guitarist and songwriter, puts it: "As any woman who has performed in a nightclub knows, when they hire a man, they may be hiring a musician, but when they hire a woman, they hire an act." Aside from just playing the music, she will be expected to be good-looking and to come on to the men in the audience.

Being cute or sexy onstage has nothing much to do with playing the guitar. It has everything to do with the sexploitation of female musicians by the industry; it enhances their "marketability." Presumably Linda Ronstadt's fans will tire of her music before they tire of her cleavage. While Ronstadt is an extreme case (and is responsible for her image to some degree), many female performers are "strongly encour-

aged" by male promoters to strut their stuff on stage and on album covers. Women rockers find themselves in a constant struggle to be taken seriously as musicians.

Some have won, or at least put up a valiant fight. Fanny, one of the first and most successful of all-woman bands, launched a breakthrough for women in rock with their debut in 1969. Headed by June Millington, an impressive lead guitarist, they recorded several albums and backed such artists as Laura Nyro and Barbara Streisand. Millington's raunchy solos prove conclusively that women can play rock and roll and play it well. Though it has since been all but buried in rock history, the group was important for its time. Fanny emerged relatively unscathed from the usual PR gimmickry. At a time when most women interested in rock were handed a tambourine or a g-string (not the guitar variety), the women of Fanny presented themselves as serious and talented musicians. For the other few women who were starting to play in the early seventies, they provided inspiration and an impetus to smash the stereotypes.

More recently, Patti Smith has proven to be a crucial influence. It would be stretching the point to call Smith a rock *guitarist*. She does not play the guitar so much as play *with* it. In fact, she plays with the whole cock-rock image. She appears as a lithe androgynous, slipping in and out of male and female personage at will. One minute she is Keith Richard, the next she is singing "Redondo Beach," a song, she says, about "a place where women who love women go." She does unmentionable things to a guitar on stage. She treats the most reverent instrument of rock and roll with totally irreverent abandon. Slamming it with a Coke can, wrestling it to the ground, she parodies the phallic posturings of male lead players.

Smith does not take kindly to the woman-rocker-as-freak show media image. When asked the inevitable "What makes a woman want to play rock and roll?" by a British TV interviewer, she boredly strummed her guitar, ignoring him, and then replied flatly, "It's better than being dead."

Smith sends the rock moguls running, because they don't know what to make of her. And that's just the point. She won't let them make anything of her. She is a rock and roll rebel in the grand tradition, an outrageously romantic figure. Smith proves just as capable of that aggressive energy as any male performer has ever been.

Punk rock and so-called "New Wave" music, drawing heavily from the ideas of Smith and others, has been a major spawning ground for women rock musicians. Despite the violence and the sado-masochistic regalia that go with the punk image,

a surprising number of women have become involved in music through punk. Steven Davey, New Wave columnist and musician, explains: "For years many of the women involved in the present New Wave were reluctant to get out and perform music. Many had boyfriends in bands, and would hang around rehearsals watching. Few of them seriously considered being musicians themselves — they thought of it as something girls don't do. There was a big macho mystique about rock — women had no inroad. They couldn't see themselves in female equivalents of heavy-metal bands like Rush. Punk initially cleared away a lot of the hype in rock and inspired people to go further. The emphasis was on energy and experimentation rather than musicianship. This opened the door to a lot of women who wanted to play but felt shaky about their experience. Now they've started to play and they're getting better."

Riding in on the energy of the New Wave, female talent, new and old, is getting exposure. Suzy Quatro, Genya Raven, The Runaways, Tina Weymouth of Talking Heads, and many other women are gaining reputations not only as rock singers but as rock musicians, and in the case of Raven, as album producers. Some are recording on smaller, independent labels, which perhaps allow more freedom from sex-object packaging. Most women are at least aware of the hassles and are making demands for greater control over their image and the way their music is produced. But change is slow.

Julia Bourque is lead guitarist with True Confessions, a.k.a. The Curse, one of Toronto's best-known all-woman New Wave bands. Although she agrees that New Wave has encouraged more women to get into playing rock, she feels that most of the old attitudes haven't changed within the music industry.

"Record promoters are the scum of the earth. They try to make you into a girlie, when you want to be taken seriously as a musician. I feel torn sometimes between the pressure to play to the stage image of a female band and the desire for recognition as a good musician. It's a bit schizophrenic. You have to get tough to survive and you have to compromise to a certain extent to get exposure.

"We don't want to get stuck on the bar circuit, where we'd be just another lounge act, a novelty, high heels and short skirts. It's a constant struggle for us, yet there are always people who accuse us of selling out just because we don't want to play in basements anymore. If we've sold out, where's my pink Cadillac? Then there are people who don't take us seriously, who think that being in an all-girl band is just the way to meet boy bands. Can't a woman just play guitar?"

Yes.

While punk rock and the women's movement are strange bedfellows (to say the least), the answer to that musical question

comes from feminist alternatives to the male-controlled recording industry. Groups like Olivia Records and Wise Woman Enterprises have established themselves as growing companies run by and for women. Besides giving women musicians and composers a chance to record their music in a non-sexist environment, Olivia also provides training for women in record production.

Initially, Olivia recorded mostly folk-oriented music, chock full of granola and good intentions. But recently they have branched out into more jazz and rock-flavoured sounds, accompanied by more lavish production. Their albums feature superb musicianship. A studio standout is electric guitarist Jerene Jackson, who plays anything from jazz to salsa and R&B. Fanny's June Millington has resurfaced as a musician and producer with Olivia. The Olivia collective is constantly attracting and nurturing new talent because it offers an environment where women can develop as musicians, without the sexist trappings of the usual industry image. As Ginny Beron, Olivia spokesperson, explains:

"We are trying to see women treated with respect. Musicians are often treated otherwise in the record business, and with women the treatment's worse. We try to treat everybody fairly — the artists, the people who work in the mailroom or whomever. As far as rock music is con-

cerned, if a woman wants to be a rock and roll guitarist, it's supremely ridiculous that she should not be allowed to do it just because she's a woman. It's just a waste of a life. A woman should have access to any role, to any form of music."

The big record companies are oblivious to the work of groups like Olivia. They're too busy hyping a phoney Woman Invasion to notice a real revolution. Cindy Bullens, a young protégée of Elton John, has obviously been groomed to the industry's idea of what this new hard rockin' woman should look like. She looks real tough standing there in her faded jeans with her Les Paul guitar. The promotion people keep making a point of telling us she's a former auto mechanic. Unfortunately, that's probably the most interesting thing about Cindy Bullens. Musically she has all the kick of a flat beer. But the industry PR boys don't care about her music — that's not what they're selling. It's the image that counts. If it excites men to see a woman with a guitar, give that woman a guitar. The Woman Invasion is nothing but one man's marketing scheme. In the real world women are smashing up against a wall of sexist assumptions and stereotypes in their fight to be respected as musicians. They're getting angry.

And the beat goes on.

(Introductory issue, May 1979)



Gay Bell at 1981 IWD Fair. Photo by Judy Stanleigh. (II, 7, May 1981)

Deuce, Fault, Love -- Oops

Judith Lawrence

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

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

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

It's not surprising that Phyllis Schlafly has never taken up tennis. It's obviously an immoral game — it attracts all these people of dubious sexual identity, not to mention the sweaty head bands and abbreviated skirts. Good grief, I remember when Gorgeous Gussie Moran was titillating the tennis touts at Wimbledon; I remember her knickers, but I can't remember her game. Phyllis Schlafly is probably right — only

impure are sexually harassed. I can't remember when I was last whistled at by a man. I think it was in Expo year. That obviously makes me pure as the driven snow. And the Yorkshire Ripper knows; he said he only killed all those women because they were nasty, impure prostitutes, and they had mocked him. What with his wife nagging all the time, things were so bad at his house that he had to stay out late at night and kill prostitutes instead. Mind you, he slipped up on a few — they were not prostitutes at all. Probably just tennis players.

Of course American women are receiving guidance from the First Lady. I've often wondered, is Mrs. Bush the Second Lady, in which case, who is Jane Wyman? (You may well ask). Anyway, the First Lady says ERA supporters are perverts — hippies, lesbians, tennis players, that sort of thing. And she could be right (well, we know she's Right). After all, the ERA people are obviously supporters of lost causes, and that's becoming a lost cause in itself, so they might be immoral as well.

But the highlight of the last few weeks has been Prince Charles, no doubt about it. His search for a virgin with blue blood was beginning to seem like a lost cause. The field was narrowing down to 12-year-olds, but fortunately Lady Di has passed the test, and if Charles can just stop falling off his horse long enough, they might even get

married. Britain needs a spectacle, and what better than a royal wedding? Canadians probably won't see it on TV because of the sporadic CBC strike, but we can imagine it all. The Queen will be gratified; she must have been wondering if Charles was about to take up tennis. But then Lady Di appeared on the scene and saved the day.

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

(II, 8, June 1981)

I'm a Feminist, but...

Susan G. Cole

Autumn. The pigskin (an appropriate term?) flies across television screens. Housewives lose the ongoing battle and try to wrench their husbands away from the tube for family gatherings on Sunday. Now Monday night is lost forever and ABC is trying to set aside Thursday and Friday nights as well. Women all across the country are stocking up on beer and peanuts for the boys. Saturday is pretty hopeless, too. Real football fanatics wouldn't miss a Saturday college game for anything. The misery will continue past the Canadian Grey Cup to Super Bowl Sunday, a day when one can determine when the network is running commercial breaks by checking local water levels: they go down with the simultaneous flushing of at least 60% of the toilets in town.

I should get right to the point by saying that I welcome the season. In fact, I'm an incurable sports fan. I have received

enough flack already to know that mine is not a very popular addiction in feminist circles. "How could you?" say some women when they discover I've foregone a fund-raising meeting to watch Wide World of Sports. I'm not choosy. And that's why I'll settle for surfing, barrel jumping, or tree-climbing, for heaven's sake. I don't care how they give me the thrill of victory or the agony of defeat, just as long as I get my fix.

I think I'll blame my brother. He always had first crack at the television at the time (B.F.M., Before the Football Marathons) the only team televised was the Cleveland Browns. Every Sunday I'd get to watch fullback Jim Brown burst through the opposition's line for hefty gains. I developed a serious and dangerous idol workshop. It was so intense that even the sorriest news couldn't swing me around. When I was informed that Jim Brown had a paternity suit

filed against him, when a few years later a news report from Los Angeles had him mixed up in a violent scene with an actress in a motel room, when I could see before my very eyes that Brown's Hollywood image was the ultimate in machismo, I didn't care one whit. Jim Brown, I would intone, may have been an American symbol of black macho, but he was still the greatest football player ever to grace the turf.

It got worse. As I grew up, so did the business of sports. Everything just got bigger and better. There was no more wonderful pastime than watching Bobby Orr scoop up the puck from behind his own net and skate down the ice, around, past, and through every defender and then niftily tuck the puck into the opponent's goal. Or as we used to say in the euphoria-steeped days of the sixties — what a rush. Baseball was even better because I could see those guys. Football players are hidden under-

Getting Blood from a Stone

Mary Hemlow, *Broadside's Woman-on-the-Hill*, discourses on the delicate operation of Grant Applications to the Federal Government.

Mary Hemlow

This is a very sensitive area, but because it's so vital, I'd like you to pay particular attention. Most of you are now preparing to send in proposals, so here are a few tips. You might just stick them to your fridge door or somewhere as easy reminders.

1. Just answer the questions and fill in the blanks. Please sisters, not so much about Sweden, Cuba, and China. Not much is known about those countries in Ottawa and you are trying to get money from the Canadian government.
2. When applying for a grant to, say, publish a newsletter, it is simply not necessary to send long paragraphs on menstruation, tides, cycles of women, childbearing, and so on. This kind of thing upsets grants officers and very likely makes them depressed. Their own wives/husbands don't speak of such subjects, so why should they hear it from strangers? Just skip all that.
3. Try to make yours the one application this year that *does not* state that women make up over one-half of the population.
4. You do not, repeat do not, need a cover photo for your application. *No photographs or illustrations are necessary.*

Think — has anyone asked for a photo? Photographs of the group itself are particularly unnecessary. To you, a photo of women dressed oddly, perched strangely on printing presses, sitting on each other's shoulders, lying in each other's laps in a field, or gathered laughing on the sidewalk is charming and shows sisterhood. To a grants officer it looks *queer*. This applies as well to drawings of the insides of wombs, showing little girl babies holding guns, women holding up globes of the world, and artful drawings of the vagina.

5. Do not enclose little plastic pink pigs.
6. When applying for funding for a film it's best not to go into too much detail. Be as vague as possible. Realize that it's impossible to describe your really brilliant idea of a three-hour film of two women *really talking, really communicating*, with each other in a way that will be attractive to Ottawa. If your film has a title like DIANE, MADELEINE, CAROLE IN WINTER, CAROLE IN SUMMER, THE FORBIDDEN LOVE, THE LOVE THAT HAS NO NAME, REJECTED, SILENT LOVE, or WOMEN FRIENDS, *do not* tell the federal government. You have every right in the world to believe that incest is beautiful, but please ask yourself if the general public is ready for your three-hour documentary with voice-over by Mercy Hope. Films on our bodies are not re-

ceiving strong support in Ottawa this year, and long films of women peering inside each other's bodies are out entirely. As I have said, be vague about the precise nature of your film. Women in the Senate and equal rights in general are well understood in Ottawa, so we suggest you swing your film proposal around to fit those categories.

7. If you must use quotes in your application — and Goddess knows, nobody asked you to — use more the Nellie McClung, Margaret Mead type of thing. Stay away from quoting gripping emotional speeches by Gene Errington, June Callwood, Rosemary Brown, etc. Quotes from the profound writings of Dr. Dorothy Smith, Suzanne Findlay, and Judy Wasylecis-Leis are not good either. Quotes from human rights people are okay as long as they're pretty general. Straight equality is very popular in Ottawa and it will be some time before the Human Rights Commission actually tests a case and it becomes real and messy.

I hope that all of this advice will be taken in the spirit in which it's offered. If you need further information or if you want to give advice yourself, just contact one of the clever women at *Broadside*. They have lots of time and they'll be delighted to hear from you.

(I, 4, February 1980)

neath all that paraphernalia and hockey players go too fast. There's something slightly funny about a manager's argument with an umpire. All that huffing and puffing eyeball to eyeball, the ump checking out his adversary's cavities. You'd think they were arguing over controlling interest in Standard Oil or something.

There is big money involved here and that's why I have a particular weakness for championship games. I'd watch a bowling championship if it came to that. When men play for money they are deadly serious. Really, don't you think there's something wonderfully absurd about the fact that \$50,000 can rest on whether a little white ball, when stroked gently by a long stick, will drop into a hole? A close call at the plate will make one roster bum and the other heroes. More important, on that decision can rest the difference between a measly \$12,000 per losing player and \$25,000 per winner, not to mention the first dibs on Brut, Schick, or Schlitz endorsements that go with winning.

Don't get the wrong idea. I was maturing, sort of. When I developed some political sophistication I put it to work analysing some of America's most expensive televi-

sion. Millions of dollars worth of equipment are required to bring you the game and millions of dollars are spent fashioning some of that country's most crucial items of Americana — the commercials. The biggest stars, the biggest corporations, the biggest strides of the biggest corporations are trotted out between plays quarters periods innings matches. You can pray for a homey plug for Schneider's weiners or a word from your local car dealer, but you don't have a chance. It's Xerox, IBM, Ford, Gillette, Esso, or their competitors. And when the Rose Bowl starts with the Air Force planes flying to the tune of the national anthem, you know you're getting a sense of the state of the nation. Last year's Super Bowl commercial time was stolen by Canadian networks and we were encouraged to engage in *our* national pastimes — beer-drinking, investment and the banks, and Loto Canada. And if that isn't an indication of the state of the nation then I don't know what is.

My emerging feminist consciousness did provoke a minor change of heart. I no longer praised Jim Brown's end runs on account of his rumoured shennigans in the motel room, although, with a couple of

drinks down, I was now to wax eloquent on what Jim Brown could do with a screen pass. I was aware of, and bemoaned the fact, that millions of American men crammed their homes full of their friends and left their female partners to vacuum the potato chip crumbs off the carpet when the gun finally sounded at seven o'clock.

Then major league baseball came to my home town of Toronto and I slid back into my old ways. I'd reserve Wednesday nights to watch the Jays. I got a Blue Jays T-shirt, I bought a Blue Jays cap. I even considered taking my mother to the game for her birthday. I ordered my tickets for the Yankee double-header two months in advance and the blue Jays management flew me two terrific tickets on the first base line. The night of the game I missed an important meeting. I'd warned my co-workers in advance that I wouldn't be able to make it that night. "Oh yeah? Why not?" they asked innocently. "Well, uh, the Yankees are in town." One woman who didn't quite catch on asked me if I was attending a re-enactment of the American Civil War. The others delivered snorts of incredulity and disgust. They don't understand. Few feminists do. I'll try to explain it. Later. (I, 1, October 1979)

Crones and Spinsters: Re-Fusing Chess

Judith Quinlan

This game is an attempt to maintain the best of chess — variability, intellectual and conceptual challenge, and amusement— while eliminating some of its more patriarchal aspects — war strategies, aggressiveness, and killing. It is designed to be played by two women. The game ends when the two Crones share a space and the two players share a kiss.

MATERIALS

A standard chess board. The kind with chunky oversize pieces won't do, since there must be room for two pieces in one square.

PIECES

- Eight Spinsterlings for each player (use the pawns):
 - they can move one space forwards at a time. They cannot move two spaces on the first move.
 - they can move one space diagonally forward only when moving off a space shared by another Spinsterling.
 - they can move one space laterally at a time, after reaching the opposite end of the board.
 - they can share space with any piece of the opposite colour, except the Crone.
 - they cannot be taken off the board.
 - they cannot move first from a shared space, unless it is shared by another Spinsterling.
- Two Spinsters for each player (use the castles):
 - they can move any number of clear spaces in a straight line.
 - they can share space with any piece of the opposite colour, except the Crone and other Spinsters.
 - if one lands on a space occupied by another Spinster, that piece is removed from the board.
 - they can move first from shared space only if shared with a Spinsterling.
- Two Hags for each player (use the knights):
 - they can move in any direction along two sides of a rectangle bounded by one space and two spaces (same as a knight). They do not need clear spaces along the path.

- they can share space with any piece of the opposite colour, except the Crone and other Hags.
 - if they land on a space occupied by a Hag, that piece is removed.
 - they can move first from a shared space, if shared with a Spinster or a Spinsterling.
- Two Witches for each player (use the bishops):
 - they can move any number of clear spaces along a diagonal line.
 - they can share space with any piece of the opposite colour, except the Crone and other Witches.
 - if a Witch lands on a space occupied by another Witch, that piece is removed.
 - they can move first from shared space if shared with a Hag, a Spinster, or a Spinsterling.
 - One Amazon for each player (use the queen):
 - she can move any number of clear spaces in any direction, along straight lines or diagonals.
 - she can share space with any piece of the opposite colour except the Crone or the Amazon.
 - if she lands on a space occupied by the Amazon of the opposite colour, that piece is removed.
 - she can always move first from a shared space.
 - One Crone for each player (use the king):
 - she can move one space in any direction.
 - she can only share space with the Crone of the opposite colour (this is the end of the game).
 - if a Crone is surrounded (*i.e.* has only one empty space to move into), she **MUST** move into that space immediately.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

The pieces of each colour try to bring the two Crones together on a shared space on their own side of the board. The centre line is four spaces in from each end. The winner is the player whose side of the board the Crones share space in, no matter which Crone moved to that space first.

Sp = Spinsterling (pawns)
S = Spinster (castles)
H = Hag (knights)
W = Witch (bishops)
A = Amazon (queen)
C = Crone (king)

SET-UP

At the beginning of the game, the pieces are set up as in a standard chess game. Either colour may move first — this is decided by the players. There is no advantage in Crones and Spinsters to having the first move. (See diagram.)

• continued next page

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Black | | | | | | | | |
| S | H | W | A | C | W | H | S | |
| Sp | Sp | Sp | Sp | Sp | Sp | Sp | Sp | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Sp | Sp | Sp | Sp | Sp | Sp | Sp | Sp | |
| S | H | W | A | C | W | H | S | Centre Line |
| White | | | | | | | | |

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RULES OF THE GAME

- players move one piece at a time, taking alternate turns.
- only two pieces can share space at a time.
- Spinsterlings which reach the opposite end of the board replace pieces which have been PREVIOUSLY removed from the board. They must do this immediately upon reaching the end, and the exchange is considered part of the same move.
- when one Crone moves into a space with the other Crone, the winner is the player on whose side of the board this happens. At the end of the game, the players must kiss.


(1, 2, November 1979)

Contributors

BEVERLEY ALLINSON, is a founding member of *Broadside*. Besides teaching and writing for children, she is interested in photography. MOIRA ARMOUR is an archivist and photographer and is active in the Feminist Party of Canada and the National Action Committee of the Status of Women. BEVERLY BIDERMAN lives in Toronto, where, among other activities, she has been involved in food co-operatives and written about issues of general social concern. ANNE CAMERON (CAM HUBERT) is the author of *Dream Speaker*, *Rites of Passage*, and *Daughters of Copper Woman*, and was a scriptwriter for the film *Ticket to Heaven*. She lives in Prince Rupert. ANN CHAPMAN is academic dean and teaches history at Western Reserve Academy in Hudson, Ohio. ANNETTE CLOUGH is on the staff of the Vancouver Women's Health Collective and is an activist in Women Against Nuclear Technology (WANT). SUSAN G. COLE is a freelance writer and a founding member of *Broadside*. She is an

active feminist and an inactive sports fan. LYNN CRAWFORD is a poet and artist who lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Her work has been published in *Sinister Wisdom* and elsewhere. ALICIA DOWLING is a nurse who lives and works in Newmarket, Ontario. She is also a union organizer. GAIL GELTNER is art director for the Ontario *Status of Women News*. She publishes regularly in *Broadside* and is known internationally for her drawings. JANE HASTINGS is a member of the *Broadside* collective, a novice bassoonist, and a consulting psychologist who works primarily with the hearing impaired. She lives in Toronto and in Ladysmith, BC. MARY HEMLOW is a raconteur, writer, and broadcaster who lives in Ottawa and who reports regularly to *Broadside* on developments on "the hill." MYRNA KOSTASH was born and educated in Edmonton. She is a journalist and the author of two recent books: *All of Baba's Children*, to which her article in this sampler refers (1977), and *Long Way from Home: The Story of the Sixties Generation in Canada* (1980). NICOLE LACELLE is a feminist journalist who lives in Montreal. JUDITH LAWRENCE is a founding member of *Broadside* and is the puppeteer on CBC's *Mr. Dress-Up*. JUDY LIEFSCHULTZ has been concerned about environmental issues for many years, and as a lesbian-feminist most recently has been involved in the anti-nuclear movement. OTTIE LOCKEY helped to found the Women's Counselling, Referral, and Education Centre and the Women's Self-Help Collective in Toronto. She now is an arts administrator. KYE MARSHALL is a Toronto composer and a cellist who plays with, among others, the National Ballet Orchestra, the Epic String Quartet, and her own jazz quartet. STEPHANIE MARTIN grew up in Jamaica but has lived and worked in Toronto for the last few years. BARBARA HALPERN MARTINEAU is a Toronto filmmaker and teacher. Her reviews of current films

have appeared in *Broadside* since the paper began. PHILINDA MASTERS coordinates publication of *Broadside* and is its only paid employee. She has been involved in feminist activities in Toronto for many years and helped start the Women's Credit Union and the Rape Crisis Centre. BERNADETTE MAXWELL lives in Halifax. She has been active in patients' rights, nuclear medicine, and the Voice of Women. LISE MOISAN is a Montreal feminist who at present is involved in the abortion movement in that city. MARY O'BRIEN came to Canada as a nurse, a profession she gave up to study sociology. She now teaches sociology and women's studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in Toronto. PATRICIA O'LEARY is a stockbroker and broadcast journalist in Toronto. She is particularly interested in the arts and women's involvement in them. ANN QUIGLEY is an artist living in Toronto who contributes regularly to *Broadside* and who has been active in the anti-nuclear movement. JUDITH QUINLAN has become an authority on matriarchal history in Edmonton, Vancouver, Toronto, and Parksville, BC, where she now lives. She practises witchcraft, reads and writes science fiction, plays the accordion, makes super-8 movies, and dances. DEENA RASKY is a Toronto graphic artist, a founding member of *Broadside*, and has been studying the violin for the last few years. JUDY STANLEIGH is a member of the *Broadside* collective. When not taking photos or soliciting and organizing ads for *Broadside*, she runs various small businesses. ANNEKE STEENBEEK is a painter originally from The Netherlands who now lives in Toronto. Her work has been exhibited in Toronto, Vancouver, and The Netherlands. SUSAN STURMAN is a member of the well-known Toronto women's band, Mama Quilla II, and was a founding member of *Broadside*. The TORONTO ABORTION COMMITTEE is a sub-committee of the Women's Services Network in Toronto. Its members when "Abortion: It's Not Free and Easy" was written were Deborah Bartlett, Shelley Glazer, Marilyn Reinwald, Selma Savage, and Judy Stanleigh. MARIANA VALVERDE is doing postgraduate work on nineteenth-century French socialism, and is involved with the International Women's Day Committee in Toronto. JEAN WILSON is a member of the *Broadside* collective and is a freelance academic editor. She also helps to edit *Broadside* and was co-ordinator for this issue. EVE ZAREMBA is a founding member of *Broadside* and a feminist writer and activist who lives in Toronto.



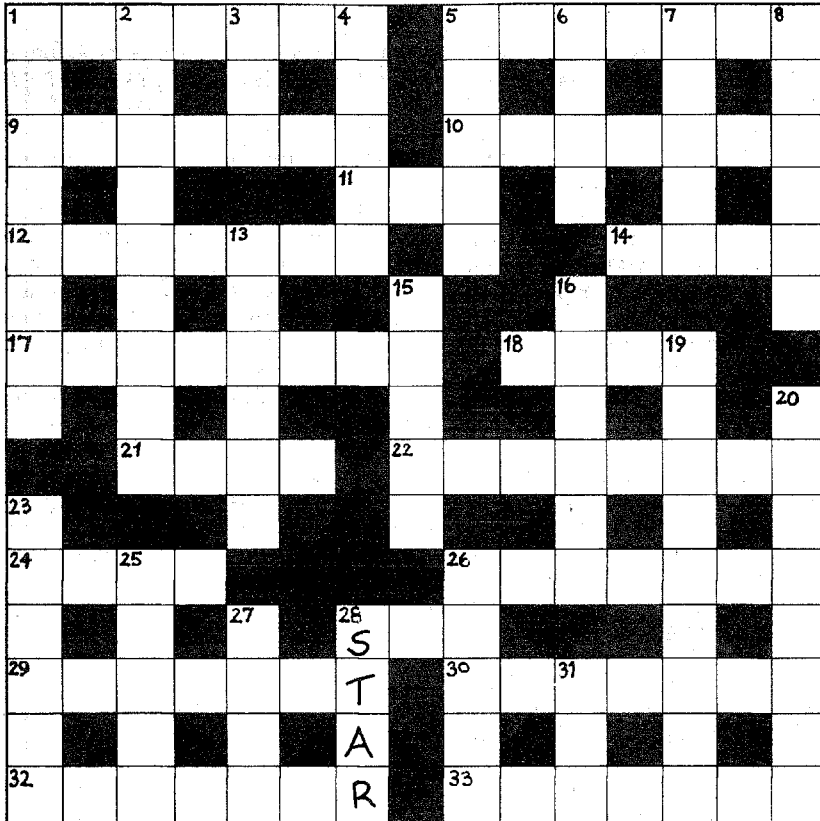
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W-M-NLY W-RDS

(II, 8, June 1981)

DR



Mary O'Brien

ACROSS

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

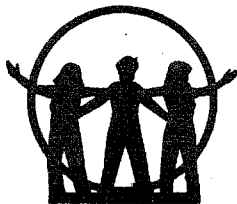
DOWN

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

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(Answers page 40)

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