

Broadside

A FEMINIST REVIEW

Toronto Women's
Calendar Inside.

Volume 4, number 2

November 1982

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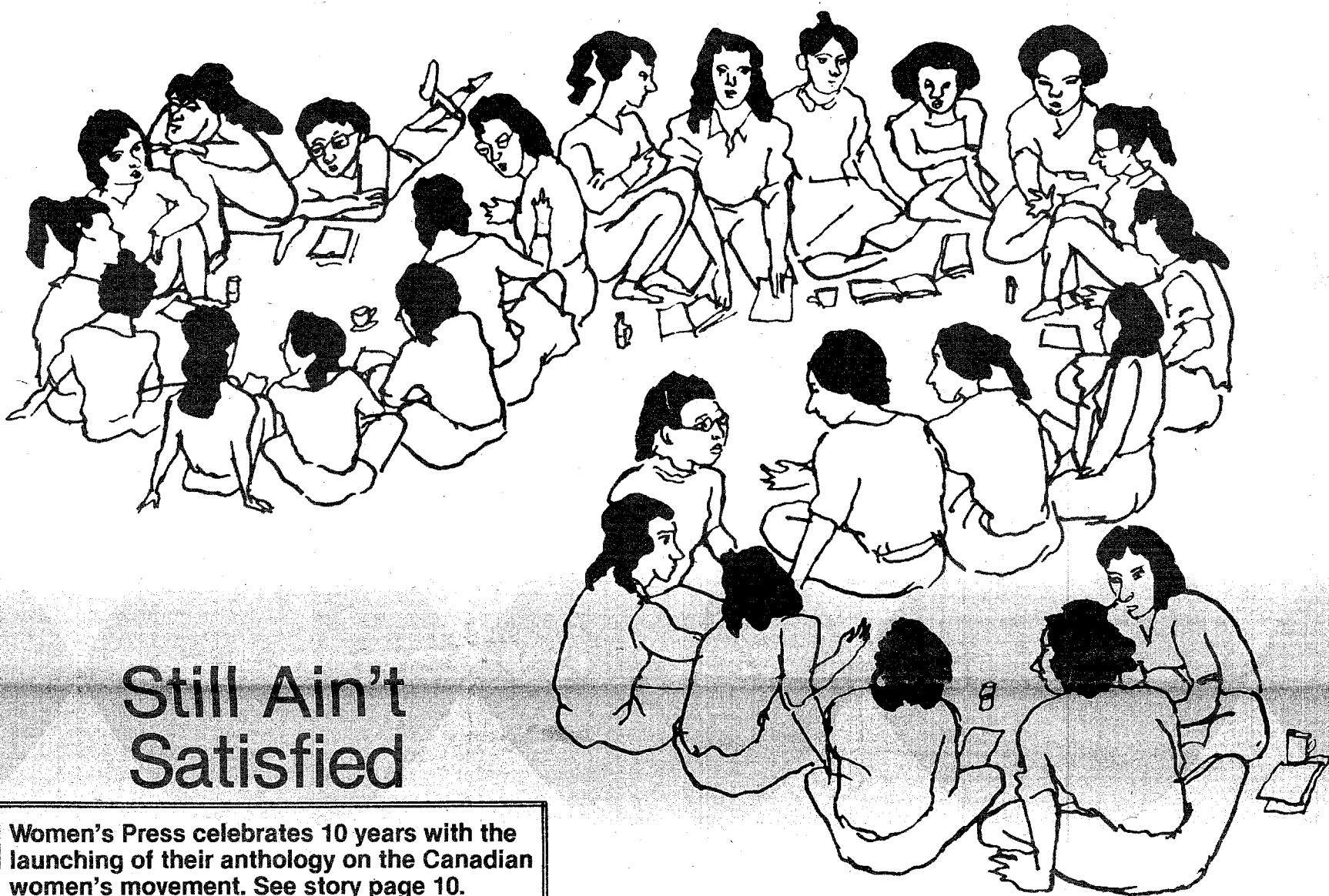


Illustration by Gail Geltnier

Still Ain't Satisfied

Women's Press celebrates 10 years with the launching of their anthology on the Canadian women's movement. See story page 10.



INSIDE BROADSIDE



FEATURES

WHERE HAVE ALL THE WOMEN GONE? Greek women are not to be found in the many cafés in Greek towns and cities. Their place is in the home, and that's where Myrna Kostash spoke to them about their lives, their struggles, their politics. Page 8.

EASY OVARY: Surrogate Mothers — what's it all about? Who benefits, who's in control? What are the legal, and other, implications of this newly-publicized phenomenon? Lawyers Lisa Freedman and Susan Ursel ask and answer many questions about surrogate motherhood. Page 5.

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ZEROING IN ON ZIONISM: Ottie Lockey responds to last month's article by Lilith Finkler. Anti-Zionism, she says, is anti-semitism. Page 4.

DAMN YANKEES: Susan G. Cole comments on the parachute syndrome of issues in the feminist movement. They often drop down into Canada, pre-packaged, from south of the border. Page 6.

FEMINIST = MAN-HATER? How many times have you been asked if you like men? The correct answer is 'Yes.' The underlying assumption is 'No.' The question seems trivial, but it is basic, according to an editorial in *La vie en rose*, a Montréal feminist magazine. Movement Comment, Page 14.

CALENDAR: Don't miss 'Outside Broadside,' our calendar of Toronto women's events for November 1982. Page 15.

ARTS

WOMEN'S PRESS PRESSES ON: This month the Women's Educational Press celebrates its 10th Anniversary with the publication of an anthology on the Canadian women's movement, *Still Ain't Satisfied*. Jean Wilson talks with editors Margie Wolfe, Maureen FitzGerald and Connie Guberman. Page 10.

AFTER SILENCE: Film columnist Barbara Halpern Martineau explores the phenomenon of women's silence in film, the silence that surrounds women, and the new voice women are finding to speak of our experiences. Page 11.

LETTERS

Broadside:

The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre collective wishes to respond to the publication of a letter from WAVAW/Rape Crisis Group in *Kinesis* and *Broadside* (June 1982).

We recently went through a long, painful political split in our own collective and feel that the position we are now taking about the split in the Vancouver women's community must be based on our understanding of our process as a collective. One of the things we've learned is that, although in the midst of the struggle the "villains" and "heroes" seemed to be clearly defined after the struggle was over and we went through the long process of trying to figure out why, we discovered our own mistakes and contributions to the split. The "heroes" became a little tarnished and the "villains" seemed more human. It is because of this that we are not prepared to take a position in support of one group at the expense of the other.

We've worked with Vancouver Rape Relief and we respect the work they've done with us but we know that political splits are

never simple either/or situations. We recognize the support WAVAW/RCG has gotten from the women's community in Vancouver but we believe that publishing a letter in a feminist newspaper has created a serious problem.

Our first priority is having and maintaining a strong feminist anti-rape movement in Canada and Québec and we believe that the government, the straight press and the moral majority will have access to this information through *Kinesis* and *Broadside* and will use it against all of us.

One of the things we've learned is that political splits are incredibly destructive to the individual women involved and that the resulting wounds take a long time to heal. We are worried that if the resolution of this split depends on the destruction of one group or the other, the women's liberation movement will lose many of our strong fighters and that will weaken us all.

Laura Rowe
Toronto Rape Crisis Centre

Broadside:

We were appalled to see that *Broadside* has seen fit to reprint the letter (June 1982) from the WAVAW/Rape Crisis Group concerning Vancouver Rape Relief which first appeared in *Kinesis*. First of all, your introductory paragraph contains some inaccurate statements. The WAVAW statement was not signed by 80 women. Some of the names on that page of *Kinesis* were in support of WAVAW opening another rape crisis centre but not of the statement itself. It is also untrue that relations between Rape Relief and the Vancouver women's community broke down over the controversy around the government funding. The British Columbia Federation of Women, whose member groups represent hundreds of feminists in Vancouver and across the province, supported the demand of the B.C. Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (of which Rape Relief is a member) that the government reinstate its funding. Many women's groups came out for a march and rally in March to support the Coalition's demand for funding.

Besides being critical of the inaccurate

way in which you presented the WAVAW letter, we think it is irresponsible journalism to print the letter at all. Many feminists in Vancouver, some of whom are quite critical of Rape Relief, were horrified to see a group purporting to be feminist making such unsubstantiated and even slanderous accusations of another feminist group and making them public. To make in-movement conflicts public at a time when the government of BC (and this is a worldwide pattern) is trying to break the strength of the women's movement by setting up women's groups to fight each other for funding and to fall into the government's trap is, to quote one Vancouver feminist, "committing hara-kiri with the government's sword." The government has been aware of the tension between Rape Relief and the women's community and is trying to use this opportunity to pick off a service which has become too outspoken in its criticisms of the establishment. It must have loved WAVAW's letter.

Since the letter appeared, many of us have been spending inordinate amounts of time trying to make sense of the implications of WAVAW's actions for all feminists in BC

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Broadside

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

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Broadside:

As members of a Jewish-feminist group which meets regularly in Toronto, we were distressed to see *Broadside* joining the ranks of the mainstream, patriarchal media by publishing "Zeroing in on Zionism" by Lilith Finkler (October 1982), an article characterized by over-simplifications, half-truths and distortions.

In a feminist publication such as *Broadside* we are not likely to see examples of sexism or racism; why then does anti-semitism find a place? Denying Israel's right to exist, (as opposed to criticizing governmental policies) is a form of anti-semitism. What about the 3 million inhabitants of Israel, many of whom are refugees from Arab lands, many of whom are survivors of the Holocaust as well as the native born? Why is the existence of Israel always open to debate?

Finkler's answers to these questions is the notion of "Jewish only spaces." This solution would be laughable if it were not tinged

with such tragedy. It represents a denial of Jewish history, in fact Jewish existence in Eastern Europe for 900 years. During this time Jews established rich and complex social, cultural, educational and political structures which existed until the Holocaust and the destruction of European Jewish civilization.

What purpose is served by such an extremely imbalanced perspective? Wrongs have been committed by both Israel and Arab countries, but we are only presented with one aspect of the whole. Many of her quotations are taken out of context, some are arrested in time, some of her sources are questionable (i.e. the Neturai Karta is an extremist religious group who, while living in the State of Israel, will not recognize its existence until the arrival of the Messiah) and her interpretations are distorted (are threats of violence against Jews at Copenhagen a new form of consciousness-raising?)

We reject Finkler's concluding statement that Jewish feminists who support the State of Israel also support the destruction of the Palestinian people. We find the either/or approach too reminiscent of male-stream thought. As feminists we join our voices to those of our sisters, Di Vilde Chayes (an American collective of lesbian/feminist Zionist Jews):

"We refuse these fragmentations, refuse to be trapped by choices that are both personally and politically destructive. We know that a just solution is possible between Arab and Jew in the Middle East."

Judith Arbus, Elizabeth Bohnen, Elaine Cooper, Frieda Forman, Giselle Igier, Renate Krakauer, Helen Levine, Isabella Meltz, Fay Nemani, Ellen Passmore, Dorothy Rusoff, Selma Savage, Barbara Waisberg.
Toronto

EDITORIALS

This Is Broadside

In the past several months, two matters have arisen for which *Broadside* has received criticism (see "Letters" this issue).

In June, *Kinesis* printed a letter from a newly-formed WAVAW group, protesting the policies of Vancouver Rape Relief. In our next issue, we reprinted that letter, for which we were criticized. The issue of "irresponsible journalism" crops up from time to time — it's one of the hazards of the occupation — and we wish to say that we do our best, with limited resources, to be accountable to our readers.

But, in the case of the WAVAW/RCG letter, we erred in not being sensitive to the political significance of the letter; namely, the delicate situation in Vancouver over the past few years was known to *Broadside* collective members and the letter was no surprise to us. We assumed, wrongly, that our readers understood the events leading up to it. Since they didn't, our reprinting of the letter meant that we were lifting one event out of its political context and plunking it out of the blue into another. Naturally, it seemed like irresponsible journalism.

In speaking with a *Kinesis* staff member in June, we agreed to print nothing more on the issue until we could provide readers with an overall view. This month, we are publishing Maureen FitzGerald's article, thereby hoping to correct the apparent distortion and place the situation in its proper context.

A more recent source of criticism was our publishing Lilith Finkler's article on anti-Zionism (October 1982). The basis of the criticism is two-fold: that Finkler's anti-Zionist article should not have been the first in an ongoing dialogue, and that we would not print a sexist or racist article so why an anti-semitic one?

The question of anti-semitism in the women's movement began being discussed after a UN conference in Copenhagen and an article in *Ms.* magazine. *Broadside* wanted to open up the dialogue on our own pages. We solicited a review, which never materialized, of the Jewish lesbian anthology, *Nice Jewish Girls*, and we put it about that we were interested in articles on the subject. Our first (and only) article was Finkler's. She submitted it in June and by September we still had no others of different points of view. We, including the Jewish members of our collective, decided to go ahead with it, hoping to get the dialogue going.

As to whether or not we would print a sexist article: no, but the parallel does not hold up. We would not, for example, publish an anti-abortion article because the pro-choice position is firmly entrenched in the feminist politic. (We might, on the other hand, publish an article by a woman exploring her qualms about having an abortion.) The questions Finkler raised in her article (and in Ottilie Lockey's response in this issue, plus a letter from a Jewish feminist group) are the

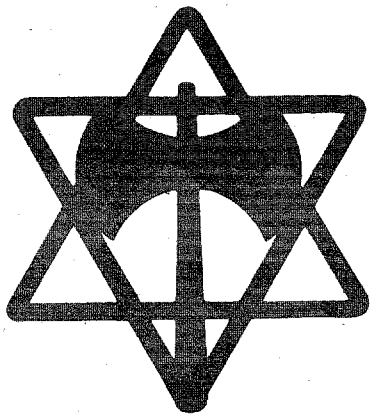
beginning of a dialogue.

We do not, as a collective, always agree with the points of view raised in articles we publish (see our masthead). Finkler's article is not the first unpopular article we've printed (see "Neurosis on a Sliding Scale," an anti-therapy article by Ottilie Lockey, or "Resurrection of God," an irreverent piece by Susan G. Cole). We never intend to offend any one or any group, but we can't please everyone all the time.

We hope that the articles in this month's *Broadside* and future issues will present a balanced picture and contribute to a broader feminist perspective.

ERRATA

In last month's article on feminism and gay liberation, "Boys and Girls Together," by Lorna Weir and Eve Zarembo, two errors occurred in the paste-up process. Paragraphs 4 to 7 of the "Thumbnail Sketch" section should have come after paragraphs 8 and 9. Also, the sentence reading: "...our gay brothers are going through a brotherhood phase which the women's movement endured several years ago," should have read "a brotherhood phase something akin to a sisterhood and eternal feminine phase which the women's movement endured several years ago."



Broadside:

I was pleased that you printed my article "Zeroing In on Zionism" (October 1982). Unfortunately there were a number of points omitted during the editorial process.

In the original draft, I had written that one cannot justify Zionism unless one similarly justifies the colonization of North America by the Puritans and Huguenots, who exploited the Indians. Then, it was the Indians who were the "terrorists." The point was raised in an effort to place the Palestinian issue in an international context. We, too, here in Canada are guilty of the same uprooting of the indigenous population. Another paragraph in the original stated that not all members of the PLO advocate terrorism.

Another point: the woman quoted as "Leila" was *not* Leila Khaled. The name was used as a pseudonym for a woman who cannot be publicly active, as it might endanger her relatives in Israel.

I hope these added comments help to clarify my article.

Lilith Finkler
Toronto

Broadside:

I have just read Lorna Weir and Eve Zaremba's article "Boys and Girls Together: Feminism and Gay Liberation" (*Broadside*, October 1982). I have been very disturbed at the increasing tendency of the gay movement to present its politics and vision in narrowly defined (male) sexual terms. So I very much appreciated the authors' historical examination of the context within which this is occurring.

From my observation of the process, it seems, sadly, to be the more radically self-defined activists in the movement who are initiating this redefinition. The struggles around the *Body Politic* and the Baths raids that have recently galvanized the gay community are extremely important but are nevertheless essentially civil rights issues. Radicals in the gay movement have been uneasy at the movement's apparent "backsliding" into simple liberal issues and have not been content to join with their gay brothers and other progressive movements and sympathizers to fight mere civil rights issues. Some of them, in order to maintain the revolutionary promise of the earlier movement, have begun to look again at the by now much more developed, feminist theory and to work towards an analysis of gay oppression and gay struggle that recognizes male domination of women as a crucial component. The majority, however, have been, like most male radicals in other movements, unprepared to question sexual power and gender domination.

It is this refusal to deal politically with feminism and with male domination that underlies their militant and dangerous reduction of gay politics to what Weir and Zaremba call "sexual liberationism." In attempting to connect a gay struggle uninformed by feminism to wide progressive social change (and even to claim a vanguard position for such a struggle) they have been forced to

abandon any real analysis for the simple glorification of those forms of sex that are particular to, or characteristic of, gay men and the gay sub-culture. This allows them to argue that in defending the Baths and the *Body Politic's* right to publish about pedophilia they are not *just* engaged in a civil rights struggle but are defending the incipient forms and practice of a future free society.

These gay "radicals" manage to save their own self-definition as revolutionaries without having to face the really revolutionary question of male dominance. In fact gay struggle, like all other radical politics in this period, can only be truly progressive if it is informed by feminism. Without this, gay politics must remain, at its best, an important but limited liberal, civil rights struggle. Those few gay men who are working with feminist theory and feminists to develop a new non-sexist progressive politics deserve our support, as do those gays who are engaged in the struggle for gay civil rights. But I think we must actively resist the reactionary attempts to ignore feminism and male domination while claiming revolutionary significance for gay struggle. In fact this tendency of the gay movement demands not only our support but our recognition of its vanguard status! Its glorification of gay male sexuality is not just the result of a politically opportunistic alliance with an "unenlightened" gay community as Weir and Zaremba suggest. It is an active initiative which limits the gay movement by directly attacking and undermining feminism. This is evidenced (among many other things) by the support that Weir and Zaremba note for lesbians who attack feminism in the name of sado-masochism.

Angela Miles
Antigonish, N.S.

P.S. I really enjoy the paper. It's full of good stuff. Thanks.

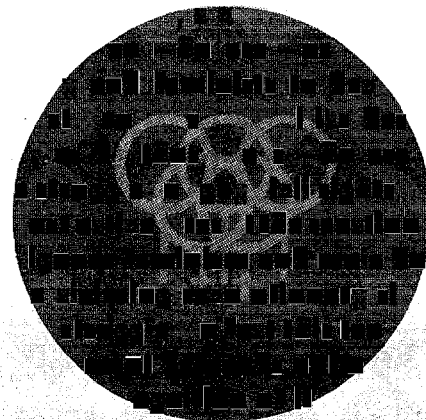
Broadside:

For your readers who live in the City of Toronto: they may be interested in the results of a lesbian and gay municipal election questionnaire, organized by Lesbians Against the Right (LAR), Gay Liberation Against the Right Everywhere (GLARE) and the Right to Privacy Committee (RTPC).

As of *Broadside's* copy deadline, the following candidates had responded in favour of lesbian and gay rights. Aldermanic candidates: Ward 1: White, Ziembra; Ward 2: Bever, Friesen; Ward 3: Preziosso, Gilbert; Ward 4: Pantalone; Ward 5: Kanter; Ward 6: Layton, Sewell; Ward 9: Thomas. Public School Board candidates: Ward 1: Little, Whitla; Ward 2: Meagher, Weatherup; Ward 3: Barkley, Silipo; Ward 4: Marchese; Ward 5: Moss; Ward 6: Doiron, Spencer; Ward 7: Bhagan, Campbell, Endicott, McConnell, Reville; Ward 8: Baird, deKlerk, Glazer; Ward 9: Harris, Howell; Ward 11: Johnston. Mayorality candidate: Kellerman.

Election day is November 8. Vote for candidates who support lesbian and gay rights.

LAR, GLARE, RTPC
Toronto



• Letters continued page 13



Elinor Mahoney

by Eve Zaremba

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence (OPI) are a group of gay men in Toronto who dress up as nuns on festive occasions, such as demonstrations, and cavort about outrageously. Their doings have raised many a feminist hackle, especially among lesbians, who tend to have the most contact with them. After the Lesbian and Gay Pride Day in June 1982, some women from LAR (Lesbians Against the Right) became incensed enough to write an open letter of protest. In this letter, sent to *The Body Politic* and to *Broadside*, LAR stated that the public appearance of men in nun drag is misogynist, and a misunderstanding of political theatre which diverts attention from serious issues. LAR suggested that those gay men who wish to mock traditional patriarchal sexual mores by dressing up, do so as priests or cardinals and not as nuns. (Subsequently, LAR decided their energy was better spent in other struggles.)

The "Sisters" themselves have replied to the LAR statement in a light-hearted and beautifully typed letter (there is some great secretarial material in the Order). They deny that dressing up as nuns is misogynist or that it diverts attention from serious political issues. Quite the contrary, "high on their list of souls to save are the gay men unaware of their stake in feminism and the need for fundamental change in society; men self-oppressed by the ideological by-products of male privilege." In addition, the men of OPI consider that far from misunderstanding political theatre, they have expanded its scope and pertinence. For gay men to dress up as nuns is no different, they claim, from women wearing plaid shirts and work boots. They suggest that it would be suitably shocking and enlightening for dykes to take up cross-dressing as priests.

I beg to differ with much of what both parties have had to say in these two letters.

Gay men dressed up as powerful male figures, such as cardinals, would not have the same effect as men dressed as nuns. OPI is

Sisters of Perpetual Arrogance

right there. But that is precisely the point, the implications of which OPI then proceeds to overlook. Men cross-dressing as women and having fun doing it is very different from women wearing plaid shirts. Historically, men have used women and images of women in their struggles against other men. Women have been just the objects in battles between men. This is an obnoxious practice no matter what the motive. Politically aware gays should not indulge (!) in it.

There may be significance in what the men of OPI do, significance which we as women tend to miss or even dismiss. However misguided the means they have chosen to make their point, these men are rejecting male privilege and questioning masculine roles in society. We should not be blind to the possibility that each of the men in the OPI is taking some personal risk by "degrading" his masculinity, if only for a while. This may indeed have some consciousness-raising value for other men. At any rate it is an example of a very rare phenomenon, at a time when gay men in the main are bent on fulfilling our worst fears regarding their ultimate desire for all the privileges of maleness in our society. So let's give them that much credit.

Not everything which we as women find objectionable is necessarily misogynist, a term we should handle carefully so as not to downgrade it through overuse. The shenanigans of the OPI are politically myopic and perhaps distasteful to many but that does not *per se* make them misogynist.

It is difficult not to judge men by our standards and not to expect those who claim to be our allies to feel and understand as we

do. But the problems of men fighting "masculinity" are clearly different from our problems. They have their priorities, we have ours. All that anyone can reasonably expect is solidarity on issues of mutual interest when this coincides. Where our interests conflict, as is bound to be the case from time to time, all that can be hoped for is respect of the genuineness of that difference. However, women have every reason not to accept male claims of good will and support unless accompanied by suitable action.

If they truly want to give up some of their male privilege, gay men, along with other males, must try to overcome their arrogance vis-à-vis women. In this case I suggest that the men of OPI do some soul-searching regarding their motives. Why do they go in for this stuff? My suggestion is that the main impetus is that *it is fun*. And, since it upsets many straights and less "advanced" gays, it could even be considered politically progressive, even revolutionary. This kind of analysis, to honour it with a name it does not deserve, is currently prevalent in the gay community and unfortunately among some feminists as well. It permits combining the sixties flavour of "if it's fun, do it" with the seventies spice of political relevance. It justifies doing whatever you feel like doing — fun, fun, fun — and calling it "political work." Very tempting stuff, especially for the mentally lazy and guilt-ridden. It's time we grasped the fact that not everything which shocks the bourgeoisie is necessarily progressive. Guess that makes me a spoilsport. •

Zeroing In On Zionism: Survival at Stake



by **Ottie Lockey**

It is deeply disturbing that *Broadside's* first published article on the connections between feminism, Zionism, and anti-semitism, "Zeroing in on Zionism" by Lilith Finkler (October 1982), presents such a one-sided account of the concerns which are currently being voiced from the pages of New York's *Ms. Magazine* to Vancouver's *Kinesis*. The scope of this dialogue is tremendous, encompassing hundreds of years of history, persecution both past and present, and the complicated realities of the Middle East. It is crucial that these complex issues be discussed in a framework rather than appearing as a political diatribe.

The article in *Kinesis* (September 1982) by Robin Barnett and Marion Kawas is another case in point. It presents the anti-Israeli viewpoint as if written by PLO public relations hacks.

Feminists must repudiate the propaganda of either side: the right or the left, the PLO or the Israeli. We must look at the facts in context and draw conclusions consistent with our understanding of the world. The feminist press, whether *Broadside* or *Kinesis* has a responsibility to make this analysis available to us, and not merely regurgitate propaganda.

Israel is part of the here and now. In order to write about the Middle East today its existence must be accepted and its reality acknowledged. It is a tiny country, one-third the size of Nova Scotia, of fewer than 4 million inhabitants surrounded by hostile neighbours. That is the geo-political reality.

The state of Israel acts, as do all other states, out of self-interest. We have every

right to be critical of the policies of any and all states. However, unlike most other countries, including Canada, the crux of the matter for Israel is survival. For Israelis, the alternative to a Jewish state is annihilation. We should carefully avoid sitting, in safety, in judgement over people who firmly believe they are fighting for their very right to exist.

Blamelessness has never been a prerequisite for statehood. There isn't a country anywhere which can claim a clear conscience with respect to its past and present policies and actions towards its minorities or towards women. Which state in this world has clean hands? There is a note of hypocrisy in the indignation of those who appear to deny Israel the right to act as all other states have done for centuries.

It seems that only Israel is faced with this strange double bind. As Jews, Israelis are subject to stricter moral expectations than other peoples. Having already experienced the Holocaust in World War II, it seems morally unforgivable for Jews to commit any transgressions. The world is more comfortable with Jews as blameless victims. Does that not ring a bell for us? Women, too, are supposed to be "better" than men, the keepers of moral standards, victims of a classic double bind: our role is to suffer passively, not strike out in anger.

Since Israeli Jews have rejected the role of victim, Israel has been called an imperialist satellite of the United States. Given the fact that there are more Jews in the US than there are in the state of Israel, the bonds between the two countries are of course strong. Immense financial support has been extended from the United States to Israel, and why not? Acceptance of support from the US

does not make Israel an imperial power. Those who condemn Israel as imperialistic are merely aping the rhetoric of the cold-war warriors, left and right, who see everything in the world as a reflection of the struggle between the superpowers.

The solution often presented to the problem of the Israeli-Arab conflict is a call for the dismemberment of Israel in favour of a "secular" state to include Jews and Arabs. It would, we are assured, be non-theocratic, less patriarchal and at peace internally and externally. So perfect a solution is hard to fault in principle, which is why it keeps appearing in various guises. However, it is difficult to treat this solution as anything more than a fantasy. At best, the "secular state" solution is propaganda aimed at undermining support for Israel among progressive elements everywhere by providing a phony solution which Israel is bound to reject.

At worst it is a cold-blooded attempt to permit the PLO and its supporters to administer their own "final solution" with the approval of the rest of the world. There can be no reasonable doubt that Jews in Israel would be threatened with extermination once Israel ceased to exist as a Jewish state with state power. Platitudes about a secular state (read: anti-Jewish) where Jew and Arab would coexist in democratic equality cannot be accepted at face value at present.

Those who advocate this as a solution may fervently deny that they are anti-semitic, but their denials sound remarkably hollow. Whether motivated by Jew-hate, or in all innocence and ignorance, mouthing the slogans of the pro-PLO left, any call for the destruction of Israel amounts to acquiescence in another blood bath. Let us remember that

quite apart from its effect on the Israelis, abolition of the Jewish state would be interpreted throughout the world as victory for Jew-haters. What effect would the disappearance of the state of Israel have on assaults against synagogues in France, Italy and yes, here in Canada? The possibilities of vicious attacks against Jews increase immeasurably when the existence of Israel no longer presents psychological deterrence to violent anti-semitism.

The essential distinction that Lilith Finkler presented in her *Broadside* article is that to be anti-semitic is to attribute specific character traits to Jews, and to be anti-Zionist is to oppose the existence of the state of Israel. In other words, Finkler claims that to be anti-Zionist is not to be anti-semitic. Perhaps not necessarily in theory, but absolutely in practice. Join any anti-Israel demonstration and you will find yourself in the company of Jew-haters of various stripes. That some will themselves be Jews is in no way a contradiction. As women and feminists, we are familiar with the phenomenon of self-hate and the ways it manifests itself within despised and powerless groups.

Whether we like it or not, the focus of protest against Israel is the general atmosphere of Jew-hating and Jew-baiting which exists in some form or other in every country in the world. The PLO and their allies are busy taking advantage of it. To join forces with the enemies of Israel is to join a war against Jews.

Ottie Lockey is a Toronto arts administrator and longtime supporter of Broadside. This article was written in collaboration with Eve Zaremba.



Vancouver Rape Relief: Frustrations With the Fortress Mentality

by **Maureen FitzGerald**

Why is it that when last spring the BC government terminated funding for the BC Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres and insisted on funding centres on a regional instead of a provincial basis, the BC women's movement did not rally to support a boycott of government funding, called for by Vancouver Rape Relief?

Instead, at an "in-movement" meeting (a meeting called for all women who consider themselves to be a part of the women's movement) held on June 14 in Vancouver, Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) sought and received qualified support to apply for that government funding and set up a new rape crisis centre in Vancouver, a motion supported by half of the over one hundred women present. The meeting was not considered by those present as simply representative of a disagreement between two organizations. There was more to it. Not only could it mean the destruction of Vancouver Rape Relief, but it was an issue which posed a threat to us all. Hanging over the meeting was the question of whether we were allowing a government, whose policies are inherently anti-woman, to divide us. It was clear that it was going to be hard if not impossible to get these two groups, Rape Relief and WAVAW, to talk to each other. Even a last-ditch motion for the two groups to form a united front against government attack got little support, as seeming too unrealistic.

I don't want to analyse what led the women of WAVAW, all of whom are ex-members of the Rape Relief Collective, to take

such drastic action. Nor do I want to give a step-by-step account of who did what, when and to whom. To my way of thinking such accounts, including WAVAW's grocery list of accusations (June 1982) do little to analyse and explain the situation. I do want to examine the question of how Rape Relief (an organization that has done important educational work around the issue of sexual assault and violence against women) found itself so isolated from the rest of the movement.

In the fall of 1980 I moved to Vancouver and started to attend the in-movement meetings. I came into it at about the fourth meeting. Altogether there have been at least nine such meetings, plus long discussions in the BC Federation of Women (BCFW), and in the pages of *Kinesis*. In fact, it is safe to say that the criticisms of Rape Relief and what to do about it have dominated the political scene in the Vancouver women's movement for the last two and a half years. The results of the June 1982 meeting should have come as no surprise to anyone.

Many of us have the experience of working in a women's collective and have gained an awareness of how the organizations we work in as feminists are vulnerable to the self-isolation and arrogance that became the trademark of Vancouver Rape Relief. Feminist organizations organized around providing a particular service are especially prone to this isolation. In all service organizations there is a strong feminist consciousness where there is a commitment to provide the service (and how that is done will often

be controversial), to do educational work, and to do political work (again, defining what, how and with whom takes a considerable amount of time).

In addition to the burn-out that such an agenda can cause among individual members is the danger that our practice becomes skewed so that one of these three becomes predominant — everything grinds to a halt, for example, while we work out our political analysis. We make a mistake individually and collectively if we put all our political energy into a single organization; our analysis as feminists often exceeds the practice that is possible within a particular group. When we concentrate on one group we run the risk of thinking that our particular group is the centre if not the woman's movement itself rather than looking for ways to build working coalitions with other women's groups.

Within feminist services there is a growing and understandable impatience with the band-aid solutions that must be implemented every day, and an increased criticism of political reformism that will relieve the symptoms but not touch the underlying ills. I would imagine that in doing rape crisis work each call, each consultation, each accompaniment of a woman through the perils of the medical and legal systems triggers anger at the misogyny of our society and a desire to do something more. Sometimes the anger causes actions that are rash and precipitous, and when such actions are done without consultation and on-going support from other women's groups that makes us all more vulnerable. Sometimes we start to minimize the

degree to which providing a feminist service can be a political and politicizing action and the degree to which a reform within the present system is both possible and desirable.

I think that Rape Relief made this mistake with gusto and the result was both burn-out and arrogance. Since both of these can lead to muddle-headedness and stubbornness, they kept on doing it and multiplied the tactical mistakes. An example is the decision they made several years ago to go off government funding by October 1982 (thus adding an ironic touch to the recent government decision). This, they said, was to enable their own money to be used within the coalition to set up another centre. The decision to go off government funding coupled with very elaborate, dare I say grandiose, plans for buying a women's shelter also funded by private donations and money-raising projects, seemed suicidal. To some, this move off funding was considered desirable, creating more possibility for them to act politically and less danger of being co-opted.

While I think we are all aware of the way that government funding can be manipulative and governmental requests for information invasive, I think that we have also learned how to deal with this, how to appear to play the game while taking the money and running with it. When we put pressure on the state to provide services for women, rather than on other underpaid women, we are putting the pressure where it belongs. Going off government funding may be purist but I am not convinced that it is inherently more effective at working for social change.

• continued page 13

Surrogate Mom and Apple Pie



by Lisa Freedman and Susan Ursel

In any discussion of surrogate motherhood, one thing should be clear; when we talk about surrogate motherhood we are not talking about the ethics of artificial insemination, cloning, sperm banks, super races, genetic manipulation, or any of the other interesting and distracting issues that the press has been drumming up in the recent debates over surrogate motherhood.

We are talking about an agreement between a man and a woman, usually in contract form, saying that the woman will conceive and bear a child for that man, and will forego any claims of parenthood she may have to the child in return for some form of remuneration. Surrogate motherhood is quite often brought about by using artificial insemination, but A.I. is hardly a necessary component of the process. In the bad old days, concubines performed the same service in return for room, board and a kind word from their master. In these more enlightened times, the women are paid.

In fact, paying the woman is what brought this whole issue to the forefront. Concubinage and illegal trade in babies has been known for centuries. But it was only recently that people began to hire lawyers and write contracts formalizing the whole procedure. This tacit recognition of the practice attracted all kinds of entrepreneurs, lawyers and willing "mothers". Unfortunately, what in some jurisdictions in the United States is a grey area of the law, is expressly forbidden in Ontario. Payment to mothers placing their children up for adoption is not allowed, except to cover the legal costs of adoption. And surrogate mothers are considered to have placed their child up for adoption when the childless couple claims the baby.

Anxious couples, unable to have children of their own, found a way around this problem by simply making their deal in another jurisdiction. None of this would have mattered at all in Ontario (since the authorities were quite happy to turn a blind eye) except that in one case Mother X, in her rush to return home to Florida, left the now famous Scarborough couple's baby unclaimed in the hospital. Catholic Children's Aid stepped in, as this child was legally "deserted," and the whole case ended up in court. Of course we all know that the child was not abandoned at all: the Scarborough couple was more than willing to claim the child. This technical fiction however has finally forced the legal system and the government to deal with reality — the contracting out of baby making.

Surrogate motherhood of one kind or another has been practised for centuries with not much interference; recently, lawyers, middlemen, advertisers and women have discovered that surrogate motherhood has more lucrative attractions than simply providing a childless couple with a baby; the government finally had brought to their attention the existence of a new kind of contractual arrangement that they hadn't regulated yet — and presto, we have the outrageous and immoral practice of surrogate motherhood standing in the blinding white light of public indignation. You will notice, naturally, that it took centuries of observation and the passing of some money from hand to hand before the authorities decided that something had to be done.

What they decide must be done will depend on how they decide to view the whole interchange. If surrogate motherhood is seen as a contractual arrangement will all the proper procedures adhered to, we may face the prospect of viewing the unborn fetus as a third party to a contract with certain rights tied up in the agreement. What implication will the recognition of a fetus as a party to a contract have on the abortion debate? This is the kind of legislative precedent feminists ought to consider if they insist that surrogate motherhood is merely another control of our

bodies issue and should be allowed without state interference.

Surrogate motherhood is not a simple issue with one basic feminist reply. The term itself describes an activity that can only be engaged in by women, and is thus far primarily engaged in by poor women. The implications of this on an economic analysis of the exploitation of women's bodies and labour are obvious. Some might argue that the surrogate mothers are handsomely rewarded for their work. The question we must ask these people is why women would find it necessary to become surrogate mothers in the first place, an old and tired argument, but nevertheless valid. The difference between this kind of exploitation and the more common forms is that here the products wear diapers and the factories walk around on two legs. Who really owns, in the sense of controlling, the means of production is the next question to look at.

For feminists who find it intriguing that women are finally being recognized in financial terms for work they have performed for eons without appreciation, consider this: The lawyers who negotiate the terms of the contract are, as a profession, primarily men; the doctors who care for these women and supervise the birth are, as a profession, primarily men; the advertisers who generate the catalogues of surrogate mothers are, as a profession, mostly men; the politicians and civil servants who will be deciding how surrogate motherhood will function if it is to function at all, are also usually men. It is also a man's world that pays women on average less than 60% of the average male wage, creates barriers to female employment in more remunerative jobs and generally erects the ghetto that women find themselves in. And just for interest's sake, it is the economists of this male-dominated world that assure us that just as soon as there are lots of surrogate mothers, the price that seemed so high will drop by the magic of the market economy — leaving us with a true valuation of motherhood. We should not be too surprised if the "true" value of motherhood is pretty low.

And we would question exactly how much control surrogate mothers are actually retaining; the imbalance of influence most men enjoy in other relationships and exchanges will almost certainly occur in the situation of surrogate motherhood and its related contracts. Should we then press for legislation to ensure the mother's rights, for instance, to refuse to continue with the pregnancy for personal or health reasons, or to supervise her own prenatal care because women, by the nature of this society, are in an inherently weaker position than the men for whom they work?

And in pressing for legislation to protect the woman's interests are we not calling down upon us the very power we hoped to

avoid by insisting that women have the right to control our bodies?

And what of the legislation? Will it define those who are suitable parents for a surrogate baby (somewhat analogous to adoptive parents)? Will the legislation specify that the recipients be a married couple? Will the legislation discriminate against common law couples, gay couples, single persons?

So far we have been looking at the exchange the surrogate mother's contract describes as an exchange of the adoptive parents' money for the use of the surrogate mother's body. This is not how the law views the situation. The legal problem with surrogate motherhood is not payment for the use of a woman's body, it is payment for a baby. Babies, unlike women and their wombs, are not to be bought and sold, presumably because the babies are not old enough to look out for their own interests. This view of the exchange leads us inevitably to worry about the rights of the child, who is to protect it and to what extent it will take precedence over the rights of other parties to the contract. Public sentiment, and so we might assume the sentiments of a government that intends to be re-elected, are with the child as a relatively defenceless player in this game. All this is fairly consistent with child welfare legislation already on the books, and probably appeals to our sense of a just society that protects the weaker members from abuse by the stronger.

There is one major problem with this whole view though: for the crucial nine months of the contract, this future child is still only a fetus, a distinction that all the debate on the "child's interest" has failed, perhaps purposefully, to make. What rights should a fetus have? Will the public be willing to settle for the idea that fetuses are the sole responsibility of their surrogate mother, until they are born and the state can step in? Do contracts recognizing certain rights of the fetus, to good care for instance, provide the legal recognition of broader rights? Given the vociferous activity of the anti-choice movement and the *Borowski* (the fetus as a person with rights) case yet to come, is this the kind of question they could win on?

To put the rights of the child in another context, suppose there was uncontroversial evidence that the child would be born with Down's Syndrome. Do the adoptive parents have the right to refuse to accept the child as not fulfilling contractual specifications? Can the surrogate mother abort the pregnancy, or would that be considered a breach of her contract? Would the delivery of a handicapped child be considered another breach of contract? Should contracts for surrogate situations be allowed to specify non-acceptance of a handicapped child (remember that often the reason the adoptive parents did not adopt a child by the more regular route is that the children available were the wrong age, race or health)?

The legal view of the exchange as "money for baby" leads us into a thicket of thorny questions. However, this legal view is probably the one that will prevail, and if this is so, will feminists who support surrogate motherhood as a control of our bodies issue, be able to circumvent it and its implications effectively?

What meaning does surrogate motherhood have for this society? Why do we have surrogate motherhood anyway? The usual answer is that there are people who want to raise children and they can't have any of their own. So why don't the couples adopt? Because, the answer goes, there aren't any babies to adopt. But as many social workers can tell you, there are many children to adopt or provide a foster care for. Unfortunately, they are often not the "right" age, race or in the most desirable state of health: most adopting parents prefer perfect "Ivory Snow" babies. At least, the most "desirable" kinds of parents, the ones who are in an income bracket high enough to afford a surrogate mother, these kinds of children.

And obviously, adoption agencies and society in general cater to these kinds of predilections, rather than challenging them. It is of course another matter to assume the burden of a handicapped child. Still, if society's concerns were genuine, we might remove some of the barriers to adoption of these children.

Even if adoption were easy, even if parents felt no stigma about adopting a child not like themselves, surrogate motherhood would probably still exist because surrogate motherhood is not really about raising a child. Surrogate motherhood is about *having* a child. The difference is crucial. We have children, we don't make babies (in fact "making babies" is an almost derogatory description in some contexts). We have children, we exercise control over them, we own them.

Adoptive parents who have used surrogate mothers, and parents of all kinds, speak of "at last having a child of their own." This is an important aspect of parenting, that the child be identifiable as yours and no one else's. The only context in which it is useful to identify something as your own is when you intend to use it for your pleasure or necessity, and to protect it from others' attempts at control. Consider the commonplace: "This is my secretary and you must ask me if you wish to use her." We exert control over people all the time by laying claim to them or to some aspect of them. Parents and children, like wives and husbands, may be the prototypical version of this claim.

In the special case of surrogate motherhood, though, the idea of property in children becomes a corollary of other values. Notice that surrogate parents, like other parents, are overjoyed at having a child of their own. But what makes it uniquely theirs is that the husband has had a part in the creation of the child. Now, if the child were really to be uniquely theirs, the adoptive mother should also have had some role in the creation of the child. That way, at least from a genetic point of view, the child would be a unique combination of their genes and no one else's. Such a procedure has been successfully used at the English Steptoe Clinic, where ovum from medically defined infertile women has been combined with their husband's sperm outside the uterus. Later, the developing fetus is implanted in the woman's womb and brought to term. In theory anyway, practices such as this should be much more interesting to the adoptive parents who wish to have a child of *their* own.

Alternatively, if the adoptive mother's ovum is not so very important to making the child theirs, then why is the husband's sperm? If the genetic makeup of the child is not the crucial factor, then why not just hire a woman to get pregnant by a mutually agreed upon mate, perhaps of superior genetic material, and give the child so created to the adoptive parents (with permission of all parties of course). Granted it might be a somewhat costlier procedure, but the end result of superior genetic material in, might be a superior child out. Certainly in the context of the surrogate mother's genetic makeup, defects and sound characteristics are very important to the purchasing parents (have a look at the surrogate mother catalogues). Why aren't the father's characteristics given similar attention?

The answer is quite obvious, but its very obviousness should give us pause for thought. The sperm must be from the adoptive father because that is the way the parents know the child is theirs. The woman's contribution, except for the use of her womb, is not of primary importance. The adoptive mother's contribution seems to be of no importance at all. And the values that determine whose contribution is more important are as old as patriarchy and the ownership of property. And equally as outdated.

Lisa Freedman and Susan Ursel are Toronto lawyers.

Exceeding Our (Political) Import Quota

by Susan G. Cole

Early in October, about 700 Toronto feminists paid \$5 to hear Mary Daly speak at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). It looked as if it would turn into something of an event — a jammed hall, a radical feminist, an early autumn energy charge. But as Mary Daly regurgitated much of the material in *Gyn/ecology*, and as Mary O'Brien came to the podium to thank the star of the show, receiving an ovation a good deal heftier than the one given to Daly, I realized that I would rather have heard from Mary O'Brien, the Canadian lapsed Marxist than from Mary Daly, the American lapsed Catholic.

I suspect, though, that we never would have thought of booking OISE for an address by O'Brien, or that we would have been as willing to shell out \$5 for the privilege of hearing her speak, despite the fact that we can be certain, after Daly's cryptic performance, that O'Brien is the more eloquent speaker. Unfortunately, Mary O'Brien is too close to home, a Canadian, one of ours. We will, it seems, continue to prefer Yankee names like Daly who can barely believe that we have read her books.

Of course, there has to be more to the influence Americans have on us than the frequency with which we import and embrace American writers (and musicians, of course). There is an integrity to the notion of global feminism that compels us to heed the words of non-Canadians. Indeed the strength of Mary Daly's work lies in her recognition of sexism as a cross-cultural phenomenon. The suttee in India, the practice of foot-binding in China and the millions of clitorectomies performed in Africa are the testaments of the universal power of violence against women. But while we should read with interest whatever feminists around the world have to say, while we must strive to maintain the larger global perspective, we are still Canadians living in our own idiosyncratic Canadian political culture. The difference between the Canadian and American

women's movements is a subject *Broadside* will be exploring in the near future. But in the meantime, it would be useful to make note of some of the issues that are becoming problematic on account of our willingness to find interesting everything our American friends find interesting, and our insistence on dealing with issues the same way Americans do.

Many Canadian reviewers criticized the National Film Board's *Not a Love Story* for the attention it gave to American writers and philosophers and for its failure to recognize the many home-grown feminists who have analysed and protested against pornography in Canada. Again, we can't reduce our criticism to the nationality of our "stars." Personally, I'll listen to whatever Susan Griffin or Kate Millett have to say anytime. But the NFB film *did* look at the anti-porn movement in the States and the movement there is quite different from the feminist initiatives taken on the same issue in Canada.

Recently, a feminist critic of the feminist position against pornography asked me to read a review of *Not a Love Story* by B. Ruby Rich printed in the *Village Voice*. The review, it turns out, slams Women Against Pornography (WAP) for focussing on the entertainment division of violence against women (pornography) rather than on the violence itself. Further, Rich accused the anti-porn movement of constructing manipulative videos designed to convince the unconverted that pornography *causes* violence.

When I read this review and its assessment of the anti-porn movement, I was tempted to write a quick letter to the *Voice* complaining that the reviewer had criticized the fanatic fringe of the anti-porn movement; nobody with any sense is making the claim that "man reads porn; man rapes." Then I thought, maybe that's what they are doing in the US. And I became even more distressed that Canadian initiatives against porn were being criticized on the basis of the American version of an anti-porn movement.

For the record, there has never been a



Catherine Maunsell

Mary Daly spoke to a Toronto audience at OISE on October 2.

strong Canadian anti-porn group, precisely because it is not a typically Canadian political practice to isolate individual issues. It's the American way to focus on one factor (whale liberation, or individual committees to defend individuals, for example) and to create coalitions with other single issue groups to make change. All protests against pornography in Canada have been made under the banner of Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW), where efforts have been made consistently to link pornography to the incidence of violence against women without making the grand leap to the claim that there is a direct cause and effect dynamic at work. The Canadian women's movement, with a few exceptions (the abortion movement for example, an exception only because of its association with the left), has been inclined toward integrating different issues into a cohesive whole, and the approach Canadian feminists have taken to pornography is a good example of that integrated approach.

A Jewish feminist friend of mine asked me to consider the issue of anti-semitism in the women's movement and I asked her whether we weren't importing another issue from the US. My reaction was based on having read an article by Letty Cottin Pogrebin in *Ms.* magazine, which although compelling and duly passionate, I believed to speak to the American feminist experience.

Except for the questioning of the existence of Israel, which is an issue for Jews everywhere in the diaspora, the incidence of anti-semitism as reported by *Ms.* was the result of a particular relationship between feminism and the left in the US; between feminism and the American black movement; between Jews and the American left; and between Jews and American blacks. In other words, anti-semitism exists in the American women's movement because of American historical circumstances.

That doesn't mean that anti-semitism doesn't exist within Canadian progressive movements. It means that American writers cannot possibly describe the Canadian experience. For better or for worse, Canadian feminists have not actively sought to make feminism palatable to the left and to women of colour by *de facto* embracing socialism struggling against racism as a priority. American feminists, on the other hand, have. They've done so in order to engage the

large numbers of black, brown and immigrant women and socialist feminists into the coalition which is the American women's movement.

Our black community bears little resemblance to the Afro-American movement. Our relationship to the Canadian left is different than feminists' relationship to the American left. As it stands, discussing anti-semitism in the women's movement by referring to the disaffection of blacks vis-à-vis Jews doesn't exactly ring true to Canadian ears. Besides, just because a problem exists in the States, does that mean it exists here in the same form? Must we be a reflection of our American neighbours?

Many of us have wondered why the arguments in the S/M and feminism debate have been so defensive, in fact. The truth is, the issue got hot in the US and was parachuted into our midst complete with its not so pleasant tone. To wit, S/M's American celebrators Pat Califa and Gayle Rubin were invited to participate in a lesbian/gay conference in Toronto called "Doing It" and bitched at Toronto lesbians for the way women in San Francisco had treated them. I'm convinced that if we had wanted to deal with the issue (and I'm not sure we would have), we would have done it differently than have our American counterparts.

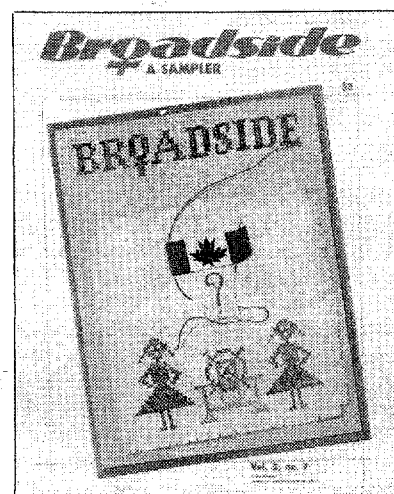
Because our American sisters are talking about something or doing something about something, does that mean we're lagging behind if we don't adopt the issue and do something about it? We have our priorities, our own history, our own way of relating to government, a unique underground of feminists in the government's varying civil service, a much less fragmented women's movement, our own writers, philosophers, musicians and our own way of organizing around the issues we *do* adopt.

Mary Daly started talking about Ronald Reagan and then realized she was talking to a Canadian audience. "Well, you have your own version of Reagan, don't you?" she said to cover herself. Well, we don't actually, and it was sheer folly for Daly to imagine that there is another Reagan or another army quite like the one that props him up. We do, however, have our own problems. It would help if we realized that all the answers, all the questions for that matter, don't necessarily lie south of the 49th parallel. ●

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MOVEMENT MATTERS

Dollars for Scholars

Canada's only women's university, Mount Saint Vincent in Halifax, recently launched a \$1 million campaign and is asking for \$1 from every Canadian woman to help it reach its goal by March 30, 1983.

The money raised will go towards scholarships and bursaries for deserving women of all ages and to fund neglected areas of research into women's issues.

Four years ago Mount Saint Vincent launched a \$3.5 million fund-raising campaign. So far it has raised \$2.5 million which has been used for much needed facilities. The university was bursting at the seams as the result of the large number of mature women returning to full-time study. The university, built by women for women in 1873, a time when women were not welcome in such circles, has no endowment funds.

The Celibate Woman

The first issue of a new journal is out: *The Celibate Woman, A Journal for Women Who Are Celibate or Considering this Liberating Way of Relating to Others*. While most of us spend a portion of our lives in a celibate state, we are not always able to appreciate its benefits when all around us there is an attitude that the only healthy and happy way to live one's life is to be sexually active. If one does not have a partner with whom a sexual relationship can be shared, one is expected to seek a partner. Otherwise one's life is not considered to be "full" or "complete."

Yet, at the same time, more of us are discovering that choosing celibacy can be a very positive choice and that this lifestyle can provide healthier and happier relationships with those we care about, including those with whom we share an intimate relationship. Living in a society where sex enters practically every aspect of our lives, it is refreshing to share new ideas, to explore new ways of relating to others.

Wanted

Wanted, from Jewish women, for an anthology: narratives, interviews, oral histories, fiction, poetry, drama, essays, translations.

The anthology, edited by Melanie Kaye and Irena Klepfisz, will depict the lives, history, creativity, resistance and survival of Jewish women. Submissions from and about Arabic, Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews from all nations are encouraged.

Send manuscripts with SASE to *Anthology*, c/o I. Klepfisz, PO Box 128, New Lebanon, New York, 12125. Deadline: April 1, 1983.



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President Margaret Fulton says she is determined to even out the odds and give her students an equal opportunity to develop their potential in an environment designed specifically for their needs.

Send donations to Development Office, Mount Saint Vincent University, 166 Bedford Highway, Halifax, NS, B3M 2J6. (Amounts over \$5 will get an income tax receipt.)

Lesbianery

650 lesbians were "visible to each other" on October 2 at the YWCA in Montréal. They came from all over Québec, from Ontario and even the Maritimes to see each other, meet, discuss, exchange, share, give and take information and celebrate our love of women, a love that in this "civilization" is often misunderstood, even denied.

Women meeting in workshops, or at the Visibility Fair, gave birth to associations (lesbian mothers, working class lesbians, Jewish lesbians) and to actions (Lesbian Visibility Action, next March 8).

Others publicized their activities: Bouche bée catalysante will be a lesbian festival of creativity in the Spring; the Women's Health Centre in Montreal now has a clinic for lesbians on Tuesdays; the lesbian only video and newsletter, *Amazones d'hier, Lesbiennes d'aujourd'hui*; the new lesbian monthly, *Ça s'attrape* (as in "It's not a sickness, but it's catching!") — PO Box 771, Station C, Montréal H2L 4L6. \$5/yr.)

In the evening, the rock music of Loulou's Band combined with the energy of the full moon and all the lesbianery of the day made for a wild party. We decided to create a tradition and make the first Saturday of October a lesbian day.

— Marie-Michele

The Celibate Woman Journal is published irregularly and is available for \$4 (for a single issue) or \$8 for a subscription (2 issues) from 3306 Ross Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008. The editor, Martha Allen, welcomes articles, artwork, letters, experiences, ideas and theory.

Lesbians and Abortion

At first glance it may not seem obvious as to why an organization calling itself Lesbians Against the Right (LAR) and touting Lesbian Pride, Power and Visibility as its battlecry, would be actively concerned with abortion. Unwanted pregnancies are not of daily concern to most lesbians, although a case could be made for access to abortions for lesbians raped and lesbians locked into heterosexual relationships.

But there is another reason why lesbians concerned with the ongoing struggle towards a world where women loving women is an everyday occurrence, like breakfast or traffic lights, must also be vitally concerned with events on the abortion front. The present society with its courts which take children away from lesbian mothers, its hospitals

which limit abortions to numbers far, far below the need, its police who harass lesbians for touching in public, and its morals which condemn both a woman's choice to love women and a woman's choice to terminate an unwanted pregnancy is telling women what to do with their bodies.

Women's bodies must be controlled by the women inside of them, not by men, not by the church and not by the courts. What a woman does with her body in or out of bed, on the street or in a hospital should be her business. At the present time it is the business of many others.

Lesbians Against the Right sees that the struggle for women to have ready access to safe, medically insured abortions and the struggle to overthrow the oppression of lesbians are both part of the same struggle. It is because of this issue — controlling our bodies — that LAR has endorsed the newly formed Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics and actively supports, with them, the legalization of free-standing abortion clinics.

— Diana Meredith for Lesbians Against the Right

RAPE Bill

(TORONTO) — Jillian Ridington, Vice-president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), and Megan Ellis, a Rape Crisis Centre worker from Vancouver, appeared before the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs this morning to comment on Bill C-127.

They told the committee that the new sexual assault bill does not measure up to the demands that women's groups, and other concerned organizations, have been making for the past decade.

"This bill has serious implications, not only in terms of the relatively few cases which end up being brought to trial, but also in terms of the attitudes of the people in this country to rape — and their faith, or lack of it, in the criminal justice system," said Ellis.

Although the government has stated that women welcome the new legislation, Ridington, who also heads NAC's Justice Committee, told senators that some provisions in the proposed Bill are totally unacceptable to NAC's 212 member groups. These include

the admissibility of evidence regarding the past sexual history of the victim, and the fact that a defendant will be allowed to claim an "honest belief" in the victim's consent as a defense.

"Given the fact that men are constantly bombarded with pornography that tells them that women "really want to be raped," any man could claim to believe such lies about women," Ridington said. She also noted that, "Although the government has, as promised, removed the licence men had to rape their wives, the inclusion of "honest belief" negates that improvement.

Ellis cited examples from her experience of rape crisis work to illustrate the serious problems which could arise were the new bill to be proclaimed as it now stands. "Those of us who work in Rape Crisis Centres and Transition Houses know that these are not merely legal fine points. What we are talking about is real women's lives. It is clear to us that the government has not even considered the possible impact that this bill could have on battered women," said Ellis. "It has taken the government ten years to act on the criticisms put forward by women's groups, social researchers, and concerned law enforcement personnel, and this bill is so flawed that it offers no guarantee of increased justice for victims of sexual assault," Ellis concluded.



Sex, freedom and violence: the topic of discussion at a forum in Toronto, October 22. Keynote speaker was Charlotte Bunch (bottom left). Panel speakers (from left): Bunch, Lisa Steele, George Smith, Chris Bearchell, Gary Kinsman and (standing) Mariana Valverde.

Deena Rasky

Catherine Maunsell

by Myrna Kostash

It's easy enough to meet the men in Greece, so many of the public spaces are theirs. The cafés, the bars, the park benches, the seaside paths, the restaurants at midnight. You have only to be a foreign woman, alone, to have their company (whether you want it or not). They speak English, a language they've learned from the women who have preceded you.

But the company of Greek women, ah, that's a different story. For five months I frequented the handful of cafés, bars and restaurants in the Peloponnesian coastal town of Nafplion — I was a "regular" — and not once did I chat with a Greek woman. If it was after dark, of course, the women simply weren't there. In the daytime, they were invariably in the company of men to whose flanks they were stuck even though excluded time and again from male conversation. If they looked around and noticed me, and I smiled (conspiratorially?), they gave back only a cold and suspicious regard.

As for the shops, the bakery, the drug store, the confectionery, they were there by the score. But they didn't speak English.

Clearly, if I was to get to know them I would have to be aggressive. Seek them out. Ask questions. Wait for answers. Come back for more.

Gradually, after weeks and weeks of persistent and insistent inquiry, I made contact with Greek women. Once the conversations began, reams of data and stories and declarations fell into my taperecorder, as I sat in their living rooms, their kitchens, at their desks, behind a book table, in a corner of a meeting room. So much for the Greek cafés.

The life of the Greek woman is her life in the family. It is almost unheard of that she live alone and, if she does, it may be because she is unmarried, a calamity of another sort. Within that family her status is determined generally by centuries of patriarchal authority (honed by the specifics of Greek history: the Turkish occupation, rural impoverishment, industrial under-development, right-wing governments) and particularly by the Family Code of 1946 drawn up during the appalling political and social turbulence of the Civil War.

There are families, and families. In one, the mother shares her bed not with her husband but with her son and years later the son will acknowledge that, good or bad, the psychic relationship of mother and son is "far more important" than the bond of father and son. In another, the wife has been eight times pregnant: her husband believes birth control is an impediment to his vitality. A woman in her fifties has been deposited in a luxurious designer home on the Argolic Gulf and, while her lawyer-husband pursues his affairs in Athens, she paces the immaculate rooms. A woman of forty-five, weary and sad-eyed (she has just served and cleaned up at a dinner party while her husband is getting drunk) goes off to sit alone in the corner and read the Community Party newspaper.

A widow with six children is waiting for the courts to decide if she may sell her late husband's car: by law a widow, but not a widower, cannot act on the matter of her children's inheritance without the approval of a Family Council appointed by the courts. An architecture student tells me she will never marry, at least not a Greek, for Greek family life, she says, depends on raising "stupid children" and on the husband being "superior" to his wife in every respect. A Greek husband, even I have noticed, never lifts a finger in housekeeping and childcare, no matter that his wife may have a job outside the home or that he considers himself to be in general a broad-minded and progressive person.

In Tripolis in 1981 a court upheld a husband's unconditional right to sexual access to his wife. In March 1982 a court in Salonika refused to hear a case brought by two women against their husbands regarding the men's "abnormal sexual demands." A woman is part of the family's patrimony, like the buildings and the livestock. A farmer shoots his 18-year old daughter because she left the village to live alone in Athens. A 39-year old shepherd shoots a 16-year old girl who refused to marry him. An 86-year-old is imprisoned for having raped his 14-year old granddaughter. A labourer from Patras impregnates his teen-age daughter. A man is sentenced to five years (and three years' loss of political rights) for having committed incest with his daughter up to the time of her marriage. A 29-year old abducts his 15-year old niece. And: "Ioannis Meimētis was jailed by a Nafplion court to three and a half years' imprisonment for incest. The court heard that Meimētis had a seven-year long relationship with his 19-year old daughter. She was also jailed eight months."

An arranged marriage is still not unusual. There are stories of fathers hiring private detectives to follow their rebellious daughters around: who are her friends? where does she go when she leaves the house? Of daughters being beaten and locked up at home until they submit to an arranged marriage. Of girls running away to Athens to work rather than to marry.

But inevitably they will marry. In most cases they will bring with them a dowry of property and household goods, property which remains theirs in name only: the law provides that the husband manage it. They will have a baby within a year. It's true that Greeks love children and believe that this is what marriage is "for." And on Sundays the whole family — parents, grandparents and children — will promenade up and down the seawalk, showing off.

Maternity is profoundly a private responsibility. Only very recently has a universal Mother's Allowance been instituted. Maternity care is something of a scandal (more than 2500 infants die at birth annually and for every one who dies three suffer mental and physical defects); prenatal malnutrition among rural women and a severe lack of obstetrical facilities and specialists exacerbate the situation. Babysitters are unheard of and, if one doesn't have a granny in the house, one simply stays at home.

The entire responsibility of childcare devolves upon individual women. This does not mean, however, that the children are inalienably theirs. If a marriage breaks up by mutual consent, a daughter stays with the mother and a son, too, until the age of ten when he goes to his father. If it is the wife who is the culpable party in a divorce (through adultery or

abandonment of the home) she may be deprived of her children altogether and not even allowed to visit them. A separated woman whose husband refuses a divorce has no right to her dowry property, and no recourse if he squanders it. I heard of a woman who left her millionaire husband because he beat her. He has their child, refuses a divorce, and keeps for himself the \$2000 a month he gets from the rent of a home she brought into the marriage. There is absolutely nothing she can do about this.

The Greek woman has, however, become increasingly self-determining in the matter of her pregnancies. The pill is generally available without fuss, as are the condom, the IUD and the diaphragm, although these are unpopular. That she seeks out these methods at all is a minor miracle: there is no sex education in the schools (teachers have been dismissed for introducing it) and family planning programs are limited to some urban hospitals and a private association operating on a very small scale. It is no surprise, then, that the most "popular" form of birth control is abortion: 400,000 a year out of a population of some four million girls and women. Except in cases of malfunction of the fetus or for reasons of the mother's mental health, abortion is illegal. The Church denounces it but it's done, wherever a woman can find an abortionist and \$200-€500 dollars. She may or may not survive the operation.

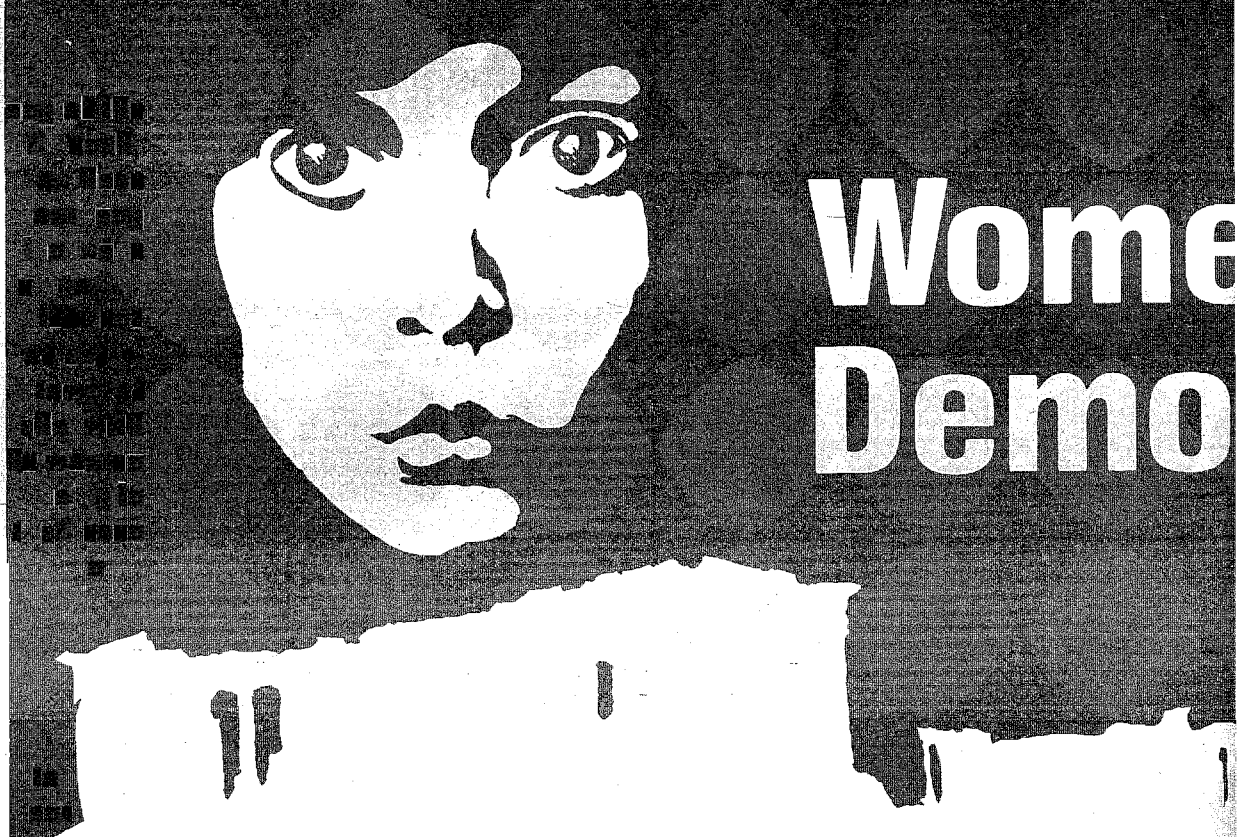
December, 1981. "About 1000 women, mostly young, took part in a march-demonstration against the gang rape Monday of a 23-year old woman by ten unidentified men on Philopappou Hill before the eyes of her boyfriend who was also severely beaten. Along the route the women held placards and chanted anti-rape slogans like Rape Is Fascism!"

I had been in Greece only two weeks and already my file was getting thick. Over the months the file got thicker. A schoolgirl raped by 14-year old students. Prostitutes raped and murdered by a man with a screwdriver. A nine-year old murdered and then raped. The "seduction" of 4-year olds. The rape of a young teen-ager and her enforced prostitution. A 20-year old, sexually assaulted by a doctor during a medical examination. The battered faces of rape victims spread across the front pages of the newspapers. The press's jocular tones. The insensitivity of the police. The connivance of families. "A 28-year old man and father of three children was charged on Thursday for raping a 17-year old girl and forcing her to live in his home along with his family."

Prostitution is legal, provided that the prostitute is registered with the police. Typically she works in a brothel but lately in massage parlours as well, catering mostly to foreigners or, as the press put it, "those with foreign tastes." While she is spared the vicissitudes of soliciting on the streets, her vulnerability is nevertheless real. On the one hand, rape, assault, battery, even murder, not to mention the brothel owners, often businessmen, who take half her earnings; on the other, the intervention of the law. In response to a new law which would have restricted the number of brothels to twelve in each police precinct and forced the prostitutes onto the streets or to set up in the suburbs, more than a thousand prostitutes held a protest rally and threatened to shut the brothels down completely, go on strike and form a union. They won.

But the ambiguity of a woman's right to sexual self-determination in a macho society is most starkly presented by the presence of pornography. For the longest time, of course, the triple-headed censor of right-wing government, the Orthodox Church and the patriarchal ideal of the Family kept pornography out of Greek public life. The current modernization and liberalization of Greek society (especially since the election of a socialist government) is thus a mixed blessing. The new government has justifiable misgivings about the current censorship laws, which date from 1931, and the courts are finding the legal distinctions between "decent" and "indecent" murky, to say the least. Cinemas are subject to arbitrary raids by the police, public prosecutors themselves initiate raids and seizures of pornographic materials, and cabaret artists have been imprisoned for "scandalous" striptease acts after citizens' complaints. This sort of vigilantism is increasingly intolerable to a people with very recent memories of brutal and corrupt state administrations for whom censorship was a means of political control and repression.

But the new liberality means, in practice, that Greece, like every other westernized society, is now openly trading in the pornographic representation of female sexuality. Downtown cinemas show hard-core porn films, skin magazines



proliferate at the streetside kiosks, cabarets feature staged sex acts. And the "new mentality" — ostensibly socialist, libertarian, feminist — is on record (in a pro-government newspaper) as believing pornography to be merely "ridiculous."

January, 1982. "A 16-year old girl who won 30,000,000 drachmas (\$600,000) following the draw of the National New Year Lottery now tells the Press that her 'good fortune' has turned her life into a living nightmare. 'People from all over Greece are constantly phoning me and begging me to help them. And others keep knocking on my door for the same reason. I think I'll crack up.' Toula Kostarou, who comes from a poor family, commenting on her future plans, said: 'I think it's time to pack in my job. I left high school at the age of 14 to work in a factory which manufactures electrical appliances. I got up at 5 a.m. and returned home at 4 p.m. to earn 650 drachmas (\$13) per day. As you can imagine, I got very tired. I'm going to take a 2 month holiday in the summer to make up for the holidays I never had in my entire life.'"

In 1971 (I have no later statistics) 145,000 Greek women worked outside the home. Compared to western and eastern Europe and North America, this is a very low rate of participation in the labour force. For good reason. Husbands and fathers don't like it. Daycare is scarce. And the job opportunities and working conditions for women are discouraging.

Although there is a law guaranteeing equal pay for equal work, women who have worked in the same tobacco factory for 30 years, for example, continue to be paid as "unskilled labour" while the men, assigned to loading carts, are "skilled." On a packaging assembly line in a drug company, a woman makes 18,000 drachmas (\$360) a month after 20 years. 60% of the hotel workers are women but 99% of these are chambermaids who work 9 hour days for 18,000 drachmas a month. (A waiter — there are no waitresses in Greek hotels and restaurants — makes 30,000 a month or \$600.) In the hotel trade schools girls are told they will be chambermaids and are limited to 2 hours a week of instruction in Reception; the boys get 6 hours. 80-90% of health workers are women, mainly nurses and orderlies, and the job carries very little social status: their training is minimal, the public considers them "slovenly," they are often denied their legal 2 days off per week and can be put in charge of as many as 40 patients at once. (I heard of a case in Nafplion of a man who had a heart attack; the local hospital had neither cardiac machine nor oxygen bottles, and only one nurse for the entire station that night.) Piece workers collect no social insurance or, when the employers do give social insurance stamps, they tell the workers that these are in lieu of paid holidays. There is no guaranteed maternity leave; if a woman does not return quickly to work after childbirth she may lose her job.

An average wage for all such work is 18,000 drachmas per month (\$360). For state employees there is some government-subsidized daycare but for all other employees there is only private daycare at about 10,000 drachmas a month (\$200), or granny. If a woman has access to neither of these alternatives, she quits working, period. She may very well want to stay home with the children anyway. Greek daycare centres are woefully inadequate in specialized personnel. I was told this was a particular problem with the previous government (1974-81) which simply handed out daycare jobs to the daughters of influential families.

Easter Sunday. Soula took me along with her to visit her cousin, a woman living in a beautiful big house on the beach of Irea in the Argolide. The cousin invited me to inspect the house, an excuse, as it turned out, for her to take me aside and voice her complaints. ("I understand you are a writer?") She complained that the beach was public. She complained about new building regulations which, forbidding the construction of houses larger than 2000 square metres (6600 square feet), prevent her from simply adding guest rooms to her 2600 square meter (8580 square feet) house; she must build a whole new compound. But, most bitterly — and here she plucked my sleeve and planted herself in front of me — she complained of her tenants, farmers who rent her land to grow oranges, melons, artichokes, hay. "They're stealing me blind!" Theoretically, she and the tenants split the tenants' revenues 50/50 but because "you know it is not possible always to be supervising them, I cannot be watching everything they do," she is convinced she is only getting 30% of the revenues. "These farmers are always complaining about how hard everything is for them. Well! They're no

n in Greece: eracy at Home?

worse off than me. Tell me, have *you* seen any poor farmers around here? Have you? Have you seen anybody starving?"

Not starving, no. But it wasn't so long ago that they were, and, as Soula and I drove away, I noticed a scene which, even the day before, I would have registered as picturesque. An aged adobe dwelling askew on the rocky soil. A donkey tied to a tree. A small pile of twigs — fuel for the clay oven. By the oven, an old woman dressed in black from head to foot, sliding bread into the oven on a long wooden paddle. Now this scene was translated. Substandard rural housing. Lack of farm mechanization. The high cost of electricity, oil, gasoline. The impoverishment of farm women, psychically and materially, colourless drudges on the land, condemned to repeat their foremothers' lives.

One-third of Greece's population still lives on the land and it is among these women that many Greek feminists feel the most important work is to be done. The farm woman is the most isolated and alienated of Greeks. She works in the fields in the day and in the house in the evening. While the men are at the local café watching TV, reading newspapers, discussing, arguing, exchanging information, she is alone with children.

There are 16 feminist organizations in Greece ranging from professionals' associations to syndicalist federations to mass-based women's rights groups to special issue committees. (Only in the English language, however, will some of them refer to themselves as "feminists." The word is provocative outside Athens, where it has overtones of "anti-men.") There are also organizations which are not explicitly feminist but which, like the YWCA (founded in Greece in 1923), aid women in the pressure-cooker of urban life, offering baby-sitting services, language classes, "family life" courses, children's libraries, and so on.

Numerically the largest organization is the Confederation of Greek Women, grouping various women's federations under one umbrella within a program supportive of the Communist Party. The next largest, at 5500 members, and more strictly women's liberationist in its orientation, is the Union of Greek Women (UGW) which is completely independent of any political party but which "agrees with" the political philosophy of the socialist party, PASOK. (In fact its new chairperson is Margaret Papandreou, wife of the socialist prime minister.) The Democratic Women's Movement claims 5000 members (of whom 3000 are in Athens) and is understood to be sympathetic to the Eurocommunist Communist Party.

One difference between Greek and North American feminism should already be obvious: the Greek movement has developed, not independently of or split off from the Left, but *within* it. For the current generation of activists, at least, their politicization as *national* liberationists came first and since "national liberation" — the effort to transform Greece into an economically-independent and non-aligned nation — is still on the agenda, *women's* liberation must go hand in hand with it. As one UGW activist put it to me: "If women do not have feminist consciousness, it will be very difficult for us to co-ordinate our liberation with that of the civil society. And so we'll be sent back to the kitchens after the struggle is 'over'." The only group I heard of which is completely independent of any party program is the very small Athens-based Autonomous Women's Group, a centre of radical feminist and lesbian politics.

The UGW was founded in 1976 by a group of 20 women who had been involved in the anti-junta struggle both in Greece and abroad. They began organizing in Athens but within four months were travelling to towns and villages as well. "The main aim of our work then," said Calliope Bourdara, a past president, "was to sensitize women as to what our rights are. As you must have realized by now, Greece is a very male-oriented society and most women don't know what to ask for and — more important — *how* to ask for it." UGW is now organized in 60% of the country's main towns and the demand for new cells increases daily, especially since the October 1981 national election which saw the victory of PASOK with its avowedly pro-woman program. (Mind you, a lot of PASOK men don't know what's hit them. They'll talk for hours about "social transformation" without once mentioning the status of women.)

"Our Athens office is contacted by UGW members in the towns who in turn have contact with the villages," says Bourdara. "We go out to talk with them. Together we create a new cell and its members find a meeting place and set up a

program: speakers, discussions, films. Anything to break the isolation of rural women. We send out books from Athens. Or sometimes the local members organize a dinner party and sell tickets to it and the money goes to a library or a day-care centre. Even in the villages the extended family is changing to a nuclear one and the women desperately need somewhere to leave their children."

The UGW has not waited around for government to act on the issue of daycare. They've set up two self-funded, parent-(i.e. mother-) controlled centres in suburban Athens which have run successfully for three years. "We want to show women that if *they* decide to get together and raise money, they can have a daycare centre in their neighbourhood. The fathers rarely participate, their excuse being they have to get to work in the mornings." Bourdara snorts, "As if women don't."

Concerning rape, the Salonika UGW cell has studied the legal and social situation and recommended that the crime be more severely punished, that the police treat victims more sensitively and that a rape not be exploited to slander a woman's reputation. Some UGW members concerned with education are involved in a commission to rewrite the primary school textbooks (for the first time since the 50s). The undersecretary of Health, a UGW member, is drawing up a program for birth control that will place family planning clinics in all the hospitals. And the UGW proposes that the dowry system be abolished, that property a woman brings into a marriage remain in her control and that matrimonial property be jointly owned.

Through a Co-ordinating Committee of representatives of women's organizations, UGW is also working on a revision of the Family Code. The groups first began working together three years ago when the Greek army began accepting female recruits. Feminists were concerned this might evolve into female conscription. Bourdara: "Our position is that we will support conscription *if* there are enough daycare centres, *if* we have equal job opportunities with men, *if* we have civil marriage. If we don't have these things in society, why should we fight in the army?" As for the Family Code, the previous government thought it might do something about it but they refused to name any Co-ordinating Committee members to their commission and kept postponing parliamentary discussion. In the words of the then Justice minister, Greek women weren't "mature" enough for the changes. "The first thing we asked of the new government," Bourdara said, "was the reformulation of the commission to study the Code and we wanted 50/50 representation of women's organizations." In fact they got seven such women named compared to six men.

If you've ever been to Athens, you know how difficult it is to be *left alone* when seated at a bar or café. Umpteen instances of the Greek male's "hospitality" kept driving me resentful back to my hotel room until — thank goddess! — I stumbled across the "Kafenion Ginekon" (Women's Café) in the university district. With the sweetest relief I climbed up the stairs, plunked down my drachmas for a glass of wine and a salad plate, and sat at a little marble-topped table in blissful solitude. A white-painted, sunlit room with lace curtains, plants, songbirds in a wicker cage (a bit of a contradiction in a feminist space?), soft music, a library and lots of women, mostly students but not entirely, talking together, laughing, conspiring, just like at home. (I was, however, the only one in pants.) The next time I dropped in, there were also two men seated, a situation I simply had to enquire about. "How come," I asked of a woman working at the little bar, "there are men here?" "Yes, well..." she replied. "We discussed it and the consensus was that it would be fascistic to keep them out. But they can only come in the company of women and must respect the atmosphere of the place." They were certainly doing that: they were the meekest males I was to see in five months.

The café is a project of the Democratic Women's Movement, an eight-year old organization formed during the last months of the junta. Initially it grouped together all the various strands of the anti-junta resistance, strands which have since separated off into the Communist and socialist mass organizations, leaving a core of Eurocommunist and unaffiliated women. Like the others, the Movement is organized in the large towns — Patras, Salonika, Volos, Heraklion, Kalamata — as well as in Athens and has its own publication. (They also publish an almanac, very much in the spirit of the Everywoman's Almanac in Canada.)

Their programmatic demands cover the territory from equal pay for equal work and equal access to technical and professional education to improved maternity benefits and birth control and abortion procedures. With regard to this last, the Movement has demanded that abortions be fully legalized, performed in public health centres by specialized personnel and its costs covered by a national health insurance plan. These demands illustrate graphically the state of affairs.

Not every feminist is as delighted as I am by the idea of a women's café. Said one woman close to the Communist Party, "I can go anytime I like to an ordinary cafe. It's my right." True enough. But she's Greek. And probably knows a swear word or two in Greek.

October, 1981. "I Am Not My Father's, I Am Not My Husband's, I Am For Myself!" "No To The Monster In The Family!" "Down With Sexual Traffic!" "We Demand Our Role In Politics!"

I came to Greece a month after the national elections in which women had participated to an unprecedented degree, a group to whom the socialist party PASOK owed in no small degree its victory. (They won with 47% of the vote.) Fifteen women were elected to Parliament and three have been appointed to Cabinet. (Almost everyone must know that the redoubtable Melina Mercouri is Minister of Culture.) It seems that PASOK has filled the tremendous vacuum created in Greek society by the systematic repression of leftist activists after the Civil War and the consequent great fear in the population of associating with progressive politics. PASOK made a point of cultivating women's votes, women were impressed, women voted for them. Now the women want to see action.

On International Women's Day, five months after the election, the prime minister, Andreas Papandreou, "hailed" Greek women, congratulated his government on the "courageous steps" it had already taken towards the abolition of anachronisms in the relations of women and men, and promised full implementation of the party's program for women.

What, in fact, has changed? In November, the government created the post of adviser to the prime minister on women's rights and appointed a feminist lawyer (and a founder of the Union of Greek Women) whose first goal was the establishment of daycare centres throughout the country. In December, the Supreme Court ruled that a child's christening is considered legal and valid even without the father's consent. In December, the Justice Minister announced that adultery will cease being a criminal offence and that divorce by mutual consent will be recognized. In January, farmer's pensions were paid for the first time to farm women. In February, the Minister of Education abolished school uniforms for girls and permitted the wearing of trousers. In March, Greece's United Nations delegate signed, at long last, the International Declaration for the abolition of sex discrimination; and parliament passed the controversial Civil Marriage Bill which allows divorced people to remarry and gives civil weddings the same validity as the church wedding. Later in March, the government named six women (and 49 men) to the post of provincial governor; and in April reconstituted the Co-ordinating Committee to advise the government on the new Family Code.

The fracas around the Civil Marriage Bill was instructive. The original proposal — and the one which feminist organizations had recommended — would have made the civil wedding mandatory, the religious one optional. But in the ensuing flack from the Church and other conservative, not to say reactionary, groupings (who claimed that civil marriage would undermine the institution of the family by creating a class of "adulterers" outside the Church), the government retreated to a compromise. Women marched in the streets to show their displeasure. To no avail.

I stayed on in Greece for May Day, that "festival of the people" I imagined would be so jubilant among a tumultuous people celebrating socialism. Athens was festooned with posters from every imaginable political group and party, and the city was indeed brilliant with their colours and dramatic graphics. But on these posters I saw only male faces, male fists, male "masses." Where was the image to celebrate women uprising? On my last visit to the PASOK offices, I asked this question of Ada, one of the office workers. "I know, I know," she said, "I detest this too," she said, first looking around to see if her male "comrades" would hear, in a whisper.

Ada's mother married at twenty and continued to work as a telephonist. At the job she saw that men doing the same work were paid more than she; at home, she saw she did all the work. "Something isn't right," she thought, and began to investigate why. She became a unionist and one day announced at home that she would no longer be the exclusive housekeeper: the rest of the family would have to do their share of work. She read voraciously, especially after the fall of the junta. And joined the Union of Greek Women.

Ada is twenty-six, a student, and lives with her mother. Their apartment is untidy with the books, papers, pamphlets, of their work in common: the women's movement. Ada was eighteen when the junta collapsed and immediately after this she began encountering feminist materials "everywhere." It is now a little "chic," she says, for the young women to challenge the boys with their feminism. Through increased social contact and especially through the co-educational school, boys have become "demystified"; and once the young women enter the labour force, the challenge will become concrete, so unequal are men and women workers.

Ada's sister is sixteen. She wants someday to have a child, but no, husband, no, definitely not. And she doesn't want her child to call her "mama." A mother is a friend.

Greek women: their past, present and future. I think they're going to make it.

Myrna Kostash is an Edmonton writer, author of *Long Way from Home*, who recently spent six months in Greece.

ARTS

Women's Press

Becoming A Household Word

by Jean Wilson

Still Ain't Satisfied: Canadian Feminism Today, edited by Maureen FitzGerald, Connie Guberman, and Margie Wolfe. Illustrated by Gail Geltner. Toronto: The Women's Educational Press 1982. Pp. 318. \$9.95.

In 1972, a new and radically different voice was heard in Canadian publishing — at least by a few people. It was that of the Women's Educational Press. Its first book was *Women Unite!*, an anthology of writings on the "issues, debates, demands, and strategies of the developing Canadian women's liberation movement."

Now many more people have heard that voice. The Women's Press has a long and carefully structured list ranging from monographs on social and political issues to fiction and children's literature; a good track record in sales and promotion; well-produced and designed books; an increasing presence in bookstores and on private bookshelves; and lots of energy and ideas.

This year, partly to celebrate their tenth anniversary but mainly to celebrate the Press's "survival and the survival and strength of the women's liberation movement," the Women's Press collective has published a new anthology, *Still Ain't Satisfied: Canadian Feminism Today*. It's an important book and one that both experienced and novice feminists would do well to read.

Jean Wilson recently talked to the editors of the anthology about it and about the Women's Press, past and present.

The song says, "...this world sure don't look my way and I still ain't satisfied" ("Still Ain't Satisfied," by Bonnie Lockhart). The book says why, but also tells us what we've accomplished in some areas and suggests where we're going.



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New Fiction
Contract With the World Jane Rule \$9.95
Mrs. Porter's Letter: A Lesbian Mystery Vicki P. McConnell \$9.25

New Lesbian Plays
My Blue Heaven Jane Chambers \$6.50
Last Summer at Bluefish Cove Jane Chambers \$9.25

Maureen FitzGerald: When we started to plan *Still Ain't Satisfied*, it was going to be an attempt to cover a huge array of topics. But as we honed it down we decided that we wanted to cover specifically those issues — rather than the whole waterfront — that women had been active around. We weren't entirely successful, but that's what gave the book a theme.

Connie Guberman: We had committees of areas of interest with five or seven women on each. They discussed what topics should be considered and then talked to people concerned with those areas who could say who would best combine a level of activity over the last 10 years, and who could write.

The result of this brainstorming was a team of 33 authors, several of those being groups rather than individuals. All but three articles were written especially for *Still Ain't Satisfied*. In order to avoid the usual Toronto bias of a book originated in that city, the editors chose writers from as many different areas of Canada as possible. At the last minute a prospective author from Québec was unable to meet her commitment to write about Québécoises, so one major part of the country is unrepresented, but that is the only one.

The anthology is arranged in three parts. Most articles are a combination of analysis and historical documentation. Part 1, Out of the Bedrooms, focuses on the private and the personal issues, "the politicization of the personal" — violence against women (pornography, women's shelters, rape); heterosexuality and feminist consciousness; lesbianism; feminist services. Part 2, Into the Work Force, focuses on "the struggle over work" at home and in the labour force — women being housewives; minding the children; getting organized in feminist unions, in the Confederation of Canadian Unions, in the Canadian Labour Congress, and in Saskatchewan Working Women; sexual harassment; health hazards; women being secretaries; in trades and heavy industry; in trades in BC. Part 3, Onto the Streets, focuses on women's experiences in organizing to fight for our special interests — lesbian feminism, immigrant women, native women, feminist publishing, feminist teaching in educational institutions, feminist art. The book concludes with a forward-looking discussion by several women of options for future activities.

The title of the book caused some debate at the Women's Press and among authors, but in the end, as Maureen FitzGerald remarked, "we thought it was really feisty and that it said what we wanted to say. It can be



Gail Geltner

interpreted to have a sexual connotation, but not necessarily."

Generally, the three editors are pleased with the result of many long hours — and three years — of effort.

Margie Wolfe: The activist/historical part of the anthology is primarily what we wanted and what we got. Each article itself has been or could be the subject of a book; what we asked authors to do was to take an aspect of a struggle and discuss it, not necessarily exhaust the whole subject. I like the last article very much, not because of the content but because for outsiders looking at the women's movement there's a feeling of women's movement, of group discussion. Its being the last article, dealing with tactics and how to move forward, seems very effective.

CG: We know we've made choices. The women's movement isn't monolithic, and we knew from the beginning that we didn't have to agree with everything. We tried to represent the different voices of the women's movement so that there would be a basis for debate. I think we succeeded. Also, I like the historical aspect of the anthology.

MF: I'm especially pleased with the articles which were written by more than one author. They're very hard to bring off. The last piece turned out especially well. It is a creative way for feminists to express themselves from many points of view. I'm pleased with the article politically. It's a more representative and more dynamic piece than it might have been otherwise. After all, a lot of feminist process is collective, as in the discussion in this piece.

The editors are well aware that some pieces will be controversial, that the anthology may be criticized for its socialist feminist bias, that the gaps will be mentioned. Already, some things such as rape law have been changed, so that current comment on some topics might be different from what's stated in *Still Ain't Satisfied*. But the analysis stands up, and probably will for a good while yet. Maybe in another decade there'll be different issues, but for this past decade this anthology is a useful record.

Of course, just because one book has been published doesn't mean that activity has ceased even temporarily at the Women's Press. It publishes five to six books a year, and is very active in soliciting new manuscripts and new markets, promoting published and forthcoming books, and working closely with authors.

MW: We're a socialist feminist press. Formally, we're the Women's Educational Press, though popularly we go by the Women's Press only. But the educational aspect is always there. We aim to improve. We know how to make books, and what we want to do is make more people aware of what we're doing so that we can fulfil our political role and keep operating as a collective. We want to make the Women's Press a household word!

CG: We've had to look closely at ourselves and ask how we're different as a socialist feminist press, especially since other publishers have been doing women's books. It's been rough. It's hard to get the type of manuscript we want.

MW: We don't just want manuscripts other publishers reject. But other publishers are doing a lot we could very well do. There are also books that no one else is willing to do.

MF: About the time we started *Still Ain't Satisfied* we'd decided to do fewer in-house books because of the problem of individually becoming so involved in writing and coordinating that we would all get exhausted. We wanted to act more like a mainstream publishing company. But that's hard because many women writers still need an enormous amount of encouragement and feedback. We work closely with authors. We do look for what we want. Almost all our titles are solicited, although that's impossible to do with fiction.

MW: The problem is that many people working in a particular area aren't necessarily professional writers. Working closely with them lengthens the publishing process, makes editing more difficult. We want material that's well-written and feminist. More and more we're going after an idea and an author, but after style as well.

CG: We're making a concerted effort now to solicit fiction. We want the fiction profile to be higher. In the process we'll define what we mean by socialist feminist fiction.

MF: Many people don't realize that we are professionals. They think we're small, that we don't have a good distribution system. In fact, we do have a good distribution system; we work through University of Toronto Press, which works well. We put a lot of emphasis on promotion. We have a shorter list than most publishers that we push hard and stand behind. A title doesn't get lost in our list. We're a good deal.

CG: Unfortunately, many people still think they've made it if they go mainstream.

MW: But we're very competitive with mainstream publishers. Our contracts are like other publishers — we give royalties, we help get grant money, people don't get a worse financial deal coming to us. For a woman's book in Canada, we can do the job. We've been at it for 10 years; we know where to go. One of our recent successes is Meg Luxton's *More than a Labour of Love: Three Generations of Women's Work in the Home*. It was published a year ago. Already we've sold over 6,000 copies and reprinted once.

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Silence Is Breaking



The silence breaks in *Christine M*.

by Barbara Halpern Martineau

I want to unravel some threads of thought from previous film columns — it is a punctuation point, if you like, a pause to ponder. Looking back at the aspirations I cherished (tongue in cheek though they were) for Princess Leia in *Star Wars*, the admiration for Tillie Olsen and her old woman in *Tell Me a Riddle*, for the miners' wives in *A Wives Tale*, mixed response to the three stars of *Nine to Five*, alienation from the glory celebrated in *Chariots of Fire* and disappointment at the absence of glory in *Personal Best*, the felt power of *The Silence Around Christine M* — I see that I am deeply interested, virtually obsessed by the concept of heroism. Woman as hero, modern hero, survivor and witness, teller of tales, She Who Speaks In A Language of Our Own. Not star, not fetishized object, but Hero, truth-speaker, sibyl.

"Now I'm the hero and you're the queen."

Holly Near

So it seems essential to qualify last month's discussion of silence (*Broadside*, October 1982) with a discussion of voice, the giving of voice to those who have been voiceless. She Who Simpered in countless Hollywood "vehicles," was known for her face, or for her legs, or breasts, or white skin, but has another aspect, She Who Speaks to Us, which we have always known exists. This other side has been like the dark side of the moon — Hollywood lighting keeps that side in shadow; directional mikes don't pick up that voice; sound blankets muffle it; script-writers suppress, distort, divert it; film critics and historians bury it in silence.

Who, before the new women's movement uncovered it, remembered Manuela's passionate speech of love for a woman in *Maedchen in Uniform*? Who would listen to her? was the question asked of Christine M. What I would like to emphasize here is not the silence of Christine M, but the silence surrounding her, and the voice which breaks that silence, the voice of the woman seeking an answer to her question. That the woman

who speaks in *Christine M* is a psychiatrist who becomes aware of the limitations of her profession is not a coincidence. We are dealing in the hidden realms of dreams and imagination.

Only those who have power can speak — perhaps they have taken power in order to speak. A question then is, in which language do they speak — the oppressor's language? Is there another? I am reminded of the fairytale in Andrew Lang's collection, intriguingly titled "The Girl Who Pretended to Be a Boy." The hero of this story is the youngest daughter of a king who sallies forth into the world of dragons and adventure disguised as a man, and is so brave and resourceful that ultimately she is rewarded by the storyteller with an angry hermit's "most deadly curse," — "that if the thief was a man, he might become a woman; and if she is a woman, that she might become a man."

Finally, this hermaphrodite hero, Fet-Fruners, is approached by a prince she had befriended while still a female in disguise, to become her husband. "Yes, I will marry you," said the young man, with a voice almost as soft as when he was a princess. "But know that in our house, it will be the cock who sings and not the hen!" "She Who Takes the Power of Men Speaks with the Voice of Men? Is that the inevitable moral? No longer, I think.

The next day as the sun rose, sparkling the white snow, the girl came out of the cave with her string of rabbits. The two War Gods praised her strength and courage. Then they walked with her down the snow-covered valley to guide her to her village. As they travelled through the fresh new whiteness of the world, the two War Gods taught the maiden much hunting wisdom.

... 'You have done well, daughter...and hunter maiden,' her father added, smiling, 'From now on you will hunt for our family, and your brothers' axes will be yours.

— "The Hunter Maiden," a Zuni tale from the *Maid of the North*, ed. Ethel Johnston Phelps.

Women are increasingly taking on the role of hero, not She Who Waits to Be Saved, but She Who Ventures Out into the World, Descends to the Underworld and Returns, Filled with Stories.

What is the difference between these female heroes, such women as the ex-battered wives portrayed in the German film *The Power of Men is the Patience of Women*, the women in *A Wives Tale*, Tillie Olsen, Audre Lorde, our own Rita MacNeil and Joyce Wieland, my friend Sara Binns, labour organizer and octagenarian wheelchair activist; and women held up to us as examples by the patriarchy: Margaret Thatcher, Phyllis Schafly, Anita Bryant, Bette Stephenson? I think Virginia Woolf pointed the way to understanding the crucial difference between Women Heroes and Women Super-

stars when she said: "Masterpieces are not single and solitary births; they are the outcome of many years of thinking in common, of thinking by the body of the people, so that

The hero goes down into the underworld to confront dragons of all kinds, and then returns with a gift for the world which, at the same time, transforms the self. . . Many women are more noble than traditional heroes; they are survivors. Survivors do not emerge unscathed. But the source of transformation and the gift they possess for the world is the knowledge they have achieved along the way. Survivors are always anxious to tell the tale, no matter the dangers of exposure. They have come to understand the spiritual reparations of voice, the madness at the heart of silence.

— Jane Lazarre, *The Village Voice*, May 18, 1982.

the experience of the mass is behind the single voice." (*A Room of One's Own*). The Woman as Hero takes with her into the underworld, into that labyrinth of privatized



South African women's voice: *You Have Touched a Woman: You Have Struck a Rock*.

fears and personal inadequacies, the knowledge that she is neither alone nor unique. That when she returns, her prize will be the sharing of her knowledge.

My sense of the ending of *The Silence Around Christine M* is that it is the beginning of a new, conspiratorial voice for women, that those women standing on the steps outside the courtroom will develop a new language in the freedom created by their si-

Hero: (1) In mythology and legend, a man of great strength and courage, favored by the gods and in part descended from them. . . (2) Any man admired for his courage, nobility, or exploits, especially in war. . . (3) Any person admired for his qualities or achievements and regarded as an ideal or model. (4) The central male character. . . with whom the reader or audience is expected to sympathize. (5) The central figure in any important event or period, honored for outstanding qualities.

Heroine: (1) A female hero, a woman of brave spirit. (2) The principal female character, or the one with whom the hero is in love. . .

Webster's New 20th Century Dictionary, 2nd ed.

lent sisters inside the prison, who refused the old language and were crippled by their resulting silence.

She Who has a being named She Who is a being named She Who carries her own name.

— Judy Grahn, *She Who*

Barbara Halpern Martineau is a Toronto filmmaker and *Broadside's* film columnist.

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Incantation Inconclusive

by Rachel Vigier

Charlene Spretnak, *The Politics of Women's Spirituality*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday 1982. Pp. 590. \$16.95

With much regret I have reverted to my original impression of *The Politics of Women's Spirituality*. I was initially disheartened by the book. Then was uplifted at the beginning of a more thorough reading. The euphoria was short-lived, however, and I stand by my earlier impression — here is a book which could change the meaning of our world but which fails miserably. First, I cannot express my spirituality through worn-out words such as harmony, holistic, connectedness, oneness, which are so general they are virtually useless. Second, I cannot base a spirituality (or anything else) on inarticulate, imprecise "feelings," trusting that those I speak to are initiates and will know what I mean. This is not a revolutionary language and our spirituality must be phrased in revolutionary terms. *The Politics of Women's Spirituality* is too nice, too clean, also too white, and I mean that despite the feeble attempts to mask this bias: fragments of ntozake shange's and June Jordan's work, a cursory reference to native American traditions, an embarrassingly brief article on the "goddess heritage of black women." (There is no article entitled "The goddess heritage of white women"; apparently we are the context, the reference point, for all other forms.) Yet it is not these omissions which most anger me, although they certainly suggest another deeper one; the omission of what Audre Lorde has called the "dark place within, where hidden and growing our true spirit rises" ("Poems Are Not Luxuries"). None of the articles brought me any closer to that place of possibility.

Instead, I found a solipsistic spirituality which celebrates "com(ing) to know to feel, oneness with all the millions of women who have lived, who live, and who will live. I contain those millions. Each of us does" (Charlene Spretnak, p. xxiv). Surely it has never been difficult to create a feeling of oneness with a mass of faceless women. The difficulties occur when we recognize our lives and experiences in daily, familiar terms, that is when we move from our feelings into the world, a gesture we must initiate and complete if we are to survive. This is post-patriarchal religion and yet it has retained so many of the "old" (not ancient) trappings that its uniqueness is barely recognizable in its "new" designs — goddess/she/her are capitalized throughout, expressions such as "praise goddess" abound, priestesses defend their titles (also capitalized) and explain their work as "tun(ing) into the energy that is present and channel(ing) it when needed so that everyone feels good afterward" (p. 539).

I especially take exception to this concept of "feeling good" which occurs throughout the book. If we can reduce spirituality to a sense of "feeling good," then why bother with it at all; isolation tanks are just as effective and probably a more efficient means of arriving at that end. Here I think of Simone Weil ("You. There, with your gazing eyes/Your blazing eyes": from "A Vision" by Adrienne Rich) and Saint Thérèse d'Avila, whose spirituality rarely if ever comforted, constantly pushing out into the world into more and more difficult situations. Also, in such women's understanding of the spiritual I do not think they had effected an "unnatural divorce of spirituality and politics" (H. Iglehart, p. 404). How can Iglehart live in Reagan's America and say that "spiritual-political powers have been neglected or suppressed throughout the patriarchal era" (p. 405). Granted, the politics and spirituality of the moral majority differ in context from women's spirituality and politics but the dynamic operative between the two is very similar if one adopts the line advocated by Iglehart and other contributors. It makes me edgy and suspicious to

think we are moving towards a marriage of politics and spirituality, and claiming the uniqueness of this endeavour.

Let me clarify this idea. For all the ruckus concerning the message that the personal is political, I do not think that we have adequately understood that the patriarchy has never separated one from the other. The political disciples of patriarchy were no fools and they knew that the personal (private realm) was necessary for the maintenance of the political (public realm). Accordingly, they devoted much of their theoretical activity towards understanding and refining this relation. It is more accurate to say that we object to the place reserved for the private in patriarchal constructs, but it is foolish to continue crowing about the originality of an insight which has been central to the ideology of patriarchal politics. A parallel may be made regarding spirituality and politics: we may argue against and object to the terms of the relation, but whatever else patriarchal religion has done, it has always politicized and mobilized spirituality.

I also object to the facile dismissals of male-defined modes of thinking and of a dualistic language which is inadequate for my purposes, all of course articulated in the mode and language which one is dismissing. It is not enough to have a disclaimer, as does Barbara Starrett in "The Metaphors of Power": "That is why new realities, qualitative leaps, are difficult to articulate, why they often appear to contain contradictions. The language-symbols are seldom adequate to express ideas which are not already included within the given frame of word-connotations" (p. 186).

Yes, Barbara, there is an oppressor's language but we don't really need to continue articulating our perceptions in that mode while bemoaning the absence of our language. We do have an ever-growing body of women's writing which begins from native female forms and which we can use as a base. We don't have to keep returning to used and exhausted forms as do most of the contributors; we simply have to begin speaking in our own tongues. Joanna Russ has said: "Perhaps the only propaganda there can be for a

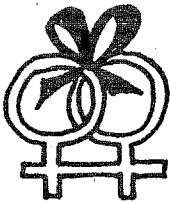
forbidden feeling or belief or existence is simply to present it" (interview with Joanna Russ, *Quest* Vol. II, No. 1, p. 43) and I heartily agree with her. We could then avoid the confusion which arises between the experiences of spirituality we are trying to express and what Sally Binford calls "New Feminist Fundamentalism" in her article entitled "Myths and Matriarchies" (p. 541). As long as we begin from a defensive position and continue to define ourselves through our deprivations we will be subject to such attacks and misunderstandings.

The solution is to do as Joanna Russ suggests — forge ahead and present ourselves fully, that is, to tell a truth instead of standing in judgement over what we consider to be someone's lies. I have always maintained that whatever we do, we must act from our strength and the healthy parts of our organism. Otherwise we feed our deprivations and this keeps us from what must be done. Where then do we begin to tell our spiritual truths — certainly not from scientific data, as Charlene Spretnak suggests. I am appalled by her recurrent appeal to scientific data to substantiate the claim that the female mind has "impulses towards empathetic comprehension, communion, and harmony" (p. 565). In what way do we differ from sociobiologists when we appeal to genetic and physiological differences brought forward from a science which still refuses to acknowledge bias of any kind (let alone sexist bias) and which is known to falsify data. Remember, this is the science which brought us justification for racist ideas and which is apparently still doing so.

Meanwhile, the lives of our foremothers and sisters are lost in the interim between goddess worship and new scientific data which proves female propensity for communion. I learned much of what I know of love from my great-aunt, a truly spiritual woman whose energy was consumed by that beast, "patriarchal" religion. Yet she survived grandly and so did I, thanks to her spirituality, which despite the trappings of the church fiercely protected what there was of women in that tradition. Where is the language and the presence of those spiritual women who "knew what we/must know/without knowing a page/ of it/themselves." (from "Women," by Alice Walker). Overall, I think we need spiritual accounts and not accounts about spirituality. From such accounts we might reach a certain intimacy regarding the truths of our spiritual gestures which we must have to survive the madness of cleaving to our experience.

Rachel Vigier is a translator and resource/person in integrated studies at the University of Waterloo.





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LETTERS, from page 3

and working to avoid a potentially very damaging polarization of the women's community here. No matter what we think of Rape Relief, and we know there are some elements of truth in some of the accusations, we do not think it was in the best interests of feminism and the women's movement for WAVAW to make its opinions of Rape Relief public. We are happy to support another rape crisis centre in this city. It does seem unnecessary to us that WAVAW should publicly trash another rape crisis group in the process of setting up its own centre and we think it is not in the best interests of feminism for *Broadside* to be a vehicle for trashing in the women's movement. It would have been

RAPE RELIEF, from page 4

The political analysis and practice that Rape Relief evolved was a curious combination of left analysis and do-gooder moralism. There are two examples of this: the plans to establish a shelter for women that would house all abused women on a no-restricted-time basis; and the adoption of direct confrontation of rapists as a tactic in fighting rape. Part of the vision of the first was that individual women who stayed in the shelter would be "converted" to feminism. Part of the belief of the second was that individual men could be changed. I fail to see how such tactics are any more revolutionary and any less piecemeal than putting pressure on the medical, legal system to change how they define or deal with rape and women who have been raped. The only difference, as a friend of mine said about the shelter, was that in addition to applying the band-aid we were being asked to buy it!

Having made such decisions and having received a considerable amount of criticism from other feminists, Rape Relief then proceeded on the belief that they had only to explain their analysis for the rest of us to see they were right. Hence the long discussions in meeting and print, hence the increasing frustration with Rape Relief, hence the increasing tone of confrontation and an increasing fortress mentality by Rape Relief members.

There are several things that I think helped to contribute to that fortress mentality and to further isolate Rape Relief from the women's movement. In choosing to work as closely as they did with an allied group called Men Against Rape they made a tactical error in the long run. How closely they worked with this men's group is a contentious issue but certainly it left them in a position of having to defend the men they were working

more useful for *Broadside* to wait until you had received more documentation on the issue (of which there are masses) and to make an informed comment based on fuller and more rounded information, since this is how *Broadside* usually approaches issues. Better still, you could have asked some Vancouver women to provide a variety of perspectives on what is quite a complex situation. To print a letter like WAVAW's, which has women attacking other women without substantiating their accusations, and which is not properly contextualized in the situation here nor accompanied by a statement from the group under attack, is a disservice to the women's movement. It does nothing to educate people about the political issues underlying the situation or open a dialogue on the is-

with. One in-movement meeting was devoted solely to the question of whether or not there was a rapist working with Rape Relief. And the fact that Men Against Rape was extremely effective at raising money for the shelter meant that Rape Relief could continue to ignore the criticism and lack of support that was coming from other women around this venture.

Further isolation, and by now it was probably a form of protection, was achieved at Rape Relief by the rigid adherence to the language and procedures of constructive criticism ending in a sort of psychobabble that was maddening if you didn't happen to know these particular rules of communication. Like all such psychobabble, the language of constructive criticism can become a straitjacket which prevents normal human interaction and it can also become a manipulative tool. The use, or rather what I perceive as the misuse of constructive criticism, may have increased the confidence of those collective members who could play the game by the rules, but in the end it distracted them from outsiders.

Ultimately, I believe as WAVAW doesn't, that Rape Relief is a feminist organization. It is a feminist organization that took on too much alone and acted pigheadedly. But it is a feminist organization. If there is one lesson in all of this controversy it is the importance of knowing who your friends and enemies are, where your support lies. We are all working to our own destruction when we submerge all our feminist politics into one project, when we isolate ourselves from other voices in the women's movement and when we fail to organize our collective women's strength to effectively organize for change.

Maureen FitzGerald is an editor at Women's Press, and has lived in Vancouver on and off over the years.

issues; it merely sensationalizes an in-movement conflict which should never, in our opinion, have been made public in such a way in the first place.

Lorna Zaback, Isobel Kiborn, Annette Clough, Debbie Hollett, Augusta Lokhorst.
Vancouver

Broadside:

I agree with Judy Fudge that men who confront women at social events and announce, gratuitously, "I'm a feminist," are worthy of suspicion. One might well question the motives of anyone who begins a dialogue by claiming to be something. Fudge is right: how does one respond to a conversational gambit like that?

On the other hand, when people ask what my own politics are, I respond that they are feminist and socialist. I'm sorry if this is offensive to some other feminists, but the statement happens to be accurate. It refers, quite simply, to where I choose to allot my political energies: my praxis, not my "position." Feminist men are of course not interchangeable with feminist women in the Warren Farrell sense. Women must determine for themselves how best to achieve their liberation. It is clearly not up to feminist men to attempt this role. But our energies can be placed at the disposal of the women's movement, and directed by that movement, and I see nothing wrong with that.

So what's in it for you, Fudge asks. There is no convincing response to a question like that. I'm not Vietnamese, nor an American black, but I put energy into those struggles in the sixties despite the fact that, as a white North American, I was profiting from the oppression and exploitation of both peoples.

In this connection, I cannot accept the distinction between "feminist" and "non-sexist" men in the Eve Zarembo/Lorna Weir article, or rather, I would stand that distinction on its head. No man yet born is non-sexist. Such a declaration would well merit Fudge's deepest distrust: it is either a patent lie or based upon ignorance of what sexism is. It is condescending and presumptuous for a man to call himself non-sexist, since it suggests that the phenomenon of sexism is merely a question of personal attitude rather than a complex historical fact which we are scarcely beginning to understand. There is no material basis for such a claim. But for a man to describe himself as a feminist means an ideological and practical commitment on his part, extending to all spheres of life, a recognition of his necessarily peripheral role in women's struggle, and an understanding

of and struggle with the institutions of patriarchy. It means a politics, a world-view, a perspective: to which I subscribe.

I recognize that the energies of feminist women may well not allow for dialogues with men in periodicals such as *Broadside*. But at the very least I do hope that whoever in the *Broadside* collective might read this will concede that a sectarianism which defines nearly half the planet as "irredeemably they" is a tendency fundamentally hostile to any struggle against oppression. While semantic arguments about what "feminism" means continue to divide comrades in the struggle, the patriarchy applauds. It knows what "feminism" means.

John Baglow
Ottawa

Broadside:

There was some errata in my article "From Paupers to Pensioners" printed in October's *Broadside*. I would appreciate it if you would publish the following corrections:

Re Paragraph 3: all part-time workers who earn more than \$1,600 a year are covered by the CPP; few, if any, are covered by private pension plans.

Re Paragraph 16: Approximately 50 percent of all married women with no children at home, and approximately 50 percent of all married women with children over six work only in the home. Clearly, these women spend even less time on childcare than mothers of children under six.

Reva Landau
Toronto

Broadside:

As a student in Toronto, I enjoyed your review each month; keeping informed about the feminist movement had become an important part of my life.

For the past six months I have been working in Paris and thanks to a good friend, I still receive my copy. Strangely, it has become even more important here as I am still an outsider due to the language barrier and haven't been in touch with the "Mouvement de libération des femmes." Your paper keeps me from feeling isolated in my "radical" thinking and gives me a monthly boost of confidence in this patriarchal society.

Know that your hard work and commitment to *Broadside* are more than appreciated by this Canadian in Paris.

Janice Oakley
Paris

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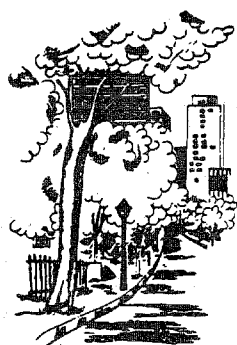
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MOVEMENT COMMENT

Aimez-vous les hommes?

The following article appeared as an editorial in the June/July/August 1982 issue of Montréal's feminist magazine, LA VIE EN ROSE. It was translated from the French by Marlene Wildeman.

...Des yeux qui font baisser les miens
Un rire qui se perd sur sa bouche
Voilà le portrait sans retouche
De l'homme auquel j'appartiens

Quand il me prend dans ses bras
Qu'il me parle tout bas...

Edith Piaf

Since we started publishing LA VIE EN ROSE, and actually, long before that, ever since a number of women began calling themselves feminists, we have been asked repeatedly: *Aimez-vous les hommes?* All of us together and each of us individually have been asked this question, from distributors of the magazine, from the man in the corner store, from people in bars, at family dinners, at parties, by telephone, and by letter.

The question is posed in various ways, from the subtle and oblique, to the directly offensive. Why do you not accept men to work on LA VIE EN ROSE? Are there some among you who refuse to talk to men? Are there more lesbians than heteros? Why do you hate men?

Initially, the question seemed to us simply stupid. Eventually, however, because this question seemed to somehow trip us up, to tie our hands, and because it made some of us feel decidedly ill at ease, we began to understand that it was not, in fact, harmless, and that it should be looked at with a critical eye in order to put a stop to it at once. The question is a false one, but at the same time, it is fundamental.

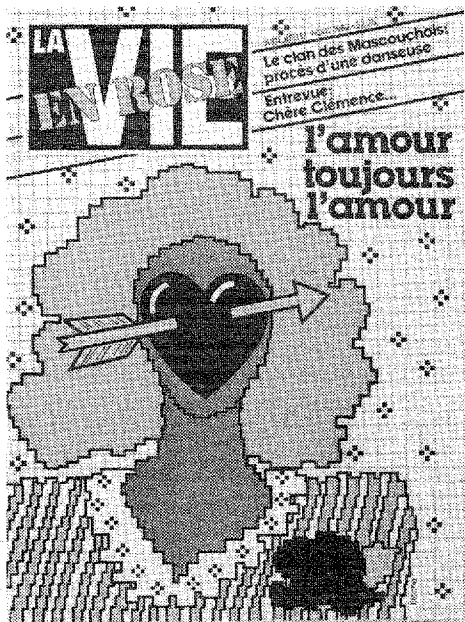
First of all, which men? Reagan, Jean-Paul II, Trudeau, Lévesque, Maître Emile Colas,¹ Docteur Jean-Yves Desjardins?² The postman, the next-door neighbour, hit-and-run drivers, the police, officials, rapists, bosses, our fathers, our brothers, each of our male subscribers? All together, or one by one? On the bus, when having a heart to heart talk, in a photograph, or in bed? With ketchup, or mustard?

It is a false question because a feminist presented publicly with this question is expected to respond with a definite and enthusiastic Yes, or a reassuring smile, as if at last we were given the chance to exonerate ourselves. To be sure, we at LA VIE EN ROSE are regarded as suspect. A feminist magazine, OK, but don't carry things too far, eh? Are we serious, reasonable, intelligent, normal women, and do we have good sense? Good sense, reasonableness, seriousness and intelligence, for a feminist, is to love men, they imply. Or are we, alternatively, completely hysterical, demented, and aggressive — radical lesbians who hate men?

You doubt? Make this test.

They ask you: "But just the same, you do like men, don't you?"

You answer: "No, to tell the truth, I don't like men. I much prefer women." Or: "You know, to be perfectly honest, I'd have to say I'm rather indifferent to men."



Observe the reaction! Yes, this is very instructive. And it is precisely here that the question becomes fundamental.

Women do not love men by choice. In general, one *must* love men. It goes without saying. It's normal. It is men, men in general, who rape us, beat us, abuse and exploit us by pornography, men who refuse to hire us because we are women, men who have us laid off because we refuse to serve coffee, who hold us in contempt, men who ignore us, men who give us their children to raise and their jockey shorts to wash, and men who, despite all this, systematically exclude us from the spheres of money and power. We *must* love them, for they are not all the same, because they are not all individually responsible, and because, above all, one must not generalize. Maybe, possibly, we shouldn't generalize. But why then must we say that we love men *in general*?

And why is loving women so poorly regarded? Why did they teach us to keep clear of women *in general*? Why was it so frequently and variously repeated to us that it would be a man, and not a woman, who would be the Love of our Life. Why was it not left to us to choose? And why do we so quickly forget that we weren't given this choice? Because some of us manage to pair up with a man we might actually want? Because those of us who are more daring, or more strategically placed, manage to choose the men we wish to associate with? This ideal is brought about by chance, not choice.

The First Brain-Washing

Heterosexuality is not a choice. It is a way of life. Obligatory. An institution inherently defended — refined — because it leaves us the illusion of our liberty. But how can we pretend to have chosen heterosexuality when we were brainwashed for it from our earliest infancy? How do we know what we might have chosen if, for instance, we had been raised by two or three lesbians? If we had always known that women could love other women, love to make love with other wo-

men, find other women passionately attractive? And if the whole world accepted this love between and among women?

But heterosexuality is the dominant lifestyle and whatever else exists becomes *marginal*, that which must be tolerated, that which might as well be accepted, or at least, not discriminated against too much. After all, we live in a liberal society, don't we? This marginal existence, *homosexuality*, gathers both men and women together under the same roof, as if there were no fundamental difference between homosexual men and lesbians, as if everything can be explained under the umbrella of the word *gay*.

An Instrument of Power

As feminists we think that there is a difference between a heterosexual man and a heterosexual woman. Even though both men and women practise seduction, make love, marry, live with someone, have children, raise them, grow old, it is never the same reality. For women, heterosexuality is a well-worn path which leads them to housework, for this is the traditional form that women's love for men takes. If you really love them, you make a home for them.

It is here where our heterosexual feminist existence or our lesbian feminist existence becomes more than defiance, more than something marginal; as for male homosexuals, this is a veritable rupture with our roles as defined by the institution of heterosexuality. This is why at LA VIE EN ROSE we believe it is important to affirm a pro-lesbian position, and not simply one that is anti-discriminatory or anti-heterosexist. Lesbianism is a refusal to obey, a fundamental rebellion against the order: *il faut aimer les hommes*, and as such, it is an outright refusal of a life which is predetermined, pre-ordained, and obligatory.

The question is not whether it is necessary to be a lesbian to love women, or to be a feminist. Obviously, all women could be feminists, regardless of who they sleep with. But the existence of lesbians gives to all women the possibility of living their heterosexuality with greater freedom and fewer obligations, and it offers them the possibility of choice. Lesbianism is therefore an instrument of power which is important for all women, in the same way that feminist groups within, for example, leftist political organizations brought greater freedom for all women by affording them an alternative: the choice of where to put their energy.

The Ways of Deviance

There are many ways to refuse the constraints of heterosexuality. First, one can refuse the illusion that heterosexuality is a choice. One can refuse to marry, refuse to bear children, refuse to be available *a priori* for men, refuse to work for free in the name of love of a man, refuse to interrupt an absorbing conversation with a woman when a man approaches.

Above all, one can affirm actively that relations are not only possible with other women, but something to be energetically worked toward on all levels: political, social, or sexual, at work, in friendship, and in love. This rupture can be highly subversive, if we are careful to avoid continuously undermining ourselves by repeating: Yes, I love men. For, what purpose is served if after ripping up the strait-jacket, we are the ones who go back and sew it up again?

If men are afraid to find themselves alone in their bed, or in their lives, they will be moved to be more attentive, to pay more attention. And if we have the possibility to go elsewhere, we will only be freer, and stronger, because, in the words of Adrienne Rich: "It seems more possible that men really fear, not that they will have women's sexual appetites forced on them, or that women want to smother and devour them, but that women could be indifferent to them altogether, that men could be allowed sexual and emotional — therefore economic — access to women *only* on women's terms, otherwise being left on the periphery of the matrix."³

For, is it not more and more apparent that there are other ways of seeing LA VIE EN ROSE than that depicted by Edith Piaf?

1 Maître Emile Colas is a well-known Montreal lawyer who has become famous for his pro-Right and pro-Life opinions.

2 Docteur Jean-Yves Desjardins is the founder of the Department of Sexology at the University of Quebec in Montreal. He has recently become Quebec's leading "conférencier" and author with a series of published talks entitled "vivre en amour," which is a clever rehabilitation of what is presently considered our ailing heterosexual relationships. Incidentally, this book is a bestseller in Quebec today.

3. Adrienne Rich, SIGNS, Journal of Women in Culture and Society. Summer 1980. Vol. 5, no. 4.

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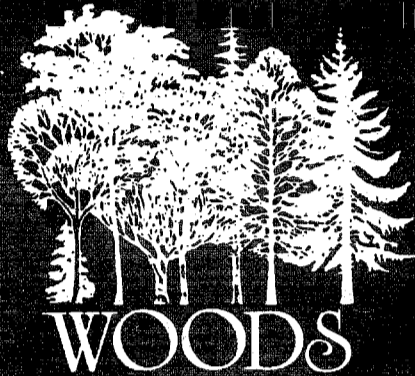
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Week of Nov. 7

• **Sunday, November 7:** "Consumerism — How Not to be Taken" — Speaker Lynn Gordon at the Koffler Gallery, 4588 Bathurst Street. For more information, call 636-1880, ex 33. \$4.50.

• **Sunday, November 7:** "Women Speak Out" panel discussion, with Amelia Productions (Vancouver), Le Groupe d'intervention video (Montréal), Nancy Nicol, Lorna Weir, Linda Briskin, Teri Schmlar. 8-10 pm. ARC, 789 Queen St. West. Free. Information: 368-5643.

• **Monday, November 8:** Vote YES to Disarmament.

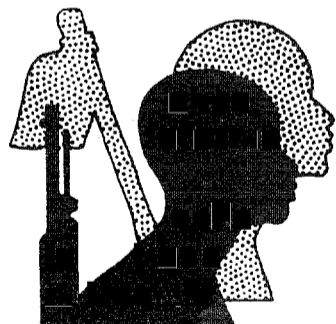


• **Tuesday, November 9:** Womyn Out Of Doors (WOODS), outdoor adventures for women, meeting. Information: Joanne, 976-1769.

• **Wednesday, November 10:** Toronto Addicted Women's Self-Help Network (TAWSHN), a self-help group for women addicted to alcohol and other drugs, meets at Central Neighbourhood House, 349 Ontario Street, 7 pm. Information: 961-7319.

• **Wednesday, November 10:** International Women's Day Committee (IWDC) meeting, 7:30 pm. University Settlement House, 23 Grange Road, room 208. Information: 789-4541.

• **Wednesday, November 10:** Experimental films by lesbian/feminist Barbara Hammer. The Funnel Theatre, 507 King St. East. 8 pm. \$3. Information: 364-7003.



• **Thursday, November 11:** Slide/tape show "Block by Block — Building a New Life in Mozambique" plus information and orientation evening. TCLSAC. Trinity United Church, 427 Bloor St. West. 7:30 pm. Information: 967-5562.

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Compiled by Layne Mellanby

OUTSIDE BROADSIDE

TORONTO WOMEN'S EVENTS CALENDAR

November 7 — December 4, 1982

• **Thursday, November 11;** Women's Action for Peace presents a day of non-violent direct actions at Litton Industries, Rexdale. For more information: 923-4215.

• **Thursday, November 11:** Taragon Theatre presents "What is to be Done," Mavis Gallant's first play, about two young women in wartime Montréal. Information: 531-1827. To December 18.

• **Saturday, November 13:** Day of Education About El Salvador. Ryerson. More information, call COSPES — 593-4236.

adolescence, adulthood and old age. A work-in-progress first presented in 1981, now expanded and re-staged. Actor's Lab, 366 Adelaide St. East. Thursday-Saturday, 8:30 pm; Sunday matinée: 2:30 pm. Tickets: \$5/6. Information: 363-2853.

• **Wednesday, November 17:** International Women's Day Committee (IWDC) meeting, 7:30 pm. Information: 789-4541.

• **Wednesday, November 17:** Toronto Arts Productions presents a public forum on political repression and torture. Free. St. Lawrence Centre. More information: 362-7041.

• **Thursday, November 18:** Lesbian and Gay Academic Society, University of Toronto, presents "Snow White and Rose Green, or Some Notes on Racism, Sexism and the Craft of Writing." 8:00 pm. Rhodes Room, Trinity College, Hoskin Avenue.

• **Thursday, November 18:** Open House at Rexdale Women's Centre (formerly Rexdale Immigrant Women's Project). 2-7 pm. 1530 Albion Road, Suite 208 (Shoppers' World Albion). Information: 741-0478.

• **Thursday, November 18:** Public Forum on the Abortion Situation in Ontario. Sponsored by the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics. 8 pm. OISE auditorium, 252 Bloor St. West. Information: 789-4541.

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

Week of Nov. 21

• **Sunday, November 21:** "Good Monday Morning." Film by Laura Sky about worklife and the women who live it. Sponsored by OPSEU and IWDC. 7:30 pm. Ontario Science Centre. Information: Carolyn — 789-4541.

• **Thursday, November 25:** Women's Co-operative Problem-Solving Therapy Group. 4:45-6:45 pm. Downtown Toronto. For more information and interview, call Arlene Anisman, 469-2725 or Sandy Wise, 783-2022.

• **Wednesday, November 25;** Speakers' Training Workshops on Wife Assault in Canada present an effectiveness workshop. For more information call 968-3422.

• **Wednesday, November 25:** International Women's Day Committee (IWDC) meeting, 7:30 pm. Information: 789-4541.

Week of Nov. 28

• **Tuesday, November 30:** Lesbians Against the Right (LAR) meets at 7:30 pm. Information: 964-7477.

• **Wednesday, December 1:** Toronto Addicted Women's Self-Help Network (TAWSHN), a self-help group for women addicted to alcohol and other drugs, meets at Central Neighbourhood House, 349 Ontario Street, 7 pm. Information: 961-7319.

• **Wednesday, December 1:** International Women's Day Committee (IWDC) meeting, 7:30 pm. Information: 789-4541.

• **Thursday, December 2:** Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) meeting, 519 Church Street, 7:30 pm.

• **Friday, December 3:** Public hearings on Older Women. Organizations and individuals are invited to submit briefs and/or attend hearings in Hamilton, Ont. 1 to 4:30 pm. Contact Miriam Simpson, NDP Task Force on Older Women in Canada, (416) 523-8290.

• **Saturday, December 4:** Workshops on Older Women. Sponsored by NDP Task Force on Older Women in Canada. 9 am to 5 pm. YWCA, 75 McNab St. South, Hamilton. Free. Information: (416) 532-8290.

• **Saturday, December 4:** Lesbian Mothers' Defence Fund "It's-Not-Winter-Yet Dance!" Free buffet, full cash bar. All women welcome. Tickets: \$5 advance, \$6 door; available at Toronto Women's Bookstore and Glad Day Books. 9 pm-1 am. 519 Church St. Community Centre. Information: 465-6822.

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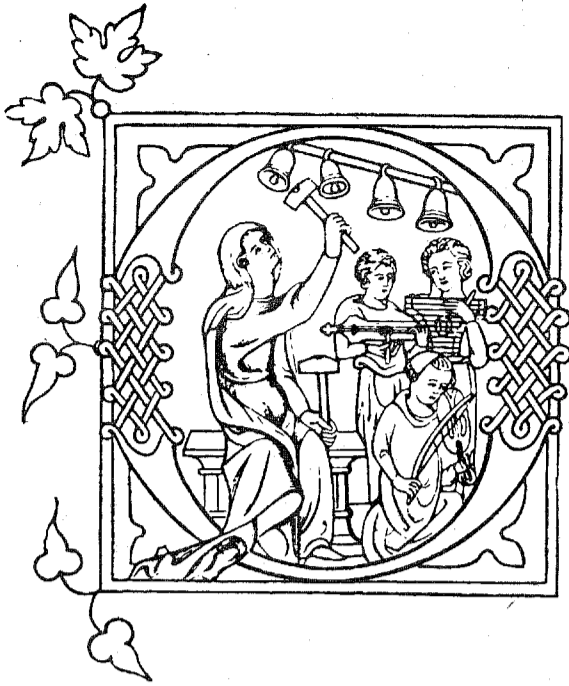
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