

Illustration: Kathy Shaw

Feminist Press: Front Page Challenge

See Story Page 8.

FEATURES

FEMINIST PRESSTIDIGATION:

Survival, for the feminist press, often seems like a matter of sleight of hand. Now you see us, now you don't. But the various Canadian magazines, newspapers and presses survive by hard work, persistence, and luck (money helps). Philinda Masters explores the role of the feminist press, how it stays true to the demands of feminist politics, and everyday production realities. Page 8.

PATRIARCHAL PILLAGE:

In a feminist analysis of patriarchal economics, Judith Quinlan maintains that their economy, like all other patriarchal ventures, is based on plunder: of women, of labour, of children and property, of natural resources. It is an economy based on violence and appropriation, and ultimately, waste. "From this point," says Quinlan, "only one thing is possible — total annihilation, and they're working on that." Page 5.

NEWS

WHAT'S IN A BILL? The new rape law, Bill C-127, is

still a source of confusion. What does it do for women, and what doesn't it do? How has the law been changed, and how will women benefit? Lawyers Reva Landau and Lois Lowenberger have provided *Broadside* readers with a summary of the changes, and the areas where there's still work to be done. Page 4.

MOVEMENT MATTERS:

Read about International Women's Day in Papua New Guinea; police harassment in Yorkshire, England; strip searches in Northern Ireland prisons; political work and self-help at Toronto's Rape Crisis Centre; a writers' conference in New York State; and more, in the "Movement Matters" section, page 6.

COMMENT

TRIAL BALANCE AND CONSERVATIVE CLOWNS:

Eve Zarembo comments on the recent federal budget which benefits the "private sector": i.e., the corporations, not the private citizen; and on the current Conservative leadership race, the results of

which may leave us hankering for things past. Page 3.

MORE ON IWD:

In further comment on International Women's Day, Shannon Bell responds to Lois Lowenberger's article "Lip Service to Feminism" (April 1983) and to the International Women's Day Committee's letter (May 1983), and expounds on the need for feminists to build an understanding of Third World liberation struggles into our analysis. Movement Comment, Page 14.

ARTS

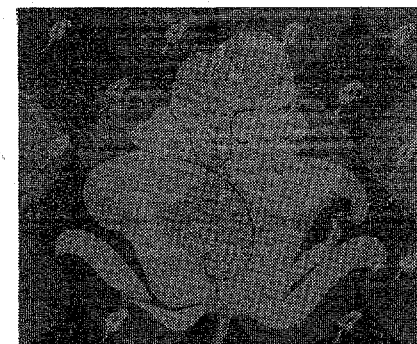
LIANNA FINDS LOVE:

Dissatisfied faculty wife Lianna falls in love with child psych professor Ruth and the end is predictable in this lesbian-film-made-by-a-man, but the effect, says Susan G. Cole, is realistic, entertaining and certainly never offensive. Page 12.

BAG LADY FINDS LOVE:

In a stage adaptation of Constance Beresford-Howe's *The Book of Eve*, Madeleine

Thornton-Sherwood plays a dutiful wife who becomes a bag lady in Montreal, and finds love. Patricia O'Leary reviews the play and talks with Thornton-Sherwood, whose current life curiously reflects some aspects of the play's character Eva. Page 11.



BOOKS: Louise Forsyth reviews Susan Mann Trofimenkoff's *The Dream of Nation: A Social and Intellectual History of Quebec*, page 10; Anne Cameron reviews Linda Halliday's pamphlet *The Silent Scream: The Reality of Sexual Abuse*, page 12; and Betsy Nuse reviews two collections of poetry — Lola Lemire Tostevin's *Color of Her Speech*, and Mary Melfi's *A Queen is Holding a Mummified Cat*, page 13.



OUTSIDE BROADSIDE:

Don't miss this month's calendar of Toronto women's events for June 1983. Page 15.

LETTERS

Broadside:

The April 1983 issue of *Broadside* published a letter from Frieda Forman and Mary O'Brien commenting on aspects of the organization of the International Women's Day rally. The letter referred to the Women's Research-Resource Centre at OISE and was signed by its writers as representing the WRRC. The Women's Caucus of the Department of Sociology in Education (in which the WRRC is situated) wish to avoid possible misunderstandings. We want to make it clear that many women in the Department hold views other than those of the letter, and that it represents the views of those who signed it and not of women in the department in general.

Marie Campbell,
for the Women's Caucus,
Dept. of Sociology in Education,
OISE, Toronto

Broadside:

We want to clarify the content of our letter to International Women's Day Committee which we submitted and which you duly published in your last issue. We should have removed references to the Women's Resource Centre at O.I.S.E. from this letter when we entered it in the public domain. We want to make it quite clear that the position presented was derived from our considered personal assessments, and in no way intended to involve others in Women's Studies at O.I.S.E.: this is a healthily diverse group,

and many feminists here strongly support the IWDC strategy.

Our own position remains firmly as stated.

In sisterhood,

Mary O'Brien
Freida Forman
Toronto

Broadside:

In response to Mariana Valverde's letter regarding Mary O'Brien's and my letter (April 1983):

We, in the Toronto women's movement, have enough real conflict on our hands without creating additional ones by misreading and distorting correspondence. I'm referring to the way in which a criticism of Spanish slogans is twisted into an indication of insensitivity towards immigrant women's plight. We said nothing in our letter about immigrant women who, by the way, are not all Spanish speaking; many, constituting the majority, come from parts of the world where Spanish is not the mother tongue, e.g. Portugal, Italy, Greece, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and others of course. If Mariana Valverde will take just a second to re-read our letter, she will see that it was not Spanish we considered divisive but rather the Middle East: "...but more alarming still was the introduction of a highly divisive and deeply controversial issue: the Middle East (reduced at the rally to the Palestinian struggle only)." (*Broadside*, April 1983).

Our comment about Spanish was based on the fact that in a bilingual country, where the "other" (in every sense of that word) language is French, that language ought to be included; especially so when our Francophone sisters in Ontario are attempting to forge an identity for themselves. I would call "linguistic chauvinism" (IWD Committee's phrase) that act which ignores the "other" language of the country. More importantly, International Women's Day would be the appropriate time to establish badly needed ties with our Québec sisters in the women's movement. We also took exception to Spanish slogans because, when chanted in a context where Native women's struggles and presence are all but forgotten, a pattern emerges which somehow seems designed from elsewhere.

I have read, several times, that portion of Valverde's letter which dumps us English-speaking feminists in Canada into an overcrowded barrel with the dominant culture, the white middle class, the bourgeoisie and affluent families. If this is the level on which "political issues" which she promises to "deal with" are discussed, then we really are in trouble, or as we say in Yiddish, *Oif tzorres*.

Now, to the issue of the Middle East, which was one of the two major points in our letter. It is very distressing to notice in the letters from both Valverde and IWDC that the Middle East is not once mentioned; especially so in light of the very deep concerns ex-

pressed on this issue in articles, letters to IWDC (not all appearing in *Broadside*) and personal exchanges. What are we to make of all this? First, the Middle East is reduced to the Palestinian struggle at the IWD forum and rally; then, when strongly felt objections are expressed, these are totally ignored in the follow-up correspondence. Putting the Middle East under the banner of imperialism is no answer for us for whom the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of heartbreak and not an occasion for slogans.

Speaking as a Jewish feminist who has experienced refugee status personally and historically, I must say that the IWD rally was all too reminiscent of a situation which has no place in the women's movement.

Surely, it cannot be the purpose of the women's movement to make invisible the lives of Jewish women — or any other women's lives.

Frieda Forman
Toronto

Broadside:

If Anne Cameron ("Gandhi: One-Dimensional God," April 1983) wishes to expose virulent anti-Moslem prejudice wherever it occurs and especially in the motion picture industry where it is rampant, she must be commended for such an intention. But she should not be permitted to get away with seeing the devil Bigot behind every movie camera. Richard Attenborough does not deserve that. Nor, for supporting the production of his film, does the present government of India deserve the appellation, though it may for other quite separate actions not relevant to the film *Gandhi* or discussion of it.

Undoubtedly there are many flaws in the film (confirmed perhaps by its success at the Academy Awards) and not least of which one flaw Anne Cameron does not allude to: the omission of any real attention paid to the very significant role performed by women in the independence movement, for instance such notable fighters for India's freedom as Sarojini Naidu, Aruna Asaf Ali, Laxmi Bai, and Bina Rai. Indeed the film could well be criticized for the entirely incorrect inference it seems to make that Mohandas Gandhi was the prime mover and chief guiding light in the anti-colonial struggle. He was not. He was, of course, a particularly remarkable kind of leader within that struggle who developed and applied a rather unique and exemplary strategy based on his now famous philosophy of non-violence. But he was no more the champion who almost single-handedly persuaded the once mighty British Empire to 'give' India its freedom than Lord Mountbatten was the noble Briton who 'gave' it. The film neglects to demonstrate that importance of Subash Rose and Bhagat Singh who were much more popular than Gandhi in many parts of India and remain so today. Nor does the film throw any light on the thousands of men and women who participated in the anti-colonial struggle all over India.

But Anne Cameron launches an incredible

and unreasonable attack on the film for being, as she puts it, a pro-Hindu, anti-Moslem "redigested Christian ... propagandist adulation" for the Imperialist-Capitalist-Patriarchal Old Boys Network (responsible for producing both Attenborough and Gandhi), while she also, somewhat confusingly, complains of a prejudicial use of different camera techniques that she sees as designed to "overemphasize the violence by outsiders" (presumably the British) and "to negate the internal violence" (presumably that between Indians and their police, and between Moslems and Hindus.)

On this latter score she appears oblivious to the crucial difference that exists between the calculated violence of the British and the spontaneous violence of the inter-confessional riots which occurred (and still occur) as a result of the accumulation of inbuilt pressures due to a combination of economic deprivation and religious fanaticism — internal pressures that were historically determined and later manipulated by the British colonizers through their policy of "divide and rule." It is easy to point the blame for an act of British violence like the Amritsar massacre. It is not so simple to point the blame for an internal riot. And Richard Attenborough's use of camera, focus in medium or full close-up for the former and more distanced vaguer shots for the latter rather aptly deal with this crucial and qualitative difference. Furthermore, it seems quite appropriate in fact that a British filmmaker should make the statement that freedom was the birthright of every Indian and that they should be allowed to make their own mistakes. It is not up to the erstwhile imperialist power to dictate solutions to these internal problems. Nor is it up to us in Canada. It is rather up to the Indians in India themselves to solve their problems in their own way.

Anne Cameron does not always clearly distinguish the film from the man. She says "Gandhi himself repeatedly advocated the view of Hindu and Christian to live in peace and harmony; the film suggests it is impossible for the Muslims to co-exist with anybody at all." Actually on this point she is conveying a mistaken impression about both Mohandas Gandhi and Ben Kingsley's portrayal of him. Perhaps she dozed off while Kingsley as Gandhi described his childhood growing up under the shade of both Hindu temple and Moslem mosque and how he became familiar with the Koran as with the Bhagavad Gita. In fact his belief in the possibility of Hindu-Moslem fellowship was amply portrayed in the film. And Cameron really must have been asleep when Gandhi (Kingsley again) was shown fasting in the house of his Moslem friend in Calcutta, only giving it up when a Hindu rioter comes to lay down his weapon beside Gandhi's emaciated body and accept his penance of adopting a Moslem orphan to be raised by him as a Moslem.

Reading her review one is even tempted to think that perhaps Anne Cameron missed the fact — as was clearly shown in the film — that it was an extremist Hindu fanatic who assassinated Gandhi.

To be sure, the film depicts Mohammed

Broadside

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EDITORIAL

Debates in Utero

In 1969 the government and Parliament of Canada changed the Criminal Code to permit abortion under certain conditions. They thereby pushed the politically volatile issue into the hands of provincial governments and the medical profession. Predictably, these authorities have proceeded to pervert the intent of the law with inequitable access and dangerous delays. Just as predictably numerous federal Cabinet Ministers have denied any responsibility. Thus the situation in Canada is that women continue to be denied equal and proper treatment by both the legal and medical authorities of the provinces whose duty it is, under our crazy

system, to administer the Federal law.

Now, through the mindless offices of Joe Borowski and his case before the Court of Queen's Bench in Regina, the issue is back in the laps of the Feds. A direct challenge to the abortion section of the Criminal Code has been issued on grounds that (a) a fertilized ovum is a human being; and (b) its rights take precedence over the rights of the mother. While the first claim is a matter for debate, the second is clearly imbecilic. Now, the judicial process puts the onus where it belongs — with the government and parliament of Canada. It should never have been for the provinces or the medical establishment to decide on women's access to safe and legal abortions.

The case in Regina is peculiar indeed. An exclusively male court is deliberating on matters of life and death for women. The strat-

egy of the Justice ministry seems to be not to argue the case in Saskatchewan but to wait for the inevitable appeal, regardless of who wins in Regina, and save its big guns for the Supreme Court. Perhaps Mark MacGuigan feels that Borowski's case is so Mickey Mouse that a win is assured. Perhaps.

Good courtroom tactics are one thing. Politics, another. Federal politicians must be aware that should they allow the likes of Mr. Borowski to endanger women's health or to subvert our rights as autonomous citizens any further, the women of Canada will be outraged. The recent foo-fa-rah about the constitution will be but a damp squib compared to what we will do to all politicians involved.

That might explain why Mr. Justice WR Matheson of the Saskatchewan court reserved judgement on the case. •

Ali Jinnah, the "Father of Pakistan," as a cold unyielding man and does perhaps lay most of the blame for the partition of India on his shoulders and those of his Moslem League. But Anne Cameron, without mentioning this as she might have, prefers to suggest a more insidious anti-Moslem manipulation on the part of the film. "The composition of the shots, the unspoken influences of staging and facial expression,...(etc.)."

It may be that the "Hindu-dominated government of India," "well-meaning Christians" and "English...apologists" will see and use the film as a propaganda vehicle. But they are not likely to out of any anti-Moslem and Imperialist-Capitalist-Christian-Patriarchal motivations that they may have. The film simply does not suit the purpose. It does, however, provide propaganda for the many well-meaning, apologetic, comfortable people who would like to believe that the problems of the world can all be solved without any violence. It would also serve as effective propaganda for the ruling circles of countries such as India, guilty of perpetrating extensive violence themselves, to diffuse the opposition of the masses which potentially may arise in large-scale and organized armed resistance. Any many others may see in the film a timely call for peace, hoping perhaps that it will give pause to some of the religious/ideological friction and violence that beset such troubled areas as Northern Ireland, Central America, the Middle East, as well as Southern Africa and India itself (Assam). A rather forlorn hope we are afraid.

Incidentally, Anne Cameron's characterization of the Indian government as "Hindu" or "Hindu-dominated," though essentially correct, is somewhat misleading. She might as easily describe the Canadian federal government as being Christian or even Protestant-dominated. Both governments are constitutionally secular, with high officials practising or free to practise different religions. Yet both may be denounced as racist for many of their policies and actions; but not in the case of the Indian government's participation in the production of the film Gandhi.

Anne Cameron also reveals little or no understanding of Indian cultural norms when she decries the film's portrayal of the typical and historically accurate style of respect shown to Gandhi by his followers (e.g. kissing his feet). Cameron should beware falling into the same trap that befell Kate Millett when she criticised Iranian women for returning to the 'chador'. It is inappropriate and rather patronizing to judge another culture by your own. And it is especially

wrong to try and analyze a culture as highly variegated as India's from a Western standpoint. Also, what the film is showing, and reasonably accurately, are the socio-cultural conditions that pertained in specific parts of India during a specific period of history. The film should, of course, be criticized for the historical errors it does make in its faulty depiction of the pre-independence political movements and of the relative importance of certain characters and events.

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Broadside:

It was good news to see that your publication is now in general distribution in the city of Saint John, New Brunswick. The cover of your March edition drew attention to a review of *Tootsie*, by Susan G. Cole.

Aside from the Academy Awards hype, reaction to *Tootsie* has been quite favourable. Thus it was quite a surprise to open *Broadside* and find such a sour-sounding and snarky review.

For one thing, it isn't entirely fair to say "Hoffman's face being what it is, Dorothy is a most unattractive female predator." As a male, while I agree that Hoffman could never pass for Jacklyn Smith, the image of Dorothy is not as entirely unattractive as he himself intimates off-screen. I think many more men than is commonly supposed would find Dorothy quite attractive.

The opening snide tones about "Look, here's Dustin Hoffman trying to be a better person again," are a little undeserved. Isn't that what life's about, ultimately? As you are aware, he spent about 2 1/2 years preparing for the role (when he could have been doing something else); that shows not just a dedication to the craft of acting, but a genuine love of women reflected in the desire to create a lovable female character.

I agree — especially upon re-reading the review — that there is much positive comment in Susan Cole's remarks, particularly in the critical handling of the homophobia in *Tootsie*. It was a painful moment when Julie closes the door in Dorothy's face.

However, the most powerful commentary on *Tootsie* (and maybe male-female relations) was in another moment, glossed over by almost every reviewer: after Julie has

confided her inner dreams to Dorothy, Hoffman-as-Michael returns what she wants to hear said word for word — and she inexplicably throws a drink in his face. No explanation. None.

There are a lot of males who really want to relate positively to the feminist movement, and that's what we feel like some of the time; Dustin Hoffman with his chin and nose dripping a martini...especially after having read Susan Cole's review (albeit not as closely the first time). I could even hear myself saying — at least at that moment — "Dear God, what do you women want?"

Maybe there's a line beyond which we can't go, try as we might, and that martini is your way of telling us that. Even if you can be as sensitive and caring as Dustin Hoffman, you're still going to get a drink pitched in your face without explanation.

It probably isn't quite as bad as all that, but I think that Dustin Hoffman deserves a little better than he received from Susan Cole. After all, he's on your side...Mirabel Morgan isn't.

Bruce Wallace
Saint John, NB.

Broadside:

In her article, 'Kiss Me, I'm a Feminist Man' (October, 1982), Judy Fudge proposed to examine "the phenomenon of the self-declared feminist man." Noting that feminism is antithetical to a paradigm which supports the long-term interests of men, Fudge posed this question: "Why would men endorse a position which runs contrary to the continued enjoyment of this benefit?" Her answer was that "when a man claims to be a feminist what he is in fact claiming is that he does not manifest sexist behaviour," a claim which she dismissed as presumptuous and paternalistic.

Now, there are two issues which Fudge fails to distinguish. The first is the psychological issue concerning the motivations of those who (rightly or wrongly) claim to be feminists. In the case of men, Fudge supposes that their self-declarations amount to an attempt to elicit praise from her — praise for adopting the "correct" point of view. Although she is perhaps correct to suspect such behaviour, clearly it is not a significant issue. One would think that as women we should be concerned with issues and problems confronting women, and not with the motivations or needs of men. In directing her article to behaviour exhibited by men, Fudge unwittingly supports their interests, and not the interests of women. The second

issue is the philosophical one concerning what it means to be a feminist. It is clear that this issue has little to do with the self-declarations of men, but applies to all who profess feminism. The issue is this: is one a feminist simply by virtue of endorsing a theory? Fudge obviously thinks not, arguing that "when someone claims to be a feminist their commitment cannot only be theoretical; it must also include a constellation of concomitant actions and responses."

Be this as it may, Fudge's article does not make it clear what kinds of actions and responses are appropriate. Is a feminist a woman who works at a crisis centre? Or a woman who serves as a missionary? Or perhaps a woman who is content with bringing up baby? The point is that actions and responses can only be evaluated against the background of ideological commitment; i.e., a theory. Regrettably, Ms. Fudge fails to recognise that most fundamentally feminism is a theoretical point of view, and that a feminist is a person who has adopted this view.

I characterize Ms. Fudge's position as regrettable, not because it excludes self-declared feminist men from the ranks of the feminist movement, but because it excludes many well-intended women. We know only too well that there are many women who support feminism as a theoretical point of view, but cannot act and respond in the way envisioned by Fudge because of social constraints. She admits that one of the fundamental tenets of feminism is that women as a group are oppressed. This oppression takes many guises, but one of the prominent ones is the groundless claim that we women must forsake our interests for the interests of men. Feminism exposes this lie: it provides a banner under which all women may join ranks, and so occupy our rightful place in society. Fudge, it would seem, strikes a blow for men everywhere. By labelling as feminists only those women who "struggle against sexism," she makes feminism a closed society — closed to the countless women who yearn for equality and freedom but are prevented from meeting Fudge's "minimum requirement for enlightened human interaction."

In a nutshell, Judy Fudge's criterion is elitist. It makes feminism the special possession of those women who are so privileged as to have the opportunity to fight on behalf of other less fortunate women. It is time that we purged the women's movement of elitism — it is time for us to make the women's movement an open society.

Monica Schwartz
Toronto

Goodies for the Private Sector

by Eve Zaremba

Does anyone recall how our press and the Conservative opposition howled about Finance Minister Allan MacEachen's budgets? Right, left and centre, everyone attacked him. And has anyone noticed how Marc Lalonde's Houdini act has managed to turn all this around?

MacEachen tried to close tax loop-holes and make our tax system fairer and more progressive. And he was almost driven out of politics for his pains, by the NDP no less than the business interests. Lalonde does the opposite and suddenly he is almost a hero. He hands millions of dollars to the "private sector" via tax breaks to business and investors. So business can get more computers to put more people out of work. He socks it to us poor bloody consumers so we have even less money to spend. All this in the name of the "special recovery budget"!

The *Globe and Mail*, which hates the Liberals, grumbles a bit about the size of the deficit but how can it be really mad about the budget when "the private sector" loves it, when the stock market hits all-time highs and when even western oil interests are as happy as they will ever be until the Coming of Pocklington? As for Broadbent and the

NDP, even they find the budget and Lalonde largely untouchable. Sure, there were motions of "no confidence" on the budget, but that's just going through the motions, as it were. It means very little. The so-called progressive party has no more idea than anyone else how to deal with the situations. Sadly, the NDP seems fated to be an "also ran" for the immediate future.

While business was bribed with tax breaks, labour got some job creation promises and mothers got increased child-care expense deductions. A little bit for almost everyone. But in fact, the whole system of wealth and income distribution has been tipped even further in the direction of the "haves." Clearly, that was the intention and this is going down on the books as a "realistic budget." Perhaps politically it is. But otherwise?

Emphasis on goodies for the private sector makes sense of a kind. Our tax money is going to help those who own or control resources (means of production) because it takes resources to create wealth and employ people. So them as has, gets.

Yet nobody is promising that this will cut employment to any extent. The fact remains that there is overcapacity in every industry, which means that a lot more goods and services can be produced without hiring more

people. The fact remains that the inexorable trend is for industry, business and government to invest in replacing people with technology. So any "goodies" which our private sector gets from us will be spent on getting more technology to increase "productivity," i.e., getting more output per worker. So, fewer workers for more output. World wide, fewer people are needed to produce all the goods that people have money to buy. After all, computers do not buy cars or shoes or food. We need more people with decent incomes to buy these things if we want employment to increase. However, our leaders are persuaded that higher incomes for more is what causes inflation.

It's a vicious circle. Thus we get a "realistic" budget with a little for everyone to make it politically palatable, but the most for those with clout and money. It is what I would call a "crossed fingers" budget: a smidgen of charity, a modicum of faith, but mostly just hope. (Ontario and Québec provincial budgets have all the same characteristics, so this approach is not specific to the Liberals.)

Is it possible that the Liberals will pull off another win come next election? It hardly seems possible considering their current standing in the polls. But the election is more than a year away, so I would not put it past

them. The country has been manipulated to welcome this "private sector" budget, and we can expect a "voters' budget" next time with an election soon after.

Whatever they do, the Liberals can always count on the Progressive Conservatives to help them when they really need it. As I write, a bunch of nonentities are still chasing the PC party leadership all over the map, concurrently showing up the whole crowd to be petty and gutless. (Whatever can be said about the Liberals and their leader, these adjectives do not apply.) One can only hope that it is Clark who wins this non-event so that we will be no worse off than we were before the other clowns got into the act.

Whatever the outcome of the PC race, the real suspense remains with Trudeau. Will he/won't he? We are running out of flower petals. If he will retire, then when? If he leaves, then WHO? Who will be next? The selection runs the gamut from old hat current ministers to the Turner Retread. Not inspiring.

Is there not a good possibility that we will be exchanging bad or worse regardless whether Liberals or PCs are in power two years from now. Remember Jimmy Carter? He seemed a disaster until Reagan came along. Wouldn't it be a laugh if we were nostalgic for Trudeau by 1985? ●

Rape Law Still in Crisis

by Reva Landau and
Lois Lowenberger

The federal government's bill C-127 dealing with sexual assault was proclaimed in early November 1982, and came into effect on January 4, 1983. TACWL's Committee on Violence Against Women had resolved that we would never write another article on this bill. But as there seems to be considerable confusion about what the bill does and doesn't do, and as it is important for women to know how the law has, and has not, been changed, we decided to do a brief summary of the changes in the law.

Offence Structure and Definition

Under the old law, almost all sexual offences against women were classified either as rape or as indecent assault on a female. For a crime to be classified as rape, the assault had to be vaginal (rather than oral or anal), there had to be penetration, and the penetration had to be with a penis, rather than a foreign object such as a coke bottle. Further, a husband could not be charged with raping his wife. The maximum sentence for rape was life. If the assault did not meet the above requirements for rape, it could be prosecuted only as indecent assault on a female, maximum five years.

The new law creates three categories of a new offence which is described as "sexual assault." This offence is never defined. This lack of definition means that there is at least the potential that all sexual assaults, whether they are oral, vaginal, or anal, or whether or not there is penetration, will be treated equally seriously. Unfortunately, this potential may never be developed because the law never clearly states that the form of a sexual assault should not matter. In other words, the law never unambiguously says that it is irrelevant whether or not, for example, the assault is vaginal or oral.

This lack of clarity is particularly dangerous when combined with the problems of the offence structure. The bottom tier, ordinary sexual assault, is what is called a hybrid offence; that is, it may be prosecuted either as a "summary" or "indictable" offence. A summary offence is less serious and carries a maximum sentence of six months. An indictable offence is more serious and always carries a heavier sentence which, for this offence, is a maximum of ten years.

Under the Criminal Code, the Crown attorney has the power to decide which of these two options to pursue. There is no indication in the Act as to when a prosecutor should prosecute an assault as a summary or indictable offence. In a perfect world this would not matter: a grab at a breast on a subway would be a summary offence; an anal assault would be indictable. However, in our less than perfect world there is a danger that a prosecutor might decide that all anal assaults, or all assaults where the victim, in his opinion, "asked for it" were not serious, and should therefore be treated as summary offences.

We are particularly concerned because for years judges, prosecutors and police officers have been accustomed to treating vaginal assaults where there is penetration as different from all other sexual assaults. As we have noted earlier, the definition of sexual assault in the new law does not make it sufficiently clear that this distinction should no

longer exist. Therefore, prosecutors may use this or other unjustifiable criteria to decide whether to prosecute summarily or by indictment.

There is an additional problem that the Criminal Code allows a judge to give a conditional or absolute discharge when the maximum sentence is less than 14 years.

A sexual assault falls into the second tier if it was committed with the use of a gun, if there were multiple offenders ("gang-rape"), if there were threats to a third party, or if there was "bodily harm." The maximum sentence is 14 years. While we approve the clear instructions that gang-rape must be punished more severely, there are considerable problems with "bodily harm." The Act has a long definition of "bodily harm" which includes the instructions that the injury must be neither trifling nor "transient." "Transient" is never defined; how long must an injury last before it is not transient? A "non-trifling" but "transient" injury would not qualify as "bodily harm." The assault would then fall back into the bottom tier, and could even be treated as a summary conviction offence.

The highest tier is called "aggravated sexual assault." This assault is one where the woman is maimed, wounded, or disfigured, or where her life is endangered. The maximum sentence is life. We do not yet know how severely a victim will have to be injured for the crime to qualify for this category.

We approve in principle the use of the tier structure because it gives judges clear instructions that the seriousness of the crime depends in such factors as the degree of violence rather than such factors as whether or not there is penetration. We hope that judges will apply these principles when sentencing. Unfortunately, the law does not clearly state that within each category the factors to be considered by a judge in sentencing should always be related to the degree of violence, rather than the form of the assault. Judges may import their old attitudes into sentencing. For example, a judge may give a lesser sentence for an oral assault involving bodily harm than for a vaginal assault with the same amount of bodily harm.

We will now briefly cover two other definitional changes. First, a husband may now be charged with raping his wife. This has great symbolic importance. It is however doubtful if it will have any practical effect especially when combined with the defence of honest belief in consent (see below). Second, the Act is now "gender-neutral." Formerly, the actual offence with which the accused was charged depended on the sex of the victim and alleged perpetrator. Now, these factors are irrelevant in laying the charge. (One anomaly is that while the offence of indecent assault on a male has been abolished, the crimes of "buggery" and "gross indecency" still remain. Therefore, theoretically, a man anally assaulting either a man or woman could be charged either under the "buggery" or "sexual assault" sections. That these old sections remain, in spite of the fact that the law is now supposed to be "gender-neutral," shows the basic homophobia of the law.)

Consent (a) Definition

The Act has widened the grounds on which a woman's consent is considered not to have been given. The former Act said only that there was no consent if consent was obtained

by threats, force, fraud in a very narrowly defined sense, or by impersonation of the woman's husband. The new Act expands the grounds to include threats to a third person, fraud in the usual and broader sense, and exercise of authority. Again, these new grounds have great potential though their impact will depend on how they are interpreted. For example, the exercise of authority could be relevant to relationships such as employer-employee, or professor-student.

Consent (b) Defence of "Honest Belief in Consent"

To understand the significance of the legislation, some background information is necessary. There are two main sources of criminal law: legislation passed by Parliament, e.g. the Criminal Code and judges' decisions. Judges' decisions both interpret the Criminal Code and provide law on areas not directly covered by the Criminal Code. In 1980 the Supreme Court of Canada gave a decision on an aspect of the law not then covered by the Criminal Code. They stated that even after it had been proved that the victim had not agreed to the rape the accused had to be acquitted if he honestly believed that the victim had consented. This belief did not have to be reasonable, just honest. The new legislation has now made this defence of honest belief part of the Criminal Code. When the defence was part of judge-made law, it could at least theoretically be overturned by the Supreme Court in another case. Now, because this defence is now part of the Criminal Code, it can only be changed by another Act of Parliament. It will therefore be that much harder to alter or remove this defence.

It is essential that women understand that the law says that the belief only has to be honest. "Reasonableness" is one factor that the jury must consider in determining whether or not the belief is honest; they can still decide that the belief was honest even if it was unreasonable. As we have outlined in previous articles in *Broadside*, this defence will make convictions of sexual assaulters even more difficult. While it is unlikely that this defence will help the "classic" rapist who attacks a stranger, it will obviously be used in the many instances of "social" or "date" rape. In addition, it is an obvious defence for a husband accused of raping his wife.

Previous Sexual History

Under the old law, a woman's sexual history with anyone other than the accused was often introduced as evidence by the defence, even though the Criminal Code stated that such evidence could only be introduced if it was necessary for a "just determination of any issue of fact in the proceedings, including the credibility of the complainant." This decision was made by the judge. Unfortunately, while feminists thought a victim's previous sexual experience was always irrelevant, and should never be admitted, most judges thought it was always relevant, and should always be admitted.

The new legislation definitely narrows the circumstances under which past sexual history can be admitted. However, the three clauses describing the circumstances under which this evidence can be used are worded in an obscure and complicated manner. We will not burden you with an analysis of this

section here. Only time, and judges' decisions, will tell whether it will be as rare for such evidence to be admitted as the federal government says, or as frequent as some law professors say.

Corroboration and Recent Complaint

Finally, the new legislation improves the areas of corroboration and recent complaint. Corroboration means supporting evidence of a particular kind, such as bruising, torn clothing, or semen. Under the old law, judges still gave a warning in some provinces that if there was no corroborating evidence it was dangerous to convict on the word of the victim alone. There might, for example, be no corroborating evidence that the woman had not consented if she had been threatened with a gun rather than beaten up. The new legislation clearly instructs the judges in all provinces not to give this warning.

"Recent complaint" referred to the old tradition that a rape victim was supposed to complain at the first possible opportunity that she had been raped. If she didn't complain at what the judge considered the first opportunity, her complaint was not admitted in court. If the complaint was not admitted, the judge instructed the jury that they could use the lack of a first complaint as evidence that the victim was lying. A major problem was that what judges thought was a "first opportunity" was not what women considered a reasonable "first opportunity." For example, some judges thought that the victim should complain to acquaintances or even friends of the accused. This rule did not apply to any other crime except sexual assaults. The new law now treats sexual assaults like other crimes, that is, there is no need for "recent complaint."

Additional Points

Women should realize that certain areas of the law remain to be changed. There was no agreement on what should be done about child pornography, so this portion of the law was left untouched. Most of the area involving juveniles and sexual offences was also not changed. For example, the section that makes it a crime to have sexual intercourse with any female under 14, whether or not she consented, and whether or not the attacker thought she was 14 or over, is still part of the Criminal Code. The similar section dealing with girls over 13 and under 16 also remains, though this particular section has always had so many restrictions it is almost useless. Because these areas have yet to be dealt with, now is the time to begin working if they want to have input.

Conclusion

While the law has been improved in some ways, it is still bad in three important areas: the offence and penalty structure, the defence of honest belief in consent, and the admission of previous sexual history. Women must not think that this battle has been won.

Reva Landau and Lois Lowenberger are Toronto lawyers and members of the Toronto Area Caucus of Women and Law (TACWL).



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The Dialectics of Plunder



Illustration: Mary Sue Lyons

by Judith Quinlan

Patriarchy is and always was an economic system based on plunder. Plunder means to rob forcibly or to despoil it. It is synonymous with rape.

The patriarchal system began with the plunder of Mother Right — the transference of hereditary rights from the female line to the male line. This required the direct plunder of women's wombs, which became the property of men in general. Men claimed the natural right of mothers to name their offspring and to bestow on them their wealth, skills and traditions.

This plunder of women's wombs was simultaneous with patriarchal plunder of the earth, the common womb, and her fruits.

In all cases of patriarchal takeover, from ancient to recent, violence has marked the theft. There has never been a peaceful transition to patriarchy. Patriarchy is not merely a natural shift in human values, but a forcible rape of existing cultures. This march of patriarchal violence has continued to the present.

Besides the plunder of Mother Right and of the earth, patriarchy plundered the technology of the people it assimilated. Fire, the wheel, navigation, astronomy, architecture, agriculture, music, poetry, literature, woodwork, metalwork, pottery, mathematics, chemistry, physics, medicine — these and many other were the inventions of matriarchal societies. From every culture man has destroyed, he has taken first the wealth of its knowledge, often distorting and crippling this knowledge towards the end of further plunder.

The examples are endless. Any analysis of patriarchal economics must take into account at all times that the patriarchal economy is always an economy of plunder, a system based on rape, and that this is at the core of its being. It is not a pleasant task for women, who are the primal objects of patriarchal rape, to look upon this system and try to analyse it. Whereas the internal analysis of patriarchal economics can be reduced to an intellectual exercise, a feminist analysis of patriarchal economics must, by nature, be fraught with feeling. What we are discussing here is the despoiling of nature, and women have not abandoned nature; we are nature. When we describe and analyse our own wounds we risk feeling them more acutely. When we speak of the plunder of women in the past, we speak also of our own rape. When we speak of patriarchal scorn for the

earth we speak also of the scorn for women's bodies displayed in the pornography that surrounds our lives. A feminist economic analysis of the patriarchal system is a journey into the soul of a rapist.

Phase One: The Appropriation of Labour

To appropriate means to claim for oneself without proper right or permission. It means to set aside, or claim for a particular purpose. It means to assign something to the realm of property, through privatization. Labour means work. It also describes the contractions of the womb preceding birth.

The first stage of patriarchy is characterized by the appropriation of labour. And the first labour that was appropriated was the work of women. Through the theft of Mother Right, the labour of women's womb was directly appropriated—transformed into property. Marriage and fatherhood are both, since their inception, property relationships. Marriage was and still is a contract of ownership over a woman's body and the issue of her womb. Rape cannot exist within marriage, because marriage is already an act of plunder. The concept of "legitimacy," granting the father legal control over children, transforms children into property — appropriation.

In the first stage of patriarchy two institutions were invented to appropriate the traditional work of women. One was the church, which replaced matriarchal paganism, and the other was the state, or government, which replaced matriarchal tribal social structures. Much hot air has been vented by patriarchal economists over the relative roles of the church and the state. Always the assumptions are that these two institutions are basic to human culture, and that they are more or less in opposition to each other. In fact both of them are patriarchal inventions and work in tandem to perpetuate the state of plunder and the religion of rape. All patriarchal religions and all patriarchal governments are, in the feminist analysis, essentially interchangeable: they speak the same language and work towards a common purpose. In the patriarchy, government is considered sacred and religion is an institution of social control.

Another characteristic of this stage of the patriarchy is the separation of the private and public spheres. The church and the state together define what is the public sphere, ie, men's work, and what is the private sphere

— women's work. This is not a natural separation based on the needs of early civilization. In fact, the only difference between these two spheres is not the nature of the work performed, but the relative isolation of that work. In the men's sphere, work is public and "visible." In the women's sphere, work is private and "invisible." In its essential nature the work itself is the same. Men are economists, while women make budgets. Men are chemists, while women cook. Men are administrators, while women are housewives. Men create morality, while women just raise the kids. Over time, because of the isolation imposed on her labour, women's work has remained virtually unchanged. Men's work, over time, because it is shared and visible, has been transformed until it appears to be the true labour of society. This is the tragedy of the isolation of women's work — it has crippled women's creativity and invention.

During this first patriarchal stage, power was wielded through direct control of labour. The labour of women, beasts and slaves was completely under patriarchal control, while some men also gained partial control over the labours of other men. In a labour-intensive economy, power accrues to whomever holds the reins of labour.

Phase Two: The Accumulation of Wealth

During the second stage of the patriarchal economy, power passed out of the hands of the men who controlled labour and into the hands of the men who controlled the means of production. Through industrialization it became possible to bypass the demands of a working class that was growing in numbers and in literacy. Labour was bought and sold rather than tithed. In this way the industrialist was released from the responsibility of "keeping" his workers — they were now required to buy their own livelihood on the open marketplace. This also created the illusion of freedom for the working class, and circumvented peasants' rebellion. Because of this separation of working life and home life, it became possible to re-introduce women into the visible industrial work force without releasing her in any way from her identification with the private sphere.

This stage of patriarchy is characterized by the birth of capitalism — both state and private. (Patriarchal socialism, or state capitalism, has never come close to restoring the ancient rights of women.)

During this stage, production systems aggregated from having a more or less regional base to a functional base. Whereas previously each area was largely self-sufficient, trading only its surplus goods in the open marketplace, now national and even global systems developed, each controlling a portion of the total production. For example the agricultural system, or the communications system: each has a life of its own, independent of any actual demands for food or communication. It is the institutionalization of functions that previously served the common needs of society that made possible the accumulation of wealth at this stage. With the development of these macrosystems, profit could be generated in a way largely disconnected from labour. In fact the occupation and control of the working class has become a macrosystem of its own, including education, unions and social services for the employed and unemployed.

Phase Three: The Waste Economy

As long as there was a real need for the products of any of these macrosystems, they functioned, at least in part, to fulfil these needs. However, over the past few decades of patriarchal history, technology has developed to a point where it is possible to fill all human needs with only a minuscule amount of human labour, and certainly without the global macrosystems of the second stage of patriarchy.

In a world built on the economic base of plunder, such a situation is antagonistic to the demands of power and profit. Instead of freeing people from work and allowing us to develop creatively, artistically and socially, the patriarchal economy has reacted to this technological "crisis" by transforming itself into a Waste Economy.

For example, the agricultural system, which was ostensibly developed to meet world demands for food, could not continue to generate profit if it was technologically possible to eliminate hunger. So it has re-gearred its machinery towards the production of hunger and thus ensured its own survival as a macrosystem. By turning over the world's richest land to the production of non-food crops such as sugar, tobacco and coffee; by decreasing the nutritional content of food crops through over-farming and the use of poisons; by decreasing the food content in the average diet through the promotion of processed and marginally digestible foods; by creating artificial competition so that food is dumped in the name of profits, the agricultural system has successfully manufactured a state of hunger in the world. In this way it has created its own reason for being. The same process can be traced in every macrosystem.

In the time-honoured tradition of patriarchal reversals, we are living in a world where everything is working to produce its own antithesis. So we have a communications system that is designed to limit human contact, a transportation system that is designed to keep us immobilized, an education system that manufactures ignorance, a medical system that creates disease, a defence system that hungers for war, a legal system that multiplies crime, an economic system that produces poverty, an entertainment system that creates boredom; the list is enormous. In short, patriarchal economics, the economics of plunder, has reached its logical end in the economy of waste. From this point only one thing is possible — total annihilation, and they are working on that.

Through its three major phases — the Appropriation of Labour, the Accumulation of Wealth, and the Waste Economy, the economic base of patriarchy has developed step by step with its ethical and metaphysical "growth." Economics is not a separate realm for feminist analysis, but must be seen, as it is, intertwined with the multiple realities of life in the land of the fathers. Thus, the economic system is a reflection of the moral mandates of patriarchy, or conversely, the patriarchal ethic is a reflection of its economic base. ●

Judith Quinlan is a writer and physiotherapist living on Vancouver Island.

MOVEMENT MATTERS



Women's Centre in Papua New Guinea

Women's Day on the Sepik

(PAPUA NEW GUINEA) — One of the longest rivers in the world, the Sepik, snakes through a little known part of the world, in Papua New Guinea, where crocodile hunters and rubber plantations abound, as well as malaria and anemia.

Mary Klink, President of the East Sepik Provincial Council of Women, sees the suffering of women in her province: wives beaten and abused by drunken husbands (who are sometimes political or government leaders); children eager to learn but not entitled to start school until age 7 or 8; women needing an economic base or some small income to help pay for school uniforms, medicines (like aspirin or malaria pills), and transport to and from the market.

In the past five years, Haus Meri, or women's centres, have emerged (in contrast to the dying out of traditional spirit houses or Haus Tambaran of the men). These centres act as a catalyst for women's and community happenings. One day a week women learn about gardening and nutrition through working on a community garden which when harvested provides income for women's club activities. Library books are available for school children and villagers to read and visitors sometimes sleep overnight in the raised loft at one end of the centre — a typical women's centre is two storeys, so they are quite cool (even though the hot tropical sun beats down on this area). They can sleep about 20 women. The floor is split sago which is a bit like bamboo, tough but springy.

Celebrations such as International Women's Day have created an opportunity for women from many different villages to see each other, exchange ideas and draw support for their activities. During March, in the remote jungle area of Gavien near the town of Angoram in the East Sepik Province of Papua New Guinea, the whole community celebrated International Women's Day. This type of celebration was encouraged by the East Sepik Provincial Council of Women so that by the end of March thousands of women, men and children had given recognition to the women of their province.

In preparation for the celebrations, women lifted steaming kettles and pots from an open fire. Others decorated themselves and their children with paint and feathers while chanting to a throbbing drum beat. For weeks donations of petrol (for the electric generator), pick-up trucks and food had been collected. Organizers had invited people from the far off capital of Port Moresby and the isolated villages up and down the Sepik River. Would anyone come? Would the rain which had flooded many communities in the recent weeks allow for a successful day? An area had been corralled off beside the bamboo, sago and grass women's centre with a big sign demanding a 30¢ entry fee. Women's crafts, sewing and food stalls were in place.

From far off a car's horn could be heard blended into drum, seed and shell rhythms. A band of about 100 women marched into the grounds wearing grass skirts, with coconut oiled bodies gleaming and accompanied by children and dogs. Speeches emphasizing the important roles of women in development of the region, a popular folk theatre drama on eating good food for good health, judging of children's healthy bodies were held before the main event, a traditional "sing-sing" where everyone, women, men and children (about 400 in all) jumped, whirled and danced to mesmerizing chants. This event, usually held at night, had been moved forward so that in the evening a disco dance could take place under the stars. The night rang out with shouts of glee, the hum of the generator and music from a live band (which many had never seen before). Old women intrigued by the action chaperoned from the sides, young women shyly danced together while men, on the other side of the grounds gyrated and swirled with their men partners in typical New Guinea style.

The next day a worship service with Sepik drum accompanying hymns and songs of praise ended a full 24 hours of reflection and celebration of women's achievements and struggles in Angoram and around the world.

— Diane Goodwillie



Diane Goodwillie

VOW vs. Cruise

(HALIFAX) — In responding to the Prime Minister's open letter to opponents of Cruise testing, Voice of Women (Nova Scotia) is disappointed that he emphasizes peripheral issues and avoids central issues of Canadian democratic process and the seriousness of US escalation of the arms race.

Trudeau states that "...our freedom to discuss and argue issues is what gives our democracy its greatness and its strength." Yet the Trudeau government has yet to submit its proposal to allow Cruise testing in Canada to a full debate in the Canadian Parliament. Voice of Women supports the proposal of a free vote in the House. A recent poll indicates that more than 50% of Canadians oppose Cruise testing here.

"...The anti-Americanism of some Canadians verges on hypocrisy. They're eager to take refuge under the American umbrella but don't want to help hold it." There are three objections to this description of our opposition. First, opposition to the military policies of the Reagan administration is not anti-American. The US House of Representatives, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, leading US businessmen, and prominent Americans such as George Kennan (pre-eminent US-Soviet expert), Robert Macnamara (former Secretary of Defense), and William Colby (former head of the CIA) have all advocated a change in President Reagan's military policies or a freeze on new nuclear weapon systems. Which of these is anti-American?

Secondly, the "American umbrella" appears to us more of a threat than a defence. Canada is at risk in a super-power conflict mainly because of our 50,000 nuclear weapons with a combined power of a million Hiroshima bombs. The present US policy of escalating the arms race, if continued, makes the possibility of nuclear war in the next decade very high, according to many sober critics of Reagan's policies.

Thirdly, through its actions in Canada, VOW has always supported as strongly as possible such organizations in the US as Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Women's Strike for Peace and War Resisters' League.

Trudeau's letter further states, "Having declared our support for the two-track strategy, Canada should bear its fair share of the burden which that policy imposes on the NATO alliance." Membership in NATO does not obligate any nation to test nuclear weapons or delivery systems on its soil. Norway and Denmark have never accepted nuclear weapons on their soil; the Danish Parliament voted not to pay its share of installing Cruise and Pershing II missiles in Germany. The Dutch and Belgian Parliaments refused to approve the 1979 Cruise missile decision. Canada is being asked by the US government, not NATO, to test the Cruise. Moreover, the air launched Cruise to be tested is a more advanced version than the one to be deployed in Europe and represents a further escalation. It is designed to be carried in US-based long-range bombers and is not part of NATO's nuclear program. The real obligation of NATO countries is to pressure the super-powers to pursue peace by diplomacy and not by further military escalation.

The Cruise missile is an example of a technology looking for a strategy. Its development was started by President Nixon in 1971 before the Soviet SS-20's appeared. Its role in nuclear conflict has never been clear. The Cruise carries a "small" nuclear warhead of 200 kilotons or 10 times the explosive and radiation power of the Hiroshima bomb. The US plans to deploy 10,000 of them, enough to destroy "all potential targets" in the USSR. The missile submarines alone can do that already. The multiple warhead ICBM's can do it too. Do we want to support plans for genocide in triplicate?

One of the greatest dangers of the Cruise is that it is almost impossible to detect. This makes disarmament agreements very difficult to verify once it is deployed. The risk of accidental firing of capture by terrorist groups is also greatly increased by the fact that there will be so many of these small, mobile missiles handled by so many people. The Soviets would surely develop their own version of Cruise and then both sides would spend billions searching for a defence against them and for further technology to secure their "superiority." The Cruise is not, as Trudeau implies, a "new means of defending ourselves against the SS-20's." Even the pro-Cruise strategists at the Brookings Institute in Washington DC call it "an offensive military weapon." It is an extremely dangerous new step in the nuclear arms race which is already robbing us of resources badly needed for jobs, housing, daycare, etc., an arms race which threatens us and everything we value with annihilation.

Voice of Women opposes the testing of the long range Cruise missile in Canada, stands beside the hundreds of thousands of Europeans who understand the threat to their lives, homes and countries of the deployment of medium range Cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe.

Canada should help stop the arms race by refusing the Cruise! ●

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\$1 Campaign

(HALIFAX) — Mount Saint Vincent University plans to let the public tune into its coast-to-coast women's network after its million dollar national fund-raising campaign is over.

Since last Fall the university has put on a fund drive to obtain \$1 from every Canadian woman in support of the only women's university in the country. The money is going toward improving existing scholarships and bursaries, providing new ones for mature students and endowing a two-year-old Institute for the Study of Women so it can get on with its research.

In conjunction with the appeal, Mount president Dr. E. Margaret Fulton said the university will be cataloguing the many organizations and women who have responded, and make the information accessible to others. When compiled the resource will be the most up-to-date and accurate in the country, she said. "We look upon the project as our first installment to pay off our debt to the thousands of Canadian women, many of whom never heard of our university before now, who are sending in their dollars to help us." ●

Women's Writing Guild

Every year the International Women's Writing Guild holds a conference at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York. Women writers come from throughout North America to learn and share their work and skills. It seems to have a most salutary effect, helping women writers at all levels of proficiency to take themselves seriously. There is something for everyone ... for those who want to earn money through writing, as well as those who are more interested in writing for its own sake with money as a welcome but not necessary award.

Over the years, the number of Canadian participants at Saratoga has grown to about 30% of the total number of registrants. On the whole, people have felt good about it. Not only does it give Canadian writers a chance to meet our American sisters, but in a country as vast as ours it is not too often that we have the opportunity to meet with one another.

This year's conference, to take place on July 22-29, will include workshops on: Storytelling, Introduction to the Intensive Journal, Using Family History as a Spring-

A Feminist Affair

TORONTO — A group of radical feminists is in the process of organizing a feminist cultural/political event, scheduled for September, 1983.

It is hoped that this celebration will provide a venue for artists, writers, craftswomen, musicians, thespians and political activists.

Women are invited to participate. Bring your ideas, your energy and help organize this gala happening!

For more information, please call (416) 537-6989.

board to Fiction, The Politics of Romantic Love, The Author/Agent Relationship, Journalism, The Business of Writing, A Practical Approach to Creativity, and many more.

Information about registration for the conference may be obtained by writing: International Women's Writing Guild, Box 810, Gracie Station, New York, NY, 10028.

— Greta Nemiroff

TRCC Update

The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre collective recently held its annual general meeting and at that time decided to submit an article to *Broadside* and several other publications about the work we've done in the past year. We believe this is important because many of *Broadside's* readers may not be members of groups we work with and therefore would not have access to information about what we do and who we are or be able to attend the Open House we are holding on June 22.

In the past year we at the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre have done a great deal of work internally to help us grow stronger and closer; many of us have also joined other organizations in the city, so that we may also grow and learn from the experience of other political women.

During this time we have also provided the ongoing services offered by all rape crisis centres. We have a 24 hour crisis line on a pager system. We provide face-to-face and group counselling and support, and we accompany any woman who has or wants to report to the police, to the police station, the hospital and the trial, if she so wishes. Our self-defense courses are still offered at a reduced rate to low-income women and free to women on government "assistance." The Speakers Bureau at the centre answered requests from high schools, universities, women's groups, legal clinics, employee associations and other groups, for public speakers in the past year. We also ran a special speakers programme for hospital emergency room staffs on the use of the Forensic Evidence Kit. We have been and are currently working on the Task Force on Public Violence Against Women and Children and we have continued our work in the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres.

The work we have been doing internally has made us more aware of the many forms oppression takes in this society. The analysis

we had developed of the power men have over women helped us greatly in this work. We began by having discussions about the different resources and choices individual women have and how these are added to or subtracted from based on other forms of privilege and oppression. We began reading and working to understand class differences, racial and cultural privilege and oppression and how heterosexism and homophobia work in individual women's lives and in society on groups or classes of people. We've instituted a structure that consists of caucuses and groups, the caucus being a group of women who experience a specific oppression in addition to being women, who meet to give each other support and validation and to develop an analysis of that oppression and how to fight it, to bring back to the collective as a whole. At this time we have a working class women's caucus and a lesbian caucus.

A group consists of women who share privilege in a specific area of their lives. Groups at the centre meet to discuss that privilege, how it affects each woman individually and how it works in a society as a whole. Women in "group" often discuss where they feel resistant to dealing with privilege and how power and privilege differences between women can be effectively dealt with day to day. Middle-class, heterosexual, genteel and white women in the collective all meet in our respective groups and both the groups and caucuses report back to the collective.

These structures have helped us to become closer and stronger as a collective, and have helped us to understand where it is possible to make mistakes with women who call us. We are much more aware of the ways in which the centre can be an intimidating and angering place to some women, and we want our work in these areas to change that. In the next year, we are going to have our literature translated and if we receive funding we are going to hire a multilingual counsellor/public speaker. We are also trying to build stronger ties with organizations of welfare

and Family Benefits mothers and we are now sitting on the Lesbian and Gay Pride Day committee.

In the past year and a half we have begun a new method of training potential collective members by having them participate in one of our self-help groups. This change was based partially on Kathleen Barry's criticism of rape crisis centre workers in *Female Sexual Slavery*. Barry pointed out the tendency of feminists fighting violence against women to see women as victims: in other words, once a woman has been raped she becomes a rape victim and is defined solely through her victimization. Much of the literature written by psychologists and social workers about "rape trauma syndrome" makes the same mistake of viewing women who have been raped as set apart from women who have not. To break down the dichotomy of the "mentally stable" counsellor and the emotionally distraught victim who must be "cured," we believe that it is important that potential members both given and receive counselling and support in group. In this way we also begin to see ourselves and other women not only through our victimization but also through our power and strength. Those of us who are already members of the collective can ask for support and counselling in any of the collective's meetings.

The self-help groups run by the centre are open and are facilitated by two collective members. We try to ensure that the groups are a safe place for all women by dealing with differences of privilege among women in the group. For example, if a woman makes a racist or homophobic comment in group the group would obviously not feel safe for women of colour or lesbians. It would be the responsibility of the facilitators and the other white and/or heterosexual women in the group to criticize the woman in a supportive and educative way. The method of communication we use to facilitate this work, in both the collective and self-help groups, is called constructive criticism and problem-solving. It combines the work of Gracie Lyons and

Hogie Wycoff and has enabled us to deal with difficult problems in a clear and caring way.

Some of the difficulties we've encountered in the past year have been very practical: ie, never having enough women with enough time to do everything we want to do. We also have had problems with our answering service screening our calls. If any of the readers of *Broadside* know of an answering service that would work more effectively with a women's crisis line on a pager system, please call and let us know (416-964-7477). Funding is, of course, an ongoing problem. The centre's funding is broad-based and our funders include foundations, corporations, unions, individuals, community-groups and government bodies. We also hold special events and on June 11, the Lesbian Mothers' Defense Fund and the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre are co-sponsoring a women's dance at 519 Church Street in Toronto. We are always open to suggestions about raising funds since much of our time and energy is spent in this ongoing struggle.

In the next year we want to build stronger alliances and links with other political and/or service organizations. To this end we are holding an open house on June 22 at 340 College St. Apt 2 (above the photo studio), Toronto. If you attend and are representing an organization please bring any literature you have, and any suggestions your group might have, to facilitate our working together. For further information about either the dance or the Open House please call us at (416) 964-7477.

—Toronto Rape Crisis Centre Collective

Stop the Strip Searches

(ARMAGH — NORTHERN IRELAND)—After the dirty protest of 1980 and the hunger strikes of 1980 and 1981, women prisoners in Armagh Jail are now being subjected to forcible strip-searching. Since November 1982 women have been strip-searched whenever entering or leaving the prison. The searches are performed by groups of female and male prison officers, sometimes as many as 10. Between November 1982 and March 1983, 772 strip-searches have been carried out on 97 women; one woman was strip-searched 19 times in 11 days.

All prisoners are subjected to the searches, regardless of age or physical condition. Women who have been searched include: a 43-year-old mother of three; menstruating women who are required to remove their tampons or sanitary pads; adolescent women held in Armagh's young offenders unit; a woman who was 5 1/2 months pregnant; a 3-year-old girl visiting a prisoner.

Recently, three women were assaulted when they refused to strip naked. They were thrown to the ground, their arms and legs twisted behind them by the prison officers, sat upon and forcibly stripped.

The overall escalation of harassment of the women includes strip-searches, solitary confinement, withdrawal of privileges (visits, letters and packages) and victimisation of particular women. Far from the so-called peace-keeping role of the security forces, which includes prison officers, the strip-search policy is indicative of the systematic abuse of women in war time.

The Stop the Strip Search Campaign has been set up by women in London to call attention to the deteriorating conditions in Armagh and to put an immediate end to the strip searches. ●

Right Wing Democracy

by Mary O'Brien

Jalna Hanmer, Diane Hudson and Sheila Saunders are three feminists who live in a friendly old house in Leeds, West Yorkshire, England. Collectively, they are raising three boy children and caring for an elderly, rather wet-mouthed but very affectionate dog and an indeterminate number of cats and other living creatures. Jalna teaches at the University of Bradford in the Social Work department, Diane is a practising social worker, Sheila teaches at Manchester Polytechnic. Their conception of feminism is one in which theory and practice are beautifully integrated, not only in their working and domestic lives, but in long service to battered women in their work for an organization called Women's Aid. The only other organization to which they belong is the British Sociological Association, which would not be most people's choice for early proscription as a revolutionary organization.

Last spring, I had the great pleasure of staying for a short time in this dwellinghouse of sisterhood. It was therefore with surprise and outrage that I learned that it and the women who have created it have been recently subjected to police harassment in February, involving a long visit to and interview at the police station for Jalna and a long search of their household by six plainclothed police officers. They had a warrant, but in Britain the police can request search warrants from magistrates without providing any supporting evidence. They took away correspondence and papers which were being collected for a proposed English-language edition of *Nouvelles Questions Feministes*, whose editor in chief is Simone de Beauvoir.

The first police intrusion came when police called in January, saying that they had information that Jalna might be involved in sex shop burnings which had taken place in the area. They asked Jalna to come to the station: one was a woman officer who identified herself as "Wendy from the Vice." Jalna was questioned about her "odd" living arrangements — women living together — and the peculiarity of working for battered women: "Have you had that happen to you?" the sergeant asked Jalna. Jalna shut him up by insisting he show the relevance of

these lines of questioning. He asked if she had a car, what type, registration number. He said, "I don't know about this feminism." Jalna said nothing. He asked, "Why do you think someone would phone us saying you were responsible?" She told him she was well-known in the area: he told her how nice cops really are; she told him she had lectured to women police officers at Wakefield Police Academy. The superintendent arrived and asked much about the same questions. He asked her about pornography, which he thought disgusting; he had a girlie calendar on his wall. He was of the opinion that unemployed teachers and social workers were capable of public mischief, like writing naughty words on walls.

As the men come and go, Jalna converses with Wendy about rape and violence against women: Wendy wonders if she should maybe refer women to the Rape Crisis Centre rather than to doctors. The sergeant comes back and tells Jalna that he is really looking after her — it might be someone close to her who is trying to get her into trouble. They take her home, asking all three women to provide fingerprints and typewriter samples "for their protection." At home, Jalna's lawyer has arrived, and they decline the fingerprints. Jalna is left with the distinct impression that Leeds Women's Aid and Rape Crises are under routine police surveillance.

In the conversation the police claimed that they had had an anonymous letter and a phone call. They did not produce the letter. While all this was going on, someone planted a bomb at the headquarters of the Conservative Party in Leeds. The fact that Jalna was in the police station at the time did not deter the boys in blue. Later in January they were back again. Sheila was having a meeting with four members of a Worker's Educational Association course. The police interrupted to question Sheila in the most general way: they seemed to have some more anonymous information, which concerned the erosion of the cause of women's rights. Sheila said she had no idea what they were talking about. They said they might come back Sunday, but not to stay in in case they couldn't keep the date. As Sheila was with a lawyer and Jalna with a policeman at the time of the bombing, presumably it didn't look promising, but they came again in February with a warrant and searched the whole house: the boys' rooms, the study, everywhere. Sheila was

alone, and was allowed to watch — except that there were six of them searching on two floors at once. They had the now well-known routine — one silent broody type and one affable, chatty type. Sheila says it was terrifying.

That is the story to date. It is frightening, but I suppose feminists have always known that as the struggle intensified the reaction of the patriarchal state and its minions of lawlessness and disorder in police uniforms would also intensify. This is no cause for paranoid dread, but perhaps it is a cause for some prudence. It would be useful, for example, to carry a list of feminist lawyers, and alternative phone numbers if we have to make that one call from a cop shop and our nearest and dearest aren't home. There is no reason to think that patriarchy will die quietly, and maybe we should be ready for its terminal terrors.

In the meantime, *Broadside* readers who would like to show sisterhood and concern to the women in question can do so in a number of ways. Cath McNaughton and I have already sent them a sheaf of spring flowers, and taken the liberty of signing on behalf of Canadian feminists. Others may write their protests to: Superintendent Walter Cowman, Millgarth Police Station, Leeds 1, West Yorkshire, England; with copies to Stan Cohen, MP, Houses of Parliament, Westminster, London SW1 and to Jalna, Diane and Sheila at 30 Brudenhall Ave., Leeds 6.



Feminist Press: Fro

by Philinda Masters

In Canada, there are about 20 feminist newspapers, magazines and quarterlies, about four feminist publishers (two in Québec), feminist bookstores in most large cities and any number of newsletters coming out of women's centres and women's organizations. Together we are members of the feminist press, an amorphous collection of committed ideologues who tend the fires of the women's movement. In this article I will explore mainly the feminist periodicals, their roles in the movement, the rewards and pitfalls of producing them and the everyday reality of feminist publishing, relying heavily on my experience at *Broadside*, which is what I know best.

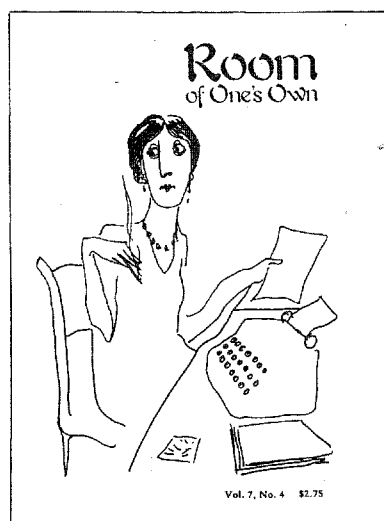
Introduction: A Hen's Life

Producing a monthly feminist newspaper, as we do here at *Broadside*, reminds me of the life of a hen: we take the germ of an idea, get it out, fertilize it, incubate it and at the end of the process we start all over again. It is a process of one part creativity and nine parts hard work in a never-ending cycle. And, unlike real hens, we feminist egg-layers have to market the fruits of our own labour. After all that gestating, we have to get up off our bed of straw and sell. What we need is some kind of feminist egg marketing board, to protect our interests and to develop and ensure our market.

To twist the egg analogy further, there's the matter of chicken and egg, cause and effect: to what extent does the feminist press affect the women's movement in Canada, and to what extent do we reflect it? What is our importance to other feminist endeavours and to the world at large?

No one denies the importance of eggs. We all know their role in our lives — how else could we get western sandwiches or chicken tetrazzini? But what role does the feminist press play? Why do some of us go through the egg-laying process month after month, against often hefty odds? What are our goals and rewards? What's in it for us, and what's in it for you?

Having now hinted at the philosophical, political and practical ramifications of the feminist press, it's time to follow the example of the TV egg ads and "get cracking."



An Obstacle Course: The Nitty-Gritty

In April I was a panelist at an Alternative Press conference at York University. In a prior meeting to discuss how we would approach the subject of the feminist press, several of us came up with three or four topics: the political context, funding, obstacles, goals, etc. I decided, in a pessimistic moment, that everything pertaining to the feminist press could be discussed under the heading: Obstacles.

Of course the main obstacle is money, or lack thereof. But there are related obstacles: access to funding, limited resources (material as well as financial), volunteer or low-paid labour, limited time and energy. Et cetera with a capital E.



Every so often someone calls up the *Broadside* office and accuses us of inefficiency because we didn't expedite some matter or other as quickly as the caller expected. I usually explain that we are not the *Globe and Mail*, we don't have the resources of the mainstream press: only one paid staff, not hundreds (or even tens) of employees, no computer to track down errant subscriptions in seconds, no news-team with a *Broadside* car to rush out to the latest movement event. We, like all other feminist publications, are a shoestring operation. We just scrape by as best we can. The caller is usually mollified.

Similarly, at a seminar a year or so ago, the editor of a slick Toronto magazine was discussing the ramifications of good editing. At one point, referring to factual accuracy in news reporting, she said: "If you're not absolutely sure of your facts, just go down the hall to your checker and get them to verify the information." Well, it may come as a surprise, but most of us don't have a hall, let alone a checker. This is not to say that we don't strive for accuracy, just that we don't have several editorial assistants lounging around our office complex waiting on our every whim.

So, we don't have enough money, we don't have enough people, we don't have enough time. Why are our resources so slim? According to the prevailing economic value system, if a business (which is what a feminist press is, after all) provides people with what they want, it will succeed, it will turn a profit. So if a business is having trouble, the people don't want its product. That's the logic. Does that mean that if feminist presses are having trouble surviving, nobody wants us? The trouble with the logic is that it's based on a myth. That's *not* the way things operate. It's not a reasonable way of defining the problem.

Although there *are* other obstacles littering the feminist press's path to success (see below), the main one, I repeat, is money. Most publications, feminist, alternative, even mainstream (yes, even the *Globe and Mail*), have trouble surviving economically. A publication's revenue (what pays the rent and the printer) comes chiefly from a combination of subscriptions, advertising and government subsidies (known in our circle as grants). And one source of income tends to depend on the health of the others. The most successful publications in the mainstream are those with either a guaranteed readership — generally trade magazines targeting a specific industry like Maclean-Hunter's *Bus and Truck* — or those with a very high percentage of advertising, often 75% (like Maclean-Hunter's *Bus and Truck*). The subscription and ad money just keeps rolling in. Since these publications are seen as a good risk, they have no trouble securing other kinds of financial backing.

Most of us, though, are in a different ball park. Unlike trade magazines, general interest or political publications can't *buy* our readership with gimmicks or freebies, and then sell our product to advertisers on the basis of that high circulation. Our readership is limited (are there more truck dealers than feminists?) and therefore our ad revenue is curtailed, advertisers needing as large an audience as possible. Without large PR budgets to expand our readership, and without the womanpower to secure advertising clients (those who might *want* to advertise in our pages), our financial bases remain meagre.

As to securing government grants, feminist publications are in a dicey position. In appealing to government agencies, whose interests very likely do not coincide with those of the women's movement, hiding your radical feminism, your lesbian content, your anti-patriarchal views is no easy task when that's what you're all about. Most government funding is directed towards one-shot promotion projects, which isn't useful if what you need are short-term operating funds, or to special theme issues, which isn't useful if you're a general interest newspaper. Other funding agencies support the Arts, with an apolitical A. In other words, money for the feminist press ain't easy to come by. And, as we all know, looking for that money, and satisfying the requirements of the granting agencies is a full-time job in itself.

Putting money matters aside (if possible), there are other problems feminist publications face. In a report on the feminist press a few years ago, Sharon Batt (then editor of *Branching Out* and board member of the Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association) figured that the circulation ceiling for feminist publications in Canada was a mere 2500. Apart from Montreal's *La vie en rose* which sells 10,000 to a highly political Québécoise readership, most of us haven't yet topped the 2000 mark, even those of us who've been around for a number of years. Well-meaning critics suggest that our focus is too narrow, we're preaching to the converted (obviously a small number), or simply that women haven't the money to support us. It is probably the single, most urgent question plaguing us all. And if anyone has The Answer, I'd like to know it. The feminist press can't please everybody, but we need to please more than 2000 each if we're going to succeed.

One more obstacle, before I move on to other matters, one which is not specific to the press, feminist or otherwise, is the geography of our country. Most feminist publications (apart from local newsletters) attempt to have at the very least a national profile. We do not wish to be merely house organs for our local, city movement. But that presents problems. Face-to-face encounters with our sister journalists across the country, and with potential subscribers and contributors, is almost non-existent. On-the-scene reporting is pretty well impossible. At *Broadside*, we don't even have a long distance phone budget. We're like the early pioneers before the CPR went through. Getting money, for instance, for women to travel to the Women and Words Conference in Vancouver this summer is a major struggle for the conference organizers and a severe strain on the budgets of individual women and publications. Without easy communication, we are missing out on a major support network, and our publications suffer for it.



How to Run the Business and Stay Pure: Philosophical Considerations

As feminists, we have a stake in remaining PC (that's politically correct, not Progressive Conservative). In other words, we are involved in political work and we try to remain true to our politics. The attempt produces certain symptoms: our non-hierarchical struc-

Front Page Challenge

ture, our approach to professionalism, how we deal with our contributors, our relationship to other feminist publications. The attempt to live our politics also results in a good deal of soul-searching as we try to deal with the contradictions of purity vs. poverty, of efficiency vs. exactitude, of co-operation vs. competition.

Early feminist publications were marked by two things: their publishers didn't believe in layout, or in editing. The papers were often sloppy and hard to read. This was partly the result of lack of money, partly because the producers were in the early stages of developing skills: they couldn't afford classy publications and they didn't know much about layout or editing. But it was also a stance: slick, professional papers were *male*, and elitist; to edit copy was to exert control over one's sisters. This was not all silly narrow-mindedness. Women were finding new ways to do things, slick publications were often empty and regressive, editing has been used as a tool of control, particularly over women. But in making one point, they missed another: feminist publications are a means of communication and to succeed as such they must be readable. The reader has to want to read an article, her eye must be drawn into it, hence the layout, and the message to be communicated must be clear and coherent, hence at least a modicum of editing. The rules of straight lines, grammar and syntax have their uses. This may seem like an odd point to belabour, but it's a point hard-won in feminist publishing.

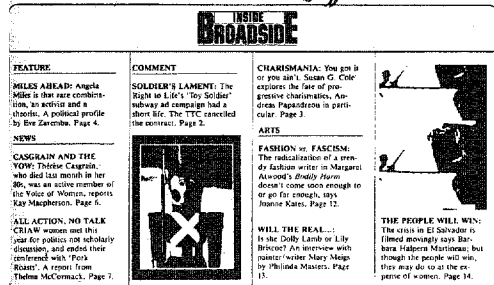


Volume 3, number 3 December 1981/January 1982 \$1



Books, Books, Books

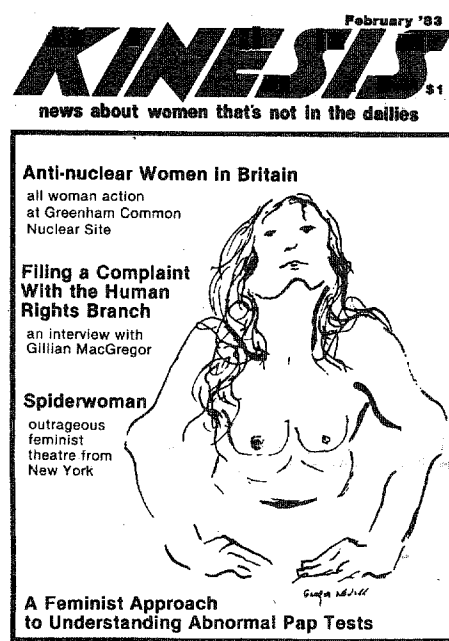
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Another tricky point is the use of the word "editor." Many feminist publications eschew the title still. Since we operate non-hierarchically, that is collectively, we have no time for bosses or leaders. But some of us have editors, even an editor (as at *Broadside*). The title does not denote a position of prestige or authority, but rather a function. The real editorial authority, the position that in the mainstream would be called Executive Editor or Editor-in-Chief, is vested in the collective. It is the collective that makes policy decisions, it's the editor who carries out the day-to-day co-ordinating work.

Speaking of work, there are differing opinions as to the place of volunteer labour in feminist periodicals. The reality is that, left to our own devices, we couldn't afford very many reasonably paid workers. Some publications refuse to operate with volunteer labour and would prefer to go under. Others would continue at all costs, publishing out of their own basements, in the middle of the night, with no phone. In the best of all possible worlds we would all be highly paid, but as it is we have to limp along, making peace with our political values.

Some publications, those affiliated with Status of Women groups or university departments, have at least their basic expenses covered. Although this may appear to be a luxury to some of us, the question is debatable. *Network* in Saskatchewan ceased publication in March because its mother organization, the Saskatchewan Action Committee on the Status of Women, turned down a grant from the Secretary of State on the grounds that there were too many strings attached. University-affiliated journals are subject to the political whims and budgetary restraints of the particular administration. So whether we are dependant on organizational subsidy or government grants, we are always vulnerable.



And, we are often put in the position of competing with each other for tidbits. Whether we are trying to increase the number of our subscribers within a limited community, whether we are trying to convince advertisers to spend their dollars advertising in our pages, whether we are trying to squeeze money out of government programs with relatively little money to juggle, we are, in fact, in competition. The amazing thing is that the *feeling* in the community of feminist publishers is one of co-operation, not competition. We feel we are complementary to one another; we in fact work amicably together (when time permits).

But the question remains: would we be better off pooling our resources into one big Canadian publication and so get all the subscription, advertising and government monies in one place? If there are 2500 feminist subscribers out there, and ten publications (an adjusted figure, accounting for reader overlap), does that mean there are only 2500 feminists reading all of us, or 25,000 feminists each reading only one of us? If there are 25,000, then there's room for all of us, competition is a moot point and we're better off with a lot of little publications all specializing in our particular area, all attempting to expand our circulation.

What's My Line?: The Role of the Feminist Press

When a feminist publication sets up shop, it very quickly comes to be seen as an institution in its community. This may be more true for newspapers than for other types of press, because newspapers purport to deal more directly with women's lives (as opposed to literary quarterlies or scholarly journals). Whatever the reason, the publications become identified with authority, and then a number of things happen: we are imbued with exaggerated powers, saddled with unrealistic expectations of perfection, or eyed with distrust. Sometimes all three. It's hard to convince people we're just simple folks trying to do our bit for a better world. We are also presumed to have a stance, a "line" on everything: what does *Broadside* think; what does *Kinesis* say? But most of

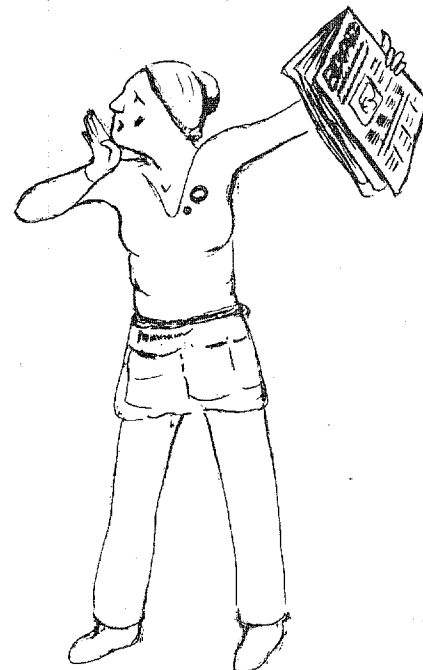
the feminist periodicals in Canada do not have a rigidly adhered to line, other than an often vaguely articulated commitment to feminism. Most of us see ourselves as a forum for women in the movement, a place for dialogue, not as disseminators of any official position.

People often ask feminist periodicals who their audience is, exactly, who they're trying to reach, who they do reach. This is a difficult question to answer. *Broadside*, for example, has never done a demographic survey, though we suspect our readers are mainly of the high education/low income/political activist category (not a large segment of any population). The question often translates as: are you trying to convert the masses (housewives in the burbs), female business executives, high school women, etc. (and if not, why not)? The answer to that is that we're not trying to convert anyone; we're not publishing a newspaper for "them"; it's for "us" because it is us. A feminist newspaper is a place to air our concerns, discuss our experiences, explore the issues that matter to us. In doing so, we develop skills at articulating our position, and at a point in the movement when developing a critical feminist analysis is a priority, the ability to articulate is crucial.

The feminist press is also a focus for the many diverse activities across the country. It gives us a feeling of links, between cities and between struggles. It helps create momentum for these struggles. It is not a passive press sitting on the sidelines reflecting news and events, partly because feminist journalists and writers are often politically involved in other work, and partly because the feminist press is part of the action. It provides food for thought, recipes for action, information to prevent otherwise isolated groups from forever re-inventing the wheel. And it gives us a sense that there are a lot of us (25,000?) in this thing together.

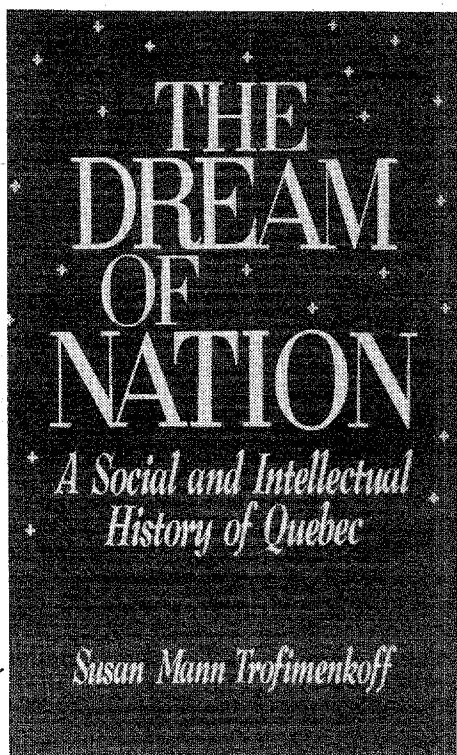
An FBI report leaked to a feminist media conference in Washington, DC, two years ago stated that the women's movement in the US was held together by its network of feminist periodicals, presses and bookstores. Of course you can't believe everything the FBI says, but it might be right about this. Imagine life stores, women's appointment calendars from Women's Press. How would you catch up on what's happening? Who would you write your letters about the latest movement controversy to? Where would you publish your (otherwise unpopular) feminist research? How would you find out the real story, after reading the *Sun* or the *Globe*? What would you read while relaxing in the bath after a long day's work? What would you do?

You'd probably get a group of women together and start putting out a feminist newspaper. The feminist press will always be with us, through thick and more likely thin, because we need it. Period.



ARTS

What Matters in History



by Louise Forsyth

Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, *The Dream of Nation; a Social and Intellectual History of Quebec*. Toronto: Gage, 1983, Pp. 344.

Neither on the cover nor in the Preface of her book does Susan Mann Trofimenkoff make any claim that this is a feminist reading of Québec history. And yet, as I first glanced through the book, reading certain sections and noting with interest chapter headings such as "Feminism, Federalism and the Independence of Quebec," I had the exciting impression that here was a history which promised to recount the past of both women and men as they lived and worked together building a society. It is, in fact, quite clear in the book that Trofimenkoff is working as a historian to rectify the terrible errors of the usual historical approach whereby the lives, events and achievements of women are simply overlooked as being unimportant. This is why women will read this book with particular interest. Our interpretation of our past, and so long and rich a component of it as that found in Québec, has a crucial bearing on who we think we are and what our place is in society.

Nevertheless, even though Trofimenkoff has attempted to challenge certain assumptions about the writing of history, it must not be overlooked that her primary aim was not to produce a book on woman's history but, much more broadly, on Québec. This is the first one-volume synthesis of Québec history written in English; she "intended to provide English-speaking Canadians with an interpretive synthesis of the history of Québec." As such, Trofimenkoff takes the reader through the almost four hundred years of Québec history, a significant part of our past which is not generally well enough known in English Canada, particularly as it has been lived and seen from the French-speaking point of view. Trofimenkoff discusses the period when it was a French colony, that of New France, which lasted until the conquest by the English in 1759. She explores some of the social impact of that traumatic event, which she compares to a rape in its long-lasting, devastating consequences. She deals with the birth of French-Canadian nationalism in the early nineteenth century, a period of intense social ferment, leading to the sad results of the 1837-1838 Rebellion and the humiliation of the Durham report. Throughout the rest of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, the ideologically dominant group in Québec encouraged an extremely conservative attitude, centering on the family unit (and, of course, held together by the mother), in order to preserve its French, Catholic, rural traditions.

Armed with this moral conservatism, which had a strong impact on approaches to

education for girls and boys, as well as on all social structures and practices, Québec traversed with considerable difficulty such events and major changes as Confederation, the industrial revolution and two world wars. Early in the twentieth century, and again, much more strongly and effectively in the 1960s, a voice was heard expressing a new kind of active nationalism and insisting on the right of French-speaking Québécois to make their own economic and political decisions, to control their own destiny, culturally and politically speaking. Interestingly enough, both of these historical moments, when French-speaking Québec was insisting on its rights, were also moments when a strong feminist presence was evident: the suffrage movement early in this century and the very strong feminist movement which emerged in the late 1960s. Trofimenkoff's chapter titles show the way in which she has viewed together and synthesized the impact of the movements of nationalism and feminism in Québec: "Feminism, Nationalism, and the Clerical Defensive," "Feminism, Federalism, and the Independence of Quebec."

The Dream of Nation is a well written book; its style is witty and intelligent. In its presentation it systematically covers the major events of Québec history. However, as social and intellectual history, particularly in its goal to integrate women into the mainstream of historical events, it is somewhat disappointing. There are too many historical details of the traditional kind, dealing with history's usual preoccupations, with the result that the reader often does not have a sense of what was going on throughout society. Consideration of the various intellectual currents, incorporating as it must all cultural activities (of both a popular and official nature) and ideological conflicts, is rarely satisfying in the understanding it provides of what was on people's minds. In its aim to recount the social and intellectual history of Québec, the book would have been considerably strengthened by the use of more illustrations and photographs, tables and extracts of various texts such as letters, diaries, memoirs, official documents. The latter part of the book is more successful in giving a full sense of Québec society. One has the feeling that this is perhaps because Trofimenkoff had previously done fine research in these areas of history. The earlier chapters seem to follow on the other hand much of what has already been said by traditional historians, with observations about society, work activities, family life and women added but not fully integrated to the total perspective. The problem is particularly evident in the first chapter, where Trofimenkoff, in the brief space of fifteen pages, deals with the 150 year period of New France, a fact which allows her to give no sense of change over this long period of time. Although there is considerable material available to do at least a good initial social history of New France, Trofimenkoff deals with this fascinating moment in our past in a most summary manner, naming very few of those, such as Marie de l'Incarnation or Marguerite Bourgeoys, who made an extraordinary contribution in the early years. The fabric of life in the colony, the experience of the settlers and of those who worked away from the settled areas, the "filles du roy," the cultural life, much of which is still preserved, are not dealt with in the necessary detail and fullness.

Would it have been possible here and throughout the book to bring other facts to bear, to work on a different framework following different rhythms in the course of time, and, above all, to challenge certain assumptions regarding the important events and figures of history?

As an example of this difficulty, the reader could turn to the chapters dealing with the First World War and the 1930s. For these decades, Trofimenkoff devotes considerable time to the leading ideologues of the time: Henri Bourassa and Lionel Groulx, and she deals in detail with known events such as the war, the Conscription Crisis, and various aspects of the nationalist response to these difficult years. There is a full discussion of the strict ideology surrounding traditional family values and the association of these values to the Catholic faith. However, only mention is made of the difficult conditions pre-

vailing for families living in dreadfully crowded areas of the large industrialized cities, and little detail is provided about their experiences. The history of the period is certainly not seen from the point of view of society in its material reality. In addition, during this first part of the century when certain women were struggling so courageously to obtain the vote for women in the province of Québec, it seems a shame that their struggle is barely mentioned. The great woman who shares with Thérèse Casgrain the credit for having finally obtained the vote for women, Idola Saint-Jean does indicate that the woman of Québec were finally granted the right to vote provincially in 1940, she gives the impression that the Premier of the province simply decided to proceed to this action on his own and almost gratuitously:

... Godbout was able to legislate a number of reforms during his almost five years in office.... Certainly he withstood the continuing opposition of the church to votes for women, ... and he convinced the Liberal caucus to do so too.... Moreover it was also an insult to the socially prominent women who had been urging it for years. Both houses of the Québec parliament passed the suffrage bill in the spring of 1940 with scarcely a murmur. The significance of its passage may well lie less in the political equality it accorded women than in the public rebuke it delivered to the Catholic hierarchy.... (p. 252)

It is a shame to recount this momentous event in such a way as to deny it any real significance for women as citizens and to give all the active roles to the male players, suggesting that "socially prominent women" had been "urging" it. The fact that these women, who remain unnamed, were socially prominent does not seem to be the primary point here, besides which, all of them, such as Idola Saint-Jean, were certainly not. The fact that would have deserved much more lengthy attention is that a determined group of women had carried on a strong and what proved to be an effective lobbying and political campaign over a period of several years.

The history of Québec, like that of every other nation, has so far been written in the main from the point of view of the dominant ideological group, that of white, upper-class males. Many historians now agree that this is so and are working to change and correct their vision. And yet it is certainly not easy to rewrite history. Attitudes have to be changed, methods and assumptions challenged. New sources other than the official archives must be found to obtain historical "facts." Historians must completely rethink what they take to be meaningful and discover suitable alternative perspectives on all that has gone before. The task is enormous and must be done even when the available material is inadequate. In fact the beginning of research in Québec in broad social history and in women's history occurred quite some time ago. And while much remains to be done, there is already considerable material to draw from and fine examples to follow. Personal diaries, letters and memoirs have been published. Alternative archival sources have been consulted and books dealing with women and men in the work force and in unions, the family, education for both sexes, religious communities, witchcraft have been published. Trofimenkoff has made good use of some of this material to provide the English-speaking reader with interesting information on aspects of Québec history. And yet there are unfortunate omissions in the material she uses in view of her intent to write a social and intellectual history of Québec. She makes almost no reference to popular culture or to literature. Certain books are not mentioned in her bibliography, such as Denis Moniere's award-winning *Le Développement des idéologies au Québec; des origines à nos jours*, or Marguerite Jean's *Evolution des communautés religieuses de femmes au Canada de 1639 à nos jours*, a strange omission in view of the importance played by women religious communities in the social history of Québec. Another unfortunate omission is Michèle Jean's *Québécoises du vingtième siècle*, which brings together a great number of primary texts, along with significant commentary.

If all of society, including women, is to be written into history in a significant way, the detailed chronologies of military events and political conflict, the authoritarian voices of the public figures must yield some of the space they monopolize to private voices and to the events of daily existence, viewed in such a way that an appreciation of collective experience, the weaving of the social fabric, with all its delights, its pain and its joy, is conveyed. It is for this reason, and because there is much we don't know about the people in our past, that social, cultural and intellectual history is the only possible approach which allows the reclamation of the entire body of the collective past with its shared memories.

Because of its many good qualities, Trofimenkoff's *The Dream of Nation* promises to further enhance English Canada's knowledge of Québec. It will probably be used as an introductory textbook in many English-speaking universities. However, it is hoped that for those whose interest is aroused by this book, further reading will be the next step.

As a fine example of Québec history revisited and re-viewed from a feminist perspective, with women's activities integrated into the flow of social history, I strongly recommend *L'Histoire des femmes au Québec depuis quatre siècles* by Le Collectif Clio, which has just come out. Unlike the Trofimenkoff book, the Collectif Clio volume contains many photographs and illustrations, tables, and a large number of extracts from letters, diaries, newspaper articles, documents, all of which carry on a lively and running commentary on events and allow the reader to hear immediately the voices from the past.

Historians in Québec have been exploring new ways to write social history for many years, particularly since the Quiet Revolution, probably because telling the story of the ordinary French-speaking people of Québec, particularly that of the working classes, coincided so completely with the shared strong need for self-identification and affirmation. The Québec people as a whole felt they had been excluded from the exercise of power, that their language was not viewed as an effective medium in the public forum of even their own nation, and that their voices had been deformed and could be heard speaking only silence. The parallel between the Québécois sense of alienation and women's feeling of social exclusion and cultural isolation is obvious. Under such circumstances, reclaiming their own collective past has become imperative for both Québécois and for women.

What is probably the best social history written in Québec has been translated into English: *Quebec, A History. 1867-1929*, by Paul-André Linteau, et al. This book integrates into a fascinating tapestry covering about 60 years a great number of the pieces which compose Québec society: the land and its people; the economy; politics; culture; ideology; social structures, classes and institutions. Because the authors of this book have succeeded so well in painting a broad and detailed picture of society between 1867 and 1929, including many areas of human activity not usually of interest to historians, they have managed to integrate women's activities reasonably well into the overall view of society in what seems to be a natural way, with women's activities and experience not left in the margin. Their brief chapters on the status of women, their exploitation in the work force, the feminist movement then complement the appreciation of women's activities elsewhere in the book.

As social history of Québec, *Quebec, A History* is more satisfying than Trofimenkoff's *The Dream of Nation* because of the richer and more complex synthesis it achieves. However, Trofimenkoff's book covers a much broader period of time. *The Dream of Nation* makes an important statement about the traditions of historical research in Canada and provide necessary and useful information to English Canada about the history of the people of Québec, both women and men. ●

Louise Forsyth is a professor of French at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ont.



Madeleine Thornton-Sherwood as "Eva" and James B. Douglas as "Burt."

by Patricia O'Leary

There aren't many theatrical roles for women, especially older women, and what there are mainly fall into either the crazy old witch variety, à la *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* or the Tennessee Williams version: faded gentility and lost opportunity. There are few, if any, sane but interesting older women characters in the theatre.

So it's not entirely surprising for the audience to expect a bad end for Eva, the main character in Constance Beresford-Howe's novel *The Book of Eve*. Toronto's Theatre Plus is presenting *Eve*, Larry Fineberg's adaptation of the book, through May and June.

Many of us have read Beresford-Howe's excellent novel about Eva, a proper middle class woman with an invalid husband, who at the age of 65, upon receiving her first old age pension cheque, leaves home and goes to live in a dingy basement room in Montréal's French section. Now she has an income, now she is free.

Of course, she barely does have any in-

come, the old age pension being what it is. But she is determined to live here alone, where no one knows her and no one needs her. She gradually becomes a sort of bag lady, searching through garbage pails for "treasures"; she has no winter boots, she gets sick, her family thinks she's nuts, and as one Toronto reviewer (male) put it, one could expect an even more sordid denouement to this poor old woman's life. (She made her bed, now she would have to lie in it.)

But no, Eva continues to value her new solitude, her freedom to be responsible only to and for herself, even her liberty to be sick for days on end (not always possible when she was a wife with an invalid husband). Sure, she has down days, she is scared, her feet freeze, she has no door on her apartment, there is a spider living in her sink, but it's all hers. Eventually it's clear that she not only will survive, she will thrive. She also, at the age of 65, finds love. She not only finds love, she finds sex.

Theatre Plus has put on a fine production, maybe the best I've seen them do. *Eve* has some excellent performances, especially

from Madeleine Thornton-Sherwood as Eva, who is on stage all the time, mostly by herself, and also from George Touliatos as Johnny, Eva's immigrant Hungarian lover who shows Eva that she is desirable, and Barbara Bush as Kim, Eva's granddaughter who tries to understand what Eva is doing because she loves her. The script by Larry Fineberg is good (working with Beresford-Howe's fine material) and the sets, although a bit claustrophobic, are adequate. The play moved along so well and contained so many recognizable elements (to the women present, at least), that my (female) companion couldn't believe it was over.

Theatre Plus is fortunate to have Madeleine Thornton-Sherwood playing Eva. Originally from Montréal, she is now living in New York, where she acts, directs, and runs and acting school with her partner, Patrick Brafford. She has a long string of acting credits, among them playing the part of Abigail in the first production of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* on Broadway, and Sister-Woman in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, among other things. She is recognizable also because she played Sally Field's Mother Superior in the TV series *The Flying Nun*.

Thornton-Sherwood is perfect for this role. She is 60, and has become a feminist through long experience, as many people have. She becomes Eva in this play, and she is a strong enough actor to carry off what is virtually a one-woman show. She has been familiar with the novel for years, and has always wanted to play the role.

I talked with Thornton-Sherwood in her dressing room at the St. Lawrence Centre before the play opened, and as I came in Madeleine was putting in her hearing aid. (She has hearing aids dotted all over the stage in case a battery packs in.) She is deaf in one ear, something which scared her so much at first that she stopped acting for a while, and turned to directing and teaching. But after a while she met a doctor who told her she should have her hearing retested because it was silly to let this handicap stop her. She found that she could hear well enough again to take the big risk of going back to acting.

"I advise people to keep looking for help if they are deaf," she says, "because you feel so out of it with this handicap. Especially women."

We got settled for the interview. Madeleine eating her lunch and me trying to get my paper organized so that I can write and look at her at the same time, chatting without stopping right from the beginning.

I asked her about *Eve*. She feels that she is taking a risk not only in playing in stage with a hearing aid, but also in taking on what is such a large role. "I used to feel that if I took a chance and failed, I had to apologize for myself," she says. "But now it's a part of life." We discussed the fact that women are so often educated not to take chances, it almost seems as though we're born with a will to fail, or at least the fear of succeeding. That's one of the reasons she likes this play so much. (Although she would really like to see it as a movie. "There are so many women that a movie would reach," she says. "In the stage-going public I think women are probably more 'aware,' so that *Eve* may already be a little past its time there.")

Thornton-Sherwood says she was always a rebel, always had a lot of anger, but tried to fit into the mold of marriage and having a child. "But I was never sure why I always felt sort of discombobulated," she says. At least she had her acting, which gave her some independence other women might not have. But feminism came later, as it did to many of us, after a divorce, a suicide attempt, therapy, sexuality workshops, consciousness raising.

She has some interesting comments on theatrical roles for women. "Even roles that used to be considered good parts for women were not what consciousness-raised women think are good," she says. "Usually they are victims." In literature, "good women die, and bad women get into trouble and die." Even her roles on Broadway, like Sister-Woman and Abigail, can be seen differently now. "Sister-Woman was seen as a bitch," Madeleine says. "But she was trying to do every thing right, and Abigail (the young 'bad girl' in *The Crucible*), was an early feminist."

I asked whether Madeleine's own daughter, aged 38 and married for the second time, shares her feminist beliefs. She said that no, unfortunately, she does not. In fact she hasn't seen her for a number of years, since the daughter married a man who wanted nothing to do with that sort of thing and she was going along with him. Madeleine has not been allowed to see her teen-aged granddaughter for 3 years, and they had been close.

"I find this very disturbing to talk about," she says, "and in fact I've never discussed it in a public interview before. I'm only doing so now because of the nature of your paper, and I hope you've got it right." (I hope so too.) We discussed the fact that her daughter is probably rebelling in her own way at her mother's strongly held and forcefully expressed feminist beliefs. And we talked about the fact that things in families can change, and that perhaps she will see and be close to her granddaughter again. (There is a moving scene in the play where Eva, now to all appearances a bag lady, bumps into her granddaughter Kim in the street. It is obvious that Kim misses and needs Eva, and that they love each other, but at the moment Eva won't let herself become involved. It's a sad moment, yet there is a feeling that Kim will make contact again.)

Thornton-Sherwood made a remark about Phyllis Schlafly and the Total Woman gang. She believes that "we haven't yet shown those women something better than they think they have. They are working within the system, making oppression work for them. Until they find that system still able to work against them, they see no reason to abandon it." This is partly because of a fear of striking out into the unknown.

Madeleine's activities also include involvement with the Grey Panthers. She is a great admirer of Maggie Kuhn, and also believes that there is a great need to improve conditions for old people (especially in the US where people don't even receive Social Security unless they have worked for a living, leaving housewives precisely nowhere).

"You know," she says, "Whenever anyone says to me 'You don't look 60, you look wonderful,' I say, 'well I am 60, and I am full of wonder. And I always will be.'" ●

Patricia O'Leary is a freelance reviewer.

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1983 By Karen Fraser

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Faculty Wife Finds Fulfillment...

by Susan G. Cole

"Personal Best," the film about lesbian athletes, was either fiercely loved by gay women who hunger for role models, or was hated by lesbians who think that director Robert Towne had no business treading on lesbian territory in the first place. The latest in the made-for-lesbians-by-men series is "Lianna," a film that most likely will not elicit the same passionate response from its intended audience. "Lianna," as it turns out, is a thoughtful movie, with flaws that are rooted in the simple fact that director John Sayles chose a subject about which he could not possibly have any intimate knowledge.

Linda Griffiths is marvelous as Lianna, the wife of a professor of film at an east coast college in New Jersey. Her husband is not a



Jane Halloran (Ruth) and Linda Griffiths (Lianna) in a lesbian bar.

typical academic pedant. She, however, is a typical faculty wife. The mother of two children, she considers her husband's antics in the classroom endearing but suspects that he has endeared himself too closely with many of his female students. She turns out to be right, and confronts him with his infidelity just as she is falling in love with Ruth (played by Jane Halloran), her child psychology professor.

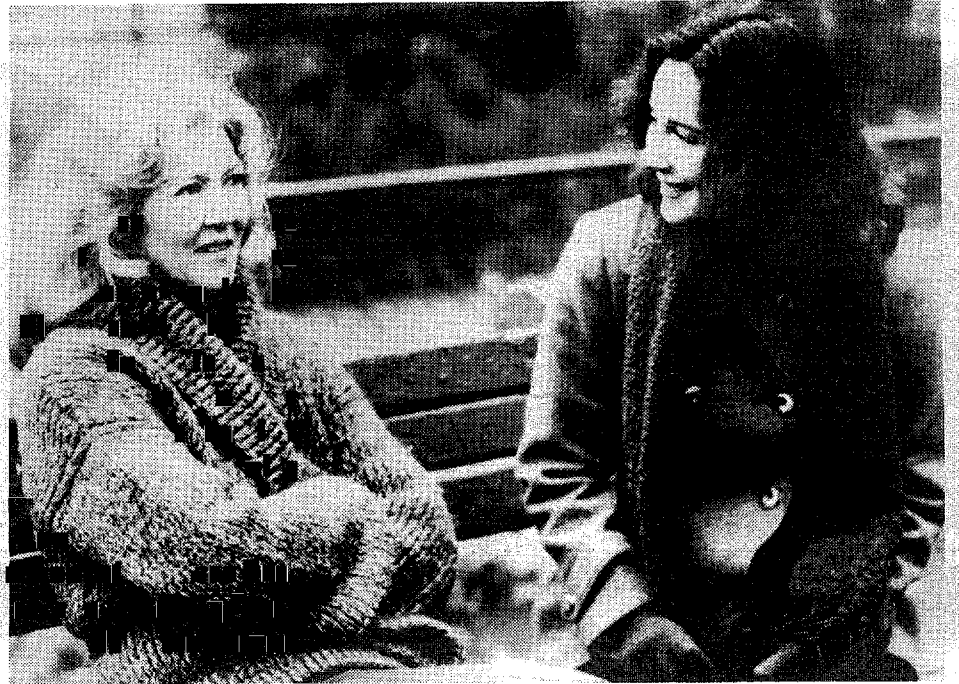
For Lianna, the process of coming out is at once exhilarating and frustrating. She

leaves her husband and children, and her hopes that her lover will take her in are thwarted. Ruth has no intention of taking in a female lover in such high profile circumstances. She has found a comfortable niche in a closet she has no intention of leaving for fear of jeopardizing her career as a specialist in child-rearing. Lianna's own community offers little encouragement. Her best male friend tries to seduce her and her best female friend fears that Lianna wants to seduce her. As Lianna tries to adjust, she is finally forced to take an apartment on her own, alone and isolated.

But still, she is absolutely delighted with her new identity. Her journeys through the bars — just looking at women — gives her enormous pleasure. The fact that Ruth is aloof, tentative and probably romantically entangled elsewhere does not prevent Lianna from embracing her new lifestyle with a commitment and a positive approach. As is often the case in situations such as Lianna's the newly initiated turns out to be a better lesbian than the woman who seduces her.

John Sayles's previous film, "The Return of the Secaucus Seven," showed him conversant with progressive movements of the sixties. They may even be his favourite theme. But while he obviously talked with lesbians in order to make "Lianna" he seems to have lost track of the women's movement at the same time. Lianna floats through her environment bereft of personal and political support, except whatever she can find in the nearest gay bar. Lianna's isolation may help move the plot along and it does give Sayles the chance to give us his version of a lesbian bar but the isolation is only credible if Lianna is an introvert completely unaware of a women's movement. But not only is Lianna not a social zero — as played by Linda Griffiths she is attractive and tuned in — it is unlikely that her campus (even if it is in New Jersey) would be without amenities. If she'd fallen in love with the schoolteacher in a rural town, Lianna's total isolation would make sense, but in a college environment in the 1980s, it's just plain puzzling.

And the sex, regardless of one's taste, is



Sandy (Jo Henderson) and Lianna patch up their friendship.

patently absurd. Lianna and Ruth sit up, kiss, lie down for many more frames than is necessary while a garbled soundtrack (possibly in French — seriously) whispers in the background (doesn't anybody holler anymore?) He may have had the best of intentions, but it looks as if John Sayles, deep down in his progressive heart of hearts, secretly believes that lesbian sex doesn't really go anywhere.

But there are some things Sayles does know about. He certainly has a handle on his subject when it comes to university film classes. His is a splendid rendering of why film's place in the academic calendar is suspect and why, incidentally, film students are among the most obnoxious to be found on campus. Lianna's walk through town as a New Lesbian is terrific as she manages to find something worth looking at in every woman she sees. This is one of the rare moments when Sayles shows us a first-rate visual eye. For the rest of the time, "Lianna" is an intellectual rather than a fabulously visual experience.

And finally, Lianna's two children are

superb. The youngest, an eight year old girl, turns sullen — not understanding why her mother has left so suddenly. Her brother, pubescent and precocious, thinks he has it all figured out and when, with a shrug, he utters those words: "So what, my old lady's a dyke," you get the feeling that Sayles has hit upon the clarion call of at least some members of the generation now trying to grow up being hip about sexuality.

Since there are so few movies that deal with a lesbian theme, it's likely that lesbians will flock to "Lianna" regardless of any reviewers' ruminations. If they do, they should be pleased with what they see. "Lianna" is a movie about lesbians being lesbians rather than about lesbians *doing* things and hence the plot is thinner than it could be. But Sayles brings his low-key, low-budget sensibility to a situation that seldom sees much light in the film business and the light Sayles shines on it, though it flickers at times, is bright enough to make "Lianna" interesting, sometimes even entertaining and certainly never offensive.

Abuses Abound

by Anne Cameron

Linda Halliday, *The Silent Scream: The Reality of Sexual Abuse*. Pamphlet, \$4.95.

I was in Everywoman's Bookstore on Johnson Street in Victoria to help celebrate Everywoman's 8th birthday. Looking at the excellent collection of women's books, and choosing a number of them, I saw a small forty-seven page booklet written by Linda Halliday, the woman who helped start Sexual Abuse Victims Anonymous on Vancouver Island. My initial reaction was that \$4.95 was a lot of money for so small a book. My next reaction was that I had paid more than that to get into a movie I did not enjoy. I bought the booklet.

I have a head full of statistics as a result of several years' research and I know the damage done by sexual abuse, but the opening sentence in the book hit me in the pit of my stomach: "A little girl, seven years old, lay with a pillow over head to drown out the screams of her six year old sister being raped by her father in the next room." I was locked in till the last page.

There is safety, of sorts, in the objectivity of statistics. Possibly, when we first begin to discover the ugly truths that lie under the polite middle-class facade of society, we need that objectivity, we need that safety. Without it, we might overload before we can say or do anything constructive. But there is a place for subjectivity, and certainly the six- and seven-year-old children are not gently and safely introduced to the ugliness that is truth. We are all so conditioned to turn away from anything unpleasant, to recoil from anything ugly, to block out the knowledge of anything fearful that perhaps we need a cold bucket of water thrown in our faces to wake

Anne Cameron is a novelist and screenwriter living in Nanaimo, BC.

us up to the reality being lived by increasing numbers of children. Linda Halliday's booklet is just such a bucket of cold water.

Campbell River is not the largest town on Vancouver Island. There are possibly twenty thousand people living in and around it. When Linda Halliday began her research she discovered, within six months, that forty-eight females and seven males, a total of fifty-five, were victims of sexual abuse. Within one year she had found ninety-one victims past and present. The case load in Campbell River is now over two hundred.

A Vancouver newspaper reported that in the past twenty years there had been less than a dozen cases of sexual abuse against children reported, and that few had even made it to court. In Campbell River, since the Self-Abuse Victims Anonymous group started going public and removing the lid of secrecy that aids and enables the abuser to continue abusing, seven cases have gone to court and six of them have resulted in convictions. Halliday strongly supports prosecution of those who sexually assault children. Halliday is aware that few offenders believe that have done anything wrong; offenders thrive on power, offenders thrive on having control over someone else, and that power and control must be taken away from him. Halliday states "the offender has to be made to realize that he, and he alone, is responsible for controlling his sexual feelings. There must be no excuse made by or for him."

Too many of us want to believe "kids are tough," "a kid can adapt to almost anything," "kids are natural survivors," and to want to believe that if the abuse stops, everything will be fine, and the universe will once again begin to unfold as it ought. Sexual abuse obviously isn't going to stop unless the offender is forced to stop, and the kids who

survive are *not* going to adapt, adjust, and just get on with their lives without an incredible amount of help and support. The case histories prove that the damage done by sexual abuse complicates and damages far more than we have realized. Two weeks of abuse at age eight while "on holiday" with grandpa so damaged one young woman that years later she is only just beginning to learn, with the help of SAVA, how to put her life together again.

Eighty-seven percent of the mothers of victims of sexual abuse have been victims themselves as children; and yet the majority of the mothers were totally unaware the abuse was happening. This suggests to me that we are all conditioned to want to believe, even in spite of our own experience, in spite of statistics, in spite of overwhelming evidence, that only a small minority of "weirdos" are getting off on humping the helpless. When you look, really look, at the negative statistics involving women, a common element, an inter-connection, begins to appear. Most of the women in prison, most of the women involved in prostitution, most of the women addicted to drugs and alcohol, most of the women being beaten regularly, most of the women in mental hospitals, most of the women going to psychiatrists, most of the women.....have one thing in common. Their lives were blighted at an early age by a male authority figure they loved and trusted.

I spent years of my life feeling like a punching bag, looking as if I made my pocket money working as a sparring partner for a prize fighter. Life was "all shit or else all sugar," and when the slaps, punches, and kicks weren't coming down for no reason anybody could fathom, the slapper, puncher, kicker was happily singing all over the house. One of the songs he sang can still re-

duce me to chaotic emotions and almost instant tears:

You're the end of the rainbow, the pot of gold
You're daddy's little girl to have and to hold
A precious gem is what you are, you're daddy's bright and shining star
You're the spirit of Christmas, my star on the tree
You're the Easter Bunny to mommy and me
You're sugar, you're spice, you're everything nice
And you're Daddy's Little Girl

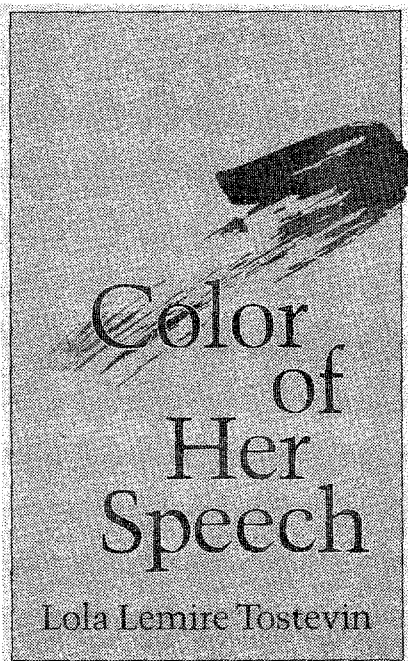
When I try to wade past the lachrymose sentiment and really look at that piece of musical drivel, the patriarchy and its hold on the helpless becomes clear; to have, to hold...to possess. Child as chattel. And I resent that, I am politically and personally opposed to that, I detest the very idea of that....and the stupid song can still make me cry because wouldn't it be lovely if it wasn't such a lie?

Linda Halliday helps prove the lie. Linda Halliday's figures tell us of a three and a half month old baby sexually abused. Linda Halliday tells of an eight year old who tried to dive head first into a moving car because she already knew the Sugar'N'Spice was a lie.

Eight years ago at a public meeting, I said I had been told by an authority I considered to be totally dependable that Nanaimo and Ladysmith, both on Vancouver Island, shared the horror of having the highest incidences reported in Canada, US and Britain of incest, rape, wife battering and sexual abuse. To this day the majority of people in Nanaimo prefer not to believe this. Prefer, in fact, not to discuss it. Linda Halliday, her work, and book, are going to force open the eyes that prefer not to see. ●

Unbinding of Umbilicals

by Betsy Nuse



Lola Lemire Tostevin, *Color of Her Speech*. Toronto: Coach House Press 1982. Unpagged. \$6.50.

Mary Melfi, *A Queen is Holding a Mummified Cat*. Montréal: Guernica Editions 1982. Unpagged. \$6.95.

We might hypothetically possess ourselves of every recognized technological resource on the North American continent, but as long as our language is inadequate, our vision remains formless, our thinking and feelings are still running in the old cycles, our process may be "revolutionary" but not transformative. — Adrienne Rich, writing of the American poet Judy Grahn, in an essay collected in On lies, secrets and silence.

How "adequate" is Canadian English as a tool to transform our consciousnesses? My answer might have been different before I read two fairly recent volumes of poetry: *Color of Her Speech* by Lola Lemire Tostevin, and *A Queen is Holding a Mummified Cat* by Mary Melfi. These two young Canadian poets have raised my language consciousness. Here's how.

Though she writes for the most part in English, Lola Lemire Tostevin was born into a French-Canadian family and studied comparative literature at the University of Alberta. *Color of Her Speech* opens with a suite of poems in French and English, poems about "mother tongue" and language, a process she describes as

the Unspeaking
the Unbinding of Umbilicals

But from this point, the anthology expands to consider other languages as well: music and silence, Sanskrit, the languages of ac-

tion and inaction — and in later pages, the language of women as contrasted with that of men. Here Tostevin's poetry becomes more playful, more experimental.

Out of O
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for
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foreign
marrow

begins her chant/poem, "Gyno-Text."

Color of Her Speech is Lola Lemire Tostevin's first book of poems. It's a short, serious work from a new Canadian poet with lots of intellectual promise.

The title of Mary Melfi's second book has offered me so far no clue to the meaning of any poem within, but it provides even casual browsers a fair taste of Melfi's unusual flare for words. *A Queen is Holding a Mummified Cat* verges on the surreal. Melfi can use words and images the way you or I might borrow clothes from the wardrobe of a total stranger: with pleasure, abandon, and no preconceptions about what "matches" or goes together. The book opens with a poem which begins

Why the dead are God's underwear
the mountains are his dresses
and the rivers are his shoes.
God cuts a good figure on earth.

There are many pleasant (and unpleasant) surprises which follow — the book is rich in memorable images. "The Head" is a poem which has stayed with me. It begins

His head is sticking out of the river.
It looks like a life buoy. Someone threw it
out of a boat.
Or maybe he placed the river over his head
like a poncho.
It suits him.

Betsy Nuse runs a book-finding service in Toronto.

To Mary Melfi's skilled hands and ears and eyes, Canadian English is the raw material for play and speculation and fantasy. But in the best poetic tradition — for both Melfi and Tostevin — language is living and changing at the command of the speaker.

Sample the work of these two poets if ordinary language has begun to seem inadequate to you. ●



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MOVEMENT COMMENT

More Than a Rhetorical War

by Shannon Bell

Lois Lowenberger, in her article "IWD: Lip Service to Feminism" (April 1983) raises four important points in her discussion of this year's IWD: (1) IWD should focus on the struggles particular to women; (2) there is not necessarily a relationship between the feminist struggle and the nationalist struggle (or anti-imperialist struggle); (3) national liberation movements should be assessed and judged according to their relevance to women; and, (4) by equally supporting all national liberation movements the real feminist achievements of the few which articulate the feminist struggle with the nationalist struggle are dismissed.

Lowenberger, on the one hand, argues that the women's movement should not concern itself with national liberation struggles for two reasons. First, national liberation struggles are "at best peripherally relevant to feminism." Second, the women's movement should aim to unite "women on all points of the political spectrum" — support for nationalist struggles could serve to alienate women according to their class location in the political spectrum. On the other hand, Lowenberger, correctly, stresses the need for a feminist analysis of national liberation movements.

Counterposed to Lowenberger's view is the stated position of the IWDC, as put forth in their letter to *Broadside* (May 1983) and as articulated by Maria Teresa Larrain of Women Working with Immigrant Women at the May 18 meeting to discuss IWD. This view, to quote from the IWDC letter, sees "real links between feminism and anti-imperialism."

I am at one with those who hold the latter position. However, this position must include the provision that a feminist analysis be applied to liberation movements to determine if the feminist struggle is an inherent part of the nationalist struggle — to determine whether the feminist and the nationalist struggle take place simultaneously as a single and unified process.

Unfortunately, neither Lowenberger nor the IWDC directly address the problem which underpins the issues they discuss. This being: what is the political role of the women's movement; should the women's movement, in fact, have a political role; if so, what should its political position be regarding national liberation struggles?

Lowenberger seems to be of the opinion that the women's movement should not have a political orientation and direction that goes beyond the immediacy of the Canadian situation, or the western capitalist condition. Consequently, the predominant concerns of the women's movement should be: equal pay for equal work of equal value, equal opportunities, the double burden or the problem of dual labour, affirmative action, day care, technological change, decent pensions, sexual harassment, reproductive freedom, sexual freedom, lesbian rights, violence against women, discrimination, pornography, etc. A number of these do apply to third world women, although their struggle is at a different stage.

The IWDC holds a broader political perspective which sees "a real relation between women's struggles and wider progressive struggles," i.e. "struggles against racism, imperialism, class oppression." However, the IWDC fails to distinguish those struggles which do incorporate the feminist struggle.

Lowenberger does not make this distinction, although she concludes that nationalist struggles are not directly relevant to women.

The contemporary women's movement has evolved through two stages. The first stage, spanning the 1960s to early 1970s, stressed consciousness-raising and self-awareness. The second stage, which began in the late 1960s, has emphasized a political program of action directed at achieving legal reforms and societal change. The North American women's movement has, however, focused on the gaining of bourgeois democratic rights and the implementation of changes specific to the North American social, political and economic situation at the neglect of the women's struggles in the third world.

The North American women's movement has developed as a stable and united front that has a strong and definite effect on the political terrain in which it operates. It is now time for the women's movement to forge links with related struggles.

This means that ultimately the women's movement must take a political stand on national liberation movements. The women's movement is faced with two options: it can assess and judge national liberation movements according to the role of the women's struggle in the national struggle or it can support all nationalist movements which purport humanist goals.

If the women's movement develops a specifically feminist analysis of liberation movements it will not run the risk of dividing women along class lines. Nor will it face the danger of being submerged in the larger struggle and losing its specific identity to this struggle.

An understanding of patriarchy is essential in developing a feminist analysis. Lowenberger's feminist analysis is based on a "universal patriarchal system" which she makes responsible for "war, oppression, expansionism, imperialism, the nuclear arms race." A universal patriarchal system does not exist. Patriarchy refers to the male power structure and the social system which has its foundation in this power structure. Patriarchy, through a number of political relations, transforms the biological difference between females and males into a social difference.

Patriarchy can not be termed universal. The form in which it is manifest is historically specific: patriarchy's form under feudalism was different than its form in capitalism. Patriarchy's form in a developed capitalist social formation is different than the form it takes in an underdeveloped third world social formation. What is constant is the fact that males are in the positions of power.

To view patriarchy as a universal system leads to a very serious error in feminist analysis — the error of transplanting western capitalist categories to underdeveloped countries and viewing and judging the women's struggle in terms of these categories. We are at different stages of the feminist struggle. As Maria Teresa Larrain stated at the May 18 meeting, with references to Chile: "How can we talk to women who are in fear of their lives, who are fighting political repression, who do not have enough food to eat or a decent place to live, how can we talk to these women about abortion, about pornography?"

In the third world both women and men

are repressed as political subjects, oppressed as human beings and exploited as workers; in addition, women are oppressed and exploited as women. The basis of their oppression is not simply the patriarchal system, it is the economic, political and social system in which the patriarchal system has its roots. Patriarchy can not be overcome unless the entire system is changed.

The women's struggle must be understood, viewed and judged in terms of the political, social and economic terrain in which it is a part. This is the precondition of a feminist analysis.

There are a number of general feminist criteria for analyzing liberation movements: (1) Women must play a key role in the struggle; (2) Women must play an equal political, economic and social role in the armed struggle and in the construction of a new society; (3) There should not be a sexual division of labor; work must be shared equally amongst men and women; tasks and duties must not be defined according to gender, i.e. women cannot merely be incorporated into the people's army in positions that are extensions of their family and motherhood roles — the provision of food, emergency health care, etc.; (4) Women must be in leadership positions in the people's army, guerrilla units and in the societal reconstruction undertaken in the liberated areas; (5) The national struggle must be conducted in such a manner that once it is won, women do not return to traditional roles, as has been the case in Algeria and Iran; (6) There must be an active

and on-going campaign against sexism combined with a massive re-education of the male and female population; (7) Patriarchal customs such as polygamy, forced marriage, bride price, denial of divorce rights, etc., must be prohibited and there must be an active campaign educating the population as to the exploitative and oppressive nature of these customs; and (8) Women in the new society must guard against the development of the second shift, which has occurred in Cuba, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique: the second shift refers to women assuming a new role as worker in addition to retaining their traditional role as housekeeper.

Obviously, no liberation movement could fully meet the above criteria. Support for liberation movements should be conditional upon the women's struggle being an integral and continual part of the national struggle. National liberation movements must wage a systematic and practical day-to-day war against sexism, not merely a rhetorical war.

If feminism is to be, as Lowenberger believes, the "most revolutionary movement of our time," it cannot exist and function in isolation from progressive movements; nor can it fall prey to partisan politics. The women's movement must develop its own feminist criteria for analyzing progressive movements. It must give its support to those struggles which advance the women's struggles.

Shannon Bell is a political science student at York University.

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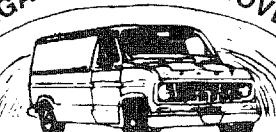
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TORONTO WOMEN'S EVENTS CALENDAR

June 1983

Compiled by Layne Mellanby

• **Friday, June 3:** Gallery 44 shows photographs of people of Fredericton, Nova Scotia by Lynn Johnston. 109 Niagara St., Suite 202, Info: 363-5187. To June 19.

• **Friday, June 3:** "Eve," the dramatization of Constance Beresford-Howe's novel. St. Lawrence Centre, Town Hall. To June 11. Info: 366-7723.

• **Friday, June 3:** Mercer Union shows photographs and text exploring women's relationships to the home, by Susan McEachern. 333 Adelaide St West, 5th floor. Info: 977-1412. To June 18.

• **Friday, June 3:** WITZ (Women's Independent Thoughtz). A seminar/discussion meets for the exchange of ideas. Information: 766-9496. Also Friday, June 24.

• **Friday, June 3:** Women's Perspective at the Partisan Gallery, 2388 Dundas Street West, presents "Women Speak". Also Saturday, June 4. Info: 532-9681.

• **Saturday, June 4:** Toronto East Business and Professional Women's Club presents a seminar "Woman in the Work Place," 9 am. WestIn Hotel. \$35. Information: Anna Carter, 977-2422 or Irene Bailey, 960-9200.

• **Saturday, June 4:** Toronto Women's Bookstore Sale. All Sale Books 30-70% off. 85 Harbord St. Monday — Saturday 10:30 — 6:00. Continues until July 2.

• **Saturday, June 4:** "Discovery of Personal Mythology," a workshop with Pol Pelletier. Information: 967-9195, also Sunday, June 5.

• **Saturday, June 4:** Lesbian Mothers' Potluck Brunch. 1-4 pm. Information: 465-6822.

Week of June 5

• **Sunday, June 5:** "Cider, Coffee and Candlelight," coffee-house and light music by The New Voice, Toronto's lesbian and gay choir. 519 Church St. 8 pm. \$2.



The New Voice

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• **Monday, June 6:** The Women's Group, a support and consciousness-raising group for lesbians meets at 519 Church St. 8 pm. Information: 926-0527. Also meets Monday, June 13, June 20 and June 27.

• **Monday, June 6:** Sexuality workshop for women. Scarborough Women's Centre, 91 Eastpark Blvd. Scarborough. \$3. 9:30 — 11:30 am. Also Monday, June 13, 7:30 — 9:30 pm. Info: 431-1138.

• **Monday, June 6:** Women and Words Benefit Cabaret. Music, poetry, performance. Harper's Restaurant, 38 Lombard St. 8 pm. \$5. Information: Sarah Sheard, 979-9771.

Women
and
Words

• **Monday, June 6:** Nellie's Benefit performance of "Eve" by Larry Fineberg. Tickets \$15 and \$20. Info: 598-1450 (Nellie's Fundraising Office)

• **Wednesday, June 8:** Toronto Addicted Women's Self-Help Network (TAWSHN) meets at Central Neighbourhood House, 349 Ontario St. 7 pm. Information: 961-7319. Also meets Wednesdays, June 15, June 22, June 29.

• **Wednesday, June 8:** North York Inter-Agency Council presents a workshop on wife assault. \$7. Earl Bales Community Centre, 4169 Bathurst St. Info: 266-5505.

• **Thursday, June 9:** Married Lesbians, a support discussion group meets each Thursday. Information 967-0597.

• **Thursday, June 9:** Grindstone Island Centre presents "Women Healers and Activists." To Sunday June 12. Information: 923-4215.

• **Saturday, June 11:** Environment Week Festival. Films, speakers, displays, hands-on activities, information tables. Toronto City Hall Square. 11 am to 6 pm. Information: 537-0438.

• **Saturday, June 11:** Toronto Rape Crisis Centre and Lesbian Mother's Defence Fund sponsor a women's dance with entertainment by Boo Watson and Debbie Parent. 519 Church Street. Tickets \$6 (on a sliding scale), \$5 advance at the Women's Bookstore.

Week of June 12

• **Sunday, June 12:** WOODS (Women Out of Doors) First annual picnic on the island. Potluck. RSVP by June 6. Info: 463-0924.

• **Sunday, June 12:** WOODS (Women Out of Doors) Cycling tour. 10 am. Information: 463-0924.

• **Tuesday, June 14:** Women's Self-defence 8-session course for all women. YWCA, 80 Woodlawn E. \$45. Tuesdays and Thursdays to July 14. 7-9:30 pm. Information: 487-7151.

• **Thursday, June 16:** "Holistic Health," film and discussion night. Scarborough Women's Centre, 91 Eastpark Blvd., Scarborough. 7:30 — 9:30 pm. No charge. Info: 431-1138.

• **Saturday, June 18:** Salukis Benefit Dance. Support the team which won the top prize in the Metro Women's Softball League. Entertainment by Boo Watson and Debbie Parent. 519 Church Street. Childcare (Janet — 964-7477). Signed for the hearing impaired. 8 pm. \$5.

Week of June 19

• **Wednesday, June 22:** Rape Crisis Centre Open House, 4 to 9 pm, 340 College St., Apt 2. Information: 964-7477.

• **Thursday, June 23:** Benefit for the Women's Cultural and Political Fair (to be held in September). Entertainment by Marianne Girard, Donna Marchand and others. At the Trojan Horse, Danforth Ave. \$3 (sliding scale). Info: 469-1372.

• **Saturday, June 25:** Stop the US War — march against US intervention in Central America and the Caribbean. End Canadian complicity. 11 am. Christie Pits (Christie and Bloor Streets). Organized by the Coalition Against Racism, Imperialism, Sexism and Militarism.

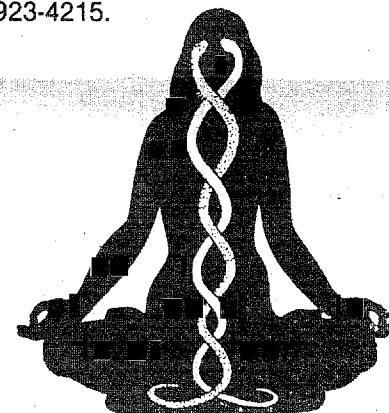
• **Saturday, June 25:** Gay Community Dance Committee sponsors "Celebration." — Disco, new wave and women's music. Concert Hall, 888 Yonge Street.

Week of June 26

• **Sunday, June 26:** Lesbian and Gay Pride Day 1983. Entertainment, food, fun. King's College Circle (north from College, west of University). Parade at 4 pm, followed by a dance with the Parachute Club. Info: 923-GAYS.

• **Monday, June 27:** Kingswood Music Theatre presents Bette Midler. Info: 832-8131.

• **Thursday, June 30:** Grindstone Island Centre, a non-profit co-op for social change education, presents "Women and Spirit". To Sunday, July 3. Information: 923-4215.



• **Thursday, June 30:** Women and the Making of the Working Class. Marxist Institute sponsors a talk by socialist feminist Mariana Valverde on the history of the participation of women in the labour movement in the first half of the 19th century in England, US and Spain. Medical Sciences Bldg., room 2172 (College and University). \$2.



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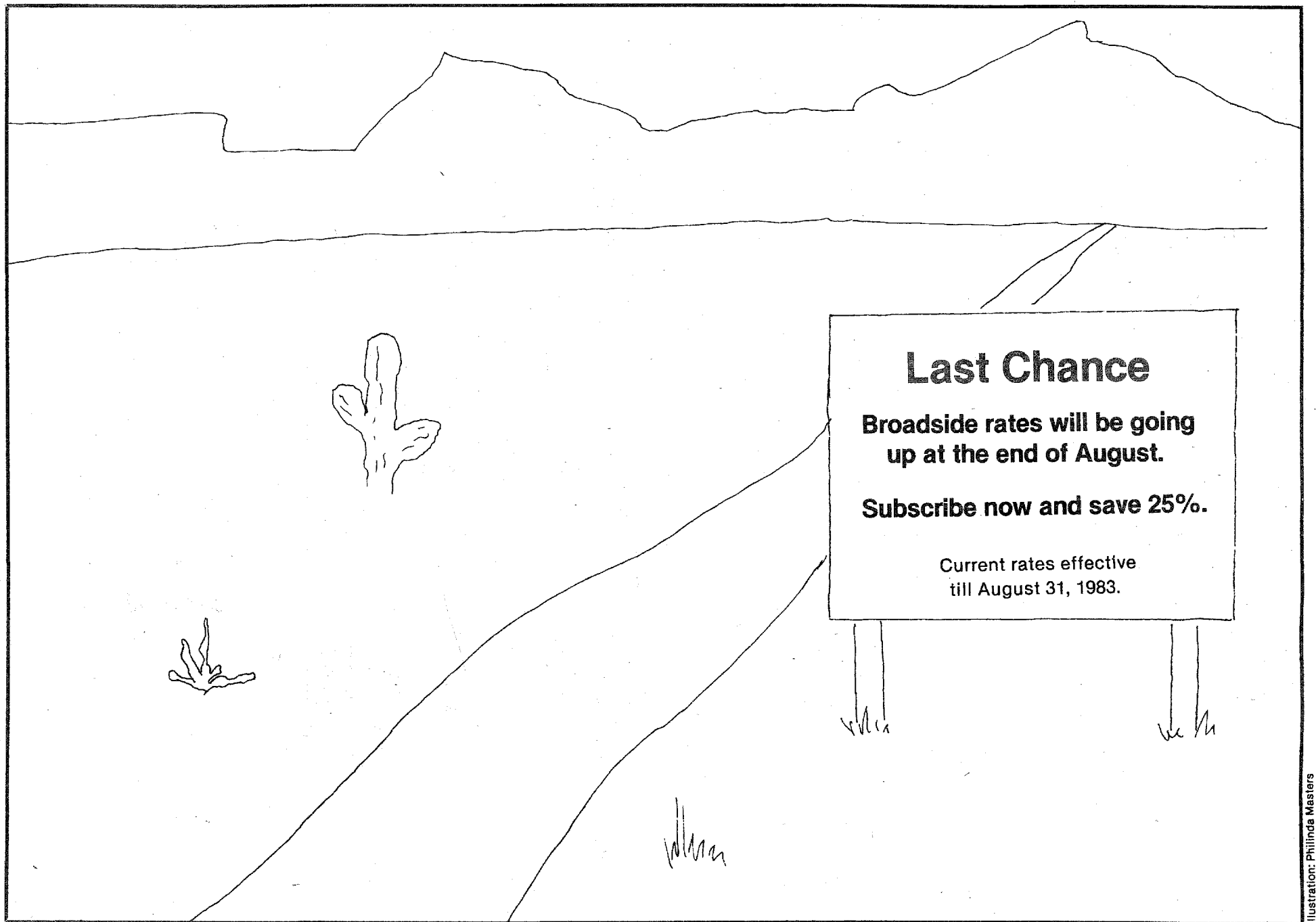
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