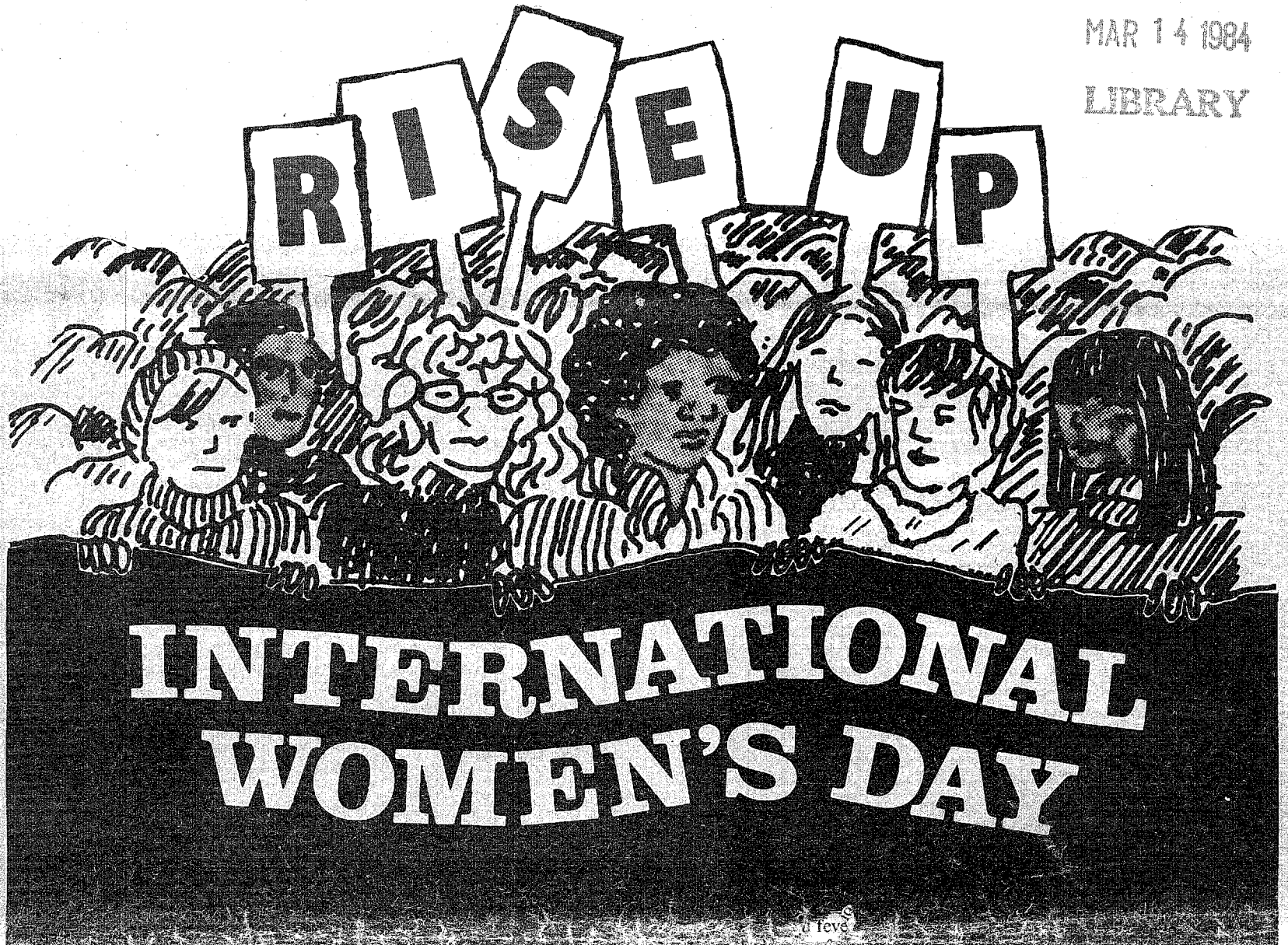


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NEW COLLEGE

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FEATURES:

POLITICAL PORTRAIT:

Barbara Deming is an American feminist, civil rights and peace activist, whose philosophy of non-violence has been the common thread of her life, in her actions and writings. Long-time friend Mary Meigs draws a portrait of Deming. Page 8.



Meigs and Deming

THE GODDESS IS COMING!

In the second of a 5-part cartoon strip called 'Judgement Day' by artist Beth Walden, the Goddess continues her return journey to Earth. Don't miss the unfolding story. Page 12.

INSIDE BROADSIDE

NEWS

ACTION FOLLOW-UP: The follow-up committee on the Action Daycare proposal for International Women's Day, and beyond, presents its strategy for action—a working document for which they invite discussion and revision. Page 4.

POST-SOCIALISM: At a socialist feminist forum the topic of discussion was the poor record of traditional socialism and its lack of recognition of women's oppression. The real agenda was the role of men. Philinda Masters reports. Page 6.

WHO'S REAL? Canada's R.E.A.L. Women (Realistic Active Equal for Life) claim to have 10,000 supporters, the real women of Canada, whose main concern is the stability of the family. Although anti-feminist, they couldn't exist without 20 years of work by REAL feminists. Pat Daley reports. Page 6.

MOVEMENT MATTERS:

Read about a Canadian women's mailing list, a women's studies and publishing conference, a survival law manual for women, a daycare hotline, a drop-in centre for transient women, Women and Words, the fate of VSW, and more. Movement Matters, pages 6 and 7.

COMMENT

MEDIA & PORNOGRAPHY:

The porn issue is everywhere, even in the groves of academe, where it has gained "credibility." Susan G. Cole comments on the unexpected feminist presence at a male-dominated Media Violence and Pornography conference in Toronto. Lisa Freedman also reports on the problems of media misrepresentation of the pornography/obscenity debate. Page 5.

OUTSIDE BROADSIDE:

Don't miss this month's calendar of Toronto women's events, for March 1984. Page 15.

ARTS

CLOUD CUCKOOLAND:

Nobody's who they should be in *Cloud Nine*, Caryl Churchill's play about sex stereotyping in Victorian colonial Africa and in the present. What can you expect from a play in which the daughter is played by a doll, and the former father wears a big frilly pink dress? Reviewed by Amanda Hale. Page 10.

ANTAGONY: Even though Theatre Plus's version of *Antigone* is set in a present-day third world country, it's still a classical Greek tragedy. Reviewed by Patricia O'Leary. Page 11.

BOOKS IN REVIEW: *Voices from the Shadows* by Gwyneth Matthews, reviewed by Chris Lawrence; *A Gathering Instinct* by Betsy Warland and *The Larger Life* by Libby Scheier, reviewed by Alexa DeWiel; *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens* by Alice Walker, reviewed by Anne Cameron; and *Harems and Other Horrors* by Anne Innis Dagg, reviewed by Judith Johnson.

LETTERS

Lesbians and Therapy

Broadside:

I object in the strongest possible terms to Theresa Dobko's review (February 1984) of my workshop entitled "Integral Therapy with Lesbians" at the Women and Therapy Conference in Toronto last November. I object to the fact that she criticizes a talk I was not allowed to complete, and misrepresents what I did have to say. I object to the fact that she wrongly accepts the bias of a portion of the audience as representing the whole audience. I object personally, professionally and politically. In fact, my objections are so extensive that to do them justice I would have to take every sentence of her review and compare it to a transcript of the session to show that she ignored or misrepresented or selectively perceived what I said. I will limit myself to correcting her major misconceptions, with the assurance that it is safe to generalize from that wrongheadedness to the wrongheadedness of nearly every word she writes.

Dobko: "The third-person focus of the talk, in which facilitator Linda Page referred constantly to lesbians as "they" and to herself, the audience and the straight world as "us," seemed to reflect not only her discomfort at the possibility of having to identify herself as straight or lesbian, but also a strong dose of lesbophobia."

In listening to the tape of the workshop, I kept this criticism in mind. I noted that I referred to lesbians as "respectworthy," "worthy," as women whose choice was ok, all quite the opposite of "denial of the worth

of lesbians" (Dobko's phrase). I also noted the pronouns I used. There were a variety: "You," "us," "we," "them," "I," "she" referring to therapists, women, lesbians and clients, depending on the point I was making. I recognize that inclusion/exclusion is a sensitive issue, however. For that reason, I listened carefully when a member of the audience interrupted and commented that she had heard only "us therapists" and "them lesbians."

My response as transcribed from the tape recording of the session: "In this first point, there is no question that I am talking to therapists, particularly straight therapists, to say to them lesbianism is a choice. I don't think we as lesbians have to hide behind a claim that we were forced into that. I think we choose it and that it is an ok choice to make. That was the point I was trying to make by using these examples."

How possibly could a conclusion of "lesbophobia" be derived from these remarks? Where did Dobko get that idea?

Dobko implies that she is disagreeing with me when she says, "... the origins of women-identified feelings is a question too complex for any of us to make conclusions." In fact, this is in line with my position. That's one reason I argued in my talk against looking for origins or causes or determinants of lesbianism. But the question of how an individual lesbian perceives her own choice is crucially important for a therapist who wants to deal with a unique person and not a label. I gave the examples I did to illustrate the complexity and variety of the lesbian choice. Not only did Dobko miss the point, but she misrepresented the examples.

Next, Dobko insists that I "never once addressed the issue that one could love women solely for the pleasure of loving women." This concern was also expressed by a member of the audience during the session. I replied, "Yes, exactly. You preface my next example." And then I gave an example of a lesbian who simply found women wonderfully fulfilling to be with. Was Dobko not listening?

The *for-women-not-against-men* discussion did not end there. Another member of the audience interrupted to state that the fulfillment women seek among women is not just sexual. My response: "Yes, exactly. The next mistaken impression that I want to question was that being a lesbian is primarily or only a sexual issue. I don't see it that way. I see it that women, in being lesbians, make a much bigger choice out of a much larger range of potentials than just a sexual one."

For Dobko, the "breaking point for the audience" was my illustration of a "gay female client" (Dobko's phrase) who comes in to therapy with the conflict of fearing the consequences of lesbianism yet feeling she cannot live as a heterosexual.

First, let it be clear that this so-called

"breaking point" was not for "the audience" but for some members of the audience. Other members of the audience told me afterwards that they wished I had gone ahead and completed my remarks. But I took the suggestion of some women who felt it was terribly important to discuss what *they* had come to discuss. I only wish they had listened as carefully to me.

But, getting back to the "gay female client," I would suggest rephrasing her conflict as one of not *choosing*, rather than not being able, to be heterosexual. For many of us who choose to be lesbians, that choice is made very early in life, and we often are not aware of making it. Ultimately, we make that choice because among all the alternatives, that is the one we want most. Far from "effectively denying all feelings of lesbian oppression," as Dobko claims, I offer the idea of choice in order to deal with exactly those feelings: we move from feeling victimized, oppressed, repressed and martyred the moment we recognize that we have the power to choose how to take what life deals to us, if not what is dealt; and the moment we respect who we are and what we want, no matter who disapproves or disagrees.

Dobko asks of me, "One wonders if she would tell all of her heterosexually identified clients that they should examine the lesbian lifestyle?" She implies that I tell all of my lesbian clients to examine the heterosexual lifestyle. Of course I do not. I deal with the issues that my clients bring to counselling, not ones I impose on them. And, yes, I examine the lesbian alternative as an ok choice with heterosexual women when that is relevant to their goals in therapy.

Perhaps what upsets Dobko is that I treat the heterosexual alternative as an ok choice, too. One wonders if Dobko is really saying she would prefer that *all* heterosexually identified clients be "told" by their therapists that they "should" consider homosexuality?

Dobko concludes that I ignored the differences between straight and lesbian women and that to suggest crossing "over the line" is tiresome. I clearly stated what I wanted to accomplish at the beginning of the workshop: "... That we as women learn to overcome barriers between us. Through doing that, through helping each other, we can learn how to provide better therapy for each other. I'm not interested in reinforcing barriers between people. I would like people to go out of here more encouraged, if you're a therapist, about your ability to do therapy with lesbians; and if you're not a therapist, more encouraged about seeking out the right kind of therapy that will best suit you, and not to go by sex-role related, or sex-related labels in doing that."

I find the effort of overcoming barriers tiring, but not tiresome, and certainly worth doing. But I recognize that others disagree. That's why, after I stated my goals, I made

what I understood was an agreement with the audience that I would complete my remarks, and then we would have a more free-wheeling discussion about a number of lesbian-related issues which I elicited and noted on a flip chart at the very beginning of the session. This hardly matches Dobko's assertion that I said I was "only offering a basic lecture to what (I) assumed was a straight audience."

I stated five basic assumptions which I have found yield therapy that is effective for lesbians. I take into account social context and unique differences for lesbians and among lesbians. Yet Dobko not only ignores these crucial assumptions (she never once mentions the word "purpose," which is central to my approach), but she claims I "never stated (my) assumptions as that."

The fact that I facilitated a "lively group discussion" (Dobko's phrase) belies her assertion that I "did not acknowledge dissenting opinions."

I would be interested in examining instances where I contradicted myself. What Dobko refers to are instances of her misunderstanding rather than my contradiction.

I did not identify myself as an "expert" on lesbian issues, as Dobko implies I did and warns us against doing. In fact, at the beginning of the workshop, I made it clear that I wanted simply to share my integral approach. I don't apologize for my expertise on *that* subject. But even so, I invited the audience to overcome the lecture-hall atmosphere of the room and to think of ourselves as equals around a table. Sometimes equals gather to hear one member give a report on what she's been doing. That was my assumption, and one which I stated quite clearly. This is in line with an approach I first described in 1972 during a panel discussion on Women's Issues at McGill University in Montreal. I was the lesbian representative on the panel. (Is this evidence of "a strong dose of lesbophobia"?) I suggested at that time that our oppression had been documented enough for us to get to work on changing it at every level, in every arena. At the November workshop, I was reporting on my progress: a methodology that was workable for individuals to free themselves from *feelings* of oppression and consequently to respect themselves and others enough to challenge and change the *facts* of oppression.

I did a great deal of soul-searching and review immediately after the workshop. My goals were certainly not accomplished. I finally concluded that the major problem was organizational: this was the *only* workshop that had the word "lesbian" in the title, and it got loaded with many more frustrations, concerns, desires, and ideas than could ever be dealt with in 90 minutes, no matter what I had chosen to focus on.

Broadside

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EDITORIAL

IWD: Turning Out Again

Since 1978, International Women's Day in Toronto has been celebrated under the leadership of the International Women's Day Committee; a socialist feminist formation which, in spite of its name, operates year round. Every year, two or three months before March 8, the IWDC organizes a series of open meetings for interested women at which the day is discussed and, eventually, organized. This ad hoc group, formed specifically for IWD, has become known as the March 8 Coalition to distinguish it from the directing force, the Committee.

The socialist feminist orientation of the Committee has been helpful in giving feminists and feminism access to other political constituencies. In the past few years, IWDC was concentrated on making contacts throughout the year with women in unions, immigrant communities, solidarity groups, and peace and anti-nuke movements and similar areas of opposition to the status quo. It is many of these women members of IWDC who plan and execute the rally, march and fair on the day itself as well as all the events of the preceding week. The rally at U of T's Convocation Hall, the march of some 5 to 8,000 through Toronto streets and the fair—at Jarvis Collegiate—are by now the tra-

ditional pattern of the IWD events in this city.

Needless to say, over the years the organizers of IWD have not escaped criticism (and *Broadside* has contributed its share). Last year a major controversy developed about the actual political content of the anti-imperialist panel held before the day itself.

Some disagreements on format, language, style and political direction has to be expected regardless of who the organizers are; unanimity on these matters is not a characteristic of the highly heterogeneous women's movement. There can be little doubt that International Women's Day in Toronto has been highly successful in the past few years. Toronto women have been well served by the hard work and dedication of the IWDC and the March 8 Coalition. In 1984 we will turn out again for International Women's Day to demonstrate our solidarity and determination to work together for the liberation of all women.

An interesting development during this year's planning process has been new ideas presented by women from Action Day Care (see *Broadside* February 1984) and subsequently taken further by a group of interested women dubbed the Follow-Up Committee. The text of most of the Follow-Up proposals

(as of mid-February) plus comments by Eve Zaremba, appear in this issue on page 4. We urge everyone to read them carefully. These are ambitious and far-reaching ideas and plans. It is much too early to tell what, if anything, will materialize from them. But the very fact of this initiative and of the interest it has created amongst us is a sign of strength and health. ●

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From a professional standpoint, the review is not only misleading, it is defamatory. I have shown that Dobko's claim of "lesbophobia" was not "apparent" in my remarks, nor was there a "denial of the worth of lesbians." Quite the opposite. I agreed to do the workshop because I had found a therapeutic approach that is very effective in building self-worth for lesbian clients, and I was willing to share it. If there is something about my "analysis" (and not just about her misconceptions) which Dobko finds "dangerous," then it cannot be a hindrance to good therapy because that's what I do. Yet I suspect there are lesbians who now won't take advantage of that therapy because of Dobko's libelous labels. That is indeed damaging to my practice, but it is even more generally damaging in that it cuts off routes to lesbian worth-building, which we all agree is crucial. Yes, Theresa, "So much damage can be done. . . ." But what disturbs me more than any of this is my sense of loss. There was a time when I felt safer among lesbians in Toronto than anywhere else. We often disagreed passionately, but I never got the sense of mistrust and guardedness and downright hatefulness that I now see instances of much too often. Phyllis Chesler "admonished" us to "stop expending energy on internal struggles." She gave the address in which she spoke of the war on women right after my workshop, and I recall feeling I had just experienced the war. Dobko's "sympathy" for Chesler's admonition wore thin when another woman's views were out of line with hers, or when she found them "tiresome." I do not agree that such a crime justifies waging a war of words.

In the last sentence of her review, Dobko has the gall to offer the hope that "... Linda Page will take these criticisms as they are offered: to provide a taste of how she must examine her own ideas about the question of living as a lesbian—before she speaks in public again." This sounds vaguely like a threat of further disruptions. If it is a sincere suggestion that I take the review as a model for my own self-criticism, I must vehemently reject it. I do not trash myself—it's not an effective way to change, and it leads to trashing others. Unity based on anger and self-righteousness breeds disunity. The challenge for us as lesbians is to develop a supportive community without compromising our differences. Impossible? I trust not. Let's talk about it more at the Lesbian Sexuality Conference (June 9 and 10 in Toronto) and move forward from here.

Linda J. Page
Toronto

(Note: *Broadside* regrets the possibility of damage to Linda J. Page personally, professionally or politically, as a result of our printing "Therapy with Lesbians" in our February issue, and hopes that in future we will all take up the challenge to develop a supportive community without compromising our differences.)

Broadside:

We would like to respond to the article entitled "Therapy with Lesbians," by Theresa Dobko, in the February issue of *Broadside*, in which she did a critique in response to the presentation on Integral Therapy with Lesbians at the November Women and Therapy conference in Toronto.

We have difficulty with the fact that Dobko's article does not inform the reader as to the real content of Linda Page's presentation but instead reads solely as a critique

without background materials. Given our struggles with analysis, our struggles with speaking for ourselves and being heard, we would like to be able to respond to the substance of the material presented, rather than to a critique which in the final analysis, seems more disparaging than factual.

Obviously, from Page's discussion, no woman "crosses the line with ease" and to initiate the assumption that Page is androcentred and lesbophobic is to continue to create and develop factionalism and self-hating, rather than to pursue an open and earnest analysis of lesbianism. Has there ever been an 'expert' who has given an adequate and full analysis in this format and who dealt with all of the essential and critical issues?

Can we not assume from her discussion of case histories, that Page was speaking about choice and the process of 'coming out' for those clients and not suggesting causal antecedents towards becoming a lesbian. As Dobko cited, Page spoke of lesbianism as a "creative choice and as an art form." Presumably, Page wanted to offer encouragement to women to embrace and examine their dissonance and mixed statements and to realize that we all can make an affirmative choice of identity. Creative choice, by definition, disallows viewing lesbianism as simply a reaction to male-centred values.

Perhaps Dobko would benefit from reading further articles in Adlerian psychology, if she is able to bracket her "often-reluctant" graduate student status.

It is essential that we as a women's community, support, listen and challenge those of us who, as the critic so succinctly noted, have the courage to address these issues. And with courage, those who present a position to which we can respond and confront in the spirit of greater communication. Page appears to have been addressing the very real conundrums of women living distinctly as lesbians.

It is our understanding that Page's presentation was taped and is available. As readers we would all gain from directly hearing what Page said. We would also hope that *Broadside* will encourage further discussion by Page and others, on the issues of therapy for lesbians.

Patti McGillicuddy, Mary McKeen,
Susan Baillie, Trish Green
Hamilton, Ont.

C-Sections

Broadside:

I was thrilled to see your feature on midwifery and birth in the December-January '83/'84 issue. It was a relief reading some gut-honest straightforward articles about the patriarchal politics behind the matter. I have some thoughts I'd like to add.

After three years of involvement with, and exposure to, the midwifery movement in North America, I am more and more deeply convinced that Caesarian sections as a cultural phenomenon are virtually equal to clitorectomies. In one culture they take away our orgasm; in another they take away the power of childbirth. I see them both as equally horrible and barbaric.

It's always hardest to see the sickness in your very own culture. I went through a period of seeing many of the otherwise politically active people I know absolutely refuse to question our birth rituals when confronted. Birth is the bottom line. I began to

understand how it is that women in northern Africa could continue to feel very comfortable with clitorotomy as part of life. It's for the same reason: cultural desensitization. How comfortable are we with the idea that being sliced open by men while labouring is devastating? Does putting it that way seem extreme? Silly? Nauseating? Pornographic? But that's exactly what it is. One out of four of the women you know who will give birth will have a Caesarian.

In the US, Caesarians have become a leading cause of maternal deaths. In northern Africa, girls die from clitorectomies, too.

And normal babies removed by Caesarian tend to have poorer reflexes and more difficulty starting to breathe during their first moments in the world. The psychological damage done to the mother, the infant, and the mother-infant relationship is not yet widely understood. Caesarian mothers are statistically more likely to abuse their children. Twenty-five per cent of North America's future population is entering the world this way.

It is present-day fear of woman's sexuality, and of birth, combined with modern technology, which have created the escalating Caesarian phenomenon. All three of those factors have stemmed from the same source.

It seems to me that Caesarians should be so rare that in my whole lifetime I should only know one or two women who have had one. At age 26 I already know at least twenty-five. I'm scared. And bloody angry. Three women I know had Caesarians last week. Each of them, of course, was told it was absolutely necessary.

There's a historical point I'd like to clear up: over and over again I read that Mary Wollstonecraft died of childbirth, in childbirth, that she "succumbed to that great scourge of women." Mary Wollstonecraft did not die of childbirth. She died of infection, ten days after some young male doctors came to scrape the placenta out of her womb. Mary was, unbeknownst to herself, one of the many thousands of female victims of a 200-year epidemic of puerperal fever created by male medicine's take-over of childbirth from the traditional midwives (who had been doing much better). Mary Wollstonecraft was a victim of the experiments of patriarchy.

Susan Weinstein
Toronto

Civil Disobedience

Broadside:

While seventy women attempted to stop the production of the cruise missile at Litton Systems in Toronto on Monday, November 14, 1983, the first missiles were being deployed in Greenham Common, England. It is becoming more and more clear that it is the women's community in England, Europe, the United States, Australia, and now in Canada, that leads the resistance to nuclear madness.

The Civil Disobedience action on that Monday was the first day of action in a week of resistance that was initiated by Women's Action for Peace and the Cruise Missile Conversion Project of the Alliance for Non-Violent Action.

Women from Guelph, Montréal, Ottawa, Toronto and upstate New York attempted to place the corporate executives of Litton under arrest for numerous contraventions of the Criminal Code of Canada, arising from their

production of the guidance system for cruise missile.

Police intervened, and arrested twenty-nine women who were intent on making citizen's arrests. A number of women arrested on November 14 returned on November 18 to repeat their demands for an end to cruise missile production. At the end of February these women took the issue into courts. Their trial began on February 20, 80, The East Mall.

Each woman participates in, or supports, civil disobedience for her own personal reasons; but the collective action of women in Canada, and around the world, is building a community of resistance to militarism in all manifestations.

The mentality of militarism which fuels the production of nuclear weapons also provokes violence against women in the forms of rape, battering and pornography, and also includes and underlies the many oppressions of patriarchal culture.

The women's action collective, which coordinated the action on November 14, is appealing to all members of the women's community for support for our work.

We have incurred substantial debts in planning and organizing the action. These debts continue to grow with the upcoming trial. Your financial contribution will help us carry the resistance into the courts, and bring us into the streets, as we work towards our vision of a peaceful, and just society. (Women's Action for Peace—November 14, 790 Markham St., Toronto M6G 2M5.)

Your support for events and actions sponsored by the Alliance for Non-Violent Action and Women's Action for Peace will strengthen the resistance community. Together we will build a peaceful future.

Women's Action for Peace
Toronto

779-9624
333 Bloor Street W.

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WCREC is happy to announce to our friends and supporters that the Ministry of Health is now providing core funding for our counselling and referral program. Although we'll still be looking for funding for other desperately needed services, this means that the essential part of our service will be able to continue from a more secure financial base. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to all of you who have supported us over the years by lobbying, letter-writing on our behalf and contributing money that helped keep us afloat.

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Rise Up for Rights

In January, members of Action Day Care wrote a proposal for an ongoing Women's Liberation coalition in Toronto (see *Broadside*, February 1984). Since then, a lot has happened. In particular, a varied group of feminists has been working on a follow-up proposal, and many women participated in informal discussions. A few words on paper are inadequate to convey the excitement, intelligence, dedication and scope of the discussions; nor can they express the misunderstandings and defensiveness which are often part of the process of change.

The four sections published here comprise the third draft of the proposal, as presented at a meeting of the March 8 Coalition on February 8, 1984. The proposal also contained a tentative timetable calling for six months to develop and endorse a 'Bill of Rights,' followed by another six months for the campaign to publicize it, to culminate in International Women's Day, 1985. Also with the proposal was a short paragraph on the possible structure of the ongoing coalition.

Since the follow-up committee has

welcomed input, there are a few points I would like to comment on.

First of all, I totally endorse the emphasis on expanding the base of our movement by reaching women who are not presently active, perhaps even not presently aware. This is a back-to-basics strategy which is politically necessary and could be intellectually stimulating for those of us who have been around for years and tend to get set in our ways and ideas. I hope that we will not lose track of this priority in whatever we do.

With respect to the 'Bill of Rights,' the proposal as it stands is not very clear on what exactly the Committee has in mind. My understanding is that it would relate to the here-and-now concerns and issues of women. The demands would be specific and winnable, not all-encompassing and doctrinaire. The idea is to be directly relevant to the political and social fabric in which we live; to be pragmatic rather than dogmatic.

This is not to be the be-all and end-all but a tool for organizing.

—Eve Zaremba

throughout the year. This would allow individual groups within the women's movement to organize together without being forced to put aside their individual concerns.

For example, each group would agree that during the year they would try and frame their individual events in the context of the Bill of Rights and participate in a "Bill of Rights Coalition." Coalition discussions could try and figure out how individual groups could best use the Bill of Rights. Obviously, the individual groups would make their own decisions, but the campaign would lay the basis for joint discussions.

In addition to the commitment from groups and organizations to frame particular actions within the Bill of Rights, the Coalition could also plan a few joint events that focussed on the Bill itself. These actions could take a multitude of forms and could be designed to reach different audiences (the women's movement itself, women on the periphery of the women's movement, young women, etc.). The Bill could be the topic of outreach actions, i.e. we could use it to speak at community centres, at schools and community colleges, etc. It could also be used in the context of ongoing media action.

Building the coalition, which would be a necessary part of the campaign, would give an identifiable organizational focus for women's liberation in this city. A phone line could be set up where women could phone; broadsheets on the Bill could be printed in the thousands and distributed to all the high schools: (Headline: This is what women's liberation stands for... Come and join us... list of all groups...); stationery listing the demands on one side, the sponsoring groups on the bottom could be printed for all members of the coalition to use within their organizations. This concerted campaign would certainly give women's liberation and the women's movement a high profile in the city.

Advantages of this Strategy

1. Starting with an action approach involves building on the seven-year survival of IWD which is the one time each year that women's groups come together and organize a joint event. It strengthens the involvement of participant groups at the same time as creating a viable ongoing way of working together. This action plan is counterposed to starting with a debate, such as discussion about "What should be the strategy of the women's movement be?" Such debate often creates as many problems as it may solve. The fact that the women's movement is heterogeneous in terms of the political strategies and issue foci means that open-ended discussion often highlights the differences in strategy rather than where we can agree. Also it often focusses on past hostilities.

Another approach would be to begin with a structure, for example setting up a women's council. The difficulty with this is, again, on what basis would women's groups join or be recruited. Once established, the group would be faced with wide-open political discussion and all the problems that this engenders. We

would prefer to see if we can generate some joint practice together first. By IWD 1985 the viability of an ongoing organization with wider goals could be assessed. Hopefully, the successful experience of working together would provide a basis to establish a more permanent structure.

2. Because joining the Coalition would depend on a certain degree of agreement with an action plan, this would short-circuit the problem of spending endless meetings in debates and discussions. For the Coalition to succeed it must have a specific goal before it is established.

3. An advantage of the Bill of Rights focus is that it can be used both for joint events, for work around particular issues, and it can also be easily adjusted to unexpected situations and elections. The Coalition and campaign would not pressure particular groups to give up their own focus but would demonstrate the advantages of being a part of an active wider network.

4. Situating the organization and initiation of IWD (at least for a year) in an ongoing Coalition would hopefully help to circumvent some of the yearly problems that occur getting the March 8 Coalition off the ground.

5. Structuring the Coalition with particular activist set of goals would mean that there would be no conflict with an existing coalition organization such as NAC. In fact, we would appeal to NAC to join the campaign.

6. The process involves a combination of small-group and large-group discussions. It emphasizes going out to women's groups and talking to them individually about their particular concerns and interests; it does not rely on a large group discussion only to deal with those concerns.

7. The process will also aid individual groups—such as single-issue groups—as much as it will aid the development of the women's movement. For example, many single issue groups would like to have a way to express the broader concerns of the women's movement whilst concentrating on their own individual issues. The campaign can provide such groups with a way to reach and educate women (and men) within their own constituencies about the broader issues of the women's movement.

Nancy Adamson
Linda Briskin
Susan Colley
Connie Guberman
Wiesia Kolasinska
Pat Leslie
Lyna Lepage
Pat Raymond
Lynda Yanz

(Note: The Follow-up Committee hopes that this proposal will encourage a wide debate on strategy for the women's movement in Toronto. We see this proposal as a *working document* that attempts to address the pressing concern about how to organize in a more united way. We invite input, discussion and revision of this proposal and encourage the development of alternate approaches. We welcome women with similar concerns to join our committee. For further information, call (416) 977-6698. *The Follow-up Committee.*)

Proposal of the Follow-up Committee

Goals of Follow-Up

Long Term: (a) developing an action strategy for the women's liberation movement which is successful at winning concrete demands; and (b) creating a viable on-going coalition structure for the women's liberation movement.

Short Term: (a) expanding the base of the women's liberation movement, i.e. bringing in women not presently active; (b) developing a high profile media presence; (c) testing out the viability of an on-going activist coalition in the women's movement; and (d) having effective debates and discussions inside the women's movement.

Where To Start

We can all probably agree that the women's movement in Toronto needs better and more effective discussions and debates, a workable on-going coalition structure, and more and successful actions. The strategic debate we need to have now is how do we get there, and where do we start? We've identified three possible starting points—debate, creating a structure, or action.

We propose to begin with a co-ordinated plan of action which would build on the 7-year history of the one time each year that women's groups come together and organize a joint event—International Women's Day. We believe our proposal will facilitate building an on-going structure and will create the space for more effective discussions. This plan will not force participant groups to give up their focus on a particular issue or constituency, nor should the action be focussed around one single issue. We envision an action plan which strengthens the participant groups at the same time as creating a viable on-going way to work together.

Outlined below is an action plan which builds on the successes of IWD and some of the ideas presented in the Action Day Care proposal. We think it can create, as part of its process, a viable organizational structure and the space for some effective strategy debates.

Action Strategy

Our recommendation is to spend the next year building a "Bill of Rights Campaign." This campaign would begin by developing a Bill of Rights which would begin by listing key demands (not strategies) of our women's movement. We would then use the Bill of Rights as a frame for Individual and group actions

MARCH SPECIALS at the DEC BOOKROOM

<i>Sex and Love: New Thoughts on Old Contradictions</i> ed. Cartledge & Ryan (Women's Press UK)	\$13.25	\$10.95
<i>Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality</i> ed. Snitow, Stansell, Thompson (MR)	\$17.50	\$14.50
<i>The Hearts of Men</i> —Barbara Ehrenreich (Pluto)	\$12.95	\$ 9.95
<i>Dreams and Dilemmas, collected writings</i> Sheila Rowbotham (Virago)	\$12.95	\$10.95
<i>The Sexual Dynamics of History</i> London Feminist History Group (Pluto)	\$11.95	\$ 9.95
<i>What is to be done about the Family?</i> Lynne Segal (Penguin)	\$ 4.95	\$ 4.00

Visit the DEC Bookroom for the latest in socialist feminist writings & an unique selection on the Third World, Disarmament, Political Theory, Labour, Culture, Education etc.

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Frankie Armstrong

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DEC, 427 Bloor W.; SCM Bookroom, 333 Bloor St. W.
The Millwheel, 2 Elm St.; Mariposa, 363-4009 (Visa, Mastercard).

Info: 925-6568 or 363-4009

Taboos and Tokens

by Susan G. Cole

You can't avoid the pornography issue nowadays. Conferences, committees and panels abound as the rest of the world discovers what women have known for years—that pornography is bad news, and it is growing bigger, more aggressive and more dangerous with each passing day.

Feminist rhetoric has grown so powerful and convincing that a number of American and Canadian scientists, men for the most part, are working on impressive careers bolstered by their study of the effects of pornography on viewers. Theirs is the voice of authority, ringing as it does from the lofty regions of the laboratory where objectivity reigns supreme and academic respectability gives the findings validity.

For the first time ever, an attempt was made to gather together these august clinicians for a conference on media violence and pornography. The Toronto conference was sponsored by three action groups: Action Group on Media Pornography, Canadian Coalition Against Violent Entertainment and the National Coalition on Television Violence. The brains behind the conference, though, belonged to David Scott, a local Ph.D. candidate in psychology with a high profile on the Metro Toronto Task Force on Public Violence Against Women and Children. All the heavyweights were planned for the agenda: Neil Malamuth (University of Manitoba); Edward Donnerstein (University of Wisconsin, whom you may remember as a bearded scientist from 'Not a Love Story' who talked about what a "time bomb" aggressive pornography can be); Dr. Dolf Zilman (University of Indiana), who's been looking at reactions to so-called non-violent porn; Peter De Julio, the Toronto Crown Counsel who has prosecuted more obscenity cases than just about anybody else in Canada; and the biggie, Dr. Everet Koop, Surgeon-General of the United States, slated to give the luncheon address.

The preponderance of men on the original schedule (to say nothing of the American representation) prompted those women who were able to hear of the conference through academic channels to wonder where all the women were. American feminist law professor Catherine MacKinnon was one of them, and she phoned David Scott to question the women's absence from the agenda. Scott quickly covered his tracks: "Would you like to come?" "Yes, I would," said MacKinnon, "and make sure Andrea Dworkin is there too, and all the women organizing across Canada." Scott confessed he should include them.

In the end, the conference agenda looked like a paradigm of sex stereotypes, with men appearing as the objective discoverers of truth while women appeared to be doing what we do best—react. The morning was to be taken up with the reports from the academic sector. The first panel on violence and television featured nine participants, two of whom were women. The second panel promised the findings of the research on the effects of pornography—five panelists, two women. The luncheon address was to be given by the star of the show, Dr. Koop. The first panel of the afternoon on pornography: victims and perpetrators, featured only two women. Then Andrea Dworkin was to address the throng. The two panels with a preponderance of women were crammed in at the end of the day. Feminists had two quick responses: Why were women slotted in at the end of the day when nobody would be listening; and what would Andrea Dworkin say in the midst of all this?

In the meantime, the conference organizers thought they had the uneasy coalition between feminists and the decency contingent under control, without understanding that you simply cannot bring activists out to a conference of this nature without having a political potboiler on your hands. David Scott thought that he would diffuse the tension by admonishing the participants in the conference "not to raise the potentially divisive issues, such as homosexuality and abortion." It was a mistake to try to exclude feminist input from a conference on pornography, but it was sheer derangement to attempt to tell feminists what to say once they got there.

The materials presented at the conference were moving and compelling documents indicting pornography and violence on television, but they shared the spotlight with an overwhelming presence of women that the organizers did not bargain for. The day's events began with an interdenominational service, an irritating sop to the religious forces at the conference alleging to be non-partisan. The morning session began and the drone of scholarly male voices filled the auditorium. The morning dragged on. Donnerstein lived things up with his findings on aggressive pornography, informing the audience that prolonged exposure led his subjects to trivialize rape. As usual, Donnerstein's visuals were compelling: a remarkable sequence from an R-rated (US) film called "Toolbox Murders" which features a female victim masturbating in a bathtub before being brutally murdered to the tune of a love song. Still, none of the material was in context.

That is, until Wendy Stock began to speak. Stock is a psychologist from New York doing work on women's reactions to pornography. She outlined her findings briefly: whereas men get less repulsed and anxious after prolonged exposure, women become more so. This isn't exactly shocking news but academic circles often demand proof of the obvious. Stock knows all of this. She raced through her slides complete with the required graphs of quantification and analysis. Then she stopped and began to get the priorities straightened out. "It is impossible to discuss pornography outside of the generalized violence women experience in a sexist society." There was an outburst of applause. Stock was relieved, obviously nervous at first about having to deliver this kind of news to an academic conference. She put up more slides, one showing a *Hustler* magazine spread featuring the gang rape of a woman on a pool table in a bar in Massachusetts. The truth was coming out.

During the lunch break, the women participants were visibly agitated, caucusing quickly. Dworkin and Mackinnon were there; Pauline Bart, whose work on rape and porno-

graphy has appeared in *Take Back the Night*, was there; so was Florence Rush; the women from New York's Women Against Pornography; Sylvia Spring and Suzanne DeRosa

CONTINUED PAGE 13

Warning:

Today's symposium is a historic bringing together of researchers and other concerned people who perceive a link between depicted violence in the media, the mounting violence in society and the harm done to victims of that violence.

Although many of us differ on other matters, our cooperation in presenting the facts and the issues today will result in significantly increased public awareness, and remedial action.

Therefore, out of mutual respect for one another's sense of values, all of the participants have been asked to avoid raising potentially divisive issues, such as abortion and homosexuality.

Feminist Statement: Conference on Media Violence and Pornography

Feminists attending this Conference are here to place the critique of pornography in its proper social and analytic context: the condition of women. We object to pornography because it is a central practice in the subjection of women. In, by, through and because of pornography, women are objectified, subordinated, tortured, raped, killed and silenced. In, by, through and because of pornography, our bodies and minds are stolen and sold, as they are in prostitution and rape, which are part of the pornography just as the pornography is part of them. Pornography institutionalizes a social system in which women and children are an underclass whose humiliation is eroticized, whose debasement is enjoyed, whose

subordination is trafficked in for pleasure and profit and made to appear natural to us, whose being is deprived of autonomy and integrity and whose speech is silenced—with most of us, forever.

The denigration of lesbianism as a sexual choice and the denial of reproductive control to all women are both parts of this pornographic system in which women are denied self-determination. Any attempt to address pornography that does not address this system as such, or actively or passively would permit any part of it to remain unchanged, does not address what pornography is and what it does. Because pornography is core to the system of the supremacy of one sex over the other, because pornography eroticizes the hierarchy that is gender as well as exploits and promotes every other social hierarchy—such as racism and anti-Semitism—we have come to this Conference to seek a way to end it. Any lesser purpose is for us anti-feminist and therefore anti-woman.

Debate and Debacle

by Lisa Freedman

When a group of Canadian and American feminists recently took over the stage at the conference on media violence and pornography in Toronto, the fact that the mainstream media so misconstrued the event should come as no surprise. Between the *Globe and Mail's* headline "Feminists Protest Symposium Agenda" and Lynda Hurst's article in the *Toronto Star* which referred to the temporarily irrelevant issues of freedom for lesbians and on-demand abortion, the fact that we have a long way to go in promoting a feminist perspective on pornography became even more evident.

The women on the stage were not, according to Hurst's column, "haranguing the delegates," on the issues of lesbianism or abortion. They were haranguing the delegates on the issues of pornography. And they were on stage because the printed agenda for the day explained how, although many differ on other matters, cooperation in presenting the facts and the issues on pornography will result in significantly increased public awareness, and remedial action, and therefore, out of mutual respect for one another's sense of values, all of the participants were asked to avoid raising potentially divisive issues, specifically abortion and homosexuality. Conference coordinator David Scott defended the ban: "There are different ways to frame the problem. You can look at the foundations of pornography without getting into a debate on abortion and homosexuality." Hurst obviously agreed: "Whatever issues they may

disagree on, they and others had come together that day to discuss *only* pornography's implications and possible solutions."

But what are the implications and effects of pornography? In a statement read in English and French, the women managed to answer this question (see accompanying "Statement").

An anti-feminist analysis of pornography is dangerous. Material on "Decency" that appeared at the conference and that was *not* meant as a joke, is dangerous. Other material disseminated at the conference blamed pornography solely for "establishing a pervasive presence at every level of society that we are paying for when we pay for federally funded abortions, federally funded health care for illegitimate children, teenage pregnancy, research for AIDS, herpes and other venereal diseases," is dangerous. We must counter those who would opt for a law that is vague, broad, or about ideas that some people think are good or bad, moral or immoral, normal or abnormal, natural or unnatural, or that suggest that women's bodies are dirty or that sex is dirty.

If an anti-feminist analysis is to go unchallenged, if in the pornography debate the obscenity fighters were to beat the pornography fighters, then no good is being done for anyone. As one participant aptly put it: "The current pornography fighters should know that there would be no anti-pornography movement were it not for us (feminists). We were the people who took rape, incest and all kinds of abuse of women to the attention of the public and the media and made a conference such as this possible." ●

No to Immodest Fashions!

Shortly before her death, Jacinta, the youngest of the three seers of Fatima, echoed words heard from the Blessed Virgin Mary, when she said: "The hour has come for all of us to give the signal of a revolt against those dressmakers, masters of their dictatorship..."

"Certain fashions will be introduced that will offend Our Lord. The persons who see to the conformity of the fashions to the faith of our Lord..."

"...also men, obeying them missively. Despising the One who said: 'Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God', by their cloth, they work for the rotting of the souls and hearts. It is a disgrace to see to what extent some have fallen."

The hour has come for all of us to give the signal of a revolt against those dressmakers, masters of their dictatorship... continually complaining that our men have cave in. But whose fault is it? More than ever, the time is up to the Christian, especially girls and ladies. It is for them to sweep the others along into the wake of their modesty and dignity. Especially during the vacations, they have the serious duty to witness through their dress:

No to immodest fashions!

A Crusade for Decency

"Clothing should veil the body, not unveil it" (Pius XII)

I promise to dress very modestly, in every place and every occasion, according to the rules stated by Popes for ladies, misses and little girls:

1. To ban transparent tissues and light-fitting cuts.
2. A dress, not trousers.
3. Knees covered, sat as standing. At least 4 inches lower than the knee if the skirt is ample, still lower if the skirt is light.
4. Low-necked dresses: not lower than two finger's breadths below the base of the neck.
5. Sleeves reaching at least the elbow.

There is an Eternal Hell

MOVEMENT MATTERS

The Man Question

by Philinda Masters

The problem with socialism appears to be men. Let me explain.

Over 100 people, most of them women, showed up at a forum in Toronto on February 11 on socialist feminism, or more particularly, on how to integrate feminism into socialism. The purpose of the forum, according to Sue Findlay in her opening remarks, was not to provide answers, but to ask questions, to stimulate dialogue. It is one of four forums planned for the next few months to inject life into a flagging socialist politics. (Other forums will cover the peace movement, the NDP, and the labour movement.)

The structure of the February forum reflected its purpose: three speakers presented their views, everyone broke off into unstructured workshops to discuss the issues raised, then reported back to a plenary. The general impression was that the workshops were extremely valuable; in fact, it was even suggested that the plenary be dispensed with altogether and another day of workshops on socialist feminism be scheduled for the near future. Although, as was to be expected, no solutions appeared, and no how-to manual emerged, it was a beginning.

But this doesn't address The Man Question. The first panelist, Bob Gardner of the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics, posited the inadequacy of a socialist politics that doesn't recognize how crucial is the oppression of women to the reproduction and maintenance of capitalism. As women serve not only capitalism but also individual men, the material and psychic benefits to men are enormous. Male domination is a powerful social control and continually reinforces capitalism, so that there cannot be an overthrow of capitalism within a system of male domination/female subordination.

The next panelist, Carolyn Egan (also of OCAC, and the International Women's Day

Committee) spoke of the women's movement's profound challenge to the left. Traditional socialism, she said, has not articulated the structures of sex oppression. The economic determinism of Marxism, with its narrow class analysis, is not only inadequate, it doesn't explain social relations, it doesn't speak to people's lives. On this basis, radical feminists rejected socialism years ago.

Another problem with the traditional left has been its traditional organizational structures: dependence on hierarchies, misuse of democratic centralism, misunderstanding of the role of women in socialism, etc. The time has come for new forms of organizing the left: an incorporation of the personal ("Not a plea for subjectivity," said Egan) and the political in a scientific context, new definitions of what's worthy of struggle, and an emphasis on prefigurative forms of organization (ie, one's present-day practice reflecting the values of the society one wishes to build).

"Revolution should be seen as a process, not a climax," concluded Egan.

The third panelist, socialist feminist writer Joanne Kates, talked of the difficulty women and men experience working together. Although she expressed the firm belief that "men are not the enemy, the system is," nevertheless she said women have given up on men as political allies because of their lip service to feminism, their inattention to process ("soft" politics) and their guilt.

"I've never seen anything as guilty as a male leftist," said Kates, but the flip side of that guilt is anger, anger at feminists for giving them such a hard time. Her solution is to validate men's experience, to give them positive reinforcement in their struggle to liberate themselves from a destructive power dynamic. "Men have to learn to love themselves as men," Kates said. "I know that sounds bizarre."

For the long-time feminist activists at the forum, there must have been a sense of *déjà vu*. As Carolyn Egan suggested, feminists have long felt that rather than being satisfied with something less than socialism, something more is needed for the radical transformation of society. And in the matter of pro-

cess, feminists have profoundly understood the need for "prefigurative" forms of organization: collectives, CR and self-help groups, connecting the personal and political.

What the three panelists at the forum had in common was an understanding that the problem with traditional socialism has been, in both theory and practice, its male orientation and male domination. Since the other progressive movements that feminists must hook up with to effect a radical transformation of society (the peace movement, the NDP, and the labour movement, to name three) are generally male dominated and male oriented, how do we go about convincing them that gender struggles are as crucial historically as class struggles and that feminism has something to say that is more profound, more radical, than socialism?

Although it was generally assumed that men have something to gain (it was mainly women who voiced this opinion, and maybe it was wishful thinking) the question is: Do they? There's a real conflict of interest between men and women, and men, as Bob Gardner suggests, may have a hard time giving up those jealously guarded privileges, those material and psychic benefits of male domination. In the new social order, they may be less competitive, have better sex lives, be able to cry, but it's quite a trade-off. And if men can't make the ideological leap of faith, what is their role in the new socialism?

Feminists should cast their minds back to 1976, to the Bolton and Daughter of Bolton conferences. Here, the crucial issues at stake were class privilege and heterosexual privilege. They were not polite debates, they touched raw nerves everywhere, but there was no mistaking their importance to feminism. The socialist feminist forum was a more subdued affair—no raised voices or threats of fisticuffs. But there was a crucial issue, a raw nerve yet to be tapped: The Man Question.

So, for the future, can we overcome the ideological ties that bind? We must. If men can't break their habit of male domination, a habit that infuses their thinking and actions, then women must take the leadership in post-socialism to move forward. ●



Women's Studies and Publishing

WATERLOO, Ont.—The Women's Studies department at Waterloo University is holding a conference on Women's Studies and Publishing on Wednesday, April 11, 1984.

The purpose of the conference is to facilitate discussion among academics, publishers, librarians and booksellers. Keynote speaker will be Dr. Paula Caplan, and panels will be held on Finding the Right Text, Resource and Collection Development, and The Publisher's Point of View.

For more information write: Women's Studies, Modern Languages Bldg., University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3G1; or phone (519) 885-1211, ext 2880. Registration is \$10 (lunch included).

York/YWCA Women's Collection

DOWNSVIEW—The York University/YWCA Women's Collection recently acquired a collection of books and journals that had belonged to LOOT (Lesbian Organization of Toronto).

The Women's Collection originally belonged to the Toronto New Feminists, then was housed at Women's Place, moved to the YWCA Resource Centre in 1975, and was acquired by York on loan from the Y in January, 1982.

The collection covers all subjects of interest to women and women's studies, and consists of about 3000 books, plus journals, pamphlets and clippings.

Members of York have generously supported the collection, but the collection's administrators are appealing for help in the form of duplicate copies of books, or money to pay for staffing and purchases.

The Collection is at 204 Founders College, York University, Downsview, Ont., M3J 2R2. Hours are: Monday, 5 to 7 pm; Tuesday, 10 am to noon and 1 to 5 pm; Wednesday, 3 to 7 pm; Thursday, 1 to 5 pm.

WARM Manual

NEW WESTMINSTER—British Columbia's Women's Access Association has put together a resource manual aimed at teachers, counsellors and community helpers who work with women.

Members of the Women's Access Association were canvassed for current and accessible material that they use in their own work. The range of topics covers career counselling, employment trends and non-traditional employment, systems survival, entry/re-entry, daycare, feminist counselling and publications, skills training, violence, funding sources, and information on specific group issues and populations.

The manual sections include: annotated listings of books, articles, manuals, films and tapes, speakers and organizations, reading lists and workshop outlines. In addition, a background file of longer articles and pamphlets is available for loan.

Cost of \$10 includes binder and mailing. To order send cheque to: Women's Access Resource Manual (WARM), c/o Douglas Women's Centre, Box 2503, New Westminster, BC, V3J 5B2.

REAL Women?

by Pat Daley

One of their steering committee members is named "Femmie." One of their aims is "to promote, secure and defend legislation which upholds the Judeo-Christian view of traditional marriage and the family." They are R.E.A.L. Women, "realistic, equal, active for life," and they're "out for action," according to President Grace Petrusek.

At a February press conference announcing the organization's existence, Petrusek said 10,000 women have joined since they got together last October "to express the beliefs of the majority of women throughout the country."

If their aims are indeed "realistic," the majority of Canadian women recognize woman's role as educator and nurturer of the family in the home, recognize woman's unique contribution to society through her volunteer work in the community, support policies for women whose primary concern is the care and well being of their families, and support the right to life of all innocent individuals from conception to death.

"We have touched a nerve across the nation," Petrusek said. She may be right, especially if one considers the nerves of the three to four million women represented by the member organizations of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC).

"Their (NAC and Status of Women Council's) views on many crucial issues undermine the family and are not those of the real women of Canada," according to the Thornhill-based organization's brochure.

Petrusek said R.E.A.L. women have no interest in affiliation with NAC and would not work with feminists against pornography, for instance. They plan to affiliate with other organizations but Petrusek would not say with whom.

She did admit, however, that R.E.A.L. Women are looking into co-operating with organizations like the Alberta Federation of Women United for Families. (R.E.A.L. Women claims to have 1,000 chapters in Alberta). AFWUF was formed in November 1982 at a conference featuring American anti-ERA activist Phyllis Schlafly. It would appear that Schlafly is also the inspiration for

R.E.A.L. Women.

"We know her and know her work," Petrusek said, adding, however, that there is no connection with Schlafly. Even so, they have adopted her definition of the family—two or more people living together, related by blood, marriage or adoption—and share her mistrust of the media.

In fact, R.E.A.L. Women's program could have come straight from Schlafly's speech to AFWUF: *opposition* to choice on abortion, no-fault divorce, affirmative action, equal pay for work of equal value, universal day care; *support* for criminalization of prostitution, increased family allowances, a separate mother's benefit, homemakers' pensions, financial recognition for caring for elderly parents in the home, and government-funded parenting courses among other things.

The one thing R.E.A.L. Women have not adopted is Schlafly's radical rhetoric. Rather than denounce feminists out of hand, they acknowledge the progress that has been made in the areas of homemakers' pensions and services for battered women.

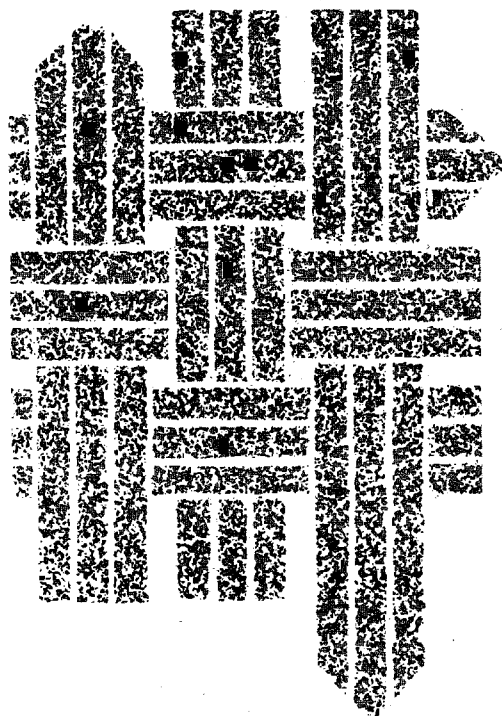
But their attempt at soft-selling doesn't wash with NAC President Doris Anderson. "They're undermining all the work women have been doing for the last 20 years and at the same time enjoying all the work the feminist movement has accomplished," she says, pointing out that it has taken a long time to reach the point where homemakers' pensions are a possibility, and "the work wasn't done by those women."

Many of the women active in R.E.A.L. Women come from the anti-choice movement, but Petrusek said they wanted an organization that could address broader issues. For Anderson, this base raises the question of whether the organization can attract other women.

"My own feeling is there is a broader base of a lot of women who are dissatisfied," she says. "I don't think they'll be deluded."

Although there are 10,000 members, presumably each paying the \$5 membership fee, Petrusek says R.E.A.L. Women has no funds. They will be applying for government funding for their lobbying efforts and their efforts to "safeguard the family, the basis of our society."

Also printed in the Toronto Clarion, February 1984.



Canadian Women's Mailing List

RICHMOND, BC—Join the Canadian Women's Mailing List, a project of the WEB Women's Information Exchange, and receive up-to-date information about women's events, publications and services.

The CWML mailing list was started as a tool for women and women's groups. By building the CWML and by then providing mailing labels at cost to women's organizations, groups or individuals, WEB can help bring women together with the wealth of information available to them. The CWML will also facilitate communication between feminist organizations to reach out to women they might otherwise be unable to contact. Women can also use the WEB computer to their advantage, to create an efficient feminist communication network.

For more information on the CWML, write: WEB Women's Information Exchange, 9280 Arvida Dr., Richmond, BC, V7A 3P4; or call (604) 272-5335.

Survival Law

Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO) is a community legal clinic funded by the Ontario Legal Aid Plan. CLEO is a unique legal clinic in that it solely produces public legal education materials and programs, presently promoting a special program for women entitled, *Survival Law for Women*.

Survival Law for Women was developed and evaluated with input from people working with women in legal clinics, women's groups, educational workers, and community workers. The goal of the program is to convey life skills information on the law to women under the care of social service agencies such as CAS and Welfare. The intention is to give not only legal information but also the skills to use the information.

This program was developed in kit form for use by group leaders in social service agencies or women's groups, and is available from CLEO, 62 Noble St., Toronto, M6K 2C9; (416) 530-1800.



Women's Bookstore

TORONTO—A used book sale held Saturday, January 28, 1984 at Trinity-St Paul's Church, 427 Bloor Street West was a great success! The sale was a benefit, organized entirely by volunteers. All proceeds were contributed to the renovation and relocation fund of the Toronto Women's Bookstore.

The bookstore, formerly located at 85 Harbord Street, was destroyed by fire in July and has been operating since September at a temporary location upstairs at 296 Brunswick Avenue. The store staff plans to move into an entirely new, permanent location at 73 Harbord Street around April 1.

The donations of books by publishers and many generous individuals as well as eager buying by hundreds on Saturday meant that over \$600 was raised to help bring about the re-opening of the Toronto Women's Bookstore.

Vancouver Status of Women in Crisis

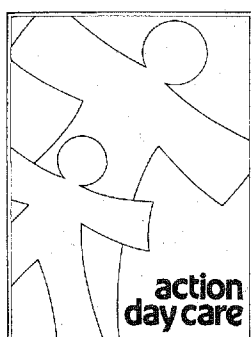
VANCOUVER—As the Vancouver Status of Women marks its thirteenth anniversary, the organization faces the most serious funding crisis in its history. Despite numerous phone calls, letters and telegrams to BC's Attorney-General, and a mass lobby of the legislature on January 30, VSW has been unable to receive assurances that its funding will be continued for the next fiscal year.

The organization has existed since 1971, providing individual women, the general public, and other organizations with information or assistance on all issues related to women. Although VSW is largely an invisible group, it remains the major resource centre on women's issues in BC and the only funded women's group left operating in a multi-issue capacity.

Besides working with those women seeking assistance for individual problems, VSW monitors and responds to government legislation at all levels, and publishes much of its information on an on-going basis in *Kinesis*, a key VSW service. For many BC women outside major metropolitan areas, the paper is their only source of information on issues relating to women. In this respect, *Kinesis* is a vital link for rural women, as well as providing a link between women's groups nationwide and around the world. In many cases the information in *Kinesis* cannot be found elsewhere.

But the publication is also placed in jeopardy if VSW is unable to continue. As publisher, VSW provides the paper with a home. More importantly, much of the news and information in *Kinesis* comes directly from the research of the organization as a whole. At this point it is difficult to know whether it is possible to convince the BC government that VSW is a vital and necessary community organization, but we ask all concerned people to send the BC Attorney-General a telegram supporting our continued funding at 1982 levels and to join the organization or subscribe to *Kinesis* as a direct support contribution. (*Kinesis*, 400 A West 5th Ave., Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1J8. \$13/year.)

—Kinesis



Daycare Hotline

TORONTO—The Daycare Improvement Project (DIP) is a special program of Action Daycare to develop and promote non-profit daycare in metro Toronto.

You can help parents find daycare spaces for their children, and help the non-profit centres let parents know they have spaces available!

The Action Daycare Hotline is trying to connect parents seeking child care services with centres which have spaces available.

For information on child care spaces available in non-profit centres in your area of Toronto, call the Hotline at 977-6698.

Women and Words

VANCOUVER—On the weekend of January 28-29, 1984, the West Coast Women and Words Society held their annual general meeting. Approximately 65 women from BC and across Canada attended the two-day long meeting, held at Langara College.

During the meeting the Structure Committee brought forth their proposal regarding the setting up of a national organization, stressing it be as non-hierarchical as possible and not be centred permanently in one city. It was agreed that the national organization location would be determined at every other annual general meeting and that this site will coincide with that of the group hosting the next conference.

A task force composed of 10 women, five of whom were chosen at the meeting, will draw up a constitution and by-laws for the national organization outlining its responsibilities and powers. Their findings will be submitted to the next West Coast Women and Words annual general meeting.

The West Coast Women and Words Society will remain a provincially registered non-profit society under the umbrella of the national organization.

—Kinesis

Sistering

TORONTO—Sistering is a drop-in centre for socially isolated, transient women, which operates from a downtown community centre, Scadding Court, and offers a warm, hospitable refuge for women who would otherwise have nowhere to go during the daytime hours. Most of the women have no permanent home but move, with their few possessions, from hostel to hostel, dingy rooming house to rooming house. Many suffer from chronic psychiatric problems and are unable to find for themselves the usual support system of family and community.

For most of 1983, Sistering was able to keep open thanks to the generous donations of ordinary men and women. As it became more established, it obtained increasing financial support from Government sources, but it is still in desperate need of your help. Your donation, no matter how small, will make the difference between a bare, subsistence program, and those small luxuries that make all the difference. And by small luxuries, that means a clean towel after a shower, a personal bar of soap, a hot bowl of soup on a winter's day. Because these small luxuries (things most of us take for granted) are not covered by Government grants, we must appeal to you for help. (Sistering, 707 Dundas St. West, Toronto, M5T 2W6; (416) 366-0001.)

NAC-AGM

OTTAWA—The National Action Committee on the Status of Women will hold its Annual General Meeting and Conference at the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa, the weekend of March 16, 1984.

The conference will begin on Friday evening and conclude Monday in the lobby of Parliament. The cost of \$80 includes Saturday and Sunday breakfast and lunch, a banquet, entertainment, coffee and juice breaks and a conference kit. Otherwise the cost is \$10/day (no food) or \$25/day (lunch and breaks). For more information, call (416) 922-3246.

MOVEMENT COMMENT

Violence Begins at Home

by Amanda Hale

Canada is a country of immigrants, except for the North American Indians. We have never had the melting pot reputation associated with the United States. Canada has traditionally been a country where immigrants create their own neighbourhoods and maintain their identity in the form of language, customs, cultural festivals, and so on.

But, as we near the end of the twentieth century, all the images are changing. We are being transformed in preparation for the new age where adoption of the global village concept may be the only means of survival. There is a last ditch battle going on as people cling to the vestiges of what they take to be their individuality. It is a resistance against the inevitable breakdown of barriers which impede international communication: barriers bolstered by habit and tradition, and a kind of false pride in the familiar. There is a lot of stagnant bathwater to be thrown out if the baby is to avoid drowning.

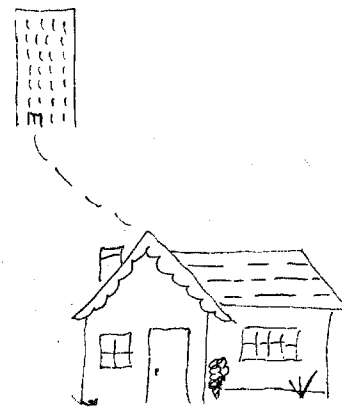
The re-education which constitutes de-conditioning has long been at the government level. We are all now aware of sexist discrimination in the form of unequal pay, sexual harassment, rape, advertising which uses women's bodies to sell products, denial of the right to abortion, etc. And, as the aging population grows and the birth rate drops, the question of ageism and the negative image associated with the elderly, especially if they be women, is forcing itself upon the national consciousness.

Another question to which the government is now turning its attention is domestic violence, or the use of a woman by the man she lives with, whether he be legal husband,

common-law husband, or live-in lover. Violence against women has been implicitly acceptable in our society and explicitly acceptable in the native countries of many of our Canadian immigrants. The Ontario Government Standing Committee on Social Development met at Queen's Park last year to discuss the question of family violence. A final report was made, including a number of recommendations, and a co-ordinator was appointed to implement public education programmes throughout Ontario in an effort to eradicate the high incidence of family violence.

We look forward to the results of these programmes, particularly with regard to immigrant women, whose situation is worsened by lack of status. Many of these women are in Canada under the sponsorship of their husbands. As such they are totally reliant, and are often prisoners in their own homes, cut off from Canadian society by lack of a common language, and subject to physical abuse from their only link with the outside world. It is not only the perpetrators of violence against women who must be re-educated, but also, and perhaps even more importantly, the women with victim mentalities who remain silent about beatings that they feel to be their own fault or their heritage as third world women.

Re-education, de-conditioning, consciousness-raising—call it what you will; it is a process that draws us into a melting pot of social values for Canadians and for the world at large. The melting pot will not rob people of their individuality. It will lead them to the discovery of their humanity.



Moving?

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Barbara Deming was born on July 23, 1917, in New York City, the daughter of Katherine Burritt, who, when she married, had given up a promising career as a singer, particularly of Native American songs, and Harold Deming, a lawyer. Barbara was the second of four children, three boys and herself. She grew up in New York City and on South Mountain Road, New City (across the Hudson from New York where her father had built a big stone house. The Deming's neighbours, sparsely scattered along the whole length of the road, were painters, writers and theatre people; among them: Henry Varnum Poor, the painter, his wife, Bessie Breuer, the writer, and Bessie's daughter, Anne, who became a painter and has been a lifelong friend of Barbara. An important part of Barbara's growing-up was her closeness to the diverse cultural world of South Mountain Road and her friendship with the Poor family. Bessie, the writer, was a kind of muse and second mother for her; other women who were important in her life, were Norma Millay, Edna St. Vincent Millay's sister, and the photographer, Consuelo Kanaga. Barbara's adolescence was free and joyful; she dressed like her brothers, shared in their activities and was often taken for a boy.

Barbara went to Bennington College in 1934, majored first in literature and then in drama and got her BA in 1938. She got a master's degree at Western Reserve in Cleveland in 1940, subsequently worked in the Mercury Theatre and stage-managed *The Cradle Will Rock*. In the summers of 1940 and 1941 she was a Teaching Fellow at the Bennington Summer School of the Arts.

Barbara and I met at Henry Poor's House in 1954, spent winters in New City and in New York and finally settled in

an old house in Wellfleet, Massachusetts on Cape Cod, where we lived until 1969. Barbara was then working on poems and short stories, and had had stories published in *Charm* and *The New Yorker* and essays on film in *The Partisan Review*. In 1960 she began to be interested in Gandhi's theory of non-violence and to take part in the first protests against the testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere and for unilateral disarmament and for civil rights for blacks. She became an active member of the Committee for Non-violent Action, both in New York and New England, and of the War Resisters' League, and took part in almost every important action to protest nuclear weapons and to urge unilateral disarmament, and in the great protest marches of the decade. She was jailed in New York City, in Birmingham, Alabama, in Macon and Albany, Georgia and three times in Washington, DC. (Just this past summer she did another stint in Seneca County, NY, while attending the Seneca Women's Peace Camp.)

At the height of the Vietnam War she went to Saigon as part of a team sent by the Committee for Non-violent Action, including A.J. Muste, then in his 80s, who was one of the founders of the movement. At Saigon, while the team was holding a meeting to protest the war, they were set upon by paid students, arrested soon after, and bundled out of the country. Later she went to Hanoi with three other women: Diane Nash Bevel, Grace Mora Newman, and Pat Griffith to talk to people in the government and to witness widespread war damage and the use of weapons which had been denied by the American government.

In 1969 Barbara went to live in Monticello, New York, with Jane Gapen, the painter and writer. They both contin-

ued to engage in protest actions against the Vietnam War, and helped to organize a protest movement against the pornographic movie *Snuff*, which was playing in Monticello. In 1971, on the way to a meeting of the National Conference of the War Resisters' League in Athens, Georgia, Barbara was the victim of an automobile accident which punctured a lung, broke most of her bones, gravely affected her eyesight and required her to be in a body cast for eight months. In 1976, she and Jane moved with two cats and a dog to a little house on a canal in Sugarloaf Key, Florida and have been there ever since. Since 1970, Barbara has written a steady stream of letters and articles and has made speeches that have influenced the course of feminist thinking and have been published in a series of books (see bibliography). To many people, she is an inspiring example and teacher of non-violence, someone who is always ready to listen and help. One of her recent achievements has been to set up the organization Money for Women, which gives small grants to women, particularly to artists who need money to launch special projects. A Canadian branch, headed by Yvonne Klein in Montreal, is now also functioning.

At the moment Barbara is trying to find a publisher for *A Book of Travail*, an autobiographical novel that recounts her love for another woman in the setting of a voyage to Italy, Spain and Greece. It should be added that she was one of the first lesbians of her generation to come out—with the publication in 1974 of her book *We Cannot Live Without Our Lives*, which is dedicated "to all those seeking the courage to assert 'I am,' and especially to my lesbian sisters."



Barbara Deming—portrait by the artist and author Mary Meigs.

Photos by Ann Pearson

by Mary Meigs

In rereading Barbara Deming's work in its entirety I have been amazed by its consistency. It is the life-long testimony of a non-violent human being with an artist's sensibility, a philosopher's power of reason and a genius for compassionate persuasion. Her voice is both light and grave and its tone is unmistakable, whether her work takes the form of poetry, short story, autobiography, letters or essays. Many of the ideas she lives by now had begun to take shape when she wrote her first book about films of the 40s and were at least latent in some of her early short stories. They took more precise shape as she turned outward toward the world, as she read Gandhi and realized that her belief in non-violence between individuals could be used in the service of great political causes, and she tested her courage in direct non-violent action. I shared sixteen years of her life when the United States was shaken by the dramas of the first anti-nuclear movement, the Cuban revolution, the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War. It seemed to me, because I felt threatened as an artist, that Bar-

bara was becoming a political being at the expense of her artist-self, but I was wrong. One has only to read *Prison Notes* (published in 1966), the book she wrote after spending a month in jail in Albany, Georgia, to be aware that the artist and the objective reporter have merged and are necessary one to the other. The political action she describes (she and her comrades on the Québec to Guantanamo Walk remained in jail, many of them fasting, until the city permitted black and white walkers to walk down the main street together) makes me think back to the action of Caroline in one of Barbara's most moving short stories, "Death and the Old Woman"—in essence, a wish to dissolve anger, to touch the source of love. Both works deal with a non-violent battle; in both, we suffer the suspense of the long struggle which is waged under the shadow of death.

In the short story, Caroline has responded patiently to her dying grandmother's outbursts of spite and bad-temper, has assured her of her love, but her grandmother says to the nurse, "Tell my favorite granddaughter to go. She tires me." And Caroline says to herself, "It is not my prayers she wants, and not my insisted love. She wants . . . not to have to know that

she is dying." The grandmother, too, is engaged in battle; her own violence has always been an expression of life, and Caroline tires her by asking her, in effect, to lay down her arms against death. Long before Barbara had fully defined non-violence, she wrote this story which shows how measured true non-violence must be, how love is insufficient if it does not every moment take the other person into account. The prisoners in Albany were struggling for elementary justice and one of the reasons they won was that they never lost sight either of themselves or of the other side. In a long letter in *Prison Notes* to a friend who had counselled surrender, Barbara says about true non-violence, "We are not trying with it to force those opposing us to their knees; we are trying to force them to look at a situation in a new way." This letter is to me the most eloquent and persuasive of all Barbara's essays about non-violence; it is full of magical examples like little parables. It has a marvellous ease or argument without insistence or aggression. I think of her there, unreeling the roll of toilet paper she was writing on, sitting in the abominable prison cage and ordering her thoughts as though she were in a quiet study, and I am truly awestruck.

Living With Our Lives: A Political Portrait of Barbara Deming

If the mainstream of Barbara's life and art has been the non-violent exercise of love, it is entwined with her other great theme, the finding of one's life. Very often the successful exercise of love will help in the finding of one's life; this is the unspoken hope. Barbara's political strength is that it is not political in the dry and impersonal sense of that word, the kind of politics that affirm that the end counts more than the means. The end is there as a goal but it can only be arrived at in its fullest sense by giving one's whole attention to the justice of the means. For Barbara, the means to her ends are arrived at through the living of her life and no one else's, her own life which she cannot live without. When she came out as a lesbian every part of her was finally in harmonious relation; this was her life, as a non-violent radical lesbian artist. Part of her personal revolution was to break with the radical mainstream, to engage her male friends in courteous argument that envisions a new world illuminated by women's insights. But her changes of perspective have never changed the essential being, and her patient voice can always be heard above the storm, pleading for non-violent solutions, giving counsel against despair.

Reading Barbara's work, one sees that even when she seemed to herself to be groping in the dark she had begun to explore the themes that dominate her life. Long before coming out as a lesbian (though she lived as one) she had written her book about films of the 40s, which is, through film images, a study of ways in which people hide the truth about themselves. The book was finished in 1950 but was not published until 1969. Rereading it after an interval of twenty years she had seen it as still relevant, had seen that overall it reflects a national malady which had worsened with the Vietnam War—"a deep crisis of faith." In the films of the 50s a new note of rebellion is occasionally sounded, though in most of them she sees only stark nihilism. "Fortunately," she says at the end of the book, "there are dreams that are dreamed outside the confines of our movie houses," and she quotes from Dante's *Inferno*, when Dante and Virgil emerge from hell, "here it is morning, when it is evening there." The psychic image of America that films portray is infernal, and the films are like wishful dreams, she says, where "one can discern quite clearly the condition from which a man wants to escape, but never the more difficult, the real hope he might have of escaping from it, never, that is, his real strength."

Barbara has changed the title of her book from *A Long Way from Home to Running Away from Myself* and the change of titles measures the change in her in the course of those twenty years. The early title is a much less precise metaphor for the subject of the book than the later one, from which another leap will take her to the watchword of "we cannot live without our lives." In her own self she has known the contradiction between "the condition from which a man wants to escape,"¹ and "the real hope he might have of escaping from it... his real strength." Some of her short stories and many of her poems are about states of psychic imprisonment: hopeless love, hopeless anger, the shutting tight of the heart. All the anguish of her life is concentrated in "An Illness," in *Wash Us and Comb Us*, in prayer-poems in which she wages a blind struggle for life, or asks to see, to be made whole, to find what she seeks, or find the strength to bear physical pain. As she turns away from her personal inferno, her prayers turn outward—to her dead friends, to the dying world,

"May we be brave enough to be changed!
Each of us! May each of us learn to be
born!"

Her own "real hope" which is discernible in her entire work has become the real strength of actually having escaped from a condition of bondage, a state from which she can tell others that this escape is possible. She has, in fact, learned "to be born," perhaps learned to die, for being born is the state that will illuminate death.

1. cf. *We Cannot Live Without Our Lives*, p. 73—"In those days I was a ghost of myself—as all women were, not yet quarreling consciously with the use of the word 'man' as generic."

In her lifetime, Barbara has undergone a succession of births into circles of understanding. She took part in the creative beginning of every revolution, when the going was hardest and demanded the most courage, but gave the most convincing evidence of the capacity of human beings for love and fellowship. It gave her the strength, too, to bear the inevitable disappointments, and the seeming impossibility of holding to the first ideal of a unified cause. In almost every case, a victory was won: the ban on testing in the atmosphere, the beginning of the end of segregation, the end of the Vietnam War. Now as we look at the world-wide violence of war, racism, torture and the poisoning and rape of the earth, we see that victories are never fully won. But Barbara belongs to the strong in spirit who are capable of generating hope because they do not lose hope. It is as though her passage through hell had made her

strong enough to keep on hoping; her own victory over fear and pain and discouragement seems to generate other peoples'. *Prison Notes* tells of her first great physical and moral trial, taking life from the example of the others and giving life to them by her own example, and tells how their combined force finally cracked the will of a whole city and changed hate, if not to love, at least to respect. She has used all her gifts as an artist, and the compassion and patience her training in non-violence has given her, in telling how in this confrontation with blindness and bigotry and heartlessness, with the injustice that speaks always in the same smooth voice and strikes out with the same cruelty, tiny changes work to penetrate solid rock and break it up.

Barbara's intense study of films had accustomed her to look and listen, and this habit (together with the ability to take notes in the dark in speed-writing) made her an exceptional reporter, but her reporter's objectivity is illuminated by her own light, which is her belief (like the Quaker belief) in the light of every human being. The dregs of humanity pass through her cell in the Albany jail, or yell or curse outside it, but she never feels disdain for them. Instead she reports the flash of humanity or wit that makes us look at them in a new way. One of the most beautiful passages in the book is where she recalls her first jail experience in the New York Women's Detention Center, how listening to the cries of the prisoners in other cells, she thinks, "See to what a hardly human condition the human being can be reduced." And then the prisoners begin to imitate animal sounds and she feels "all at once light of heart." "I reach out and grasp one of the bars of the cage with my hand... I feel a queer stirring in me, and it is as though my heart first bursts the bars that are my ribs, then bursts the bars of this cell, and then travels with great lightness and freedom down the corridor and into each stinking cell, acknowledging: Yes, we are all of us one flesh." Her supreme gift is the gift of attention of body, heart and mind. Her attention is not deflected by murderous words that come out of people's mouths; if the words make her despairing, her despair leads to a question: why? what does it mean? to the effort to understand the will-to-murder. She has an uncanny power to hear and see people when they reveal themselves most fully, and the people in her books seem to stand in the light of what matters, what reveals their individuals souls. This power is visible in all her pieces about people in the context of political actions (*Prison Notes: Dialogues in Cuba* and *The May Day Tribe in We Cannot Live Without Our Lives*; and *Notes After Birmingham* and *Mud City in Revolution and Equilibrium*) and makes each piece a kind of real-life morality play without any of the stiff sententiousness of that old form of drama. Their persuasiveness lies in small bits of evidence of defiant courage and gaiety, of trust passed from person to person, and each is magically alive so that their persuasiveness has an extra dimension, that of living human beings.

Of all the miracles Barbara has lived, none seems more miraculous than her friendship with Ray Robinson, a black prize fighter who became her friend on the Québec to Guanta-

namo Walk and was in the Albany jail for 51 days. Each was profoundly searching her/his way in the loving comradeship of the Walk, and the jail experience brought them together in a new way, but the letters between them tell of the time afterwards, of Barbara's painful effort to make Ray understand the changes in her life, her coming out as a lesbian, the importance to her of this struggle, and Ray's insistence on his own struggle toward "Total Revolution." With revolution, he says, Barbara's problems "will be solved mainly because the overall prize is so big, so great and beautiful, that what you think is a big big problem is just a mild stepping-stone." The letters that follow eloquently expose two kindred souls that are now in conflict because their choices have separated them. Barbara must follow his way, says Ray, while Barbara pleads for her own way, her own life. Finally, in his last letter to her, Ray has understood; he has met Rita Mae Brown, has respected her courage, has listened and thought. "Yes, we have been strong strength for each other," he says at the end, and Barbara, who has felt "chided" by him now replies in the fulness of her relief, "Ray, very dear brother, how happy your letter made me."

In Barbara's letters one never loses sight of the profoundly human person who is pleading a cause, not as a lawyer would, but with the desire to bring about what Mary Daly has called "the sisterhood of man." She is widely read in politics, in literature, and in the new and old literature of women. I remember my surprise a few years ago when she told me that she only had time now to read books by and about women, but I came to share her feeling that it will take the rest of our lives to catch up, to get some sense of women's history and of women's achievement, for we have spent most of our lives living men's history and reading men's books. But she does not believe in the polarization of groups which becomes the dogmatism of separatism, and she has always attempted to arbitrate between men and women, to discover men's fears and try to calm them without compromising her new life as a radical lesbian. Perhaps her position was stated most fully in "Women and the Peoples' Party," which was her own program for an ideal political party first proposed by Arthur Kinoy: "First we have to confront the truth that we are 'perennial outsiders in a man's world,'" the latter a quotation from Mary Daly in *Beyond God the Father*. We have to create a new space for ourselves, said Barbara, and again quotes Mary Daly, "the power of presence that is experienced by those who have begun to live in the new space radiates outward, attracting others." But in the creation of a Peoples' Party, Barbara saw it as necessary to persuade men "to desert patriarchal space. Until more and more men in that party begin to live in the new space, too, the women's movement will of necessity exist on the boundary even of the party."

The Peoples' Party never got off the ground, and in the ten years since Barbara wrote her essay, Mary Daly appears to have become less optimistic about the possibility of a "sisterhood of man." But Barbara continues to seek answers to the question she poses at the end: "the deepest question we have to consider: what is the best way to structure the party to make it possible for us truly to bring ourselves into each others' presence, and into our own presence?"

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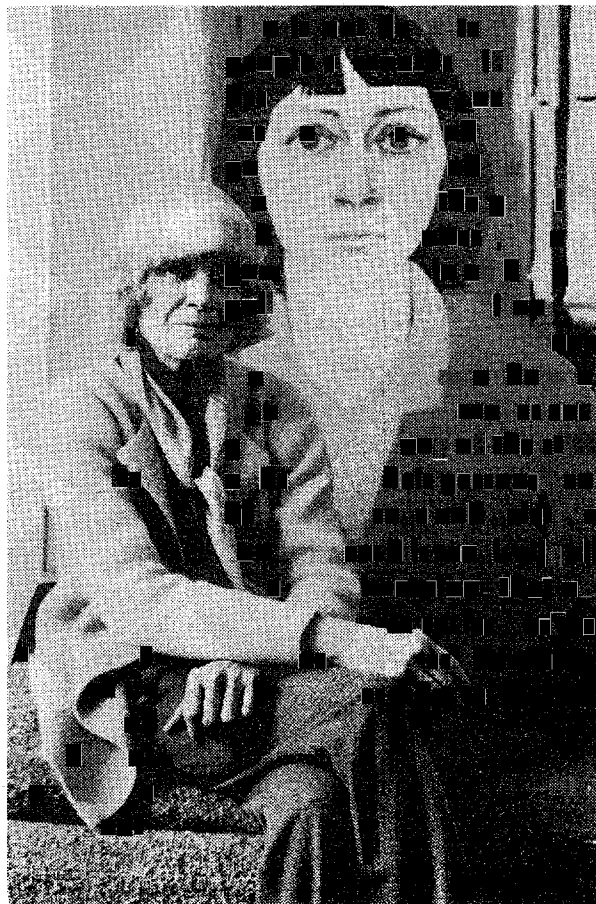
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Mary Meigs is a Montréal painter and author of Lily Briscoe: A Self-Portrait and The Medusa Head.



ARTS



Nir Baraket

Gender Bender on Cloud Nine

by Amanda Hale

Cloud Nine, by British playwright Caryl Churchill, is about sexual politics. It is billed as "a comedy of multiple organisms" and will likely be considered outrageous by Toronto audiences for its frank sexual sequences. But what is in fact most radical about *Cloud Nine* is the political content. Churchill has managed to dramatize some major feminist concerns in a highly entertaining manner, and without trivializing them.

The first act is set in Africa in 1880. The colonial mentality of the Victorian era is echoed by the colonization of women within the family. The play opens with a family grouped for a photograph: Clive, the father; Betty, his wife, played by a man because "I am a man's creation as you see, and what men want is what I want to be"; Edward, their young son, played by a woman; Victoria, their daughter, played by a doll; the mother-in-law; the Scottish governess; and Joshua, the black houseboy, played by a white man because "My skin is black but oh my soul is white. I hate my tribe. My master is my light." The device of casting white as black, adult as child, male as female, and vice versa, highlights the exaggerated role-stereotyping of the period. Edward is constantly scolded for playing with his sister's doll. He is being trained for manhood, is told the "a boy has no business having feelings," and is made to witness the beating of the black stableboys.

The African scenes play against a background of tribal warfare. Distant drums are heard and the gravity of the situation is kept from the women, who must be protected from the truth at all costs. The exception is Mrs. Saunders, a spunky widow who, being independent and sexually available to Clive, "does not require protection in the same way."

Betty lives for Clive but is nevertheless drawn into a passionate but unconsummated romance with Harry Bagley, a dashing explorer who is a homosexual and a pederast. Little Edward idolizes Harry. Joshua also has sex with Harry, in the stable. But when Harry mistakenly makes a play for Clive the game is up. Clive has been waxing eloquent about the dark evil forces of woman and the bright flame that burns between men, thus misleading Harry into a pass. Clive is disgusted by the revelation of Harry's "disease"—even

more dangerous than diphtheria. And how shocking to think that rivers might be named after him.

The only solution is for Harry to marry the first available woman, which turns out to be Ellen, the governess, who is a lesbian on the rebound from a rejection by Betty. "Don't be silly," Betty tells Ellen, "You don't feel what you think you do. It's the loneliness here and the climate is very confusing."

Meanwhile Joshua has informed Clive that his wife and Harry have been kissing. Betty grovels at Clive's feet, begging forgiveness for her indiscretion with Harry, knowing full well that Clive is in Mrs. Saunders' bed every night. We know she is dependent. There is no way out. And her mother is there to reinforce her sense of duty, lecturing to her about "the one flesh" and the sanctity of marriage.

The Victorian era, as the heyday of the British Empire, is notable as a time when social values reflected national policy. Imperialism, with its male bonding and superiority over the colonized nations, becomes the perfect metaphor for dominance of male over female. The white-identified black man and the male-identified wife are significantly at loggerheads. They become rivals for the love of Clive, the master, who bonds with Joshua against Betty. The servant and the wife, although they have so much in common, are set against each other in a relationship of hatred and betrayal; the very same "divide-and-conquer" power politics that men use to control women. But all this is sub-text. In choosing the exact metaphor, the playwright is able to concentrate on entertainment—and the play is hilariously funny—while the situation speaks for itself, clearly though tacitly.

One of the most transparent and chilling moments in the play occurs in the first act when Joshua takes advantage of his master's absence to insult Betty by refusing to obey her order. She turns to her son Edward, who is only a child. "Edward, are you going to stand there and let a servant insult your mother?" The boy tries to assert himself and is laughed at by Joshua. In the extremity of the situation, Edward apes his father: "You fetch her sewing at once, do you hear me? You move when I speak to you, boy." And the triangular balance of power, submission and reliance is established. "Yes sir, Master Edward sir," says Joshua, and exits. "Edward, you were

wonderful!" Betty gushes, and tries to embrace him, but the child pulls away, "Don't touch me!" The tangle of his emotions is palpable.

The second act is set in a park in London, England. Although the year is 1980, the characters have aged only 25 years. And all the actors change roles. There are no gender reversals here except for a 5 year old girl who is played by the actor who played Clive in the first act. Betty is played by the women who played Edward, and Edward, now grown up and gay, is played by the man who played Betty. Edward's lover is played by the former Joshua, Victoria the doll is now a real woman played by the former mother-in-law, and she is having an affair with a lesbian played by the actor who played the lesbian governess. Victoria's husband is played by the former explorer, Harry.

Sexual shenanigans and dramatic changes in lifestyle go on against a background of mundane domesticity. The characters chat on park benches while their children play. Edward is the park gardener. His lover goes to the park to pick up young men, and to reminisce about his silent, six-minute sexual encounter on the train between Victoria and Clapham with a librarian from Walthamstow.

There is a drunken invocation of the Goddess in the park by Edward, Victoria and Lin, her lover, echoing a sequence in Act One when Joshua told little Edward an African creation myth and then denied it as a bad story and untrue. "Adam and Eve is true. God made man white like him and gave him the bad woman who liked the snake and gave us all this trouble." The myth is reclaimed in Act Two with considerable hilarity and a refreshing lack of reverence.

Playwright Caryl Churchill is able, unobtrusively, to convey a certain amount of history and feminist rhetoric through the character of Victoria, who fancies herself as an intellectual. Her major conflict is whether or not to accept a job offer in Manchester which would mean living apart from her husband and child. The decision is suspended while she explores her sexual identity with Lin.

Betty leaves Clive (who does not appear in Act Two) and becomes a real person. Her coming to selfhood is in fact the central theme of the play. Her children can't stand her: "Everything I touch shrivels straight up."

She's filled with self-hatred: "I've never been so short of men's company that I've had to bother with women," she says defensively. "They don't have such interesting conversations as men. There has never been a woman composer of genius. They don't have a sense of humour. They spoil things for themselves with their emotions. I can't say I do like women very much, no." Betty does at least learn that she exists, and is well on the way to liking herself by the end of the play. *Cloud Nine* dramatizes the phases of self-discovery, from non-existence: "I thought if Clive wasn't looking at me there wasn't a person there," to consciousness, anger, guilt, and finally self-acceptance. The play ends with 1980 Betty embracing her former 1880 colonized self.

There are few shows one can attend as a feminist without being offended at one level or another. *Cloud Nine* is such a show, because the thinking behind it is so clear, and the attitude is right. It really isn't content that counts but the reason for presenting it, which of course determines the way in which it is presented.

Cloud Nine draws on a variety of theatrical traditions, including vaudeville, sex farce, and British pantomime. It was first produced in 1979 by the Joint Stock Theatre Group, a London collective using a developmental workshop process. It was subsequently produced off-Broadway where it ran for more than two years and won three OBIE and two Drama Desk Awards. The Toronto production certainly does justice to a fine script and is highly recommended as an excellent evening of entertainment. Bill Glasco directs a talented cast made up of Benedict Campbell, Geraint Wyn Davies, Nora McLellan, Jim Mezon, Fiona Reid, Brenda Robins, and R.H. Thomson. *Cloud Nine* is a challenging play for the actors, particularly on the physical level, due to the frantic pace and the many costume and role changes. The performance by this company of actors is a delight to watch. Minimal sets and elaborate costumes are designed by Cameron Porteous, with lighting by Jeffrey Dallas. The show opened on February 14 and runs for ten weeks at the Bayview Playhouse. Another Caryl Churchill play, *Top Girls*, will open at the Tarragon Theatre on May 24.

Disabled Women: Dispelling the Shadows

Reviewed by Chris Lawrence

Voices from the Shadows, by Gwyneth Matthews. Toronto: Women's Press, 1984

Voices from the Shadows is a combination of autobiographical material and interviews with other disabled women. The author is from Nova Scotia, as were the women interviewed. Matthews wrote the book because she was approached by the Nova Scotia government to do research and write a paper on disabled women for the International Year of Disabled Persons. Having completed five months of interviews and a "seventy-four

page effort," the Nova Scotia government refused to publish it because it was "too depressing."

Gwyneth Matthews's personal story is told openly and movingly. She exposes much of herself, and as a result takes some real personal risk, leaving the reader involved with her struggle to learn to survive as a healthy and happy disabled person. Matthew's message is very much that "my body may be disabled, but I am not!"

However, my overwhelming feeling while reading the book was frustration. I had the

feeling Matthews had just been dropped into the world recently, missed the women's movement, and even now is missing the exciting organizing that is going on among the disabled.

Matthews discusses the issue of sexuality at length; heterosexuality that is. Only in the foreword does she acknowledge that lesbianism exists, and then it is clearly mentioned as an afterthought. Matthews focusses her concern on the lack of information for the disabled women on sexuality, the lack of self-esteem among the disabled women themselves, and the fact that men do not see handicapped women as being sexual. In the context of the women's movement this stuff is old hat, albeit more severe for the disabled woman. Good material on female sexuality only began to appear since the movement, and came from the movement. Self-esteem for women in a world that hates women is a hard struggle for all of us, and has been a major part of feminist therapy and self-help. This is a world where men leave wives/lovers because they are too fat, too old, or the kids are a pain. In this context, it is not surprising that disabled women have trouble attracting male sexual partners. Men do, however, see them as appropriate objects of sexual abuse, a common experience among disabled women; but Matthews cites only one case of this and does not follow through with any comment or analysis.

On matters of paid work, Matthews tell another not surprising story of discrimination, but again she misses the point. Mat-

thews's assumptions about women's work undermines both able and disabled women. She describes women's work as sedentary in nature. "In fact," she says, "the majority of jobs women do would seem tailor-made for the disabled." She sees women's work as being clerical, not management or trades, and makes no comment on the low wages of these jobs, or the boredom many women experience while doing them.

Without question, the best part of the book is the introduction by Pat Israel and Cathy McPherson. They make the connections that Matthews misses. They pay attention to the role of women in this society and how it affects the lives of disabled women. Say Israel and McPherson, "Disabled women are susceptible to all the restrictions of being disabled in addition to society's expectations of them as women." In the few pages of the introduction, more is said about what is happening, why it's happening and what more needs to happen than in the rest of the book put together.

Although the book is beginning to tell the stories of our disabled Canadian sisters, and is therefore welcome, I can only hope that more will follow quickly. I am disappointed with the lack of feminist analysis the book brings to the issues. Surely a feminist perspective is not a lot to expect from a Women's Press publication.

Chris Lawrence is manager of a housing cop in Toronto.

Antigone:

Classical Agonies

by Patricia O'Leary

It has often been said that when women commit themselves to a cause such as a revolution or a resistance movement, they are far fiercer than men. Maybe such a struggle is only thinkable if it affects the core of a woman's life; therefore it *must* be won. No waffling rules, no tempering of the goal can be allowed, no Geneva Convention-type game playing can be possible.

The classical Greek mythical heroine Antigone is a prime example of such unswerving moral purpose, particularly in contrast to the pragmatic military and political outlook of her uncle, King Creon. As the story goes, Oedipus, King of Thebes, left the leadership to his sons Eteocles and Polynices, to rule in turn. But when Eteocles refused to give up the throne after his turn, a civil war erupted, and both sons were killed. The throne fell to their uncle, Creon, who had supported Eteocles. He decreed that Eteocles was to be buried as a hero, and Polynices was to be left lying outside the city gates to rot, unburied.

It was terribly important to the Greeks to bury their dead, because their souls could not otherwise cross the river of death, and had to wander up and down the banks for eternity. It was a family's duty to perform this last service for the dead, but Creon was more concerned about maintaining order in the city and establishing his own power than he was in ensuring his nephew's place in Paradise.

Creon ordered that anyone attempting to bury Polynices be put to death, but Antigone,

Polynices' sister, crept out the city gates before dawn and heaped earth on his body. She believed that it was her familial duty to bury him, even though she knew what the punishment would be.

Creon had to make an example of those who disobeyed to bolster his tenuous rule, but he didn't want to have to kill his own niece; not only was he fond of her, but she was a member of the royal family, and she was also going to marry his son Haemon. Creon tried desperately to find a way for Antigone to pretend that she had not broken the law, but she would have none of it. She was fully aware of what she had done and was prepared to pay the price. So Creon had no choice but to put her to death.

This legend has been dramatized to great effect, first by Sophocles in about 400 BC, and much later by Jean Anouilh, who used the story in 1943 to illustrate the Nazi invasion of France. The most recent production of Anouilh's play, at Toronto's Theatre Plus, sets the play in a South American republic. The transposition is an attempt to make the conflict more timely, but it isn't really necessary and doesn't add much to our perspective. Since Anouilh himself stuck closely to the original Greek story, the viewer (this viewer anyway) tends to see it as an ancient Greek play. This doesn't detract from its effectiveness, however; the Antigone legend is a universal comment on the conflict of moral vs. pragmatic action, and nothing is lost by accepting it in the original. ●



Warland and Scheier: Instinct for Life

A Gathering Instinct by Betsy Warland.

Toronto: Williams-Wallace, 1981

The Larger Life by Libby Scheier. Toronto: Black Moss Press, 1983

Reviewed by Alexa DeWiel

In junior high school I worked in the library for a while helping the librarian stack books. She was the old style who gave librarians a bad name, decrepit and somewhat berserk. I asked her one day what she liked about her work and she said it was being able to caress the books. Well, that gave my best friend and me a good hoot; we mimicked her for months. It's only recently, surrounded by the glitter and gutlessness of so much that we pay to see and rewind on our video cassettes, that I have re-interpreted her sentiments, and appreciate with new fervour, the joy of tucking a good book of poems under my arm, to leaf through it, to touch it, to turn to my favourite pages again and again.

Betsy Warland's *A Gathering Instinct* is such a one. It is Warland's first collection and holds much promise for the future. Under her pen the common problems and concerns of human existence, the disintegration of relationships with lovers, the disillusionment of young women with Man, the proximity of death, deftly come to life. On the separation from her lover, the one that takes place first in the imagination, ("Confession"), she says: "I have borrowed/ your boredom/ when I needed to/ feel safe/ I have carried it/ in my hand/ like a favourite book/ its binding broken/ from familiarity/ ... I have listened to your lethargy/ like a bedtime story/ which soothes/ a surreal mind/ until now I have been/ thankful for/ the tender touch/ of a tedious life."

Similarly, we are probably all familiar with the private, censoring sense of disgust one has of the Other when respect fades but habits remain: "when we're hiking/ you always walk ahead,/ examining seed pods/ and lichens on trees,/ dreaming of how/ you would rearrange this land/ if it were your property." ("What We See")

The real treasures in this collection are found in the segment entitled "Rituals for Parting," which chronicles the death of a friend. Regard: "I feel the rhythm between us,/ harmonious strokes/ of companions in a canoe/ murmuring, gliding, beneath summer blue./ Then the words/ tumble from your mouth/ like the whirring down on Hiro-

shima... chemotherapy/ weekly/ pain killers/ advanced/ We are calm." Warland's poems have a lyrical, clean quality which enhances the spirit and survives the grief.

* * *

How hellishly difficult it is for heterosexual women to know so much about oppressive male behaviour towards women on the domestic front and yet to be passionately involved with a man. I myself gave up this contradiction some years ago and it is only with acquired clearheadedness that I can afford to give my women friends all the support they can take. They need it. Scheier's *The Larger Life* opens with a poem about pornography in intimacy, "The Hard Work of Flying:" "sit with your legs apart, he says, and open/ your shirt to the fourth button/ he arranges her like a still life/ some evenings when sex diffuses/ in the humid August air/ she follows each direction; curious/ to see what image will emerge/ what objects he will need/ to complete the picture/ or maybe he will find all the/ raw materials right there/ on her body or even his."

The violent undercurrent flows freely, throughout the first half of the book. In "Violence," for example, Scheier justifies the brutality of some forms of heterosexual sex with the rationale that this energy is the reason "why some animals eat others/ and seeds break painfully through pods/ to grow." The message is clear. It's a violent world and adaptation takes place right into the sheets. "Barbie and Ken" expresses this view best of all: "Barbie has good posture/ long legs/ and a wide-eyed stare/ Barbie is clean/ completely clear/ ... but if Ken doll is quick/ he can bang her from/ behind/ and leave her weepy/ in tennis skirt and red convertible." Scheier's language is acute and muscular, blunt in the manner we have come to associate with American roots.

"Fetal Suite" is a unique pregnancy poem unmarked by the sentimentality one expects in having-baby poems: "the baby is a week late/ I'm sure it is petrifying/ into stone beneath my skin/ it will stay there forever/ a secret monument against/ my desire to create life."

Several of the last poems are dedicated to women and the absence of Scheier's bellicose voice heralds a thoughtful, less victimized view of the world. Her anger is justified, her civility is appreciated.

Alexa DeWiel is an Ottawa short-story writer and poet.

Alice Walker: An Iconoclast in the Garden

Reviewed by Anne Cameron

In Search of our Mothers' Gardens by Alice Walker. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983

"Womanist is to feminist as purple to lavender."

Alice Walker defines her work as "womanist," and at the very beginning of this book provides us with a clear definition of what the word means. Part of the definition is: "Traditionally capable, as in: 'Mama, I'm walking to Canada and I'm taking you and a bunch of other slaves with me.' Reply: 'It wouldn't be the first time.'"

Alice Walker obviously doesn't pay too much attention to what is and is not 'politically correct.' "... We were treated to a lec-

ture on the black woman's responsibilities to the black man. I will never forget my sense of horror and betrayal when one of the panelists said to me (and to the rest of that august body of black women gathered there): "The responsibility of the black woman is to support the black man; *whatever* he does." ... It occurred to me that my neck could be at that minute under some man's heel and this woman would stroll by and say 'Right on'."

I have read this collection of essays twice, and celebrated both times. Walker is not ashamed that she is a strong woman, she is not ashamed to have and hold an opinion that might not be the current vogue. She does not seem to believe that anger is something to be contained, eventually overcome, and she is beautifully unafraid of pin-pointing racism and sexism wherever she encounters them.

At a time when many self-appointed femin-

ists are worrying about the future of the feminist movement, Walker offers us a vision of why it is things seem to have ground to a halt, and what it is we can do to ensure that we ourselves don't similarly grind into immobility and sink into the mire of despair and depression.

There were times, reading this book, I felt Walker has not yet accepted the idea that behind most of the ills of the world there is a patriarchy composed of less than four per cent of the population, a patriarchy that has us all arguing capitalism vs marxism, black vs white, tall vs short, fat vs thin, a patriarchy so certain of the success of its tactic "divide and conquer" that it doesn't even bother to keep the tactic a secret, but rather boasts of it openly. To often I felt "the white man" was taking the pie in the face when the pie ought to have been spread wider, splattered on more faces, and the custard shared. The patriarchy is not

just 'white,' and the threat of nuclear hell is not one that comes only from 'white' idiots. Idiots come in all colours, shapes and sizes, and I wondered uncomfortably when Walker would realize that the black man whose heel might well have been on her neck is a product of more than exposure to whiteness; hatred of women has existed in all cultures and colours for too long to continue to blame only one spectrum of the rainbow.

But the discomfort I felt over that was lessened by Walker's daring exposure of the racism that is so close to the core of too much of the wishy-washy academic and quasi-intellectual rhetoric of the "feminists" who seem to think women's struggle for equality and freedom is something new, something that happened in the past ten years, something that came from the white university students.

A feminist reviewer, in dealing with my book *Daughters of Copper Women*, wondered where the native women of Aousat had heard of the feminist movement and said, somewhat snidely I thought, that she doubted they had heard of it on CBC radio. The obvious presupposition being if Little White Mother doesn't tell the native women about feminism they will never hear of it, that if the elitists don't share their wisdom and wonderfulness, the rest of us will wallow forever in ignorance and oppression.

I have met and talked with a feminist academic with a master's degree who did not know about the British Suffragettes, did not know about the involvement of working class women in the growth of the trade union movement, and was visibly surprised that the idea of equality for women hadn't started at white upper and upper middle-class US university women's level.

Women of colour, immigrant women, minority women do not need those of us who have been painted the colour of milk to tell them about struggle for equality, they do not need elitists interpreting for the poor benighted working class, do not need professors and professionals advising the parents of students in working class and immigrant population schools, do not need condescension of any kind.

Repeatedly, Alice Walker provides examples from her own experience of the kind of ethnocentric, navel-gazing, myopic thoughtlessness which has done much to divide the women's movement; done much to turn many women against "feminists" and "feminism," and to look for terms of their own choosing to describe themselves.

By now many women have read, or at least heard about, Walker's novel, *The Color Purple*, and the awards Walker has won for that beautiful and inspiring novel. *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens* thrilled me every bit as much as the novel, and to my mind, it deserves just as many awards; possibly more. Read it, listen, and learn about courage.

Anne Cameron is a writer, author of *Daughters of Copper Woman* (Press Gang, 1982), living in Powell River, BC.

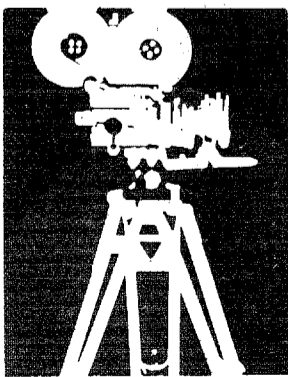
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Anthro-apologetics

Harems and Other Horrors: Sexual Bias in Behavioural Biology, by Anne Innis Dagg. Waterloo, Ontario: Otter Press, 1983.

Reviewed by Judith Johnson

I used to think that behavioural biologists who justified sexist ideas using studies of non-human animals did so by choosing to study and discuss only species in which males are dominant. It turns out that they are not that selective. In *Harems and Other Horrors*, Anne Innis Dagg documents many cases where biologists have used misleading terminology, misquoted each other and ignored even their own observations in order to arrive at conclusions which are in line with their sexist bias. She takes a careful look at many "facts" about male and female behaviour reported in scientific journals, in textbooks and the mass media, and shows them to be false.

As promised in the title, the term "harem" proves to be a horror. An entire chapter is devoted to showing how this term has been misused. For most of us, "harem" suggests a group of females owned by a male who has exclusive breeding rights. That certainly seems to be the intended meaning in the following passage, taken from a book on animal behaviour:

When new males take over a pride (of lions), killing or driving out the former masters of the harem, they kill all existing cubs as a matter of course, and continue to kill any cubs engendered by the unseated males as they are born. (My emphasis.)

Dagg points out that lion prides consist of "an old female, her mature daughters and their offspring," with the adult males in the pride being "temporary adherents to a mother-lineage group." Lionesses feed and protect themselves and their young; when in heat, they may mate with several males inside

or outside their prides and usually initiate the copulation. Neither males nor females are dominant, but "the leader of a mother-lineage group tends to be the oldest female." There is no evidence for the type of infanticide described. This widely accepted idea arose because scientists made the mistake of assuming that the males had exclusive breeding rights in "their" prides. The term "harem" is commonly used in behavioural biology to refer to any group of animals in which females outnumber males. Species as diverse as kob (a kind of antelope), red deer, seals, sea lions, rhea (ostrich-like birds), tree shrews, black antelope, leaf-nosed bats and jacana (water birds) have been described as having "harems." Dagg shows that the term is as inappropriate for them as it is for lions.

In the chapter on aggression Dagg shows that when female aggression is studied (which isn't often), females are commonly found to be very aggressive. They may be more aggressive than males, particularly but not only when they have young to protect. (This will not surprise anyone who has hiked in bear country.) There is plenty of evidence that many investigators not only do not look for aggression or dominance in females, but also dismiss this kind of behaviour when they find it. In the chapter on dominance, leadership and protection, for example, we find that Yerkes (a well-known primatologist) said:

The... cultural pattern of chimpanzee life... tends to favour the development of capacity for dominance... in the male, and, correspondingly, of subordination... in the female.

He discounted his own observations for two females, in his own words, "because they are highly dominant"! Whether we regard aggression or dominance as indicators of superiority or not, there can be little doubt about the sexist bias involved in downplaying this behaviour in females.

My favourite chapter in *Harems and Other Horrors*, "Me Tarzan, You Jane," deals with sexuality. Here Dagg shows convincingly that biologists have often concentrated on male sexual behaviour while treating females like "part of the furniture." Recently, less biased studies have shown that female choice of mate is important, and active female participation essential for copulation to occur (in rats, gorillas and turtles, for example). By 1976 we even had a word for it, *proceptivity*; behaviour exhibited by a female which "either stimulates or actively increases the probability of male sexual arousal." A comment Dagg does not make is that proceptivity is defined in terms of male arousal and does not cover any aspects of female sexual behaviour which do not include males!

Unfortunately, Dagg concentrates on pointing out sexist language and male-centred research, rather than on discussing the directions that non-sexist research might take. For instance, although Dagg gives examples of non-reproductive behaviour among female animals, she does not ask what significance this behaviour has. The first proof of orgasm in a non-human female was obtained in 1980 (circumstantial evidence had been around for a long time). Uterine contractions accompanied by an increase in heart rate and rhythmic vocal cails were recorded in a female macaque who had mounted and thrust against her female friend. Clearly it would be a mistake to assume that all sexual activity has an exclusively reproductive function. It is simply not known what role non-reproductive sexual activity plays among female animals.

At times, Dagg uses misleading terms herself. At one point she describes an acanthocephalan worm as "clever." This tendency to anthropomorphism is part of a serious problem. The language used by behavioural biologists makes it all too easy for us to hang onto our biases. The use of biased terminology can result in ridiculous claims; this has been shown over and over

again by feminists. Getting non-feminists to recognize and avoid sexist bias has frequently proved to be difficult, or impossible.

The most disturbing aspect of this book is that articles by Dagg on sexism in behavioural biology have been consistently refused publication in scientific journals. In the epilogue to *Harems and Other Horrors* she discusses this: "One of the most important points I made was that scientists have been changing data to make them fit in with their theories." This is a serious charge which ought to be heard. The "reasons" given for refusing publication range from defensive ("I feel that it is unfair that I should be lumped together with others who, no doubt, do take a sexist approach") to downright insulting ("Reaction to words such as 'possession' seem to me as simply silly... If other male conspecifics recognize this situation it can legitimately be termed possession without any violation of the language." (My emphasis)). Some of the referees asked to review Dagg's manuscripts gave favourable reviews; others felt that the work ought to be published even when they had reservations about some aspects of her work. (It is common to ask authors to make changes before publication if this occurs.) One reviewer went as far as to say, "The author does us all a service by pointing out the heavy hand of male bias laid on by the male scientists of previous generations." It seems that what Dagg has run into now is the heavy hand of male censorship. She is to be commended for making her work available. *Harems and Other Horrors* is a valuable resource for scientists who wish to avoid sexist bias in their work, for behavioural biologists who want to understand what is going on in their field, and for any woman who has had the current sociobiological version of "women are naturally inferior" thrown at her.

Judith Johnson is a geology graduate of McMaster University. She is now studying kinesiology at Waterloo.

Media Porn Conference

FROM PAGE 5

from Canada's Media Watch were there as was Janis Andrews, the Vancouver activist who spread the truth about Red Hot Video, almost single-handedly. Pierre Trudeau's Human Rights Adviser was there. So was Holy Blossom Temple's recently appointed Rabbi Elyse Goldstein. It was a remarkably mixed group.

As the applause for Dr. Koop's talk began to die down, a phalanx of women drew up at the side of the auditorium. They looked determined. Something was in the air. Finally, they made their way to the stage for their own variation on an interdenominational service. They unfurled a banner that read "Women's bodies, women's lives, we decide." and Mackinnon read out the women's statement. Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, scheduled to talk about pornography and ethics, put the clergy in their place. "Those of you who hear in confession of a woman being beaten cannot tell her to take those blows." "The Church has to take responsibility for confining women to the role of housewife and child rearer." Rabbi Goldstein has long been active in the women's movement, but the energy and commitment of feminists, the determination of these women not to stay silent, gave her the inspiration to raise a voice that no one had ever heard before, a woman's voice, from the bosom of the clergy, a woman's voice of dissent.

Then Andrea Dworkin appeared, as if she had come down from the mountain. She is indeed our prophet, not only because she spreads the good word, but because she makes those who really don't want to listen cock their ears. You could hear a pin drop. "Thank you," she said, "for taking feminist rhetoric seriously enough to base your studies on it." She *did* express outrage that we would wonder whether a meat hook in a vagina "causes harm." She reminded the audience that this was entertainment. And then to the point: "If you love male supremacy and you abhor pornography, then you don't abhor pornography enough to do anything about it."

Pauline Bart changed her mind and decided not to talk about her research. Instead, she told the audience that when she was completing her Ph.D. thesis, she became pregnant and had an illegal abortion. She almost died from the botched procedure, and if she had, she said, or if she'd had the baby for that matter, she never would have done any of her work on rape, pornography and violence against women. "So don't tell me when I'm at a conference on pornography not to talk about abortion." End of remarks.

At least thirty members of the audience walked out of the women's "demonstration," including Ontario Censor Board Chairman Mary Brown. At the end of the day, the last speaker, a Dr. Rudecki, who specializes in TV violence and who seemed to feel upstaged by the uppity women, exhorted women not to resort to violence in their protests, as if taking ten minutes on the podium, peaceably, and after having been "censored" by conference organizers, could even be breathed in the same breath as the horrifying violence flashed on the screen throughout the day. Dr. Rudecki's parting shot was that women should try something else—like starvation protests. There's consciousness for you: let's fight violence against women by committing actions of violence on ourselves. But consciousness was never built in a day.

Women's silence and pornography have always been closely linked and it was the breaking of that silence that brought the issue into the glare of media attention. By commanding women's silence by attempting to shut women out, conference organizers struck a female nerve that created a kind of magic that day. Many women left feeling more like getting back to the old activism than ever before. The American presence, high-powered and occasionally culturally unaware as it was, still taught many of us a lesson about activism in the real world: it's badly needed and sometimes it can be enormously effective.

The real lesson was: You cannot shut women out. It simply cannot be done. The *Globe and Mail* quoted the beleaguered David Scott as saying that he had "asked the women to leave their guns at home."

Pauline Bart put it best: "Oh, we left our guns at home," she said. "But we brought our politics with us."

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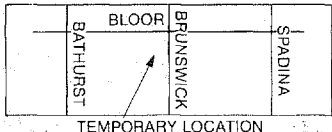
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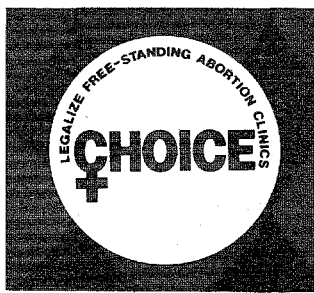
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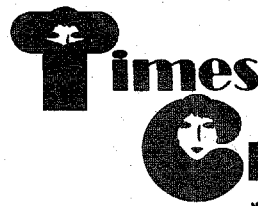
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The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) is a voluntary feminist organization consisting of 240 member groups actively working to improve the status of women.

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Toronto, Ontario M4T 1M9
Tel. (416) 922-3246

Interval House

is holding
The Mother's Day Run-
Sunday May 13

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Help Support Battered Women.

For more information call: (416) 921-7319



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is
Building Women's Culture
To the future!

Happy International Women's Day

TACWL Toronto Area Caucus
of Women and the Law
227 Grenadier Road, Apt. 2, Toronto, Ont. M5R 1R9

International Women's Day Greetings from



Centre for Women's Studies in Education
Women's Education Resources Centre
Canadian Women's History Project
Resources for Feminist Research/
Documentation sur la Recherche
Feministe

The Ontario Institute
for Studies in Education
252 Bloor Street West,
Toronto, Ont. M5S 1V6



The Elizabeth Fry Society
215 Wellesley St. East
Toronto, M4X 1G1
Tel: (416) 924-3708

Women in conflict with law—
A Status of Women Issue
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HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

from
THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
COMMITTEE
PO Box 70, Station F, Toronto
789-4541



Week of March 1

• **Thursday, March 1:** "Desire," an exhibit of women's visual art, a project of Alter/Eros, sponsored by A Space. Gallery 76, 76 McCaul St. Monday to Friday, 10 am to 5 pm; Saturday 12 noon to 5 pm. Info: 977-5311, ext. 262. To Saturday, March 10.

• **Thursday, March 1:** The Theatre Centre presents Nemo Theatre's production of *The Fairies Are Thirsty* (Les Fées ont soif) by Denise Boucher. 666 King St. W. \$5.25, \$7.25. Info: 862-0659. To Saturday, March 17.

• **Thursday, March 1:** Gays and Lesbians at U of T sponsor a Talent Night. Debates Room, Hart House. \$3. 8 pm.

• **Thursday, March 1:** Tarragon Theatre's production of "Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All To You" returns to the Bathurst Street Theatre. Reservations and info: 536-5018. To Sunday, March 4.

• **Thursday, March 1:** 'Until We Part,' play by the Gargoils, at Backspace, Theatre Passe Muraille. Tuesday to Saturday, 8 pm; Sunday matinée, 2:30 pm. \$6 (\$5 unemployed, students, seniors). Info: 363-2416. To Sunday, March 18.

• **Friday, March 2:** "Women and Education to Non-Patriarchal Politics." Centre for Women's Studies in Education, Speaker Series presents Micheline de Seve, University of Québec. OISE, 252 Bloor St. West. Rm 4-411. 12 noon. Info: 923-6641.

• **Friday, March 2:** Women's Open House sponsored by the Gay Counselling Centre of Toronto. 105 Carlton St., 4th Floor. 7:30—10:30 pm. Coffee and refreshments served. Free. All women welcome. Info: 977-2153.

• **Saturday, March 3:** IWD Dance with the Mere Mortals, sponsored by OCAC, proceeds to Pro-Choice Defence Fund. Women and men welcome. 8 pm. Ukrainian Labour Temple, 300 Bathurst St. \$4 to \$7. Info: 789-4541.

Week of March 4

• **Sunday, March 4:** Women and Judaism conference, with speakers Norma Jacob, Rela Monson and Anita Norich. York University. Info: 667-3079. To Wednesday, March 7.

• **Monday, March 5:** The Women's Group, a support group for lesbians. 8 pm. 519 Church St. Info: Raechel, 926-0527. Also Mondays, March 12, 19 and 26.

• **Monday, March 5:** Public forum on Pornography, sponsored by March 8 Coalition. 7:30 pm. Trinity Church, 427 Bloor St. West. Info: 789-4541.

• **Tuesday, March 6:** Lesbian Phone Line, open tonight for calls from women. 7:30—10:30 pm. 960-3249. Also Tuesdays, March 13, 20 and 27.

• **Tuesday, March 6:** Scarborough Women's Centre, workshop on Caring for Elderly Parents. 91 East Park Blvd., Scarborough, Rms 2 and 3. 7:30—9:30 pm. Info: 431-1138.

• **Tuesday, March 6:** Public Forum on Women's Perspective on War and Imperialism. Sponsored by March 8 Coalition. 7:30 pm. Trinity Church, 427 Bloor St. West. Info: 789-4541.

• **Wednesday, March 7:** IWD celebration: "Through Each Others Eyes" at Harbour Castle Hilton, with Anne Mortifee and Cecile Frenette. 5:30 pm. \$40. Info: 864-2080.

OUTSIDE BROADSIDE

TORONTO WOMEN'S EVENTS CALENDAR

MARCH 1984



• **Wednesday, March 7:** "Erotica: a fresh look at love" with Helen Porter. 8 pm. Palmerston Library Theatre. 560 Palmerston (near Bathurst). \$7.50 (\$5 students/seniors). Info: 463-4279.

• **Wednesday, March 7:** Eros East, an exhibit of women's visual art, a project of Alter/Eros, sponsored by A Space. Opening 8 pm. Gallery 940, 940 Queen St. East. Tuesday to Sunday 2 to 7 pm, Wednesday, 2—9 pm. To Wednesday March 21. Info: 466-8840

• **Wednesday, March 7:** Danceworks presents the "Modern Art Variety Show" with performance pieces by Tanya Mars, Marcia Cannon, Johanna Householder, Peter McGehee and Brenda Nielson. At the Rivoli, 334 Queen St. West. \$5. Also March 8 and 9.

• **Wednesday, March 7:** Lesbian Phone Line general meeting. Interested women, prospective volunteers welcome. 7:30 pm. 348 College St., 3rd floor. Info: 960-3249.

• **Thursday, March 8:** The film "The Work-Place Hustle" will be shown, followed by a discussion with Dorothy Moore, co-ordinator of the Sexual Harassment Centre, York University. 4:15 pm. Info: 487-6181.

• **Friday, March 9:** Folksinger/songwriter Sandy Greenberg from Halifax presents "Reflections of Women." Co-sponsored by Womynly Way. New Trojan Horse Café. 179 Danforth Ave. \$4. Info: 461-8367.

• **Saturday, March 10:** IWD Rally, Demonstration and Fair. Convocation Hall, U of T, 11 am sharp. Followed by march to the fair at Jarvis Collegiate, 1 to 4 pm. Childcare: 591-1434, 964-1278. Info: 789-4541

• **Saturday, March 10:** IWD Dance for women, sponsored by Branching Out. 8:30 pm. The Theatre Centre, 167 Church Street (below Shuter). \$5/6, Info: 789-4541.

Week of March 11

• **Tuesday, March 13:** Scarborough Women's Centre workshop on What Do Chiropractors Really Do? Sponsored by U of T Bookroom and OPIRG. 4 pm. Debating Room, Hart House, U of T. Free. Info: 978-3032.

• **Thursday, March 15:** Mary O'Brien speaks on "Reproducing the World." Sponsored by U of T Bookroom and OPIRG. 4 pm. Debating Room, Hart House, U of T. Free. Info: 978-3032.

• **Thursday, March 15:** On-going Women's Co-operative Problem-Solving Therapy and Support Group. Pape and Danforth area. Meets every Thursday, 4:45—6:45 pm. \$20 per week. Info: Arlene Anisman, 469-2725.

• **Thursday, March 15:** "Good Morning Monday," a view of unionized women office workers coping with low and unequal pay, VDTs, families and stressful dead-end jobs. Free film and discussion. Scarborough Women's Centre, 91 East Park Blvd., Scarborough, Rms 2 and 3. 7:30—9:30 pm. Info: 431-1138.

• **Friday, March 16:** WOODS Spring Pot Luck. Bring your favourite dish, a musical instrument if you have one. Non-members welcome (no guest fee). 7:30 pm. RSVP by March 12, to Yvonne: 463-0924.

• **Friday, March 16:** Women's Independent Thoughtz (WITZ). A seminar/discussion group for the exchange of ideas and creative endeavours in art, literature, philosophy and political thought. Topic: Nuclear Ideology. Info: 766-9496 or 536-3162.

• **Saturday, March 17:** Eros West, an exhibit of women's visual art, a project of Alter/Eros, sponsored by A Space. Opening 2 pm. A Space, 204 Spadina Ave. Tuesday to Friday, 10 to 5 pm, Saturday 12 noon to 5 pm. Info: 364-3227. To Saturday, April 14.

Week of March 18

• **Monday, March 19:** Support and social group for black lesbians. For information, call Carol: 968-2137.

• **Tuesday, March 20:** "Since *The Celluloid Closet*," a talk by Robin Wood, Professor of Fine Art, Atkinson College, York University, sponsored by the Lesbian and Gay Academic Society, U of T. Rhodes Room, Trinity College, Hoskin Ave. 8 pm.

• **Wednesday, March 21:** NFB screens "Portrait of the Artist—as an Old Lady," the life and work of Russian-born Paraskeva Clark, now living in Toronto. NFB Theatre, 1 Lombard Street. 12:15 pm. Info: 369-4093.

• **Thursday, March 22:** NFB screens "Not a Love Story," a film about pornography. Palmerston Library, 560 Palmerston Ave. 7:30 pm. Info: 531-2486.

• **Saturday, March 24:** 'Flapper Fever'—a dance party sponsored by Lesbian Mothers' Defence Fund. 9 pm to 1 am. 519 Church Street. \$6 (\$5 advance at Glad Day, Togethers and Toronto Women's Bookstore.)

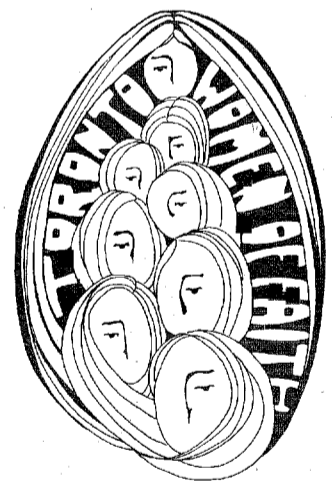
• **Saturday, March 24:** Blues and jazz singer/songwriter Hunter Davis from North Carolina performs at the New Trojan Horse Café, 179 Danforth Ave. Co-sponsored by Womynly Way. \$4. Info: 461-8367.

• **Saturday, March 24:** Gays and Lesbians at U of T present Homo Hop. DJ Ron from MCC. Trinity College Buttery. Devonshire Place. 9 pm. \$4.

Week of March 25

• **Tuesday, March 27:** "Environment Under Attack," a talk by Arlin Hackman, Conservation Director of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. Discussion will include toxic wastes, acid rain, Great Lakes. Main Floor Recreation Room, 140 Carlton St. 7:30 pm. \$3. Info: Jane, 530-4007.

• **Tuesday, March 27:** WOODS Planning Meeting. New members welcome. Community Centre, 519 Church St. 7:30 pm.



• **Wednesday, March 28:** Women and Spirituality: an Inter-faith Event for Women, sponsored by Women of Faith. Brennan Hall, St. Michael's College, U of T. 2 to 10 pm. \$12 (\$7 for limited income). Info: 364-3101.

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

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

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Sandy Greenberg Friday, March 9

Folksinger/songwriter from Halifax, Nova Scotia. Sandy has appeared in folk festivals and cafes across Canada and the USA. Her album "Reflections of Women" is a touching and thoughtful view of women in all walks of life.

Hunter Davis Friday March 23

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WOMEN'S CAMP: Easter weekend at Tapawingo, near Parry Sound. \$75. For info, call Susan, (416) 921-4755.

NOT SO AMAZON SOFTBALL LEAGUE forming this spring. All lesbian women welcome for recreational softball. For further information: (416) 967-7440 or (416) 466-9341. Look for our ad in the next issue of *Broadside*.

MARY DALY will be speaking in Winnipeg on April 26. For more information call (204) 786-7537, ext. 38, or write: Mary Daly Committee, University of Winnipeg Women's Centre, 2L30, 515 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 2E9.

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