

Broadside

A FEMINIST REVIEW

April 1985 NEW COLLEGE \$1.50

Volume 6, number 6



INSIDE BROADSIDE

FEATURE

WHO'S SEX POSITIVE?

More sex is not necessarily better sex, says Susan G. Cole, in an exploration of sex as a social construct of patriarchy. "What feels good" is not a sign of quality but an indication of what we've been taught to expect. Page 8.

NEWS

REPROTECH: Reproductive technology is becoming a commodity women are expected to "consume". But who's in control? Amanda Hale reports on the National Association of Women and the Law conference. Page 4.

GRADE B MEN? Women must bring a new approach to the field of science, said Ursula Franklin at the Women and Science conference in Guelph, and not assume a secondary role in the traditional male hierarchy. Helen Fallding reports. Page 4.

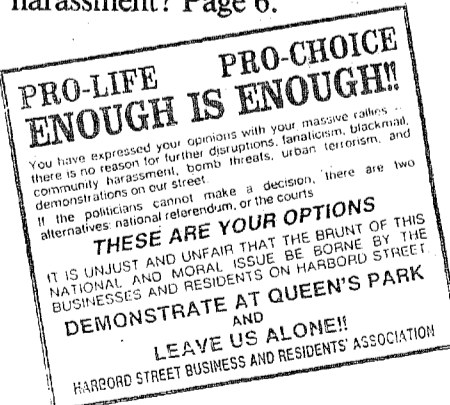
ANZUS ACTION: New Zealand is defying the US by refusing to accommodate nuclear vessels in its waters; and NZ feminists are taking seriously the message of *Carry Greenham Home*, a film about the women's peace camp at Greenham Common in England. T. Brettel Dawson reports. Page 5.

ANGELA ON STAGE: Angela Davis spoke on International Women's Day in Toronto to a capacity crowd, 40% of which was from the Black community. Faith Nolan reports on the talk, and gives her impressions of the evening and of Angela herself. Page 6.

COMMENT

FACTS ON FAC: Varda Burstyn comments on a recent *Broadside* article, and sets the record straight about Feminists Against Censorship and their work on the issues of pornography and sexuality. Movement Comment, page 7.

BUSINESS AS USUAL? The Right to Life demonstrations outside the Morgentaler Clinic in Toronto are disrupting businesses and residents alike. Everyone has the right to protest but, asks Wendy Wine, are the Right to Life's legitimate protest or harassment? Page 6.



ARTS

SUPERMOVIE; *Supergirl* is a movie not to be missed! Mild-mannered Linda Lee whips into her blue costume and blonde hair and sets out on an ovarian quest. A new feminist cult movie, says reviewer Donna Gollan. Page 10.

CURSE OR BLESSING? In Marlene Philip's 7-part audio-

cassette documentary on menstruation, *Blood is for Bleeding*, facts are presented and myths debunked. Reviewed by Alexandra Horsky. Page 11.

BOOKS: Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice*, reviewed by Jean Wilson; Dionne Brand's *Chronicles of a Hostile Sun* and Claire Harris's *Fables from the Women's Quarters*, reviewed by Alexa DeWiel; and poetry anthologies *Full Moon* and *Anything is Possible*, reviewed by Betsy Nuse. Pages 12 and 13.

INSTRUMENTS OF

SCULPTURE: Barbara Louder's medical installation at Gallery 940 in Toronto takes traditional gynecological implements of plastic and steel and turns them into *objets d'arts* in wood. Reviewed by Randi Spires. Page 13.

OUTSIDE BROADSIDE: Don't miss this month's calendar of Toronto women's events for April 1985. Page 15.

LETTERS

Anti-porn law

Broadside:

Eve Zaremba's account of my talk at the University of Toronto on January 12 (*Broadside*, February 1985) bears slight resemblance to what actually occurred. To address the most significant distortions:

1) I was invited to speak about the Minneapolis-style anti-pornography legislation. I did not refuse to debate Susan Cole - I was never asked to. Should any group wish to sponsor such a debate in Toronto and invite me, I would be happy to participate.

2) To suggest that I opposed this legislation "without examining the content or implications of the ordinance" is patently untrue. A major part of my talk was devoted to a point by point examination of the law - its definition of pornography, the four grounds for legal action, and examples of actionable material offered by supporters of the law - illustrated by slides of relevant clauses and Xeroxed hand-outs of the complete law. Hardly the stuff to whip up an emotional frenzy of unthinking opposition.

I took great pains to enumerate the claims

made by proponents of this law, because I believe they do not stand up to close scrutiny. I can understand Zaremba's irritation; for sympathizers, there is nothing so unsettling as looking at it clause by clause. The best argument against the law is to Xerox it, give it out, and let people read it. Thus, the notion that this law empowers women fades, when you realize that complaints about pornography will be made to civil courts, whose judges (male, middle-aged, and conservative) will be empowered to decide what sexually explicit materials fall under the law's definition of pornography, including such vague phrases as "the sexually explicit subordination of women," "postures of sexual submission," and "whores by nature."

Proponents of the law claim that it targets sexually explicit, sexist violence, thus representing a novel and feminist approach to pornography which has little in common with traditional obscenity approaches to restricting sexual imagery. This claim is totally false. Careful reading of the law's text and examples offered by supporters in their own court briefs make it clear that the law covers a great range of material. The legislation does not prohibit just the images of gross sexual violence that most supporters claim to be its target, but in-

stead drifts toward covering an increasingly wide range of sexually explicit material. Despite its feminist disclaimers, the law attacks what traditional obscenity laws have always targeted: sexually explicit words and images.

To claim that this approach is not censorship is mumbo-jumbo, since court orders can be obtained to remove pornography from public view. I call that censorship, as I do the chilling effect this law would have on the creation and distribution of sexually explicit materials. Under the law's most important trafficking section, anyone connected with producing sexually explicit books or images which fall under the law's definition of pornography can be sued - that includes writers, artists, actresses, publishers, distributors, storeowners. And although you may be thinking of *Penthouse* or *Hustler*, the fact is that any citizen could file a suit against sexually explicit materials which in his or her view subordinate women. That means right-wing zealots can file suits against a whole range of feminist materials: Erica Jong's *Fear of Flying*, Tee Corinne's *Cunt Coloring Book*, even *Our Bodies, Ourselves*. The point is that feminists will not control the application of this law. In addition, the chilling effect will operate

before a complaint gets to court. Anyone who dislikes a sexually explicit book displayed in a store or art hung in a gallery can threaten to file a complaint, hastening its disappearance from public view and availability with scarcely a ripple of public attention. For artists and authors trying to create sexually explicit images - why bother? Facing a potentially endless series of civil suits for economic damages suggests that it is easier not to try.

Finally, that this is a civil law - the police are initially not involved - is small comfort, since injunctions can be obtained to remove pornography from public view as nicely as if the cops had seized them. And just who do we think will do the dirty work of collecting fines and seizing work found pornographic - the Girl Scouts? Obviously, the police and other state personnel.

3) To claim that the law is not in effect anywhere in the United States is to dismiss what can be learned from the protracted debates and struggles that have gone on in the past year around these ordinances. These bills have been introduced and voted on in three cities. They are pending in many others. And

Broadside

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Pat Smith: 1950-1985

Pat Smith, printer, publisher, writer, artist and feminist activist was killed Monday, February 25, 1985 in an accident in Vancouver. She was riding her motorcycle and was hit by a van driven by a man who was later charged with impaired driving and criminal negligence.

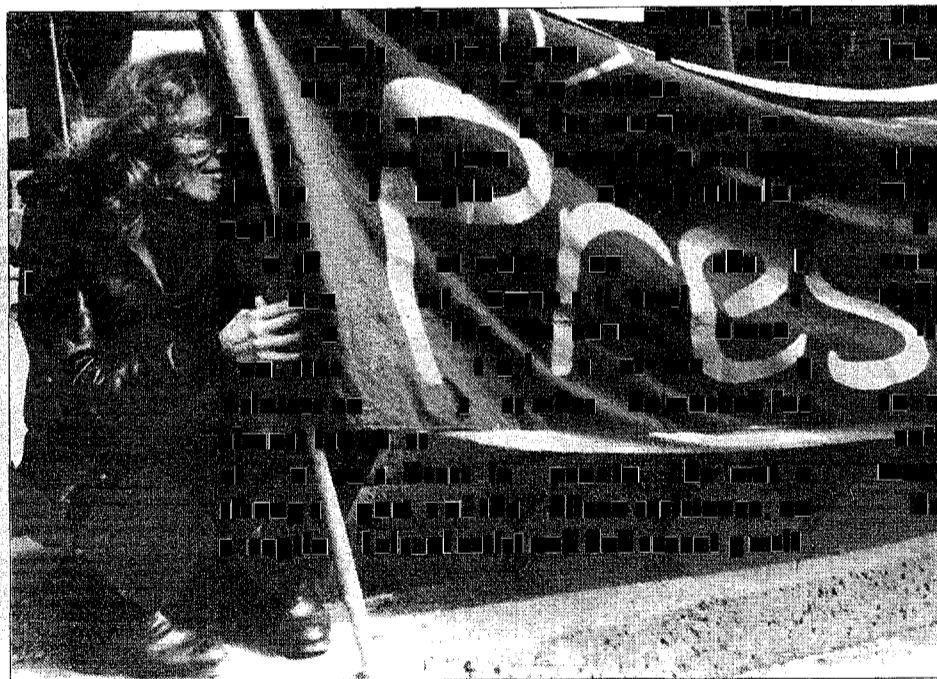
In the 70s, Pat worked on the *Pedestal*, Vancouver's first women's liberation newspaper and at the Vancouver Women's Bookstore. She left a legacy at Press Gang Printers and Publishers where she worked for almost ten years. She had also worked in 1978 at Women's Press in Toronto. She was a strong supporter of the Chilean resistance, an exceptional visual artist and had recently writ-

ten a play which was produced in Seattle about two older women who loved each other.

Pat was unique. She figured out the world for herself and acted from there. She touched people with her ideas, her creativity, her commitment, her gentleness, her sense of humour and her sense of the absurd. She used her creativity to fight for lesbian and women's rights, worker's rights and in support of Third World struggles.

Three hundred people gathered in Vancouver on Sunday, March 3 to mourn her death and celebrate her life. People from many different communities loved Pat Smith.

Pat was Pat and we will miss her.



CES ROSALES

A Tribute

by Annette Clough

The memorial gathering for Pat Smith was an important event in the life of the Vancouver feminist community. We can't say anymore that feminists don't know how to cope with death; it was everything a memorial gathering should be. A hall was rented; there were photos of Pat, many examples of her work (posters, etc.), and there were videos and slides of her. The format was informal; women sang songs that Pat liked, and got up and told stories of their memories of her. There was laughter as well as tears.

The feeling in the room was so strong I felt like crying the minute I walked in; not just because it was a personal loss to me, but because the sense of loss in the community was so palpable, and because it was a stupid waste of a life to be erased by a drunk driver. I think a lot of people now are taking stock in various ways - looking at unfinished business they have with friends, that sort of thing.

One blessing is that Janet (Pat's lover) was able to go to the funeral in Galt, and Pat's family was very supportive of her and the friends who went with her from Toronto. It was also very touching to see Janet's mother sit beside her at the gathering. Her brother was there, too. I hear Janet is all right so far, but the hard part really begins after the excitement of flying around and gatherings is over.

Pat's is the first death in the community since I've been in Vancouver. Of course as we get older there will be more, but this one had a huge impact, whether or not women were actually friends of Pat and Janet.

This tribute is an excerpt from a letter Annette Clough wrote to a friend in Toronto.

EDITORIAL

No Unanimity Here

Since *Broadside* published "Gagged, Bound and Silenced" in November 1981, we have continued to challenge the conventional liberal thinking on the issue of pornography and have urged feminists to break the silence that enshrouds women's reactions to the relentless exploitation of our sexuality.

Most articles, admittedly, have stressed the problem of pornography and not the solutions. But the focus was important, since the fear of censorship has done much to close off the entire discussion of pornography and its dangers.

Recently the treacherous question of remedies has surfaced: the Minneapolis Ordinance was drafted by Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon as an alternative to censor-

ship. The US ordinance, and its proposed adaptation to the Canadian context, is an attempt to define pornography as a practice of sex discrimination and a violation of women's civil rights. It allows women to sue pornographers for the harm caused by pornography.

Last month, *Broadside* reported (in "What's in an Ordinance?" by Eve Zaremba) that many feminists think a Canadian version of the ordinance, drafted in human rights terms, would be a politically dangerous solution. This month, a letter from Carole Vance (editor of *Pleasure and Danger*) and an article by Varda Burstyn (a founder of Feminists Against Censorship) clarify that perspective and provide a feminist expression of an anti-censorship point of view.

Next month, we will publish two more perspectives: one that describes how the ordinance might work, and another that contends that the human rights approach will not be as effective at dealing with pornography as a toughened-up criminal code.

Obviously there is no unanimity in the women's movement on the issues of pornography and censorship, which is why feminists must continue to suggest remedies, to criticize them and to discuss pro-censorship sentiment and anti-censorship politics.

The debate still has a special place on the feminist agenda and it continues to expand. As long as it does, *Broadside* will continue to cover it - from every pro-woman angle possible.

in Indianapolis, the law has been passed, challenged, and struck down as unconstitutional, with that decision being appealed in a higher court. The introduction of each bill has generated intense feminist debate which anyone considering adopting this approach - in original or modified form - would sensibly want to consider. The law's progress in the US poses several important questions, not only about the actual implications and effects of the law, but also about support that right-wing groups have given this legislation and the disturbing alliances some feminists have chosen to make in getting these laws passed. Although in Minneapolis, the ordinance was an initiative with genuine feminist support, in Indianapolis and in Suffolk both the legislative and popular support for these bills were largely right-wing. If we have any brains, we have to ask why.

And as for getting the word from the US of A: The American anti-pornography roadshow has toured Canada repeatedly and been enthusiastically received. Even the FBI got an audience in Toronto. What about hearing the other side?

4) That my presentation about a law which attempts to codify permissible and impermissible sexual words and images elicited a passionate response from the audience is neither surprising nor undesirable. When we consider legislating sexual images, we must inevitably think about our own sexual practices, experiences, fantasies, and wishes. This is not, and should not be, an abstract discussion: this law will have a direct impact on our sexual lives - what we can read, see, create, and possibly imagine. To support this legislation, we must believe that we - feminists - agree on what is pornographic and what is not, and on what sexual images are harmful to women. It is clear from that night's discussion that we do not. That discovery alone should caution us from further empowering the state to enforce sexual norms which even we do not agree on.

In addition, it was plain from the audience's comments what a delicate and tentative area sexuality is for all of us - the site of hurt, pain, anxiety, shame and judgment as well as sensuality and pleasure. We need to create and expand a sexual culture that supports both safety and exploration, while recognizing the diversity of our own sexual experiences and wants. We would do well to think hard about the impact of this legislation and state intervention on our sexual lives, on - in Colette's words - "these pleasures we so lightly call physical."

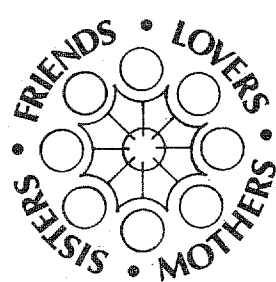
Carole S. Vance
Sunnyside, New York

Eve Zaremba responds:

(The US and Canada really are different. It is not just a figure of speech. Even censorship looks different. For a start we do not have the luxury of deciding whether or not to have it or keep it out. In Canada we have had censorship for years - at the border; in the federal Criminal Code and in films and video, via such infamous provincial bodies as the Ontario Censor Board. In the US, pornography is home grown, not imported; there is no such thing as a federal Criminal Code and in any case every child is brought up to know about the First Amendment. Thus our different perspective on this issue.

In the US, the ordinance is perceived as a great threat; in Canada we can be pardoned for viewing it as a potential improvement on what we already have. We have to be pragmatic; it is totally utopian to believe that in this day and age Canadians will suddenly demand the removal of all controls on pornography. On the contrary we are likely to have more, not less. So for us, the question is, what kind of controls would be preferable? And, would an ordinance-type of legislation better serve our goals? It is surely legitimate for us to seek answers to these questions for ourselves and in the context of Canadian political and legal reality.

That reality, so different from the US, has led a number of Canadian feminists to look at the ordinance-type of legislation from quite the opposite direction. (See next month's *Broadside* for more on this.) Far from being sure that an ordinance-type approach would constitute a great threat to our freedoms of expression, there are those who think that it would not work here at all. It may in fact prove to be totally ineffectual either for or against us. If so, then it would be a waste of energy to either support it or fight it. Since the problem is currently being examined, let's all just wait and see how it looks here in Canada.)



Credit where it's due

Broadside:

Re: the centre-spread in your February 1985 issue, "IWD: Alphabet Soup." There is a graphic design at the bottom which has, over the years come to be associated with the Canadian Women's Movement Archives (CWMA). It served, in the article, as an illustration for the commentary on Women's Information Line (WIL), the Women's Information Centre (WIC) and the CWMA.

To set the record straight on this graphic: I am sorry to say that a credit on this design is long overdue. I apologize to Ellen Woodsworth of Vancouver for allowing it to appear in a feminist newspaper with national distribution without her name. Ellen was a co-founder of *The Other Woman* newspaper in Toronto before moving back to Vancouver, and is still participating in the women's community on the west coast. If memory serves me, she began working on the design at A Woman's Place in Toronto in 1973.

Pat Leslie
Toronto

Giving Thanks

Broadside:

The Lesbian Phone Line collective would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone responsible for the success of this year's IWD dance.

First of all, our appreciation is extended to the March 8 Coalition who gave us the opportunity to sponsor the dance and thereby ensure the survival of the Lesbian Phone Line.

Secondly, we would like to thank all of the women who volunteered in the preparations and the actual staffing of the dance. Your time, effort and enthusiasm were invaluable.

We would also like to acknowledge the Toronto Women's Bookstore, DEC, SCM, Glad Day, *Broadside*, the WEB and Toronto Gay Community Appeal for their publicity, financial aid and assistance during ticket sales.

Finally, we feel that a great deal of credit should be given to our DJ for the evening, Deb Parent. She gave us all a terrific night of music and enthusiasm and for that reason we applaud her efforts.

Due to everyone's support on March 9, the Lesbian Phone Line will continue to survive in our community. We invite all volunteers to our upcoming Pot Luck Dinner.

Lesbian Phone Line Collective
Toronto

Just asking . . .

Broadside:

I just read my first issue of *Broadside* (February 1985) and found it particularly informative and entertaining. The editorial on pornography ("Sense and Censorship") was most thoughtful and balanced - a welcome contribution to a heated discussion. Lisa Freedman's article ("Valentine's Day Lament") on the sexuality of North American married life was sensitively written, and Donna Gollan's movie review ("Pop Polygamy") was so good that going to the movie would be superfluous.

One article did bother me. Eve Zaremba ("What's in an Ordinance?") criticizes Carole S. Vance's Toronto lecture for not explaining the content of the anti-porn Minneapolis Ordinance but rejecting it out of hand. Yet Zaremba does not tell us what Vance's objections were or why Feminists Against Censorship and civil libertarians (such as myself) are so opposed to such legislation.

Thanks again for a valuable magazine.

Simon Rosenblum
Sudbury, Ontario

Midwives alive!

Broadside:

The Midwifery Task Force is alive and well in Guelph! Last fall, during the Creating Unity conference in Toronto, Holliday Tyson spoke to an enthusiastic and concerned group of people here in Guelph on issues of midwifery. At the end of the talk almost all in attendance agreed to meet again and begin to work as a group supporting midwifery in our community and at the provincial level. We have been growing ever since. Each meeting brings new faces to our midst of those wishing to actively support midwifery.

Our community context is interesting and rather restrictive in that we have no practising midwife living here. The closest midwives are in the Kitchener area - a 40 minute drive away. Also up until very recently we did have a GP who was very supportive of midwifery and of home birth but who has chosen to pursue a change in career. Our situation is evidently limited for birthing women - a situation which we are working to improve.

Our current efforts are focused on supporting the goals of the MTF, bringing a midwife into our community to live and work with us and to present many public and self-education events to increase awareness about midwifery and related issues. We would like to see an improved back-up system for home birth and we are interested in working with our hospital in an effort to revive a *more* woman-centred and family-centred approach to birthing. We would especially appreciate hearing from those who have experience in affecting hospital policy regarding birthing issues. (Correspondence may be sent to 27 Wyndham St. N., 1B, Guelph, N1H 4E4.)

Midwifery Task Force
Guelph, Ontario

"Honourable" Discharge

Broadside:

As a member currently serving in the Canadian Forces, I feel compelled to comment on the tragic fate that befell five servicewomen who were released for lesbianism in Nova Scotia.

Several of my friends have been victims of such an investigation. The inhumane treatment they were put through by the military was nothing short of unbelievable. The "suspects" were interviewed one by one, and were asked extremely personal and embarrassing questions. They were not allowed to read accusatory statements made about them. Although homosexual activity is legal, they were made to feel like criminals with no means of defence.

My friends experienced depression as a direct result of the traumatic investigation and their subsequent releases. The only military mechanism available as a recourse is a "redress of grievance." But these decisions are seldom reversed. Not one of my friends has been able to obtain employment elsewhere equal to that of the Forces.

It is unfortunate that a homosexual in the service must lead a life of circumspect misery in order to avoid detection. The investigation and release of service personnel under this archaic policy is seldom publicized by the media. What should be publicized is the degradation and negative after-effects experienced by the persecuted individuals.

This policy must be abolished.

Name withheld
New Brunswick

TORONTO WOMEN'S
HOUSING
CO-OPERATIVE

The Béguinage

REWARD

Toronto Women's Housing Co-operative, or Béguinage, is offering a reward of \$10 to anyone who can provide information leading to the installation of a new member. Our co-operative is a woman-identified community located near Sackville and Shuter Streets, Toronto.

The Béguinage
is a new member-run housing co-operative
of 28 one, two and three-bedroom townhouses
and apartments
at 333 and 415 Shuter Street
in Downtown Toronto.
Living at The Béguinage means co-operatively owning
your own home without a down payment.
Monthly housing charges \$430 to \$700 plus utilities.

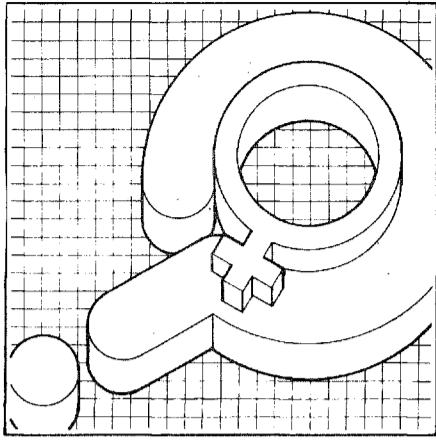
The Béguinage
is for women and women with kids.
Immediate occupancy.
Find out more about this exciting community of women
working together to make a home
that is more than just a place to live.

●

Information meetings
Thursday evenings, 7:30 pm
at 397 Shuter Street,
Toronto
Call (416) 925-2475,
ext. 330.

The Law and Reproductive Technology

Torts for Tots



by Amanda Hale

In the same way that women have been conditioned as self-monitoring oppressors, and victimizers of other women, the mother is now being pitted against her embryonic child in a battle of rights which goes all down the line from the artificial choice between motherhood and career, through the abortion dilemma, to the battery of pre-natal testing and extraordinary measures available to infertile women. It is difficult to ignore what is available in a consumer society. The fetus itself has become a product and as consumers we are under pressure to seek the best quality available.

"Who's in Control? Legal Implications of Reproductive Technology" was the topic for the National Association of Women and the Law's sixth national biennial conference held in Ottawa at the end of February. The conference was structured around information and policy workshops on contraception, fertility and pregnancy issues, work and reproductive health, and state control of lifestyle from pre-conception to birth.

The opening panel, chaired by Maureen McTeer, discussed legal, medical and feminist ethics. Christine Overall, a philosophy professor from Queen's University, raised such key issues as the distinction between feminist and non-feminist approaches to *in vitro* fertilization, sex selection and embryo transfer; what causes infertility and what makes infertility a burden in our society; and why is biological continuity of such vital importance, especially to men? Marjorie Maguire, a Milwaukee theologian and a member of Catholics for Free Choice, focussed on the male proclivity towards abstraction, whereby 'life' becomes an absolute, abstracted from reality. She cited as example an American report from Vietnam: "We had to destroy this village in order to save it." Maguire emphasized personhood as a basic principle over the concept of 'life'. Personhood is more than a genetic code, according to Maguire; it is the *in utero* bonding between mother and child.

Professor Ruth Hubbard, a biologist from Harvard, in her paper "The Impact of Genetics on Child-Bearing Decisions," spoke about the privatization of eugenics. Whereas people were forced into certain reproductive paths under the old program of eugenics (which flourished in the US in the 20s and 30s and only got a bad name by association with the Hitler regime), under the new and more subtle practice a woman is manipulated by social pressure into making her own choice to implement social eugenic policy, says Hubbard. She cites the example of chorionic villi biopsy, a newly developed test for chromosomal defects which is performed in the eighth to tenth week of pregnancy. The earlier we do the diagnosis the more we put the responsibility for aborting a defective fetus on the woman, who would most likely have aborted spontaneously at a later stage of the pregnancy.

Choice is the wrong metaphor, Hubbard feels, for what the new reproductive technologies provide, because society has definite expectations concerning reproduction. Women are eager to avail themselves of the new technologies. They are falling for the consumer myth of 'choice' without realizing that they are losing control of their bodies and reproductive rights. As Mary O'Brien pointed out in her keynote address, reproductive technology can be a valuable tool when used in the interest of the species, but, like so many potentially beneficial innovations, it is being used as a politically manipulative tool of control, in the interests of business and violence.

Why the steadily increasing fanaticism about fetal rights? And the emotionally manipulative characterization of the fetus as a person, as exemplified by the Right to Life film, *The Silent Scream*? The fetus is the perfect

patient who can now be born twice - removed from the uterus for fetal microsurgery, and then reimplanted. As Janet Gallagher, a Boston attorney, remarked during the panel discussion on the Charter, this current preoccupation is turning the fetus more and more into an active principle, and women become mere carriers or incubators. In order to curtail reproductive technology before it is too late it is necessary to identify the impetus behind its development, and this is where the conference was particularly valuable. The combination of medical, legal and feminist viewpoints provided an overview which facilitates connection of the links in this insidious structure, and an understanding of what we are *really* dealing with, presented under the guise of further choice - the great consumer buzz word.

The right-wing controlling elements of society posit the fetus as a symbol of innocence and hope, projected within the bodies of women. Given the critical state of the world, under threat of nuclear devastation and unable to face the fact, the usual diversionary tactics are in play; a nonsensical contradiction whereby the profiteering power-mongers plunge on towards destruction with the nuclear weapons industry, promoting death all the way to the bank, while pinning all their hopes for life on the embryonic product of the egg and sperm banks. The fetus has indeed become an abstraction - a symbol of hope in a hopeless world - and a means of further control over women as we begin to gain freedom. The threat of change which feminism represents, and the threat of destruction by nuclear war produce anxieties which are projected onto the fetus. This is the ethic behind the Right to Life mentality. When seen in this light, the attitude to the fetal abstraction is not in conflict with the apparently contradictory stances on capital punishment, sterilization, nuclear armament, reproductive technology and so on.

At a policy workshop on pregnancy issues, the effects of pre-natal diagnosis were discussed.

Professor Sanda Rodgers Magnet (Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa) posited the conflict which underlies the entire debate on reproductive technology: fetal entitlement versus maternal autonomy. If personhood grows from the mother/child bond *in utero*, and the medical profession intervenes to break the possibility of that bond in the form of invasive pre-natal tests backed by social pressure for quality control of the fetal product, then reproductive technology is seen as a dehumanizing force. Furthermore, reproductive technology fragments the role of mother. Bartha Knoppers, a specialist in family law and genetics at McGill University, described how it is possible now for a child to have five parents - two genetic, one gestational, and two social caretakers. The egg of one woman is fertilized *in vitro* and implanted in the uterus of a second woman who, as surrogate mother, bears the child to be reared by a third woman. The two males involved would be sperm donor and adoptive father. In the 60s and 70s we had sex without reproduction, says Knoppers, and in the 80s we have reproduction without sex. She cited a recent British Columbia case in which a wife's refusal to undergo remedial surgery to increase her fertility was judged as mental cruelty and grounds for divorce. Knoppers added that the trend is towards National Advisory Boards supported by local Bioethics Committees, to which couples seeking techniques of artificially assisted conception must apply.

During an information workshop on fertility issues, Judith Nolté from Planned Parenthood in Ottawa traced the chain of events which have led to the mediation by the medical profession of a private act. The sexual freedom of the 60s and the new contraceptive methods, particularly IUDs, caused a higher incidence of pelvic inflammatory disease and uterine infection, resulting in sterility or infertility, thus creating a need for new reproductive technologies such as *in vitro* fertilization, embryo transfer, and a barrage of

pre-natal testing to monitor pregnancies at risk for birth defects. Genetic and chromosomal abnormalities proliferate in our nuclear society due to exposure to radioactivity, both in the environment and in the workplace.

The reproductive technology industry is highly discriminatory in that it is available only to married heterosexuals, who tend to be financially privileged, and Caucasian. Nevertheless, such privilege can result in oppression when an infertile couple becomes obsessed with reproducing at any cost. Moving from doctor to doctor, submitting to endless tests and fertility drugs, the attempt to reproduce becomes a way a life, and one which it is impossible to give up without feeling a total failure.

Furthermore, there are ethical problems. Consider the case of a woman with blocked fallopian tubes. She is given fertility drugs to make her superovulate. The eggs are surgically removed. Three or four are fertilized *in vitro* (in a petrie dish) to ensure that one is accepted when implanted in her uterus. What to do with the extra eggs? Sell them? Use them for research? Donate them? Set up a human-egg marketing board? These are the dilemmas which must be considered before decisions by the powers that be become matter of course, precluding consent of the people involved.

Rona Achilles, an OISE scholar, spoke of the "maze of complexities introduced by the new reproductive technologies," and of the loss of our choice not to know the sex or chromosomal makeup of a fetus. Once you discover something you have to live with it; and we are now saddled with nuclear power and reproductive technology, and collective responsibility for their misuse, resulting in our destruction or reproductive oppression. Ruth Hubbard warns against single issue politics and argues for the larger perspective of how society functions. Over-specialization, without awareness of the global implications,

• continued page 14

Danger: Scientists at Work

by Helen Fallding

"Increasingly allergic" as she is to discussions on women in science, which imply that there is something amiss with our aspirations and abilities, Ursula Franklin was pleased with the title and scope of the Women and Science conference held at the University of Guelph in February. Dr. Franklin, a University of Toronto professor of metallurgy and materials science, proved an inspired choice as keynote speaker and over and over throughout the weekend we found that her insights clarified problems which came up in small group discussions.

The history of women in science, Franklin pointed out, is a story of exceptional women seen at best as, "fine scientists who had the misfortune of being born into the female shape - and a gentleman overlooks that." She asked us to consider ourselves instead as having a fresh and much-needed perspective: "Be partners in science and technology, not in spite of being women, but because of being women."

She discussed the problems inherent in both science as an intellectual endeavour and science as an establishment. Science has perfected the method of reductionism, dividing reality into experiment-sized portions, but it has lost the ability to solve problems in context. Hence the "surprise" side-effects of technology, like acid rain and nuclear fall-out. Carol Gilligan's research (*In a Different Voice*; see review on page 12) has shown how women's approach to problem-solving is almost always contextual, but this special ability is not granted legitimacy in the scientific community.

Of the establishment which Ursula once considered a "glorious edifice" built on the selfless struggle of a community of scientists, she is now more critical. Its communal nature allows individual scientists to shield themselves from accountability. And the questions that are being asked are not what "God or somebody out there in n-dimensional space asks, but what the society asks. . . Science has become the milk-cow of power, being fed the green grass of affluence in order to produce the sort of knowledge that can keep that affluence afloat." Like the church, the scientific establishment, "trains the young

through a rigorous process of indoctrination and ordains the right ones to practice."

Why stick it out? "Because science and technology are too important to leave to the old establishment," says Franklin. It is important not only that more women go, as competent practitioners, into science, but they go, "not as Grade B men, but as representatives of an alternative approach." That alternative arises from the non-hierarchical, non-reductionist nature of women's values and culture. (Here she stressed that she was speaking of women's values in the generic sense in which 'man' has been used - men may consider themselves included as appropriate.) To a question about whether women scientists should not be "people first," Franklin replied that, at this point, the only way to restore the balance so that a "people environment" becomes possible, is to be *resolutely feminist*.

Another question discussed at the conference, "Is science really objective?" was answered with a unanimous "No." Carole Yawney (medical anthropology, York) made reference to the sociology of knowledge - what kinds of knowledge are socially sanctioned? who can know? what methods of gaining knowledge are considered legitimate? who owns knowledge? The scientific establishment seems to consider itself magically exempt from such considerations. Yawney asked whether one can legitimately separate the tools and products of knowledge from the social context in which they were acquired. Giving an example from medical science (which she calls "an intense form of patriarchy"), she told us the story of Marion Simms, the "father of gynecology." His "objective" search for knowledge allowed him to develop his techniques by operating on black female slaves - without anaesthetic. The result is a branch of medicine which reinforces the control of women by men. According to Yawney, subjectivity is necessary for responsibility: "There is more than one way to enlightenment and there is more than one way to do science." The choice is, subjectively, ours.

Analysing the hidden assumptions in accepted theory, Jennifer Chambers (psychology and women's studies, York) observed that theories are not derived from

facts, but created to explain them. The use, for example, of the drug Depo-provera, an anti-androgen treatment for sexual offenders, is the logical, scientific solution to rape only if we grant the assumption (for which there is no evidence) that rapists are super-masculine men with extra hormonal drives. This "scientific" approach helps divert attention from more effective ways of preventing sexual assault and, as "good science" often does, supports the *status quo*. Judith Johnson (biomechanics, Waterloo) said that though we have to make assumptions in science, we do not have to assume that our assumptions are correct. Unacknowledged subjectivity is the danger. She cited examples of sexist assumptions transferred to descriptions of animal behaviour: a male with a group of females is automatically a "harem," whether or not the females actually choose to mate with him; in one study, a chimpanzee with several mates was a "big man," a female was "promiscuous."

Other conference workshops on "Myth-breaking," "Barriers to Women in Science," and "Opening Doors for Younger Women" dealt with conflicts between a commitment to science and to personal relationships or politics. There was a lot of excitement as people exchanged strategies for survival and change, particularly among those women who had been isolated within their departments and were suddenly finding out how much they had in common. The mood of the conference was very friendly, and we saw the beginnings of a new women's network to counterbalance the old boy's network so powerful in both academic science and industry.

And where do we go from here? Suggestions included: a speakers series with women in industry talking about opportunities there; a 'roadshow' on women in science to be taken to high-schools or offered as part of professional development days; public presentations on a feminist analysis of science; field trips through each other's research areas (sharing our passions!); a networking system; and another conference! - next time with more than an academic focus.

Helen Fallding is a Guelph feminist.

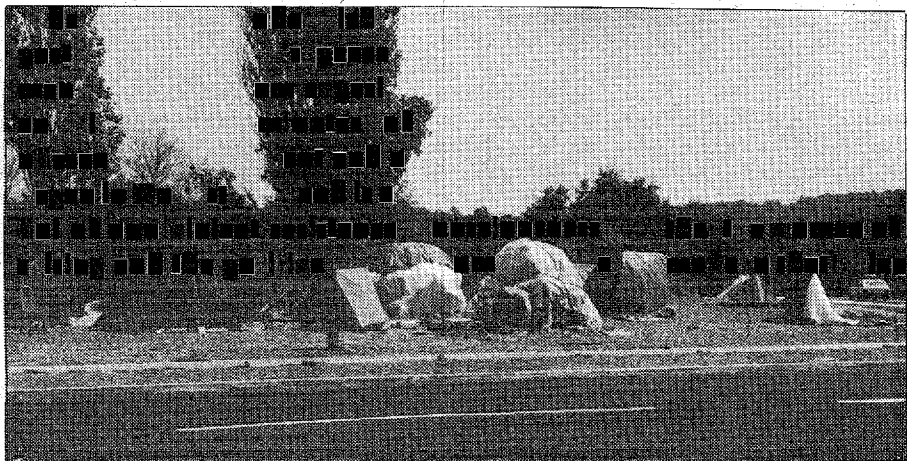
Turbulence in the Pacific

by T. Brettel Dawson

"We are women, we are strong
We say no! to the bomb"

In early March 1985, as part of the IWD celebrations, a series of events concerning women and peace were sponsored by the women's studies program and graduate faculty at York University. One event was the first Toronto screening of the British film *Carry Greenham Home*. This film is now available through DEC films in Toronto and deserves wide showing. It was made in 1983 by Beeban Kidron and Amanda Richardson who were part of the women's peace camp. It documents the Greenham experience from within and is sixty-six minutes of women's exuberance, commitment and anger. The camp began in August 1981 and is a continuing symbol of non-violent resistance, consciousness-raising and the positive role of women in the

Carrying the message home is certainly what is happening in Aotearoa (New Zealand). A drama is quietly unfolding in the Pacific between New Zealand and the US, concerning a threatened international treaty, and NZ refusal to allow access to NZ waters or dock facilities to nuclear-capable vessels. Something of the global significance of the dispute shows in the wry reversal wrought on readers of the *New York Times*. Under the banner headline "If the New Zealand Syndrome Spreads," is written, "Tiny NZ wants to make itself into a nuclear-free zone. Whether or not it actually does so, the issue is broader than NZ. It raises the general question of who the US should offer nuclear protection." (*New York Times* February 17, 1985). One can only speculate on the response that the women of Greenham Common would make to that! Clearly, NZ is not impressed, as



Benders at Greenham Common (above) and a peace quilt on the fence.

peace movement. The film communicates the exhilaration of 30000 women surrounding the nine-mile perimeter fence, dancing on missile silos, locking the gates with remarkably durable bicycle locks, picnicking in teddy-bear outfits inside the base and surrounded by soldiers mocked in their inscrutability. There is singing and creativity. Pause is given by the depiction of the physical conditions endured by the women. There is no running water apart from the feric pools that stagnate around the fence, living is done out of makeshift benders, the camp is subject to evictions and harrassment. There are arrests and fines and controversy.

For all this, the film is incredibly women-positive. It shows women together, struggling to maintain a visibility against nuclear weapons, working hard to create a collective, non-hierarchical space. The film, like *Greenham*, is a mosaic of chronology and experience. The story continues beyond 1983. In July 1984, several women went 'on holiday' inside the Base for several undetected days. September saw renewed efforts for a "final" eviction and a large action in response to NATO's war game, Operation Lionheart, in Europe. The camp, its support network and its international significance remain.

public support for the new Labour government continues to strengthen on this issue and the Prime Minister, David Lange, has received a Nobel Peace Prize nomination.

The controversy, which is presently making bigger waves than the warships, began last June with the election of the fourth Labour Government in New Zealand, only making the headlines in North America when a request by the US for USS *Buchanon* to dock in NZ was refused. The US claims that under the ANZUS military alliance NZ, as a loyal ally, is obliged to accept whatever request the US makes. They won't say whether a given ship is in fact armed and NZ refuses to accept those terms. Australia had a similar policy until pressure was brought to bear by the US, but is still refusing the US plan to test MX missiles for touchdown in the Tasman Sea. In fact, the whole Pacific region is becoming a gnat in the US military machine. Response to date by the US has included the cancellation of joint military exercises, the curtailment of military intelligence (an interesting phrase) and murmurs of trade sanctions. Perhaps it is a mercy that NZ, tiny as it is, is somewhat more distant than Grenada!

What can be made of all this? It is worth noting the context of the change of govern-



ment. Marilyn Waring, an outspoken feminist MP in the then-precariously-ruling National Party, simply withdrew her support of the government on matters of rape law reform and defence policy. It was enough to precipitate an early election which her party lost convincingly. She gracefully retired from the House. In a recent clipping received from NZ, it seems that she is suggesting a "buy nuclear-free New Zealand" policy. The idea is that the deficit could be wiped out by the positive choice by nuclear-protesters to buy NZ goods. She writes: "When you add to the millions protesting on the streets, the millions who can't or won't demonstrate, when you remember the peace activism of women and their consumer power, it's an excellent idea."

It is also interesting to situate the nuclear-free policy in the general political stance of the new government and note a clear ideological division between NZ and the US. Previous Labour governments introduced comprehensive social welfare programs which include free education, hospitalization, single parent benefits and no-fault accident compensation. They abolished compulsory military service and safeguarded compulsory trade union membership. Furthermore, New Zealand is a country that allows equal division of assets,

including business assets, on marriage breakdown and celebrates 92 years of women's parliamentary franchise. The new Labour government is building on tradition. Already it has developed a consensus-style of open government, begun a review of race relations and established a ministry of women's affairs. The sense of the person, of a good place to be and grow is the political pivot. As noted by Marilyn Waring, though, things aren't all that great economically. However, the bouyant US economy seems to be floating on military expenditure made at the expense of domestic programs and funding. Over 15% of the population in the US is officially poor. Our destruction seems to be being funded on the backs of women and other groups outside the white male technological paradigm.

It seems important to grasp the encouragement that exists. We can support *Greenham* and applaud New Zealand while renewing our commitment to the person and the sense of a good place to be. As a postscript, Dr. Helen Caldicott will be in Toronto sponsored by the Disarmament Network on April 12, 1985 at Convocation Hall. Let's save this planet.

T. Brettel Dawson is a New Zealand lawyer at present studying in Toronto.

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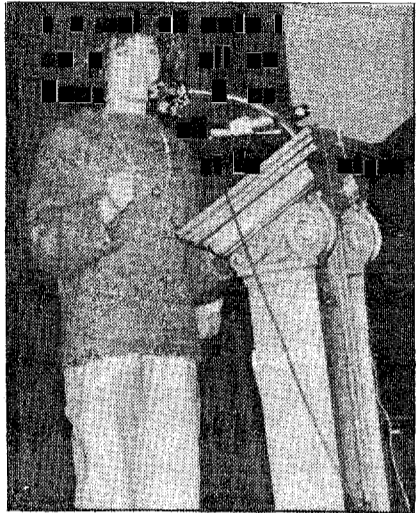
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MOVEMENT MATTERS

Angela Davis: Making Connections

by Faith Nolan

On the morning of Friday, March 8, Angela Davis arrived at Toronto airport. At 7:45 pm she walked onto the stage at U of T's Convocation Hall and spoke before a packed house for an hour and a half. The black community made up 40% or more of the audience, a first for an International Women's Day event.



Angela Davis at Con Hall, IWD, 1985

Angela Davis addressed many issues concerning the political struggles of today with a focus on people of colour and the working class. She came with her convictions and her history of struggle, at 41 still smiling, and looking youthful. Angela — who'd been hunted by the FBI, jailed by racist America, lived through all the hell that Ronald Reagan, then Governor of California, could dish out — was and is the first black woman to gain international recognition coming from the left.

However, she is not recognized globally by feminists as would be Kate Millett, Gloria Steinem or Simone de Beauvoir, because her main struggles have been race and class.

Racism and poverty are feminist issues by virtue of their effect on women of colour. In her speech, she widened the slim dimensions of a feminism based on the lives of middle class women who have seldom addressed issues of race and class, trading them for some 'general' concept of sisterhood in which white women did not thoroughly examine the political bases of their existence on this continent. As women of colour all over the world recognize patriarchy, race and class feed off each other, are one and the same.

For some white feminists in the audience, it must have seemed strange not to be addressed directly; no stranger than black feminists listening to white feminists exclude their experiences from the social experience called "woman." But Angela spoke as an internationalist pointing out the struggle of women in Nicaragua, South Africa and the US; she covered ground as a global feminist where all issues affecting women are seen as important. Obviously we cannot all work on all the issues, but a global feminism would need to come out of an understanding of the specific issues of specific women.

She gave due recognition to the underpaid garment workers of New York who, through their demonstration, began the North American struggle and celebration of March 8. Also, she spoke about the "feminization of poverty" pointing out that it was only when white middle class women began finding themselves in the statistics that this question was then recognized as a social issue when in fact most women in the world have been and still are born poor and die poor. She spoke universally on abortion and forced sterilization, that womyn have a right to control their bodies and have a right to economic

conditions which would enable them to have children.

Her analysis of Reaganism's attack on Black women's lives in the US and the lives of all poor people in the world focused on the patriarchal ideology used in formulating US policy at home and abroad.

Her linking of the struggles of women all

over the world should give us a place to start from, where patriarchy, class and race are understood as interchangeable. It is a place from which we can struggle, grow and emerge as global feminists.

Faith Nolan is a Canadian black activist and musician.

Impressions of an Activist

Since my singing was to be the "performance" part of the evening, I had the pleasure of meeting Angela Davis before she made her speech. Even though she has for many years travelled and spoken before huge audiences, like myself, she was nervous and excited since she had not been in Canada for 10 years.

I told her that as a 13 year old, I had her poster on my wall and she symbolized beauty and strength of black womanhood for me; Angela smiled saying that she didn't have posters of herself anymore. I joked about the poster that had been done for this event, and said it had no resemblance to any black woman I'd ever seen.

Constanza Allevato of the Congress of Canadian Women — the main organizer, asked me to go on stage by myself and begin the program to warm the audience up, Angela intervened and said she wanted to see me perform and we would all go on stage together. Twice I was asked to go on first but Angela reiterated that we'd all go on together; it seemed she was

interested in seeing my performance and being there to support it.

I liked and respected the warmth I felt from her as a human being. Later at the reception held in her honour we spoke again — Angela told me that she'd enjoyed my performance and that she was working on a book about black women in music.

There seemed to be a lot of security that evening both at Convocation Hall and the reception; three and sometimes four women barred the doors at the reception, allowing only the 'select' with invitations in. When 12 black youth came to the door insisting to see Angela Davis they were refused, however Maria Ramos, Angela's bodyguard, saw this and told Angela who left the party and went to meet them. She stood out there talking with those students for over 20 minutes.

I asked Maria if she got tired of travelling around all the time. She said she never tired of being with Angela Davis, and literally her life was dedicated to Angela.

— F.N.

Retailers Curtailed

by Wendy Wine

The methods being used by anti-choice groups to protest outside the Morgentaler Clinic on Harbord Street in Toronto have recently been called into question in an advertisement placed in the Toronto *Star* by the Harbord Street Business and Residents' Association. Unfortunately, the ad placed equal blame on the pro-choice movement and the so-called pro-life movement for the disruption suffered by local businesses. Anti-choice forces have been present on the street in numbers of 5 to 30, Monday to Friday, since the clinic reopened last December and in mass demonstrations throughout the week in February. There have been only two pro-choice demonstrations, held after business hours on the street during that period.

Despite this flaw, the ad made one thing very clear: the merchants are fed up with the presence of the protesters on the street. After several months, the patience of most of the people who work, live or travel in the neighbourhood is beginning to fray, resulting in more hostility and direct confrontation between the protesters and passers-by. As a full-time employee at the Toronto Women's Bookstore just down the street, and someone who never removes her "choice" button from her coat, I have been preached and sworn at in fairly equal doses. Anyone who ascends the stairs shared by the clinic and the restaurant next door, or who exits from the rear of the

building, is likely to hear shouts of "baby-killer" or "murderer." (You can imagine the furor the restaurant's chef created when he walked out the back door with tomato sauce on his apron.) One woman who had just had an abortion was chased down a back alley by a small mob of relentless protesters.

The word "protest" becomes less and less adequate to describe these fanatics as the weeks wear on. They *do* have the right to protest on Harbord Street, but is that really what they're doing? Most of their tactics, from blocking the paths of pedestrians on the sidewalk (particularly those wearing "choice" buttons) and chasing women behind the clinic, to yelling at people entering or leaving the building and encouraging passing motorists to honk, are undisguised harassment. If their purpose was simply to protest the operation of the clinic, wouldn't they "protest," at least some of the time, at Queen's Park? And, if their purpose is to protest abortions, wouldn't they protest at every hospital in the city?

Sadly, this doesn't appear to be their intended route. Right to Life has purchased, and is in the process of renovating, a building directly across the street from the Morgentaler clinic, where they say "pregnancy counselling" will take place; presumably they intend to nab poor misdirected women who've found their way into the clinic and redirect them from the choices they have already made. Reverend Ken Campbell, founder of Renaissance Canada and the newly formed Choose Life Canada, has had the gall to say that his 'referral service' will provide the choices that Morgentaler is not providing. Campbell has also made several as yet unsubstantiated claims that his group is in the final stages of buying or renting the building next door to the clinic.

But even before the 'referral service' is operating, the anti-choice movement is firmly established on Harbord Street. In February, Emmett Cardinal Carter called on Roman Catholics to join the regular demonstrators, both the pious and the paid, for a week (one regular demonstrator admitted to the press she was being paid, but refused to disclose the amount). Many of those who came out for the largest demonstration were high school students who had been given the afternoon

off and were bussed in courtesy of the separate school system.

Working nearby that week was not unlike working in a war zone, with barricades lining the sidewalk and the constant roar of hymns and chants, interspersed with loud horn-honking by passing drivers. The customers who dared to approach the Bookstore during the worst of it were shaken and scared, as were those of us who were reluctant to leave the building until the streets were clear. Fortunately, an estimated 5,000 to 6,000 people, including Roman Catholics and other religious people, turned out for a pro-choice demonstration after business hours at the end of that week, boosting the morale of Toronto feminists beyond anyone's wildest expectations. The speaker at the rally in front of the clinic encouraged the demonstrators to patronize the businesses on Harbord Street.

Whether there are five or five hundred people out there using harassment to impose their views on women's lives and their bodies, the anti-choice "protesters" on Harbord Street

are the intimidating representatives of a terrifying movement. This could not be more evident to the merchants on the street, some of whose businesses are suffering seriously. None are complaining about the clinic; it's the protesters who are the problem. The dilemma is clear; how much "demonstrating" should local businesses and residents have to put up with? And, if by some merciful chance, the demonstrations were curtailed, would the pro-choice movement be in danger of restriction at some later date? The thought of consistent harassment of ordinary people conducting their ordinary affairs on Harbord Street by the Right to Life for months and perhaps even years is a sobering one. The fault with the "pro-life" demonstrations is that they are harassment, not protest. No one, least of all the women seeking abortions at the Morgentaler Clinic, should be subjected to that kind of "peaceful" demonstration.

Wendy Wine is a Toronto feminist who works on Harbord Street.

Hot Flash!

The Pillow Sisters (Lorraine Segato, Laurie Conger and Julie Massi of the Parachute Club) will play Friday night of the *Sisters: Steppin' Out* concert series produced by Womynly Way. Emcees for the three nights are now confirmed: Lillian Allen, Friday; Lynne Gordon, Saturday; and Carole Pope, Sunday. For information call (416) 925-6568.



The IWD march snakes past the Eaton Centre.

Erotic Rights

by Varda Burstyn

Broadside's timely editorial (February 1985) taking a strong stand against state censorship because it can be used "to threaten our very right to articulate and promote our politics and our values" is very welcome indeed. This recognition has been at the heart of the work of a number of anti-censorship feminist activists for several years, and is the core *raison d'être* of Feminists Against Censorship. For a variety of reasons, however, this assessment has not been clearly enough apprehended by many feminists, and has consequently formed the basis for activity for only a minority of women's movement activists involved in current battles around sexual representation - pornography, literature, sex education and even reproductive rights. With your own declaration, perhaps this can now change.

Yet Eve Zaremba's article in the same issue, "What's in an Ordinance?" (February 1985) advances (though it does not systematically explore) the possibility that a reworked version of the Minneapolis Ordinance drafted by Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon could evade the problems inherent in present forms of state censorship. Zaremba suggests that because "the cops have nothing to do with it" and because there is no "prior censorship" involved in the approach, it would not in fact be censorship, and complains that Carole Vance (editor of *Pleasure and Danger*:

writing on the wall is plainly in view. And why don't we try to learn from history before it repeats itself again? According to the work now being published by feminist scholars, these kinds of alliances are extremely perilous.

The involvement of such forces is not simply an American phenomenon - Canadians for Decency, supposedly 200,000 strong as well as fundamentalist and Catholic churches are involved - and some prominent Canadian feminists are collaborating in ways which do not demarcate a distinct position but allow the appearance of consensus on pornography at the expense of critical feminist issues. Maude Barlow felt no contradiction between her feminism and her decision to address the Canadians for Decency Convention in Toronto at the weekend of February 2. And even Susan Cole, speaking at the Metropolitan Toronto Task Force on Violence Against Women conference on pornography preceding the Vance meeting, declared in a unifying and conciliatory way, "There are probably differences among us here on certain questions, most notably on abortion and gay rights, but on pornography we are united."

The subhead of Zaremba's piece, "Imported Porn Politics," contains a misplaced admonition - implying that Feminists Against Censorship pulled in an American heavy to tell Canadians what to do. From the begin-

ning, and cultural expressions of patriarchal and capitalist sexual norms are central to the control of sexuality. Pornography is part of that cultural expression, and, in the absence of positive mainstream treatment of sexuality, very influential with respect to ideas of women. But pornography is not the only genre of cultural expression which teaches about, communicates and shapes sexuality - and we equate explicit pictures with sexuality at our peril. Further, "pornography" is not homogeneous - depending on its definition and perception, from a feminist point of view, it ranges in content from benign to ordinarily sexist to grotesquely misogynous, like other cultural genres. Most commercially produced and distributed pornography is sexist, like most commercial material of all kinds, and it thus functions as propaganda for sexism, like commercials, soap operas and slasher films.

Because of these problems with pornography, anti-censorship feminists have spent a lot of time talking about ways to combat the values, models and lies found in much pornographic materials. We have talked and written about action that needs to be taken in terms of cultural production, direct action and legal reform around sexual harassment and public spaces, sex education, social services for hattered women and sex workers who want out, and economic rights for women and youth.

MOVEMENT COMMENT

Exploring Female Sexuality), in her speech on the ordinance in Toronto on January 12, did not deal with this issue. But Vance did deal with it. She pointed out - and it seems to me the essence of the matter - that the courts of a patriarchal state would be called on to make the determinations on the material in question, not "women;" and once such determinations are made, fines, confiscations and prohibitions on distribution or exhibition are enforced by the police. Calling an ordinance "civil liberties" does not change the fact that all laws are ultimately enforced by courts and police, including this one. That's what makes them laws instead of norms or expectations.

In previous centuries religious texts, most importantly the Bible, were used to justify men's authority over women and the stigmatization and brutalization of non-affiliated sexual women, and among very large sectors of North America today, this remains the case. These same texts are used to justify corporal punishment of children and intensely patriarchal forms of gender socialization and sexual repression.

Violence and abuse are perpetrated by people who have been brutalized and damaged and who strike out at those who cannot fight back. They are products of a social system which is structured by the exploitation and brutalization of humans - women by men, black by white, worker by capitalist, and child by parent - and we must change these conditions if we want to bring an end to violence, abuse and exploitation. Getting rid of pornography or the Bible will not bring about these changes.

It is profoundly disquieting, then, that the Minneapolis/Indianapolis ordinance has found so much support among the New Right and the Moral Majority - forces which are deeply, programmatically and militantly committed to the maintaining of these social structures. Zaremba makes light of the fact that Carole Vance "made much" of this alliance, but as a number of anti-censorship feminists see it, the success of this patriarchal and capitalist current in a feminist/conservative-fundamentalist alliance constitutes a major threat - quite possibly the major threat - to the health of the women's movement as a whole.

Zaremba asks, "Can the ordinance be used against our interests by the right wing, fundamentalist 'decency' types? No one knows for sure." Of course we know for sure. In Suffolk, Long Island these "types" have drafted a proposed law that drops all feminist pretense and openly seeks to repress explicit sex, homosexual sex and seeks to "restore ladies to what they used to be." And right wing US senator Arlen Specter is working on drafting similar legislation to be enacted on a federal level. In the meantime, their cronies fire bomb abortion clinics, outlaw the discussion of homosexuality and contraception in sex education in the schools, and continue to struggle against the ERA. Just how long do we have to wait to see whether the Right will use the ordinance against us? Surely the

ning of the anti-pornography campaign in this country, Americans have been brought in to address us. From Donnerstein and Malamuth to the FBI, we have been bombarded with Yankee "expertise." More to the point, Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon have spoken at least once, sometimes two or three times, in most major Canadian cities within the last three years. Their manner of presentation has been hailed as "powerful," "magnetic," "riveting" by their supporters and "demagogic" by their detractors, but in any case they have hardly been models of a make-up-your-own-mind-on-the-issues style. Finally, it is Susan Cole herself who has taken their legislation and tried to adapt it to our context. Carole Vance arrives in Toronto and speaks for one evening on the ordinance and we are accused of delivering "the word from the good old US of A." Come on.

Both the *Broadside* editorial (implicitly) and Zaremba's article (explicitly) chide anti-censorship feminists for clearly drawing lines of difference in analysis and strategy inside the women's movement, rather than fighting certain forms of censorship on the one hand, and "pornography" (used as an undifferentiated category) on the other. First of all, anti-censorship feminists have spent most of our time fighting state censorship. But second, there is no unanimity on any of these issues, and it's wrong to behave as if there were. Further, when feminists see tactics and strategies being pursued which they consider dangerous, they have a responsibility to speak up to other feminists, and the women's movement as a whole has a responsibility to discuss these issues in depth, particularly - as with pornography and prostitution - when different positions are in the process of being reflected in official state and social policy, in laws and agencies and bureaucracies - none of which can easily be changed once implementation has begun.

Zaremba wants to know if Feminists Against Censorship considers pornography "a red-herring, a non-issue, a distraction from work on basic change." Clearly pornography is a major issue - it commands an enormous amount of time and energy within the women's movement, among conservatives and certain churches, in the media and now in government circles. The reasons that it commands this attention in these different spheres vary enormously - ranging from anger, confusion, pain over sexism and its manifestations among feminists, to shame, sexual repressiveness and the desire to reinforce patriarchal sexual norms among conservatives and fundamentalists, to opportunism among many politicians and bureaucrats. Therefore how and why pornography is an issue is just as important as that it is an issue - and for a lot of people now involved in the whole campaign it is an issue for very problematic reasons. Feminist politics around pornography have to take all this into account.

Is pornography central to the oppression of women? *Sexuality* is central to that oppres-

sion, and cultural expressions of patriarchal and capitalist sexual norms are central to the control of sexuality. Pornography is part of that cultural expression, and, in the absence of positive mainstream treatment of sexuality, very influential with respect to ideas of women. But pornography is not the only genre of cultural expression which teaches about, communicates and shapes sexuality - and we equate explicit pictures with sexuality at our peril. Further, "pornography" is not homogeneous - depending on its definition and perception, from a feminist point of view, it ranges in content from benign to ordinarily sexist to grotesquely misogynous, like other cultural genres. Most commercially produced and distributed pornography is sexist, like most commercial material of all kinds, and it thus functions as propaganda for sexism, like commercials, soap operas and slasher films.

Because of these problems with pornography, anti-censorship feminists have spent a lot of time talking about ways to combat the values, models and lies found in much pornographic materials. We have talked and written about action that needs to be taken in terms of cultural production, direct action and legal reform around sexual harassment and public spaces, sex education, social services for hattered women and sex workers who want out, and economic rights for women and youth.

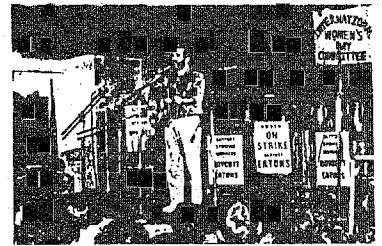
Unfortunately, these kinds of priorities have taken a back seat to, or disappeared altogether compared with, discussions of various forms of censorship and legal regulation of sexual material and sex work, so that the anti-pornography campaign has diverted a lot of attention and hard resources away from these matters, on the one hand; on the other it has actually reinforced repressive tools and institutions which compete both in terms of money and in terms of values with what a feminist program for sexual change should be. If alliances with the patriarchal right continue to be cultivated, this approach and these priorities will ultimately be undermined completely.

However, if the women's movement is clear about our refusal to share the patriarchal and right wing agenda or to support their credibility and methods, we can avoid these dangers and help women to use anger against sexist pornography to make change along feminist lines. Specifically, given the general silence on censorship from large sections of the feminist community, this means two things: first, we must put more emphasis on alternatives to censorship; and second, we must be much tougher and more open in the struggle against censorship. In Ontario a number of feminists, arts and progressive groups are in the process of planning actions and days of resistance to the Ontario Censor Board and the new legislation, and are putting test cases together to challenge that legislation in the Supreme Court of Canada. I and Feminists Against Censorship look forward to *Broadside's* support in these efforts, and in extending the ongoing dialogue on analysis and strategy.

Varda Burstyn is editor of the book *Women Against Censorship* which was released at the end of February.

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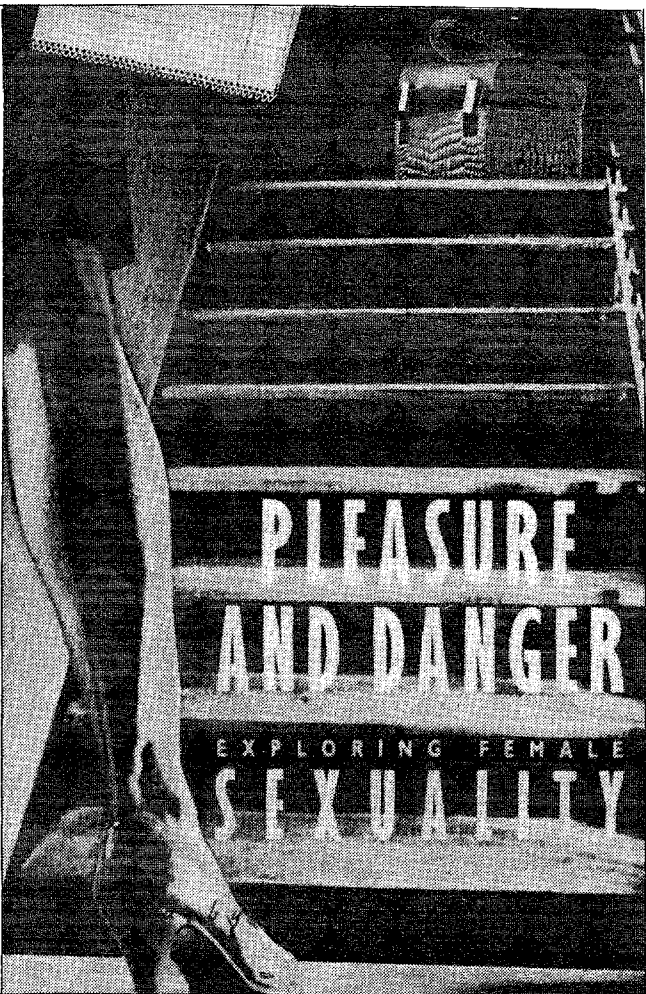
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by Susan G. Cole

I

In sex, what works, what brings mutual pleasure should be the criterion of "good." The problematic issue is consent, not whether my desire is better than yours. - Esther Newton, Shirley Walton, "The Misunderstanding," *Pleasure and Danger*.

With a few exceptions here and there, most women I know would like to have more and better sex, and they wish it would last longer. Many women are relieved that feminism has finally got around to talking sex. I mean talking good sex.

Good sex, not the frightening kind that Ti-Grace Atkinson was writing about in her radical essay "The Institution of Sexual Intercourse." Atkinson argued that since sexual intercourse was good only for male pleasure (the myth of the vaginal orgasm had just been exposed) and for getting women pregnant, the "act" itself was patriarchal to the core.

Good sex, not the protestations of celibates who claim that it is easier not to bother and that sex gets in the way of political action.

Good sex, not the kind we hear about again and again, where sex gets defined as women's sexual abuse.

Good sex, the kind that feels good, the kind that empowers women, the kind that redefines sexuality in our own terms. Now really, who could be against that?

After Atkinson, celibacy and the litany of sexual abuses that are real for women, feminist theorists would like to take sex back. The catalogue of feminist literature on the subject has been beefed up considerably over the past several years by the publication of a number of books focussing on sexuality and related issues (see bibliography). The British anthology *Sex and Love*, reflects a wide range of opinions, but two American books, *Powers of Desire* (especially the section on current controversies) and the more recent *Pleasure and Danger*, sustain the argument that it is crucial for feminists to stop harping on our potential for victimization in the sexual arena, and necessary for us to get to the good part - the good sex, the kind where women become sexual subjects not sexual objects, where female desire is fulfilled.

Read Ellen Willis's "Feminism, Moralism and Pornography," read Judith Walkowitz's "Male Vice and Female Virtue" both in *Powers of Desire*. Add to that Ellen DuBois's "Seeking Ecstasy on the Battlefield: Pleasure and Danger in Nineteenth Century Thought" in *Pleasure and Danger* and the pattern begins to appear. These writers insist that, historically, feminism has scared women away from sex, that feminism has characterized women as the bearers of a moral standard in such a way as to make the right wing proud, and that feminism has created a theoretical framework in which there is no safe sex. We are left with a liberation that can only come from sexual purity. To writers reared in the 60s and in a culture that gives enormous rewards for sexual appeal, the nineteenth century feminists - and those Willis would call their imitators in the second wave - are no fun at all.

Pleasure and Danger



In a hypersexualized culture where personal identity is so wrapped up in sexuality... sex-positive feminism sounds very appealing. But we accept the view uncritically at our peril.

Having vilified feminists in the first wave for associating freedom with sexual abstinence, the second wave backlash, evidenced in these books and in the quote that begins this article, argues that sexual liberation equals sexual activity, period. Women have had no authentic sexual voice, you can hear the "let's do it" women say. How can we know what we want unless we "explore more"? Women have been allowed no sexuality. Expression is everything. Imbedded in this view is the notion that sex is proto-social, that is, untrammelled by patriarchal concerns of power and powerlessness, and that by engaging in sexual activity we can reclaim it, we can change it. Female orgasms will make us free. In a hypersexualized culture where personal identity is so wrapped up in sexuality, where even the women's movement has its own sex symbols, this sex-positive feminism sounds very appealing.

But we accept the view uncritically at our peril. To embrace it is to underestimate the extent to which sexuality is a social construct not so easily undone by female orgasms per se.

Sexua

II

To simply celebrate whatever gives us sexual pleasure seems to me both problematic and too easy; we need to analyze how it is that certain things turn us on, how sexuality has been constructed under patriarchy to produce pleasure in the dominant/submissive forms, before we advocate these modes. - E. Ann Kaplan, "Is the Gaze Male?" in *Powers of Desire*

Like Kaplan, I think it is important for feminists to identify a patriarchal sexual ideology that is held together by three strands. The first is the practice of forced heterosexuality, a phenomenon addressed by Adrienne Rich in "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence" (reprinted in *Powers of Desire*). Feminists have begun to unpack the cultural and sexual baggage with which this particular ideological strain has saddled us, and that struggle in the second wave, with the high profile of lesbian activists, has produced a lively debate that recognizes the Lavender contingent as a vital, perhaps central force in a sexually conscious movement.

Just as a great number of women think heterosexuality is their "natural" choice and not relentlessly promoted... many men and women really "feel" aroused by domination and surrender.

The second ideological strand perpetuates the women-as-submissive/men-as-dominant configuration within the heterosexual paradigm. Pornography's practice of eroticizing sexual subordination is particularly useful in the promulgation of dominant/submissive male/female gender categories. Pornography is just one of the cultural institutions committed to this second strain. There is a great deal else done to make our own demise sexually arousing to women and to make our conquest at their hands sexually arousing to men: for example some of the more excessive and sexually explicit rock video the dynamics of Harlequin Romances; or the signifiers in fashion magazines.

What is crucial about the way sexual ideology works is that it does not operate on the "idea" level. It works in our bodies. Just as a great number of women think that heterosexuality is their "natural" choice and not relentlessly promoted by culture that needs it badly, many men and women really "feel" aroused by domination and surrender. This is not an argument for feminist essentialism and the acceptance of male and female qualities as natural. If women were born to submit and men to dominate, why do the products of culture have to keep reminding us about it?

The fact that men get to act in the world, and women get to nurture them in their pursuits, gets acted out in sexual terms: men act and women receive - sexually. Men take and women are taken. The reason why penetration by men has so seldom been construed as engulfing by women is because the term is entirely inconsistent with our culture's sexual ideology. Even the most enlightened and progressive women and men get caught on pornography's sexual subordination. This does not make these people sick, it makes them well-socialized products of a culture determined to make sexuality the most powerful force for keeping us in our rightful places.

Feminists have argued closely that pornography lies. I think we have to accept that the lie of pornography, and its imitation in the mass media, is becoming the truth about life.

I do not think that feminists have come to grips with the second strand of patriarchal sexual ideology, at least not enough to change it. Given the definition of sexuality under patriarchal construction, the best we've been able to do in the feminist struggle has been to fiddle ever so slightly with the roles, give lesbians a chance to be "tops" as well as "bottoms," without challenging the hierarchical construction in the first place. Actually, the very best evidence we have that sexuality is socially constructed and not biologically determined is the fact that not only have some lesbians resisted the ideology of forced heterosexuality, but have resisted the male/dominant female/submissive role demands by changing places at will.

The third strand of patriarchal sexual ideology is the tension that power and sex are inextricably bound, that sex with aggression and violence and tension and conflict is not

y and its Discontents

ent, or boring at best. Judging by material in the newist texts, this third strand is not only not rejected in the thinking, but is actively embraced by feminists who would have power-laden sex than no sex at all. Although the nice for this abounds in both *Powers of Desire* and *Pleasure and Danger*, the capitulation to the third strand is plainly put by Esther Newton and Shirley Walton in "Misunderstanding" (*Pleasure and Danger*), where they in their failure to consummate their friendship by the fact they were incompatible: they were both tops. They don't try to analyze how this came to be. In fact, they refuse to touch it at all and submerge the entire question of power in a scenario where nature wants it that way. "Power and sexuality," they write "are deeply, perhaps intrinsically, connected (italics mine) in ways we do not fully understand and cannot abolish." Some feminists are so solidly in the grip of the "can-only-equal-power" ideology that when I suggested an alternative to the dynamic—ie, a serious feminist interest in eroticizing equality in both our cultural product and in personal sexual practice—a feminist writing for the recently sex-positive gay newsmagazine *The Body Politic* led that I had advocated celibacy.

Newton and Walton deliver the female-orgasm-equals-radiance motif. When they say, "What works is what's good," they mean that what works is what feels good. But "feels good" is constructed from something other than a feminist framework, like thousands of years of sexual oppression and the perpetuation of a sexual ideology that is certain to bring women down. Why do so-called "pro-sex" feminists not care about this, or ignore it, or misinterpret it, or repeat it in a desperate attempt to avoid the anti-sex "pro-choice" label?

Shirley Dimen, in her article "Politically Correct, Politically Incorrect" (*Pleasure and Danger*) tried to be conciliatory, but she kept saying that sex and political correctness are incompatible. "Sexual intimacy," she writes, "is resistant to rules of political correctness, or rather when it succumbs to rules, it disappears." But Dimen has not only missed the point, she has turned it around. Feminists do not set the rules, patriarchy does. The very source of our passion is rooted in patriarchal interests. For some reason, Dimen worries more

Feminists do not set the rules, patriarchy does. The very source of our passion is rooted in patriarchal interests.

Some feminists telling her what to do than the extent to which a feminist sexual ideology has already laid down the rules for her. Given the absence of close analysis in these discussions, it is the rate some feminists are espousing the view that more is the answer, I'm beginning to think that even though I doubt the quality of sexual life, I'll concede to them the "pro-choice" label, the way feminists have had to concede the "pro-choice" label to the right wing even though we know we care a great deal about the quality of life issues. If pro-sex means the abolition of sex, the doing of it, at all costs, I'd rather be pro-choice.

III

Sexist chauvinism cannot be redeemed by tarting it up in a post-modernist drag, sophisticated constructionist theory or retro-feminist jargon. — Gayle Rubin "Talking Sex," *Pleasure and Danger*.

As agreeing not to mention danger requires that one's sex-autobiography be recast, agreeing not to speak about pleasure requires a similar dishonest alchemy, the transmutation of sexuality into unmitigated danger and unremitting victimization. — Carole Vance, "Pleasure and Danger: Towards the Politics of Sexuality," *Pleasure and Danger*.

The tendency of some feminists to regard women purely as victims rather than sexual subjects, and to define the movement's goal as controlling male sexuality rather than demanding women's freedom to lead active sexual lives, reinforces women's oppression and plays into the hands of the new right. It is a dead end, a politics of despair. Feminism is a vision of women's freedom of fulfilled desires, or it is nothing. — Ellen Willis, *Diary of a Conference on Sexuality*, (out of print).

It is not the problem, sexism is. — Lisa Steele, "A Capital Idea," *Women Against Censorship*.

These quotations are taken from among the most eloquent proponents of a new feminist perspective on sexuality. To what extent do they take on the issue of patriarchal sexual ideology? Not much, from what I can see. Gayle Rubin, whose article "Talking Sex" is really the centerpiece of *Pleasure and Danger* (and who unfortunately repudiates the truly brilliant "Traffic in Women" which she wrote in 1973), does an exhaustive analysis of the way in which legal proscription against sexual behaviour has caused unspeakable trauma for people who have done nothing to warrant such persecution. Her critique of legal sanction is extremely useful. Rubin

Why does the left wing become victim-oriented when analyzing the state, but refuse to question the way sexuality can be used against us?

Sexism has always been a force to reckon with in this debate. But her main point is that erotic chauvinism is reprehensible: "Variation is a fundamental property of life... yet sexuality is supposed to conform to a single standard." But Rubin picks on the wrong standard. She worries about the persecution of S/M practitioners and "cross generational" sexual activists, calling them the true dissidents, when in fact they express one of the fundamental elements in patriarchal ideology—the desire to dominate.

In her introduction to *Pleasure and Danger*, Carole S. Vance complains that feminists have transmuted sexuality into unmitigated damage, once again placing the blame on feminists for theorizing about how sexuality works. Ellen Willis also wants to be a sexual subject, a sexual actor and not a victim, as if we could wish away an ideology that is deeply entrenched. Why do these women resist the idea that sexuality is gendered to the ground? I think they resist the view because they are eager for sexual freedom and they do not believe that they can get it as long as they think of themselves as victims. To say that women are not victims in sex becomes the means for them to feel empowered in the sexual arena. While I sympathize with their desires, I don't think putting on blinkers is the answer. To say that women are not victims in sex is to trivialize everything we know about rape, incest and wife assault. I do not think we can afford to do that lest we retreat into the silence that has kept women victimized for so long.

The desire for orgasm is not worth that. This is not to say that we shouldn't have sex. It means we have to continue to question how and why we get our pleasure; we have to question the role of sexual intercourse in a sexist culture; we have to question the social meaning of fellatio; we have to question the ways in which conflict, aggression and hierarchy get us hot. We should be able to do so without anyone thinking we are saying women should stop participating in any of these activities. (This tendency to sniff out "censors" and "judgements" in the feminist debate permeates Gayle Rubin's article, for example. She seems to think that just talking about these things means the same thing as applying legal sanction.)

What's fascinating about the new developments is that women like Carole Vance and Ellen Willis are anti-censorship feminists with strong views about the action of state and legal mechanisms. Both of these women would be prepared to argue meticulously that patriarchal structures exist to maintain the status of the powerful over the powerless. The question here is this: Why is sexuality so different? Why can we agree that cultural and political life have been organized over centuries to protect the status quo—with a few reforms allowed—while sexuality has not? Why does the left wing, for that matter, automatically become victim-oriented when analyzing the state, but refuse to question the way in which sexuality can be used against us? If the forces of political dominance have been so careful to appropriate every other avenue of human expression and change, and given what we know about sexuality's potential for empowerment, why and how could we imagine that the forces of political power would have left sexuality out?

The new sex-positive feminism seems to assume that the operative sexual ideology of patriarchy, if one exists, has been repression and not oppression. I am not impressed with this view. I look around in this culture and I do not see a great deal of repression. I see a hypersexualized society less concerned with having no sex, than with having the right kind of sex—men on top, women on the bottom; a society in which, for example, American men spend fifty million dollars a day on prostitution. These men spend the money to have sex, not to avoid it. This is a culture in which men's sexual access to women is guaranteed by a pornography industry that remains for all

practical purposes protected, or by health workers who in the wake of wife assault, tell the victims to go home and be more feminine, or by law enforcement officers who think wife assault is "just sex," or that marital rape is a man's right; a culture where adolescent women purchase T-shirts with a heavy metal rock band's logo featuring women in chains on their hands and knees, and advertize their inevitable readiness to participate in sex that will sit quite nicely with patriarchal constructs; and finally, where one out of four women will have her first sexual experience before the age of sixteen with a member of her family or someone close to it, in a context of force and inequality. Likely no one will find out, and she will learn that sexuality is essentially a source of her own victimization. Cultural products aren't the only things that keep us in line. Real experience works just as well.

Lisa Steele's "Capital Idea" in *Women Against Censorship* is a thorough analysis of how mass media sex stereotyping keeps the prevailing sexual ideology unthreatened. But I disagree with the comment that "sex is not the problem, sexism is," even though it is a formulation feminists, especially anti-porn feminists, have espoused since the critique was first developed. Sex is a problem for a lot of women. Ann Landers found that out (see *Broadside*, February 1985) and I think that is the significance of her survey. She discovered that 72% of women preferred cuddles to the act.

Cultural products aren't the only things that keep us in line. Real experience works just as well.

I mentioned this poll to a woman who would no doubt appreciate the "sex-positive" label. Her response was swift: "I'm in the other 28%." The implication is, "What's wrong with the other 72%? Maybe if they weren't so repressed they would get into it more." But the women who responded to Ann Landers's poll did not say they preferred cuddles because the Bible told them that fornication was a sin; they did not complain about jism and come and how it made them gag. Their problem was not that sex was "yucky." Their problem was they felt used and used up, as if the act were the exercise of power over them and not something which gave them pleasure. These women are resisting. What's amazing, given the intensity with which they are encouraged to like it the way it is, is that there were so many of them who were willing to say that they didn't. They deserve our support, not our contempt.

What most of us want to believe is that sexuality is unremittingly positive. We want to believe this because sex gives us pleasure, regardless of whether it has been constructed by political ideology and its cultural agents. Sometimes women can be heard arguing that they like to be sexual objects. What they mean is that they like to have sex, that they cannot imagine anything else but objectification through sexual response. The last time I heard a woman say this, she was cheered by an audience who agreed that she shouldn't have to give up sex. She and her audience's insistence that sexual objectification was worth maintaining, lest none of us ever has sex again, locks out change. Objectification, conflict and danger in the sexual arena are not inevitable for women.

We do not have to give up on sexual pleasure, but we cannot afford to be afraid to examine where it comes from and how we get it. In the lead article in *Women Against Censorship*, Varda Burstyn warns that we have to be careful about the strategies we develop, "to mend and reweave the delicate fabric of sexual life." Sexual life does need mending and reweaving, and with an entirely new set of threads and strands. The feminist struggle is not against sexuality, it is the struggle for change in the sexual arena.

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ARTS

A Girl and Her Egg

by Donna Gollan

What do we know of Supergirl? Oh yes, she's faster than a speeding bullet and able to leap tall buildings at a single bound, but that's because she's Superman's cousin and therefore, his Krypton equal. If Superman is, literally, super-masculine, the muscle-bound Man of Steel, why hasn't Supergirl got any super female qualities? Super endurance? A building monthly cycle of super strength? Exciting powers that rely on nimble fingers, a quick brain, a supple body? As a comics heroine who masquerades as a shy, brunette teenager whenever she's not flying through the skies in her blue and red supergear and flowing blond hair, she's a bit of dud. Clark Kent is a wonderful illustration that a man can be bumbling and inept and still be hiding a "real man" beneath the surface. What is Linda Danvers? Flying proof that blondes have more power?

Take heart super feminists. *Supergirl*, the movie, is a silly, happy, fantasy cult movie for women. All the female characters take risks, leaping into the unknown without a backward glance, be they heroes or villains. The special effects, universally poo-hooed by the mainstream critics, rely on menstrual, conception, and birth imagery. The whole story is shaped around a young girl after her lost egg, the omega hedron, one of two major power sources that keeps her planet alive. It falls into the hands of Selina (Faye Dunaway), a wicked witch with wonderful Medusa-hair, who hasn't a clue how to use it but instantly recognizes its power. Nothing daunted, she and her sidekick Bianca (Brenda Vaccaro)

keep practising destruction until they get the hang of it. We almost get sidetracked into cheering for these two, especially when they slam the door in cohort Nigel's face. "I've just outgrown you Nigel. These things happen." "You girls are rank amateurs. You're playing with fire." "That's because We Own the Matches."

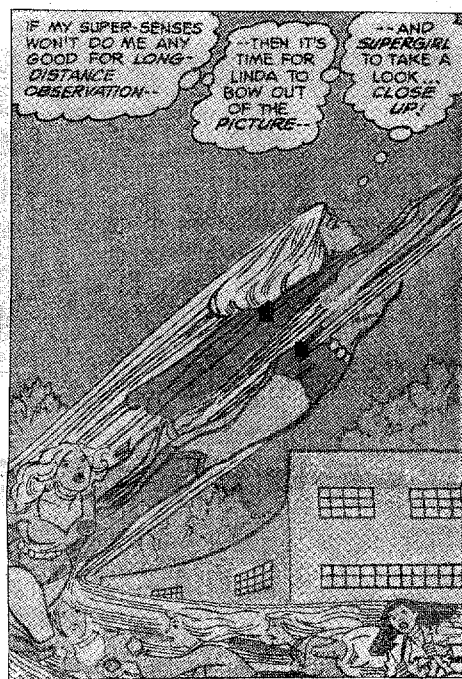
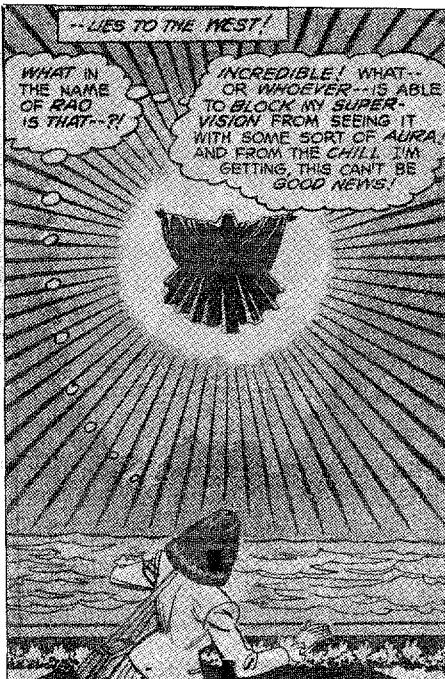


But who can resist a Supergirl who leaps into an egg-shaped capsule and hurtles out into the unknown, risking her own destruction and reaching earth through a wondrous barrier of liquid red globules? Bursting up through the water of a large lake, she is delighted to discover her new powers and spends her first moments on earth floating happily from tree to tree. Taking on the identity of Linda Lee, schoolgirl and "wimp," she struggles with such feminine mysteries as brassieres and pierced ears: "You mean all the boys will be crazy about me if I put holes in my ears?" And what is her first adventure as a Superhero? Two truck drivers in baseball caps attempt to rape her. As she innocently asks for directions, they begin to twitch at her super short skirt and fondle her blonde mane. "Why are you doing this?" "It's just the way we are," they answer. Can you beat this script? Naturally she kicks them through a fence. And their response? "Hey Eddie, I think we should keep this to ourselves."

If Supergirl's passage to earth was through menstrual space, and her banishment to the

love potion of Selina's but falls for Linda Lee by mistake. He stalks her with roses and chocolates, speaking only in the most fulsome poetic phrases. An attempt to swing her up into his arms fails when he finds he cannot budge her. She laughs at his attempts to rescue her and giggles when he is at his most romantic. He tumbles to her disguise when he recognizes her kiss but keeps her secret and, in the end, lets her go without regret. Mortal men are just not ready for supergirlfriends.

Selina has no real power to stop Supergirl with her own egg, until she pairs it with a wand stolen from Nigel. The two together send Supergirl to the Phantom Zone where she meets her childhood mentor, Zoltar (Peter O'Toole). Zoltar was banished for losing the omega hedron in the first place and has since spent his time drinking the Phantom Zone's equivalent of alcohol and feeling defeated. This is not Supergirl's idea of a good time, however, and she urges him to risk passage through "the rift" and out of the Phantom Zone. It is interesting that all the time they are there, they never meet up with



Phantom Zone was accomplished with the power of conception between the wand and the omega hedron, her voyage through the rift is filled with birth imagery. She must fight her own fears to make it through the swirling red vortex up to the opening and the light. Selina battles away from the other side with her usual inept spells but only succeeds in stopping Zoltar, a mere male and, in this movie, expendable.

And it gets better. Selina's fatal flaw is her "overreaching ambition," a monster which is, frankly, male. She sends him to destroy Supergirl but she is not surprised when he fails. "That's what you get when you send a man to do a woman's job."

Meanwhile, for a little comic relief we have Ethan, a muscle-bound gardener, who takes a

any other phantoms or, in fact, anything Supergirl must battle besides mud and slime which has a very unfeminine effect on her appearance, and her own loss of powers—signified by the fact that her hand bleeds when she squeezes a rock.

Zoltar continues to serve a purpose, however, even after his death. When Supergirl is once more head-to-head with Selina and her nasty Overreaching Ambition, it is Zoltar's voice of encouragement that helps Supergirl to break out of the monster's grip. Could this be masculine confidence internalized? The end of Supergirl's shaky adolescence and the beginning of her super-womanhood? Who knows what can happen once a girl and her egg are reunited? Nothing can stop them now.

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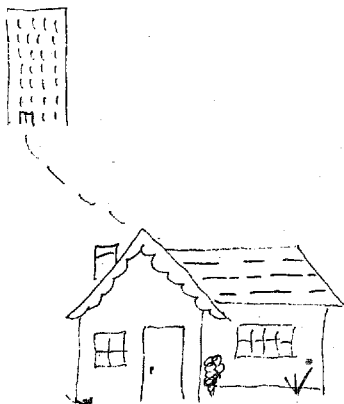
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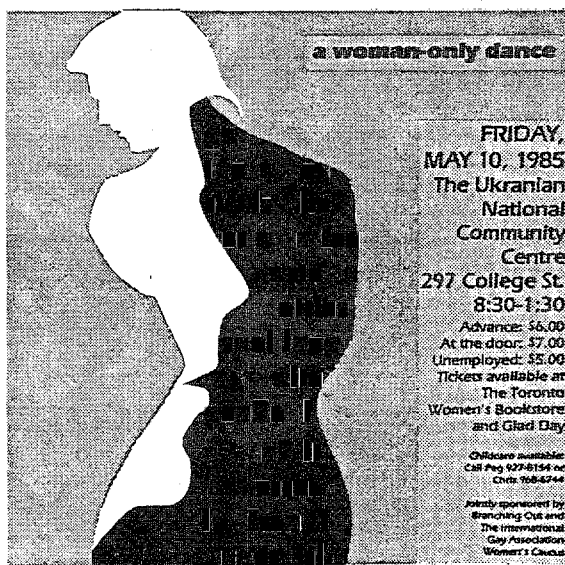
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A Period of Blessing

The Menstruation Tapes



ILLUSTRATION BY INGRID MACDONALD

Blood is for Bleeding: The Positive Value of the Menstrual Experience. by Marlene Philip. Cassette tapes.

Reviewed by Alexandra Horsky

The inspiration for Marlene Philip's documentary series on menstruation is credited in part to the work of Peter Redgrove and Penelope Shuttle, who acknowledge in their book *The Wise Wound* that there exists "a terrible silence about extraordinary riches." Western society's long-standing refusal to accept menstruation as anything but an excretory process (a messy and inconvenient one at that) has done much to devalue the experience. Philip asserts that much of *The Wise Wound* is speculative, an observation which applies equally to *Blood is for Bleeding*, and constitutes much of its strength. An open-minded curiosity is precisely what is needed to combat the prevailing negative attitudes towards the menstrual cycle. This is not to imply, however, that Philip's investigation is a cursory one.

The 7-part taped documentary series is ambitious in both the number and range of topics explored. Having chosen as her field of inquiry an issue which concerns over half the world, Philip's undertaking must be applauded. The series is just over four hours in length, and consists of cassettes which may be heard individually, or as part of the larger work. Each tape focuses on a particular facet of the menstrual experience. Evident in all is Philip's intent to explore the positive value of menstruation, not only as it affects the individual woman, but also as it relates to the evolution of humankind in general.

The series begins with a comprehensive examination of the physiological aspects of the menstrual period. The ovarian and uterine cycles are described, as are the problems of dysmenorrhoea and pre-menstrual tension. An historical overview indicates that we have made progress in our understanding of the reproductive cycle. One of the earliest recorded views on the effect of a menstruating woman upon the natural environment, for instance, reveals that a woman had only to approach a vessel of wine for it to sour, or a field of herbs and young buds for it to "catch a blast and burn away to nothing (The Elder Pliny, *Natural History*)."

Although it is clear that our knowledge of the cycle has much improved at the molecular and hormonal levels, there remains a disturb-

ing tendency on the part of diagnosticians to view problems associated with menstruation from one of two mutually exclusive camps: the physiological or the psychogenic. The recent introduction of anti-prostaglandins and progesterone in the treatment of dysmenorrhoea and pre-menstrual tension has done much to ease the periodic discomfort experienced by some women, but as Philip points out, over-reliance on drug therapies benefits the large pharmaceutical companies more than it does the individual patient, who is led to believe that she has no control over her bodily functions. Conversely, an over-emphasis on the psychogenic creates an excessively negative image of the "hysterical" woman who has only herself to blame for any pain she may feel. More client-centred alternative therapies such as acupuncture, shiatsu and homeopathic remedies are increasing in popularity; however, the low level of information among women and physicians, coupled with the low priority given to research in the area of menstrual problems, certainly qualifies any "progress" we may have made.

If there is an over-emphasis on the practical, hygienic side of menstruation in the medical profession, there is at least some attempt made to link the period to positive experiences in psychiatry and psychology.

The area of dream analysis has proven particularly fruitful in establishing a link between body and mind. "Phases of the cycle," according to Philip, "can serve to reveal hidden truths to women about themselves." Correspondingly, Philip cites a number of studies in which specific dreams with specific sexual feelings and meanings could be linked to phases of the menstrual cycle.

Marion Woodman, a Jungian therapist in Toronto, elaborates on this subject and agrees that the menstrual cycle is clearly reflected in women's dreams. It is at this point that the series takes its most radical departure from conventional beliefs about the period, not only because both Woodman and Philip assume that the period can benefit the individual woman, but also because they encourage all women to *take the responsibility* to look within and uncover a more personal meaning behind the menstrual cycle. In Woodman's words:

So I would see it as a time when they go into themselves in order to build up their own psychological, inner, introverted life. It

really is a period of blessing - if it is accepted that way! If the psychological conflict is not in consciousness, it will manifest as a somatic symptom, and then it will manifest as water. Now, mind you, the dreams even then may be beautiful dreams of fish and being in the bottom of the ocean, and just that lovely, quiet peace, but that's where the creative seeds are, in the bottom of the ocean, and right in the bottom of the unconscious. And particularly for a creative woman, that's the period when she can really get hold of those creative seeds and get them back up to the top. But if she just goes on rushing in the world, she's missed the opportunity again.

Woodman suggests that much of the monthly pain and discomfort experienced by women signals the need for a temporary withdrawal from the competitive, outer-directed world. Denying the cyclical nature of our bodily rhythms can be injurious at both the psychological and physiological levels. She invites us to reconsider and reclaim the ways of our foremothers, setting aside a period each month for our return to a symbolic menstrual hut. Whereas our society's current understanding of the menstrual hut would have us associate the need to withdraw with a woman's impurity at the time of menstruation, Woodman believes the process, as well as being self-imposed, reflects a need to punctuate creative activity with periods of introspection and integration. Considered in this way, the period can no longer represent, at best, an inconvenience, and at worst, the curse it is so often labelled.

Redgrove and Shuttle also used dream analysis as the vehicle for their investigation into the menstrual cycle in *The Wise Wound*. Redgrove saw the period as a largely unexplored resource, although he maintained that all women could and should gain access to the energy inherent in the cycle, advocating, like Woodman, that women engage in active and responsible investigation of their own menstrual periods. According to Redgrove:

... the traditional way, if you like the magical or tantric way of looking at this is that at ovulation at the other end of the cycle, the egg is formed and in this egg is contained the entire energy and differentiation capable of producing a complete human being... the image is that if this energy is not used for

producing another person, then when the egg disintegrates at menstruation... this energy is given up for the personal use of the woman... for her own personal, magical, healing or psychological or creative, mental use. It's as though if there is not a physical child, there is a spiritual child possible.

Redgrove and Shuttle observed an increasing sensitivity, both inner and outer, around the time of the period and saw the period as an opportunity to reap benefits at creative, sexual and spiritual levels.

The conclusions of Woodman, Redgrove and Shuttle will undoubtedly change the way we think of, in Shuttle's words, "the monthly repetition which is never the same." If it is accepted as such, the period *can* be a blessing. If, on the other hand, women choose to ignore the never-ending source of energy which is our birthright, we will experience, as Redgrove suggests, a "compression of the entire menstrual experience delivered to (us) in the form of an illness." The notion of the period as a means of drawing on creative energies is certainly a new one, and has far reaching implications for the individual woman, as well as for society in general. Imagine women across cultures, globally united in their ability to maximize the benefits of their creative cycles - surely a force to be reckoned with.

Philip's examination of menstruation and its positive value for women covers topics too numerous to mention in detail, but among them are: menstruation and the law; the anthropological significance of the menstrual cycle; the periodicity and synchronicity of the menstrual experience and its impact on the development of social structures; and a reinterpretation of traditional myths and rituals in light of a more positive view of menstruation.

Philip contends that we are currently undergoing a reclaiming of the menstrual experience, and includes as evidence of this trend a collection of testimonials by women as to the benefit of the period in their own lives. These statements are not only heartening in the face of society's inclination to denigrate the menstrual experience, but also serve to corroborate many of the theories and findings postulated by Philip throughout the series.

Angela, a Tamil woman from Southern India, describes the special ceremonies which marked the onset of her first period. Rubbed with oils, offered gifts of silk, jewels, ceremonial herbs and foods, and surrounded by women singing songs of a celebratory nature, it is no wonder she looks back on the event fondly. To this day, she links the auspiciousness of that occasion with her positive feelings towards her period.

For Debbie, the fact that there exists no framework within which we may celebrate a woman's "coming of age" in our culture is no impediment, she encourages us to find our own commemorative symbols: the red, flowing dress which she dons for the duration of her seven day period is a testament to her pride in the experience, as well as a reminder to herself that menstruation represents her "passport to solitude" and introspection.

A third woman recalls her first period at the relatively late age of 17: "... I finally saw that I was menstruating and all I can remember is getting up from the toilet and thinking, 'Well now, that's that! Now I have some power.' Now I'm taking my rights as a powerful participant in the whole culture..."

Philip's series succeeds in providing a novel and positive image of the menstrual experience. The tapes represent a pivotal point of departure for the listener - departure from the worn out opinions and the many misconceptions which shroud the issue. What is most inspiring is Philip's insistence that we abandon our passive stance and accept the challenge of self-exploration. As evidenced in the testimonials of those interviewed, a thorough investigation of our own menstrual cycles can yield a wealth of creative riches.

Philip concludes her series with an excerpt from Penelope Shuttle's poem *Fosse*, perhaps best expressing the continual discovery of the new that is ours for the reaping:

I am here to correct my mistakes.
These corrections are made in blood
on the borderland of riddles
at the brink of encyclopedias
I cannot open and read yet.

(Information about the menstruation tapes is available from: Marlene Philip, 173 Robina Ave., Toronto, Ontario M6C 3Y5; Tel: (416) 651-3090. "Blood is for Bleeding (The Positive Values of the Menstrual Experience)" includes: *The Science of Bleeding; Problems: Dysmenorrhoea and Pre-Menstrual Tension; Psychology and Psychiatry; Menstruation and the Law; The Terrible Silence; Turning Levi-Strauss on his Head; and The Blessing.*)

Alexandra Horsky is a feminist filmmaker living in Toronto.

A Different Choice

In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development.
by Carol Gilligan. Cambridge, MA/
London, Eng.: Harvard University Press
1982. Pp. viii, 184. \$7.95

Reviewed by Jean Wilson

In a Different Voice is not new, but since it is obviously already one of the most significant feminist books published in the 1980s and has not yet been reviewed in *Broadside* it requires comment, however belatedly. Its insights into and clear, common sensical analysis of the difference between how women and men integrate experience and moral behaviour have presented a radically new way of looking at human development. Gilligan has opened new doors to perception for many of her peers, especially those stranded in the quicksand of Freudian theories about women. Her book has already taken a deservedly prominent place in psychological literature. But this is not just an academic book written for the specialist only. Gilligan also speaks directly to lay readers, eloquently and persuasively.

What she has to say, in fact, will probably not be entirely unexpected to most of us, whether we have ever stopped to think about it before or not. *Women* have known that there are essential differences in general in how women and men perceive the world and behave in it. Simply consider, for example, the issues of war and pornography, and how radically different male and female views about them can be. However, particularly since Freud propounded his theories about human development, psychology has systematically and repetitively misread how women make moral choices, how women deal with relationships of all kinds, how women grow psychologically, and how women order their priorities. Almost without exception, theories about human development have been devised by men, about men, and for men. Women have been assumed to either fit the patterns cut out or to not fit them because of a failure in moral development. Gilligan points

out, logically and with many pertinent examples, that this way of looking at human development is biased and indefensible.

The "different voice" she refers to is not so much associated with gender as with theme. Gilligan's central assumption is that how women behave differently is not just a matter of physiology but of how women describe their lives, the language used and the kinds of connections made. Reasonably enough, since this is a book focussing on women's psychological development, Gilligan's observations and research data are given primarily through women's voices, but she does include significant examples of cases in which male responses to given situations differed from female responses. This kind of contrast highlights the distinction she makes throughout *In a Different Voice* between two modes of thought and shows how psychological interpretation has confused those modes.

In order to gather relevant data for the book, Gilligan, who is an associate professor of education in the Graduate School of Education at Harvard, did three sets of interviews. The first set explored identity and moral development in the early adult years by relating the view of self and thinking about morality to experiences of moral conflict and the making of life choices. Twenty-five students were interviewed as college seniors and then five years after graduation. The second set of interviews involved 29 women, aged 15 to 33, of various ethnic and social backgrounds and single or married, and concerned each woman's resolution of whether or not to have an abortion. Twenty-one of these women were interviewed again a year after they had made their choice. These two studies, which

Gilligan refers to as "the college student study" and "the abortion decision study," asked those interviewed to define what their moral problems were and what they saw as conflicts. From the answers to these questions, the third set of interviews, "the rights and responsibilities study," was devised.

This latter set of interviews was with a sample of females and males "matched for age, intelligence, education, occupation, and social class at nine points across the life cycle: ages 6-9, 11, 15, 19, 22, 25-27, 35, 45, and 60. From a total sample of 144 (8 males and 8 females at each age), including a more intensively interviewed sub-sample of 36 (2 males and 2 females at each age), data were collected on conceptions of self and morality, experiences of moral conflict and choice, and judgments of hypothetical moral dilemmas."

What Gilligan's research data revealed, or confirmed, is that women define themselves primarily in terms of human relationships and of their degree of caring about other people. Problems of moral choice are rarely seen as having only one of two possible resolutions. Instead, because women from childhood tend to associate individuality with relation to others, be they mother, father, siblings, friends, or lovers, there is not usually an immediately obvious answer to a given problem or moral choice. In most psychological theories, this kind of approach to solving moral dilemmas has been interpreted as either confused or deferential, and certainly as a negative way of dealing with life.

Men, on the other hand, generally do determine that there are immediately obvious answers to moral problems since from childhood on they tend to define themselves in

terms of their capacity to think and act independently, without necessarily considering the ramifications of their choices on others. The moral dilemmas posed for women in considering problems of human relationship are often simply not there at all for men since their very masculinity is associated by them with separation from others, lack of intimacy, and hence with the ability to maintain this state and make clear moral choices. This approach traditionally has been interpreted as the positive way of dealing with life.

In a Different Voice is an illuminating book and does nothing less than refocus how to consider human development. What Gilligan has to say is fundamental to understanding human behaviour without prejudice to half the human race. As she says, "The failure to see the different reality of women's lives and to hear the differences in their voices stems in part from the assumption that there is a single mode of experience and interpretation. By positing instead two separate modes, we arrive at a more complex rendition of human experience which sees the truth of separation and attachment in the lives of women and men and recognizes how these truths are carried by different modes of language and thought.... Through this expansion of perspective, we can begin to envision how... adult development as it is currently portrayed and women's development as it begins to be seen could lead to a changed understanding of human development and a more generative view of human life."

Jean Wilson is a former collective member of *Broadside*.

Vital Illumination

Full Moon - an anthology of Canadian women poets, edited by Janice LaDuke and Steve Luxton. Dunvegan: Quadrant, 1983.
Anything is possible - a selection of eleven women poets, edited by Mary di Michele. Oakville: Mosaic, 1984

Reviewed by Betsy Nuse

who can spend some time with *Full Moon* will have a similar experience. First, one enjoys the comforting presence of familiar, favourite voices - for me these include Roo Borson and Miriam Waddington. Then, there are experienced poets I have somehow missed but was delighted to discover. How will I ever be able to ignore again the extraordinary imagery and energy of Janis Rapoport, Diane Keating or Liliane Welch? But, finally, there is the special delight of such a large anthology: new voices whose work I hope will be more widely published and that I look forward to following. I remember Ronnie Brown and Heather Cadsby's clear-spoken sentiments on mothering and Paddy Webb's rich natural imagery. I long for another book from Robyn Sarah.

The particulars will vary for each reader, of course. But the beauty of an anthology like *Full Moon* - like a festive buffet - is that there's almost certainly something for everyone, in abundance, and an opportunity to en-

As Mary di Michele explains in her introduction, the poets she has chosen are "writers whose poetry I have been following closely for some time." She is not trying to offer a representative collection from across the country, but to make "a significant selection from new work, enough to convey their particular voice and view." Di Michele accomplishes this goal admirably. The book, then, is a thorough introduction to a new school of Canadian women poets. Despite the differences in technique and imagery between Susan Glickman and Libby Scheir for example, I found a common thread in their work.

I would say all eleven women write out of the "new" feminist poetic tradition of the 60s and 70s - the tradition of personal poetry in free verse form. As editor di Michele says in her introduction,

"With deep feeling, but without sentimentality these poets describe the world as they see it. Because they are women to whom the world of feeling has been abandoned by many men and because they are incisively intelligent, their work has a special integrity and a facility to illuminate some vital areas of experience which have been ignored by our literature to date."

Personal violence, youth and aging, the rhythms of the body and emotional suffering, are these poets' raw materials. There is some humour, some despair and much sympathy for us in these women's words. Bronwen Wallace closes the anthology and "A simple poem to Virginia Woolf" with:

yet even as I write these words
those ordinary details intervene
between the poem I meant to write
and this one where the delicate faces
of my children faces of friends
of women I have never even seen
glow on the blank pages
and deeper than any silence
press around me
waiting their turn

The depth of skill and sympathy, the she number of gifted women writing poetry: Canada today is heartening - and amped demonstrated by these two very different but equally interesting anthologies. Browse the pages; whether you prefer *Full Moon's* banquet or Di Michele's well-selected menu, you will find ample fare.

Betsy Nuse is proprietor of *Boudicca Book*

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FULL MOON

An anthology of Canadian women poets
Edited by Janice LaDuke and Steve Luxton

Full Moon celebrates the richness and diversity of women's voices. Twenty-six poets are included in this two-hundred page anthology. They represent a pleasing variety of regions, ages and experience; young women without books published speak alongside the established voices of Joy Kogawa and Elizabeth Brewster. And you may rest assured that, though style and subject vary from author to author, the quality of the writing is uniformly skilful and polished.

Reading *Full Moon* was like dining at a grand buffet. There was so much to taste, I unwittingly overstuffing myself on single bites of dozens of offerings. At first, I couldn't remember what I'd "eaten"!

Fortunately I was able to come back to particular poets and poems. I expect most readers

Anything is Possible

A SELECTION OF ELEVEN WOMEN POETS

Roo Borson
Marilyn Bowering
Jan Conn
Lorna Crozier
Mary di Michele
Susan Glickman
Erin Moure
Libby Scheir
Carolyn Smart
Rosemary Sullivan

EDITED BY
MARY DI MICHELE Bronwen Wallace

joy it all from one easy chair.

On finishing the first anthology, I was astonished that there could be another recent anthology of Canadian women poets which would contain women not included in *Full Moon*. But indeed *Anything is possible*, an anthology of the work of eleven poets, includes three writers (Marilyn Bowering, Jan Conn and Rosemary Sullivan) not in the first anthology.

Winter Quarters and a Hostile Sun

Fables from the Women's Quarters. by Claire Harris. Toronto: Williams-Wallace 1984. 61 pp.

Reviewed by Alexa DeWiel

Fables from the Women's Quarters is published by Williams-Wallace, a house which devotes itself to publishing primarily the works of minority writers in Canada. This should have given me a clue, but until recently I was unfamiliar with Claire Harris, a Black woman whose name evoked in me the image of a white hot-house flower steeped in the cerebral niceties which are peculiar to the middle-class Caucasian population. And so it was with considerable delight that I discovered poetry written with the same outrageous talent that embosses the prose written by Toni Morrison and Alice Walker. I have an endless thirst for writing in the black idiom. The people and situations described in these poems water the dry pages with tactile and olfactory descriptions, alive with the currents and undercurrents that define the human gut and character:

wet churned into rush and breaking it
was always thus the brain's
clear anger
the body's blind welcome and at such
times the moon
full blurred and singing
(Blood Feud)

These are poems which show a clear intelligence, a controlled and melodic voice; each is a work of art. They are intensely personal, secretive in their coding, but they succeed at striking universal chords:

Against a siren wind laden with
darkness
she waits for the pale erotic bells

signal
for midweek's ritual flirtation with
passion
(this love nurtured as one nurtures
an invalid)

In "Nude on a Pale Staircase" from which the above lines were taken, a bout of habitual sexual passion sends one bored participant's imaginative memory soaring into the underbelly of women's lives all over the developing and not-so-developing world, life in the women's quarters:

Now she meets them these other
village women in the aisles of the coop
together pouring over the eggplant their
noses wrinkling in the sterile air they
circle the old rituals of food of caste
Their serious hands give off a small
light

"Where the Sky is a Pitiful Tent" is a series of poems inspired by the testaments of Rigoberto Manchu, a Guatemalan who witnessed the torture and death of members of his family for the crime of going against the sovereign order of Guatemala by resisting the takeover of his small homestead by rich patrons. This genre of journal transformed into second-hand poetry usually makes me uneasy, something about leaving well enough alone. However, this poem is above such categorical speculation. It is beautiful and strong, the kind of poetry that inspires courageous acts:

Now in this strange mountain place
stripped by knowledge
I wait for you
Someone drunk stumbles the night path
I am so porous with fear
even the rustle of ants in the grass flows
through me
but you are set apart

The Catechists say 'in heaven there is no
male'
no female that is far foolishness
why else seeing you smelling of danger
and death do I want you so
your mouth your clear opening in me

and, from the same poem:

We are our corn our salt
this quiet is the strength we didn't know
we had
our humanity no longer alarms us

we have found who we are
my husband our silence is the silence of
blue steel thrumming
and of love
Our deaths shall be clear

Harris has interspersed several haiku among her longer selections. They not only provide lyrical interludes, but also serve to remind that these poems used to be exclusively written by men in Japan, until the early 1900s when some women began to defy tradition by also writing these seventeen syllable verses. They had a melancholy sweetness about them that critics of the day scoffed at as being the writing of prostitutes. A modern Harris example:

a white butterfly
settles on the typewriter
sun bands on the floor

A poignant piece in this book is a commemoration to the poet's crisis of self-confidence as a young girl when she was arrested for jay walking in Edmonton. To have been black, female, and young in Edmonton in the early 60s must have been an experience of dramatic proportions in the best of times, but imagine being singled out and arrested. "Policeman Cleared in Jay Walking Case" is

the title of the poem and the headline of the same "story" in the Edmonton Journal:

Look, you, child, I signify
three hundred years in swarm
around me
this thing I must this uneasy thing
myself the other stripped
down to skin and sex to stand
and say to stand and say
before you all the child was black and
female and therefore mine
listen you walk the edge of this cliff with
me at your peril do not hope
to set off safely to brush stray words off
your face to flick an idea
off with
thumb and forefinger to have a
coffee and go home comfortably

There are only ten poems in this book, excluding the haiku: each is a stand out. "In the Dark, Father" is a gentle and ironic tribute to Harris's late father and his unrealized dreams. "This was the child I dreamt" is a song waiting to be put to music. "After Image" is an interesting shredding of the minimalist artist's ego and it contains a superb stroke of northern restraint.

This is a wonderful book. (A second volume of poems by Claire Harris, entitled *Translations into Fiction*, has recently been released by Fiddlehead/Goose Lane Editions).

Chronicles of the Hostile Sun. by Dionne Brand. Toronto: Williams-Wallace 1984. 75 pp.

War breeds few good poems and there's nothing wrong with that. Let newspapers, journals, novels and movies provide the world with limb-by-limb descriptions of the killing fields. Dionne Brand was in Grenada

continued page 14

Surgical Sculptures

by Randi Spires

Certain art forms, such as conceptual art, often require the viewer to think, to imagine and to criticize many things in order to make any sense of the work. There is often no question of any visual pleasure or any display of dazzling artistic technique. The enjoyment one gathers from this experience is that of thinking about the work, and by extension about the rest of one's life. A hybrid art form which combines images and objects which may or may not be beautiful in and of themselves, along with harder political and conceptual parts, is often termed installation art. The viewer is expected to carry over the critical lessons learned in dealing with the conceptual and textual parts when encountering the more traditionally pleasurable ones.

One such exhibition, *Caring/Curing: Women and Medicine*, was on display at the Gallery 940 in Toronto in March. The artist, Barbara Lounder, has taken a number of sculpted objects, photographs and texts, and put them together in such a way as to force the viewer to reconsider the ways in which women's experience of modern medical technology reflects the racist, capitalist and patriarchal underpinnings of the world.

A motif recurring throughout this exhibition is based on the comic strip, *Rex Morgan, M.D.* Lounder took a strip she found in a daily newspaper, whited out the dialogue in the original bubbles and replaced it with words of her own. Several versions of this were made, photographed and enlarged. The familiarity of the image is seductive. Most of

us, even if we are not regular readers of this cartoon have at least glanced at it. Finding it at an exhibition, we are inevitably drawn toward it. But what is presented is no longer the patriarchal doctor reassuring the subservient nurses. Instead, in Lounder's rewrite, the nurse is authoritative and the doctor unaware. In addition to asking the viewer to consider what the nurse says, the reappropriated comic strip asks the viewer to look at doctor-nurse relationships, and by implication doctor-patient and male-female ones as well. It also suggests looking at the way in which popular culture reinforces traditional sexual and medical roles. Also, by using these familiar everyday images, Lounder is saying that art should be made accessible to everyone, including the woman on the street with little or no background in "high" art.

The closest one comes to the traditional visual pleasure of supposedly non-political art is through the carved objects placed at various points throughout the room. They have all been well-crafted in wood, and many are based on things commonly used by the medical establishment, made many times larger. They are intriguing because, in Lounder's rendering, objects of danger and necessity have become items of pleasure. The Dalkon shield, an IUD banned in many western countries but still available in much of the third world becomes, in Lounder's hands, something innocuous and shell-like. The introducer, a device for inserting contraceptive diaphragms, turns out to have a

graceful boomerang shape.

Not only is there a contrast between these aesthetically pleasing forms and the practical and often perilous functions of these objects, there is also a tension between the organic wooden materials of Lounder's models and the inorganic plastic and stainless steel of the originals. This may well lead the viewer to ask whether or not the insertion of such materials into the bodies of women is any accident. Is it possible that male-oriented medicine is so inured to the reality of women that they view them as extensions of these materials, inert and expendable as plastic and metal?

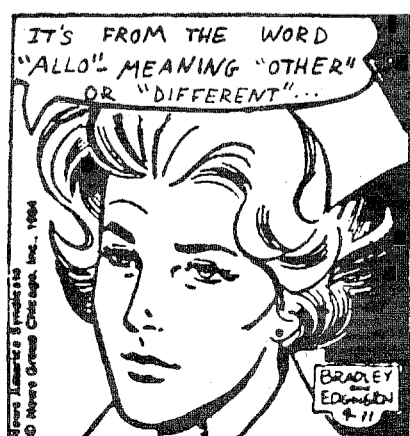
One of the displays contrasts the ideology of consequence-free sexuality with the realities of environmentally induced reproductive disasters. Blown-up photographs of condom packages are interspersed with texts de-

scribing the effects of certain poisons on pregnant women. The condom packages come from pharmacies in the two most polluted areas of Toronto; the Junction and Riverdale. The picture is always similar. A woman, inevitably a blonde and identifiable as an individual, is happily being made love to by a dark-haired male, whose face we never completely see. This allows the male purchaser to envision himself in the picture. The suggestion is that by the simple acts of buying and using this product a man has become reproductively responsible and need not give any further thought to the topic. But we all know that no method of contraception is 100% safe and pregnancy is often a dangerous time for both mother and child. The surrounding texts outline a number of these perils and imply that male responsibility does not end with proper contraception but also includes rectifying the results of patriarchal indifference to the environment. One panel notes that, "Within days of the gas leak in Bhopal, India, pregnant women in the area began reporting spontaneous abortions and miscarriages." To remind us that the attitudes which allowed this event are not isolated ones, another panel tells us that, "One area of the Navajo Indian Reserve contains 36 uranium mines, 6 mills, 6 abandoned mills, and is also being developed as a national nuclear disposal site."

The set-up of the exhibition is not linear. One is not asked to start here, end there, and come out with a single, simple conclusion. Instead, one is invited to pick up what threads one can and weave them oneself into a coherent ideology. There just may be connections between the kindly but patronizing Doctor Morgans of the world, the types of medical technologies commonly used on women and the indifference to environmental disasters expressed by many governments and corporations.

For many people used to the pretty picture school of gallery-going, a first reaction to Lounder's work may well be, "What is this? Is this all there is?" But by doing what this type of exhibition asks her to do, to actively engage her mind and sensibilities in assessing displays, the viewer may just learn not to passively consume the art she encounters, the medicine she receives, or anything else.

Randi Spires is a Toronto feminist writer.



Dionne Brand, from page 13

during the American invasion of that tiny island and, since returning to Canada, has been a dynamo of productive verbalizing about the loss of entitlement she experienced there. She has spoken out in person, on the radio, in magazine articles. She has also written a book of poems. *Chronicles of the Hostile Sun* contains some of her best poetic fragments, but you have to dig for them among the rest of the work, much of which seems to have been psychically abandoned while still in progress. In this, her third collection of poetry in as many years, Brand struggles with a fierce love-hate debate about the justification of poetry itself. This is understandable since her subject matter is essentially hostile to the process of living in an unjust world.

Is war hell? This book bristles with scorn:

It's hell to find pretty word
to describe shit, let me tell you

Anti-poetry

The first section of the book hops like a plane on a milk run from Caribbean island to island. If you do not come from the Caribbean or have never visited, you will be quite lost without an atlas. Barbados is the first stop and subject of the first poem. This island was used as a staging area for the invasion of Grenada, and the publishers may well have thought of adding some explanatory notes about the whole Grenadian travesty. As it is, Brand sees politics in every aspect of her environment. Looking up at the sky:

I see orion like an imperialist
straddle the half sky

From Barbados we fly to Dominica's Roseau, ("you humid slum"), and then on to "Vieux Fort, St. Lucia":

vieux fort has a vengeful sky
a sky of massive death and massive life

Reprotech, from page 4

results in the Frankenstein syndrome—tunnel visioned scientific brilliance, removed from a moral, human context.

Diana Majury, a candidate for her doctoral degree in law at Madison, Wisconsin, compares reproductive technology to pornography as a form of violence against women, and as the ultimate objectification of woman's body as commodity. As Achilles says, the anguish of infertility is to be heard, and reproductive technology can be either liberating or repressive, according to how it is utilized. But infertility is also to be understood as a societally generated phenomenon; the creation of a demand which the reproductive technology industry can respond to for its own profit in terms of both money and control. As Majury says, sterility is iatrogenic: the medical profession has created a problem and is now building on it in the guise of fixing it. The money invested in research into artificial reproduction would better be used in seeking the causes of infertility and preventing them at source. But this would not be profitable. The infertile are doubly exploited; by a life-threatening society where the fear of mortality and sense of isolation make people more

eager than ever to pass their genes on; and by their predicament which precludes the fulfilment of this desire by natural means and leaves them prey to the medical profession, reliant on reproductive technology to alleviate the anguish of their infertility.

Also discussed during the conference were drug marketing practices and manufacturer's liability, midwifery, the protection of workers from reproductive hazards in the workplace, and free access to abortion. Amongst the resolutions put forward at the plenary session were: that women have complete control (independent of fetal rights) during pregnancy, labour, and at birth; that midwives be recognized as valuable health care providers and self-regulating professionals; that the federal government be urged to support the World Health Organization in its efforts to develop and implement an international code of pharmaceutical marketing practices; and that non-profit child care be funded with certain prescribed criteria.

Anyone wishing to know more about the new reproductive technologies should read Test-Tube Women, edited by Rita Arditti, Renate Duelli Klein and Shelley Minden, published by Pandora Press. •

how can you look at it and the stench
below
at once

As the book and Brand's journey of the war continue, the dead and the grief are named and unmasked, layer after layer. Brand surfaces after the crisis of invasion, a shell-shocked survivor groping for details of past realities. Her piece-de-resistance in this collection is "P.P.S. Grenada," which is a love poem of a kind and gives full reign to her descriptive talents. "On eavesdropping on a delegation of conventioners at Barbados Airport" is about a collection of white males travelling south. They are easy pickings for derision at the best of times. But Brand snarls that these are not the best of times, lest the reader think even for a moment that the world really is not just a simple matter of black and white.

In this book, generally, Brand creams her target for all the most predictable offenses, virtually for still being alive. Rage and despair come off sounding like moral indignation which recklessly pops off the page like the thoughtlessly shot bullets that hit and killed some of the most progressive and compassionate men and women working for Free Grenada.

Back home in Canada, Trinidadian-born Brand travels from coast to coast telling her bitter story. In poetic terms it's the kind of stuff that sours the stomach, which no doubt is the desired effect:

I'm sick of hearing chuckles
at my discomfort
I'm sick of doing literacy work
with north americans
as they choke on their food and
I'm sick of their hunger
I'm sick of writing new names and dates
of endings.

Contrast this shooting-straight-from-the-hip style to the cadence and possibilities of the following lines from "P.P.S. Grenada":

it was a new way of seeing everything
even though the sky was still oppressive
and the land smelled of hardship
there was a name for all of this, only
it was never said quite well
but had to do with a freeness which
the body felt

This is the potential to which Dionne Brand is capable and of which there's too little evident in *Chronicles*. I hope that she has been able to take the time to collect herself so that she can again find the full use of that full-toned voice which resonated so powerfully in her first book, *Primitive Offensive*, a book which also called upon capital and civil offenses to measure her rage. *Primitive Offensive* gave us many passages as gripping as this one; "a continent of blood/ to write the Common Book of Prayer/ even as he walks/ his quill drips/ even his quill is made of my tailfeather."

It's too easy to insist that it's hell to find pretty words to describe shit. We're in the global company of great poets and writers who live or have lived through the last decade's growing indecencies to the human spirit in places where murder in the streets is a daily occurrence. They have been able to evoke great passion for justice through the beauty of their words. I am reminded of Pablo Neruda's: "I have written about time and about water/ I have described mourning and its purple metal/ I have written about the sky and the apple,/ now I write about Stalingrad. (*New Song to Stalingrad*).

A book about war which does little but spit at its readers for living the kind of lives which allows for the time to sit down and read a book of poetry is a book that dates quickly and teaches little about the ethics of liberty.

Alexa DeWiel is a freelance writer living in Ottawa.

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Tickets available at Toronto Women's Bookstore, 73 Harbord, DEC, 427 Bloor St. W., SCM Books, 333 Bloor St. W. Both events are interpreted for the hearing impaired/Wheelchair accessible/ Free childcare available (call (416) 925-6568 to reserve).

Week of April 1

● **Monday, April 1:** Underground at the Cameron screens Cream Soda and Minimum Charge, two films by Holly Dale and Janis Cole. 408 Queen St. West. 8:30 pm. Info: 364-0811.

● **Tuesday, April 2:** Womyn Out of Doors (WOODS) holds their bi-monthly planning meeting. New and prospective members welcome. 519 Church St. 7:30 pm.

● **Tuesday, April 2:** Gay Community Appeal forum on Social Services. Committee Room 1, New City Hall. 7:30 pm.

● **Tuesday, April 2:** Pink Turf Soccer League holds a general information meeting. Community Centre, 519 Church St. Info: 463-3528.

● **Tuesday, April 2:** Lesbian Phone Line open tonight for calls from women. 7:30-10:30 pm. 960-3249. Also Tuesdays, April 9, 16, 23 and 30.

● **Tuesday, April 2:** Judge Rosalie Abella will moderate a public forum "Equality Now? The Charter and Women." Co-sponsored by the YWCA and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. Panelists and topics: Mary Marshall - health issues; Mary Jane Mossman - poverty; Lynn King - family; and Mary Cornish - employment. YWCA, 80 Woodlawn Ave. East. 7:30 pm. Free. Info: YWCA, 961-8100 or CCLA, 363-0321.

● **Wednesday, April 3:** "Site Unseen" - new work by Kathleen Peer, opens at the Sparkes Gallery, 1114 Queen St. West. Info: 531-1243. To Sunday, April 28.

● **Wednesday, April 3:** Paintings and coloured pencil drawings on the themes of isolation and alienation in society by Stella Kyriakakis. Gallery 940, 940 Queen St. East. Info: 466-8840. To Saturday, April 27.

● **Wednesday, April 3:** "Desire," a new production by Necessary Angel Theatre, previews at the Toronto Free Theatre. A collective piece about love, sexuality and seduction. (Regular show opens April 10.) 26 Berkeley. Info: 368-2856.

● **Wednesday, April 3:** Lesbians and Gays at U of T. 8 pm. International Student Centre, 33 St. George St. Check 923-GAYS for weekly topic. Also Wednesdays, April 10, 17 and 24.

● **Thursday, April 4:** Lesbian Phone Line open tonight for calls from women. 7:30-10:30 pm. 960-3249. Also Thursdays, April 11, 18 and 25.

● **Thursday, April 4:** Lesbian Phone Line organizational meeting. Interested women, prospective volunteers welcome. 525 Bloor St. West, 2nd floor. 7:30 pm. Info: 960-3249.

● **Thursday, April 4:** Toronto Women's Housing Co-op - the Béguinage - is holding information meeting. 7:30 pm, 337 Shuter Street. Info: 925-2475, ext. 330. Also Thursdays, April 11, 18 and 25.

Week of April 8

● **Tuesday, April 9:** The Lesbian and Gay Pride Day Committee meets at the Community Centre, 519 Church St. 8 pm. Also, Tuesday, April 30.

OUTSIDE

BROADSIDE

TORONTO WOMEN'S EVENTS CALENDAR

APRIL 1985

Compiled by Catherine Maunsell



● **Tuesday, April 9:** Reading group on feminist art meets at 455 Spadina, room 215. 7 pm. Info: 593-0058.

● **Thursday, April 11:** Jeri Wine of OISE will present the results of a research survey on "Lesbians in Academia," sponsored by the Lesbian and Gay Academic Society at U of T. Rhodes Room, Trinity College, Hoskin Ave. 8 pm. Free. Wheelchair accessible. Interpreted for the hearing impaired. Info: 924-6474.

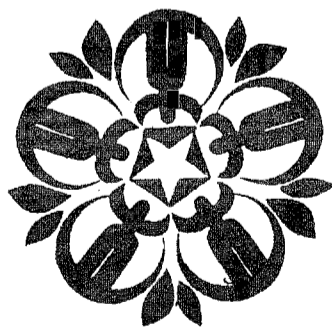
● **Friday, April 12:** Ravenwing: Ritual and Introduction to Women's Spirituality. 66 Churchill St. Info: Janice Canning, 533-2738 or 626-5465.

● **Friday, April 12:** Women's Music/Women's Culture: with Marion Wade, New York, women's music a cappella; poets Susan Glickman and Bev Daurio; and "Sea Change," original folk music. New Trojan Horse Café, 179 Danforth Ave. 8:30 pm. \$4. Info: 461-8367

● **Friday, April 12:** 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: Women's Spirituality, 7 pm. Info: Janice, 533-2738 or Vera, 536-3162.

● **Saturday, April 13:** "Jock Around the Clock: The Spring Training Dance" brought to you by the Notso Amazon Softball League. Ukrainian Labour Temple, 300 Bathurst St. 9 pm. \$5 advance at Toronto Women's Bookstore and Glad Day Books, \$6 at the door. Info: 967-7440 or 364-1914.

● **Sunday, April 14:** The Toronto Women's Bookstore and the Women's Press are sponsoring a reading-performance by Jovette Marchessault and Gay Bell of Marchessault's Lesbian Triptych. The Rivoli, 334 Queen St. West. 2:30 pm. Free. Info: 922-8744.



Week of April 15

● **Monday, April 15:** The Women's Cultural Network, a forum for the exchange of information about projects and funding for individuals and women's cultural organizations working in the arts. 455 Spadina, room 215. 7:30 pm. Info: 593-0058.

● **Monday, April 15:** Older lesbians and gay men interested in being part of a new social/political group please attend an evening discussion. Community Centre, 519 Church St. 7:15 pm. Info: Chris, 860-1544.

● **Tuesday, April 16:** Ursula Franklin speaks on Women and Peace sponsored by the U of T Women's Network. Hart House Gallery. 7:30-9:00 am. Breakfast \$2.50. Info: OISE Centre for Women's Studies, 923-6641.

● **Tuesday, April 16:** The Women's Art Resource Centre hosts a discussion with Stella Kyriakakis. Gallery 940, 940 Queen St. East. \$2/\$1. Info: 466-2030.

● **Thursday, April 18:** Emily Stowe Night with musicians Laurie Bell, Arlene Mantle and Noele Hall at the New Trojan Horse Café, 179 Danforth Ave. 8:30 pm. \$4. Info: 461-8367.

● **Friday, April 19:** "Women's Studies in Canada: Researching, Publishing and Teaching" a two day conference at York University, sponsored by the Women's Studies programs at York's Atkinson and Glendon Colleges, the Faculty of Arts and the journal, Canadian Women's Studies. \$15 per day, \$20 for celebration meal. Day care and billeting available on request. Info: (416) 667-3179.

● **Friday, April 19:** Benefit for Ernestine's Women's Shelter, with ONA Radio and Future Shock. The Party Centre, 167 Church St. 8:30 pm. \$6 advance, \$7 door. Info: 746-3701.

● **Friday, April 19:** "The Charter of Rights and Freedoms: Implications for Human Services" - a working conference co-sponsored by the Social Planning Council of Metro Toronto and the Canadian Council on Social Development. Speakers include David Kairys, legal activist from Philadelphia; Mary Jane Mossman, Jean Chretien and Chaviva Hosek. Park Plaza Hotel. Registration by April 4. \$50. Info: Suzanne Olsen or Robert Doyle, 961-9831.

Week of April 22

● **Monday, April 22:** Ontario Open Screenings: Six Days of Resistance Against the Censor Board. A coalition of artists, arts organizations, feminists, writers, producers, gays and lesbians and community organizers is calling for a week of resistance against the Censor Board. Info: Pat, 593-1332; Doug, 364-3227 and Kerri (night) 922-9933. To Saturday, April 27.

● **Tuesday, April 23:** Reading group on feminist art meets at 455 Spadina, room 215. 7 pm. Info: 593-0058.

● **Wednesday, April 24:** "Off Centre" at the Rivoli: Sheila Gostick with Romanovsky and Phillips. 334 Queen St. West. 9 pm. \$6. Info: 360-6037.



● **Saturday, April 27:** The Against Cruise Testing Coalition (ACT) sponsors a demonstration for disarmament. City Hall (on Queen St. West) 12:30 pm. Info: 362-0354.

● **Saturday, April 27:** Cruise Missile Conversion Project 5th Anniversary Fiesta, with a dinner and dance. Ukrainian Labour Temple, 300 Bathurst St. Tickets for dinner and dance \$15; dance only \$6. Info: 532-6720.

● **Saturday, April 27:** Womynly Way Productions presents Linda Tillery and her band. Innis Town Hall, 2 Sussex (at St George). \$7.50 advance, \$8.50 door. Info: 925-6568.

May

● **Saturday, May 4:** "Revolutionary Romp" - Dance to Kick off Rape Awareness Week (May 4-10). Sponsored by Toronto Rape Crisis Centre. 8 pm, The Party Centre, 167 Church St. \$5 advance, \$6 door. Women only. Info: 964-7477.

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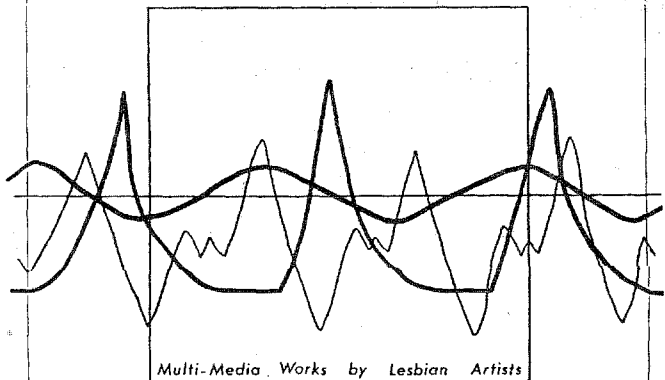
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Feminist Country Commune (Matri-centric)

I can't take the devastating bankruptcy of the patriarchy any more! I want to live in the country & raise my boy there!! - clean air, cats, dogs, trees, grass! In an effort to overcome isolation and avoid the serfdom of conventional marriage I would like to participate in a communal lifestyle, celebrating humanhood and autonomy. I am a strong, sensitive, intelligent, healthy, competent, emotionally strong & stable, supportive, non-gay widow, 41; with a delightful son, 4-1/2. I have some capital, enough furniture to fill a house, plus a small income. I am an apolitical, evolutionary athiest, into holistic health - no smoking, no sugar, etc! - pro-vegetarian. I have an almost unlimited range of interests from armchair philosophising to wind-surfing, from fixing things around the house to classical music - I love truth, beauty & joy in all its forms. I am flexible & tolerant, with a great sense of humor. I'm very concerned about the patriarchy's educational systems - they're hopeless - would like to work out an alternative.

I am an ardent maternalist - skin-to-skin bonding, demand breast-feeding & all that! Motherhood is not the only thing women can do - but it is the most important thing anyone can do - female or male - next to achieving & maintaining one's own humanhood & autonomy! I believe in the natural superiority of femaleness - equality would be quite an existential step down! Unless males can come, graciously & non-violently, to terms with their problematic alienation from the human reproductive enterprise the planet is doomed. While I think guys are great I am an impassioned anti-patriarchalist.

My son & I would love to contact similar feminists - with (or without) children, female (or male), single (or pair-bonded), old or young, with a view to eventually setting up together. If you have the inclination, the inspiration, the courage, the opportunity, the means & the qualifications to give it a try with us, contact me, Margriet Anne, at 8 Lomond Drive, No. 1007, Toronto, M8X 2W3.

Broadside CLASSIFIEDS

WOMEN'S WEEKEND at Tapawingo, near Parry Sound. Friday evening May 3 to Sunday, May 5. \$60. Call, after April 1, Susan (416) 921-4755 or Kye (416) 967-7118.

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CONSTANCE HAMILTON HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE: a co-op for sole support women, with or without children, who are interested in living in a feminist environment and are willing to put some work into our community. One bedroom (\$390-\$401) and two bedroom (\$540-\$578) units available, as well as single accomodation (\$235) in a six-bedroom communal house for post-crisis women. No subsidized units available. 70A Lambertlodge Ave., Toronto; (416) 532-8860.

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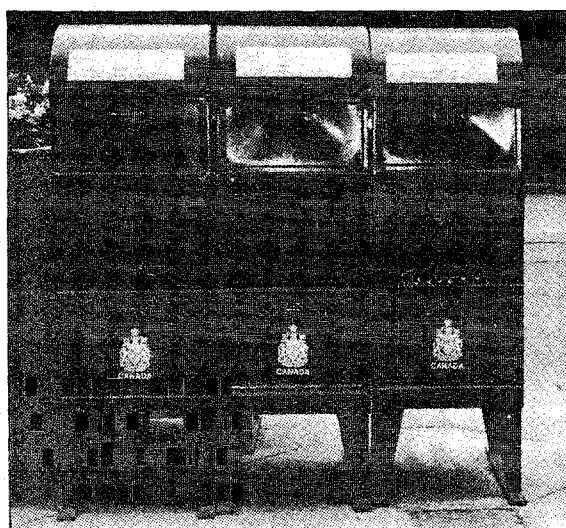
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