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From Harlot to Hooker: Myths of Prostitution. SEE STORY PAGE 8.

Broadside

A FEMINIST REVIEW

FEATURE

TRADE TALK: If activists inside and outside the sex trade are to engage in political dialogue, it's necessary to clear up some myths about prostitutes and prostitution. "I won't go so far as to say that prostitutes are the same as other women, however," writes Debi Brock, in an examination of the tensions which surround the issue. Page 8.

NEWS

BAN BILLING: A newly formed alliance is demanding an immediate end to Ontario doctors' practice of extra-billing. Contrary to the OMA's ad campaign, "women know our interests have never been served by extra-billing," says Lynn Lathrop. Page 4.

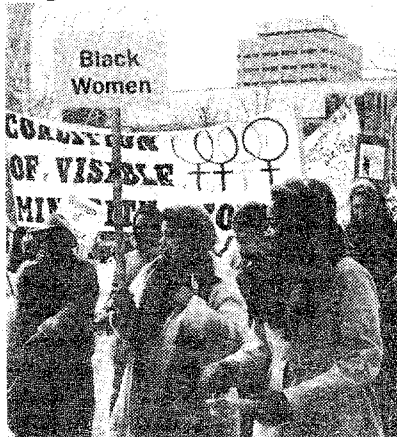
CREDIBILITY GAP: October's Equality Report and last month's equality legislation demonstrate the gap between government recommendations and government activity. "The trickle-down effect continues," says Sarah Eliot in a report on the dilution of the Equality Commission's fairly progressive considerations. Page 5.

INSIDE BROADSIDE

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COMMENT

IN STRUGGLE: Toronto's March 8 Coalition, organizing International Women's Day 1986, took on the issue of racism, a huge project and a frightening one. "The movement goes into flux as we come to terms with the internal reality of racism," says Ingrid MacDonald. Page 6.



LETTERS: Readers respond: to "Standards of Sisterhood" — "I am distressed about the tendency to reduce opposing views to simplistic polarities," says one writer; to a review of *Women and Russia* — "The United States and the Soviet Union are Big Brothers in the nuclear arms race"; and more. Page 2.

ARTS



STUFF OF ROMANCE: Love, lust, jealousy, desertion — these are the familiar Hollywood conventions, and Donna Deitch's *Desert Hearts* is true to form. "It may not be a masterpiece," says reviewer Donna Gollan, "but it is fun." In contrast, the two women in Lina Wertmuller's "lesbian" film *Sotto Sotto* never get (it) together. Page 10.

6 OF 1001: A Space's Nights of Performance provided some exciting new work on the theme of media influence. Says one performer, "Those who look at the *Sun*, the *Star* and the *Globe* will never see the world." Reviewed by Amanda Hale. Page 11.

WHO ARE THEY? Record stores have trouble placing the albums of Wondeurbrass: are they jazz, are they rock, are they classical, are they "women's"? Right, they're all of these. Marion Lydbrooke interviews a member of the Montréal all-woman band. Page 12.

BOOKS: Jennifer Stephen reviews Mariana Valverde's new book *Sex, Power and Pleasure*; Gail van Varseveld reviews Norwegian lesbian feminist Gerd Brantenberg's novel *Egalia's Daughters*. Pages 13 and 14.



OUTSIDE BROADSIDE: Don't miss this month's calendar of Toronto women's events, for April 1986. Page 15.



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

Manuscripts of articles should be typed on white paper, double-spaced (send us original, keep a copy) and accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Broadside is published 10 times a year by the Broadside Collective, P.O. Box 494, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2T1. (416) 598-3513. Member: Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association.
This issue: April 1986; Vol. 7, no. 6

Typesetting: Walker Communications
Alphabets
Printing: Delta Web Graphics
Second Class mail registration no: 4771
ISSN: 0225-6843

Broadside receives funding support from The Canada Council and The Ontario Arts Council.

Next production date: April 19, 20
Copy deadline: April 1
Ad closing date: April 11

Standards of Support

Broadside:

So, the women who wrote to *Broadside* (February 1986) defending Varda Burstyn against Catharine MacKinnon's so-called "attack" think MacKinnon's criticism amounts to "political suicide," weakens our movement by exposing internal conflicts, and fractures and divides the movement! Amazing! Ironic! When I read in Varda Burstyn's *Forum* interview her patronizing and disrespectful dismissal of the work of anti-porn activists as lacking "a clear political analysis of the causes of sexism and violence" and as a product of "a poor political understanding of power and strategy," I thought, good grief, Burstyn has committed political suicide! When I read her derogation of Andrea Dworkin as "damaging" and "exploitative" of women's experience of sexuality, I thought how unconscionable of Burstyn to play into the hands of pornographers by attacking another feminist in their own male controlled medium. When I read her suggestion that pornography should be improved or made non-sexist or even feminist and thus be made somehow acceptable, I thought how naive she must be, how ignorant of the reality of pornography. And I was outraged that Burstyn could possibly justify making these charges and suggestions in the pages of a pornographer's magazine surrounded by exploitative ads and framed by such horrific comments as, "Better dead than spread seems to be the rallying cry of Andrea Dworkin and like-minded women against pornography...."

If Burstyn's interview had been in a feminist publication I would still disagree with its content but at least I would know I could participate in the debate — it would be, as we say in BC, an "in-movement" discussion. So I find it ironic that MacKinnon is vilified for criticizing Burstyn in the pages of a feminist newspaper which, in my opinion, is the most valid forum (no pun intended) and Burstyn is lionized for what seems to me to have been ill-advised, divisive, and disrespectful remarks in *Penthouse Forum*.

Furthermore, I find it distressing and disillusioning that women calling themselves feminists hurl such epithets as hysterical, moralistic, extremist, incoherent, and, that old standby, silencing at another feminist no matter how much they may disagree with her. In my experience these kinds of characterizations have most often been used by representatives of our society's dominant institutions when they seek to discredit or dismiss feminists who pose a real challenge to the powers that be — a sure sign we're doing something right! In this case for feminists to use this tactic in attacking MacKinnon tells me two things: one, even feminists can fall prey to using the very tactics we deplore and seek to resist; and two, MacKinnon's criticism must have success-

fully challenged some very entrenched interests that deserve to be challenged.

The response MacKinnon has received also poses a real question for those of us who disagree with Burstyn and her supporters. Must we expect to be subject to this same kind of defensive vitriol if we articulate our disagreements? Or will we escape it as long as we're not too angry or a lawyer or an American?

The final irony and outrage is that the letters you printed accused MacKinnon of stifling or poisoning debate on the issue of pornography. In fact it is Burstyn and the women/feminists against censorship who have made debate on pornography all but impossible. They have misrepresented the issue as a pro- or anti-censorship debate with the result that censorship becomes the focus rather than pornography itself. Rather than continuing to develop an analysis and strategies to eradicate pornography and the sexual terrorism against women it promotes, valuable energy must be used up in answering the charges of the anti-censorship forces that would construe anyone who is anti-porn as being pro-censorship. Interesting how reminiscent this is of the state's tactic of translating feminist issues into items on the state's agenda.

Catharine MacKinnon's "Standards of Sisterhood" article does not require my support. It stands for itself as a reasoned if justifiably angry critique that exposes the flaws both in Burstyn's defence of her decision to do the *Penthouse Forum* interview and in the content of the interview. I can only hope that women who reacted so vehemently to MacKinnon's article will see its validity if they read it again — preferably in conjunction with Burstyn's interview in *Penthouse Forum*.

Jan Barnsley
Vancouver

The Real Struggle

Broadside:

On reading Catharine MacKinnon's written attack on Varda Burstyn and the barrage of angry responses in your last issue, I struggled with a profound sense of despair and frustration about the direction our movement is taking.

MacKinnon's venomous attack on Burstyn was absolutely out of line, but it should come as a surprise to no one. It is the culmination of a protracted, recriminatory and largely unproductive debate around the "censorship issue" which has raged in the pages of *Broadside* and elsewhere for too long. For everyone, and for themselves, Burstyn & Dworkin/MacKinnon have evidently come to symbolize these opposing views.

I am distressed about the tendency I see to reduce these views to simplistic polarities: socialist vs. radical feminism; being male-identified vs. pro-woman; pro-sex vs. anti-sex; collaborating with the right vs. collaboration

with liberal interests.

Why is it that we cannot talk about this, about the real issues here, without refusing to hear each other? Women are more interested in defending entrenched positions than in productive dialogue or increased understanding. Have we such an ego investment in being right that we refuse to consider the validity of other points of view? I am fed up with the labelling, the mud-slinging and name-calling. We are all guilty of "employing the methods of patriarchal discourse." Let's not kid ourselves, when it sinks to this level, feminist discourse is no different than patriarchal discourse.

This conflict is derailing the real struggle. We are draining energies better spent in opposing patriarchy in opposing each other. This is a plea for tolerance and understanding, for more openness to other ways of thinking.

I am not naive. I've been involved in the movement for ten years, the last four of them as an anti-porn activist. I realize that a group as vast and diverse as women cannot expect to be united and homogeneous. The only thing we have in common is our oppression, and even that we experience in varying degrees. Differences of race, class, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, sexual preference, religion, and personality make disagreement and struggle inevitable.

But lately the struggle has become unproductive. Effective and useful means of communication have been abandoned in favour of accusations and counter-accusations, labelling, reproach and condemnation. Our movement has always been characterized by a touch of self-righteousness. But now being merely "politically correct" has given way to being "more feminist than thou," with banishment from the ranks the penalty for those who don't measure up.

It is clear to me that Varda Burstyn is a feminist. So too is Catharine MacKinnon. These women are coming from radically different perspectives but for both of them, bettering the situation of women is a clear priority. We should be able to disagree with the views of either of them (or anyone else) without judging and condemning her as a person, as a feminist.

On a deeper level, this "censorship debate" is really an issue of sexuality. This is why the recent dialogue on sexuality has arisen when it has, and why it is so difficult and painful. It will remain painful because we are at our most vulnerable around our sexuality, and talking about it openly means taking risks. We must start here, though, if we hope to reach understanding or agreement on the issue of censoring sexual images.

How can we help women to hear each other better? Do Burstyn and her supporters really understand the intensity of Dworkin and MacKinnon's conviction that porn is a danger to women? For them, it is not simply an issue of sexism or offensiveness, but the exploitation of real women used to make that image and the effect of the image on other women. Why then do they refuse to face this danger

EDITORIAL

Cheques and Balances

If you've been on the buses or subways lately, you've no doubt noticed that it is time to give to charity again. The United Way is using the slogan, "When it means so much how can you say no?" Share Life (for Catholic social service agencies) has a picture of an elderly person in a wheelchair against a designer background (hot pink fish on bright yellow) with the slogan "Your silence is killing me." The United Jewish Appeal "is for life." If you're active in the Toronto gay community then no doubt you are aware of the good work that the Gay Community Appeal does; this year groups like Women for Sobriety, The Web, The Lesbian Phone Line, and Lesbians Making History will benefit from the generosity of those who gave.

What we don't have in this city is a United Feminist Appeal, a central body that would bombard the subways with calls for funds. Hmm, and what could this year's slogan be for the UFA — "She needs you right now"?

As it is, money is scarce for most women. We work for less money than men, we make

do with less, and there is less left over to give to charity. Many of us compensate for this by donating our time to organizations, by working as volunteers. Despite the kind of support our organizations receive from the donation of unpaid time and skills, they still have bills and salaries that must be paid.

A side-effect of coming of age in the women's movement is that as services gain credibility, they cease to appear vulnerable. The Toronto Women's Bookstore is beautifully decorated and *Broadside* will always publish on time, but beauty and punctuality aside, we still require the support of our community in order to continue. Those of us who have money left at the end of the month must remember to keep that money circulating in our community. Support your bookstore by going there and buying a book. Support magazines and newspapers by taking out a subscription. Support services, shelters and crisis centres by offering donations or by attending their fundraising events.

As our community matures and as women

gain access to better jobs, we have to develop a spirit of social generosity with regard to our money. We have to look after our own, the way that churches keep themselves going by soliciting a financial commitment from their members. Women might think of tithing a portion of their income to the movement. Imagine if one hundred women earning \$20,000 each tithed 5% of their incomes. That would mean that the community would have the use of \$100,000 annually, and \$100,000 would go a long way at a shelter, a phone line, or a press.

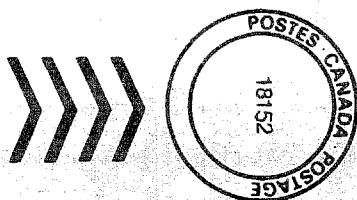
Even if tithing is an extreme idea, and even though the United Feminist Appeal doesn't exist yet to knock on your door, remember that the community we live in is bettered by the continuing presence of services by and for women. Our grass roots institutions form the backbone of our movement and they need our support.

Women! To your cheque books please!



Moving?

Send *Broadside* your subscriber's address label with your new address. Please give us 4 to 6 weeks advance notice.



issue, brushing off current research as "contradictory and inconclusive"?

Similarly, do Dworkin and MacKinnon and their supporters take *seriously* criticisms about their approach? Many women question why sexual explicitness is a pre-requisite to a definition of pornography, and why the emphasis is not instead on the violence and sexism found in mainstream media. Do Dworkin and MacKinnon understand that for Burstyn, censorship presents as grave a threat for women as porn does from their own point of view?

Neither side of this debate seems willing to address concerns raised by critics. These concerns are dismissed as trivial or irrelevant, or simply ignored. We are locked into rigid ways of thinking, of looking at this problem, and we need to discard them entirely, and create a radical new approach.

We need to re-examine our priorities, to look seriously at how we communicate with each other. We need to look at ways to make dialogue more useful and productive; ways to enable us to work together despite our differences; ways to avoid the mistakes we have been making. There was a time I would have said surely we can get beyond this. Now I wonder.

Pam Blackstone
Women Against Pornography
Victoria, BC

Lines Drawn

Broadside:

The letters in the February issue of *Broadside* leave no doubt the lines are drawn and we must choose sides. That's easy enough. Varda Burstyn and the anti-censorship forces have one message: censorship is bad. So who disagrees with that? Certainly not Catharine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin, according to their writings and speeches and interviews.

MacKinnon and Dworkin and the anti-pornography movement have described and analysed women's experience of pornography and the porn industry, the harm it does to all women and the conflicts that understanding the significance of porn presents for all of us, particularly for the male apologists among us. From this analysis the anti-porn movement is developing and testing strategies that are valid alternatives to the state's pro-censorship approaches and alternatives to the dangerous ostrich policy of ignoring the harm and pervasiveness of porn.

Those of us who want to take informed feminist action against pornography will thank Burstyn and company for telling us what we already knew and continue to work with MacKinnon and Dworkin and the feminist movement to further develop our analysis, to organize women, and to challenge the status quo.

Helga Jacobson, Cheryl Dahl, Diana Ellis, Andrée Buchanan, Nadine Allen, Jean McIntosh, Jan Barnsley, Frances Wasserlein, Pamela Sleeth, Vancouver

Appropriate Forum

Broadside:

I continue to be intrigued by the debate around Varda Burstyn's interview in the Penthouse *Forum*. Without indulging in character assassination, may I offer some general thoughts?

To begin with, *Forum* is unquestionably a pornographic magazine aimed at a low-consciousness male readership. It reinforces patriarchal values, particularly regarding the supposed innate inferiority of women, by reducing them to sexual objects. In this, the magazine has an ideological function which is not merely incidental, but is its reason for existing.

For a socialist feminist to publish anti-censorship views in such a magazine seems to me to do several harms, including the following:

1) It implies a feminist assent to the existence of the magazine itself, as a legitimate place to publish. Shouldn't feminists and pro-feminist men, whatever their anti-pornography strategies happen to be, oppose the very existence of *Forum* and similar anti-

woman propaganda vehicles, rather than hitching a ride in them?

2) It enlists the readership of the magazine on behalf of one tendency in the feminist movement against the others. Our enemies can now rejoice at this dramatic public split in the movement, smugly reinterpreting Burstyn's message as 'some feminists are finally showing sense.' (Remember who the audience is in this case.) Pro-censorship feminists are further isolated through this apparent collaboration of anti-censorship feminists and pornographers.

3) It reinforces the over-all patriarchal ideology of the magazine by implying that feminists are not completely opposed to it, and in fact share some of the views of the publisher and audience.

4) It confuses the already badly confused censorship debate by aligning 'feminist' views with the oppressive/libertarian ideology of the readers and publisher.

So in effect Burstyn, a socialist feminist, has reinforced a channel of reactionary patriarchal ideology by the mere fact of appearing in it. Further, by the coincidental alignment of her anti-censorship views with those of the publisher and audience, she appears as an ally of professional pornographers and pornography consumers, whatever her own intentions.

She had, after all, no hope of transforming the readership nor the character of *Forum* by infiltrating its boundaries. The magazine is a product of a corporate power structure over which she has no control. *Forum* will not become a socialist feminist erotic periodical by publishing occasional 'feminist' contributions: rather, those contributions, however highly motivated, are concretely transformed by the context in which they appear.

Burstyn's interview in fact served a reactionary purpose, regardless of her motives and her socialist feminist credentials. It was ill-judged, in my opinion.

John Baglow
Ottawa

Big Brothers

Broadside:

In her review of *Women and Russia* (*Broadside*, February 1986), Lorna Weir rejects the assumption put forward by three of the contributors to this almanac that the United States and the Soviet Union are equally culpable in the nuclear arms race. Weir instead characterizes the US as the "chief culprit" and cites the cruise missile, Star Wars, and US nuclear-armed submarines as evidence.

It is this practice of asking who is worse instead of who is better that continues to feed the arms race and provide its basic rationale. Weir might have made her case more convincingly if she had referred to some of the positive initiatives issuing recently from the Soviet Union, such as the unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing, the offer to allow on-site inspection and verification, or Gorbachev's recent comprehensive proposal to eliminate nuclear weapons. But even these are disarmament initiatives and do not address the question of peace.

Peace in a pluralistic world requires a commitment on the part of all nations to the concept of common security — the idea that the world community through its institutions such as the United Nations will provide fair and effective security for nations — and to the further development of international institutions of law which can provide reliable mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of disputes. By strengthening the institutions and procedures for international security (peacekeeping, mediation, conciliation) we reduce the likelihood of war, and undermine the most basic rationale of the arms race. We also put into place the essential institutions for eventual disarmament "under effective international control," which is the stated goal of both superpowers and the Final Document of UNSSOD I and II.

Consequently, I agree with Robin Morgan that the United States and the Soviet Union are "Big Brothers" in the nuclear arms race in that neither is pursuing initiatives to provide an alternative to weapons as a means of security. Both are opposed to any serious discussion of UN reform and neither has shown a commitment to the development of the institutions of world law for peaceful settlement of disputes.

Kathryn Pineau
Toronto



Some Women's Bookstore staff: (from left) Sharon Fernandez, Jude Johnson, Beth McAuley.

Women's Bookstore Business as Usual

Broadside:

After 11 years as managers of the Toronto Women's Bookstore, Patti Kirk and Marie Prins have left the store to pursue other endeavours (including for Marie a second child, due in April). As the remaining staff at TWB, we thank them for their hard work and wish them well.

Despite personnel changes, it's business as usual at TWB. We will of course stay in the same location, performing the same services as before. The bookstore, though a much larger organization than when it was first started, remains incorporated as a non-profit business. Recent changes include the expansion of our Board of Directors to include community and staff representation. The staff are working on a transition from manager-run day-to-day operations to a more collective format. We now have an equalized pay structure. We have also installed a new accounts payable system (sorry

for any delayed payments!).

We consider the central role of the bookstore to be the sharing and distribution of information on all issues of concern to women. We hope that TWB can be an exemplary workplace, one which furnishes adequate financial and health provisions to the women who work here and which operates as an organization where work and responsibility are distributed evenly.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of the women and men who have supported TWB over the years. We are all working hard and we're excited about the future, but we'll continue to need your support through this transition time.

We welcome any suggestions or queries you may have.

The TWB staff: Sharon Fernandez, Jude Johnson, Beth McAuley, Marilyn McCallum, Wendy Wine
Toronto

Common Themes

Broadside:

I would like to respond to some items in recent *Broadside*s: (1) feminist conferences; (2) the Noto's Amazons; and (3) the Burstyn-MacKinnon debate. I don't wish to imply that the three issues are of equal weight, but rather to identify some important common themes.

Firstly, I agree that *Broadside* provides an invaluable forum for these debates. It is more constructive to deal with the disagreements and the rifts, and to challenge the prescriptions of "political correctness," than to have blind faith in a mythical sisterhood that transcends all our differences.

We don't need a Margaret Thatcher or a Phyllis Schlafly to know that there are differences: surely all of us have had experiences in women's groups which proved that being, for example, feminist, or lesbian, or working class, was often insufficient common ground, *of itself*, to avoid cliques and rifts. This might mean that we can still work together on a common project — coalition politics — or that we need to regroup. Whatever the outcome, we emerge a little wiser in the ways of feminist politics.

Let us agree, then, that we are not all clones, either personally or politically. However, in the ensuing rush to the typewriter, our energy is often diverted from the central issues.

(1) Conferences: As feminists, we rarely question the effectiveness of the conference itself as a vehicle for information-sharing and consciousness-raising; perhaps the medium, not the message, needs to be examined. Instead, we trash both organizers and participants because they are (allegedly) wealthy, and (therefore) insensitive to class issues — false assumptions, given that (a) class consciousness is not necessarily, or solely, a function of a woman's current financial status; and (b) that many participants at feminist conferences are subsidized in one way or another.

(2) Noto's: As feminists, we have seldom explored what forms woman-identified sport, recreation and entertainment might take, although we know what we don't like, and we certainly know what we *shouldn't* like. In-

stead, we trash women who take a few chances and break new ground, women who are trying to reclaim the word "fun."

(3) Pornography: While we are spending so much time and energy on personal conflicts within the pornography debate, we tend to forget who the enemy is. Instead, we trash the Burstyns and the MacKinnons who have put themselves on the front lines, at considerable personal risk, it seems, from both the Right and the Left. Debates on issues are healthy, attacks *ad feminam* are not.

Helen Lenskyj
Toronto

Heritage Ignored

Broadside:

Thanks to Marlene Nourbese Philip for her article on racism (*Broadside*, March 1986). While I am appreciative, I am saddened that once again it is a woman of colour spending time and energy explaining racism.

I would like to make one correction. Nourbese Philip writes that she was the only Black woman or woman of colour at the workshop. I identified myself as half Lebanese, and said I am a woman of colour. Similarly, the other woman of colour at the workshop, also of Middle Eastern descent, named herself as a woman of colour.

Joanna Fairheart
Toronto

I W Deal

Congratulations to Rhonda Pelshea, who works at the North York Women's Shelter, for winning a one-year subscription to *Broadside*. Happy reading!

Opting for OHIP

by Lynn Lathrop

Doctors in Sarnia, Ontario got a lot more than they bargained for when they closed down the city's only therapeutic abortion committee in protest against the provincial government's legislation to ban extra billing. By now, they and the Ontario Medical Association must regret having tried that tactic in their war on Bill 94. The reaction to their move was immediate: the general public was unsympathetic; women's groups and active supporters of medicare were outraged.

But the Sarnia doctors' action was far more than simply a failed attempt to combine public relations and intimidation. The misguided tactic was also the catalyst for the formation of a powerful, pro-medicare alliance that promises to become an important force in the debate over the Liberal government's proposed legislation.

The doctors launched their assault against the women of Sarnia on Friday, February 21. By coincidence, the following day members of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) were holding a regular meeting in their Bloor Street offices in Toronto. They had already determined that, at some point, NAC would get involved in the fight to end extra billing. But when they heard the news of Sarnia, the issue was vaulted to top priority.

The Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics had also been galvanized into action by the doctors' move and decided to respond to it quickly. OCAC called for a news conference the following Monday and NAC agreed to participate along with the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL).

At the news conference in the media studio at Queen's Park, Diane Mossman of CARAL and OCAC's Judy Rebick condemned the doctors' withdrawal from the abortion committee as "power bargaining at the expense of women" and called on the provincial government not to prosecute any hospital which violated federal law by performing abortions without a therapeutic abortion committee. Doris Anderson, speaking for NAC, warned the doctors that they had picked on the wrong group. Women were not prepared to sit back and be used as pawns, she declared. "Doctors have thrown down the gauntlet, and we're going to pick it up."

The news conference made a powerful statement, but it turned out to be only the start of a strong grassroots campaign, not just against the Sarnia doctors, but also in support of the general ban on extra billing. Having finally entered the medicare debate, NAC decided it could not let the issue drop, and during the next week its health committee and reproductive rights sub-committee got to work. Within a few days, they had put together what is possibly the biggest alliance ever formed in Ontario. It had not, they discovered, required much convincing to get other groups to join; most were eager and, it



Birth of an alliance: (from left, at table) Huguette Tries, Bill Corns, Lynn Kaye, Judy Rebick, Michele Harding, Bob White.

appeared, had been waiting for a vehicle through which they could express their opposition to extra billing.

The newly formed Alliance to End Extra Billing launched its public campaign on March 3, with a news conference that jammed a caucus room at Queen's Park and attracted reporters from virtually every print, radio and television outlet in the area. Representatives from 40 organizations including women's groups, seniors, trade unions, the disabled, health care professionals, consumers and others were there to jointly demand an immediate end to extra billing and to urge the government not to withdraw or weaken what the alliance members viewed as a vital piece of legislation. The demands put forward by alliance members made it clear that the government would have strong, enthusiastic backing if it stood firm against the OMA's well-orchestrated campaign.

In fact, the formation of the alliance was a welcome relief for opponents of extra billing who, for weeks, had watched as the OMA was left alone to set the agenda and tone of the extra billing debate. At last there could be an effective voice in the province to rebut the spurious arguments being put forward by a profession intent on protecting its privileges.

The OMA's massive, well-financed advertising campaign has put forward a variety of arguments in support of extra billing. It claims, for example, that the practice does not

reduce access to health care for anyone, that it provides a means to reward doctors who have greater skill and experience and that it will actually improve our health care system in the long run. The OMA would have us believe that doctors are thinking of their patients' interests when they argue for the right to charge more than medicare rates for their services.

But women, in particular, know that their interests have never been served by extra billing, or by any program that does not guarantee universal and equal access. The poor are affected most by extra billing, often removing themselves from the health care system rather than face a medical bill they cannot afford to pay. And the majority of the poor in Canada are women.

Women are also put at a special disadvantage because we need more health services and the specialists we use, gynecologists and obstetricians, extra bill more than almost any other group of physicians.

Extra billing also makes the effects of Canada's unjust abortion law even more intolerable. As Judy Rebick, speaking for OCAC, told the legislature committee studying Bill 94, gynecologists are the only doctors allowed to perform abortions in Ontario hospitals and many charge as much as \$400 more than OHIP rates, often demanding cash in advance. The federal law, on its own, limits access to the procedure and causes delays, but add to that the burden of extra billing and women get caught in a dangerous situation.

Rebick recounted the story of a woman who, several years ago, "was lucky enough to get a hospital procedure (but) was thrown off the operating table by an anesthetist who recognized her as a former patient who had not paid her bill. He refused to administer the anesthetic and she was forced to look elsewhere for help." This may be an extreme example, Rebick told the committee, but it illustrates what can happen when access to medical care depends on a person's ability to pay.

But although Bill 94 is titled, and touted, as

the "Health Care Accessibility Act," it doesn't live up to its name. True, banning extra billing is an important step in the right direction, but we must demand more. We are still saddled with high medicare premiums and user fees. Both charges are a form of regressive taxation that place a disproportionately heavy burden on those who can least afford it, and both charges must be done away with before Ontario can be said to have a truly accessible health care system.

We should also be leaning hard on the government to extend OHIP coverage to midwifery services and to abortions in free-standing clinics. Ultimately we should aim for the establishment of community health clinics, covered by medicare and providing a wide range of reproductive health services, including education on fertility and sexuality for women, in their own languages and in their own neighborhoods. In addition, we need access, through OHIP, to alternatives to high-tech health care, particularly those geared to prevention.

However, for now, it is necessary to rally around the extra-billing issue. A ban would bring tangible benefits to the people of Ontario, and a government retreat on the issue would be a major setback. The OMA is a powerful lobby, with a lot of resources at its disposal and there are signs that, faced with its strong attack, the Liberals may be wavering in their determination to end extra billing.

We must not let that happen. Women, particularly, have too much at stake.

(Several actions are currently being planned by Alliance members, the most important of which is a major demonstration Friday, April 4, 1986 at 5 pm at Queen's Park. Help make sure the government does not back down from its commitment to the people of this province. Come out and say No! to extra billing.)

Lynn Lathrop is a freelance writer and abortion rights activist.

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Competing for Equality

by Sarah Eliot

For anyone who may have forgotten the provisions of Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, during the long wait for it to come into effect, it states:

(1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

(2) Subsection (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

Of all the *Charter*, only s. 15 had to wait three years to come into force, on April 17, 1985, ostensibly to provide governments time to bring their laws into line and ensure a seamless transfer to equality for all. Not surprisingly *Equality to All: Report of the Parliamentary Committee on Equality Rights*, with its 85 recommendations, did not appear until October 1985, and was not brought forward until March 1986. If one judged commitment by speed, a verdict of indifference would be fair.

Setting aside such prejudices for the moment, let us look at the committee's report in its purported and actual considerations. First, the survey was limited to an examination of federal laws, even though, as the committee admitted, section 15 applies to all three levels of government. The committee was left to hope that the provinces would approach change similarly to the federal government. Second, the committee concentrated its enquiry on the broader issues, leaving a detailed audit of federal laws to someone else. Third, while the committee scheduled numerous hearings and received over 500 written submissions, it concluded that this process was not intended as a polling device by which to determine the extent to which "the community at large was prepared to tolerate the recognition, in practice of equality rights. The content of those rights cannot be limited by the wishes of the majority."

Brave words those, from politicians whose continued existence is often thought to reside in the wishes of the majority. Nevertheless, in its chapter on Women and the Armed Forces, the committee did flout the conventional "wisdom" (a word often used in this context to be synonymous with stupidity) that says women don't have the strength, the fortitude, the bravery or the integrity to participate fully and equally in the military, even if that is the career they have chosen. The committee simply and broadly recommended that *all* trades and occupations in the Canadian Armed Forces be open to women. While many of us do not have any enthusiasm for the military and what it represents, nonetheless current female exclusion from key positions and educational programs cannot be justified.

The committee adopted an even broader mandate in its consideration of homosexuals (the report's term for same-sex relationships of both men and women) and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. While carefully hedging its view — "legal protec-

tion does not mean endorsement... it simply means that... discrimination... will not be tolerated" — the Committee reached two conclusions of note:

1. sexual orientation should be read into the open-ended language of s. 15 as a constitutionally prohibited ground of discrimination; and

2. sexual orientation should be a prohibited ground of discrimination in the Canadian Human Rights Act.

As a natural consequence of these, the committee also decided that exclusion of homosexuals from the Canadian Armed Forces and the RCMP could not be justified.

No doubt the military is wondering what it did (or hasn't done) to deserve this double whammy from the committee — to be directed, all in one report, to be fair both to "girls" and "deviants." Not only that but the committee went so far as to comment that the current exclusionary practices are based on unjustified stereotypical views.

While the committee sees no justification for discrimination based on sexual orientation in the workplace, there is still a place for it in the family.

Unfortunately, after this high point of tolerance, the committee backslides somewhat in its chapter on Marital Family Status. Although recommending that common law relationships be given the same legal recognition accorded to traditional marriages, the proviso is that such a relationship be between members of the opposite sex. Therefore, while the committee sees no justification for discrimination based on sexual orientation in the workplace, there is still a place for it in the family. This, it seems, is to say that lesbians and gay men only deserve some equality under the law. Should they wish to live together or have children, they apparently cross the boundaries of good taste and no longer merit equal treatment under the law accorded heterosexual relationships. Thus, equality becomes a piecemeal concept, parcelled out in palatable pieces to assuage those wishes of the majority who, ostensibly, were not going to limit anyone's rights.

This may be a churlish interpretation of the committee's position but, logically, it becomes difficult to justify this line that cuts off rights arbitrarily and abruptly.

Not to dwell on its less shining moments, the committee forwarded reasonable recommendations to revoke mandatory retirement in what is a belated acknowledgement that age does not equal uselessness. In a similarly progressive spirit, the report also took note that pregnancy does not equal illness; thus, it was recommended that the Unemployment Insurance Act be amended to distinguish between the two. Further, in an effort to promote the novel concept that not only mothers are parents, it has been suggested the Act also be amended to recognize a two-tier system of childbirth benefits: the first tier for women only during late pregnancy and the immediate

period after birth, with a second tier to be subsequently available to either or both parents.

One begins to wonder how many government reports it takes for a lucid notion to be adopted.

In its chapter on Employment Equity, much of what was suggested in the Abella Report on Employment Equity has been reiterated. Not that it wasn't cogent the first time, but one begins to wonder how many government reports it takes for a lucid notion to be adopted. Much of this applies to the recommendations concerning the physically and mentally disabled — reasonable suggestions, all made before. Endless recommending seems to substitute for actual implementation.

Lest there be any doubt concerning the (credibility) gap between government reports and government action, one has only to shift from a study of the report to last month's announcement of federal legislation changes. First, women will be able to *compete* for all trades and occupations and in a manner consistent with the *requirement* of the armed forces, to be operationally effective in the interests of national security. The sound you have just heard is dilution. The armed forces will not simply be open, women will have to compete. Who sets the requirements for competition — ah yes, the military brass who for so long have excluded them.

What is most distressing is the reaction this tame compromise has evoked from the more neanderthal of the Tory backbenchers.

The trickle down effect continues. Homosexuals will be allowed access to the RCMP and the military, but no protection will be forthcoming by amending the Canadian Human Rights Act. This would mean that an individual would have recourse to the courts — out of his or her own pocket — but no protection from federal legislation. What is most distressing is the reaction this tame compromise has evoked from the more neanderthal of the Tory backbenchers. MP Alex Kindy has stated that the changes are tantamount to "condoning a third sex, somebody who is not exactly normal."

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So, if one measures the Conservative changes by Alex Kindy's response, one surely be impressed by the bravery and integrity displayed. However, if one measures them by the Equality Report, the Abella Report, the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and all those other reports that have preceded them, one weeps yet again for the timidity of a government that places the rights of the individual somewhere to the side of, and oh so slightly behind, the wishes of the majority.

As long as the right to equal treatment under the law can still only largely be proven through a lengthy and expensive court case and as long as little or no funding is set aside for such cases, the poor and disadvantaged will continue to be unequal. Equality under the law with no equality of access or commitment through government laws is a notion without reality.

Sarah Eliot is a Toronto feminist and civil servant.



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Conditions of Coalition



IWD: Toronto 1986

by Ingrid MacDonald

In the ten years that Toronto has actively celebrated International Women's Day with demonstrations, marches and fairs, women have taken what could be called the umbrella approach to organizing. Using massive and well-conducted outreach campaigns to women in the movement, in the left, in work places, in unions and in education, women have organized around a cluster of issues: choice, reproductive rights, immigrant women, disabled access, and third world issues. Phrases like Rise Up in 1983 and Still Ain't Satisfied in 1984 have typified an attempt to unify a pot luck of causes. Usually the coalition highlights a local, current struggle, as in 1984 when the striking Eaton's workers headed the march through Toronto and right into the Eaton's store. It uses the parameters of local struggle as a way of seeing the global shape of feminism. One coalition member described the days, "a time to stress the international — issues which concern women around the world, and a struggle against imperialism. It is a way of seeing the revolutionary potential of the women's movement."

An event informed by leftist activism, International Women's Day is as inclusive of companion struggle as it is a global vision of what feminism could be. As such, it is not necessarily a liberal or a cultural feminist's cup of tea. In going beyond the typical expectations of what a "woman's issue" might be, the struggle for equality for women becomes of necessity a social justice cabaret: jobs, hunger, anti-imperialism, access to health care, all have their place in the International Women's Day revolution.

This year, the March 8 Coalition, an ad hoc group of women who begin the work of putting on the day in early December, departed from the generic approach to organizing by featuring a single issue on the platform. The issue was racism and the rallying cry was "Women say no to racism, from Toronto to South Africa." This challenged not only the umbrella approach to organizing but also the

white dominance of women as organizers of the women's movement. Saying no to racism came at a time when the struggle of the South African peoples against the racist rule of apartheid is a focus of media attention. On the local scene, government reports have been confirming what most of us either know or suspect, that Black people, people of colour and immigrants are actively discriminated against when applying for jobs, when working, when seeking housing. As well, more than one social critic has compared the apartheid method of allocating Black Africans to Bantustan homelands to the Canadian government practices of creating reservations for native Canadians.

It is not so simple just to say "No" to racism and address the external forces of oppression, as if racism were not also part of women ourselves. As the Black Women's Collective, who gave leadership to this year's coalition, described their experience as organizers, they came to the Coalition to investigate the "authenticity" of those women who wished to say no to racism. In a statement that was read at a Coalition meeting on February 5, the Black Women's Collective voiced their dissatisfaction of the decision-making process used by the Coalition: "The Coalition in our point of view has organized white women over the last ten years. In selecting this theme perhaps it was not fully aware of the step it was taking. Simply, it was seeking to organize Black women! Did the Coalition consider how it would have to change in order to do so? What matters it would of necessity discuss and how that would change the very face of the women's movement?"

The result of the Black Women's Collective statement was that direction was taken from the leadership of Black women in every aspect of organizing the day: from the rally, to the order of contingents in the march, to the march route, to the topics at the fair's workshops, to the entertainment of the day, to the kind of music that was heard at the dance. The DJ on the upstairs dance floor noted that she was playing the kind of music that women

don't always hear in the discos. "It's not that I don't like Jane Siberry or whoever — I want you to have the opportunity to hear the music of Black women and Black people." An attempt also was made for the white women of the Coalition to form workshops where racism could be discussed as their issue as well. American Black author Barbara Smith talks about the significance of this kind of acknowledgement in Coalition building. In



Yours In Struggle she describes the uselessness of hoping to enter into coalition with one's hands washed. Thinking of oneself as "not racist" or "not anti-Semitic" is not constructive. Smith writes, "This kind of denial effectively stops discussion, places the burden of "proof" upon the person(s) experiencing the oppression, and makes it nearly impossible ever to get to the stage of saying: 'This is an intolerable situation. What are we going to do about it?'"

At certain times in the Coalition meetings, women from the Native Women's Resource Centre reminded the group that the role of Black, Native and women of colour was not "to educate white women about their racism." Part of the way white women could demonstrate their commitment to working against racism would be to educate themselves through consciousness raising. The Black Women's statement continued, "For white women, individual awareness of the problem is the beginning of the process. Verbalizing the problem is the next step, followed thereafter by the collective awareness of the group. Hence our suggestions for closed workshops for white women. Knowledge of the material of racism, in its covert and overt forms, helps in strategies of self liberation."

Those white-women-only workshops began at the fair, and the response was enthusiastic. As well, some black women have taken up the project of helping white women who are in working groups understand the problems more clearly. Michele Paulse, who has been doing such workshops with Carol Allen, describes their approach as a way of "talking about why certain dynamics come up between white women and women of col-

our who are working together. Problems are created when the reality of women's lives are taken up as a political issue. Issues that exist in the here and now, issues which we live in our lives."

The recognition of racism, like the development of the International Women's Day event itself, is something that has to be lived out in the long term. Between organizing the day, and doing the work of the women's movement, and the resolution of coalition politics as they arise in the context of the planning process, the members of the Coalition have an enormous task set before them. Coalition member Laurie Bell says, "We have to have women coming to International Women's Day who are dedicated to all three aspects of the project. For the sake of history, of continuity and accountability, it should be the women who are already involved in the movement who are planning the day." Which is not to say that new women are not welcome to the March 8th planning process, but that the work requires the presence and guidance of women who have a feel for the history and complexity of the issues, and a long term commitment to the movement.

An historically white dominated women's movement has begun to confront racism. For women, it means coming of age and making the leap to understand the point at which, as Laurie Bell describes it, some women cease to be the Oppressed and begin to be the Oppressor. Coalition member Cherie MacDonald is optimistic about what lies ahead for the movement, "We're hoping that from now on we're building a new women's movement — one which recognizes that the struggle against racism is the same struggle which women have been fighting against oppressive companies and governments. A new women's movement requires not only the participation, but the leadership, of women of colour."

Resources

The following resources are just a small example of what's available. Check with the Women's Bookstore for more material.

Sister Vision: Black Women and Women of Colour Press, Box 217, Station E, Toronto, M6H 4E2.

Yours in Struggle: Three Feminist Perspectives on Anti-Semitism and Racism, Eilly Bulkin, Minnie Bruce Pratt, and Barbara Smith, Long Haul Press, Box 592, Van Brunt Station, Brooklyn, New York, 11215 USA, 1984.

This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color, eds. Cherie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, New York: 1981. *Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press*, PO Box 2753, Rockefeller Centre Station, New York, New York, 10185.

Our Lives, newspaper published by the Black Women's Collective (Toronto), PO Box 44, Station P, Toronto, M5S 2S6.

Anti-Racism Group: The Toronto Lesbians of Colour Collective and two members of the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre have formed an anti-racism work group and are currently offering anti-racism workshops to women's groups in Toronto. A \$25 negotiable fee is charged. (For information, contact Carol or Michele at (416) 588-2930 or Anna or Stacey at (416) 465-1781.)

"Coalition Politics: Turning the Century," by Bernice Johnson Reagon in *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology*, ed. Barbara Smith, Kitchen Table Press, 1983.

MOVEMENT MATTERS

Sex-Role Stereotyping

Women's groups will have an opportunity to speak out this April on the issue of sex-role stereotyping in the broadcast media.

The Canadian Radio Television Commission (CRTC) has scheduled public hearings in Vancouver, Montreal and Hull to obtain a public response to its Report on Self-regulation in the Broadcast Media. This report, which was published in January, 1986, makes it clear that self-regulation by the broadcast and advertising industries has failed to eliminate sex-role stereotyping in programming and advertising.

For example, the report commissioned by the CRTC shows that on television, women make up only 16% of the characters in children's cartoons, 41% in adult drama, 29% in news and public affairs and 21% of those interviewed in news and public affairs. On radio, women make up only 12% of announcers and 9% of voiceovers in radio commercials. In television news, 89% of the experts interviewed are men.

MediaWatch will be presenting a major brief at the hearings, but it needs the support of many women's groups if it is to demonstrate to the CRTC that sex-role stereotyping is a serious problem that is of concern to all women.

Child Care Study

A National task force studying child care has recommended that day care be available for every Canadian child by the year 2001, at a cost to the provinces and Ottawa of \$11.3 billion. The task force, set up by the previous liberal government and chaired by Dr. Katie Cook, found that in Canada today, child care is in a state of crisis. Further it found:

- Nearly 2 million children aged 12 and under have parents who work or study for a substantial part of the week. By 2001, there will be almost 2.7 million such children. Yet there are now only 172,000 licensed child care spaces across the country.
- More than 80 per cent of Canadian children receiving non-parental care are getting care that is informal, unlicensed, unsupervised or unregulated.
- In 1984 average fees for licensed child care for infants ranged from \$2,100 to \$5,200 a year. For pre schoolers, the fees were \$2,400 to \$3,800 and for school-aged children \$1,400 to \$2,800.
- Virtually no child care is available in rural areas, for immigrants or for children whose parents work on an irregular or part-time basis.

Instead of implementing any of the recommendations of this task force, the Conservative government has set up its own parliamentary task force to travel across the country and do its own study at an additional cost of \$1 million.

How many task forces do we need to tell us what we already know — that there is a severe shortage of child care spaces in Canada?

Women's Health Network

TORONTO — The Toronto Women's Health Network grew out of the Strategies for Well Being conference on women and health in April of 1981, as an information sharing and resource group of women in Toronto and surrounding areas. It meets regularly to discuss health issues of concern to women, and to share information and resources. It currently comprises women representing a variety of clinics, schools and other health-related organizations in Toronto and surrounding areas.

The network publishes a monthly newsletter with announcements of upcoming events in the women's community and health-related fields, and will continue to sponsor talks and film screenings by and about women.

If you are interested in joining the network, receiving the newsletter, and being kept informed about its activities, please write to: Toronto Women's Health Network, c/o 24 Lonsdale Road, Toronto, Ontario, M4V 1W3.



Women and Psychiatry

TORONTO — A two-day event focusing on the female experience of psychiatry will take place on May 3 and 4, 1986. The first day will be a public speak-out: any woman who wishes can talk of her experiences with psychiatric institutions, etc. The second day will include workshops addressing concerns as ex-psychiatric inmates.

The event, co-sponsored by The Coalition to Stop Electroshock and the Dept. of Applied Psychology at OISE, will start at 9:30 Saturday morning, at OISE, and admission will be the equivalent of one hour's pay (women on welfare or family benefits admitted free). For more information, call Bonnie (416) 536-4120, Kali (416) 534-5081, or Lilith (416) 531-8537.

Ad Nauseam

A federal advertising campaign aimed at luring American tourists north has come under attack by many women's groups.

The ad, featuring dancers in starched nurses uniforms, dancing women in maids outfits and bathing suits performing to a fast-paced soundtrack prompted Lynn McDonald, the women's issues critic for the New Democratic Party to accuse Tourism Minister Jack Murta of approving the commercials which were blatantly sexist and exploitative. According to Ms. McDonald, these commercials are merely a slicked-up version of an old message, Hey Mister, want my sister? "This use of women's bodies makes the minister of tourism Canada's Number 1 pimp."

Under increased pressure from professional nurses' associations, Murta did agree to take out the segment featuring the dancing nurses.

Quote of the Month: "There is a great misconception that women were oppressed in the past." — Gwen Landolt, founder of R.E.A.L. Women.

Violent Tolerance

TORONTO — James Check, a York University psychologist, has found that a large proportion of teenagers between ages 12 and 17 may be developing tolerance toward sexual violence because of the effects of violent pornography. His survey showed a "surprising amount of acceptance of rape myths, of victim blaming and acceptance of use of sexual coercion amongst males and females. For example, violent pornography will depict a rape scene in which a woman ends up loving it. To people who are sexually inexperienced and most in need of understanding the difference between reality and fantasy, it gives the false message that women enjoy this form of abuse. It may increase their acceptance of rape and violence."

In addition the study suggested that explicit, non-violent and non-abusive pornography "doesn't have a negative impact."

Politics of Custody

There is a growing concern among feminists doing research on the family and households and among feminist lawyers that the principle of equal rights in the area of matrimonial law, which has been a political asset for women for a long time, is now working against women in the field of child custody outside marriage. In several countries in Western Europe, in Canada, and the USA, policies of mandatory joint custody are now being developed.

A seminar is currently being organized to draw together a small number of women actually working in this area to begin preliminary discussions on the politics of custody.

The main issue of the seminar (tentatively scheduled for July 7 to 9) will focus on joint custody, its growth and implications, and how feminists should respond to these developments. Several 'background issues' may be discussed as they effect these developments, for example:

- The rise in men's rights movements. How do they organize, in what arenas, in which fields and professions are they influential, what are the issues on which they concentrate?
- The challenge to biological parenting arising from reproductive technologies and the ways they effect women's legal position as mothers.
- Whether there is a feminist policy concerning children, and which suppositions in feminist thinking concerning children and motherhood support or hinder a feminist policy in this field.
- Whether it is possible to develop feminist

political concepts and 'bodies of knowledge' that are politically as effective as the equal rights concept, without losing the radical intentions of equality?

If you are interested in preparing a paper for this seminar, please contact one of the organizers, before April 15, 1986: Kathleen A. Lahey, Faculty of Law, University of Windsor Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4, (519) 253-4232, ext. 2952; or Diana Majury, 615-550 Ontario St., Toronto, Ontario, M4X 1X3, (416) 921-1925.

Midwifery in Ontario

A task force has been appointed to study and make recommendations to the Government of Ontario on the implementation of midwifery in the province. The task force was appointed by the Minister of Health and will make its recommendations both to him and to the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

The mandate of the task force is to recommend a framework for establishing midwifery as a regulated profession and part of Ontario's health care system. The task force invites written submissions from all interested groups and members of the public. Presenters of written submissions will also have an opportunity to make oral submissions to the task force at hearings to be held in various communities in Ontario in the fall. The task force's itinerary will be publicized through local news media.

Submissions addressing the following matters will be particularly helpful to the task force:

- education and entry requirements for midwives,
- scope and standards of practice,
- locations and types of practice,
- patient access,
- relationship with other health professions,
- personal experience with midwife-assisted or physician-assisted deliveries.

It will also be helpful for persons or groups wishing to make oral submissions at hearings to so advise the Task Force.

The members of the Task Force are Mary Eberts, Chairperson; Alan Schwartz, Q.C., Vice-Chairperson; Rachel Edney, M.D.; and Karyn Kaufman, R.N., C.N.M.

Submissions may be addressed to and further information obtained from: Linda S. Bohnen, Executive Director, Task Force on the Implementation of Midwifery in Ontario, 14th Floor, 700 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5G 1Z6; Tel.: (416) 965-5094.

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Early 20th C. USA: EJ Bellocq's portrait of a prostitute

by Debi Brock

At a recent Toronto conference on the politics of pornography and prostitution, there was in evidence what could loosely be defined as two camps of opinion among prostitutes and ex-prostitutes. One was at least sympathetic to feminism (most notably, Margo St. James of Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics — COYOTE), while the other, more vocal grouping (mainly Canadian Organization for the Rights of Prostitutes — CORP, particularly its irrepressible spokesperson, Peggy Miller) was not. A third grouping comprised feminist, non-prostitute women, who are active in hookers' rights campaigns (ie, Downtown Hookers Action and Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes — ASP).

In addressing the tensions amongst the various groupings, I begin from my own experience. I was around the prostitution business for nine years, from about 1975 to 1983, a proximity which was 'accidental' in that a close friend ended up making her living this way. Because I had spent my teenage years in a rural, economically depressed area, I knew more girls who moved to Toronto to work in massage parlours than I knew females and males combined who went on to university. I say this not only to authorize myself to speak, but also, I hope, not to appear patronizing towards prostitutes, an attitude which feminists all too frequently are guilty of conveying.

In order to clear the ground of many of the myths and distortions which surround prostitutes, it's important to say who I think they 'are.' Women who are prostitutes have generally been dealt more shit in their lives than anyone should have to tolerate, both prior to and after entering the business. Most have come from poor families, and some were sexually abused when young. But as feminists have argued, the rate of sexual abuse among all females is very high, and only a small number of abused (or for that matter, poor) women end up working as prostitutes. There is something more going on here, I think, a lot of which is circumstantial. For instance, a woman is broke, sick of doing menial jobs for insultingly low wages, and meets someone in the business who presents it as a lucrative option, given the constraints women face in the labour market. There may be some moral qualms to get over at first, but after all, every woman recognizes at some point that she is most valued for her sexuality, and isn't our function as a commodity flashed at us from every billboard? Prostitutes actually represent a pretty broad range of people and life experiences, and if they have been sexually abused or come from poor families, well, that is what it is often like to grow up female in a patriarchal, capitalist society.

My friend, whom I'll call Anne, and her business partner were fairly motivated women, making a conscious effort to get ahead the best way that they knew how. From working the streets and in massage parlours and escort services owned and operated by men, they eventually set up their own escort service. Many of the other women I met through Anne who worked in the parlours, as well as those who worked for Anne's escort service, were not so motivated. Some of the latter, in particular, looked upon the job as occasional work, a way to get some quick money when the rent was due or when they wanted to go out partying. Temporary or occasional work for an escort service was certainly preferable to the streets. Others treated the job as a full-time occupation, but were satisfied if they did one or two customers a day. Some of the women are quite bright, others are not. Some enjoy challenging themselves with new ideas and realizing their creative potential, while others live in small worlds. I won't go so far as to say that they are just like other women, however, because they are all too aware of the stigma attached to their jobs and this sets up a perception of difference, of ones who stand apart.

The hookers who attended the Toronto conference last November showed us that far from being the abject figures hookers are often portrayed as, their numbers include women who are bright and politicized. (These women won't necessarily disagree with the descriptions I have given so far, it is a little further on that the trouble starts.) They did, however, attempt to present prostitution in as positive (and therefore one-sided) a light as possible, for political/strategic reasons. The hookers' rights advocates are different from many of the women in the business (right now, anyway) in that they are formally organizing; they take the extra step from complacency to action. I don't think that most prostitutes regard organizing as important enough to engage in at this point — if they think of it at all — because most women, particularly the young ones, regard the job as only temporary, on the road to somewhere else. The women still in the business, who attended the conference, clearly regarded it as a long-term career: they were asserting their identities as prostitutes as a positive choice. As with the formation of the feminist, gay and black power movements, the assertion of a positive identity is the first step in political organizing. It is necessary not only for the sake of women who are prostitutes, but for all women, as an interim measure on the road to self-determination. Even middle class homemakers are usually only one man away from welfare, and every woman is a potential prostitute. Prostitutes, more than any other women, recognize this quite clearly.

Beyond

However, part of this assertion of a positive identity by some prostitutes at the conference entailed the advancement of a 'free to choose' philosophy. Prostitutes were also represented as bright, articulate entrepreneurs who enjoy both their jobs and a high standard of living, and prostitution was promoted as natural and inevitable, and therefore beyond criticism. One woman made this clear when she stated that prostitution was not about patriarchy or matriarchy but human nature. These women appeared to represent a large constituency, and on one occasion Peggy Miller actually claimed to speak for all prostitutes. With no disrespect intended to Peggy, she cannot claim to speak for all prostitutes any more than I can claim to speak for all feminists.

I had never, before the conference, heard a hooker say she enjoyed her job. Loved the money, yes. But with respect to their customers, there was only an occasional display of compassion for a regular who was faring badly, while most of the time they were relegated to the status of "pig," or considered "not bad shits, for shit." How can you enjoy your job if you say of your customers, as Anne did, that, "Sometimes I wish there were condoms that covered their entire bodies." However, some of the women at the conference would have us believe that prostitutes are the equivalents of sex therapists and social workers, and that they derive sexual pleasure from their jobs. Perhaps *some* do, *sometimes*. I know that when feminists investigate women's sexuality we tend to concentrate on the negative and coercive aspects of sexuality (sex as danger) rather than determining what women get out of it (sex for pleasure and/or profit). There is a tendency to deny that women can experience sexual fulfillment in a patriarchal culture. But as one woman in the audience pointed out in an understated way, if you are having sex several times a day with different men, you are not going to enjoy yourself with every customer. These men are, after all, chosen for their ability to pay rather than perform. As Anne's partner, Donna, told me,

you tell them, "Lie on your back and let me pamper you." And what you really mean is, "Lie on your back; don't you fucking touch me, and let me do my job my way so that I can get to have the least amount of contact with you. You just sit. Play dead."

Asserting that hookers enjoy sex with their customers reinforces how patriarchal culture presents these women: as nymphomaniacs looking for an outlet. Customers are therefore not culpable, but mere recipients of the women's lust. It asks us to believe what hookers would have their customers believe, that he has gotten the woman off, since it enhances the customer's sexual pleasure, and a happy customer is a repeat customer.

Presenting prostitution as liberated sex is as silly as the idea that the sexual 'revolution' liberated women's sexual expression in the 1960s.

What the defenders of prostitution were also conveying at the conference was a picture of prostitution under 'ideal' conditions: in a clean bed, with a well kept and wealthy man with whom one can relax and fulfill one's sexual fantasies, while drinking Dom Perignon, perhaps in an exotic location. This fantasy bears about as much relation to the reality of most prostitution as my life does to the Ewings' on the TV series, *Dallas*. It may be easy and clean and fast. It could also, for example, take place in a car, or a customer's dirty apartment, with a man who at best objectifies and at worst is repugnant. Perhaps there are some exclusive call girls around whose engagements approximate this glamorous, class-specific stereotype, but she is not to be found on the streets, or even in the yellow pages.

Linked to this was the disconcerting presentation of prostitution as a form of anonymous sex, as liberated sex (what determines the liberated character of anonymous sex, I assume, is its separation from the context of familial relations). This would be fine if prostitutes really performed their work for pleasure, which I think it is clear they do not. Like other forms of work, prostitution, for the purveyor of the service, is an oppressive and alienating economic relation, a condition which is exacerbated

Images: Hookers and Feminists

er still by its clandestine character. Presenting prostitution as liberated sex is as silly as the idea that the 'revolution' liberated women's sexual expression in the 1960s.

Many of the hookers and ex-hookers also attempted to legitimize prostitution by promoting it as a business like any other. However, they under-emphasized the economic rationale behind prostitution (and what other rationale is there behind business?) in favour of justifying it as liberating and pleasurable. This strategy works to their presentation of prostitution as something like the corner grocery store. I do not think that prostitution is as different from other forms of women's work as popular 'wisdom' would have it. However, I do not believe that it is a business like any other,

subjectivity as objects, and that I was not accorded a great deal more respect working as a chambermaid than Anne was as a hooker.

I had a lot of time to think while I was spending my days cleaning hotel rooms. I came to the conclusion that prostitutes and feminists actually have a lot in common, as former prostitute Margo St. James has been trying to tell us for some time (though for perhaps somewhat different reasons). Both prostitutes and feminists have broken the rules, and in the process revealed the character of those rules. Since we do this, we are "bad girls." Feminism is concerned with developing an identity which is not dependent on male approval, which is why men find it so threatening (even more threatening, I think, than the idea of sharing the housework). Prostitutes are not generally regarded as the property of any one man, and this provides them a peculiar autonomy, peculiar because prostitution exists to satisfy male "needs." We are unified too because all women are really whores in the patriarchal imagination, and any woman's sexuality can be treated as a commodity, or depicted and distorted for male pleasure. Even lesbian women are not free from this, as is evident by the proliferation of porn ostensibly depicting sex between women for heterosexual male consumption.

Prostitutes are not simply victims but are active agents making their own history, albeit, like all of us, not under conditions of their own choice.

There is a certain amount of justified hostility towards men from both hookers and feminists, which comes from realizing that men, in the last analysis, have the power to determine the tune and set the price. For example, women in the business have revealed that perhaps their "choices" were not so fully theirs after all (how many women actually freely choose, as opposed to being "freely compelled," to undertake a particular form of labour?). One prostitute at the conference revealed that she had blocked out whole periods of her life. Donna once commented that if she had been a guy she would have had more options. Anne told me that she became a prostitute because she couldn't handle poverty anymore. And most notable is the anger women I have known have exhibited towards their customers and their jobs.

Reinforcing these relations, there is of course another level of authority and control exerting its influence on the lives of women — the state apparatus and its front line of repression, the police. As one hooker remarked, in a statement which contradicted most of what had been said by hookers (including herself) before, "We have heard a lot about patriarchy at this conference. We know about this. We call it The Man." Implicit in this statement is the realization that, important as decriminalization is, it is going to take a lot more than this to make women who are prostitutes free from oppression.



Late 19th C.: Lautrec's Parisian Brothel

Feminists need to develop this knowledge into an understanding of the position of sex trade workers. However, the problems seem to be these: while feminists who are sympathetic to prostitutes portray them as downtrodden victims of patriarchy in lobbying for decriminalization, we have seen that some prostitutes portray themselves as quite the reverse. These feminists

declare that prostitutes need to work because prostitutes (poor things) have no other option in a patriarchal society, and therefore the law should not be an additional barrier. These prostitutes declare that they have a *right* to work because their business is no different than any other, except that selling sex is more honest than using sex to sell. Neither position provides an adequate explanation. Their falsity lies in their exclusivity.

I think there are three interdependent ways of conceptualizing prostitutes, which accounts for both the wide range of prostitutes' experiences (for example, some have pimps, others are independent, some have to take their chances working the streets, while others work indoors in relatively safe and comfortable conditions) and the contradictions which prostitutes live in this kind of society. First, we can regard them in a very limited sense as victims; second, as survivors; and third, as empowering themselves. Prostitutes are not simply victims, but are active agents making their own history, albeit, like all of us, not under conditions of their own choice. In this way we can regard hookers as not only surviving under conditions of victimization, but also as empowering themselves to act on their own behalf, whether or not we believe that prostitution is a legitimate path for women. This remains true whether their actions are motivated by economic necessity or through a desire for material success.

The social structures of prostitution, like social class and the institutions of patriarchy and femininity, become sources of meaning and identity. While decisions based upon these structures appear to be freely made by the individual, they also serve to reproduce these social institutions on an aggregate level. However, the structures themselves exert their influence upon the individual, not in a mechanical way, but mediated by cultural relations, thereby allowing the production of alternative outcomes. Therefore, while I believe firmly that prostitution as a social institution is rooted in female subordination, I also recognize that institutions and the people who fill particular places in them are not the same thing. We must realize that working as prostitutes can be a means of women doing their best to improve their material conditions; that women may be 'freely compelled' to become prostitutes. This recognition means that feminists can support prostitutes without supporting prostitution, and prostitutes can assert a positive identity without defending or obscuring patriarchal relations. I think that once we realize this, feminists can overcome some of their ambivalence in dealing with prostitution, an ambivalence which has clearly not revealed itself in feminist efforts towards the censorship of pornography, where the involvement of sex trade workers can be more easily obscured.

As feminists explore the commoditization of sex more thoroughly, taking into account the position of sex trade workers, whether they be strippers, prostitutes or porn models, it is also hoped that *all* prostitutes will become more aware of how their condition reflects the position of women more generally. I think that prostitutes attending the pornography and prostitution conference gave feminists a much needed shaking up, and I'd like to know what new information prostitute activists took away with them. This kind of information sharing is vital if we are to fight against repressive measures like Bill C-49 and for the decriminalization of prostitution, in the context of broader social, economic and sex-related changes to bring about women's liberation. This does not mean that we must always fight together in the same organizations. We need to respect the right of sex trade workers (whether feminist or not) to organize autonomously, without feminists who are not participants in the sex trade attempting to take up and transform their agenda. We in turn can use our own organizations to defend prostitutes, demand that women gain more control over their conditions of work in the sex trade, and organize for a future where the institution of prostitution no longer exists.

(I hope these comments, partial and tentative though they may be, serve to continue the dialogue between women inside and outside the sex trade.)

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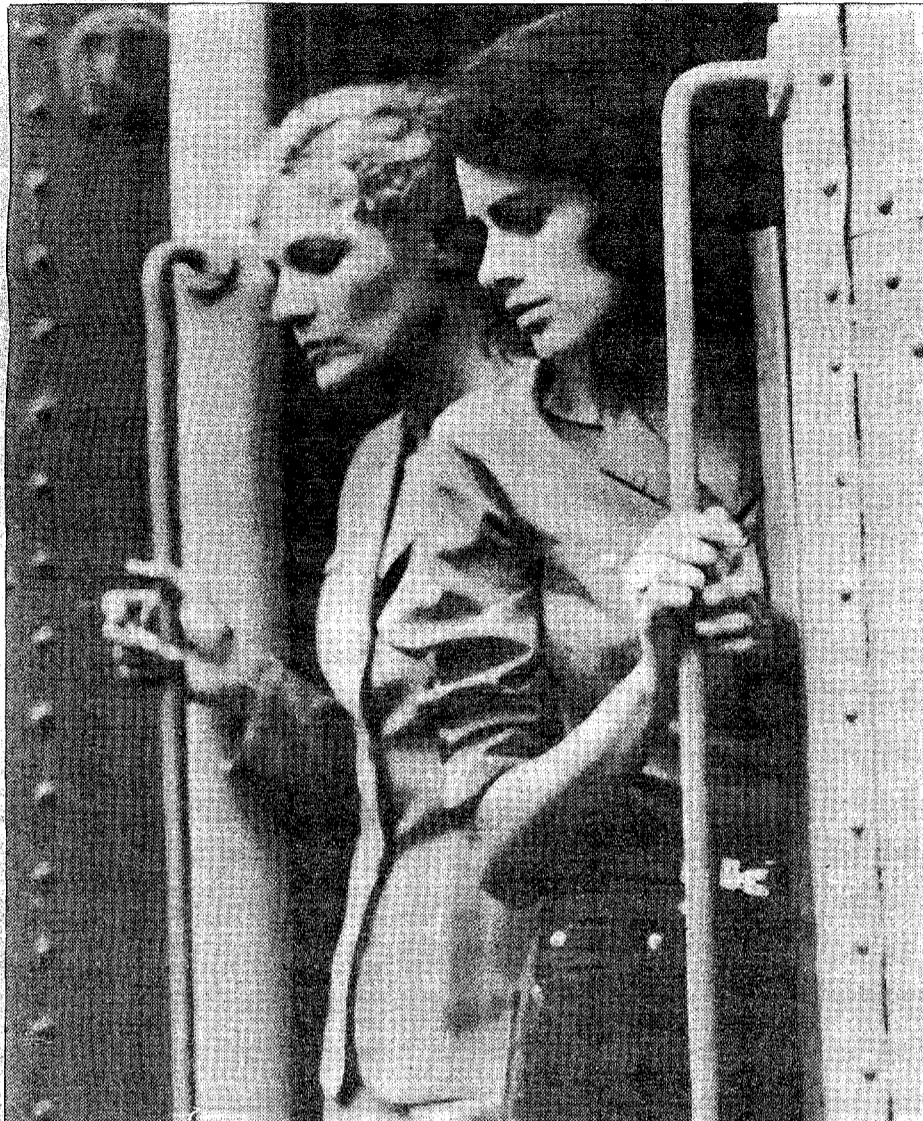
700: A wink from the "bagnio"

ly because of its history (ideological baggage prostitutes cannot just wish away), nor would I see it treated as such. I wouldn't want the state to regulate women through licenses and taxes, and I think that prostitutes lobbying for decriminalization assert this exemption as a political act, should the state. And, most importantly, there is no place for men in this business: women themselves must maintain control over their own working conditions, since work begins with their own bodies. This kind of control is of course something we would all do well to strive towards.

The hookers and former hookers attending the conference considered these assertions necessary tactics in asserting their right to continue working. But I for one do not need to be fed this in order to defend prostitution. I have the right to work in a social order where, as Richard Ki, in *The Immoral Landscape: Female Prostitution in Western Societies*, asserts, "Men are willing to pay for sexual access than for almost all forms of labour." Prostitution, when undertaken as a job and where the women have a degree of control over their working conditions and their income, offers the possibility of an income undreamt of in the usual occupations like secretarial or fast-food work, and different the reality may often turn out to be. Consider this autobiographical note: A number of years ago I was working as a chambermaid in a hotel, and my friend Anne had come to regard men as pigs. From her experiences in the business, I was beginning to see that way about almost everybody (it really is what people can do to a hotel room in under 24 hours). Sometimes Anne would do an 'escort' at the hotel. One day I cleaned a room after she and her partner had vacated it. She had just made \$200 for a day's work; I made \$2.30 in the same amount of time. Another day, I met Anne at 4.45 pm after a long day's work that included cleaning twenty bathrooms and earning \$30. Anne had only been working a few hours and already had \$450 in her pocket (though not every day was this good). So who was being exploited? I knew too that all women experience their

ARTS

Lesbian Love Stories



Vivian (Helen Shaver) at left and Cay (Patricia Charbonneau) board a train in *Desert Hearts*.

Desert Hearts

by Donna Gollan

Romance, love, lust, sex and petty jealousy, these are the stuff of cinema. Seduction and desertion, broken hearts and burning desires are not exactly the substance of our lives, but rather our more minor heart throbs blown up and reflected back a thousand times grander, high on the silver screen. Hollywood has systematized the boy and girl story, the longing looks and tentative moves, the passionate first kiss and the angry tears, so much so that we know them by heart. Each obstacle in the path of love has its own particular look and feel. To watch a romantic movie is to enjoy a familiar fantasy — secure in the knowledge that everything will turn out right in the end — or if it doesn't, we have our Kleenex at hand. But it has taken an independent US filmmaker, Donna Deitch, to bring these conventions to the screen for a sizzling love affair between two ravishing women. *Desert Hearts* may not be a masterpiece, but it is a lot of fun.

Not that Deitch's intentions were all that lofty to begin with. In an interview at the 1986 Toronto Festival of Festivals she made these plain: "At the time I optioned the book (Jane Rule's *Desert of the Heart*) there hadn't been a film about a love relationship between women that hadn't ended in suicide... or a bisexual triangle. There hadn't been just a love story, like any love story between a man and a woman, handled in a fairly frank and real way.... What made me think I could do this? I think I was out of my mind."

Indeed Deitch must have doubted her sanity many times during the four years it took to produce and direct *Desert Hearts*. Raising the money for her own project was a courageous enterprise, although one no doubt born of necessity. What studio could afford to take a chance on a Canadian lesbian love story set in 1950s Reno, starring a Canadian actress (Helen Shaver) opposite a virtual unknown (Patricia Charbonneau) and directed by a woman who had previously done only short documentaries?

Desert Hearts owes much to Deitch's non-studio background. The scenes roll into one another with expressive wipes or fade quickly into black in a very un-Hollywood fashion. The pace is leisurely and humorous, instead

of frantic or sexually charged. The narrative is always secondary to the character development, and although much is made of the visual parallels drawn between the risks the women are taking and the gambling atmosphere of Reno, frankly, it doesn't work.

What does work are the slap happy one-liners. A ranch worker comments on the woman he sees coming and going from young Cay's cabin: "How do you get all that traffic with no equipment?" Or gum-snapping Gwen's greeting to Cay's stepmother: "Long time no see Miz Parker," paired with her flat reply: "I'm handlin' it." The characters too are well worth putting before the plot. Helen Shaver's Vivien is an uptight English professor in an eye-watering bun and a boring suit who literally lets her hair down as the movie progresses. The rambunctious Cay (Patricia Charbonneau) is unlettered and direct, ambitious, straightforward and never outwardly afraid of anything life has to offer. She trustingly tells friends, relatives and ex-boyfriends that she gets the "brass ring" only with women, and no sooner lays eyes on Vivien than begins a passionate dead-set seduction of the older woman. Her stepmother Frances (Audra Lindley) is even less educated and even more proud of her cowgirl heritage. She understands little, takes everything hard and provides us with a few laughs and a saddened voice of disapproval. Her disapproval, however, cannot survive her love for Cay. Indeed, Cay is surrounded by people who love her, which leaves us merely curious about her professed lack of self-confidence, which is rarely, if ever, in evidence. Could this be the standard ploy of the supposedly shy and vulnerable man who always gets his girl? Well, it works again.

Let us not be too hasty, however. If you rush out to see *Desert Hearts* for the passionate lovemaking you have a long wait to endure for a few very discreet, though nicely erotic scenes. If you are hoping to hear those fatal words that prove Vivien's love for Cay is more than skin deep, you may be as disappointed as Cay is when she hollers, "You're just visiting the place where I live." If you're going to see "just a love story... handled in a fairly frank and real way," you're on the right track. Incidentally, so is Donna Deitch.



Vivian in her boring suit, Cay in her usual garb and gum-snapping Gwen in *Desert Hearts*.

Sotto Sotto

Let me make it plain, right from the start, that Lina Wertmuller's *Sotto Sotto* is no ordinary lesbian love story. It is in fact a raunchy, slapstick comedy that pokes fun at the consumption of romance, flirts with class differences and dishes up female bisexuality as the final breakdown between the sexes. It is, like all good Wertmuller films, simultaneously silly and confusing. Probing the layers for whatever "message" there may be, you soon realize that the plot, at least, is served up to look remarkably like light entertainment and you may just as well sit back and laugh along. After all, Wertmuller has made a career of poking fun at male and female foibles. This time she pokes a little harder at women's views of our own sexuality, which very often leaves us feeling slightly offended.

The two main characters in *Sotto Sotto*, Ester and Adele, are close friends who live in the same working class neighbourhood. While Adele provides the neighbours with some healthy gossip on the breakdown of her marriage and ultimate divorce, Ester is provoking in her Madonna-like sainthood. Mother of one son, Ester has never strayed, nor lost her looks, in twelve years of marriage. She and her equally good-looking friend Adele are addicted to the high romance of the great movie classics. Ester's carpenter-husband Oscar genuinely enjoys ruining the movies for her — claiming, for example, that he cannot understand Bogey's self-sacrifice in *Casablanca* and concludes that he must have been "queer." Obviously Ester finds little romance at home and the stage is set for an "impossible love" for which she is currently lacking a particular object of desire.

One fine day Ester and Adele stroll with a friend through a statue-filled garden which turns out to be some kind of lesbian haven. Watching two women kiss passionately, framed in an old tower window, Ester immediately relates a dream to Adele of their own tender romance. Adele is suitably shocked and curious and everything snowballs from there. It is interesting to note, however, how out-of-place Ester and Adele really are in the grotto. When they fall for the image of passionate romance between women, we cannot help but wonder how much of the attraction may be towards the whole package, the tranquil look of the rich and serene women who

stroll leisurely through the garden. Ester and Adele are women who consume classic movies, imitate classic looks and admire classic beauty. In this modern society it is any wonder they turn their admiration towards the beauty of women? Are we not all inundated with the beauty of movie stars and *Vogue* clothes and Italian shoes? Why not buy the whole package and see women as the objects of desire?

Wertmuller presses her point with Oscar's reaction to the discovery that his wife Lusts After Another. The slapstick springs forth full-blown as he flounders around attempting to discover his rival and failing comically. When he is brought to realize that his rival is a woman, he cannot decide if that makes him merely half a cuckold. Certainly it is more than clear how little he values women. Meanwhile he begins to listen to his arty friends quoting statistics about female bisexuality. Shocked at their lax attitude, he nevertheless puts on a front of false bravado later for his own neighbours. He misquotes the statistics he has heard earlier, but nonetheless equates female bisexuality with modernity — again as if he has bought the whole package that women are more romantic and more progressive in their sexuality.

In fact, Wertmuller dishes it all up with humour so that she can more easily show the exaggerated ideas that women still retain about romance, and the exaggerated threat men feel on being bypassed, even though they still openly declare the lack of value they place in women. Much is made of Ester's previously unbroken record as a Madonna figure and her subsequent downfall, but the real humour lies in the fact that no one has actually been unfaithful. The two women cannot achieve their "impossible love." They cannot even manage a kiss in the tower window back in the lesbian garden of delights. It is not as easy as it looks to merely translate themselves into the world they would like to consume, as they consume everything else. However, in the end they do achieve a classically romantic movie moment: in a flurry of embarrassment and high farce, Oscar is stabbed and all three take the blame. Considering that the affair has been entirely imaginary, and Oscar has been torturing himself, they probably have a point.

—D.G.



Ester (Veronica Lario), Rosa (Isa Danielli) and Adele (Luisa De Santis) spot two women kissing in *Sotto Sotto*.

Starry, Starry Nights

by Amanda Hale

Makka Kleist is a performer who combines humour and anger, mythology and contemporary scenarios to weave a totality, at once complex and simple, but above all which elucidates our time with the resonance of history and cultural myths. Her one-woman show, *There Was an Old Woman*, is part of 6 of 1001 Nights of Performance, curated by Toronto's A Space Performance Committee in February. The performance night provided some exciting new work on the theme of media influence. The huge Workman Auditorium at 1001 Queen Street West with its traditional proscenium stage, while accommodating the large audiences attending this series, created a distinct separation between the audience and performer, alien to the ideal performance art venue.

The series featured a variety of performances by poets, actors, video and performance artists. Most communicative were those who directly addressed the theme of media influence, and whose performance skills matched the quality of their material.

Kleist's *There Was an Old Woman* is a transformative piece which encompasses issues from environmental pollution to poverty, ageism, and the New Age alternate culture. Kleist, who is a superb performer, wrote the script in collaboration with Larry Lewis, her director. The original character is Sassumap Arna, Mother of the Ocean/Woman of the Deep, from Inuit mythology. While playing in the sand to the recorded sounds of air warfare, Kleist enacts the story of Sassumap, an only child who grows up "with no men around her." When she mates with a dog her father is so infuriated he attempts to drown her. As she clings to the boat he takes an axe and chops off her fingers. Sassumap falls to the bottom of the ocean and her fingers transform into sea creatures and birds. Kleist smears her hair with white mud, an image of the increasing corruption and filth in the world above. Finally she surfaces in Lake Ontario and reels off a diatribe about the pollution she finds there — 50 odd chemicals which have caused various forms of cancer and mutation in the fish.

Sassumap now transforms into a bag woman by changing into a "\$9.99 dress" and a motley assortment of layered jackets. With her Honest Ed's bag, she is a splendidly feisty, humorous character. She invites a young man to her room. "Wanna fuck?" she asks. She is rejected because she is too old. "Well, I should make myself look about twelve years old," she says, evoking media images of the increasing evidence of child porn — younger and younger girls, easier and easier to control in a feminist age when many adult women refuse to be objectified any more. Kleist proceeds to do schtick with a Clairol hair-colouring kit, then she puts a green mud pack on her face, completing the grotesque effect with lipstick and rouge spots. Dressed in psychedelic, luminous pinks and lime greens ("to avoid being run over by a truck"), tottering on spiky red high heels, she is now ready for secretarial school. She learns to type and lands a job running the office for the Media Modelling Agency. Interwoven with this is a video sequence of a man addressing a disembodied girl. She is a model. "I'm only twelve," she says. "Daddy treats me different from what he used to. Mommy is jealous of me. I use her makeup." "Take your skirt off," the man urges her. "I'm only twelve," she responds. "I don't know who I am."

Now Kleist dons a fur stole and transforms into a tough businesswoman doing the hard sell on nuclear warhead toys. She barks down the phone to her male employee. "I don't fuck around." (She doesn't need to: she's the boss.) "Sell those toys!"

Her final transformation completes the cyclical structure of the piece. Kleist washes her face and becomes radiant as she talks about the alternate culture of the human potential movement. "Ten people graduated in astral travel today. Fifteen people formed an organization to practise healing with sound. Death is only transforming into something else," she tells her audience, addressing the great North American fear of death which

ironically results in a death culture based on the get-it-while-you-can mentality of the typical North American male.

Lillian Allen is an extremely successful artist who performs all over Canada and is in the process of making a solo record. Well-known to Toronto audiences for her Dub poetry, Allen is undergoing a transformation in the presentation of her work. From the basic use of voice, music and rhythm, she is moving into technological effects with a multiple echo digital delay mike which is highly effective; pulsating lights which echo her voice rhythm; and backwashes of brilliantly colored light in red, turquoise, electric blue and mauve. Allen describes her performance, *Let the Heart See*, as "the experience and spiritual journey of a woman at odds with the conditions of her reality." She seeks "peace through self-expression" while declaring "war on the inequality and injustice around her." Allen is a powerful performer whose work resonates with the sincerity and conviction of her vision. Surrounded by an aura of political knowledge and experience, she holds her audience's attention riveted, though the fact that she still reads her poetry from a sheaf of papers seems incongruent with the broadening presentational aspects: the papers distract from the power of her performance.

There is a blend of imagistic and abstract poetry. The poems which build characters and develop dialogues are particularly effective, as in the piece where a bureaucratic employee is repeatedly questioned. "Whose side are you on anyways?" "I like you people," she says. "I'm just doing my job." A repetitive cliché in response to confrontation. The repetition of phrases has a powerful effect on the audience: "The spirit fights back." Allen's use of high-tech in order to give a message against its dehumanizing aspects is masterful — "Fit, fit, fit ... the box on the computer print-out page." We all have to fit, but we refuse; "the spirit fights back; the spirit fights back."

John Greyson, an accomplished video and performance artist, presented a skilfully layered piece called *You Taste American*. Based on the 1983 washroom raids at the Orillia Opera House, the piece sets up a fictional encounter between Michel Foucault and Tennessee Williams. Clips from *Suddenly Last Summer* appear on video monitors; slides are projected onto the backdrop showing classical images of the male nude, clinical diagrams of the penis, cityscapes; there is an overlay of voice and music on the soundtrack, including Ann Murray's "Snowbird" to which Greyson and David Roche do a lyrical



Makka Kleist

striptease. The four live performers, including Colin Campbell and Michael Balser, share the stage with a sewing machine and 100 toilet rolls which are intermittently unravelled and swept up. The men audition for James Dean and Montgomery Clift roles, using lip synch and stylized body language. *You Taste American* is skilfully conceived, the disparate layers of sound and visual images sharing a common body of imagery, reinforcing the central conflict between the official and the personal.

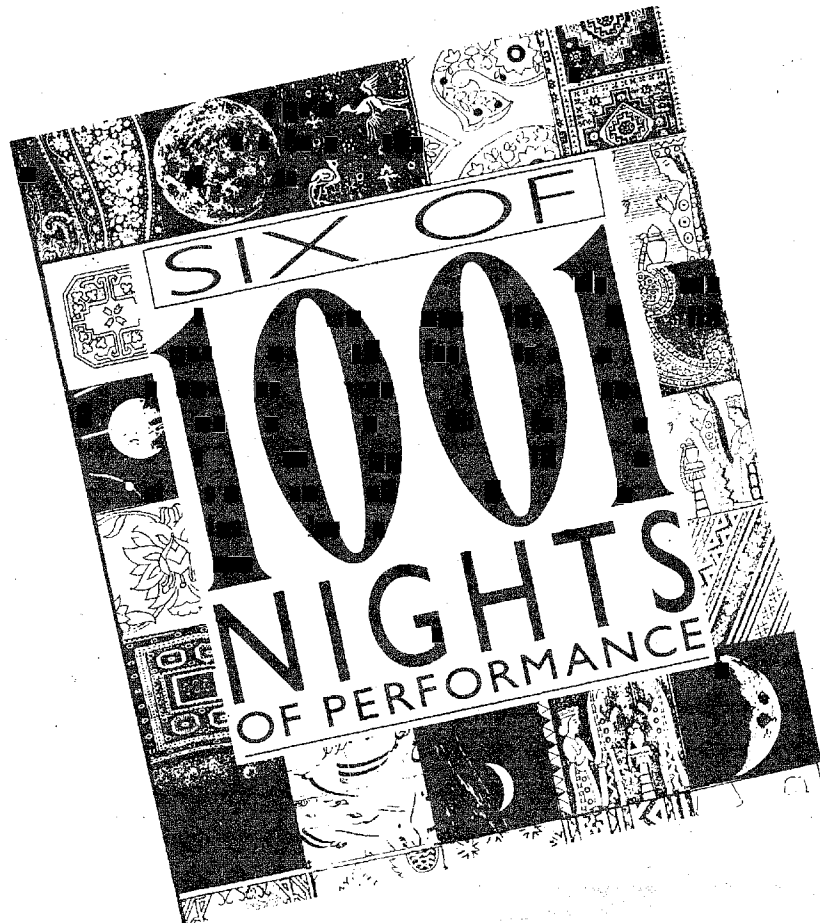
Rhonda Abrams, known as a video artist, wrote a country and western opera for the 1001 Nights. *The Lament of the Sugar Bushman*, sung and yodelled by Johnny McKeown with accompaniment by Elliott the fiddler, marks the demise of the sugar maples as they succumb to acid rain. The stage is strewn with freshly cut maple logs and branches against a

Hollywood blue backdrop scudded with puffy clouds. With echoes of Nelson Eddie/Jeanette Macdonald movies, the Canadian Air Farce and the lumberjack stereotype, and McKeown warbling "Oh, give me back my trees. Oh no!", the audience seemed uncertain about how to react. Interestingly, the seriousness of the subject matter being romanticized in a mixture of traditional genres with an ironic eye precluded a clear response from the audience. In this way it was an original and rather cerebral piece of work which unsettled but refused to entertain.

Marcia Cannon's *Jane of the Grapes* focussed on the political situation in South Africa. Satire is Cannon's medium, but her pace did not match the genre on this occasion. Satirical wit does not work unless it is sharp, cleanly cut and fast paced. Cannon could have benefitted from some good direction to speed up the performance and elucidate what was a potentially humorous and satirical situation.

Jane is a wealthy white vineyard owner and decides to break the tedium of her luxurious existence by roughing it in the bush of her own property. She sets up a tent, takes a bubble bath in a lagoon, wrestles with a crocodile and eventually asphyxiates it between her powerful thighs. She clumsily knocks over a tree, trapping a black panther beneath it, then she magnanimously liberates the animal and sings "Born Free." Perhaps some less clichéd images could have been chosen, but it is difficult to know what might have worked with improved performance and production values (there was inadequate lighting until near the end of the piece). Too slow a pace was the major problem and gave the performance an aimless quality, which I am sure Cannon intended as languorousness.

Krisantha Sri Bhaggiyadatta based his performance on his recently published book of poetry, *The Only Minority Is the Bourgeoisie*. His concerns as a poet have always focussed on media misrepresentation which obscures the facts about racism and imperialism. Bhaggiyadatta recognizes North American culture as militaristic, and moves on from this undeniable fact to explore the fear base which is created by popular culture such as TV cop shows. His comment on the Toronto mainstream press perhaps sums up what much of the 1001 Nights performance series was about: "Those who look at the *Sun*, the *Star* and the *Globe* will never see the world."



Ravishing Eclecticism

by Marian Lydbrooke

Wondeurbrass is an all-women band from Montréal, which plays a mixture of pop, jazz, opera and rock. Marian Lydbrooke interviewed Wondeurbrass's Judith Gruber-Stitzer for Broadside after last summer's Canadian Women's Cultural Festival in Winnipeg.

Marian Lydbrooke: Can you tell us something about your music, something about the people in your band?

Judith Gruber-Stitzer: We have two saxophones, one tenor, one alto saxophone; electric bass, electric guitar, synthesizers, electric drums, electronic drums; and regular drums; acoustic drums and a trombone.

Marian: How long have you been together and playing together?

Judith: It'll be six years in October, which is really an accomplishment we're rather proud of.

Marian: Are you still the same line up after six years?

Judith: Four of the women are the original members. I've been with the group for three years and the trombonist is the most recent member.

Marian: Do you all have jobs, or do you manage to make some money with your music?

Judith: Until recently, until about a year ago, we all had sidelines, in terms of earning our money, in whatever way suited us best. But in the past year we've begun to earn money more and more, either with the band or because of the band. For example, I do music for films, something I've been doing for the past four years, and this year I've been making a living from that. Wondeurbrass is like a non-profit business in the sense that all the money we earn in our contracts we put back into promotion. The record that we've just put on, *Ravir*, is "auto-produced." We had help from the Secretary of State, but we assumed quite a bit of the production cost ourselves.

Marian: Can you explain that a little more, tell us a little bit about your record. What do you mean by auto-produced? And how did you get the money?

Judith: Instead of going to a record company with a demo and asking if they'd be interested in producing us, we decided to attempt to do it ourselves. We wanted the sound to be really "the Wondeurbrass sound," and our sound is such a strange mixture, I think, of pop and

jazz and opera and rock, that we didn't want a producer to come in telling us that we should change our arrangement to make a sound that would be more commercial. We think the commerciality of our music will eventually be its original sound. We received a grant from the Secretary of State Women's Program, which helped us enormously, encouraged us a lot, and we also invested some of our own money into it.

Marian: Did you have women sound engineers in the recording studio?

Judith: No, we co-produced the recording with André Dechine, an avante-garde musician in Montréal.

Marian: What about your record, *Ravir*...

Judith: ...which means "ravishing" in French.

Marian: Can you explain that?

Judith: It's our first 33 rpm, and obviously from the title we feel it to be ravishing —

"ravish" in the positive and negative sense of the word. It's a strong first statement from our band, somewhat different from our 45 rpm *Panaro* and *Go à Do* — it's the same band playing — but we feel that we've matured since then, with the addition of synthesizers and the natural evolution of our music in the past three years.

Marian: What about the lyrics? Who writes them and what are they about, on the whole?

Judith: There are three of us in the group who compose. Myself, Dianne Labrosse and Joane Hetu. I compose my own lyrics, Diane works in collaboration with Joane often and with Danielle Roger, who's our drummer. The topics we speak about ... they're all over the block, you know. I like to think of ourselves as intelligent, active women who are very much a part of the society around us and so the lyrics are about things that hit us, things that interest us. One is about sexuality, one is about unrequited love, one is about feeling good, one is about President Reagan's Star Wars, one is about whales committing suicide.

Marian: Do you call yourselves feminists or do you prefer to avoid labels?

Judith: I would be proud to call myself a feminist and I'm sure all the other women in the band would be. I have the kind of generalized attitude that any aware woman would consider herself to be a feminist.

Marian: You played at a women's festival in Paris last year. That must have been very exciting. How did you get all your equipment over there, for a start?

Judith: We took our primary instruments, but we rented the secondary level, the amplifiers, the chairs and things like that, over there!

The festival was terrific. It was terrific because we were in Paris, which was our first time, and because we got a chance to meet a lot of other musicians, and to see how our music was received in Europe. Many people for years have been saying Wondeurbrass has a very European sound, so it was the first time we had a chance to see how "Europeans" would react to it. It went over very well.

We didn't meet as many avante-garde musicians as we would have liked to, or as many rock musicians, and that brought up an interesting aspect of the festival. Most of the participants received government grants from their respective governments to participate. We were the official representatives of the Québecois government, and were lucky to be so, but I believe that avante-garde or experimental or even rock music is less "grantable" and is less often supported by the government. Classical music and contemporary music (which is classical music gone down a different road) is more easily accepted by the governments. I found there to be a large majority of classical and contemporary women musicians represented, more than I would have liked... but... it was terrific.

Marian: It's difficult to earn a living playing avante-garde music, because there are fewer places to play...

Judith: ...and because avante-garde means that you're ahead of your time. The music business works with labels, and one of the problems with Wondeurbrass is what section of the record store we're going to put it in: "Is it jazz, is it rock? Do we have a women's section? I mean, who are they?"

Marian: Where do you play in Montréal? Do you play in bars? How do you get received?

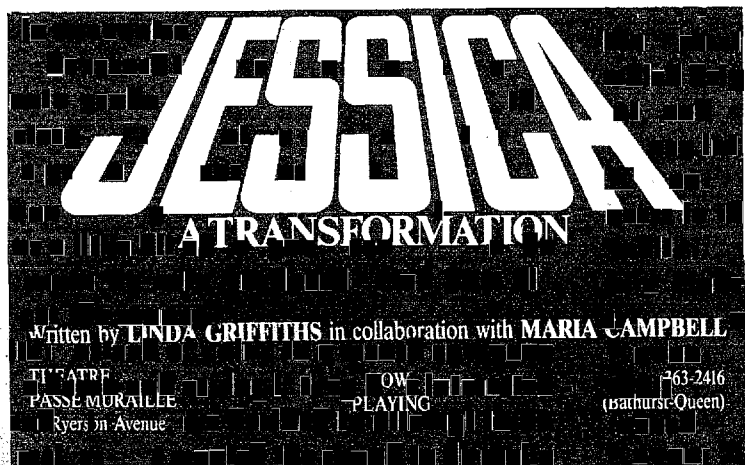
Judith: We don't play very often. We played for the Fifth International Montréal Jazz Festival and for the Festival De Musique Actuelle. We went on tour in Québec, we play universities, we're playing at Club Soda, a rather large, prestigious club in Montreal.

Marian: Have you got any plans to travel around Canada?

Judith: We'd like to go to Vancouver. And you asked me, do we play in bars. No, we're not really a bar band. We don't appeal to the bar crowd. We're really "listening music," although some of our pieces are definitely danceable. It's kind of intellectual — you've got to get used to it. It's a music that's emotional and cerebral at the same time and so it doesn't really go with the beer drinking crowd.

I think there are some good things coming up for us. Our record has helped us a lot in terms of exposure on the radio. We've got very good reviews. The record's distributed by Fusion à Trois (Fusion Three), which is a national distributing company, so if you really look for it you could probably find it!

Marian Lydbrooke is a musician and member of the CKLN Soundwomen collective.



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Juggling Sexual Ethics



Mariana Valverde

Reviewed by Jennifer Stephen

Psychoanalytic discourse on female sexuality is the discourse of truth. A discourse that tells the truth about the logic of truth; namely, that *the feminine occurs only within the models and laws devised by male subjects*. Which implies that there are not really two sexes, but only one. A single practice and representation of the sexual. With its history, its requirements, reverses, lacks, negative(s)... of which the female sex is the mainstay. — Luce Irigaray, "Cosi Fan Tutti," *This Sex Which Is Not One*.

Mariana Valverde's work, in *Sex, Power and Pleasure*, stems from a developing tradition which we fondly refer to as "the sexuality debate." It situates Valverde in the midst of juggling feminist sexual ethics, morality, feminist psychoanalysis, pornography, erotic power, sexual desire, and yes — pleasure and danger. Since Valverde is well aware of the relationship between author and reader, she issues a caveat, a disclosure:

I do not want disciples to absorb my theories; I do not want weak-willed souls who will submerge their own desires in the erotic appeal of the text... Which is not to say that I want to abolish the necessarily erotic connection between reader and writer; far from it. I just want it to be an egalitarian and open-ended match, in which there is both struggle and identification."

Understanding Valverde's conception of the term "erotic" requires persistent reference to the operation of dialectics. The framework is thereby made compact, concise, even compelling; sexuality is both institutional and experiential; it is constructed by the rigid categories of gender and subsequent compulsory heterosexuality, but is also the valid site for resistance, pleasure, and creativity.

So far so good. Similarly, we are all (women and men) subject and object in our experience of sexual desire and of erotic power. Erotic power can and must be experienced as ungendered, even while we experience ourselves as quintessentially gendered beings. For Valverde, power and agency (the capacity to know and be known in action/activity in the world) become synonymous. Women need not balk at the recognition of our own sexual desire as erotic power which may be expressed as activity and/or passivity. Power in this sense is not fixed and static; power, at least my understanding from Valverde's use of that term, may be likened to the use of energy in physics: active potential, fluid, dynamic. But

we aren't out of the woods yet, since power is currently organized within the context of social relations according to one's class, gender and race. While Valverde recognizes that racial, economic, and gender (or "erotic") power are used for exploitation, she refuses to toe the line of the "sexual pessimists" who contend that "erotic power has come to mean rape and violence against women":

Erotic power has to be detached from the bedrock of patriarchal social relations; it has to be used to eroticize equality — which is by no means synonymous with sameness — rather than inequality.

And further:

An eroticism that is both sexy and egalitarian is one in which both partners are simultaneously subject and object, for one another as well as for themselves.

Valverde sets before us the task of subverting the hierarchy of differences embedded in social relations of power, namely those of gender, race and class. Similarly, we are cautioned against attempting to collapse all such difference into the single category of gender, a point she draws on when discussing the problems of seeking a "universal women's experience" to provide the basis for a collective feminist ethics.

Meanwhile, Valverde wants to attain mutual recognition between (social) erotic equals without undercutting plurality and difference. It was at this point that I began to wonder if *the erotic* in "erotic power" was somehow pre-social. Or perhaps it is *the power*, or even both, which is somehow to be retrieved intact from all other social relations that, as Valverde concedes, actively construct our sexual desires. To answer that question, I took another look at Valverde's "dialectic of desire," as well as at her fusion of various psychoanalytic discourses. In short, it seems, we begin with an acceptance of the initial dialectic of subject-object with the mother, the initial love-object of the infant. The "polymorphous perversity" identified by Freud, that is, the anal-oral eroticism of the infant, is clarified in Valverde's thesis as the pre-genital and pre-generated sexuality of the infant. For women, this subjectivized sexuality is steadily eroded by the process of heterosexist socialization. It is this process which subverts women's capacity to develop and maintain a sense of self and the experience of erotic desires as 'subject':

The woman who has been traditionally brought up and successfully socialized will therefore identify with the Other's desire and pleasure *instead of* developing her own desires. Her much-vaunted selflessness, which could be very positive, is turned into a negative characteristic when women live simply for and through their men.



And there we have it: women frozen on the submissive-Other side of the dialectic of desire. Given the essential bipolarity which the dialectic presupposes (ie, self-other/subject-object), the point is to "collectivize and equalize power. Then we will be free to really play, to really explore the possibilities of the dialectic of desire."

Sex, Power and Pleasure is a self-identified "how to think" book. Valverde does not purport to provide answers, strategems and solutions. And yet I wonder. I began by citing Luce Irigaray only because her work has helped to clarify my understanding of how

subjectivity is denied women — and what that means to us sexually, economically, politically.

The ideology of sexism proceeds on the basis of oppositional thought, organizing capital K knowledge into rigidly fixed, gendered categories. Women are excluded from this discourse which is, in theory and practice, premised on hierarchy: male/masculine subjectivity *depends* on the hierarchy of oppositions. Which suggests to me that the point is to subvert that hierarchy while creating and subjectivizing women's sexuality apart from it. Valverde begins to move in this direction when she refutes the "car in the empty garage" thesis of female sexuality outlined by compulsory heterosexuality, one she acknowledges to be phallogocentric.

And yet, we are not seeking an eroticism of sameness, which would be so "unimaginative and homogenized" that we would all be bored to tears and left with "no reason to be attracted to one person rather than another." Nor are we interested in an eroticism of difference, "which would exaggerate sexual difference into the pornographic scenario where the man with the biggest cock gets the women with the biggest tits." So we are left, it seems, to develop an eroticism where sameness and difference are both eroticized and valued, a reciprocity of erotic power which resists the rigidly gendered hierarchy in which women's passion is currently locked in the state of submissive passivity:

Active and passive desire always contain each other. The movement *within* (each player) is the ground for the interchange that we observe *between* them... active and passive constantly create each other as opposites and at the same time constantly merge into one another.



In between an exploration of erotic power and a trilogy in two parts (Imagining Desire, and Desire & Ethics), Valverde develops the projects of eroticizing equality within the context of sexual pluralism: namely, heterosexuality, celibacy, lesbianism and bisexuality. Central to this portion of the text is a thorough debunking of sexual essentialism (the 'naturalisms' of compulsory heterosexist ideology) and an approach to sexual plurality as a radical alternative to heterosexual monothemism — and lesbian chauvinism.

It was then that I stumbled across a chapter entitled "Pornography: Not For Men Only" and drew a heavy sigh. Sexual pessimism, according to Valverde, has pervaded the analyses of anti-pornography feminists, such as Robin Morgan, Susan Griffin, and Andrea Dworkin. All are cited as the descendents of the late-19th century "maternal feminists" who embarked upon their futile campaign against "male lust." Valverde correctly isolates the sociobiological premise that men are *inherently* predisposed to rape.

It is on the same score that Valverde critiques Mary Daly, which is certain to invoke the angst of some readers. She also objects to the single-issue campaigning against pornography: "If male sexual violence is a serious concern, so is female unhappiness and guilt." I won't suggest that she is begging the question here: pornography is a complex social process that can only be understood within the context of its production and consumption. Pornography is not an isolated natural object: its meaning is structured through the social relations of class, gender and race which in turn construct the cultural practice through which women become the targets of masculinized violence. (I chose the term "masculinized" since the

implications of "male sexual violence" play directly into the discourse of sociobiology.) We don't counsel silence about sexual harassment: we develop and institute grievance procedures within the collective bargaining process, and then educate to press the point that sexual harassment *exists*. Not only is it an employment condition; sexual harassment is often a condition of employment; there is a connection between the 'pin-up' on the shop floor and the subordination of women in the workplace.

Therefore, while I agree with Valverde's comments about pornography (and the futility of developing a legal definition which presupposes an isolated "thing" called pornography), I recall nearly falling off my chair at the sentence, "By rejecting violent sex, some feminists express a more general fear of all erotic power." OK, so I'm not wild about rape, but "a general fear of *all* erotic power"? Whose "erotic power" are we talking about? Particularly after having asserted, or rather recognized, that male desires are often of the kind which result in violence.

I held my breath and stumbled onward, while Valverde unpacked the "domino theory of the passions... the fear that if we indulge in one prohibited passion, this will act as a domino toppling all other prohibitions," and then proceeded to demystify desire itself, or at least begin to. Imagining our desires is not a clarion call for sexual libertarianism, or talking our way into individual liberation. Nor is it the reproduction of master/slave scripts which leave the social meaning of such roles intact and unchallenged.

It is here that we return to the dialectic, to the goal of acknowledging the erotic power, individual autonomy and integrity of desire which resides in the Other. The desire for pleasure and the recognition of mutual erotic power (although I still prefer 'agency') must be rooted in a collective feminist ethic, and not brandished as the false idol of individual autonomy, as though the movement toward autonomy were an individuated, isolated quest. For the same reason, consent is but one of the many ethical considerations involved in what Valverde envisages to be a multiplicity of ethical sexualities.

As a "how-to-think" book, *Sex, Power and Pleasure* is definitely food for thought. Still, we cannot think our way out of the oppressive hierarchy of race, class and gender. And a one-sided revolt of the "Other" won't do it either. Perhaps Valverde's next work will be a "how-to-do-it," or a "how-to-make-dialectics-work-for-you."

Jennifer Stephen is a co-producer of *The Pornography Tapes*.

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Of Menwim, Pehoes and Housebounds



Egalia's Daughters: A Satire of the Sexes, by Gerd Brantenberg, translated by Louis Mackay in co-operation with Gerd Brantenberg, Seattle: The Seal Press, 1985. Paper, \$8.95 US.

Reviewed by Gail van Varseveld

The menwim are burning their pehoes and the wim cannot understand what the problem is. After all, life in Egalia is much better for the menwim than it used to be. Young maidmen no longer have to go about with their knees tied together to keep them pure enough to get fatherhood-protection and thereby become the housebound of some powerful wom. And

Gerd Brantenberg will be reading at the Toronto Women's Bookstore on Wednesday, April 23. See calendar for details.

what do the housebounds have to do all day, but take care of the children and keep the house and go to their coffee-mornings and discuss their new beard ribbons for the Grand Menstruation Games?

But now the masculists are saying that isn't good enough. They want the same rights as wim to be fisherwim or farmers, to live without fatherhood-protection and not be stigmatized, to share the responsibility for contraception with their wives. The wim put it all down to menstruation-envy or Pallurian tendencies, but the menwim want economic justice; they want to be equally huwom.

Gerd Brantenberg is a Norwegian novelist long active in the women's movement. *Egalia's Daughters*, her second novel (of five so far) and the first to be translated into English, was originally published in 1977. The content of the novel makes it quite clear that she has indeed paid her feminist dues.

Egalia's Daughters is satire by reversal. Only the physical characteristics have not been reversed: men beget and women bear. Women are the dominant sex, so childbirth is a major event which takes place at the Birth Palace amid choirs of celebrants and audience applause, and the annual Grand Menstruation Games are the social event of the year. Women are the politicians, the controllers of the lucrative spearbiter fishery, the lawmakers and the designators of fashion: plump men with small penises are the standard of beauty.

Men, on the other hand, are subservient help-mates; either housebounds for middle class wim or, for the lucky unprotected, pitied spinnermen who survive by teaching or working in similar helping professions. The unlucky get shipped off to the mines in Palluria. In this culture, Petronius, son of a powerful director and her frustrated housebound, tries to grow up and find a place where he feels comfortable. The strictures of the culture drive him into the menwim's liberation movement.

One thing is different in the history of Egalia. In the days when General Sheracles was driving nomads out of the highlands and

consolidating the territory that became Egalia, she used menwim in the infantry because a high mortality rate among them would not hurt the country's birthrate. This practice ceased after the wars ended and the country became more civilized; besides the practice was bad for morale.

The satire of *Egalia's Daughters* is sharp and very close to home. Almost everything has been included (even the point that homosexual behaviour is more severely censured in the dominant sex). I am tempted to say it is the best summary of the second wave of the feminist movement that I've read; it is certainly the most fun.

But the satire works on two levels: of the sexist culture we've been struggling to change and of the tendencies toward female supremacy on the part of some feminists. In fact, there is enough bite to the satire in this novel to make female chauvinists squirm. I found myself wondering as I was reading just who Brantenberg's primary target was, but there is a statement towards the end that clarifies the author's perspective: tyranny by women can never be quite as disastrous for the world as tyranny by men.

If I were to complain about this fascinating novel, I would gripe that it is too short. It covers a number of years and a great deal of growth on the part of Petronius and his colleagues in 269 pages of rather large type. While much of the content is instantly recognizable in our own world, I would have enjoyed more on the naming system of the matriarchal culture (which I never did figure out) and on the people, wim and menwim, of the lower economic levels who are very much in the background.

Nonetheless, it is a delightful read, even for those of us who have to squirm a little at some of the barbs. The Seal Press has a series called Women in Translation, of which this book is part, and it is to be hoped that there will be more Brantenberg novels to follow.

Gail van Varseveld is a Toronto feminist and regular contributor to *Broadside*.

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1:30 - 2:30	Speaking of Nairobi: Forum '85 — A World Meeting of Women
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APRIL 1986

Compiled by Catherine Maunsell

WEEK OF APRIL 1

- **Tuesday, April 1:** Lesbian and Gay Youth Toronto are looking for more young women (under 25) to join their support group. 519 Church St. Community Centre, 7.30 pm. Info: 923-2778. Also **Tuesdays, April 8, 15, 22 and 29.**
- **Tuesday, April 1:** The Women's Information Line is open from 7-9 pm. Messages may be left at any time. New number: 598-3714. Also **Tuesdays, April 8, 15, 22 and 29.**

- **Tuesday, April 1:** "A Wedge of Night," Toronto's only live, improvisational continuing soap serial is moving to larger, grander premises. Enjoy Passion, Romance, Mystery, Intrigue, Good Music and Good Times every Tuesday. Lee's Palace, 529 Bloor St. West. 8 pm. \$5. Info: 536-0471. Also **Tuesdays, April 8, 15, 22 and 29.**

- **Tuesday, April 1:** Lesbian Phone Line open tonight for calls from women. 7.30-10.30 pm. 533-6120. Also **Tuesdays, April 8, 15, 22 and 29.**

- **Tuesday, April 1:** Linda Griffith's new play "Jessica" continues at Theatre Passe Muraille, 16 Ryerson Ave. \$8, \$10, (\$2 off for students, seniors and groups). Info: Vivienne Muhling, 363-3212. **To Sunday, April 13.**

- **Tuesday, April 1:** Joyce Burkholder's exhibit of paintings on silk opens at Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. Info: 967-1078.

- **Tuesday, April 1:** Joanne Mackell and the Yahoos. At the Stage Door. 8.30 pm. 322 King St. West. Info: 597-8526. **To Saturday, April 5.**

- **Wednesday, April 2:** "The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism in the 1920s and 1980s," a lecture by Sheila Jeffreys, author of "The Spinster and Her Enemies: Feminism and Sexuality 1880-1930." Sponsored by the Dept. of History of Philosophy of Education and the Centre for Women's Studies in Education, OISE. The Board Room, 252 Bloor St. West. 4-5.30 pm. Free.

- **Wednesday, April 2:** Anna Gutmanis performs original songs/keyboards at Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. \$5 minimum. 9 pm. Info: 967-1078.

- **Wednesday, April 2:** WEN-DO, Women's self-defence classes begin in the Parliament/Gerrard area. 7-9.30 pm for 6 Wednesdays. Free childcare. Instructor: M. Walsh. Info: 925-4363. **To May 7.**

- **Thursday, April 3:** Lesbian Phone Line open tonight for calls from women. 7.30-10.30 pm. 533-6120. Also **Thursdays, April 17 and 24.**

BINGO

- **Thursday, April 3:** Bingo! sponsored by Womynly Way. 1-4 pm. Maple Leaf Bingo, 665 St. Clair Ave. West (at Christie). Wheelchair accessible. Free admission. Info: 925-6568. Also **Thursdays, April 10, 17 and 24.** (Mention Broadside and get a free Womynly Way button!)

- **Thursday, April 3:** The Women's Information Line (WIL) is open 7-9 pm. Messages may be left any time. New number: 598-3714. Also **Thursdays, April 10, 17 and 24.**

- **Friday, April 4:** Say No to Extra-billing! Demonstrate for an immediate ban! 5 p.m. Queen's Park (in front of the Legislature). Sponsored by Alliance to End Extra-billing. Info: 699-0830.

- **Saturday, April 5:** Tribute to NFB's Studio D. Two days of film screenings and discussion. 9.30 am to 5.00 pm. Harbourfront York Quay Centre, 235 Queen's Quay West. Free. Info: 364-5665. Also **Sunday, April 6.**

- **Sunday, April 6:** Necessary Angel Theatre and Toronto Free Theatre present a benefit performance of "mr. nice guy" in support of Education Wife Assault. 26 Berkeley St. 7.30 pm. Info: 365-0533.

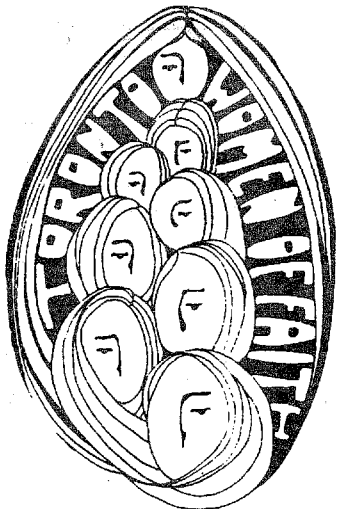
WEEK OF APRIL 7

- **Monday, April 7:** Popular Feminism, a lecture and discussion series, presents Kathy Rockhill: "The Chaos of Subjectivity in the Ordered Home of Objectivity." OISE, 252 Bloor St. West, Room 3-3111. 8 pm. Free.

- **Monday, April 7:** The Women's Group, an open lesbian discussion group meets at 519 Church St. Community Centre. 8 pm. Info: 923-2778. Also **Mondays, April 14, 21 and 28.**

- **Tuesday, April 8:** Donna Marchand performs music and slides, at Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. 9 pm. No cover. Info: 967-1078. Also **Wednesday, April 9.**

- **Tuesday, April 8:** WEN-DO, women's self-defence classes begin in the Main St. subway area. 7.30-10 pm, for 6 Tuesdays. Instructor: M. Walsh. Info: 368-2178. **To May 13.**



- **Wednesday, April 9:** "Women and Spirituality: Responding to Suffering." Third annual interfaith event for women. 1 pm - 5:30 pm. Timothy Eaton Church (Dunvegan entrance), 230 St. Clair Ave. W. \$14/\$7 (pre-registration required). Info: 364-3101.

- **Wednesday, April 9:** Annual general meeting of the North York Women's Shelter, with guest speaker Susan G. Cole. Lansing United Church, 49 Bogert St. (1 south of Sheppard, east of Yonge). 7.30 pm. Info: 635-9630. Memberships available at the door.

- **Wednesday, April 9:** Grapevine Theatre presents Diane Gordon in "MacPhail," Theresa Sears and David Switzer's play on life and passions of Agnes MacPhail. Palmerston Library Theatre, 560 Palmerston Ave. \$7.50 (\$3.50 seniors, 2 pm. April 10 only). Reservations and info: 531-7066.

- **Friday, April 11:** "Desert Hearts," Donna Deitch's film based on Jane Rule's novel, opens at Cineplex. Info: 598-2309.

- **Sunday, April 13:** DEC Bookroom presents Roy Bailey, a gay social activist folksinger, in concert at Trinity-St. Paul's, 427 Bloor St. West. 8 pm. \$5 advance, \$6 door. Info: 597-8695.

- **Sunday, April 13:** Carol Leckner reads her poetry. Free Times Cafe. 320 College St. 8 pm. Info: 967-1078.

NECESSARY ANGEL



THEATRE

- **Sunday, April 13:** Necessary Angel Theatre and Toronto Free Theatre present a benefit performance of "mr. nice guy" in support of Victims of Violence National Inc., sponsored by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. 26 Berkeley St. 7.30 pm. Info: 365-0533.

WEEK OF APRIL 14

- **Monday, April 14:** WEN-DO, women's self-defence classes begin in the Royal York and Mimico area. 7-10 pm, for 6 Mondays. Instructor: M. Walsh. Info: 252-4218. **To May 12.**

- **Thursday, April 17:** Happy first anniversary to Section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

- **Friday, April 18:** GALA (Gays and Lesbians Aging) general meeting. Intergenerational group, caring support for gays and lesbians as we age. 8 pm. 519 Church St. Community Centre.

- **Friday, April 18:** A 3-day production workshop open to all women interested in imagery and the representation of women in film. Hands on approach using Super 8 before and behind the camera leading to the completion of films. Previous film experience not necessary. Info: 364-7003. **To Sunday, April 20.**

- **Friday, April 18:** Portraits of Women by Women, a selection of work by women filmmakers from France curated by Katerina Thomodaki and Maria Klonaris. The Funnel, 507 King St. East. Info: 364-7003. Also **Friday, April 25.**

- **Sunday, April 20:** The Free Times Cafe presents Margeret Christl, celtic-traditional singer. 320 College St. 8 pm. \$4 cover. Info: 967-1078.

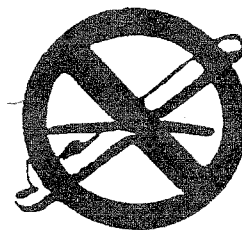
WEEK OF APRIL 21

- **Tuesday, April 22:** Jocelyn McGillvary, singer/songwriter influenced by Joan Armatrading and the blues performs at Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. 9 pm. \$5 minimum. Info: 967-1078. Also **Wednesday, April 23.**

- **Wednesday, April 23:** Gerd Brantenberg, Norwegian lesbian feminist novelist, reads from her satire "Egalia's Daughters". Toronto Women's Bookstore, 73 Harbord St. 6-7.30 pm. Free. Info: 922-8744.

- **Friday, April 25:** Annual Ontario New Democratic Party women's conference. Keynote performance: Lillian Allen. 7.30 pm. Toronto City Hall. Non-members welcome. Also **Saturday, April 26,** 9 am-5.30 pm. \$15 (\$10 under/unemployed). Info: 537-3888 (evgs.).

- **Saturday, April 26:** "Working in a Feminist Framework," a day of workshops and speakers on issues of class and ethnicity in feminist therapy. \$15. OISE, 252 Bloor St. West. 9 am-4 pm. Info: 848-2630.



- **Saturday, April 26:** Stop the Nuclearization of Canada. Join the demonstration sponsored by the ACT for Disarmament Coalition. City Hall. 1 pm. Info: 960-2228.

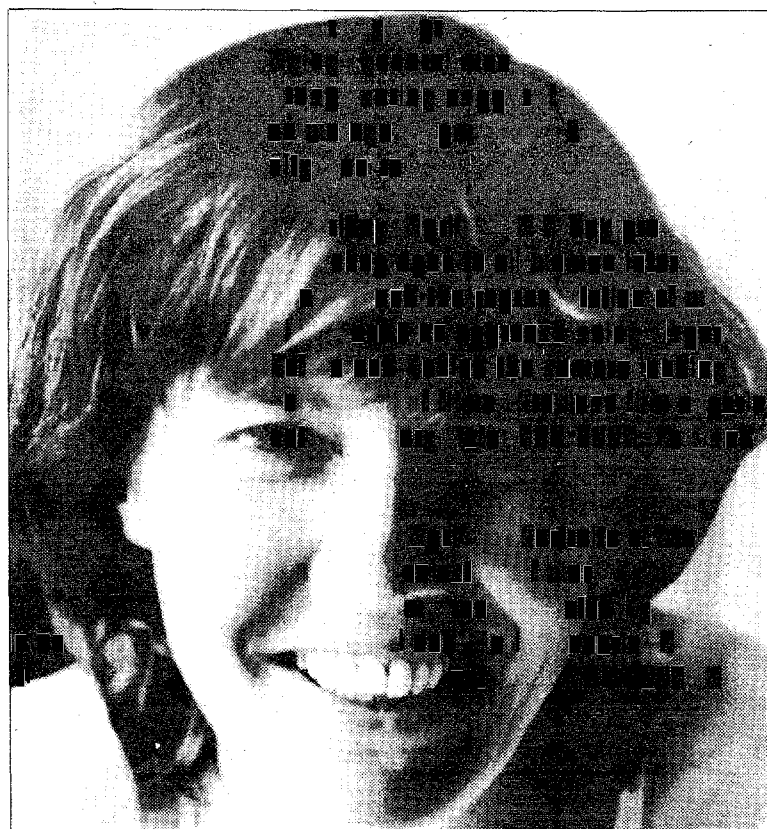
- **Sunday, April 27:** Cathy Miller, singer/songwriter from Ottawa performs at the Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. 8 pm. \$4 cover. Info: 967-1078.

- **Sunday, April 27:** Women's Independent Thoughtz (WITZ), a discussion/seminar group for the exchange of ideas and creative endeavours in art, literature, philosophy and political thought. Topic: The Goddess in Every Woman. Info: 536-3162, 766-9496.

- **Saturday, April 26:** Second production workshop for women interested in film. See Friday, April 18.

WEEK OF APRIL 28

- **Tuesday, April 29:** Sandy Alexander and Terry Morrison singers/songwriters perform rock, blues, jazz and reggae. Free Times Cafe, 320 College St. 9 pm. \$5 minimum. Info: 967-1078.



Gerd Brantenberg: Reading at TWB, April 23

Broadside CLASSIFIEDS

MOVING WEST? Sitka Housing Co-op created and designed by women for women and women with children. Sitka is 26 units made up of apartments and townhouses. 1-4 bedrooms, located in the unique west end of Vancouver. Occupancy is projected for July. We welcome applications. Sitka Housing Co-op Society, 2842 St. George Street, Vancouver, BC, V3T 3R7; (604) 291-0703.

AVAILABLE: large basement room with private bathroom. Share kitchen, living room, and large backyard with three other women. \$225 plus utilities. (416) 461-3923.

TO SHARE: Sublet room in house with two other women, non-smoker. Bathurst/College. May-August. (416) 927-8390 (after 6).

LESBIAN HOUSEHOLD looking for fourth woman (or woman with child) to share large home on Constance Street (High Park area); large garden, five bedrooms, three cats; rent \$287.50 utilities included. (416) 769-7795 day; (416) 769-7755 evening.

SUBLET downtown two bedroom apartment for July, August and September. \$500 inclusive. (416) 977-7609, Wendy or Michele.

HOME TO SHARE with third woman: private room, \$265 per month. May 1st. St. Clair and Dufferin. (416) 653-8549.

THINKING of spending the summer in Toronto? Lesbian preferred for great room in five woman house. Sublet July and August. Non-smoking, with cats, sorta vegetarian. \$250/month. Call (416) 598-3513 days, Ingrid.

Smokefree teaches women to quit smoking without pain. Why struggle with cold turkey when there is a tried, true and easy way to succeed. For more information, call Dr. Jensen, (416) 465-1323.

INTRODUCTIONS for (and by) lesbians: Meet new women, make new friends, expand your network. Write LINK, Box 207, 253 College Street, Toronto, M5T 1R1.

ARTIST/CARPENTER with half-ton truck will build custom furniture, do renovations, haul rubbish, move household, etc. (416) 596-0465.

WOMAN WANTED NOW to share furnished, smoke-free (except for the fireplace) house, parking or subway, quiet street, Yonge-Lawrence, peace at \$485. Call (416) 489-6257.

OVER 30 and coming out? Interested in an evening(s) of discussion/support? For information, call Lisa (416) 531-2668.

WOMEN'S SEDER — looking for one to attend this year. Will help plan. Susan R. (416) 536-2594.

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