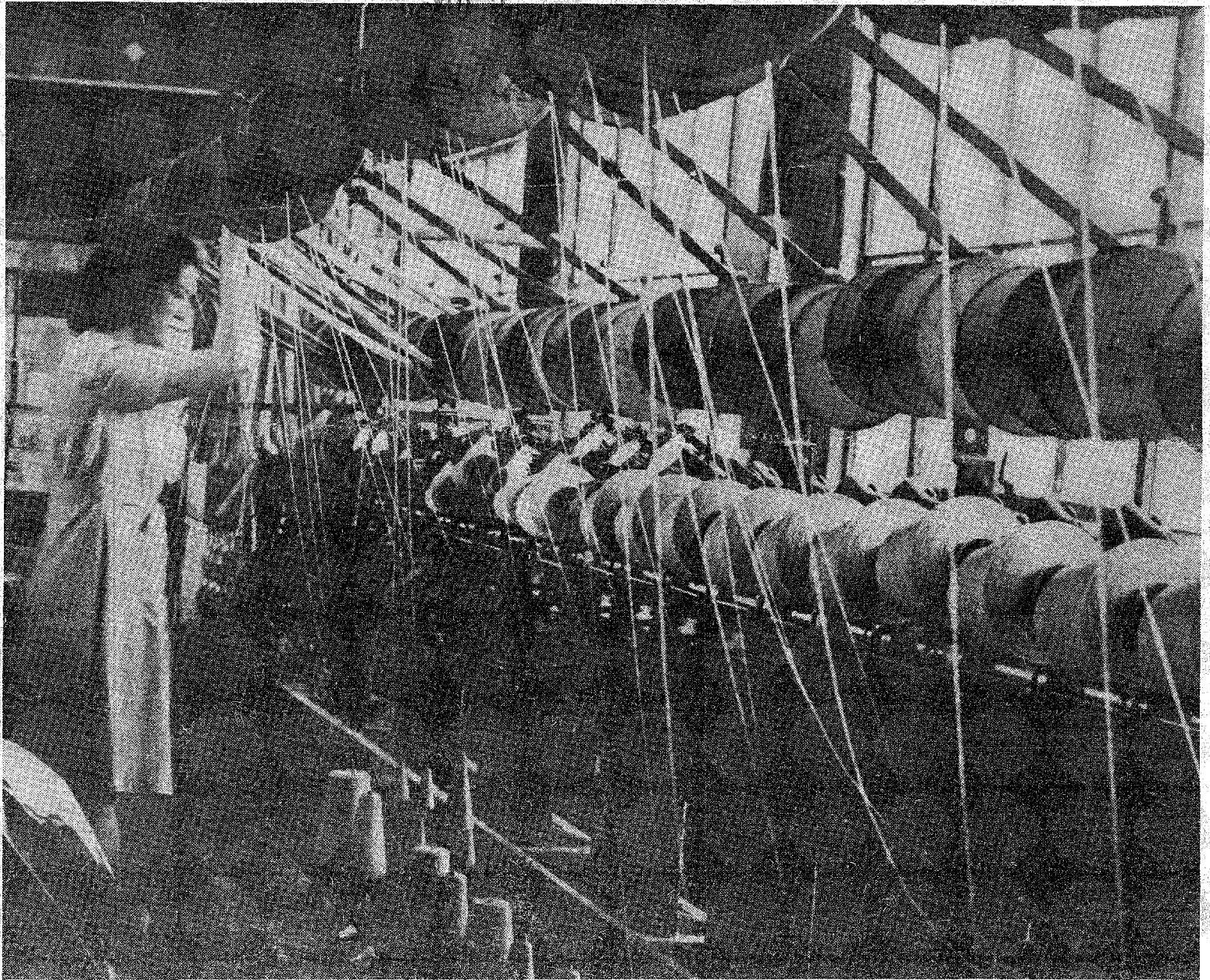


Broadside

A FEMINIST REVIEW



Occupational Hazards SEE STORY PAGE 6.

FEATURE

JOB JEOPARDY: Not just the air you breath but the chair you sit in, the sounds you hear, the light you see with may adversely affect your comfort and your health on the job. Susan Ursel reports on the often subtle effect of occupational health hazards: "Everything from fatigue to tooth decay, from headaches to bone deficiencies." Page 6.

NEWS

CUSTODIAL INTERESTS: A movement towards joint custody of children after divorce is a movement towards establishment of "fathers' rights," and rarely works in the interests of the mothers. In fact, "the only group that appears advantaged by joint custody is fathers," say Kathleen Lahey and Mary Lou Fassel. Page 3.

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OUTSIDE BROADSIDE: Don't miss our calendar of Toronto women's events for August and September 1986. Page 11.

INSIDE BROADSIDE

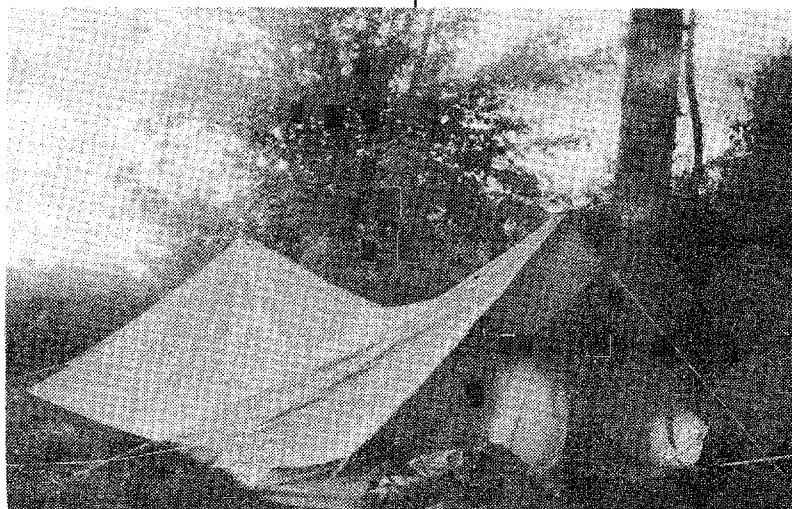
SUMMER SORTIE: A group of amateur Amazons trekked to the north for a guided tour by canoe of Manitoulin Island and the North Channel. From wet birch fires to blackfly bites, they paddled to find a perfect cure. Deena Rasky reports. Page 4.

MOVEMENT MATTERS: Read about the House Saving Action in Vancouver; about the state of women's health around the world; about a new booklet, *Compensation for Battered Women*; about DAWN, the

DisAbled Women's Network; and more. Movement Matters, page 5.

ARTS

RAGWEED'S ROLE: Publisher of Ragweed Press in PEI, Libby Oughton talks about the need to "grow" authors. Her goal is an all-woman list of fiction, poetry, journals and diaries, as part of the explosion of women's writing. "I want to be around publishing during this exciting time," she told Betsy Nuse for *Broadside*. Page 8.



Andrea Dworkin

ORDEAL BY FIRE: In her first novel *Ice and Fire*, Andrea Dworkin transmutes her feminist politics into the art of fiction. Though some still can't cope with her anger, in this book "her feminist work becomes absolutely coherent," says reviewer Susan G. Cole. Page 9.

MANNERED MELODRAMA: Liliana Cavani's film *The Berlin Affair*, about a ménage-à-trois which is intended to reflect the rise of Nazi Germany, has no underlying persuasiveness, producing nothing more than numbness in the viewer. Reviewed by Martha Houston. Page 10.

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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.

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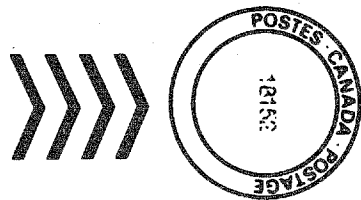
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**Moving?**

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LETTERS**No NDP?**

Karen Moncur's letter (*Broadside*, July 1986) in which she clearly articulated why women should be opposed to the extension of funding to Ontario Separate Schools, and in which she publicly explained her severance from the NDP, prompted me to write.

The national media had not discussed the feminist aspect of the Ontario school issue, and I am a new subscriber to *Broadside*. Therefore, I am glad that this view was put forth again. And I must say that it seems to be the most rational way of approaching the subject.

In regards to NDP membership, I, too, have recently disassociated myself from that party. I came late to active politics. What prompted me to make the move was awareness that those to whom I had entrusted power had used that power to build up a nuclear arsenal of such proportions that now all that I hold dear is threatened.

Looking at the Saskatchewan connection with nuclear weapons, my greatest hope for change seemed to be with the NDP. But in truth they are waffling. They have accepted that uranium mining is immoral, and that if they form a government in Saskatchewan again they will call for a moratorium on that activity as soon as alternate jobs for uranium workers can be found. This seems to me to be a cop-out, for with no committed timeframe they could mine out the whole Athabasca Formation before finding alternate jobs.

If an activity is wrong, it is wrong. And once that recognition is made the activity should not be supported. To do so is to head down the road to treachery.

It is difficult to disenfranchise oneself. But of what use is the franchise if there are no choices? If the NDP does not offer a choice based on what is right and what is wrong, then I can see no reason for them to exist.

Isabelle George
Arcola, Sask.

NAC Response

Broadside:

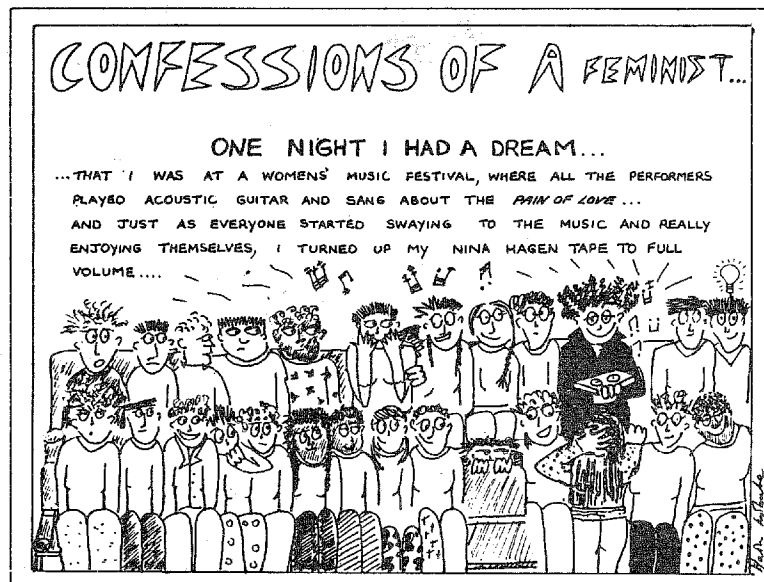
Thank you for printing NAC's recently passed resolution on prostitution in your July issue. However, you inadvertently omitted the word "currently" in the second sentence of part 3 of that resolution. This *should* read: "It currently represents the provision of a legitimate service..."

This may seem a small point, but the inclusion of this word represents a significant compromise for our member group, CORPS (Canadian Organization for the Rights of Prostitutes), who sponsored that resolution. It implies that an 'ideal' view of a world free of prostitution is still alive, but in the short

term, a significant reality for prostitutes is oppression, lack of dignity and safety and a dire need for support from the women's movement.

This resolution marks the *beginning* of a dialogue to which all *Broadside* readers can contribute by writing the NAC office at 344 Bloor St. West, suite 505, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 1W9. This year a committee has been established to develop NAC's position on prostitution further and we welcome all points of view to this ongoing debate. At the 1987 AGM in Ottawa, this committee will bring forward more resolutions reflecting this work.

Lorraine Greaves
Chair, Prostitution Committee
National Action Committee
on the Status of Women



MARIAN LYDBROOKE

Quote of the Month

Written in the margin by a prominent Toronto editor, when confronted with the phrase, "radical feminist" in a story: "Can't we just call them lesbians?"

— from *Toronto Life*

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EDITORIAL**Is There a Doctor in the House?**

When doctors went out on strike last month in Ontario to demonstrate their opposition to the provincial ban on extra billing, health consumers learned a great deal about the medical system, who does most of the work, who gets hurt in a strike situation, and where fundamental change in the system is required.

Women, after all, constitute the majority of health care users, and thus doctors were, by definition, targeting women in particular when they withdrew their services. This targeting became all the more explicit when doctors refused to sit on therapeutic abortion committees, thereby allowing no therapeutic abortions during the strike, an action that struck at some of the most vulnerable of health consumers — pregnant women trying to terminate a pregnancy legally.

Other health care workers also felt the impact of the doctors' strike. Many relief nurses, the great majority of them women, lost hours in shift time which translated into lost dollars. On the job, nurses were moved off familiar floors to cope with the shifting demands in the strike context. There they found themselves dealing with the acute anxiety of patients whose scheduled surgeries were postponed and who were denied access to their own test results.

Crucially, for the emerging consciousness of health consumers, the health care system

did not fall apart during the doctors' walk-out. The resilience of the system was due in part to those nurses who picked up the slack and in part to an array of alternative clinics, staffed mostly by women, which continued to provide the services doctors had tried to withdraw. Community birth control services were unusually busy, and the Morgentaler and Scott free-standing abortion clinics were forced to work overtime. The extraordinary energy of these health professionals proved that often doctors are dispensable and that their stranglehold on the health care system must continue to be challenged — by government and by consumers.

This is exactly what the physicians did not want to see. The strike was supposed to prove the doctors to be invaluable cogs in the health machine and to justify their tightened grip on the system. But instead of justifying the fact for example that over 90% of Toronto's gynecologists extra-bill, the strike wound up illustrating that other services can perform the work of doctors, and at no extra charge. Instead of reinstating a medical hierarchy with doctors ensconced comfortably at the top, the strike drew attention to the valuable work done by nurses who are often treated poorly by their medical "superiors."

This rising consciousness could spark the implementation of a new agenda for change

within the health care system. The issues are not specific to Ontario at all. In fact, the Health Care Accessibility Act originally tabled by the Liberals under Monique Bégin's Ministry of Health and Welfare in 1984 was a controversial piece of legislation because it began to address these basic concerns. This federal legislation is the law that makes it illegal for physicians to charge above the medically insured rate. In addition, the new Health Act calls for an increased role for nurses, in particular allowing nurses, not just doctors, to be access points to hospitals. Generally the Act implements changes in health care priorities away from sickness cure towards preventive medicine in community settings. In the wake of the Ontario strike, the substance of the law can be expanded in political practice to strengthen the new feminist initiatives to take birthing out of the hands of doctors in hospitals and to place it in the hands of midwives in the home.

All of these actions are related. Their importance can be measured directly by the extent of doctors' opposition to them. Doctors seem determined to do all they can to slow the process of change, and when they do, women are always hit the hardest. But women are treated as second class citizens in the health care system anyway, which is why the system is so badly in need of fundamental change.

Joint Custody Disruptive

by Kathleen Lahey and Mary Lou Fassel

Individuals and delegates from a variety of organizations across Canada and the United States gathered in Windsor, Ontario to hold a conference on the politics of child custody. The three-day conference developed a feminist critique of the joint custody movement, which has been used as a mask for fathers' rights groups. The conference was sponsored by the law faculty at the University of Windsor, a law school that is well known for its sensitivity to feminist issues and its commitment to grassroots political and legal movements.

The participants of the conference agreed that the move toward joint custody is an anti-woman backlash that is a direct attack on women's hard-won right to custody of their children — a right that North American women achieved only sixty years ago, and a right which is central to redressing the inequality of women. Papers presented at the conference explored the ways in which fathers' rights lobbyists have manipulated social science data, the legal process, the mediation process, and the popular media in order to create the belief that the father-child relationship is so important that it justifies subjecting mothers and children to involuntary joint custody arrangements without regard to the best interests of the child.

There are now 36 US states with some form of joint custody statutes, laws that favour joint custody as a condition after divorce, and nine of these make joint custody mandatory. While the situation in Canada is not as extreme, the federal Divorce Act does contemplate involuntary joint custody orders. These legal developments are almost without exception the result of massive lobbying and drafting efforts of fathers' rights organizations that have proliferated in alarming numbers in recent years. In Canada, these groups represented their positions before the legislative committees reforming our divorce laws. We now have enhanced fathers' rights provisions throughout the Divorce Act and the principles of fatherhood have become much more firmly entrenched in all custody litigation whether within or outside the divorce context. While women seem to be unaware of this political movement in our country, fathers'

rights groups have become more sophisticated in their strategy and theory. Many have appropriated the very language of feminist aspiration, casting their claims in terms of equality, dignity, coparenting and children's rights.

The assumptions behind joint custody, regardless of the rhetoric behind the claims, have to be challenged. A joint custody order automatically assumes that it is in the best interests of the child to maintain frequent and on-going contact with both parents. In the case of high-risk relationships where there has been physical abuse, this notion is absurd. Even in the so-called "normally hostile" relationships that usually result in divorce, the perpetuation of husband-wife contact demanded by joint custody arrangements may simply perpetuate the tensions and trauma experienced by the child before the marriage breakdown.

Many legislators and judges supporting joint custody believe that the arrangement can be an incentive for fathers to participate more in the child's upbringing and to take their financial responsibilities towards their children more seriously. This assumes that a father wants to participate in these ways. If he does, then he will do so regardless of who has custody of the child: the law of access is certainly sufficient enough to empower him to do so. If the father is not predisposed to participate in childrearing, a piece of paper will not change his mind, particularly a piece of paper which bestows on fathers absolutely no childrearing obligations whatsoever. It is likely that if a father's legal rights were contingent on the performance of childrearing responsibilities, few fathers would seek joint custody. In fact, fathers' rights groups in the US have consistently sought assurances from legislators that mandatory joint custody statutes would not include mandatory joint physical custody.

And so rarely does mandatory joint custody involve the sharing of physical custody of the child or the equal distribution of child care responsibilities. Most of the time, joint custody simply means sharing the legal entitlement to the child. The child usually resides full-time with the mother who assumes all of the day-to-day care while the father gets

to determine how and under what circumstances the care is given. The father then has the opportunity to make all the decisions with respect to schools, religion, friends, place of residence and health care, while the mother has to meet the standards the father sets. As one conference participant put it, it is like child-rearing to someone else's specifications. The situation places fundamental limitations on women's abilities to make geographic moves or to engage in any activities of which the father may disapprove. Conference participants were told of cases in which mothers lost custody of their children when they moved to residences even short distances away from their original homes, or when they remarried to a man the father disliked.

Sexually and physically abusive fathers/husbands have been taking cynical advantage of the popularity of joint custody in order to secure continuing access to their children/wives. Even when there has been evidence of abuse, judges tend to treat the mother's allegations as evidence that the mother is not a fit parent. Seeking sole custody of a child in abuse situations is turning into a problematic strategy for many women. One Montana judge in a Supreme Court decision indicated that the mere request by a mother for sole custody put her in violation of public policy, which was pro joint custody, and therefore ought to lose custody of her child automatically.

At the conference in Windsor, feminist anthropologists, social scientists, historians and philosophers explored and explained the complexity of what has been called the new "ideology of fatherhood" and the ways in which this new ideology has been readily and uncritically incorporated into judges' and legislators' thinking about custody. One participant described the way the "best interests

of the child" have been used as an ideological cloak for what is really going on. Lawyers have latched on to these "interests" because the argument has inherent value as a litigation strategy. Men generally have embraced it as a way of redressing what they see as the past discrimination against men in custody litigation. What is really going on is that fathers are maintaining control over the family; mothers are continuing to be solely or largely responsible for child rearing while remaining unable to attain the personal independence that accompanies divorce.

The American experience has already provided sufficient evidence that involuntary joint custody is anti-woman and anti-mother. It is hurting women. Its effects on children are still largely a matter of speculation. The only group that appears unquestionably advantaged by coercive joint custody is fathers. As one conference participant described the situation, the problem with involuntary joint custody — and possibly all joint custody situations — is that now mothers have to try to keep their children together and rebuild their lives and economic arrangements while cheerfully patching up their children after visits with their fathers so that the fathers can look to themselves, and to other people, like equally nurturing parents.

Kathleen Lahey is a Professor of Law at the University of Windsor, and the English language co-editor of The Canadian Journal of Women and the Law. Mary Lou Fassel practices family law in Toronto. The Windsor conference was organized by Diana Majury, a Toronto lawyer. Parallel conferences are being held this year in England, Europe and Australia. There is a mass conference on custody issues scheduled for 1988 in Europe.

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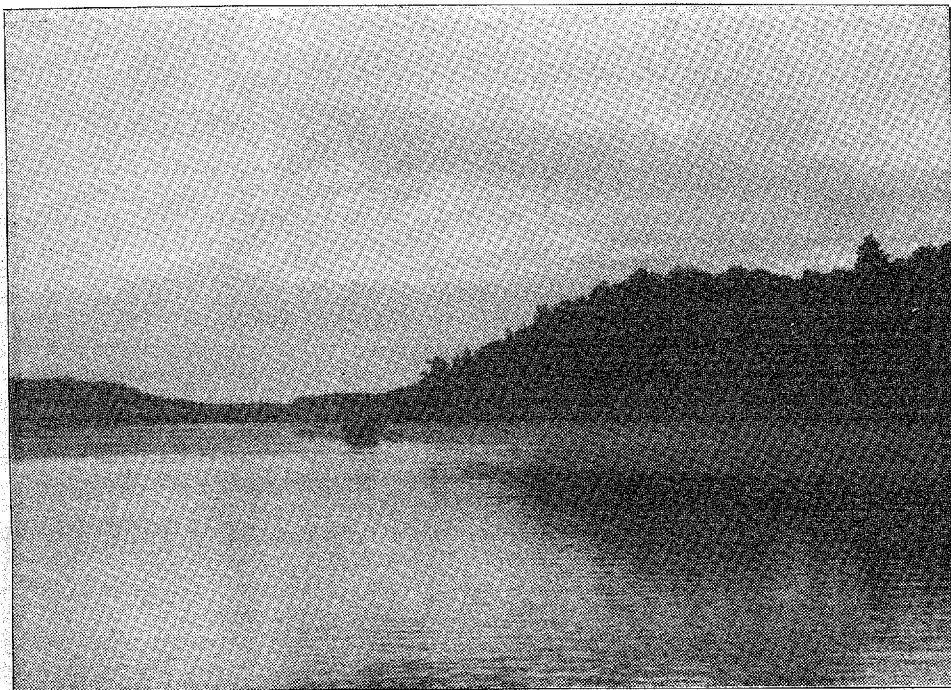
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Amazon Paradise



by Deena Rasky

The tent at the International Women's Day fair in Toronto drew me in like a magnet, promising wilderness and adventure at a time when sooty cold snow and too many domestic chores were my reality. This tent belonged to the Amazon Canoe Company, displaying idyllic photographs of brave, strong women together out in the woods, paddling through relatively unknown territory, swimming, enjoying gorgeous scenery, cooking by an open fire and enjoying each other. A brochure was handed to me by the country-tanned, athletic and enthusiastic organizer of the trips, Shauna Strikland. Inside were the most reasonable rates possible for an organized trip. "Accessibility," Shauna later explained. "I want these trips to be accessible to all women."

Four months later, we're driving over 6 hours from Toronto to Amazon Paradise. My passengers were some of the Fisherwomen who wanted to find new fishing spots up north. We chat, we check out truck stops while discovering what music goes best with the changing scenery of smaller trees and grayer rocks of the Manitoulin district. The music gets turned up louder as the excitement mounts. Only 2 miles to go as we pass the sleepy town of Little Current. When we arrived, the rest of the crew were already setting up for the night. I was assigned the family shed for a sleeping spot instead of a tent. At least I'd have one night to sleep out on a flat surface. To ensure restful nights in the woods, someone picked up a VCR film, *An American Werewolf in London*. The smart ones went to bed early. With heart pounding out of my chest, I stayed up to see the werewolf's fate. Later, I went outside where the starry night greeted me with a shiny glimmer of northern lights. "Nothing to fear," I thought. "There's not even a full moon."

After breakfast in Shauna's family kitchen, we were taught how to waterproof and pack our gear. One of Shauna's staff was her Dad, a pleasant easy-going man who enjoyed being "one of the Amazons." He helpfully strapped the canoes on top of the cars — two regular canoes for six of us and one mammoth canoe for the five Fisherwomen. We set off for Willisville and the first stage of our expedition. Under the weight of all those canoes our procession slowed down at every

railway track and every turn, but we managed to get to our destination without catastrophe. Charlton Lake is part of a buffer zone 8 miles north of Killarney Park. Already Ministry of Parks and Recreation signs indicated that our paradise would soon be absorbed into the public domain.

The sky was a cloudless pastel blue and the strong sun wouldn't let up as we paddled past the hard, rocky shorelines, dotted with the occasional cottage. Some of us turned our T-shirts into protective hats. The weekend fishermen and the full-time hillbillies stopped us from shedding more clothes. I turned redder and redder until someone finally advised me to cover up. My long pants were warm but it felt better than the sun's constant burning. A slight breeze was on our side as we drifted past endless waterlilies while a loon sang a duet with its echo.

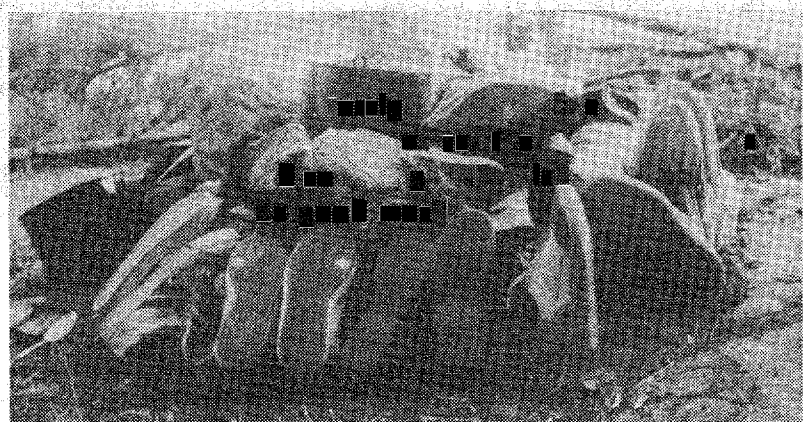
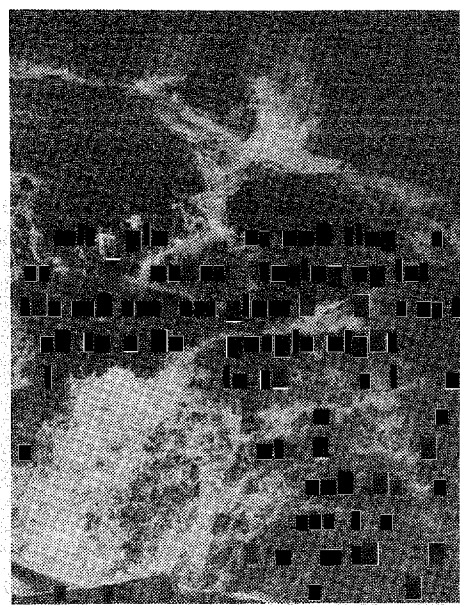
We paddled into the connecting Murray Lake and found a campsite. As we set up our tents and gathered firewood, we were warned by Shauna that the Birch wood would be too wet to use here. It was too tempting to resist — big logs of Birch looking like huge newspaper rolls. But they really did absorb moisture, converting our dancing red flames into a smouldering nothingness. We had to start



PHOTOS BY DEENA RASKY

over again with pine cones and tiny, dried-out coniferous branches. Staying up late, we watched the red embers glow brighter as the sky changed to a dark purple night.

Fishing is best early in the morning and the Fisherwomen went off to nearby Leech Lake where Shauna guaranteed a catch. As the breakfast fire was being lit and the french toast was soaking up eggy juices, the Fisherwomen returned triumphant with a bass. There were eleven of us and one 12-inch bass. It was fortunate that some of the campers were a kind of Buddhist who eat meat, smoke and drink, yet were appalled at a fish taken prematurely out of its life cycle. I chivalrously offered to oversee the baking of the creature and encouraged the Fisherwomen to keep up the good work.



Later, we took turns swimming alongside the canoe until the grey clouds and distant cracks of thunder got us all in and paddling. Gathering up our gear, we used a canoe for a lean-to with tarps over top, tied to trees. Just in time. Our make-shift shelter wasn't rain-proof but we made the best of it, passing around trail mix and jokes. As soon as the rain subsided, the Fisherwomen were out and at it again. "We better get moving," Shauna warned, "before it thunders again." Our goal was to return to Charlton Lake, and up north to a fine campsite near Cross Lake. We never made it. It started pouring again. Thunder was more distant but we decided to cool our heels at the beginning of our portage site. Swampy heaven for women-chomping bugs, we somehow made a couple of shelters and even managed to eat some lunch. The sun returned as suddenly as it left, just in time to dry out our clothes, but it clouded over for

another downpour. "No thunder, no stopping," was the rule. It was eerie and peaceful paddling through the rain. I didn't even regret mislaying my raingear. Some of us were too exhausted to go much further and did not trust the weather, so we took an island campsite. Motorboats hummed in the distance. The forest floor was covered with pine needles, making for a comfortable sleep.

Daybreak. The dew was so heavy, it took great skill leaving the tent without getting drenched. Morning mist covered the lake like a huge, steaming pot. With one eye open, Shauna, bravely sleeping outside, had caught a glimpse of me and suggested we go to the sunny side of the shore and collect firewood. A couple of others joined in as we collected more sun than wood.

A touch of cabin fever spread amongst us on our last day. There was no real coffee left and the black fly bites flared up like miniature volcanoes on some of us. The Buddhists and Fisherwomen were a bit snarlish with each other. I felt like the original lobsterwoman, with bright red thighs, arms and nose. Shauna had the perfect cure for all our ills: a glorious waterfall. It was no tiny trickle in the woods but a mighty, roaring gush over the rocks. There were spots for the Fisherwomen and ample ledges for the sunbathers. I could have spent hours frolicking in Mother Nature's Jacuzzi but some women needed to go home early and Shauna's Dad would be waiting for us at shore to restrap those canoes.

Over food and drinks at the Little Current tavern, we toasted our trip and promised to return. Our Amazon hostess worked hard to satisfy all of us. She assured us we could do the trip again, but with more relaxed organization. Next year it will be called the Amazon Canoe Co-op. If you're interested, write to P.O. Box 71, Little Current, Ont. POP 1H0. Write soon as this year's trips were booked solid before May 1. Just tell Shauna that Lobsterwoman sent you. ●

Women in the Non-profit Sector

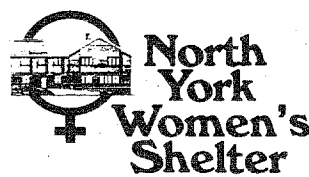
MAKING CHANGES

Toronto, Ontario, September 19, 1986

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MOVEMENT MATTERS

MATCH

OTTAWA — MATCH, the only Canadian development agency concentrating its support exclusively on women through overseas project funding and education, has produced a video production entitled *Women: All One Nation*, composed of images of women worldwide and tightly woven together with a lively narration and evocative music.

Taking its name from a Turkish proverb, *Women: All One Nation* emphasizes the commonality of women's struggles throughout the world. Striking images and startling statistics leave no doubt that "the scales of world equality are out of balance — the side marked 'woman' is weighed down by work while the side marked 'man' rides high with power."

Unique in its combination of a global perspective on women's issues with a feminist perspective on global issues, the video depicts the connections between women in Canada and the developing world. Problems like poverty, job ghettoization, lack of reproductive freedom and victimization by violence are shared — they differ only in form and degree.

Women: All One Nation explores how women are disadvantaged at work — unpaid in the home and underpaid in the work force — and how this contributes to the global feminization of poverty. It also portrays women's exclusion from most decision-making structures and documents the pervasiveness of sexism in all societies. The end focusses on women's emerging consciousness, solidarity and organization.

(Contact MATCH, 401-171 Nepean, Ottawa, Ont. K2P 0B4)

House Saving Action

VANCOUVER — On June 28, 1986, women marked the anniversary of the occupation of Vancouver Transition House by calling on the provincial government to provide money toward opening a new house for battered women in Vancouver.

"We ended our eight-month occupation of the house when Vancouver City Council agreed to seek funds to open a new house. City Hall has followed through on its commitment and has sent a proposal to the Ministry of Human Resources, but to date the government has not responded. It appears that the Social Credit party is too busy with its leadership race to pay attention to the needs of women in this city," said Frances Wasserlein, spokeswoman for the Women's House Saving Action.

"Vancouver has the lowest number of transition house beds per capita of any major city in Canada. This means that some women will stay in dangerous situations longer, and it also means that if a woman can find safe shelter she will have to stay longer because of the crisis in low cost housing created by Expo. In recent weeks, some nights there has been no available space for battered women and their children. The current situation is critical," said Wasserlein. "We understand that existing shelters are being forced to take not only battered women, but also women with a range of other problems, which means that there are even fewer beds for battered women and their children."

The Women's House Saving Action said community support for Vancouver Transition

House showed that people in Vancouver place a high priority on services to battered women. The proposal by Vancouver's Social Planning Department is to provide a new 15-bed house and an advocacy centre which would provide service to a greater number of women than ever before. However the new services are contingent upon financial contributions from senior levels of government, and the provincial government's support is crucial.

"While we wait for the Ministry of Human Resources to respond to the proposal, battered women and their children remain vulnerable to continued violence," Wasserlein said.

Nicaraguan Tour

In mid-August sixteen Canadian women will be leaving for a two week study tour of Nicaragua. Organized by the brigades committee of Canadian Action for Nicaragua, the Simone de Beauvoir Tour (as it has been christened) will be hosted by AMNLAE, the Nicaraguan women's organization. Participants will meet with members of women's groups and cooperatives from whom they hope to learn of the changing situation of women in Nicaragua, particularly now as the war against the American backed contras taxes the economic and human resources of the country. The Canadian group also hopes to build links between women's movements in the two countries.

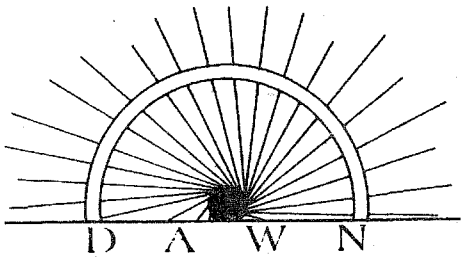
Organizers believe this is the first all-women's tour to visit Nicaragua from Canada. The group includes educators, artists, journalists, and women with a wide variety of experience in community, solidarity and women's organizations. (For more information on the tour or to contact members upon their return, contact Laura MacDonald, (416) 763-4364.

DAWN

TORONTO — DAWN is the DisAbled Women's Network, a national organization controlled by and comprised of disabled women. It is a feminist group, supporting disabled women struggling to control their own lives, and acts as a voice for disabled women.

Did you know that 18% of all women are disabled; or that disabled girls are twice as likely to be sexually assaulted; or that support and services for disabled mothers are almost totally inaccessible; or that when men become disabled 50% of their marriages break up, but when women become disabled 99% do?

DAWN local chapters meet regularly to deal with these and other issues. In Toronto, DAWN can be contacted at: DAWN Toronto, 14 Boem Ave., Scarborough, Ont. M1R 3S8; or call (416) 694-8888 (Pat) or (416) 466-2838.



STRAW INTO GOLD

A creative workshop for women, focussing on the unique female experience, both personal and social. Through story, drama, visual arts, we will create new expressions for these experiences.

Friday, Sept. 19 at 7:30 pm to Sunday, Sept. 21 at 4 pm. At 316 Dupont, Toronto. Cost is \$110. Registration deadline Sept. 12. Conducted by Maureen Jennings. Call (416) 588-0033.

Global Health

A revealing and moving report on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children was submitted to the United Nations Human Rights Commission on February 4, 1986.

The 41 page Report is a devastating and mind-shattering exposure of world-wide oppression of women.

Written by a Working Group, composed of experts, representatives of UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO and non-governmental organizations, the Report deals with female circumcision, traditional birth practices and preferential treatment for male children.

Female circumcision refers to traditional practices which consist in cutting away all of, or part of the external female genital organs. There is absolutely no reason, medical, moral, or aesthetic, to suppress all or any part of these exterior organs. Female circumcision is a major cause of serious disability, disease and death of female children and women around the world. The Report documents various forms of circumcision practised on girls from a few days old to adolescence in various countries, the severe physical harm done to the child, from haemorrhage, acute infections, violent pain, serious complications in child-birth, and serious psychological trauma, and it notes that female circumcision is supported by a passive majority which refers back to traditional society without sharing that society's values. Because of the taboos which surround everything relating to female sexuality, they can hardly arrive at an enlightened personal opinion.

Only recently has attention been turned to the situation of women, or to studying those hidden aspects of women's lives that, for decades, have gone unnoticed, but which seem to be at the root of much of the ill-health, poor education, high mortality and stress that affects the lives of millions of women. As more studies are done on the causes of excess female mortality and morbidity, a clear relationship is shown to the widespread preferential treatment of boys.

Sex preference manifests itself in neglect, deprivation or discriminatory treatment of girls to the detriment of their mental and physical health. It is estimated that one million female children per year die as the result of neglect.

Studies show that more girls than boys suffer from severe malnutrition. In fact, in-depth economic analyses of causes of malnutrition among children have found sex to be the most statistically significant determinant of nutrition status, even in areas where the supply of food within the family could be considered adequate.

Not only is there overwhelming evidence

of differential feeding leading to differential nutritional status between boys and girls, but there is evidence to show that girls are also much less cared for during sickness than boys. Although severe malnutrition is more prevalent among girls, clinic data show that more boys than girls are brought for treatment or admitted to hospital.

Where family planning is gaining ground, a dangerous trend of aborting female fetuses is being found. A private clinic in Asia openly advertised amniocentesis techniques to discover the sex of the foetus in order to abort the female ones. A study of hospital data on amniocentesis showed that of 800 women informed of the sex of the foetus, 96 per cent of those informed they would have a daughter opted to abort the foetus, while 100 per cent of those who were advised they were carrying a male child carried to full term.

The Report notes that even when the World Fertility Survey and other demographic studies have taken up the question of sex preference, they have unfortunately focussed on the influence of that preference on fertility and not on the ensuing consequences for female children.

Reproductive behaviour of women has been surrounded by many myths and taboos in most societies, says the Report, some of them to the detriment of women's health, and even their lives.

The majority of the world's women are poorly nourished, overworked, bear children at an early age, and have too many or too closely spaced pregnancies. In certain developing countries, each time a woman becomes pregnant she runs a 200 times greater risk of dying than if she lived in the developed world. Most of these deaths can be avoided with skilled care, as also a large proportion of the five million or so perinatal deaths each year.

It is impossible to read this mind-shattering Report without realizing that social development and human progress cannot be achieved in this world without addressing the issue of oppression against women.

World-wide prejudice against women, reinforced by tradition and religion, views women as of lesser value, which leads to neglect and deprivation of female children, which leads to ill health and denial of education, which perpetuates a cycle of ill-health, ignorance and suffering in the next generation of the woman's children.

As the Report notes, prejudice against women is so entrenched that the "experts" have not bothered to even take note of the sex factor in their gathering of statistics and studies.

— from *The Canadian Human Rights Advocate* June 1986

Roe v. Wade

In a major defeat for the Reagan administration and anti-abortion groups, the US Supreme Court last month reaffirmed its 1973 decision, 5 to 4 in favour of legalizing abortions, and struck down a state law that places tough restrictions on the operation.

Mr. Justice Harry Blackmun, author of the 1973 decision, said that "Few decisions are more personal and intimate, more properly private or more basic to individual dignity and autonomy than a woman's decision... whether to end her pregnancy."

The court struck down a Pennsylvania law requiring parental or judicial approval for minors seeking abortions. The law also required that doctors obtain the "informed consent" of women seeking abortions after telling them about "detrimental physical and psychological effects," that doctors fill various reports for the public record about each abortion performed; that doctors performing third-trimester abortions use the least risky procedures to a fetus capable of surviving outside the womb; and that two doctors be present at third-trimester abortions.

Judge Blackmun's opinion was shared by Justices William Brennan, Thurgood Marshall, Lewis Powell and John Paul Stevens. Dissenting were the conservative block of the court led by Chief Justice Warren Burger, Sandra Day O'Connor, Byron White and William Rehnquist. Judge O'Connor, who

was appointed by President Reagan and who is also the only woman Supreme Court judge, said that the court created an unworkable plan for making legal the regulation of abortion and described the trimester framework as "outmoded."

Compensation for Battery

A new publication encourages battered women to seek financial compensation for their injuries. The booklet, *Compensation for Battered Women*, explains, in an easy to read format, how an abused woman can go about getting compensation, either through a civil lawsuit against her attacker or through the Ontario Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

As a first step, it advises women to call the police if they have been assaulted, get immediate attention, have photographs of the injuries taken, write down what happened and keep a diary of events after the attack. Women should keep a record of all expenses that result from the injuries including medical and dental expenses, transportation costs and time missed from work.

The booklet was put together by law students at the University of Western Ontario under the direction of Professor Constance Backhouse and is available free of charge by writing the University of Western Ontario, Faculty of Law, London, Ontario, N6A 3K7.

Office Overload -

by Susan Ursel

The next time you walk into work, do these three simple things. Take a deep breath. Close your eyes. Listen.

Chances are, the breath you take is less than refreshing. Did you notice any strange or irritating smells? An abundance of cigarette smoke? Odours from the photocopy machine? Is the air stale, lacking some ingredient that your lungs seem to be striving for?

When you closed your eyes, did they sting or smart? Are they sore and strained? Did you see any kind of an after-image on your eyelids?

When you paused to listen to the environment you worked in, what exactly did you hear? When you actually stop and listen to the noises that surround you every day, you may be surprised not just at what you hear, but at how much there is to hear. Conversations, machines, office equipment, the general hubbub of normal workday life can be very loud once you stop to notice it consciously.

If you work in a factory or on a construction site, or in some other workplace, such as an airport, where heavy machinery is in operation you may have come to accept all these environmental "ills" as part of the job. But if you, like over four million workers in Canada, are employed in an office or other institutional setting, you may be very surprised to learn that your workplace has become the new breeding ground for occupational health hazards.

Women in particular face these new hazards. In Canada, the bulk of office work is performed by women. (By office work, I am generally referring to clerical, white collar work, although certainly the armies of women who clean the offices we work in face the same and more hazards in their work.) In the past thirty years, the number of women employed in clerical positions has increased from 62% to 80% of all those employed in those positions. Only about 5% of employed women work in managerial and administrative positions, with corresponding work environment benefits.

But what exactly are women facing?

In recent years, with the introduction of microtechnology into the office workplace, a profound change in the nature of work performed has taken place. Analogies between assembly line work in the factory and clerical duties in the modern computerized office are very apt.

Tactics such as job rationalization, simplifying and speeding up tasks, management control of flow and performance of work through computers, the increasing use of shift and piece-rate work for clericals have created an office assembly line, with all the inherent ills of the factory assembly line — stress, social isolation, alienation and loss of freedom of movement.

Along with these changes in the nature of the work have come changes in the nature of the environment in which it is performed. Office design, from layout to the materials used to create the optimum working environment, has brought with it a whole new set of occupational health problems.

The office has changed from cold institutional gray walls and hard tiled floors to soothing pastels, wall-to-wall carpeting and individual work stations surrounded by movable panels. At the same time, we are just beginning to realize that the office environment threatens its inhabitants with a variety of assaults from radiants, carcinogens, mutagens, toxins, teratogens, allergens, noise and other components of inadequate design. These may never be detected by the average worker, though they can destroy her health, well-being and peace of mind.

So, women are facing a work environment which is made up of two major components: new work organization which bears startling resemblances to assembly line work with its stress and strain; and a physical environment which leaves a lot to be desired.

Why hasn't more attention been paid to the hazards, if not the work organization? Two reasons immediately come to mind: the traditional undervaluing of women's work in this society; and the relative subtlety of the hazards in the office. We are each intimately familiar with the first component of this equation, and we will leave it for the moment, but the second requires more explanation.

Office health hazards are subtle in terms of defining the source and, sometimes, the full effect. Few studies have been done on the subject. Little is known about the over 25,000 chemical compounds believed to be in industrial use, and even less about the effects of those compounds when they end up in daily use in an office setting, contained in furniture, paper, carpets, building materials, photocopiers, and other office supplies and equipment.

If we break the office down into a few constituent elements however, we can begin to get a sense of the problem.

Lighting

Few things matter as much to us in designing a livable environment as light, and yet office lighting always seems to attract the least attention. Lighting costs make up about one half of one percent of operating office costs, a fact which accounts for the general lack of concern among designers, executives and facility managers. If the office is brightly lit by bank upon bank of fluorescent lights, we consider the need for adequate light to be met.

But light is, like food and water, a nutrient which is essential to a healthy existence. We all know of the association

between sunlight and the body's production of Vitamin D, but light also performs a key role in a variety of other bodily processes, from the formation of bones to the functioning of various organs and glands.

Good lighting, as discovered in one survey, was the factor which most affected personal comfort on the job. This is not surprising considering that about 90% of office work is visual and 25% of our body energy is consumed in just seeing with normal vision, under adequate lighting.

But good lighting does not necessarily mean more lighting, and it almost certainly does not mean standard fluorescent lighting. Sunlight consists of constantly shifting patterns of light waves, covering the entire spectrum of colour. This full spectrum light, changing in its components throughout the day, has an effect upon the human body which is measured in physical and mental terms. Compare, for instance, your mood on a cloudy day with your mood on a bright, sunny day.

Fluorescent light, which accounts for 99.9% of all commercial lighting in Canada, is not full spectrum light, and the portions of the spectrum it uses remain constant. It lacks ultra-violet light, a portion of the spectrum linked most commonly with sunburn, and in large enough doses, with skin cancer. But ultra-violet light is important to our bodies in small doses. Maladies from fatigue to tooth decay, from headaches to bone deficiencies have been associated with a lack of ultra-violet light. Some studies have even linked a lack of this light to depression and loss of learning ability.

A more frightening study was carried out in New South Wales, Australia, in 1982. There a group of 274 women who had developed melanoma, a form of skin cancer, were studied. The researchers found that in comparison with a control group, those women exposed to fluorescent light were twice as likely to develop skin cancer as those women not so exposed and the higher the exposure time, the greater the likelihood of melanoma. While additional work factors such as the presence of other carcinogens and the ever present problem of stress seem to be contributing factors, the researchers emphasized the need for further study.

The quantity of light, as well as the quality, can literally create headaches for office workers. The conventional wisdom of a decade and a half ago dictated that the brighter the better. With the energy crisis of the seventies, office lighting was reduced. Today, those standards are again being re-evaluated, but what is clear is that the computerized office of the eighties has generated its own lighting design needs.

Glare from computer terminals and other reflective surfaces in the office can cause eyestrain, headache and not surprisingly, back ache, as workers assume awkward postures to compensate for poor lighting design.

Innovative solutions are available in the form of full spectrum lighting, individualized task lighting, lighting controlled by workers in the office, rather than at a master panel, and so on. However, the problem of lighting may go straight to the heart of how office buildings are designed and expected to look, and who is to participate in their design.

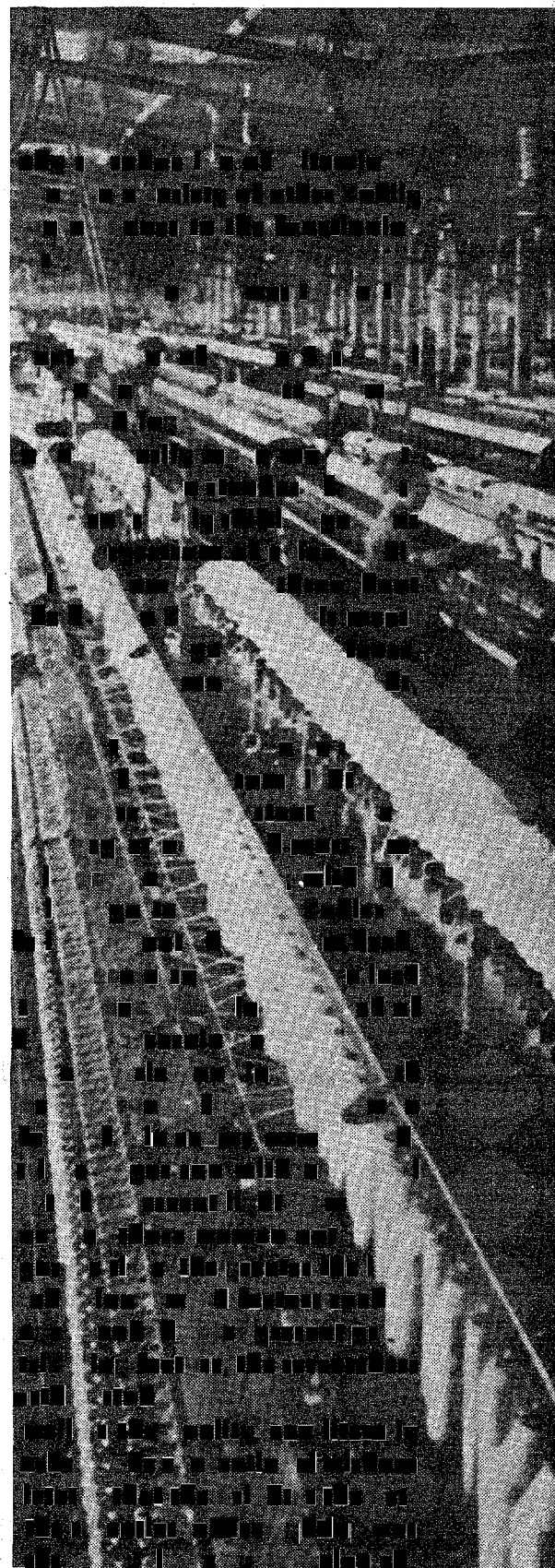
Air

In 1982, in Ottawa, workers in a federal government building complained of odours, headaches, nausea, fatigue and general discomfort associated with the air they were breathing. They also experienced an abnormally high rate of miscarriages. Investigation of the building's ventilation system revealed that the chemical gases halothane and benzene were circulating from labs in the building next to the offices. A \$720,000 renovation project was undertaken to correct the ventilation problems. As well, a \$200,000 study was commissioned on the short and long term health effects on the workers' blood, liver, neurological, respiratory, kidney and reproductive systems, the first phase lasting 18 months, and the second phase involving followup testing for from 10 to 20 years.

Obviously, one of the problems of office health hazards, one that makes them so difficult to deal with, is their long term nature. Carcinogens, toxins and mutagens are substances which take time to manifest themselves as diseases and their latency periods, which can run from 10 years to a generation, mean the chemicals and materials containing them can remain in use, unchallenged, for a very long time.

As to the quality of the air we are breathing at work, complaints ranging from eye irritations and headaches, to fatigue and respiratory problems are so common in modern office towers that a name has been coined to describe the source: Sick Building Syndrome. Sick buildings are those hermetically sealed, glass and concrete edifices in which thousands work each day. There are no windows to be opened and the heat and air supplies are usually controlled through a centralized system.

These buildings are commonly thought of as energy efficient. Modern insulating materials and few windows insure low heat loss in the winter and efficient air conditioning in the summer. The air is circulated and recirculated until the maintenance staff activate the ventilation system to take in more fresh air, if they remember. At the old Toronto Stock Exchange, one employee collapsed on the trading floor before an investigation revealed, among other things, that the maintenance staff had completely closed down the air intake mechanism, and in fact had no idea what the appropriate level of fresh air intake should be.



The failure to add fresh air, whether accidental or part of a program to reduce energy costs by lowering the number of times outside air must be "conditioned" for indoor use is only part of the indoor air story. Hermetically sealed buildings trap indoor air pollutants and recirculate them over and over. These pollutants can be biological in origin, as in cold that makes its way through the entire staff, or they can be mechanically caused, as in "humidifier fever," a flu-like disease which is caused by a micro-organism which flourishes in some air conditioning systems, or can be brought into the office via building materials, furniture and office processes such as photocopying. Smoking too, which adds over 30 contaminants to the office air alone, must also be pinpointed as a major indoor air pollutant.

Among the pollutants floating in the air, formaldehyde has gained a high profile. Used in everything from building materials to particle board room dividers, office furniture and adhesives, it is probably most familiar as the primary ingredient in the now banned urea-formaldehyde foam insulation, or UFFI.

UFFI was banned because of a tendency that all products using formaldehyde have, that is to "outgas" or give off formaldehyde fumes as the material deteriorates. Short term health effects include a wide range of irritations: burning eyes, coughing, difficulty breathing, nausea and dizziness. They can be experienced even where the quantities are as small as six or seven parts per million. The long term health effects are not as clear, but experiments indicate that formaldehyde can cause cancer in rats, and in Ontario the Ministry of Labour considers it a substance requiring regulation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Other common office air pollutants are ammonia, asbestos, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, ethyl alcohol, fibreglass particles, ozone, PCB's, radon, tobacco smoke, vinyl chloride.

Health on the Job



work going on there. Whereas it is easy to take the women off the production of a certain office supply (for example, "whiteout"), it is much more difficult, probably impossible, to control who will use the final product.

The most viable alternative then, as far as women are concerned, is to find alternative substances and products.

Noise

Everyone has had the sensation of ringing in the ears after being exposed to a particularly loud noise for a prolonged period of time. That feeling is similar to the sensation one often has in the quiet countryside, of listening to the silence.

Both these reactions are physiological in origin, the response of the body to auditory stimulus. The body responds in other ways to sound as well, responses that involve the circulatory and respiratory systems, and other automatic functions.

These reactions form our body's answer to stressors in the environment and sound, or rather noise, is one of those stressors. This definition of noise as a stressor helps explain how office noise, often considered one of the most innocuous by-products of work activity, can contribute to health problems of workers.

Sound is measured in decibels. The decibel scale for sound intensity can be confusing because it proceeds logarithmically, and not on a linear scale. This means that a sound intensity of 20 decibel is ten times as great as one of 10 decibels, and 30 decibels is ten times as great as 20.

Consider these relative intensities of sound: the quiet countryside registers about 20 decibels, a quiet livingroom is about 40, a normal conversation is 60, the average street registers at 70 and a noisy office comes in at about 80 decibels. A noisy office, which could be any busy office, is ten times noisier than the street outside.

What is even more interesting about noise levels is the assumptions made about them. A professional journal for noise engineers suggests that a noise level of 30-35 decibels is appropriate for a board room, 35 decibels is recommended as maximum for the managing director's office, the personnel manager can get by at 45-50 decibels and the secretaries and clerks out in the pool should be able to perform their work in a 60 decibel atmosphere, although the journal also notes that the noise level is more usually between 60-80 decibels.

Noise then, or its elimination from the environment, is part of the hierarchy of the office work place. Quiet equals status.

The World Health Organization has issued standards on acceptable noise levels, and has concluded that levels above 75 decibels create an increasing and predictable risk to health.

In Ontario, sound levels for industrial establishments are regulated; sound levels of 90 decibels for a period of eight hours are considered acceptable. However, there are no limits for office workplace, and in any case, research now indicates that sound levels over 80 decibels for a sustained period of time can cause permanent, irreparable hearing loss.

But hearing impairment and loss are not the only ill effects of noise. Short term effects include changes in the clarity of vision and accuracy of colour perception; inability to balance properly; stress on the heart caused by the contraction of blood vessels; the release into the bloodstream of fats, thus increasing the chance of heart attack when combined with the stress on the heart; headaches; a potential link to ulcers; and the side effect of strained vocal cords as workers try to be heard above the racket.

Long-term effects of noise are still largely unknown, but not unexpectedly, noise seems to be implicated in a variety of stress related health problems.

Another area in which there is no positive proof of harm, but an indication of potential danger is the hazard of high intensity noise to a pregnant woman and the fetus. Most of the studies in this area focused on the health effects of exposure to noise in excess of 90 decibels for extended periods of time. They conclude that women should avoid such exposure because of potential harm to the fetal development of the inner ear and the central nervous system.

Tests involving pregnant animals at sound levels in the 75 to 90 decibel range, which are still high, but do begin to come within office noise levels, indicate that skeletal development is affected.

Studies on birth rates and birth defects in humans living in areas of excessive noise (eg, near airports) show that similar levels of sound have adverse effects on these rates.

The solutions to noise at the office are not clear because so little is known about what acceptable levels are, from a physical and mental health point of view. Clearly the solution is not to mask the sound with white noise or Muzak as some offices have attempted. Noise levels should be reduced, not hidden.

One possibility would be to re-examine the open office design plan, which uses room dividers which do not reach the ceiling to separate work stations. A Swiss study has determined that these modern space arrangements actually exacerbate the noise problem in offices.

Another study of office health hazards indicates that five office machines operating at once exceeded 70 decibels, making phone conversations difficult, and reducing the range in which a normal speaking voice could be heard to two feet. If the average electric typewriter without a sound hood generates 63 to 69 decibels of sound and a tabulating machine creates noise over 80 decibels, the answer is obvious — make the machines quieter.

Sound control is another example of design choices made by virtually everyone involved with the creation of the work area except the people who will work there. To some, the answer is found in the new computer technology, which has reduced mechanical movement and noise to electronic impulses. But computer technology, and the equipment necessary for its use, has generated a whole new set of problems, which fit into a category loosely described as "design neglect."

Design Neglect

Design neglect may seem like an excellent description of all the health problems in an office. It does have a more limited meaning generally though, being used to describe the problems office workers experience with the tools of their trade. Furniture, equipment and office supplies all fit into this category.

Poorly designed office furniture, such as chairs, can create serious back disorders, and back disorders are the number one reason for absence from work. They are also the second most prevalent disease among North Americans (the first is sinus problems). Complaints range from minor discomfort to major degeneration of the discs.

The two problems with most chair designs for office work is that they are simply not designed for prolonged periods of sitting (for that matter, neither is the human body) but they are designed as status symbols.

Take a look in your boss's office. Chances are he or she has one of the best designed and most comfortable chairs in the office. Now take a look at your chair. Chances are you aren't so lucky.

Poor chair design can cause restrictions in blood flow to the arms and legs, chronic muscle strain in the neck, shoulders and back, varicose veins, muscle cramps and foot swelling. There is even some evidence that the postures assumed by some people in the wrong chairs can affect the functioning of different nerves and vital organs. With all this in mind, just sitting down to work each day begins to resemble a go-around on a medieval rack.

Even labour saving supplies, such as no-carbon-required paper, can cause skin itching, rashes on the neck and face and extreme irritation of the nose and nasal passages. The Ontario Ministry of Health has even gone so far as to recommend that NCR paper only be used with good ventilation, high humidity, protective gloves and skin cream, or where possible, be replaced by other paper forms.

Perhaps the most worrisome of the office worker's tools is the VDT, or visual display terminal. Introduction of the equipment has resulted in "job rationalization" which is another way of saying elimination, deskilling of tasks performed, intensification of work by computer controlled work flow, and monitoring of work patterns via the computer.

• continued page 10

Brief Glossary

Carcinogen: cancer producing substances

Teratogen: substance which can cross the placenta via the mother's bloodstream and directly affect the fetus

Mutagen: substance which damages the genetic structure of reproductive cells

Toxin: a poisonous substance

Ergonomics: the study of efficiency of people in their work environments

Sources of More Information

- Jeanne M. Stellman and Susan M. Daum, *Work is Dangerous to Your Health*
- Jeanne M. Stellman and Mary Sue Henifin, *Office Work Can be Dangerous to Your Health*
- Wendy Chavkin, editor, *Double Exposure: Women's Health Hazards on the Job and at Home*
- Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health, and the Boston Women's Health Book Collective, *Our Jobs, Our Health*
- Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, *Reproductive Hazards at Work*
- Jeanne M. Stellman, *Women's Work, Women's Health*
- Joel Makower, *Office Hazards: How Your Job Can Make You Sick*
- Heather Menzies, *Women and the Chip*

ARTS

The Spirit of Ragweed

Libby Oughton is the publisher of Ragweed Press in Charlottetown, PEI. Her vision and skill are bringing to what was a tiny local history publisher a list of some of the most interesting feminist literature being published in Canada. In Toronto for the launching of Ragweed's most recent book of poetry, The Fat Woman Measures Up by Christine Donald (see Broadside, July 1986), Libby spoke to Betsy Nuse about her publishing philosophy and some of the books Ragweed has published.

Because I'm the only publisher in PEI, there are all sorts of things that come my way that should be published, but my goal is to have an all woman's list of fiction, poetry, journals and diaries.

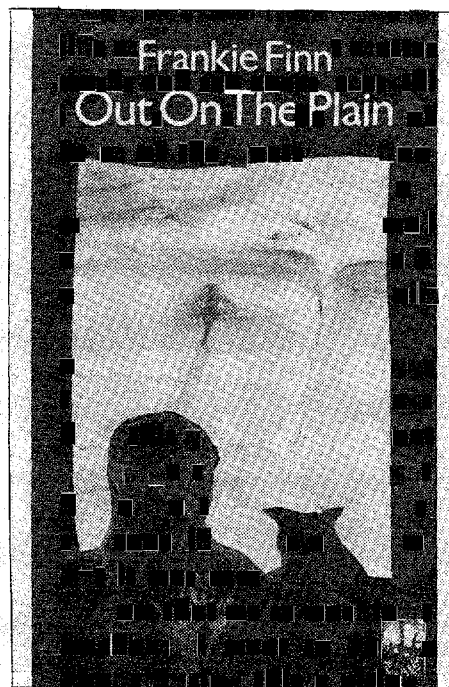
I like fiction and poetry because it can jump as far into the future and the imagination as you want. Non-fiction just tells you the facts. As I grew through the women's liberation movement and became a full-time practicing feminist, I wanted to get beyond all the terrible controls on us: not being able to have abortions, unequal pay, all of those dreadful things. I wanted to find our women's spirit. It's been a slow development for me that's part of my own politics, my own lifetime experience, my relationships with women, and my relationships with books.

I like books because they leave the imagination free. I'm not a television watcher. Books allow our own participation in them; they allow you to form your own mind pictures, create your own movie.

The other thing I have held very strongly for a long time is that women have been desperately programmed and ignored by society, and that is right down to books, what gets written and published. Once we begin to liberate our own spirits (and that's far beyond "women's liberation") we won't write books like men. The subject matter, the way we use words and sentences, everything may be totally different from the form of the novel or the form of the poetry we know now.

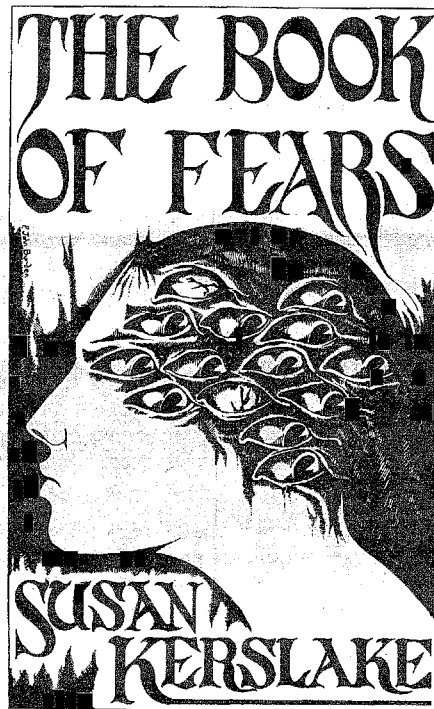
I love women's spirit so much, and I feel we've been so pressed down into a mold! But also, partly because we've been pressed into a mold, we haven't quite followed the way the "regular world" is going. We fortunately did not develop violent and aggressive personalities like men did. I've always thought that we have this gorgeous imagination, and it's the male, patriarchal society that's pressed it down. In the past, every so often you got someone like George Eliot who burst through, but it was rare.

Now that we're working towards our own freedom, I want to be around publishing books during this exciting time.



Frankie Finn did graduate work at UNB. Her professor came up to me at a book launching and said, "This woman has writ-

ten a wonderful novel for her master's degree, and I know you like 'women's materials.' You might like to read it." Frankie was there, so I met her and she agreed to send me the manuscript. I called her up on Sunday (having got the manuscript of 400 pages on Thursday) and said, "I'll publish your book." In the front, she had a long essay about the history of women's writing; it remains as a preface cut down by about half. You grow through your books, and Frankie's was the book that clarified my thinking about what I'm trying to do. It was perfect; it wasn't a novel like any other novel. It was so much a woman's novel, and I don't mean just a novel for women. It was a novel with a woman's spirit right through it: her very lyrical style of writing, her wandering in and out of the novel (which she does when she gets hung up writing it. She's writing it on a houseboat. She goes out of the novel, sits at her desk and tells you about herself sitting at the desk not being able to write the novel.) And then some of her characters jump out of the novel and say, "Frankie, I don't like how you're treating me here!" I love the breakdown of the traditional novel form! Plus Frankie loves women, she writes well about women and understands women. So, *Out On the Plain* was really important.



I had seen Susana Kerslake at a writer's meeting and said, "If you ever have a manuscript, send it to me." In came *The Book of Fears* (great title — I liked that right away) with these spectacular, scary short stories. What I liked about them, other than the issues they address, is that you're not sure whether they're real or they're imagined. I liked the dubiousness of that. For example, you don't really know whether the Native boy Skye in the final story falls in the hole or imagines he falls in the hole.

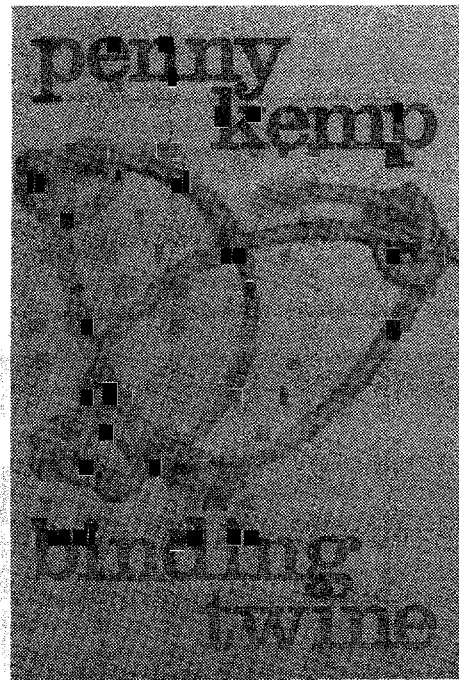
Women's books often travel through a different route than men's books. Of course, big publishers can spend lots of money promoting a book, selling lots of copies and remaining the rest. Women's books, especially significant women's books, often go through an underground, circuitous route. Susan's was getting around that way, and then it was nominated for the Governor General's Award for Fiction. All of a sudden, the big guys in Toronto were saying, "We've sort of heard about Ragweed Press" — you know the kind of tokenism! There I was, with one of four books chosen as the best works of fiction in Canada. That got the word out about what I was trying to do, and I was very proud. Recently Susan was chosen as one of the top ten fiction writers in the big "45 Below" promotion. So *The Book of Fears*, published in 1984, is still alive and well. Think of the big blockbusters that come and go in four months!

I also believe very strongly in taking on new writers. I make it a mandate of mine to take on at least two brand new, unpublished women a year, to work with them, edit them and

give them a good quality book.

Very few people publish poetry these days. I've always known that women don't get published enough: only about one out of every five books published is by a woman. And even though we're "in" these days, the situation still hasn't improved, when you get right down to it, because the majority of publishing houses are owned by men. The shit work is generally done by women, but the ownership and the important decision-making is by men. So women's books, especially unusual and different women's books, are subject to that editorial heavy hand which doesn't, in the end result, publish them. A big male-owned publishing house will publish a history of feminism in Canada because it's "in". But it won't touch new authors, especially poets and different authors, with a twenty-foot pole.

If I'm correct — that there's going to be an explosion of women's writing (and not just about how I left my relationship and grew up with my two kids) on things of the spirit — then it's important to grow authors.



I'd known Penny Kemp for years. She's a very active poet, does a lot of readings, and has published a lot of books. But she had a book, *Binding Twine*, that was very close to her heart and very difficult for her: writing a series of inter-linked poems about losing her children in a custody case — not because she was a "bad mother" but because she lived an alternative lifestyle. I felt the subject matter certainly suited my own politics.

I did another book of poetry called *Melancholy Ain't No Baby* by Patricia Young. It was a manuscript that came through the mail. Patricia wrote a lot about her husband and

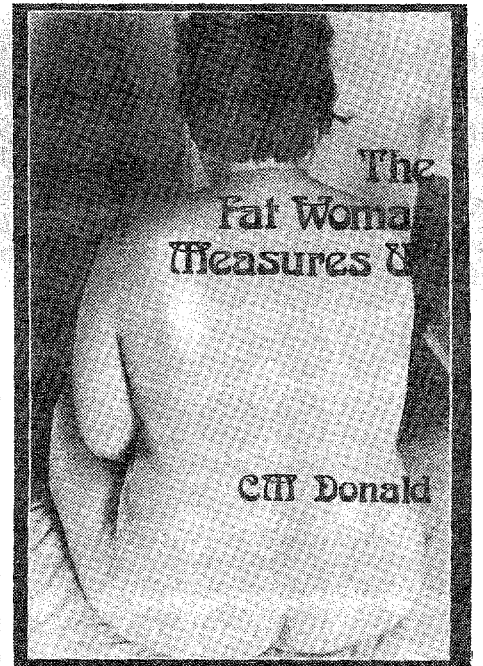


her children with a very fine voice and a nice combination of humour and anger. She begins one poem: "I'm mad enough to fling / these flowers across the room. / To write you out of this poem." I also published *Manstorna*, a book of poetry about a woman who's a spectacular mountain climber. Lillian Welch is a college professor. She has a husband and spends her lifetime with men. It was the first time she had worked with a woman publisher. She liked the experience, and she wants to do her next book with Ragweed.

When I begin to edit a manuscript, I use the same criteria as you use when you open a book: "Am I anxious to turn the page?" If you've read a lot of male poetry, you know much of it is so cold you'd swear that the guy was born on an iceberg! Because I think women are basically more sensual, more sensitive and more warm than men have allowed themselves to be (I'm sure it's in them too, it's just that society hasn't allowed it to come out) I want the emotional feeling to spring out in the poem or the story.

I also like my books to be a whole package. It isn't just enough for me to put the print on the page. How the print goes on the page should reflect the feeling of the poem. The kind of paper that's used, what goes on the cover, the design of the book should be an integral package. That package should equal the quality and feeling of the words inside.

People say about my books — which really pleases me — that they are beginning to understand that there is some thought — some spiritual thought — put into them. Because I respect women so much, I must respect the book. It's not a slapdash thing. There's not necessarily a monetary return for doing this kind of thinking behind women's books, but I couldn't do otherwise.



I'm trying to bring what I consider is my woman's spirit and whatever sensitivities I've acquired in my almost 50 years on the face of this earth to my respect for women writers and to treat them well. Christine Donald's book, *The Fat Woman Measures Up*, addressed two important issues for me — the continuous indoctrination put on women against being fat and women loving women — with great compassion and intelligence. I think she received the kind of support and attention that she would seldom get from a male publisher. Now this doesn't necessarily come out in monetary terms, but so what? I'm interested in restoring our self-confidence in our woman's spirit. And I happen to be trying it through books just as other people are doing it in dance, film-making and art.

(The titles Libby Oughton has described, and other books published by Ragweed Press, are available in Toronto at Longhouse and the Toronto Women's Bookstore, or in the bookstore in your community. Or write to Ragweed Press, 145 Pownall Street, Box 2023, Charlottetown, PEI, C1A 7N7.) ●

Sound and Fury



Ice and Fire by Andrea Dworkin, Secker and Warburg, London: 1986, \$18.95

by Susan G. Cole

A few years ago, I was asked by the editor of a progressive arts magazine to help her out of a jam. Would I, she asked, review Andrea Dworkin's *Right Wing Women*? Why was she in a jam, I wanted to know. Well, the deadline was approaching faster than was fair for a reviewer, and she had given the book to another reviewer, a poet, who had given it up. Later, the poet admitted to me that she "couldn't cope with Dworkin's anger." This was meant not as a criticism or questioning of the ultra-tender sensibilities of the poet but of the power of Andrea Dworkin's voice.

Why, I have often wondered while reading Dworkin, do people feel like they want to shut her out, close their ears, turn away? Why, when William Burroughs scribbles about fucking boys and shooting junk, is his work elevated to the status of art, when Dworkin writes about the truth of sexual subordination, and her work is denigrated to the status of tirade? Why could she not find a publisher for her novel in the US? Why do readers, activists, artists get furious at her fury and not at what Dworkin is furious at? There is something about what Andrea Dworkin says and does that otherwise reality-oriented activists seem not to want to face. That something, I think, is women's real experience.

Dworkin's new novel *Ice and Fire* describes what it feels like to be silenced, by drugs, by little boys, by publishers, by sex. It is not, by any means, an easy read. Written in the first person, and more than a little autobiographical, the book is structured into what comes across as three movements of short tableaux, many of which are prefaced by quotations from writers — and artists — Kafka, Pasolini, Beaudelaire — for whom sex and/or discovery were painful. The first movement is an imagistic memoir of childhood, the second an explicit account of life on the lower east side of New York as a young adult, and the third an account of the writer's attempts to get her book on pornography published. The scenes are presented the way memories emerge, with repetition, and in flashes. Sometimes the prose is clipped into short sentences, at other times it rolls along in a stream of consciousness. It is always intense.

The central metaphor in the book is a cage, described in the first section as part of a children's game called "witch." The boys chase the girls and the first girl to be caught is tied up and hoisted in a wooden cage. The witch is eventually released and ostracized for the rest of the day. The game itself is a metaphor for sex, especially the pursuit of sex, as well as Dworkin's — and by extension, women's — ambivalence about her part in it.

It became a game of slow dizziness, of staggering solitude: breathless, dizzy, she would stop running in a fever and turn to see no one chasing, no one following. Had she won, outsmarted them, outrun them, or had she lost, they had never really been after her anyway. She might hide, or stalk the boys, dazzle them by showing herself, and they would chase her, and she would lose them again, or hadn't they really tried at all.

Do women win, or do we lose? Do we want to be caught or are we afraid? Either way, in the game of witch, the winner winds up caged.

In the second section, the protagonist has finally been caught and the cage is sex itself, sex in a series of doped out, alienated and dangerous encounters, described in relentless detail. No one gives anything away for nothing, and the exchange rate for the now starving writer is always the same. Simply getting fed becomes a sexual ordeal, because every meal has to be paid for. There is no way out of the cage because food is the bottom line. She needs food to write and she needs to write to survive. "Coitus is punishment, I say," writes Dworkin here; "I am a feminist, not the fun kind."

By the third section, the feminist writer has entered the cage of the publisher who she thinks wants sex but who really wants her to give up something more difficult: control over

what she has written. This section is laced with irony. He wants her book on pornography to be about ads, Calvin Klein, Brooke Shields. She won't do that. He wants something on the First Amendment, "something hot for the lawyers." She won't do that. "And why aren't you advocating censorship?" Because she won't do that either.

With this novel, Andrea Dworkin's feminist work becomes absolutely coherent. Her political non-fiction on male violence and pornography deals with power, who has it, who doesn't, and who abuses it. Her political practice, apart, though sometimes connected to, her public speaking on these subjects, has been the drafting and organizing in support of an ordinance that provides relief for the victims

of pornography. Her novel puts both her non-fiction and her practice into a context. This, says Dworkin, is what all of that has to do with me. This is also how politics becomes art.

With a happy ending. For after everything, we have this book in our hands. Survival, for Dworkin, means being heard, and being heard means being published. That, though she had to go to England to do it, has happened. I do wish that at some time Dworkin would give herself the luxury of writing a piece, a pamphlet even, a blurb that resonated with unmitigated joy. But if in the meantime her work is too tough to handle, it means women's experience is too tough to handle. And if we can't cope with women's experience, we can't change anything. ●

Voyeurism in a Void

by Martha Houston

Throughout her career, Liliana Cavani has been fascinated by the rise of Nazi Germany and the horrors revealed in the lives of the individuals it affected. The ambiguity possible in the human character sees its ultimate expression in the excesses of the Third Reich. It is this theme to which Cavani again turns her attention in her film *The Berlin Affair*.

The movie opens as we watch a professor typing out the phrase, "It is not in universal history we find plan and unity, but in the individual." Immediately after, an elegant woman, dressed all in black, enters the office and announces, "I had to come and tell you my story." The account of obsession, betrayal and death that follows is thus once removed from experience in the act of being recalled rather than being lived. The story becomes an object to be related and examined.

This framing device of observation points to much of the film's structure and thematic development. Significantly, the narrator Louise Von Hellendorf, chooses as her entry point the art class where all the students are drawing a voluptuous, nude, blonde model, representative of "fine Aryan beauty." Bored, Louise's gaze wanders and fastens on another student, Mitsuke, the Japanese Ambassador's daughter. Drawn to this object, Louise begins to sketch her instead. Events proceed rapidly: the class gossips, Louise lies to her husband Heinz about the extent of her fascination, Louise is physically seduced in a scene of great tension but little eroticism.

So begins the obsession. Louise's life disintegrates, subsumed by her enthrallment with the enigmatic Mitsuke. As she says to the professor, "Little by little, everything becomes acceptable." The first third of the movie culminates in Louise's horrified understanding that Mitsuke and the art teacher are, and have been, lovers for a long time. That this revelation has been carefully organized by Mitsuke to occur in a face to face encounter intensifies Louise's "fury and humiliation." In response to this infidelity, Louise goes home and confesses all to her husband in a dramatic sequence culminating in their ferocious lovemaking.

Later, Louise takes up her affair with Mitsuke, even though she acknowledges in retrospect that she was knowingly manipulated into it by the Japanese woman. Once more the cycle commences: Louise lies to her husband, her life revolves around her lover's desires, the art teacher blackmails the husband, who tells his wife that her affair "could damage the Reich, do you understand?"

Heinz inevitably falls victim to Mitsuke's obsessional charms and they make love ferociously (the only manner in which sexual activity occurs in this film) on the same bed where Louise lies semi-conscious, watching. Descending to yet a lower rung of relationship hell, the characters voluntarily engage in a ménage-à-trois presided over and defined by Mitsuke. It is she who dictates that the husband and wife must take sleeping potions

so that there will be no infidelity to their mutual inamorata. Drugged at night and somnambulistic during the day, both their lives fray. Heinz becomes incapable of attending to the duties owed his precious Reich, while Louise becomes "pale and wan."

Eventually, word of Louise's unnatural activities are broadcast in a local scandal sheet and Heinz is ordered to tidy up his wife's affair with the Japanese Ambassador's daughter so as not to strain relationships between the two political allies. Instead, the denouement occurs in a suicide pact, which is somewhat marred by Louise's waking up to find that she alone survived. But as she informs the professor, "There's no point in hating the dead."

The film concludes with the professor being led away by the SS, his manuscript entrusted to Louise, and his final words, "Write your story when the pain passes — nostalgia never passes."

What are we to make of this? Clearly the director intends an inextricable link between the political and the personal, wherein extreme times produce extreme behaviour. In *The Night Porter*, Cavani probed the sado-masochistic relationship between an SS jailer and a young Jewish prisoner. The extremes inherent in the concentration camp environment made comprehensible the extremes of personal behaviour manifested. There is no such link in *The Berlin Affair*. The plunge into "lesbianism" of a bored woman does not bear close examination for ties between the political and the personal.

Moreover, while the film is a visual and emotional tour-de-force, the voyeurism into the void it depicts has no underlying persuasiveness. Bereft of a convincing political framework within which to study character development, it fails to convince at the individual level as well. We never get any closer to understanding Louise's obsession than the moment in the art class when her gaze is caught by the shape and line of Mitsuke. Mitsuke, the grand draughtsman for the entire tragedy, is left even more enigmatic in regard to motivation. We have no sense as to whether she acts out of lust, hate, anger, or even ennui. For the activating agent of all events it is more than frustrating that she remains an impenetrable wall. Nor is the obsession itself convincingly delineated. For all concerned, it starts at such a peak that no gradation or evolving complexity is possible. We, as spectators, are not drawn in with inexorable force; rather we commence at an unrelenting height that never diminishes. The movie, in fact, moves perilously close to indulging in cheap thrills.

This mannered melodrama finally wearies rather than horrifies, the ultimate effect one of numbness rather than the catharsis one may assume the director intended.

Martha Houston is a Toronto feminist and film buff.



Berlin Affair: Heinz (Kevin McNally) and Mitsuke (Mio Takaki); Louise (Gudrun Landgrebe) unconscious.

• **HAZARDS**, from page 7

All these factors have contributed to increased stress levels in the office. But the equipment itself has also been implicated as having adverse health effects. Poor machine and work station design cause eyestrain, headaches, short term loss of visual acuity and changes in colour perception, back, neck and muscle pain, fatigue, stomach ache and vomiting. These illnesses have been linked to the machine itself. The flicker on the screen itself is one such source, and is more noticeable on older machines. The colour of the screen and the amount of contrast between the screen and the characters on it are another source of visual problems. Inflexible machine design can force the user to assume pretzel-like posture in order to avoid glare and still read the screen. Excessive time spent on the machine without breaks leads to muscle pain and fatigue. Machine wear and tear can reduce performance and lead to increased stress as workers attempt to keep up the expected pace.

Concern about the radiation hazards from VDTs was aroused by the high birth defect rate among women working at terminals at the *Toronto Star*. No direct links were made between radiation emitted by the VDTs and the birth defects, but of seven births in the office at the time, four resulted in congenital defects, while the three normal births were those of mothers who did not work on VDTs. Curiously, manufacturers have responded to fears of radiation dangers by installing light radiation shields on their equipment or re-designing plastic casings at the same time as they deny the possible hazards.

The dangers and harms from VDTs are not limited to radiation and ergonomic problems however. A recent study in Oslo found levels of cancer-causing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) fifty to eighty times the normal concentration in offices where VDTs were used. The researchers concluded that there was a strong connection between the intermittent leaking of PCBs and the periodic occurrences of skin rashes.

A report by the Ontario Public Service Employees' Union on VDT hazards also suggests that the abnormally high concentration of PCBs existing close to terminals may be responsible for complaints of spontaneous abortions and other illnesses among operators.

What Next?

As the list of known and suspected office hazards grows every year, two things become apparent about the nature of the issues involved. One is that the problems are inextricably meshed with the predominant "office landscape" so many of us take for granted. The actual organization of the work performed there is progressively degraded in the interests of management control. Decisions on office design and job or-

ganization are traditionally assumed to be the prerogative of management, a hierarchy which statistics and experience both tell us is still off limits to most women.

The second aspect of the issues involved is simply that the problems will not be solved without worker input into the design choices and the decision making processes. Perhaps more fundamentally, change will not occur until the problem is recognized, and it is up to the victims to make the problem so visible that it must be dealt with.

Management responses to office or white collar health hazards and problems so far has been typified by the experience of San Diego welfare workers, who were invited to management sponsored stress reduction seminars after they complained about increased case loads. While learning techniques of stress management can be useful, they hardly represent a total solution to an environmentally created problem, and they do not even address the issue of the risks to physical health found in the office.

Union responses to white collar occupation health issues have been much more encouraging, and unions such as CUPE, OPSEU and other public service unions have been at the forefront of educational efforts and collective bargaining for office health issues. Issues such as maximum work-time spent on a VDT, time away from a VDT on a daily basis and for pregnant women, and joint management/union health and safety committees have been dealt with in collective agreements.

But collective bargaining is subject to certain limitations itself, not the least of which is that in Canada only about 25% of working women are represented by unions. In the unions themselves, women account for about 30% of the membership. While public administration has a high union rate — over 63% of the women workers are union members, in the private sector average union participation by women hovers around the 15% mark.

Clearly a first step for women in gaining any kind of voice in the management of the workplace is through unionization. However, there are other practical questions women have to ask when considering collective bargaining for health and safety issues.

The first is the most obvious, is adversarial collective bargaining the best forum in which to achieve health and safety goals? What are workers willing to give up for health safety protection? Should women workers, almost always at the lower end of the pay scale anyway, have to give up anything for a safe workplace? Are health and safety negotiable?

Some workers say no, health and safety are not negotiable, they are simply the basic requirements of work. If that is so, how will women get these requirements instituted? By whom? And when?

Collective bargaining only occurs once an enterprise has been started and a workplace assembled. Hazards created in the setting up of the workplace will already be an entrenched

part of the work organization. For office workers, hermetically sealed buildings, VDTs, photocopiers with carcinogenic toners, bureaucracies heavily dependent on NCR forms to keep the paper moving smoothly and furniture designed for the average man and used by a universe of different women, are a reality long before the workers are hired.

Legislation may be a partial answer to some of these problems. In Ontario the Occupational Health and Safety Act gives all workers the right to refuse unsafe work without reprisals from the employer. The Act also requires joint management/worker health and safety committees in all workplaces where 20 or more people are employed and a designated substance is present. This requirement obviously does not cover all workplaces though, and it specifically excludes offices, stores, restaurants, hotels, motels, libraries and museums.

Furthermore, the designated substances referred to are substances commonly used in industrial settings and the exposure levels set for them are in that context, not an office context. Safety regulations included under the Act's regulations deal with industrial workplaces, construction sites and mines.

While government regulation may be part of the answer, in Ontario at least, the legislature has not yet even considered office hazards as worthy of addressing. In order for their concerns to be heard, women are back to the first step of organizing for change, through advocacy groups, political parties, and union lobbying (although if unions cannot automatically use their money for political lobbying, as was the decision of the recent Lavigne case, they may be restricted in lobbying the government for adequate health standards legislation).

Office health and safety issues raise as many theoretical and philosophical questions for women as they do practical ones. Our concern with our work environment starts from some fairly basic fears for our own physical and mental health. Do these kinds of issues simply lead us back to the roles we are trying to escape? Do we have to become the nurturing mommies of the work world in order to ensure a livable work environment for ourselves?

The answer to those questions has to be no, both to maintain our self respect and to make sure we understand the issue properly. The long term goal of women dealing with health and safety and the work environment has to be input to and control of its making, not just response to pre-existing problems. This requires our involvement in whole other areas, both political and practical.

Working women spend, on average, eight hours a day in an environment the creation of which we have little or no participation in. If the idea of demanding control over such a major part of our lives seems revolutionary in scope, that's because it is.

Susan Ursel is a Toronto labour lawyer.



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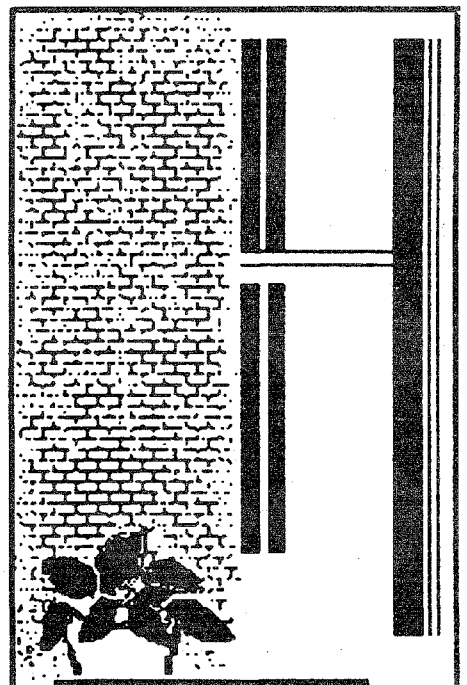
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JULY

- **Tuesday, July 29:** The Women's Information Line is open from 7 - 9 pm. Messages may be left at any time, at 598-3714.
- **Tuesday, July 29:** Lesbian Phone Line open tonight for calls from women, 7:30 - 10:30 pm. Call 533-6120.
- **Tuesday, July 29:** Lesbian and Gay Youth Toronto are looking for more young women (under 25) to join their support group. 7:30 pm. 519 Church St. Community Centre. Info: 392-6874.
- **Tuesday, July 29:** Prenatal Yoga: Pregnancy & Back-care Workshop at the Esther Meyers Yoga Studio, 228 Brunswick Ave. Specifically designed for women suffering from lower back pain and sciatica during pregnancy. Focus on stretching & strengthening for legs, pelvis & lower back. Cost \$12/person, \$20/couple. Registration limited: 960-8019.
- **Tuesday, July 29:** Scarborough Women's Centre is hosting "Shared Summer Luncheons." Topic: Assertiveness, with Phyllis McElroy. 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. 91 East Park Blvd., rms 2 and 3, Scarborough. All welcome. Bring your own lunch. Info: Lynda Kosowan, 431-1138. Every Tuesday.
- **Wednesday, July 30:** "Giving Birth Is Just The Beginning." Toronto photographer Judith Crawley explores the challenge of motherhood in this display. Harbourfront Photography Gallery, York Quay Centre, 235 Queen's Quay West, 9 am to 9 pm. Info: 364-5665. To **Sunday, September 7.**
- **Thursday, July 31:** Closet Bingo Players Come Out! Womynly Way hosts bingo afternoon at the Maple Leaf Bingo Hall, 665 St. Clair Ave. West (at Christie). 1 to 4 pm. Admission free. Wheelchair accessible. Info: 925-6568. Every Thursday.

AUGUST

- **Monday, August 4:** The Parachute Club, at Ontario Place Forum. 8:30 pm, followed by a fireworks display at 10 pm. Also **Tuesday, August 5** and **Wednesday, August 6.**
- **Tuesday, August 5:** The Women's Information Line is open from 7 - 9 pm. Messages may be left at any time, at 598-3714. Also **Tuesdays, August 12, 19** and **26.**
- **Tuesday, August 5:** Lesbian Phone Line open tonight for calls from women, 7:30 - 10:30 pm. Call 533-6120. Also **Tuesdays, August 12, 19** and **26.**
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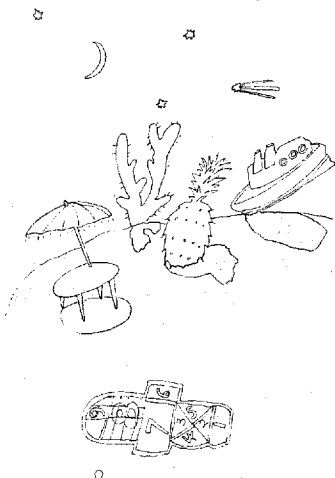
OUTSIDE BROADSIDE

July 29 - September 26

Compiled by Mary Gibbons

- **Tuesday, August 5:** Selections from Graphic Feminism, posters and buttons from the Ontario Women's Movement (1970-1986). Organized by the Canadian Women's Movement Archives and co-sponsored by *OtherWise* at the Robarts Library, University of Toronto. Open to the public during library hours. Info: 597-8865. To **Sunday, August 31.**
- **Wednesday, August 6:** Great Canadian Women, a full-length version of David Demchuk's *If Betty Should Rise*, the one-act, one-woman show about child sexual abuse, with Martha Cronyn, 8:30 pm. Backspace, Theatre Passe Muraille. Tickets: \$7/\$9. For reservations call 363-2416.
- **Wednesday, August 6:** Hiroshima/Nagasaki Vigil. Peace Garden, near Toronto City Hall. To mark the anniversary of the first use of atomic weapons. 4:45 pm, Circle of Hope. 5 pm, Silent Vigil. 5:30 pm, Speaker. 6 pm, Picnic. Planned by Toronto Disarmament Network & Hiroshima/Nagasaki Relived. Info: 535-8005.
- **Tuesday, August 7:** Lesbian Phone Line open tonight for calls from women, 7:30 - 10:30 pm. Call 533-6120. Also **Thursdays, August 14, 21** and **28.**
- **Saturday, August 9:** The Lesbian Dance Committee presents A Hot Summer Night at the Party Centre, 167 Church Street, from 9 pm to 2 am. Tickets: Toronto Women's Bookstore, Glad Day, and SCM Bookroom (sliding scale). \$5 advance, \$6 door. Wheelchair accessible, except for bathrooms. Childcare \$ available.
- **Saturday, August 9:** Lotus Productions presents New Music concert with Lorna Glover and Valerie Nichol. Info and location: 653-6734.
- **Sunday, August 10:** The Interaction Network workshop, Human Interaction: Improving male/female communication, led by U of T professor Alex Perlman, includes a colour video and a draw for a free trip to the Caribbean. Free. 7:30 pm. Room 2-211, OISE, 252 Bloor St. West. Info: 429-2468.
- **Monday, August 11:** The Women's Group, an open lesbian discussion group, meets at 519 Church St. Community Centre at 8:00 pm. Info: 392-6874. Also **Mondays, August 18** and **25.**
- **Tuesday, August 12:** "Shared Summer Luncheons" at Scarborough Women's Centre, 91 East Park Boulevard, Rooms 2 & 3, Scarborough. 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. Topic: Separation and Divorce. All welcome. Bring your own lunch. Info: Lynda Kosowan, 431-1138.
- **Friday, August 15:** Raising Kids For A Better World - An Alternative Holiday. Grindstone's opportunity for those involved with children to develop ideas & skills. To **Wednesday, August 20.** Info: 923-4215.
- **Saturday, August 16:** Seven Arrows Learning Centre is presenting two workshop series in Native Art & Legend In Personal Growth. Workshops are intended to perpetuate and enhance self-awareness and understanding and to encourage the search for truth and wisdom leading to fulfillment of all people of all cultures. Fee is \$80 for Saturday & Sunday. Group enrolment limited to 10/group. More info: (705) 472-5735. Also **Saturday, August 30** and **Sunday, August 31.**
- **Sunday, August 17:** DAWN Summer Fun: Barbecue and corn roast at the DisAbled Women's Network monthly meeting. 25 Elm St. 1 - 4 pm. Wheelchair accessible. Call Joanne at 466-2838 or Pat, 694-8888 (at least a week in advance if you need sign interpreting or special needs).
- **Tuesday, August 19:** "Shared Summer Lunches" at the Scarborough Women's Centre, 91 East Park Blvd., rms 2 and 3, Scarborough. 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. Topic: Stress Management. All welcome. Bring lunch. Info: Lynda Kosowan, 431-1138.
- **Sunday, August 24:** Broadside Beach Brunch. Join us for brunch at home in Toronto's Beach area. Garden splendour, gourmet food. \$25. Reservations: Caroline: 967-1212, ext. 4216; or 691-5459 (evg.).

A Hot Summer Night



- **Tuesday, August 26:** "Shared Summer Lunches" at the Scarborough Women's Centre, 91 East Park Blvd., rms. 2 and 3, Scarborough. 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. Topic: Building Self Esteem. All welcome. Bring lunch. Info: Lynda Kosowan, 431-1138.

- **Friday, August 29:** 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: Anti-Racism Workshop (with the Anti-Racist Work Group). For info call 536-3162 or 487-7061.

SEPTEMBER

- **Sunday, September 7:** 3-day seminar on "Alternative Enterprise Development," at Grindstone Island Centre. Info: 923-4215. To **Wednesday, September 10.** (Originally scheduled for June 8-11.)
- **Monday, September 8:** General Meeting of Social Services Network for Lesbians, Gays & Transsexuals. 7:30 pm. 519 Church St. Community Centre. Info: 392-6874.
- **Friday, September 19:** Take Back the Night March, sponsored by the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre. 7 pm. 519 Church St. Women only. Info: 964-7477.
- **Friday, September 19:** "Making Changes," a day of seminars for women in the non-profit sector. To register: Side by Side, Box 85, 275 King St. East, Toronto M5A 1K2. Info: 626-5465.
- **Friday, September 19:** "Straw into Gold," creative weekend workshop for women. 7:30 pm. 316 Dupont St. \$110 (register by September 12). Info: Maureen Jennings, 588-0033. To **Sunday, September 21.**
- **Saturday, September 20:** Take Back the Night Dance. The Party Centre, 167 Church St. 9 pm. All women welcome. Info: 964-7477.
- **Sunday, September 21:** DisAbled Women's Network (DAWN) workshop on Feminism and Disability. 25 Elm St. 1 to 4 pm. All Women welcome. Wheelchair accessible. Call Joanne at 466-2838 or Pat at 694-8888 (at least one week in advance if you need sign interpreting or other special needs).
- **Friday, September 26:** 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 Power of Childbirth. Info: 536-3162 or 487-7061.
- **Date: TBA:** OCAC will organize a demonstration exactly one week (to the day) after charges are laid against Drs. Morgentaler, Scott and Colodny. Attorney-General's Office, 18 King St. East, 7 pm. Info: 532-8193.

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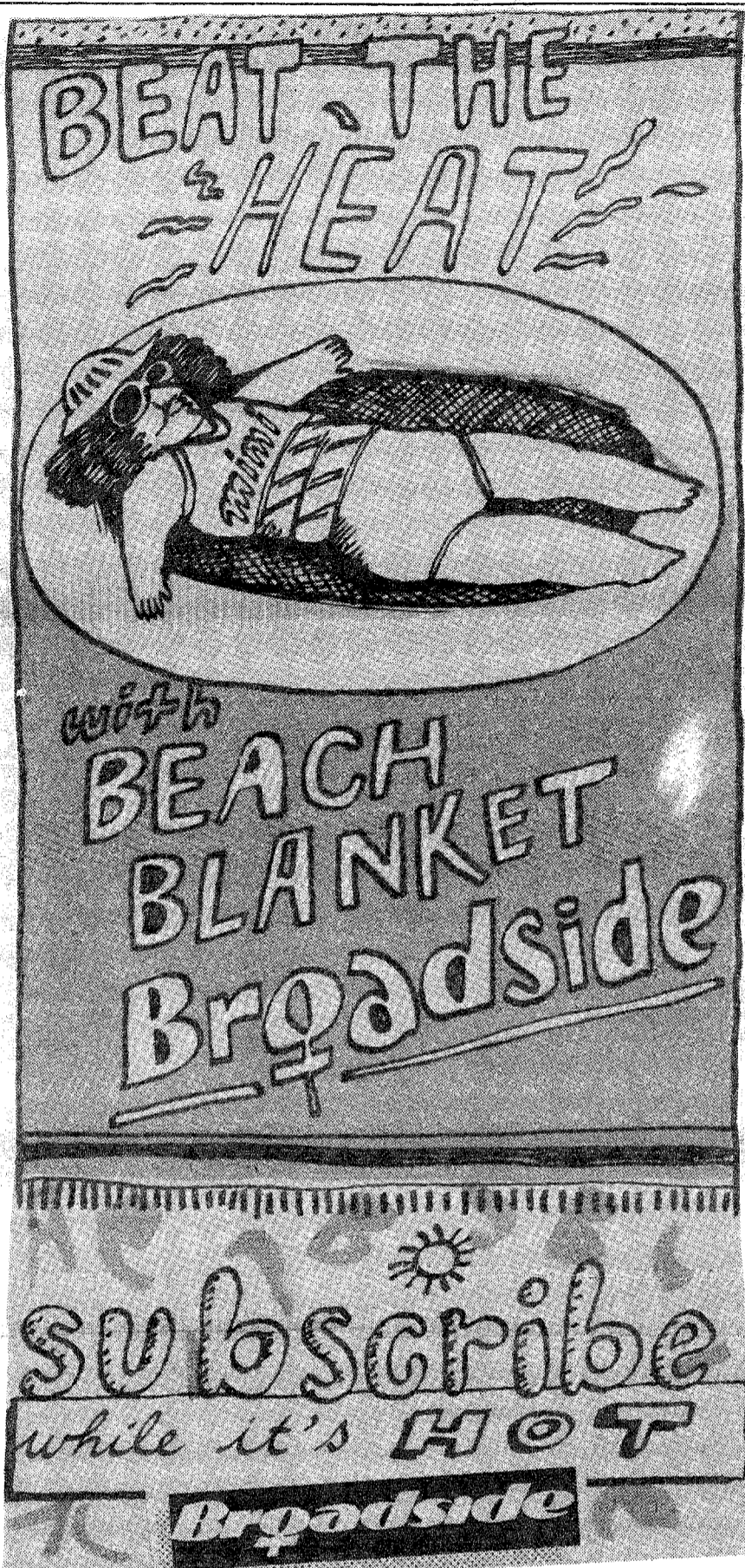
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MATURE WOMAN grad student — York, seeking accommodation with or without 11-year son. Sept. '86. Box 2084 M, Halifax, NS, B3J 3B7.

CRONES II: Following the establishment of the Crones Group in Ottawa (Crones I), a Crones II group will be founded in Toronto in September 1986. Any feminist over 50 who is interested in helping to create an older women's support group, please telephone Janice Tait: (416) 928-2820 (office) or 967-5993 (home).

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SOCIAL WORK STUDENT at U of T, male, feminist-socialist politics, looking for M/F's to share/find house for September 1, or place in established co-op. Arndt, (416) 921-5704.

WOMEN'S WEEKEND at Tapawingo near Parry Sound. Thanksgiving weekend; Friday October 10 to Monday, October 13. \$89. Call Susan, (416) 921-4755, or Kye, (416) 967-7118, after September 1.

SMALL-MEDIUM OFFICE for rent, available Sept. 1, central location. Call Canadian Women's Movement Archives, (416) 597-8865.

THE COMPANY OF SIRENS, a feminist theatre group, extends an open invitation to all women to participate in a "Sirens' Soirée" — an informal night of performance, poetry, theatre, etc. Time limit: 5 - 10 minutes. Proposal deadline: September 1. Our Soirées provide a comfortable encouraging environment with technical assistance. Send proposals to: Company of Sirens, Station J, Box 44, Toronto, M4J 4X8; or phone (416) 461-6101 for further information.

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