



MARTY CROWDER

The World of Demi/Monde

SEE STORY PAGE 11

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FEATURE

INTEREST IN INCEST: It's not just feminists who have brought the crime of incest to public attention, but a whole industry of social services. The challenge for feminists, according to Susan G. Cole, will be to ensure that treatment practices keep the interests of child and women survivors to the fore. Page 8.

NEWS

MEANINGFUL MEETINGS: An international network of women peace activists, Women for a Meaningful Summit, is a coalition of 90 organizations representing millions of women. It wants women more involved in the politics of the arms race and plans to put women forth as ambassadors for nuclear disarmament. Jacqueline Swartz reports. Page 5.

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AIDS & WOMEN: Why should women be concerned about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome? How can women protect themselves? Can lesbians get AIDS? These and other questions are answered on page 4.

RETIREMENT PLANS? Have you thought about what happens after you've turned 65? Will you be one of the one-in-three elderly women living in poverty? Will you have any pension income? *Broadside* presents a primer on pensions. Page 6.

MOVEMENT MATTERS: Read about an older women's network forming in Toronto; about the firing of a fundamentalist family court judge in Nova Scotia; about R.E.A.L. Women being turned down for federal funds; about the Winnipeg conference of the National Association for Women and the Law; and more. Movement Matters, page 7.

RIGHT vs. REFORM: A powerful, homophobic lobby which attacked the sexual orientation amendment to Ontario's Bill 7 ended in failure. But their "hysterical banterings" brought the legislative process to a new low, and the pamphlets and fliers they distributed were "nothing short of despicable." Ellen Waxman comments. Page 3.

ARTS

DEMI/MONDE SURFACES: A new women's rock band is hitting the circuits. Demi/Monde combines complex politics with complex music in an unapologetic but invigorating way. Sandy Alexander interviews band members. Page 11.

DUB TO DISC: Toronto Dub poet Lillian Allen successfully makes the transition from poetry to music in her new album, *Revolutionary Tea Party*. "The album is full of musical treats, but none of them overshadows Allen's poetry," says reviewer Tori Smith. Page 12.

COMING BACK: In her recent book *Albuquerque: Coming Back to the USA* author Margaret Randall chronicles the difficulties of returning home after 23 years in Mexico, Cuba and Nicaragua. Her choice to return, and her effort to reclaim citizenship, "has made her a victim of the American bureaucratic system," says reviewer Amanda Hale. Page 12.

IMMEDIATE CRISIS: The 4-Play Festival's lesbian play "Immediate Family," directed by Keltie Creed, faces the issue of whether a dying woman's lover has the right to "pull the plug" in contradiction to the wishes of the immediate family. Reviewed by Amanda Hale. Page 13.

IN MEMORIAM: Though novelist Margaret Laurence died recently, she will live on in her timeless novels, novels which though not explicitly feminist were inherently feminist in perspective. A tribute by Margaret Gail Osachoff. Page 13.

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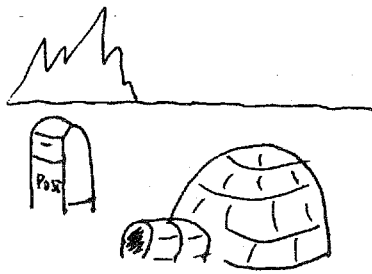
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Sheer Quality

Broadside:

Just a note to say how impressed I was by the sheer quality of your December/January issue. Megan Ellis's article on prostitution opened up a window to a whole world of thought; Mary O'Brien's review of Marilyn French's *Beyond Power* was solid and thoughtful; and Sheila McIntyre's memo describing life in law school just had this academic jumping up and down with outrage at her experience and delight at her writing.

Joan Baril
Thunder Bay, Ont.

P.S. A query? Are there no feminist games? No feminist Trivial Pursuit?

(Ed. note: In an upcoming issue of *Broadside*, we will be running a feminist crossword by Judith Quinlan.)

Nicaraguan Solidarity

Broadside:

It was wonderful to read the article, "Context for Feminism—Revolution in Nicaragua," by Amanda Hale (October 1986). I congratulate the Toronto women's group on the success of their tour. I am encouraged to see a Canadian feminist newspaper relate the story, as for too long we have ignored international women's issues. The article has been photocopied numerous times and passed on to Nicaraguans.

As one who also arrived in Nicaragua via a tour, I have since remained to better understand the lives of Nicaraguan women. As a working class woman, the decision to accompany a tour was difficult—financially and politically. My criticism of tours is that they usually consist of white middle class people and they often reflect white middle class ideology—while here and on their return home. Tours do receive a rather sheltered look at reality here. "Everyday life" in Nicaragua is not eating steak or travelling in air-conditioned

buses, sleeping in the best hotels or talking with (well rehearsed) diplomats of the revolution.

Although feminist tours do tend to recognize the importance of having working class/poor women—as well as women of colour and lesbians—they are often treated as tokens. Lower income women pay a higher price to go: they may have difficulty getting time off work, they may have to arrange for child care, or they may not get acceptance from friends/family, who may criticize tours as being extravagant holidays. Ironically, it is these women who can find more similarities between their lives and Nicaraguan, and perhaps they are less shocked by the conditions of poverty here. As the sole native woman on our tour said, "This reminds me of the reservation I grew up in."

As I stay on in Nicaragua, it becomes more apparent how vital solidarity tours can be. The more people who visit and return home to educate others, the less likely is the chance of American invasion. I find most Nicaraguans quite encouraged by international tours despite the inconveniences caused by shuffling around revolutionary tourists while also fighting American aggression.

Before leaving Canada, I read a report in the *Globe and Mail* which said the Nicaraguan government was discouraging tours as a drain on food supplies and people's energy. I've asked various Nicaraguan journalists if this is true. No, they replied, this was the first time they had heard about it. But they were not surprised, as they are quite aware how international presses distort coverage about Nicaragua. It's well known that these stories are created by the many reporters employed by the CIA. Another story I read commented on a typhoid epidemic in Nicaragua—of course, it also was not true.

Although the *Broadside* article correctly connects feminist organizing with AMNLAE and the Women's Legal Office, it must be understood that they do not address all women. These organizations, especially AMNLAE, have been openly criticized for only representing middle class women (sound familiar?) or those women connected to FSLN movements. This ignores a vast majority of women—mainly the working class and poor.

In Nicaragua feminist theory is often reserved for academic and privileged women. Books and literature are simply not available to most women and when they are, it probably

won't relate to her needs. These women, often the sole supporters of their families, work over 12 hour days for minimum pay and are not protected by any labour standards. In particular, many domestic workers must travel many miles (sometimes across the country) in order to find work, and see their family once a month, if they can afford to.

Because of the American aggression against Nicaragua, the majority of men have been mobilized to the front. This has resulted in a dramatic change in the Nicaraguan family. The "family" now consists of a mother, her daughters and likely her daughters' children. In my opinion, this removal of men has allowed for the natural rise of women's organizing, which is happening in Nicaragua. There simply aren't the men to silence the women as they demand their rights. Too often the "revolution" gets the credit for confronting women's oppression, when in fact it is the women doing the work because now they have the freedom to speak and move.

The real test will be when men return from the front. Already problems exist. Many men returning are unable to accept the changes in women and results have been violence towards women, especially in the home. Fortunately the Nicaraguan government has recognized the problem and is trying to confront it before the men return home, by providing education on the changes in society.

The long term effect to women of the American aggression against Nicaragua is yet to be known. What is known is Nicaragua, at this point, could not exist without women's work. Women do suffer immensely—they work double days, there is constant stress in the death of family members, there are shortages in water and food and a lack of quality health care and child care.

In the midst of this war, Nicaraguan women are gaining world-wide recognition and are seen as the hope for freedom of all Central American countries. It is important that women's solidarity groups exist, as the many other solidarity groups/organizations will never recognize women's issues as a priority. Yet, it is important that we maintain our solidarity for *all* women of Nicaragua—not just for those who have the means to be heard.

Kim Irving
Managua, Nicaragua

EDITORIAL

Sudden Death

Of all the alternative periodicals being published in Toronto, the *Body Politic* seemed the one least likely to fold due to economic circumstance. The recent decision by Pink Triangle Press to cease publishing the BP came as a surprise to us at *Broadside*, and as sad news. With so few magazines in Canada, and with each of us struggling to remain solvent, the loss of one is felt by all. Court cases and police raids through the seventies had not been able to stop the BP, yet money, or what has been described as "subscriptions stalling at 7000," has and did.

From a publisher's point of view 7000 subscribers is nothing to sneeze at. One can speculate that the perpetual increase of subscriptions must have become a requisite for keeping the paper alive. Many magazines in Canada endure with 1/10 that many readers. No doubt that small circulation magazines are often less attractive and more infrequent, but they exist due to the commitment of their editorial boards.

The suddenness of the Pink Triangle Press' decision has evoked some malcontent within the lesbian and gay community: readers were neither consulted nor warned, and the closure has been described by some as arrogant. Indeed, the BP was running full page subscription ads in their January 1987 issue, about the same time that we were reading about the closure in the *Globe and Mail*, or hearing it on the CBC's national Arts Report. One of

the editorials in that issue was called "Our First 15 Years"—would readers have liked to know that it was also their last?

For a good example of how to bow out gracefully, first prize must go to the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, who recently closed their Toronto chapter. They first placed ads in the *Body Politic* and *Rites* (the other magazine for gay and lesbian liberation) saying that they were re-evaluating their direction and could they please have feedback. Two months later, more ads were placed explaining their decision to cease operation, to describe where the leftover money was being sent, and to bid a proper adieu.

One could speculate about the ways in which the closure of the BP might have been averted through cost recovery plans, or through a change in expectations towards financial growth. The BP seemed to have such momentum, especially now as the economically independent male is being recognized as a new target audience for advertisers. Pink Triangle seemed to have the things that money can buy: typesetting equipment, an art room, subscription packages, and fancy telephones. They also had the things that community brings: devoted staff—up to seven people working long hours for very modest pay, the ongoing support of volunteers, and support from the Gay Community Appeal, a Toronto based funding body, for such things as a computer printer, and just

recently, \$1000 to revamp the phone system.

Beyond the economics of the situation, the closing of the BP represents a political crisis, the unreconcilability of a political consciousness with the larger audience of the lesbian and gay consumer. In the BP's early years it was published with a strong commitment to feminism and gender analysis. Of late, sourness over censorship as a primary issue made much of feminism suspect and the conflict over a racist classified ad brought discontent to a boil both inside and outside the pages of the paper. One regrets the extent to which the BP has alienated itself from its community: in the *Globe and Mail* Ken Popert described the BP as the only English language paper of its kind, overlooking the existence of a rival paper, *Rites*. In three years of publishing *Rites* has, in the name of liberation for gay and lesbian people, consistently illuminated the links between their liberation and other struggles, feminism among the many.

While the BP's focus has shifted over the years, we regret the loss of a voice for gay and lesbian liberation. Sadly, the closure comes just at a time when we were celebrating the inclusion of gay and lesbian rights in the Ontario Human Rights Code. Its absence will be felt by the community now that the BP will no longer document our struggles and our changes, as we live through the crisis of AIDS and celebrate the institution of gay and lesbian rights.

Moral Defenders and Definers

by Ellen Waxman

After an intense five days and fifteen hours of debate, the sexual orientation amendment to Bill 7, the act designed to prevent discrimination in housing, work and the provision of services, was finally passed by the Ontario Legislature on December 2 by a vote of 64-45. While a historic victory, the debate surrounding the amendment reflected a vicious homophobic lobby effort spearheaded by the same people who lead the attack on reproductive choice. Organizations such as R.E.A.L. Women, Renaissance Ontario and Morality for the Nation inundated the Legislature and individual MPPs with a mountain of material that can only be characterized as hate literature.

In introducing the amendment, Attorney General Ian Scott said that fear is the lowest human motive for acting. For the many politicians who spoke against the amendment, it was clear that fear, based on ignorance and misinformation, underlay much of their homophobic sentiments.

While the existence (and threat) of lesbians was largely absent from the material, the attacks on gay men were nothing short of despicable. Gay men were charged with just about every social ill from child abuse to disease to murder.

In attempting to lend legitimacy to discrimination, the right wing argued for the freedom of non-association. R.E.A.L. Women, in their widely-circulated pamphlet, "Laws protecting Homosexuals or 'Sexual Orientation' Legislation—how it will affect Canadians," explain:

Aren't homosexuals discriminated against "as a minority"?

No. Everyone is against discrimination. The word connotes prejudice and bigotry. But there is a difference between permitting discrimination on an irrational basis (race) and permitting employers, landlords, or others to exercise a sound discretion based on a legitimate factor (moral character). Homosexuality is a pseudo-sexual disorder. Refusing to pass laws giving special privileges to homosexuals is *not* discrimination.

Having shown us the logic for discrimination, R.E.A.L. Women then proceed to reveal the connection with prostitution:

As he (gay man) begins to lose his attractiveness, he resorts to buying sex. That need has given rise to a subculture or prostitution of boys and younger men in inner cities.

They go on:

Many homosexuals, because they cannot procreate, must recruit—often the young. They promote recruiting "straights." With new legislation such seduction becomes permissible and acceptable.

The right proclaimed themselves to be not only the defenders of morality but also its definers. Renaissance Ontario demanded that members of Cabinet declare their sexual orientation in public. The Coalition for Family Values, made up of organizations such as the National Citizens Coalition, the Canadian Organization of Small Business, the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, charged that the amendment inappropriately interfered with moral choice and that "traditional family values, strong marriages and the right to set high moral standards for the community are essential building blocks in a free and democratic society."

Perhaps the most insidious material of all came from John Alexander, president of Morality in the Nation. In a letter circulated to all MPPs, Alexander wrote:

Perhaps you have been told that homosexuality has nothing to do with employability. Do you know that their sexual practice centers around human waste and urine ("water sports"). Can we expect to give them special hiring rights in the food industry, medicine, first-aid, etc.

Morality in the Nation circulated a series of pamphlets published by the US Institute for the Scientific Investigation of Sexuality, under titles such as "Murder, Violence and Homosexuality," "AIDS, the Blood Supply and Homosexuality," "What Homosexuals Do (It's More than Merely Disgusting)" and "Criminality, Social Disintegration and Homosexuality." Each pamphlet contained the following statement:

Viable societies are organized to sustain themselves by producing and educating succeeding generations. Each individual is expected to repay society for all he has inherited by creating and nurturing a new generation... Homosexuals renounce their social obligation and slavishly devote themselves to self-aggrandizement. They rob society to pleasure themselves...

Homosexuals often spend their "extra" disposable income roaming the world in search of sexual adventure. Because of their promiscuity and incredibly unsanitary sexual practices, pathogens once localized in a given geographic region are rapidly being spread throughout the world. AIDS is a first fruit of this process and many more plagues stemming from homosexual behaviour are bound to occur. Homosexuals have already compromised the nation's blood supply and are straining the resources of the medical community...

Having acquired a monstrous habit they cannot feel good about themselves until everyone is driven by sexual release. Tortured by their own lack of productivity they cannot rest until the lives of others are as trivial as their own. The only way they can assure that unfavorable comparisons cannot be

made is to persuade heterosexuality to become as empty and mean as homosexuality...

Drug addicts endanger themselves and others, but knowing that they do wrong they skulk in the dark or pretend that they are not captives of their vice. They ply their habit to escape the world. Of all the vices, only homosexuality constitutes a conspiracy against society...

Under the guise of scientific investigation, the pamphlets are full of contradictory "evidence" and inflammatory lies. One pamphlet, "Child Molestation and Homosexuality," stated in the space of two pages that gay men were twelve times more likely to molest children than heterosexual men, that gay teachers were seven times more likely to molest their students, and then that gay teachers were 100 times more likely to molest their students! Another pamphlet informed interested legislators that they were fifteen times more apt to be killed by a gay person than a heterosexual during the course of a sexual murder spree. Another claimed that kissing a friend or family member who practices gay sex, or shaking hands with them and then touching one's eyes, nose or mouth could result in deadly infection. One of the only references to lesbians in all of the pamphlets is that lesbians are twelve times more apt to have ever had oral infection from penile contact than heterosexual women—a "fact" which seemed to require no explanation!

For those sitting in the galleries, restraint was often difficult. Much was made of the protection of family values. The public was told that homosexuality interferes with God's plans.

The hysterical bantering of the homophobic lobby found its way into the public record during the legislative debates. For those sitting in the galleries, restraint was often difficult. Much was made of the protection of family values. The public was told by politicians that the family unit is supreme, that the birth rate declined in Quebec as a result of gay rights anti-discrimination laws, that homosexuality interferes with God's plans for the family and that "woman was made for man and man for woman, and no other mix fits, according to the plan for the world." One could only wonder why, if the heterosexual family is so strong and superior, it needs discriminatory legislation to protect it.

Perhaps the most insulting of all homophobic attacks came from the Tory member from Mississauga South, Margaret Marland. She attacked the report of the Committee for Gay Rights in Ontario for not mentioning the murder of twelve-year-old Emanuel Jacques,

a decade old crime. No one heard her decry the fates of Alison Parrot or Nicole Morin or any of the young children who have suffered or died at the hands of heterosexual men. She contended that without legislating values and morality we would have a society out of control. For Marland, the solution was simple—if gay men and lesbians would stop flaunting their sexuality, there would be no discrimination:

If I were gay or wanted to rent an apartment or to apply for a job, there would be nothing to stop me from doing these things unless I demonstrated this difference. That is the whole point of this debate in the Legislature. It is not the fact that people are gay or lesbian that impedes them from access from any of those areas: it is the fact that they choose to demonstrate that they are gay or lesbian.

It is indeed a sad commentary that politicians hope to win future elections on the basis of promoting hate.

There were more enlightened moments during the debate. Liberal members, including Attorney-General Ian Scott, Treasurer Bob Nixon and Liberal whip Joan Smith rose to speak in favour of the amendment as did Tory members Susan Fish, Larry Grossman and Phil Gillies and New Democrats Richard Johnston, Ross McClellan and Evelyn Gigantes, the initiator of the amendment. While appealing to the notion of human rights and countering the most blatant homophobic attacks, few, however, were able to come to grips with pervasive heterosexist thinking. Evelyn Gigantes and Susan Fish were two notable exceptions. Fish, in a passionate speech, spoke of the true betrayers of family values as being the perpetrators of wife abuse, of child abuse, as consumers of exploitative, pornographic material—heterosexual men. Gigantes denounced the heterosexual male-dominated system which treats men who will not join them as traitors and which condoned the murder of a gay man (in High Park) by young people who considered it acceptable to murder homosexuals.

Even in supporting the passage of the amendment, heterosexism was obvious. NDP leader Bob Rae called for tolerance, implying a moral obligation on the part of the superior to endure the actions of others. Premier David Peterson, while proclaiming to the Legislature that he would embrace a homosexual member of this family, commented, "Of course, I would look at myself and ask, 'What did I do wrong?'"

The passage of Bill 7 marks an important victory in the struggle for gay and lesbian rights in Ontario. But it represents only one step in the fight against homophobia and heterosexism which is so all-encompassing.

Ellen Waxman is a Toronto feminist and member of the International Women's Day Committee.

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AMBER OSWEN will speak on "Pornography and Civil Rights" at the University of Manitoba, on October 31, 1984, at 7:30 pm. Call U of M Womyn's Centre for details at (204) 261-9191.

AIDS and ^{Women's} Safety

Why should women be concerned about AIDS?

In North America, most people with AIDS are men. Up to the end of January 1986, there have been only two cases of women with AIDS in Ontario. However, because AIDS is a sexually-transmitted disease, women can become infected and infect others. They can carry the virus and pass it to their infants in the womb, during birth or through breastfeeding.

While it is possible for women to become infected with AIDS, it is also easy for them to protect themselves from the disease. To prevent the spread of the disease, to understand its effects and to reduce their risk of exposure, women should know the facts about AIDS.

Which groups of women are most at risk?

The AIDS virus is transmitted in four known ways:

- through certain kinds of sexual intercourse;
- through sharing contaminated needles or syringes;
- through transfusion of infected blood or blood products;
- from an infected mother to an infant in the womb, during the birthing process or through breastmilk.

Certain groups of women are at greater risk of exposure to the AIDS virus and should take precautions. They are:

- Women whose sexual partners have AIDS or are carriers of the AIDS virus;
- Prostitutes;
- Women who have multiple sexual contacts;
- Women whose sexual partners are bisexual or have had homosexual contacts since 1980 (when AIDS probably first occurred in Canada);
- Women who are intravenous drug abusers and share needles and equipment;
- Women whose sexual partners abuse drugs;
- Women who received or whose sexual partners received many blood or blood product transfusions between 1980 and November 1985 (when the Red Cross began screening blood);
- Women who have been artificially inseminated with donor semen. If the donor's blood was not tested for the AIDS virus antibody, the semen could carry the AIDS virus and the women would be at a very slight risk of infection.

How can women protect themselves against AIDS?

- The surest way to protect yourself is to avoid sexual contact with:
 - anyone whose history and health status is unknown;
 - multiple partners or with persons who have had multiple partners;
 - bisexual men or men who have had a homosexual contact since 1980;
 - persons who abuse intravenous drugs.
- If you think your sexual partner may have been exposed to the AIDS virus:
 - Insist that your partner use a condom. This will reduce some of the risk. Condoms can also protect you from other sexually-transmitted diseases such as syphilis.
 - Don't indulge in any activities in

which semen or blood enters the vagina, anus or mouth.

- If you want to be extra careful, abstain from "deep-kissing". The risk is slight, but the AIDS virus has been found in small amounts in the saliva of infected people and might get into another person's bloodstream through cuts or sores in the mouth.
- Don't abuse drugs. If you are an I.V. drug user, never share needles or syringes. Assistance for drug abusers is available from the Addiction Research Foundation.
- Prostitutes risk exposure to the AIDS virus. Counselling and information are available from the AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT).

What about blood transfusions?

The Red Cross has been screening all blood donations for AIDS virus antibodies since November 1, 1985. Blood that tests positive for the AIDS virus antibody is not used for transfusion. This procedure has further reduced the very slight risk of getting AIDS from blood transfusions. You cannot get AIDS from donating blood.

What about artificial insemination?

If you are planning artificial insemination, check with your doctor to ensure that the donor's blood has been tested and does not contain the AIDS virus antibody.

How can women with the AIDS virus antibody in their bloodstream protect others?

If you have AIDS or AIDS virus antibodies in your blood, you are very likely to be infectious. To reduce the risk of passing the AIDS virus to someone else:

- Tell your sexual partner.
- Insist that your sexual partner use condoms.
- During your menstrual period, abstain from sexual activities that would expose your partner to your blood.
- Wrap and carefully dispose of any blood-soiled products (napkins or tampons).
- Don't share razors, toothbrushes or other implements which might be contaminated with your blood. Avoid any activities that would expose people or equipment to your blood, such as electrolysis, tattooing and ear piercing.
- Consult your doctor if you are planning a pregnancy. Infants born to infected women may acquire the AIDS virus in the womb and those who do so usually die in infancy.
- The AIDS virus has also been found in breast milk. If you have a baby, consult your doctor before deciding to breast-feed.
- Inform anyone who provides you with health care and may come into contact with your blood—such as doctors, dentists or nurses—so they can take adequate precautions.

Is a woman who lives in a household with someone who has AIDS at risk?

It depends whether the contact is casual, care-giving or sexual.

With casual contact—even daily—there's no risk. Extensive studies of families of AIDS patients have found not one case of the disease being spread through everyday contact.

Not one case of AIDS has been transmitted by casual contact from parent to child, from child to brother or sister, or from child to parent. There's no danger in sharing bathrooms, food, kitchenware or clothes. There's no risk from touching, hugging or kissing without the exchange of saliva.

If a woman is giving personal care to someone who has AIDS and may come in contact with the infected person's blood or urine, there's a very slight risk. To prevent the virus from entering her bloodstream through cuts or sores on her hands, she should wear plastic, disposable gloves and wash her hands thoroughly when handling body fluids from the AIDS patient.

If a woman has sexual relations with a person who has AIDS, the risk is much greater. She and her partner should take precautions and avoid pregnancy. They may want to contact their doctor or local public health unit for counselling.

Many of the health care workers and laboratory staff giving care to AIDS patients are women. Are they at risk?

Only health care workers and laboratory staff who handle body fluids, such as blood, semen, feces and urine of AIDS patients are at any risk. They should follow the infection control practices and procedures recommended in their institutions so the AIDS virus will not have the opportunity to enter their bloodstreams.

Several hundred health care workers worldwide have accidentally pricked themselves with needles contaminated with the AIDS virus. Twenty-six have been found to have the AIDS virus antibody in their bloodstream. However, only three of the 26 are not members of a high risk group and, as no consistent pre-testing was done, even those three could have been exposed to the virus before

their accident. As of the end of February 1986, none of the health care workers has developed AIDS.

Are lesbians likely to get AIDS?

No. There is no evidence of AIDS being transmitted from an infected woman to another woman through sexual contact. However, contact with menstrual blood, which may contain the AIDS virus, should be avoided.

Should women be tested for the AIDS virus antibody?

If you are not in a high-risk group (e.g. sexual partners of people with AIDS or AIDS carriers, I.V. drug abusers, prostitutes, recipients of many blood or blood product transfusions before November 1985), you are unlikely to be exposed to the AIDS virus and do not need to be tested.

If you are a member of a high-risk group or think you may have been exposed to the AIDS virus, you may want to be tested. This is particularly important if you are considering having a child.

Although there is no test available that will identify the AIDS virus, there is a blood test that will tell you if you have antibodies to the AIDS virus in your blood.

Don't make a blood donation in order to have the blood test. If you want to be tested, contact your doctor.

If the test shows that you have AIDS virus antibodies in your blood, this does not mean you have AIDS. It does mean that you have been exposed to the AIDS virus, you are likely to be infectious, and you should take precautions.

(From a fact sheet prepared by the Ontario Public Education Panel on AIDS)

Racism Reflected

by Joanna Kadi

TORONTO—A multicultural women's movement would be more reflective of all women's lives and would be a serious step toward eliminating the racism of mainstream feminism, according to Sandra Camacho and Marta Garcia, two feminist organizers from New York City.

Camacho, co-director of New York Women Against Rape, and Garcia, currently developing a film on battering in the Hispanic community, were in Toronto recently for a conference on racism and violence against women.

In an interview after the conference, Garcia and Camacho discussed their understanding of how racism affects the women's movement, and how they have learned, through working on issues with their own political groups, some of the ways in which cultural insensitivity can be overcome. One way is understanding that women of colour cannot be lumped into one group. "We are coming from different histories and cultures, and we were integrated into the country in a different way," Camacho said. "We can't ignore that." For example, her Puerto Rican foremothers and fathers experienced assimilation differently than Black people; they were not brought as slaves, and have been able to move between Puerto Rico and the US. Camacho visited Puerto Rico last year, and it was a powerful experience for her in her search for roots and identity as a Puerto Rican woman. She says Latina women need to unearth their history of resistance just as Black women have.

During the conference, Camacho offered another suggestion: expand the feminist understanding of rape and battering—as one way men keep women in our place—to include a framework of how violence affects women differently, something current feminist programs often don't reflect. Camacho was part of a group which recently organized a conference for women of colour at which issues of forced sterilization, reproductive rights, rape and battering were examined from an inclusive perspective, acknowledging different issues for women of colour; it also looked at how naming violence perpetuated by men of colour can feed

into racist stereotypes, and the difficulties of looking to racist institutions for help.

As radical women of colour, Garcia and Camacho do not see themselves as part of mainstream feminism: "We see the mainstream trying to change the position of women within the existing system. We want to change the system so it's a better system for all. . . . We don't see that the situation for women of colour will change under the current system," said Garcia. They still do some work within the system—Camacho's work with New York Women Against Rape involves working with police for appropriate responses to violence against women—while they seek fundamental change. Camacho also pointed out that it may be easier for fringe groups to hold a more radical outlook because they are not entrenched within the system and have little to lose, whereas mainstream groups with more resources and power do.

Garcia and Camacho are involved in several political groups in New York City, including the Network for the Rights of Undocumented Women. (Undocumented refers to people from such countries as Haiti or Central America, who are in the US illegally—they were formerly known as aliens.) Garcia said the network began two years ago after some groups she works with received crisis calls from undocumented women who were raped, battered, harassed, and without shelter. The network was set up to provide resources for those women and groups working with them. Garcia noted that currently the majority of undocumented people are women, indicating a need for a feminist perspective on this issue.

Some of these issues were raised during the Toronto conference. Camacho also discussed the importance of lesbians of colour breaking silence and coming out. This is something she does, in spite of some negative results, because she believes people within and outside of the women's movement must know of the existence and contributions of lesbians of colour. Active work against homophobia is currently a key focus of New York Women Against Rape.

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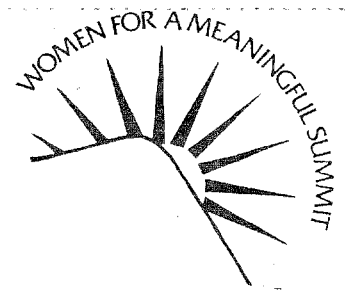
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Lysistrata at the Summit



by Jacqueline Swartz

What if women were in charge of the "arms race," or rather of the project of bringing lasting peace to the planet? What would female ministers and members of parliament and leaders of peace groups do if they were handed over the conflicts that menace the world with destruction. What if the world's leaders said to them, "Here, we've failed, there are still wars, there is still deadly competition for the most effective killer weapons... now you try to bring peace?"

An extensive international coalition of 90 organizations representing millions of women in government and in peace groups is trying to do just that. Of course, the sceptre of power hasn't been handed to them. Instead, they have to keep repeating something that should be troublingly obvious: that half the world has almost no say in stopping its destruction. Furthermore, on the governmental level, it's still considered weird when women try to get involved in nuclear issues. Thus when US Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder said she wanted to sit on the Armed Services Committee, the response was first disbelief and then derision.

Women For A Meaningful Summit, an ad hoc coalition of women leaders and organizations around the world, was formed in 1985 with the intention of putting women forth as ambassadors for nuclear disarmament. The goal is to stop all nuclear testing, halt Star Wars, and shift funds from weapons to development. To do this, WMS has organized itself into a high-powered lobby group. It sent a delegation of 35 American women to the Geneva summit in 1985, and they met with General Secretary Gorbachev and with Charles Thomas, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Canadian and European affairs — Reagan refused to meet with them.

Since then, a WMS delegation has visited the embassies of eleven NATO and Warsaw Pact countries. In August of 1986, WMS sent two representatives to Mexico for the meeting of the Five Continents Peace Initiative called by the presidents and prime ministers of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania. One of the representatives was Margarita Papandreou, president of the Women's Union of Greece. In her official capacity, she met with her husband Andreas, Greece's Prime Minister. The other representative, Karen Mulhauser, Chair of the WMS Coordinating Committee and Executive Director of the Washington based Citizens Against Nuclear War, also met with leaders from the six countries.

WMS was in Iceland, during the October pre-summit meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev. It will continue to lobby the superpowers at every major arms talk.

All this sounded admirable but amorphous to me until I saw WMS people in action. Four months after signing her first WMS petition, Margarita Papandreou—and the Women's Union of Greece—hosted an international conference in Athens last November.

The setting, a graceful neoclassic building in the middle of a park with orange trees in bloom and peacocks whooshing by—was in harmony with the meeting itself, which was in harmony with the message: women, acting upon their best values, can help the world turn to peace; women are skilled at resolving conflicts in such a way that there is no winner and no loser. And something else. Women, just because they are ministers or members of parliament, don't have to become male-identified. They don't have to be afraid of admitting they are feminists—instead they can proclaim it.

"Welcome to the land of Lysistrata," announced Margarita Papandreou opening the meeting. She was, of course, referring to the ancient Greek comedy in which women refuse to make love until their husbands stop making war. But this conference was about women's ability to make peace. "Women give life; men make war," Papandreou said flatly. She added that one cannot isolate the issues of equality, development and peace—the themes of the U.N. Decade of Women. "The connections are there, so patently evident in the questions 'Can we have peace in a patriarchal world?' and 'Can there be proper development of the Third World in the midst of a nuclear arms race?'"

Papandreou characterized the meeting at Reykjavik between the two superpower leaders

as the beginning of a promising phase in the history of nuclear negotiations. But when the news came about the breakdown of talks at Geneva, and the US refusal to negotiate on Star Wars, she added: "Are we to be hostages to the obstinate insistence of one man to develop a hypothetical defense system which extends the ugliness of international conflict to outer space? I say no. We women say no," she said with majestic anger as 130 women applauded. Included were over 70 members of governments and women's organizations from 35 countries in five continents.

Mexican Senator Sylvia Hernandez, president-elect of the World Parliamentarians for Peace; Maj Britt Theorin, Swedish MP and President of World Women Parliamentarians for peace and chairperson of the Swedish Disarmament Commission; Indian Minister for Women, Margaret Alva, were some of the WMS members who attended the Athens conference. Madeleine Gilchrist, from the Voice of Women, and Rosemary Brown represented Canada. Ivanova Tatiana Georgovna, vice-president of the presidency of the Supreme Soviet represented her country on a high official level.

The first day of the conference Georgovna and US delegate, Karen Mulhauser, made it a point to meet for breakfast. They were determined, says Mulhauser, to begin by transcending the political ideology of their respective countries. Argentine and British representatives did the same. And in one of the most moving moments of the conference, Drora Cass, representing the International Center for Peace in the Middle East, interrupted her own speech, turned to the Syrian delegates (including Minister of Culture, Najah El Attar) and said: "The borders of Israel and Syria are permeable not only to radiation, but to radiance." Has something been learned from the example of the UN conference at Nairobi, so fraught with the weight of ideological and national conflict?

Said Ann Hercus, New Zealand Minister of Police and Social Welfare: "There is a magic, a bond of sisterhood here. With the most amazing speed, scores of women from different countries put together a communique which would have taken men a month, in my opinion, to prepare. That grace, that flexibility can be turned to advantage in struggling for peace." New Zealand's first female Minister of Police explained that women, to get political power, have had to learn the ropes of a man's world. "Now it's time the men who run the system learn our feminist values—and to be altered by them."

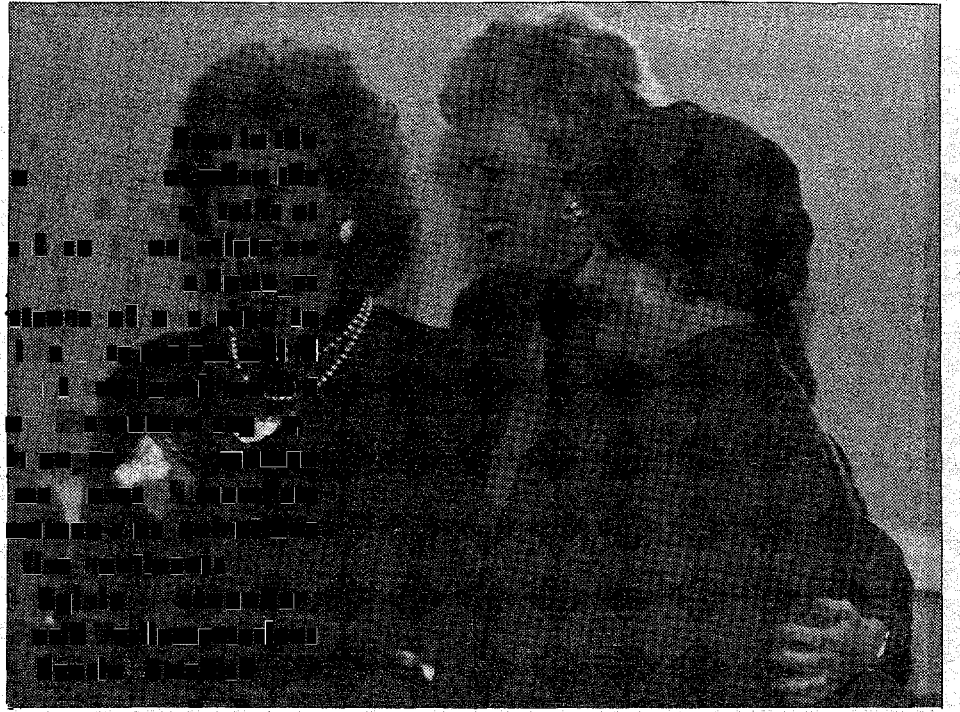
Cooperation, sensitivity, reaching out—at the Athens conference they came alive not as empty platitudes, but as sturdy guiding principles that extended from the warmth of a greeting to the goodwill and determination mustered to circumvent ideological differences. As much as ever, the personal is political. There was a feeling that the survival of all of us depends on that wisdom.

There was also interesting discussion about hard facts. "Sure we have to educate ourselves," said Mulhauser. "But it's not that daunting. I bet Donald Regan didn't know what a throw weight was before he went to work for President Reagan."

Scilla Maclean, a researcher with the Oxford Research Group, explained how the all-woman team worked for five years to identify the people and institutions that are most powerful in creating, selling and funding nuclear weapons. *How Nuclear Weapons Are Made*, published this year by Macmillan, points to 800 key decision makers. Not surprisingly, only four are women. "And they probably wouldn't agree with what we are saying at this conference," Maclean noted. She said that nuclear weapons take so long to make—ten to fifteen years—that they are not controlled in the west by political leaders. Often they are created by scientists working in a value free vacuum, and are dreamed up before they are even requested. The perceived need comes from intelligence agencies who calculate the "enemy threat."

Lobbying is a very appropriate priority for women at this time, Maclean explained. "Many of these 800 people work in low profile or semi-secret situations—it's up to us to reach them."

Yet there are still limits to how much women, even women in government, can accomplish together. For example, in contrast to the Soviet women's cordial discussion with the US delegation about the importance of



Karen Mulhauser, USA (left), Margarita Papandreou, Greece, and Ivanova Tatiana Georgovna, USSR.

women shaping policy, Ivanova Tatiana Georgovna's official remarks from the podium were a pointed attack on the US. Even more startling was the difference between the Syrian delegation's speech that was delivered, and the anti-Israel diatribe that was handed out later.

"It's a relief to be able to write my own speeches, not to have government approval or a male chaperone," said Mulhauser. Yet she suffers from censorship, US style. "President Reagan seems to have a magical hold on what gets covered in the media, and how." At the Geneva summit, she noted, scores of European reporters covered the substance of the issues. When WMS did attract the American press, she explained, "we were trivialized; we were asked what we thought of Nancy and Raisa's dresses!"

Indeed, at the Athens conference the North American press was represented by the local wire services, *Ms. Magazine*—and myself. Was this to mean that when I returned to Canada the following day, newspapers and radio would be scrambling to get the story? Quite the contrary. The response I got was chilly. At first, in a daze of culture shock (after several months in Europe) and jet lag, I didn't understand why. Then I talked to the news director at CBC Radio. When he told me

—defensively—that of course their policy emphasizes extensive coverage of women—"We sent someone to cover Nairobi, you know"—I was shocked back into the real world of the media blackout on news affecting women. And of course since women's magazines in North America are afraid to appear too political, the blackout covers all but the most dramatic or relentless shafts of light.

As a result, the public, without a feminist perspective, is mystified by the complexity of nuclear negotiations and stunned by the images of famine on television. The root truths get obscured. "What's a billion dollars?" asked New York veteran peace activist Cora Weiss. "Can we allow \$800 billion dollars to be spent on weapons this year while only \$40 billion are used for development—and this in a world where one in four people goes hungry?"

What it comes down to is that women have to believe we can make the difference. That we have a vision of peace to offer which is eloquently practical. We have the methods. And that we can refuse to be passive bystanders while violence continues to be used as the only solution.

Jacqueline Swartz is a Toronto feminist and freelance writer.

Margarita Papandreou

"Women's values, whether they are biologically imbedded or culturally instilled, are clearly more anti-war, more anti-violence, more for the preservation of life than are the male values. The struggle of the women's movement against violence that is rooted in sexism is part of an overall struggle against violence and all injustice. Violence stems from a common lack of concern for human rights—and war is the epitome of destruction, brute power, de-humanization.

"When one looks into the history of women working for peace, the amazing thing, the sad thing, is that we used some of the same expressions and appeals today that were used by the suffragettes back in the early 1900s... Jane Addams said to the press in 1915 just before the Women's Peace Congress in Holland, 'We do not think that we can settle the war. We do not think that by raising our hands we can make the armies cease slaughter. We do think it is valuable to state a new point of view. We do think it is fitting that women should meet and take counsel to see what may be done.'"

"Women then, as now, received the hostility and anger of the press, which generally ridiculed or belittled their efforts."

"We would like to ask President Reagan and Secretary Gorbachev to tell us their vision of the world... and we would like the rest of

the world to sit in... You, Mr. President, would you like to see, would you support a United Europe? How about, Mr. Reagan, dismantling the NATO Alliance? On the premise that you, Mr. Gorbachev, would dissolve the Warsaw Pact?"

"Do you have a vision of the world where people can live in security and without the threat of war? Or do you think that wars are a fact of life, of history, that they are part of the nature of the human psyche and that those of us who talk about a world where conflict is resolved without the use of force are dreamers, idealists, romantics? Have you ever answered these questions—if not publicly, to yourselves?"

"Mr. Gorbachev, what do you include in your list of human rights? Does it include the right to political dissent? President Reagan, does your human rights catalog include the rights of dissenters in Chile, in El Salvador, in Guatemala? Does it include economic rights and the right to development?"

"And for both of you—what about that one half of the population of the earth—the women—whose rights to live as total human beings have been circumscribed in all societies on the globe, and particularly so when the war system remains intact and military spending rises continually?"

Ready to Retire?

by Lisa Freedman and Sharon West

The recent changes to the Canada Pension Plan which came into effect on January 1, 1987 are something that few of us paid much attention to. If you are young, worrying about old age and pensions is of little concern. Yet it has long been recognized that the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) discriminates against Canadian women. The CPP was designed to accommodate the school, work, and retirement life patterns of males. Any pension scheme based exclusively upon male working patterns which completely ignores the needs and realities of working women must be recognized as discriminatory.

This discrimination is of ever increasing importance when we look at the statistics: two out of three elderly women, who are alone, live below the poverty line; more than six out of 10 single, divorced or widowed women over 65 have annual incomes of under \$8,000; fewer than one half of all widows can expect to get a widow's pension from a private pension plan; one fifth of all single, widowed or divorced women over 65 depend entirely on government pensions for their support.

Pensions in Canada were not designed with the interests of women in mind. They are premised on assumptions reflecting the traditional family, headed by a male who has a long term attachment to a single employer. In reality, this does not reflect the situation in Canada today, where 40% of marriages end in divorce.

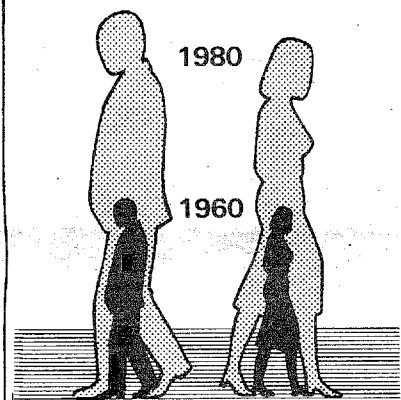
Women who work at home, and other Canadians who have no earnings, are for the most part excluded from our retirement income system. They cannot contribute to CPP or join an employer-sponsored private pension plan because they do not have an employer who pays them wages. Benefits depend on being linked to a man. Spouseless homemakers who keep house for parents, brothers, sisters or children get nothing from the CPP. For the married homemaker, there is no recognition of personal contribution to the economy.

Widow's pensions are unsatisfactory. Pensions are related to the husband's income rather than reflecting the value of her own work. Widow's pensions treat homemakers as dependents, not as partners who make a valuable contribution to society. Less than one-third of men participate in employer-sponsored pension plans that give pensions to widows. Even women who do have jobs end up with poor pensions since they are based on earnings, and women's wages are only about 64% of those of men.

Many women and women's groups have stayed away from the pension issue because it appears to be complex and overly technical. What follows is a simplified look at our new pension scheme.

DIVORCE

In many countries — developed and developing — divorce rates are rising and fewer couples are getting married.



Since 1960 the divorce rate has more than doubled in every western country.

Source: EEC

Canada's pension system is made up of various elements which are meant to complement each other. Any retirement income system should perform two tasks. It should ensure that all elderly persons are assured a minimum income that will enable them to live decently and in dignity, and it should maintain a reasonable relationship between an individual's income before and after retirement so that old age does not greatly reduce one's standard of living.

Canada's retirement income system has three levels: federal income security programs, Canada and Quebec Pension Plans, and private pension plans and retirement savings schemes.

OLD AGE SECURITY (OAS)

The federal program, Old Age Security (OAS), is basic income security provisions for elderly Canadians. It is the biggest and most costly of federal programs for the aged. Last year close to 2.8 million Canadians received monthly OAS cheques, and the program paid out roughly \$2.5 billion.

Everyone in Canada who is 65 or older, a Canadian citizen or legal resident and has lived a minimum of 10 years in Canada after age 18 receives OAS. Now, in the first quarter of 1987, OAS benefits are \$297.37 a month, an amount which will increase every three months to reflect rises in the cost of living.

Before July 1, 1977 the OAS pension was an all or nothing proposition, depending on long-term residency in Canada. But in 1977, a system of partial pensions was introduced. Anyone becoming a legal resident after July 1, 1977 earns 1/40 of the OAS for each year of residence in Canada after age 18. At least 10 years residency is still needed to receive even a partial pension, but there is an exception for elderly immigrants from countries that have signed an International Social Security Agreement with Canada (Portugal, Greece, Italy, France, Jamaica, USA, Barbados, Denmark and Sweden). Those wishing to take OAS out of the country must have lived in Canada for at least 20 years after age 18, otherwise they receive the pension for the month they leave and six months after that. It will then be suspended, but will be rein-

stated on return to Canada, but with no compensation for missed benefits.

GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT (GIS)

The second federal program for the elderly is the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS). This income-tested supplement to OAS was established in 1967 to help the elderly poor who have no other income than the OAS pension. In 1986, over 1.45 million men and women received some GIS in addition to their OAS benefit, roughly half the elderly population. One in four of these people qualified for the full amount.

All OAS pensioners with low income are eligible for GIS. Women make up the large majority of single pensioners and have lower incomes on average than men. Consequently 56% of women over 65 receive the GIS, compared to 49% of men, and six in ten of all GIS recipients are women.

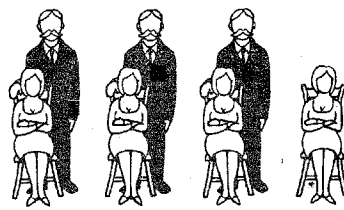
The GIS is indexed four times a year to reflect the full rise in the cost of living. In the first quarter of 1987, the maximum GIS benefits are \$353.40 a month for a single pensioner and \$460.32 a month for a couple. Payments are reduced \$1 for every \$2 of other monthly income (excluding OAS).

PROVINCIAL INCOME SUPPLEMENTS

Elderly people who live in six provinces (Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia), the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories, are eligible for additional income-tested, non-indexed, provincial supplements, available to all persons 65 and over. (In Ontario, for example, the supplement is called the Guaranteed Annual Income Supplement (GAINS); it is pro-rated on the pensioners income with a maximum benefit in the first quarter of 1987 of \$83. About 180,000 Ontario senior citizens receive GAINS cheques.)

WIDOWS

Because women live longer than men and tend to marry men older than themselves, more women are widowed than men.



Aged 60 - 69

Aged over 80

Figures for industrialized countries.

Source: UN World Assembly on Aging

SPOUSE'S ALLOWANCE (SA)

Spouse's allowance is for those couples having minimum income but with only one spouse over 65. The Spouse's Allowance is available to the 60-to-64 year old wives or husbands of the low income pensioner. Widows and widowers in this age bracket who have qualified for the SAs can continue to receive it in the event of the death of their spouse. As of January 1987, the maximum full monthly allowance is \$527.54, which is equal to the sum of an OAS pension plus maximum GIS benefits at the married rate. The maximum Spouse's Allowance paid to eligible widowed people between the ages of 60 and 64 is \$582.42. Similar to GIS, benefits are reduced by a portion of other income and are not taxable.

THE CANADA PENSION PLAN (CPP)

The Canada Pension Plan (CPP), which operates everywhere in Canada except Quebec, and the Quebec Pension Plan (QPP) make up the second level of Canada's retire-

ment income system. (The CPP does not operate in Quebec because the province decided to exercise its constitutional right to establish its own pension plan. Yet they operate in an almost identical way.)

The CPP was established in 1966. It was recognized that private pension plans and personal savings were not able, on their own, to meet the needs of all retired Canadians. Thus, the federal and provincial governments set up a publicly administered system to ensure a basic level of retirement income to supplement private retirement income.

Who is eligible for CPP?

Anyone between the ages of 18 and 65 in the paid labour force, whether an employee or self-employed, working full-time or part-time, for a large or small employer, who earns more than \$2,500 in a year, is required by law to make contributions to the CPP, though as of January 1, 1987, one can leave the work force and choose to stop paying into CPP and start collecting the retirement benefit as early as age 60, or as late as age 70.

Employees contribute 1.8% of their salary, up to a maximum of \$492.10 a month in 1987. These contributions are matched by an equal payment from the employer. Self employed people are required to pay both the employee's and the employer's share (3.6%) to a maximum \$984.20. This 3.6% is being increased over the next 25 years until it peaks at 7.6% in the year 2011.

The CPP account follows the worker from job-to-job, regardless of how long she works at each job or how long she may be out of the paid labour force between jobs. The maximum monthly pension for 1987 is \$506.04. All CPP benefits are increased once a year to make up for the rises in the cost of living. In order to take inflation fully into account, pensionable earnings from previous years are adjusted at the time of retirement to make past wages comparable with current wages. While CPP benefits are subject to income tax, contributions are deductible from taxable income.

The CPP also provides benefits to surviving spouses and children, a death benefit and a pension in the case of severe disability. A disability, in order to qualify, must be "severe and prolonged" and of such a serious nature that the person is unable to "pursue gainful employment" of any sort. In 1987 the maximum monthly disability pension is \$640. A surviving spouse who is 35 or over receives a CPP survivor's pension. A person between 45 and 64 receives \$284.55 and a person over 65 receives \$303.62. A reduced benefit is paid to those between 35 and 45. Starting in 1987, survivor's benefits will not end because of remarriage. A lump sum death benefit of up to \$2,590 is paid to the estate of a deceased contributor.

The amounts quoted above are the maximum payable under the Canada Pension Plan for benefits beginning in 1987. Since most benefits under the plan are based on a contributor's previous earnings and on how long the individual contributed to the Plan, not everyone will be entitled to the maximum.

The CPP has a feature known as the "child rearing drop-out provision." This permits parents, most often mothers, who stay at home to care for children under 7 (or who work part-time instead of full-time) to exclude those years of low or no income from their average lifetime earnings. Through this provision, a parent is not penalized for leaving the paid labour force or taking a part-time job to raise young children.

People who were low-wage earners during their working years receive smaller than average CPP pensions. Therefore, their total retirement income is even less. The inferior position that women hold in the labour force weakens their capacity of earnings-related pension plans to provide them with an adequate income in retirement. 1981 statistics show that 77% of women contributing to the CPP had earnings below the maximum pensionable level, whereas over half of male contributors, 58%, earned more than the limit on pensionable earnings.

As of January 1, 1987 CPP pension credits will be split automatically upon marriage breakdown (except by written agreement). After a year of separation, a legal or common law spouse may apply to have the credits split.

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MOVEMENT MATTERS

R.E.A.L. Loss?

OTTAWA — R.E.A.L. Women, a right-wing, pro-family lobby group, has been declared ineligible for federal money. Two applications, one for \$566,620 for operational funding and another for \$1 million for the same purpose have both been turned down. Secretary of State David Crombie told R.E.A.L. Women that it was ineligible for funds because the Women's Program of the Secretary of State supports only those groups which "promote understanding and action on status of women issues" and which "carry out projects toward the achievement of equal opportunity for women in Canadian society."

In addition to meeting the equality guidelines of the Program, Mr. Crombie told the group he needs to see "a proven track record of project management before committing operational funds to representative organizations."

Mr. Crombie apologized for the way the group was treated 18 months ago when it submitted its initial application. Officials at the time were said to have ignored it and later responded too slowly to other applications. What particularly angered R.E.A.L. Women was that when it submitted an application posing as a lesbian group, that application allegedly received prompt attention.

Campaign Trail

The Ontario government has introduced a bill it hopes will encourage more women to run in provincial elections. The bill allows candidates to spend campaign funds for their children's care without having to report it on the campaign expense record forwarded to the provincial Commission on Election Finances.

The bill would make it easier for female candidates to use tax exempt campaign money for childcare. They wouldn't have to report it as official campaign spending, which is capped under tough, new election financing rules passed last spring.

The bill's sponsor, Progressive Conservative MP Susan Fish, had said such a change would eliminate one of the obstacles to women running for provincial office. She estimated day care for one child could cost \$2,000 during a 37-day campaign.

Reproductive Freedom and The State

TORONTO — A forum of communities currently in struggle for basic reproductive and sexual rights will be held in Toronto on Sunday, February 22.

The different struggles for the control of our bodies are closely linked, and none of us will truly have won until all have won. This forum has been called so that we can update each other on the progress of our struggles against the state, share ideas and strategies for the future, and build mutual understanding and support. Representatives will attend from the Aids Committee of Toronto, the Disabled Women's Network, the native community and the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics.

The forum is on Sunday February 22, 1 pm, at the Council Chamber, City Hall, Toronto. Wheelchair accessibility, interpretation for the hearing impaired and attendant care are provided. Money is available for daycare. Donations are accepted. For further information, call OCAC at (416) 532-8193. The forum is co-sponsored by councillor Jack Layton.

Judge Judged

A Nova Scotia Family Court judge, who had been accused of demeaning women by expressing fundamentalist Christian views from the bench, has been fired.

Women who have appeared before him on matters such as child custody and support payments have complained he waved the Bible before them and said they should obey their husbands and be subservient to them. Some of the women were seeking redress against physically abusive spouses.

In an interview, the Judge stated that he was not angry with the women who had made the complaints, remarking, "I will not judge them—the Lord will."

Quote of the Month

"Many homosexuals, because they cannot procreate, must recruit—often the young. They promote recruiting "straights." With new legislation such seduction becomes permissible and acceptable."

—R.E.A.L. Women pamphlet attacking Bill 7

Older Women's Network

TORONTO — A new organization, called the Older Women's Network, is hoping to mobilize older women around issues affecting their well-being. The founding members also plan to monitor the media so that the image of older women may be projected in a positive and realistic way.

Members will meet in small groups in each other's homes to study feminist literature in order to analyze the position of women in our society and relate it to their life experience.

It is hoped that study groups will be formed all over Metro Toronto and the rest of Ontario and that representatives will come together to plan public discussion and action on programs and legislation to enlarge opportunities for housing, economic security and optimum health.

The Older Women's Network also commits itself to support the needs of younger women and of children, and to ally itself with movements for social justice in Canada and abroad.

Women over the age of 55 who are interested in joining or forming an OWN group, may call (416) 483-3234, or write: Older Women's Network, 273 Eilerslie Avenue, Willowdale, Ont. M2R 1B6.

NAWL Meets

WINNIPEG — The seventh biennial conference of the National Association of Women and the Law will be held February 19 to 22, 1987, at Winnipeg's Downtown Holiday Inn. The theme of the conference is: Section 15 Equality in the Criminal Justice System and the Workplace: Fact or Fantasy?

Registration and a reception will open the conference on Thursday, February 19. The opening panel on Friday will debate the use of special versus equal treatment models. Friday's workshops will focus on equality issues in the criminal law. The workshops, offered twice, are:

1. Current Canadian Law on Abortion
2. Abortion in North America
3. The Charter Backlash
4. Defences for Women
5. Prostitution
6. Female Offenders and Equality
7. A Feminist Approach to Criminal Law Practice
8. Pornography
9. The Young Offenders Act

Friday evening features a reception and banquet with a keynote speaker.

On Saturday, the workshops again run twice, focusing on equality in the workplace. The workshops are:

1. Putting the Feminist Agenda before the Bench
2. Pregnancy: Sex Related Discrimination
3. Day Care and Parental Leave
4. Domestic Workers
5. Pay Equity in the Private Sector
6. LEAF Report
7. Affirmative Action
8. Evidence and Charter Cases
9. Working Women and Custody

After the workshops on Saturday morning, the plenary session will consider proposed resolutions and elect the new National Steering Committee.

On Sunday, a panel session will discuss the topic Equality in the Legal Profession. Several workshops will follow, running concurrently, each examining the theme of Personal Strategies for Coping: Variations on a Law Practice: Superwoman.

For information regarding registration and accommodation, call (204) 284-8683.

Legal LEAF cases

LEAF is a national organization which supports test cases which will advance women's equality. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms in Canada's new Constitution includes equality guarantees which are new and which need to be tested and defined in the Courts. LEAF's goal is to ensure that cases which will positively define and expand women's equality are brought before the courts in a planned and expert manner. LEAF is a powerful voice. It is the *only* organization designed to take women's equality issues into Canada's courts.

Canadian women's organizations have developed specialized knowledge and expertise in many areas including: sexual assault, women's health, employment equality, non-sexist education, pensions, women's poverty, and women and the criminal justice system. LEAF counts on this expertise to identify the issues which should be addressed by court cases, and to provide research and information on which cases can be based.

LEAF's role is to help women and women's organizations to use the law where it can effectively redress inequality. To provide this assistance, LEAF will sponsor equality rights test cases, provide legal representation for women involved in LEAF-sponsored court cases, pay case costs, and undertake research and public education on equality rights for women.

LEAF cases are selected by its national Legal Committee. The Committee considers whether a case meets the following criteria:

1. *An equality rights case under the charter.* An equality rights case is one which seeks to use the Charter guarantees in Sections 28 and 15. Section 28 states that all of the rights described in the Charter are guaranteed equally to males and females. Section 15 states that every individual is equal before and under the law and is entitled to the equal protection and benefit of the law. These two sections seek to remove the legal disadvantages which women have experienced in the past. LEAF's priority is to take Charter equality rights cases before the courts. LEAF

will also consider cases which combine equality rights with other rights described in the Charter such as democratic rights, legal rights or mobility rights.

2. *An equality rights case under other legislation.* Cases based on equality rights which are provided in other legislation, such as provincial Human Rights Codes, will also be considered. Such cases will be sponsored on the basis that they help to establish equality rights in the law.

3. *A test case, not a service case.* To be sponsored by LEAF, a case must be able to make a positive contribution to women's rights: because it can effectively challenge a discriminatory law or practice; and because it can expand the way the courts interpret equality rights guarantees.

4. *A case with strong facts.* Since LEAF's objective is to set strong, positive precedents for women, the cases selected must present clear, factual situations to the courts.

5. *A case of importance to women.* LEAF selects cases which can have a positive impact on the rights of many women. Over time, LEAF will select cases which address many different issues of inequality which affect Canadian women. LEAF will especially sponsor cases which redress women's economic disadvantages.

6. *A case in which a woman is doubly disadvantaged.* Women are not only affected by sex discrimination. They also experience the impact of discrimination based on race, religion, disability, age, marital status and sexual orientation. LEAF will support cases in which women are discriminated against on any of these grounds, as well as sex.

If you or your organization knows of a case in which LEAF may be able to assist, or if you can identify issues to be dealt with by the law, write: LEAF, 344 Bloor Street West, Suite 403, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 1W9; (416) 963-9654.

Tax Break

The Tax Court of Canada has ruled that taxpayers cannot refuse to pay taxes to be used for military purposes. Dr. Jerilynn Prior, a Quaker, withheld 10.5% of her 1982 taxes on grounds of conscience. She said that 10.5% of the 1982 federal budget was used for military purposes. She sent the amount instead to the Peace Tax Fund which was started in 1983 by Edith Adamson of Victoria.

The judge said that even if Prior's freedom of conscience were infringed by the way the taxes are used, "it is the court's opinion that the Canadian tax system which is required to collect money to provide for the needs of the nation—which includes its defence—would be a reasonable limit which must be imposed in a free and democratic society. Furthermore, he added that the tax system could not function if people were allowed to challenge it because tax payments were spent in a manner that violates their religious beliefs. He also said that he doubts that payment of the military tax is "against the spirit of Christ."

"Spouse in House" OK

Changes to Ontario's welfare system, announced in September, will put an end to the controversial "spouse in the house" rule by April 1, 1987. Under the revised system, a sole support parent will not lose eligibility for public assistance, simply for sharing living quarters with a person of the opposite sex.

But, according to a news release put out by the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, the government proposes to move towards a standard which would maintain eligibility for a sole support parent, *unless* that parent resides with another person who provides economic support for the parent or dependent children, or has a legal obligation to support the parent.

Economic support will be considered essential to a "spousal" relationship. Social and familial elements will be considered as well, but the Ministry will no longer investigate the sexual and conjugal aspects of the relationship.

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Incest: Conflict

by Susan G. Cole

In the early 1970s, when women gathered in different parts of the country to uncover the prevalence of violence against women, the anger that simmered in these forums was palpable and energizing, so much so that it created a groundswell of activism. Women were naming what was happening to them, giving it a political meaning, identifying the victimization as a crisis. The crimes against women were so numerous, and creating such a collective destruction, that the groundswell turned into a construction of shelters and rape crisis centres. These feminist institutions have redefined the terms "rape" and "battery," have maintained women-centred approaches for assisting women to deal with their crises, and have helped survivors generate the resources, both emotional and financial, to cope with the legal system and to get on with their lives in safety.

In the 1980s, the crime commanding most attention is incest. Its prevalence is greater than even the most sensitive feminist could have imagined, and the damage devastating. Yet there is no similar wave of feminist activists committed to fighting incest, no coalition with the political clout of the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses or the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres. Crucially, unlike the situation with rape and assault, the absence of feminist organizing has not created a vacuum in which the sexual abuse is being ignored. On the contrary, an assortment of powerful agencies, social workers, therapists and psychiatrists, most of whom use traditional therapy models, have been deluged with funds for treating the problem. But what they see as the problem and the way to deal with it is different, sometimes diametrically opposed to the principles and politics feminists bring to the issue.

I

One of the hardest parts of approaching the issue of incest is digesting the astounding numbers. According to Diana Russell's survey, considered the most reliable because it is the only random survey ever undertaken, one out of six women will be incestuously assaulted before the age of eighteen, and one out of five will be victimized at some time in her life. Eighteen percent of these assaults were father-daughter incest. The majority of offenders were uncles. Eleven percent of the respondents reported that the abuse occurred for the first time before they were five years old. Many women have memories of being assaulted in their cribs.

Russell defines incest as "any kind of exploitive sexual contact or attempted contact that occurred between relatives no matter how distant." When feminists began to talk about rape, we uncovered the fact that sexual assault encompasses more than penile penetration and ejaculation (even though at the time the law addressed only those activities), and Russell has made similar discoveries about incest. She purposely did not restrict her definition of sexual contact to vaginal intercourse, because she learned that there are other areas of the body that are under attack. In fact, the most common area of assault is the mouth because it is the easiest part of the body to get to. It is not clear how many victims well-meaning but ill-informed therapists have missed by questioning children about adults who may have touched their "private" parts.

In other ways though, Russell's definition is very strict. It does not include what her respondents identified as "wanted contact," and this tended to include sibling incest, a form of incest some researchers, David Finkelhor and Janet Meiselman in particular, do not identify as harmful. For Russell though, the issues of how women are trained to submission and to the genuine belief that they have consented to the conditions of their lives are critical ones. But she felt that unless she kept the definition narrow, the credibility of her obviously feminist study would suffer.

Her definition does not include assaults to the eyes and ears: a child who is forced to watch a male relative masturbate is not counted as a victim in Russell's sample. Verbal assaults are not included, nor is a girl or woman who is forced by a relative to look at pornography by itself and with no physical contact considered incestuously victimized in the study. Russell took her sample from 930 random households in San Francisco. Consequently, the relevant data does not include women in institutions (where survivors are reported to be numerous), women on the streets (50% of female run-aways have run from incest), women who can't remember (many survivors don't) and women who, for whatever reasons, refused to participate in the survey when they were approached.

Russell's numbers are mind-boggling, but given the narrowness of her definition and the relative narrowness of her sample, even still, we have to face the fact that her numbers are low.

II

Incest is not a crime of passion or a sudden unplanned assault. According to the reports of many feminist counsellors, the perpetrators of incest strategize intensely, working out the infinitesimal details of the assault, some of them already planning the assault while their wives, sisters-in-law, daughters or nieces are pregnant with the potential victim.



Once the girl is born, perpetrators plot to gain increased access to the child, inundating her with gifts and treats and arranging special outings. The key is to keep the young girl away from her mother and father, or in the case of father/daughter incest, from the mother. Fathers who assault their baby daughters often commit the assault while changing diapers. In the case of older children, the seduction is often carried out to make the girl feel she is involved in a very special relationship, something only she and her new "friend" can know about and understand. Soon, the child is expected to listen to adult problems as the abuser-to-be begins to share his troubles—how hard it is for him at work, and then how hard it is for him to make friends and be close to people. A father about to assault his daughter inevitably complains that his wife is not "nice to him," thus bestowing on his daughter the role of special friend while driving a wedge between the victim and her mother. Soon, "not nice to him" means not having enough or the right kind of sex with him, and the "sex education" of his daughter begins. The victim graduates through the education process from being confidante, to being experimentally touched, to being sexually assaulted.

From the beginning, secrecy is introduced. While the child is young, the bargain is less likely to be jeopardized, but as the child grows older and begins to get a sense that there may be something happening that is worth telling someone, the threats from the attacker escalate, and often turn violent. In many cases, incestuous fathers keep their victim in line by agreeing not to rape her younger sister, though often they do anyway, and without the older sister knowing. When a victim decides to have a boyfriend, incest offenders grow panicky and more violent. Stepfathers are reported to be the most physically dangerous.

Every survivor whom feminist therapist Julie Brickman encountered had done everything she could think of to stop the abuse: begging for a locked bedroom, asking not to be bathed by their incestuous fathers, trying to avoid the "special outings," pleading to go shopping with their mothers rather than remain with their abusers. And surprisingly, many victims have told somebody about what was happening to them. According to Russell's survey, a full 17% of incest victims told someone at, or close to, the time of the assault, and only 5% of the victims had never told anybody. Feminists found that, contrary to social conventions, incest was not taboo, but talking about it was. But now we learn that the problem is not necessarily that victims remain silent, but that they are either ignored or not believed. Generally, the portrait of the abuser is that of a powerful, intrusive and self-serving man, and the portrait of the victim that of an active and resistant girl. But in the vast majority of cases, this re-

sistance fails to end the abuse. Thus "powerlessness," as Julie Brickman writes, "is not, for incest victims, a psychological experience."

III

Some women never escape. Toronto-based counsellors Michele Dore and Wendy Barrett talked with one victim who, at age 45, was still being raped by her father. She was not convinced the abuse would end until her father was dead. Other women do develop tactics for self-protection as they grow older. Leaving the family is one strategy. Leaving town is another, in the case of ongoing abuse at the hands of a relative outside the immediate family. Some women leave as

A disproportionate number of rape victims and juvenile prostitutes are incest survivors. . . . Male predators, rapists and pimps know how to find these women. Those men are to blame for the abuse, not the women they have targeted.

a matter of course to go to school, to live on their own or to marry. They often do not show up for family gatherings, and if they must, try to make sure there is someone in the room with them while their abusers are there.

But a survivor who escapes her abuser does not necessarily leave the experience behind. Many of the lingering effects are physical: headaches, or sleepless nights that are the vestige of childhood fears that the bedroom door could open at any time. Survivors' relationship to their body is invariably one of ambivalence and mistrust. Many fear getting undressed, others have a feeling of living from the neck up. Often survivors go on to abuse their own bodies. The ambivalence and mistrust extend to survivors' sexuality. Some experience lack of interest in sex; some experience conflict and a difficulty in saying no when they don't want sex; some experience confusion about the meaning of orgasm and the pleasure they felt while being victimized as a child.

Incest is also a training ground for emotional patterns and

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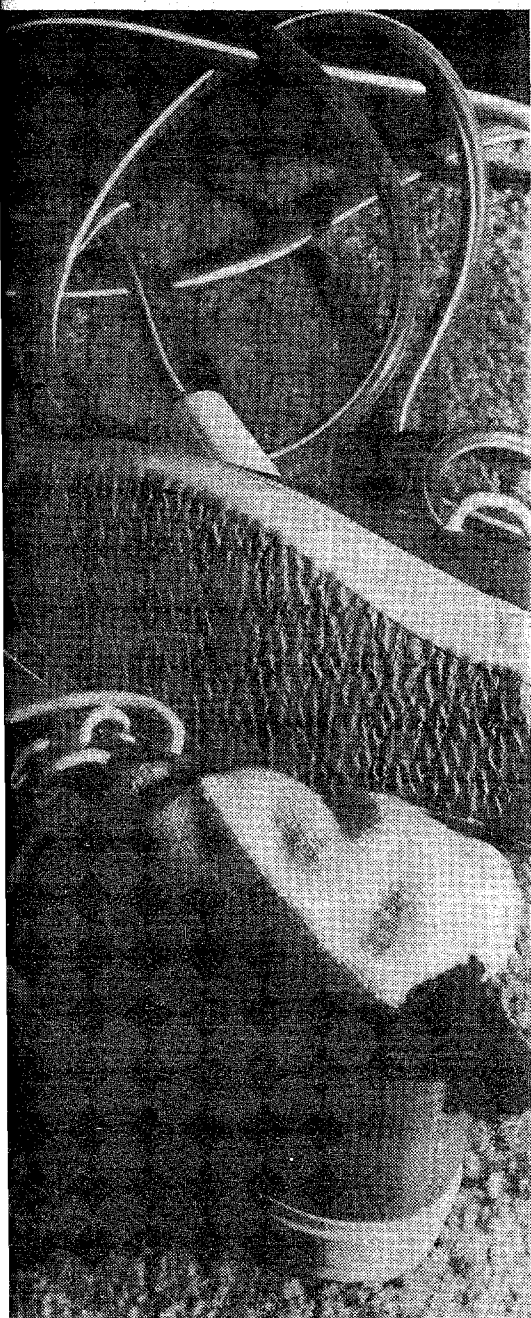


PHOTO BY MARG MOORES

personal identity. Survivors are women who have been profoundly betrayed in relationships they believed were loving and protective. Their sense of reality about relationships in adult life can be distorted. They have difficulty identifying exploitive behaviour and distinguishing between situations that are safe and unsafe. This has created a syndrome identified by feminists as revictimization. A disproportionate number of rape victims are incest survivors, for example. A study of teenaged prostitutes revealed that a full two-thirds of the juveniles interviewed had been sexually assaulted as children and now were experiencing more violence on the street. Feminists have been uneasy with this data and are aware that the statistics have to be interpreted with a great deal of care. Saying that women are revictimized is not the same as blaming the victim. Saying that a high proportion of teenaged prostitutes are incest survivors is not to isolate prostitutes, to create a hierarchy of victimization or to trivialize the prevalence of incest across classes and professions as a political fact of women's lives. Rather, this analysis attempts to make sense out of women's experience, and to understand how sexual abuse trains women to powerlessness. An incest survivor has never really owned her own body, and under these circumstances, actually, renting her body will not feel much of an intrusion. She might also be able to tolerate particular forms of violence prostitutes experience because she feels as if the universe is unfolding as it always has. In their study of juvenile prostitutes, Ayella Pines and Mimi Hertz described survivors' willingness to endure abusive relationships, how they react to abuse with inaction, depression and self-blame. "As the abuses continue and as their ability to make sense of them diminishes, they feel powerless, out of control of their life and psychologically paralyzed." Feminist therapist Sandra Butler described the syndrome as "difficulty survivors have negotiating their own friends' needs. She went on to say that, in particular, survivors recount experiences that show their trouble identifying violent and dismissive behaviour. Women who feel this way are more likely to be vulnerable to rapists. They will not know when they are safe. They may even be dependent on aggressive men. Male predators, rapists or pimps, know how to find these women. Those men are to blame for the abuse, not the women who have targeted.

IV

In her keynote address to a sexuality conference in Toronto last fall, Sandra Butler stated the facts quite clearly: "If survivors had not spoken," she said, "and if feminists had not

heard, there would be no work on sexual abuse." But the work on incest, and the so-called treatment administered to survivors has not remained in the hands of feminists. With minimal input from the feminist community, incest remains the purview of the child protection movement, controlled by professionals who practice traditional models of therapy. They, along with the government, give the appearance that incest is being "handled" but it turns out that it is being addressed in ways that are consistent with feminist perspectives and which sometimes leave women as vulnerable as ever.

The two perspectives, traditional and feminist, often overlap. Certainly many individuals working within, say, Children's Aid are well-versed in the feminist literature and research, and often apply feminism as they administer to their workloads. Conversely, many feminist therapists have been known to lapse into roles of authority and judgement. But here the two perspectives will be presented as separate and discrete for the sake of clarity. The idea is to define the perspectives, not to stereotype the people working within them.

The best way to identify a feminist perspective on violence against women is to check for the naming of gender. What police and the media call a domestic dispute, feminists call wife assault. What researchers with avoidance mechanisms call marital rape, feminists call the raping of wives. And what a psychiatrist might refer to as the aberrant pathology of incest is called by a feminist therapist the normal exercise of male power and sexuality.

Why do we lock up men for stealing property or breaking and entering, sometimes keeping them in jail for years, and coddle child rapists? Why, when the break-in is into a child's body, do we excuse it?

Professionals working through traditional models reinforce traditional family values when they adopt what is called the family systems approach to incest therapy. This is the most egregious example of how incest can be politically decontextualized, as therapists set out to treat the "incestuous family." According to the values of this treatment, incest is a signal of family dysfunction in which every family member plays a part. Something has gone wrong in the otherwise safe place of the family home, and through treatment of the entire family, traditional therapists will set it right. Feminists insist that it will never work, that the family has never been a safe place for women and has been the locus of male power, the most concrete expression of which is incest. "Families don't commit incest, men do," says Wendy Barrett, and consequently feminists have less interest in reconstructing the family than they do in healing whatever can be salvaged of women's lives, women's lives.

The family systems proponents, when they confront the actual perpetrators, find it hard to blame the offender for the assault. Instead, he is sick, and curable, provided he has the help of a skilled therapist. But while traditional treatments regard the offender as aberrant, feminists refuse to identify the behaviour as part of an individual pathology or as a "mistake." Instead they see the behaviour as consistent with other social values, the values conveyed in pornography (Playboy doesn't call them Playmates for nothing), or in other mass media that infantilize women, or in institutions that glorify male violence and link it to the male sex role. Incest is the inevitable outgrowth of normal sexist sex role development, part of the institution of compulsory heterosexuality and a key element of women's training to be dependent and attracted to their violators. Traditional models call for offenders to be treated and families to be reunited. Feminists demand that society be overhauled so that men are not gendered as victimizers and women are not gendered as victims.

As for the male offender, he is a criminal in the feminist view and should be jailed for the assault, even if he is getting treatment of whatever kind. All treatment is experimental. There isn't a single therapist who has been able to say with absolute certainty that if an offender goes through a particular treatment he will not offend again. To date, the safest strategy is incarceration. "No," say some professionals, mustering up sympathy, "these poor fellows are sick and need help. Besides, many of the children don't want their fathers or their relatives to have to disappear."

Feminists like Dore and Barrett don't buy it. They suspect that children are not interested in keeping their rapists around and that they agree to other arrangements only because they are getting cues from sympathetic caretakers. Why do we lock up men for stealing property or breaking and entering, sometimes keeping them in jail for years, and coddle child rapists? Why when the break-in is into a child's body do we excuse it?

Feminists working in the area of incest have been committed to making perpetrators responsible and nobody else:

This view has brought them into conflict with traditionalists who, armed with their family systems theory, find all kinds of ways to turn the offender into a beleaguered and sympathetic character. The best strategy for doing this remarkable turnaround is to malign the mothers of incest victims. Mothers are blamed for everything and have shouldered the responsibility for their children's delinquent behaviour in other social work models, but the targeting of the mothers of incest offenders is particularly obnoxious. The myths about the mothers of father/daughter incest victims are especially vicious. Here they are stated in their classic form by Julie Brickman, one of their staunchest critics: "A cold and rejecting mother initially twists the emotional and sexual development of her boy, which delivers him into the hands of a wife who deprives him of sexual and conjugal rights and finally sets him up for a sexual relationship with his seductive daughter." Notice how the man's actions disappear, and how the perpetrator has become the victim.

According to this scenario, mothers know their husbands are raping their daughters and still stay silent to protect themselves and their husbands. A recent episode of the TV drama series *Cagney and Lacey*, which usually gets these things right, got it wrong when the script portrayed the mother of an incest victim unsympathetically, showing her withholding evidence from the police and physically assaulting her daughter. If a girl does not know when her own sister is being victimized, sometimes in the same bedroom, how is a mother to know, especially when the father has actively sought to estrange his daughter from his wife? Whatever relationship existed between a daughter and her mother, father/daughter incest ruins it. The degree to which mothers "collude" is the degree to which they have been rendered powerless. How they lost that power is a matter of conjecture but it is worth noting the staggering number—80%—of mothers of incest victims (of all kinds, not just father/daughter) who are survivors of incest themselves. They are not secondary offenders, they are secondary victims. But not according to a great deal of the research contained in a body of literature that has to be read with increasing vigilance.

One study describes mothers who ask their husbands to cover up their daughters who are sleeping nude as "setting up situations." The same study assesses women who worked nights as "failing to protect the victim." No wonder a study out of Iowa identified the mothers in 65% of the cases to be as responsible for father/daughter incest as the fathers. The (American) Center on Child Abuse and Neglect actually lists women "who fail to protect" as offenders, reporting that a full 46% of incest offenders are women, even though the women did not commit the actual offense. Feminists regard these statistics with increasing fury, knowing that if men were not raping their daughters, there would be no reason for this irrational anger to be directed against these women. Dore and Barrett made a point of describing their priority of trying to rebuild the bond between survivors and

• continued next page

Further Reading

Conspiracy of Silence by Sandra Butler, Volcano Press, San Francisco, 1978

Father Daughter Incest by Judith Herrman, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1981

Incest in the Lives of Girls and Women by Diana Russell, Basic Books, New York, 1986

Voices in the Night edited by Toni A.H. McNaron and Yarrow Morgan, Cleis Press, Pittsburgh, 1982

"Feminist, Nonsexist, and Traditional Models of Therapy" by Julie Brickman, in *Women & Therapy*, Vol. 3(1), Spring 1984, Howarth Press.

"Sibling Incest: The Myth of Benign Sibling Incest" by Ellen Cole, in *Current Feminist Issues in Psychotherapy*, Howarth Press, 1982

"Early Sexual Exploitation as an Influence in Prostitution" by Mimi H. Silbert and Ayella Pines, in *Social Work*, July-August 1983

"In a Different Light: A Feminist Perspective on the Role of Mothers in Father-Daughter Incest" by Esther Wattenberg, in *Child Welfare*, Vol. LXIV, Number 3, May-June, 1985

"Incest: Secrets all in the Family" by Ottilie Lockey, Alicia Dowling and Judith Golden, *Broadside*, Vol. 2, no. 7, May 1981

• **INCEST**, from previous page

their mothers. The key is to bridge the distance, to find some common ground. Male interests often subvert the relationships between women and incest is one of the most effective forms of this kind of sabotage.

(f.)Lip

a newsletter
of feminist
innovative writing

Editors: Sandy (Frances) Duncan, Angela Hryniuk, & Betsy Warland

Contributing Editors: Leila Sujir, Alberta; Smaro Kamboureli, Manitoba & Saskatchewan; Janice Williamson, Ontario & Quebec; Roberta Buchanan, Atlantic Provinces

(f.)Lip: accessible, political and playful. (f.), feminine gender + Lip, a metaphor for écriture féminine = (f.)Lip. (f.)Lippant, nonsensical, "disrespectful; a flip attitude", "to have a strong reaction" (when she hears this, she'll flip). Texts that talk back, that "overwhelm with delight".

Our desire with (f.)Lip is to provide publication space for anglophone innovative (experimental & visionary, language & content) work, and to exchange ideas and information. Each issue will feature the work of four writers, mini-essays on revisionings of innovative women writers of the past, thumbnail sketches of recent books, and announcements of conferences, readings, workshops, and publications. We will publish quarterly beginning Winter 1987. The format of (f.)Lip will be approximately 20 pages of laser type on quality paper.

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V

Michele Dore and Wendy Barrett have devoted the past several years to learning whatever they could about incest. Coming from a background in women's health and youth counseling, their method of personal education was a feminist one: they listened to what women had to say, defining incest as those women defined it for themselves, and then supplemented the testimony by gathering whatever written materials they could find by feminists. They began to understand that traditional strategies for treating incest almost entirely ignored adult survivors, and so they set up a series of groups for women to talk with other survivors about what happened to them. In many cases, it was the first opportunity these women had ever been given to describe the abuse.

Last year, Dore and Barrett grew concerned about the absence of feminist input on the incest question, and they obtained funds from the Ontario Centre for the Prevention of Child Abuse to facilitate workshops on incest with the staffs of women's shelters in the province. This has been one of the few initiatives taken to educate feminists formally about child sexual abuse within the family. It is a small beginning that cries out for an infusion of even more energy so that a truly feminist network can be established, one that will nurture women, provide women with the safest environment, and make sure that women gain control of their lives.

Counsellors like Barrett and Dore have tried to maintain a woman-centred perspective on their work. This has brought them into contact with adult survivors who might otherwise have been completely neglected by the professionals who focus on children as the ones in immediate crisis. It has also compelled them never to separate their own experiences from those of the survivors they talk to. Unlike the professional stance of the social worker or the psychiatrist whose relationships to clients tends to fit the "objective" we/they construction, Dore and Barrett, and other women whose work is informed by feminism, understand that the distance between counsellor and client is a false one. We are all women, all vulnerable. Most of us have had our relationships with women distorted by our belief that male need was what

counted. Most of us have been the victims of male violence. We are all survivors in some way.

Women who are incest survivors, or who know of survivors, should be aware that the "professionals" may not be providing the best care, or that contact with child protection agencies needs to be supplemented by woman-centred input into the trauma of incest. Rape Crisis Centres often have specific information on incest, and their feminist approach to sexual assault will lead survivors onto the right route. Thanks to Michele Dore and Wendy Barrett, many women's shelters have begun a special education process on incest and have the knowledge to guide survivors to feminist resources and counsellors. If all else fails, there are feminist books on incest.

Perhaps in a few years we will be able to report a burgeoning movement against incest, one that mirrors feminist efforts against rape and wife assault. We need more feminist therapists, more skilled counsellors, the kind that can develop only through a network of survivors and feminists committed to women. This is what government—Secretary of State Women's Program, the Ontario Women's Directorate, Health and Welfare, Community and Social Services, and other agencies—should be funding: feminist conferences on incest, groups for adult survivors and support for a political coalition of incest resisters including survivors, therapists, and other feminists making the links between incest and other forms of violence against women.

The need is obvious, close to desperate, for the conditions we are in are very close to those of wartime. There is an eerie similarity between the testimony of incest survivors and the accounts of the survivors of torture. The abusers use the same tactics. "It is as if they all went to the same school," said Michele Dore describing the phenomenon. "You are worthless," they say, to keep us from caring about ourselves. "You really want this," they say, to make it impossible for us to believe that we can define our own lives. "No one will believe you, if you tell," they say, to keep us silent.

Anyone interested in forming a coalition of incest survivors can contact Michele Dore and Wendy Barrett at (416) 977-7609. This article was written with their assistance.

Why a magazine is not like any other product... and why that matters to you

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The threat to your magazine

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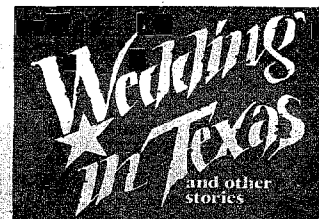
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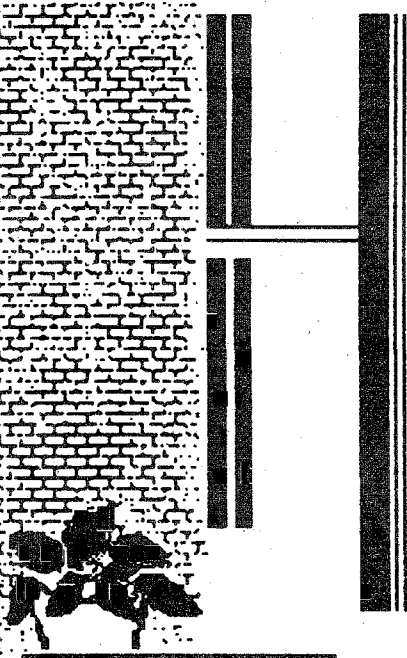
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ARTS

Demi/Monde's Multi-Layers

by Sandy Alexander

There is a new band on the Toronto music scene that is destined for notoriety: Demi/Monde—five excellent musicians whose sound is unique in a sea of "alternative" bands. And, they are women. Being women will not gain them the attention accorded women's bands ten years ago when such things were a novelty: rather Demi/Monde illustrates very clearly that women musicians have come of age, and are moving beyond established musical genres.

Demi/Monde's music is a tightly-woven, multi-layered melange of sounds. From Elaine Stef's echo-laden, almost continuous, guitar riffs, to the solid, innovative drumming of Rita McKeough, each part fits together in textural and melodic counterpoint. In contrast to the reverberating "wash" created by Stef, Susan Sturman's guitar playing is precise, razor-sharp and almost minimalist. Gabrielle van der Velde's strong, punchy bass complements McKeough's complex rhythms and provides a solid foundation for the guitars to build on. Marian Lydbrooke has a unique vocal style that is a cross between a medieval Gregorian chant and punk shouting. The technical proficiency of all the members of Demi/Monde is guaranteed to lay to rest for good the myth that women are not capable of producing tight, original music in a rock format.

All-women rock bands, in which the women actually play instruments rather than being backed up by male musicians, are a fairly recent development. Only in the past ten years have a sizeable number of women defied stereotypes by moving into what has traditionally been a mainstay of masculinity in North American culture. In the late 70s and early 80s there were several well known women's bands in Canada, including the Moral Lepers from Vancouver and Mama Quilla II from Toronto. They were part of the first generation of women working to bring together feminist politics and rock music. In a sense, Demi/Monde is a second generation women's band, containing former members of the Moral Lepers, Mama Quilla, and the Calgary art band Mode D'emploi. They are not, however, simply a continuation of the earlier projects in which they were involved. A sense of personal growth and of Demi/Monde being more challenging and more fulfilling is evident in the words of each member. "With Mama Quilla," says Susan Sturman, "a major part of the project was that we were women, we were playing rock music, we had things political to say. We became a rallying point for the community. This made up somewhat for a certain shakiness in overall musical quality. On the whole, the level of musical competence in Demi/Monde is higher." Of the Moral Lepers, Marian Lydbrooke says, "In terms of what I was saying with my lyrics, I feel like I've matured a lot. I'm not so politically rhetorical as I was. I don't write 'leaflets' in the same way as I did. I think I pay more attention now to the poetry. I'm more subtle, rather than just wanting to say something for the sake of it." Both Gabi van der Velde and Rita McKeough see Mode D'emploi as an experience that has allowed them to develop a certain musical

openness. "Rita and I were really young musicians when we started in Mode D'emploi," says Gabi. "It allowed us to learn our instruments on our own, in our own way, and to be basically really off the wall. It gave me the confidence to listen to a piece of music and say, 'How can I fit into that?' What I like about Demi/Monde is that I can approach it in the same way." Rita says, "I learned to be comfortable on my instrument, I developed my own style. With Demi/Monde I'm being challenged musically in incredible ways. The more I play, the more I realize I have to learn."

It is difficult to slot Demi/Monde's sound into a conventional musical style, although some of the material is derived from Latin and African rhythms. Occasionally their arrangements are too busy and would work better if they were played more sparsely and with greater variation in dynamics. For the most part their music defies categorization, making them both more compelling than a conventional band, and somewhat less accessible to people with mainstream musical tastes. Concerning accessibility, Rita comments, "It's a double-sided coin for me because if you have a goal to reach a particular audience and to use your music in a

to shape Demi/Monde's following. The fact that Demi/Monde is doing music which has not historically been well represented, or represented at all in "women's music," creates a void between the work and a large part of their intended audience. The possibility that the women's community may not embrace Demi/Monde does not shake their resolve that what they are doing is important and worthwhile. "It bothers me in terms of what it says about the women's community (that we might not be accepted)," says Marian. "On the whole the women's community tends to be musically conservative, culturally conservative, which I think is a pity. But I would continue to do what I'm doing no matter what the reaction."

"I think it's partially the role of cultural workers in a community to see beyond, go beyond, develop ideas that are somewhat outside the actual community," says Susan Sturman. "It seems a funny contradiction to be musically conservative and politically radical. I would like Demi/Monde to have a place in the women's community but not necessarily to be 'married' to that community."

Whether or not the women's community accepts Demi/Monde, they are bound to have an impact on alternative musical and political

that. Demi/Monde for me is all about looking at both the musical complexities and the complexities you face once you get beyond a certain political naivete—you have to face a lot of contradictions that are painful and difficult to see."

The future looks bright for Demi/Monde. Although they have only played a handful of gigs in Toronto and several out of town dates, they packed Lee's Palace on a Thursday night not long ago. They recently recorded a four song demo tape to help them secure more out-of-town gigs. They have plans to record an EP or album, and seem ambitious and optimistic about their future plans and goals.

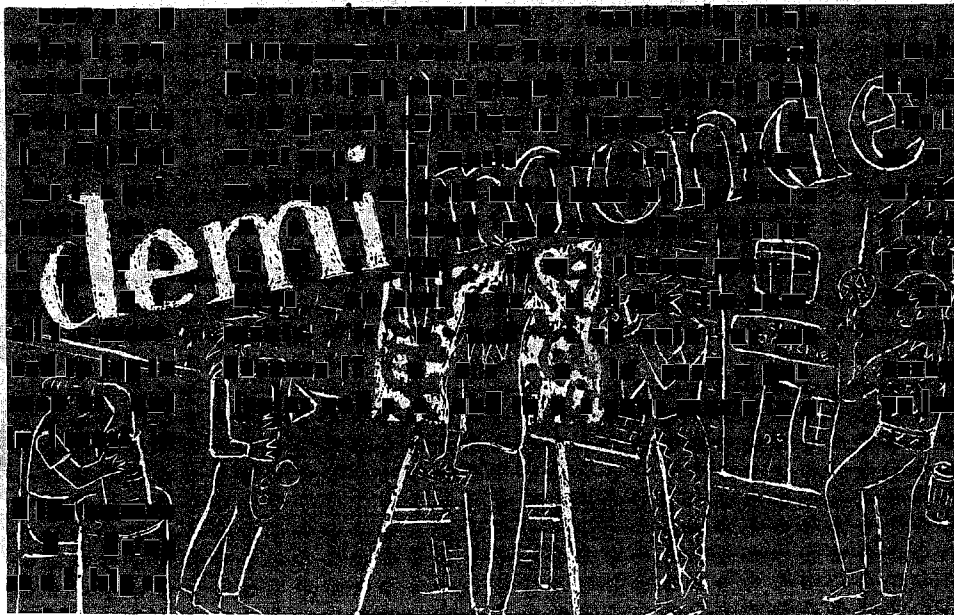
"I would really like the work that we do to go abroad because I think it's likely to be appreciated in Europe almost more so than in North America," says Susan. "North America has the money for bands but as far as taking musicians seriously as creative people, Europeans have it over North Americans."

"I'm personally not interested in remaining in the ghetto for the sake of it or in not being successful because that's politically incorrect," says Marian. "If somehow we could manage to stay true to ourselves and to our music and be able to live by what we're doing it would be great."

Just how far can an alternative feminist band progress? "I think as we develop, the issue of acceptance is going to change," says Rita. "If you want to create an alternative culture, and I do, can you run parallel with mainstream culture, can you use rock music as a form? What happens to you after a certain point? Your goals start to become the same as those of mainstream culture—to record, to achieve more acceptance, a larger audience, possibly to record again. To do this you need money. It's important for alternative bands like Demi/Monde to infiltrate mainstream culture because that's how we change the content of pop music. But it's also important to know when you must stop, because there is going to be a point where you will have to make the decision of whether to compromise the music in order to continue. Right now, the alternative distribution system does not have as long term possibilities as the mainstream route. That has to be acknowledged by the band because there is a possibility that our music will not be accepted to the extent that is necessary for either financial or long term recording goals which Demi/Monde may have."

It is clear from talking to the band and from watching them on stage that they are excited about what they are doing. They have a strong visual presence, and exude the kind of self-confidence that comes from hard work, dedication, and the collective experience they have. "The most important thing for me," says Elaine, "is how I feel about the music I'm playing, and how the band interacts as a whole, the enthusiasm we generate around the music. As long as we are happy with what we're doing, some of that is bound to be conveyed to the audience."

Sandy Alexander is a singer/songwriter, currently studying guitar making.



communicative way, a certain amount of accessibility is essential. We want our music heard, we want to play publicly, but we aren't compromising our music to gain acceptance. We have made a decision to give the audience the responsibility to choose at which point they find the music too difficult."

"We're not consciously saying 'Okay, let's be this busy, multi-rhythmic kind of weird band; it's just what we like to do,'" says Elaine Stef. "We are taking on musical and creative problems," says Susan, "and the solutions we've come up with may not be easy to listen to or what's acceptable so far. I want people to be reached by what Demi/Monde is doing. I hope people will accept and listen to it, but that can't be my only concern."

The issue of musical accessibility is bound

circles. "I think a lot of who we reach depends on our ability to promote ourselves," says Rita. "People need to know a fair bit about you to come out, to really understand what you're trying to do. Our politics need to be present in the images chosen for posters, in press releases, and in interviews like this one." From her experience with Mama Quilla II, Susan points out that being overly-identified with one particular community can be difficult. "Part of the problem with marrying a rock band to a particular cause is that to be most effective is to be simple—your music simple, your message simple—because this reaches more people. It means that if those little complexities in an issue creep in, or musically those little complexities occur to you, it's not a good vehicle for

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Lillian Allen: Dub to Disc



Lillian Allen

by Tori Smith

Lillian Allen's album *Revolutionary Tea Party* is that all too rare cultural product: music in which the style and content—the politics and the beat—complement each other perfectly to move, inform and entertain the listener.

Although it is her debut album, its quality should not come as a surprise. Performing around the country for the past few years (and on the Voicependence EP *De Dub Poets*), Allen has gained a reputation as one of the most dynamic and powerful proponents of Dub Poetry. Since hers is a style of poetry that draws not only from Jamaican patois, but from reggae as well, the idea of welding it to music seems natural.

Still, tampering with such good and well loved poems as Allen's did entail risks. Luckily, the project was in the hands of musicians who clearly understand and respect Allen's work, hence the poetry to music transition is seamless.

A collaborative approach was taken, with musicians Billy Bryans (drums), Dave Gray (guitar) and Quammie Williams (percussion) all working with Allen to write and arrange the reggae music which accompanies her poetry. Billy Bryans deserves special mention for his role as producer of this album. The production is rich and smooth, but at the same time retains an edge which makes the listener take note: this is not an album that fades into the background. That's not to say it's not enjoyable. On the contrary, the album is full of musical treats, but none of them overshadows Allen's poetry. In part this is due to Allen's voice. She is not a singer, and her vocals tend to stand slightly away from the music, more like chanting or recitation than singing.

More important though is the way the music echoes and highlights Allen's lyrics. "Riddim an' Hardtimes" for example is a poem about the role of music in the life of an immigrant West Indian man who 'chucks on some riddim' to cope with life in a hard country. On the album the strong reggae beat with its heavy bass combine with Allen's forceful vocals to evoke his sense of life here. When the music suddenly cuts, allowing the reality of Albert Johnson's (a West Indian

man killed by the police) death to sink in, the impact sends a shiver down the listener's spine. Similarly, "Nellie Belly Swelly" and "Rub A Dub Style Inna Regent Park" use reggae elements to create a danceable but dark and foreboding music; there's no missing that these songs are about oppression and struggle.

Not to worry though, the album is not a complete downer. As a matter of fact, the balance is such that it leaves one feeling quite invigorated. The music for "Birth Poem," a favourite in Allen's live performances, is upbeat and joyful. All the humour of the poem's labour section is preserved, and Lorraine Segato's background vocals add melodic texture.

A newer addition to Allen's repertoire, titled "The Subversives," deserves to become a community anthem, especially since a good proportion of the Toronto women's community is heard in the chorus! The song takes a bit from the Beatles "Oh Bla Di" to cheerfully chronicle feminists' work and defiance. Defiant in a less cheerful mood is "I Fight Back," the opening cut on the album. In it Allen chants out the experiences and anger of the immigrant Black woman in Canada, her chants counterpointed by Elaine Stef's melodic and haunting guitar work. This song covers a lot of ground—from multinationals to domestic work—in an intensely personal and empowering way.

The whole concept of the album is beautifully summed up in the title song, in which Allen invites us to join her in a Revolutionary Tea Party in order that we may "drink tea, talk analyse, strategize," and "work together." Quammie Williams' percussion and Dave Gray's guitar are as soothing as her lyrics calling for coalition and revolution. "Revolutionary Tea Party" is a song—and an album—for all of us to dance to, take heart from, and buy.

(A cheque for \$11.50 (\$10 + shipping), mailed to Verse to Vinyl, P.O. Box 335, Stn. E, Toronto, will get you a copy of this Juno winning album.)

Tori Smith is a student at U of T, formerly of the Otherwise collective.

Neither Resident nor Alien

Albuquerque: Coming Back to the U.S.A., by Margaret Randall. New Star Books, Vancouver, 1986.

Reviewed by Amanda Hale

In early 1984, Margaret Randall returned to the United States after an absence of more than 20 years. During that time she lived in Mexico, Cuba and Nicaragua, raised four children, ran a bilingual literary magazine and published a number of books of poetry, photographs and interviews with Latin American women, the most notable of which are *Sandino's Daughters* and *Cuban Women Now*. Her new book, *Albuquerque*, documents Randall's first year back home in New Mexico in the form of journal entries, poems, dreams and photographs.

While Randall is revealed as a free-spirited and politically dedicated woman who has made a strong contribution to the North American movement for solidarity with Latin America, *Albuquerque* suffers from that peculiarly American compulsion to bare all. Like most insufficiently edited journals, it tends towards indulgence, repetition and overly personal anecdotes which fail to transcend the particular. There are, however, moments of crystallized perception—critical observations of American society which ring with the irony that Randall is herself so much a product of that society. The fragmented form of the book, weaving between dreams, mundane happenings and memories of her self-imposed exile, mirrors the experience of going home after 23 years and perceiving with new eyes. The result is sometimes a naive documentation of what those who have lived constantly in North America are all too aware. But, fuelled by a socialist feminist perspective, and by anger about the oppression of racial and cultural minorities, lesbians and gays, and women in general, Randall manages at times to get to the root of America's difficulty simply by revealing her American way of living.

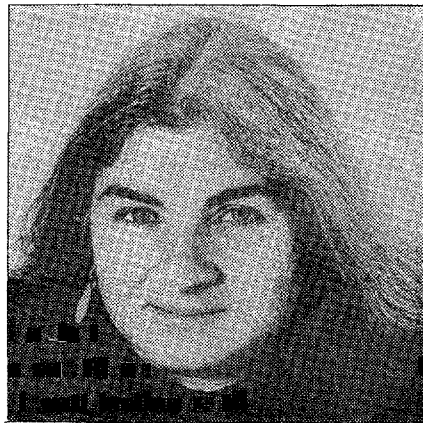
... as I make a mental note that we need ketchup and toilet paper, and then suddenly receive the wrenching identification with people I have left behind—like some sort of slow-motion knife to the gut. And then immediately center on a class I must prepare for the following day, moving from one to another of these realities as if they bear equal weight in the universe, and then hating myself because that has become, somehow—perhaps for my survival—my sense of it.

The sequences in which Randall recalls the past are infinitely more interesting than the unravelling of her daily thoughts and immediate observations. It was in Latin America that she "learned to think in the plural," where she developed as poet, photographer and political activist, where she built the reputation which drew around her a circle of distinguished friends such as Julio Cortazar, Meridel LeSueur, Roque Dalton, Elaine de Kooning, Ruth Hubbard.

I have remembered again how difficult it always is to explain to people who have not seen or felt it, the solidarity that is generated by people's revolutions in action. What internationalism is, ... what it means for the Cubans to be sending teachers to Nicaragua, when they themselves have no teachers to spare... I remember Anna's fifth grade teacher, leaving to go to Nicaragua. And how Anna's class had to regroup with another fifth-grade class at the same school. And how all that year there was never another teacher to step in, and how the class consisted of fifty-four kids, in a country that had fought with all it had to reduce its average classroom size to thirty.

Randall is clear about her own contribution as an internationalist. In response to the continuous praise she receives for her books, she says:

It is Cuban and Nicaraguan women's voices they are hearing. What I did was take advantage of the good fortune of being in those particular places at a particular moment in time. Transmit those voices... Women's voices have been silent for so long... The realization that this voice, these voices, do exist, the historic realization and also very much the sound of each woman, individually, is something that belongs to this century.



Margaret Randall

Randall could be characterized as a hippie who found and maintained her focus without losing the free-spirited impulse of the 60s. She speaks frequently of her four grown children whose "several fathers came and went," and of her own responsibilities as a mother, "economic as well as emotional." Although the children are scattered across the continent, it is clear that she maintains strong relationships with each of them while allowing them space to pursue their own lives.

Albuquerque is a personal stock-taking, a return to her source, and a transition as Randall approached 50. So, inevitably, she deals with menopause and aging.

Memory has a great deal to do with age... As I grow older my memory changes. It is

too easy to say it gets worse. I forget a great deal, but I also remember things I was not able to remember before. My reasons for remembering have changed.

What emerges most consistently about Randall is her positive energy and optimism, regarding both the global situation and her personal evolution. The process shows in this book and although it is sometimes overstated and circuitous, the constant struggle against societal values is evident—the creative antithesis to a corrupt society which must nevertheless be lived in, and which by necessity perpetuates North American individualism. She speaks of "the gulf between what is taking place (what is being built, what is being fought for) in Central America, and what one must fight for here to stay clear, avoid the suffocation of bitterness or pessimism."

Albuquerque is a courageous and self-revealing book, which may be criticized on the grounds that the gems are devalued by the excesses which surround them. Margaret Randall's reputation, however, rests on undeniably valuable work. Her choices in life have made her a victim of the American bureaucratic system. In October 1985, after almost two years of investigation, Randall was denied resident status by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The problem seems to have been her time in Cuba rather than Nicaragua, and her books are of course contentious, revealing as they do her political affiliation with Cuban communism and the revolutionary Sandinistas. The first appeal was heard in March 1986, backed by substantial support from the Center for Constitutional Rights and an impressive group of American writers. The legal system grinds slowly, so the battle could continue for years. Meanwhile Margaret Randall lives under a cloud of suspicion in her own country, neither resident nor alien, struggling with the contradictions of awareness and survival in the United States.

Final Say

by Amanda Hale

Second Annual 4-Play Festival. December 2-21: Produced by Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, at Theatre Passe Muraille, Toronto.

Immediate Family by Terry Baum, directed by Keltie Creed, co-presented with Atthis Theatre.

The Second Annual 4-Play Festival of lesbian and gay theatre, produced by Buddies in Bad Times at Theatre Passe Muraille in December 1986, featured *Immediate Family*, a one-woman play written by Terry Baum, directed by Keltie Creed, and performed by Clarice McCord. *Immediate Family* tackles the question of euthanasia and human rights, within the context of a lesbian relationship.

Virginia and Rose have been living together for 27 years. Rose is terminally ill and in a coma. Her hospital bed is defined by a rectangle of light, and her presence is signalled by a continuous tape of respirator-induced breathing. Virginia enters with flowers: "Hello there, Rosie. How's my girl?" She is the stereotypical butch in what is soon revealed as a traditional lesbian "marriage."

"So, Rose. How's your coma going? I see the old respirator's doing its thing" Virginia's humour and bravado alleviate a painful situation in which the difficulty of facing her lover's death is compounded by her helplessness as "just a friend." Only "immediate family" are allowed to stay beyond regular visiting hours, and the doctor needs permission from "immediate family" to unplug the respirator and let Rose die. "I know you're suffering. I can feel it. I guess I gotta do for you what I'd want you to do for me. And I know damned well I'd want the plug pulled. That's it, isn't it, Rose? That's it. Well, if you want it, my girl, you shall have it." But Virginia is unable to get permission from Rose's family to unplug the respirator.

Keltie Creed has wanted to direct this play for years. An extremely accomplished stage manager and technician, as well as director and performer, Creed started a lesbian theatre group—Atthis Theatre—in 1979. Atthis was named for the woman to whom Sappho dedicated her poetry, as a symbol of women's culture inspired by women. This co-production by Atthis and Buddies is timely in terms of highlighting the limitations of lesbian and gay rights. While the recent amendment to Ontario's Bill 7 legislates against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, lesbians and gays still lack the basic human rights afforded to heterosexuals by the recognition of common law marriage. And in the event of illness or death, as we see in *Immediate Family*, and in a case reported in the media recently, lack of full decision-making access to one's partner in such an extremity constitutes the worst kind of mental and emotional cruelty.

Immediate Family, however, is a positive and empowering play, not only because Virginia finally releases her lover by unplugging the respirator, but also because the play shows how she is strengthened sufficiently to commit that final act, regardless of the personal consequences. The monologue reveals a deep love and mutual reliance, and characterizes the two women in their stereotypical roles. Rose has been the one who kept a neat house, shopped economically, donated to gay organizations and tried to persuade Virginia to march on Lesbian and Gay Pride Day. "Gay pride!" says Virginia. "I'm gay. Damn it, isn't that enough? Why the hell do I have to be proud of it too? How can you be proud of something that you just are? That's like being proud that I have green eyes."

Virginia is a postal worker and she's in the closet. But Rosie's dying forces Virginia to compensate for her loss by taking on some of her characteristics. She starts eating some of Rose's favourite foods, even though she doesn't like them. She considers marching on the next Lesbian and Gay Pride Day. "Oh Rosie, how I've changed. I'm doing all the things you always wanted me to do. I'm tellin' you, if you came home today, we'd never have an argument for the rest of our lives!" And she starts cleaning the house. "If you attend to it every fifteen or twenty minutes, it's not too bad. I'm tellin' you, Rose, I'm a new woman. House so clean I can eat brussels sprouts off my floor." Running the emotional gamut, Virginia's anger and bravado dissolve into helpless obedience when the nurse tells her she has to leave because visiting hours are over.

In the second and final scene Virginia cracks under the pressure of this long drawn out death from cancer. "Goddammit, woman, I'm sick of it. I'm sick of coming here and sitting with you. I'm sick of talking to that doctor. I'm sick of thinking about you all the time. I'm sick and tired and broke and fed up. I wish you'd die, woman, and set me free!" Then, "I'm sorry. I didn't mean it. I'm sorry for so many things. For not keeping the house clean. For not going to the gay parade with you. I'm sick for all the times I got drunk and embarrassed you in public." What she regrets most is not telling Rose that she forgave her "for that affair with Sandy, way back when. . . Can you hear me, Rosie? It doesn't matter anymore. It hasn't for a long time." Of course Rose can't hear, but clearly this long painful ritual is for Virginia, not for Rose. And the process leads her to a tough realization of her place in society as a lesbian. "How they tell me that after living with you for 27 years and coming to visit you in this stinkin' hospital every single day, that I'm nobody to you, that I got no rights. Oh, if I was some man who met you and married you two months ago, that would be different.



Clarice McCord as Virginia.

A man would have the right to say, 'This person can't speak for herself anymore, but I love her, and I believe she wants to die.' Oh, they would listen to a man, wouldn't they? But me, I'm just queer old Virginia, so I don't count. They can tell me when I have to get out of this room. Those are the rules. . . . Well, who the hell made those rules? They've got no right to make rules that come between you and me, my girl!"

Clarice McCord gives a fine performance, striking a balance between feistiness and vulnerability, and communicating with clarity all the emotional levels evoked by the situation. An experienced actor from the west, McCord is a welcome addition to the Toronto theatre scene. For lesbians, *Immediate Family*, an American play, was the highlight of the 4-Play Festival, which tends to be dominated by gay male plays. Buddies in Bad Times makes an annual outreach into the community for new lesbian and gay work or produc-

tions of previously scripted work. Let's hope that next time they find more lesbian plays out there. ●

Margaret Laurence: A Tribute

by Margaret Gail Osachoff

When I attended the memorial service for Margaret Laurence, conducted according to her wishes, at Bloor Street United Church in Toronto on January 9, I wept tears for her as though I had just lost a close friend. And I had. Even though I had met her only briefly about a half dozen years ago, I felt—as did a lot of my students—that she was a friend, unmet, perhaps, but known and loved all the same because of her stories and novels.

I met Margaret Laurence in Saskatoon during one of her cross-Canada trips at, of all places, my own front door where I had to explain that, because I could not find a babysitter, I could not go to lunch with her and a group of others. Noticing my name on the door, she asked about the origin of my ancestors, an interest in roots that is evident in her fiction as well as in her occasional essays. From that brief encounter I could see that she had an extraordinary talent to be ordinary, and exhibited in person that wonderful generosity of spirit that is evident in her work. Obviously, the woman and her fiction were one.

Margaret Laurence was a feminist in all the best senses of the word and created characters in her fiction whom feminist readers find appealing. Her novels, while not overtly fem-

inist, are inherently feminist. *A Stone Angel*, for instance, shows the negative effects of a rigid puritan and patriarchal community on a woman of intelligence and spirit. Hagar, rebellious only on the surface, does great damage to herself and to others because she has internalized the values of this community almost completely. Fortunately, she achieves at least a degree of redemption on her deathbed at age ninety when she finally realizes who she is and what she has done. From her story we can understand why the women of our grandmother's or great-grandmother's generation made the choices they did and how their values influence our lives even now.

The protagonists of Laurence's other fiction make similar discoveries about themselves and their place in their communities. Perhaps the one who most appeals to feminists is Morag Gunn, the main character of *The Diviners*, Laurence's last novel. Morag is of Laurence's own generation, and her problems as a writer, wife, mother, and friend could have been Laurence's own. As a young woman, an undergraduate at university, Morag proclaims to her best friend that what she wants in life is to "have it all!" What follows, of course, are relationships and situations that demand compromise, but at every stage of her life she gains some of this "all" that most of us also want: friends, children,

a loving companion, and meaningful work. Laurence never preaches acquiescence in the face of insurmountable obstacles, but neither does she indicate that to be a superwoman who does have it all is an easily attainable goal, nor does she condemn as failures those who do not succeed in what they set out to do. Morag is strong and yet vulnerable. She is like us.

Laurence steers us in the direction of setting realistic goals, discovering our limitations and community expectations, struggling energetically but not necessarily heroically to overcome them, achieving non-exploitive relationships, and above all making only those compromises that will not undermine our integrity or dignity. It is ironic that this novel, essentially and totally moral in its message, was the target of so much fundamentalist outrage. She had the courage of her convictions and withstood all this. We often need such courage too.

There will be no new words written by Margaret Laurence, but she will live on in the timeless books that she left to us as well as in the stories and novels that are being written by younger writers who have come under her encouraging influence.

Margaret Gail Osachoff is a Toronto feminist.



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• PENSIONS, from page 6

How do I receive my pension?

You normally apply only once to receive OAS for life. It's a good idea to apply at your local Income Security Programs office six months before you turn 65. Because GIS is income tested, you must apply every year. GIS recipients are sent new applications each January. Although GAINS is paid by the province, you do not have to apply for it in addition to GIS. The federal government supplies its data on pensioners who receive GIS to the provincial revenue ministry, which then sends monthly GAINS cheques to seniors qualifying under a provincial minimum income guarantee. (For more information phone the Revenue Ministry's Multilingual Information Centre (nine languages are spoken).)

PRIVATE PENSION PLANS

When the CPP systems are fully in place, ie, when maximum pensionable earnings have reached the average industrial wage—they will replace 25% of pensionable earnings up to the average wage. OAS adds another 14 percent of average industrial earnings, yet this is still quite a long way from meeting the income-replacement objective. The difference is supposed to be made up by the third level

of the retirement income system—private pension and retirement savings plans.

Historically, private pension plans were presented to employees partly as a reward for long service and partly as a form of deferred wage. As time passed, the reward aspect of private pensions began to decline in acceptance, while the interpretation of them as a deferred wage became dominant. Now, in the labour market, employers must offer their workers a competitive compensation package which is capable of properly retaining and motivating them. Employees must be confident that after having rendered their services, their agreed upon or expected compensation package will be forthcoming.

Private pension plans have four main deficiencies which contribute to women receiving inadequate pension protection. These deficiencies are long vesting requirements, poor portability, lack of indexing for inflation and inadequate survivors' benefits. However the greatest problem is the lack of private pension plans and the effective exclusion of women from participation in them. In 1980 45% of men and only 31% of women in the total labour force were covered by private pension plans.

Vesting refers to the right of an employee, on changing jobs, to her own pension contributions as well as part, or all, of the contributions made on her behalf by her employer. It can come to her in the form of a cash settlement, or more often, the assurance of a

pension (based on the credits earned to date) when she reaches the age of entitlement—usually 65.

Most of the provinces and the federal government have enacted laws concerning private pension plans that set minimum standards for vesting. In general, pension contributions must be vested if an employee has been a member of a plan for ten years and has reached the age of 45. Presently, the Ontario government is looking into changing this rule so that pensions can be vested after only 2 years with no age requirement. Once again, the assumptions behind vesting are based on typical male work patterns. Women tend to have a high rate of job mobility and turnover because of child bearing and rearing responsibilities and are much less likely than men to achieve vested status. As such, the private pension system is heavily subsidized by female workers, because employer contributions will return to the fund and lower the cost of benefits to remaining employees.

Another key pension term is portability. This means that an employee can take her accrued pension credits from one employer to another. At this time, portability cannot be attained because all employers do not offer pension plans. However, if vesting requirements were shortened the problem of portability would be avoided because credits of ex-employees could be retained in original plans to be paid on retirement.

Inadequate indexing is a concern to both

men and women, but it is more likely to have a detrimental effect on women who live longer than men on the average and whose pensions, which are small to begin with, will be eroded by inflation over a longer period of time.

Over 44% of private pension plans do not provide survivors' benefits to the contributor's spouse. When there is such a provision, it is likely to be a life pension equal to only half of the deceased's pension. The absence of a mandatory survivor benefit in all private pension plans constitutes a failure to recognize the concept of marriage as a partnership and the substantial indirect contribution which a wife, who works in the home taking care of the children and the household, makes to her husband's pension.

Advocating for change in our retirement income system must not be done in isolation from other issues. Women's lower status in the paid labour force, pay equity and child care are battles that we must all fight in order to effect change for what lies ahead.

(A revised version of this article will appear in the forthcoming publication *Women & Employment: A Canadian Perspective*, to be published by the Metro Toronto YWCA.)

Sharon West is an MSW student at the University of Toronto. Lisa Freedman is a Broadside collective member.

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OUTSIDE BROADSIDE

FEBRUARY 1987

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 1

• **Sunday, February 1:** Last day of Nightwood Theatre's second annual Groundswell Festival, Annex Theatre, 730 Bathurst street, 2:30 pm. \$6. Info: 961-7202.

• **Sunday, February 1:** "Aunt Dan and Lemon," a play by Wallace Shawn. Starring Clare Coulter. Tarragon Theatre, 30 Bridgman Ave. Info: 531-1827. To **Sunday, February 8.**

• **Sunday, February 1:** Martha Henry's production of "The Grace of Mary Traverse," with Kate Trotter, continues its run at Toronto Free Theatre (downstairs), 26 Berkeley Street. \$8-14 (Sunday PWYC). Info: 368-2856. To **Sunday, February 8.**

• **Sunday, February 1:** Susan Hogan in "Extremities," by William Mastrosimone, the story of a woman who finds an intruder in her home. Leah Posluns Theatre, 4588 Bathurst Street. Info: 630-6752.

• **Monday, February 2:** The Centre for Women's Studies "Popular Feminism" series: Alison Prentice speaks on "Moments of Truth: The History of a Feminist Historian." OISE, 252 Bloor St. West, Room 2-212, 8 pm. Free. Info: 923-6641.

• **Tuesday, February 3:** TIDE (Toronto Independent Dance Enterprise) presents a progressive program of short works by women. Solar Stage's Luncheon Theatre, First Canadian Place, King & Bay (Bay entrance). 12:12 pm. or 1:11 pm. Info: 368-5135. To **Friday, February 6.**

• **Wednesday, February 4:** Buddies in Bad Times Theatre presents their 9th annual Rhubarb Festival of New and Innovative Work. Annex Theatre, 730 Bathurst Street. Passes \$25. \$10 per evening performance. Info: 593-0653 or 537-4198. To **Tuesday, March 3.**

• **Wednesday, February 4:** "The First Lady of Manawaka." Film tribute to the late Margaret Laurence. Centre Stage Forum, St. Lawrence Centre, 27 Front Street East. 7 and 9 pm. Free. Info: 362-7041.

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 8

• **Friday, February 6:** Women & the State: a conference for feminist activists. Discussions to include effects of the state on women's lives, women's organizing, strategies to challenge state policies, etc. OISE, 252 Bloor St. West. Info: 923-6641. To **Sunday, February 8.**

• **Friday, February 6:** "Marriage of True Minds" examines the marriages of Mary Goodwin, George Sand, Georgia O'Keeffe, Elizabeth Hardwick and Simone de Beauvoir. CBC Radio *Ideas*. 9:05 pm. Also **February 13, 20.**

• **Wednesday, February 11:** WEN-DO, Women's Self-Defence classes begin at the Barbra Schlifer Clinic. Info: 964-3855. To **Wednesday, April 1.**

• **Wednesday, February 11:** *Broadside!* Company of Sirens Benefit. Featuring Lina Chartrand, Shawna Dempsey, Cynthia Grant, Makka Kleist, women's band Demi/Monde and more. Dance with a Vulva. 8 pm. Lee's Palace, 529 Bloor St. West. \$10. Info: 598-3513.

• **Wednesday, February 11:** "Graven Images," contemporary idolatry. 8 pm. Sparkes Gallery, 693A Queen St. West. Info: 862-0470. To **Thursday, March 5.**

• **Thursday, February 12:** Louise Lambert performs at Free Times Café. 320 College, 8 pm. Info: 967-1078. To **Sunday,**

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 13

The Lesbian Dance Committee presents HEART THROB



• **Saturday, February 14:** "Heart Throb," a dance sponsored by the Lesbian Dance Committee. Concert Hall, 888 Yonge St. 9 pm. \$7 at door, \$6 Toronto Women's Bookstore (Sliding scale at SCM, DEC and Glad Day). Wheelchair accessible. Childcare money available.

• **Tuesday, February 17:** Cathy Jones' one-woman show "Wedding in Texas." 8 pm. Theatre Passe Muraille, 16 Ryerson Ave. Info: 363-2416.

WEEKLY

Monday: The Women's Group, an open lesbian discussion group, meets at 519 Church St. 8 pm. Info: 392-6874.

Tuesday: Lesbians and Gay Youth (under 25) meet in a support group at 519 Church St. 7:30 pm. Info: 392-6874.

Tuesday and Thursday: The Women's Information Line is open from 7-9 pm. Messages may be left any time, at 598-3714.

Tuesday and Thursday: The Lesbian Phone Line is open for calls from women. 7:30-10:30 pm. 533-6120.

Sunday: Lesbians of Colour (LOC), a social and support group for Native, Asian, South Asian, Black and Latin lesbians regardless of age meets every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month. 519 Church St. Community Centre. 3:45-5:30 pm. Info: Michele, 588-2930. (Out of town lesbians of colour can write for information: LOC, PO Box 6597, Station A, Toronto, M5W 1K4.)

• **Wednesday, February 18:** "The Loss of One Pregnancy After Another: An Investigation." Discussion of new medical research and the emotional aspects with microbiologist Dr. Patricia Quinn, and moderator Jay Ingram. Centre Stage Forum, St. Lawrence Centre, 27 Front St. East. 8 pm. Free. Info: 362-7041.

• **Thursday, February 19:** Audrey Rose reads from her choreo/poetry works at the Toronto Women's Bookstore. 6 pm. 73 Harbord St. Info: 922-8744.

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 22

• **Sunday, February 22:** "Reproductive Freedom and the State"—a forum of communities currently in struggle for basic reproductive and sexual rights. Sponsored by OCAC. Council Chambers, City Hall. Accessible. Interpreted. Child care. Info: 532-8193.

• **Sunday, February 22:** "Our Common Dream," the Women's Common Video, a free screening at A Space, 183 Bathurst Street, 2nd floor, 2 pm. Women only. 4 pm, open screening. Info: 469-4859.

• **Monday, February 23:** "Counting the Costs: Three Mile Island." This documentary reconstruction follows the events that began March 28, 1979. CBC Radio *Ideas*. 9:05 pm. To **Friday, February 27.**

• **Wednesday, February 25:** Open House, Open Heart, Open Mind—a benefit for U of T Women's Centre, with Bratty, Sirens, Heretix, Marianne Girard, Mariana Valverde. \$10. 9 pm. Lee's Palace. Info: 978-8201.

• **Wednesday, February 25:** Eating Disorders—panel discussion exploring obesity, bulimia and anorexia nervosa. Centre Stage Forum, St. Lawrence Centre, 27 Front St. East, 8 pm. Free. Info: 362-7041.

• **Thursday, February 26:** Mary Eberts, chair of the National Legal Committee of LEAF, will discuss the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and LEAF's mandate. Westin Hotel, 145 Richmond St. West, Governor-General Suite. \$35, lunch. Info: 963-9654.

NIGHTWOOD Theatre



• **Thursday, February 26:** Nightwood Theatre's presentation of "War Babies," by Margaret Hollingsworth, previews at Toronto Free Theatre (upstairs). Info: 961-7202.

• **Friday, February 27:** WITZ (Women's Independent Thoughtz). A seminar/discussion group for the exchange of ideas and creative endeavours in art, literature, philosophy and political thoughts. Topic: "Women of Canadian History." 7 pm. Info: 536-3162.

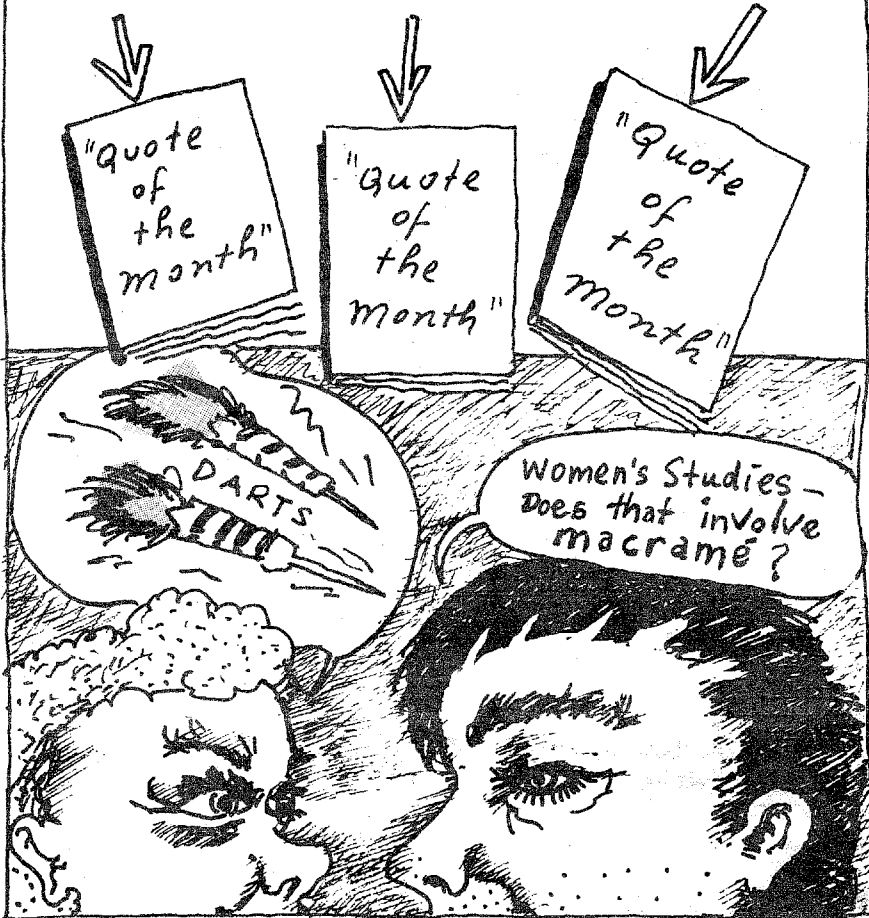
• **Friday, February 27:** Toronto Area Women's Research Colloquium presents Rusty Shteir of York University: "Gender and Genre in Science." Fellows Lounge, Atkinson College, York University. Info: 736-5208.



Cathy Jones as Nana Mouskouri — Theatre Passe Muraille, opening February 17.

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Broadside CLASSIFIEDS

THE COMPANY OF SIRENS, a feminist theatre group, invites women to participate in the Spring Equinox Siren Soirées, March 20, 21, 22—informal evenings of performance, dance, poetry, theatre etc. Time limit: 5-10 minutes. We provide technical assistance. Submit proposals as soon as possible to: Company of Sirens, Box 44, Station J, Toronto M4J 4X8, or phone (416) 461-6101 or 465-6088 for further information.

NEWLY RENOVATED APARTMENT. One bedroom, quiet, basement, in Toronto Annex. Access to backyard, close to TTC. Available March 1. (416) 967-7118.

TOWNHOUSE TO SHARE. Non-smoking lesbian feminist, over 35, to share with another (plus cat). Great situation near High Park. Should have own furniture. \$450/month each plus heating and utilities. Call 766-4920.

WALKERS NEEDED as couriers—year round—for Sunwheel Bicycle Couriers—professional, cooperative, well-organized—commission average \$6-\$8/hour. Call Barbara (416) 598-4649.

BED & BREAKFAST FOR WOMEN—renovated Victorian townhouse in downtown Montréal—close to restaurants, boutiques, bars. Lindsey's B&B, 3974 Laval Avenue, Montréal, H2W 2J2. (514) 843-4869.

12TH ANNUAL MICHIGAN WOMYN'S MUSIC Festival! August 12-16. Avoid the rush and write now! For a brochure and ticket information, write: WWTMC, Dept. B, Box 22, Walhalla, MI, 49458, USA.

NIGHTWOOD THEATRE is seeking an artistic coordinator for its 1987/88 season. Nightwood Theatre is a feminist theatre collective that operates with an artist-run board which together with the Artistic Coordinator and General Manager determines matters of programming and policy. We are interested in an individual who is able to make at least a two year commitment to the company. We can accommodate some flexibility in the work schedule according to the demands of the season. A background in dramaturgy and collective practice is essential. Experience running arts organizations is a definite asset. Salary negotiable. Please apply in writing to Maureen FitzGerald, Hiring Committee, Nightwood Theatre, 296 Brunswick Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2M7. Deadline for applications: March 8, 1987.

ARTIST wanted to illustrate lesbian/feminist epic-style satiric poems. I can't pay you, but some publications we'll submit to can. Send a sample of your work (no originals—I won't return it) to Carolyn, c/o 45 Carlton St., Apt. 910, Toronto, Ontario, M5B 2H9.

TORONTO WOMEN'S INFORMATION LINE is back in service. Our new hours are Monday and Wednesday, 7 to 9 pm. (416) 598-3714.

WE ARE TWO Toronto sisters working this winter at Las Brisas, a secluded lesbian owned guest house in Sosua, Dominican Republic. We have private double rooms & suites, all with air conditioning, bath and fridge. Perks: Lush gardens, pool, breakfast area, bar; short walk to beaches, restaurants, shops. Rates: \$25.00 U.S. single or double; \$5.00 U.S. each extra person; tax extra. Reservations: Call us or Sylvie at (809) 571-2291. Catch an air-only charter to Puerto Plata and join us in the sun. In sisterhood, Barb and Stronach.

ORDER THE 50% SOLUTION: Why Should Women Pay for Men's Culture? by Anne Innis Dagg, 1986, 130 pages, from Otter Press, Box 747, Waterloo, Ontario, N2J 4C2.

LONDON LESBIAN wishes to visit Toronto in the spring. I need a place to stay and contacts. Any Lesbians wishing to come to London? Maybe we could do it on an exchange basis.

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WOMEN'S POETRY GROUP being formed; meet alternate weeks to read own work for discussion and useful criticism. Info: Betsy, 763-2210.

"IN OUR OWN VOICES" An incest survivor group beginning Monday, March 16, 7-9 pm. Sliding scale. For more information call (416) 977-7609.

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