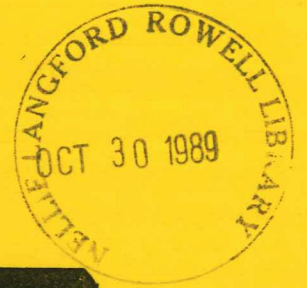


TAPESTRY

A FEMINIST QUARTERLY



FALL 1989
\$ 2.00

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Vernon Women's Centre

The Vernon Women's Centre is primarily a resource centre of information pertinent to issues of concern and interest to women. We are a registered society and are supported by fees, donations, fundraising and government grants.

Our resource library contains non-fiction, governmental and non-governmental reports as well as novels, poetry and prose.

In addition to TAPESTRY we offer workshops, seminars and conferences throughout the year on such topics as:

violence against women
sexual harassment
human rights
sex role stereotyping
childcare
pay equity
homemakers pensions
the physically challenged
visible and invisible minorities
women in conflict with the law
employment standards
reproductive hazards
non-traditional work
pornography
prostitution
world peace
the environment

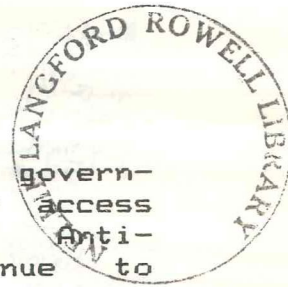
The Vernon Women's Centre is located at #6 - 3000 - 30th St. in Vernon B.C. Office hours are: Monday-Thursday 9a.m. to 4p.m. Friday 9a.m. to 1p.m.

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EDITORIAL



A pregnant woman sits silenced and condemned by the powerful voices of church and state. Heidi Thompson's cover illustration of this issue of Tapestry is particularly thought-provoking since our theme is violence against women.

The interference of church and state in a woman's autonomy over her body is a particularly disturbing example of institutionalized violence.

It has been twenty months since the Supreme Court decided that the abortion law was unconstitutional and Madame Justice Bertha Wilson made her profound comment: "The right to 'liberty' contained in section 7 (of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms) guarantees to every individual a degree of personal autonomy over important decisions intimately affecting his or her private life. Liberty in a free and democratic society does not require the state to approve such decisions, but it does require the state to respect them."

During these months we have seen both church and state scramble to regain power over women's reproductive lives. (The media have eagerly capitalized on the right-to-life backlash.) The courts have been able to use the Charter to protect women from the most blatant of these attacks. In B.C., Premier Vander Zalm's decision not to cover abortions under medicare was successfully challenged. The Supreme Court rejected two attempts to give the fetus personhood at the expense of women's rights, when it rejected Joe Borowski's case and when it vindicated Chantal Daigle. However, women are still faced with the prospect of another criminal law on abortion.

Hospitals and provincial governments continue to hinder access to abortion services. Anti-choice activists continue to blockade clinics and harass patients.

Abortion is not an easy choice for any woman, but given the conditions of women's lives, abortion must be a freely available choice.

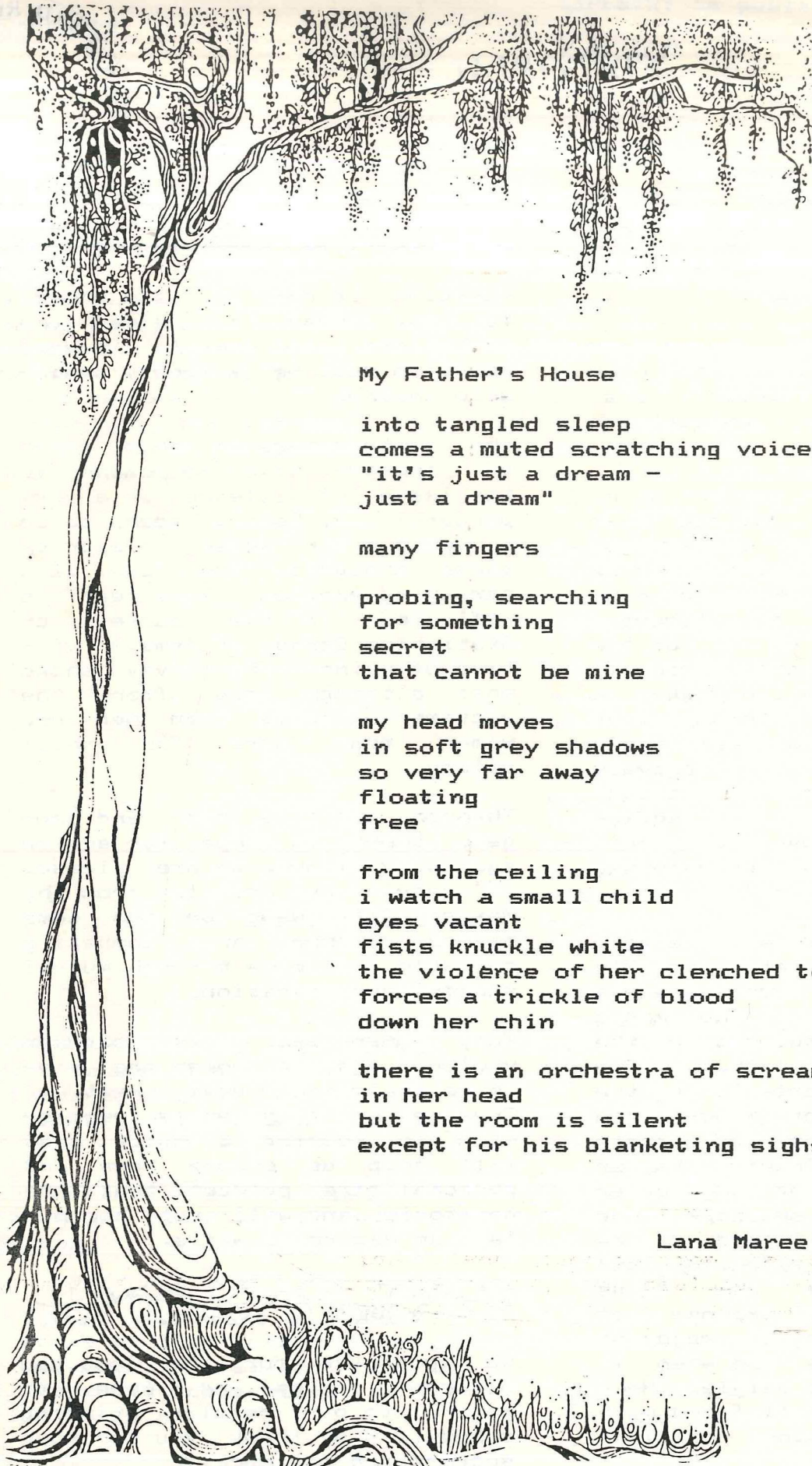
The contributors to this issue of Tapestry have responded to the issue of violence in a very personal way. Poetry seems to be a vehicle for women to express these thoughts, and fear is a pervading emotion. This fear is reflected in the survey by Statistics Canada of female victims of crime. The survey shows that although less often the victims of crime than men are, women fear more for their safety.

Through all this fear and danger, there is hope for action against violence. We are pleased to reprint an article from The Mexico City News on how some Mexican women are combating domestic violence through mutual support and education.

Many women see links between violence against women and violence against our environment. Greenpeace has given us permission to reprint a guide that will help us choose home and personal care products that are non-toxic and will not accumulate as hazardous waste.



We apologize for the long gap between issues and hope to return to our regular printing schedule now. Thank you for your support and patience. ♀



My Father's House

into tangled sleep
comes a muted scratching voice
"it's just a dream -
just a dream"

many fingers

probing, searching
for something
secret
that cannot be mine

my head moves
in soft grey shadows
so very far away
floating
free

from the ceiling
i watch a small child
eyes vacant
fists knuckle white
the violence of her clenched teeth
forces a trickle of blood
down her chin

there is an orchestra of screaming
in her head
but the room is silent
except for his blanketing sighs

Lana Maree

MY FATHER'S HOUSE

by Lana Maree

I am an incest survivor. Those words are difficult for me to write. They bring up a hurt and fear I've lived with since I was a small child.

I was not consciously aware of my abuse until my first "clear" flashback two years ago. I did know that all my life I suffered from strange symptoms and fears. As a child I had recurring nightmares, walked in my sleep, and was extremely shy and insecure. I was so lonely I had to make up friends to play with. In my teens I discovered alcohol, drugs and shoplifting. As an adult I combined my substance addictions with abusive relationships. No matter what job, project or educational endeavour I'd start, I could never follow it through. I felt destined to fail in all areas of my life.

I knew I had been brought up in an abusive, alcoholic home, so I began to actively work on those dynamics within a support group and in counselling. As I cleaned up issues, I grew more closed down sexually. I couldn't perform, which is precisely the right word in this case. I became despondent and withdrawn.

One afternoon I experienced a strong flash of being sexually molested by someone. This memory seemed to come out of nowhere but was very intense and frightening. Shortly after this, with my counsellor, I began to remember my father's step-father molesting me when I was about two.

Three months later, while dealing with recollections of my grandfather, memories of my

father abusing me began to surface. I was horrified. I had always idealized my father, even though he was an abusive alcoholic who was seldom home. There had been times in my childhood when I remembered him giving me attention or gifts when no one else noticed I existed. I can still see him helping me with my homework or taking me for a ride on his motorcycle. He was my father and I loved him.

I didn't want to believe the flashbacks. I tried to stuff them back under the surface but they wouldn't stop. Even my night's were filled with graphic visions of my father's cold, flat eyes paralysing me.

"ONCE I WAS ABLE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE INCEST, MY MEMORY-VACANT CHILDHOOD BEGAN TO RE-RUN ITSELF THROUGH MY HEAD."

My first concrete memory of the abuse from my father was when I was about four. I have flashes of events before that time but none are quite so clear or vivid.

I was playing in our attic with a farm set when I felt someone's eyes watching me. I still remember the strange, cold sensation of fear that travelled up my spine even before I looked up to see my father standing in the doorway. He came over and looked at the animals for a few minutes, then sat on the cot looking through a red leather-bound stamp book he had. I went over to his knee and looked at the stamps. He pulled

me between his legs telling me where the stamps were from. This felt nice; a special time with my dad was rare. He was always away at work.

Suddenly I felt him changing, and I grew afraid. He began to touch me under my dress, rubbing himself up against my back. His words grew harsh and scary. His big hands pulling at me hurt and made me confused. This man was not my daddy. He was a monster. As he grew more and more intense, I found myself leaving my body. I focused in on the page in the stamp book on my lap, memorizing each detail, feeling nothing that was happening in the room. My head hung, my eyes became glazed. There was a rushing wind in my ears. Then I was alone again lying on the cot. I felt nothing. I was dead inside. I walked over to my farm set and carefully examined each animal, drinking in every detail as I meticulously arranged each figure.

More memories have surfaced since. It seems once I was able to fully acknowledge the incest, my memory-vacant childhood began to re-run itself through my head. This has been difficult and not always convenient. Flashbacks surface when I don't want them to. Walking the dog or shopping, I'll suddenly feel the nausea and trembling as another memory reels through my consciousness. The sadness, pain and anger consume me for hours and days of my life that I'd rather use for something else. Yet for the first time my life is beginning to make sense.

In my healing process I am learning who I am. I am feeling emotions instead of a dull numbness. As a small child I had to "shut down" and "leave my body" in order to survive emotionally. I am now re-connecting, feeling the pain,

working it through and letting it go. I am having to confront and acknowledge the incest to my parents, siblings and friends. Often they don't want to know. My family of origin is comfortable with denial. It is what we were conditioned to believe was normal.

I often feel very alone. Yet that is what I was, as a child, alone and waiting. Waiting for a father's and mother's love and acceptance. It never came. I realize now it never will. Grieving the incest is a lengthy tiring process. Sometimes I wish it would all just go away. Other times I see my growth and strength and feel proud. I know I will never go backwards to the dark, lonely place I lived in for so long, and although my road ahead sometimes feels strange, there is a light and freedom that I can finally recognize as my birthright. ♀



RESIST ABUSE

REBIRTH ON EARTH
THE
PEOPLE AT THE BUS STOP



to view
for
by Heidi Thompson

REBIRTH ON EARTH

Gilgamesh,
seeking exhalation of Ego
raped Ishtar-the earth
with righteous passion.
Made immortal
by his act,
he watched her fall.
And crowned himself King.

Ishtar bided,
serene in faith of peace.
And the years passed
in a tumult of passion.
With the return of
her season
she gave birth
to a daughter.

Full formed at birth,
the daughter was
not beautiful.
She was angular and tall
with a strong back
and clear mind.
She walked a grace that
made Gilgamesh
see her
as she
planted
rebirth on Earth.

He wooed her
and dressed her in silk.
Her feet were painted red.
But she walked in
the forest
and planted seeds.
The silk rotted and
the paint
wore off.

Gilgamesh saw her
and turned away in fear.
He had not changed her.
She stood naked
in the sunlight and
called him father.
In her face
and stance
he saw
Ishtar,
Eternity.

He knew then,
the jest of his immortality.
In her eyes he saw
life,
and himself reaping death.

Trees grew tall
and the grain grew wild.



Kimberly Cormack

GODDESS REMEMBERED

A NEW FILM FROM STUDIO D PREMIERES ACROSS CANADA

During the next month, **Goddess Remembered**, a one-hour documentary about early goddess-worshipping cultures and the growing contemporary women's spirituality movement, will be launched across Canada via public screenings and a national telecast.

Directed by Montreal-based independent filmmaker Donna Read, who has worked with the NFB since the mid-sixties, **Goddess Remembered** traces the history of women's spirituality from 35,000 B.C. The film shows how a new interpretation of ancient civilizations is one of the main forces behind the current spiritual/eco-feminist movement.

"What is so exciting about today's spirituality movement is that we are discovering a part of our very early history that literally has been buried for centuries," says director Donna Read.

"**Goddess Remembered** will interest scholars of history, women's studies, anthropology and theology and anyone interested in spirituality because it is essentially the first film made about an era of women's spirituality that has long been overlooked and misinterpreted," explains Read.

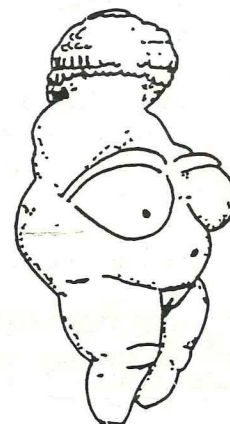
In documenting the values, art and architecture of cultures in which women played an equal or leading role, Read and her crew travelled to the caves of paleolithic France, the subterranean temples and monumental female statuary of neolithic Malta, the huge and mysterious earthworks of ancient Britain, and the palaces of Crete. The film raises interesting questions about historical misreadings and misinterpretations of archaeological data from the pre-Bronze Age, including the dismissal of early female figurines as mere "fertility amulets."

Goddess Remembered features in discussion Starhawk, Merlin Stone, Carol P. Christ, Charlene Spretnak and Jean Shinoda Bolen, leading North American scholars and authors of goddess history who link the loss of goddess-centered societies to today's environmental crises. They propose that a return to a belief in an interconnected life system, with respect for the earth and the female, is fundamental to our survival.

National premiere telecast of Goddess Remembered on Vision TV's The Cutting Edge:

Tuesday, October 24 and Wednesday, October 25.

Pacific:	5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. - Tuesday 1:00 p.m. - Wednesday (repeat)
Mountain:	6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. - Tuesday 2:00 p.m. - Wednesday (repeat)
Central:	7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. - Tuesday 3:00 p.m. - Wednesday (repeat)
Eastern:	8:00 p.m. and midnight - Tuesday 4:00 p.m. - Wednesday (repeat)
Atlantic:	9:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m. - Tuesday 5:00 p.m. - Wednesday (repeat)
Nfld.:	10:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. - Tuesday



HER BROTHER'S KEEPER

When she was thirteen and he was six, being the older sister was simple. She read Narnia to him. He was willing and worshipped her.

Being the older sister at forty-one is much more problematic.

He's not an easy brother for a woman with a feminist conscience. He can spend days composing a critical response to a pro-life editorial in a local newspaper. But he calls feminist writings on male violence "fascist propaganda," and Andrea Dworkin a "scumbag."

Avoiding him is not the answer, she tells herself as she crunches by his winter-lit windows, knowing he hasn't been to bed since yesterday noon.

Guilty again, she says to herself as she stops and knocks at mid-day only to find him asleep under the kitchen table, surrounded by years of newspaper clippings.

Avoiding him and listening to him are equally frustrating. But because he's there she can't simply fight sexism as some feminists do, with unconstrained righteousness. She wants to change the world, but somehow she has to get it right for him too, and he confuses her. She resents this.

She finds it hard to remember what his points are. She never listens without an internal editor.

"Men are victims too," he says.

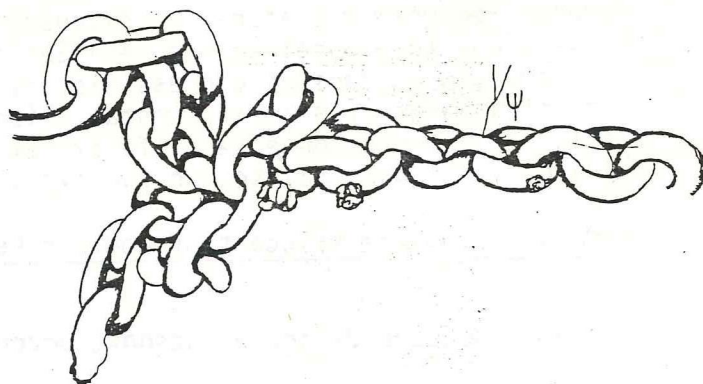
(Oh yeah, and how many of your friends have been attacked and nearly murdered while jogging in the park?)

"The Christian church is the biggest patriarchal institution going. How can feminists even think of forming an alliance with them against pornography?" he says.

(It's none of your business where we form our alliances. Christianity may have killed us in the dark ages but pornography is killing us right now!)

"Women aren't the only ones who get abused. I've been abused too!" he says. "I was circumcised."

(Okay. I hear you. I agree it was abuse, but what can I do about it? So you were hurt! If you're still suffering at 34, go talk to other men about it. Get together and change things like women have done!)



She gets angry. How dare he tower over her shaking with terror; stuttering with frustration. How dare he go crazy.

Women have abused him, ridiculed him and rejected him. She has listened to the endless loop of his hurts til she should know them off by heart.

But every time she visits him she feels smothered. (I can't stand it. Give me a break. We've all got our sad stories, buster!) and leaves.

Buster. That was his nickname when he was very little; when he trusted her completely.

But he stopped trusting and began eating his meals in his

room when he was eleven. Maybe to avoid the nagging?

She and her sister both nagged him, she recalls. Familiar guilt.

She will stop and listen again. Perhaps tomorrow. Whether she likes it or not, she is her brother's keeper. ♀



Love is not this

The darkness we share, unknowingly
is tearing at me
with claws of insanity, oh
it rips out my heart
and gouges at my eyes.
I'm sure that love is not this
unknown before, hate pulls me
into its arms to cradle me
and to protect me from all of the trees,
the air and the moon
sing sweet songs of death
your words dance as flames from
your constricted throat
I am burned
but somehow I enjoy it
the painfulness draws me to you.
I long to be hurt again and again
your long clawed fingers stretch out
an open hand striking my face with
little intelligence.
I scream with joy
and run away home.
I know that love is not this.

Dawn K. Bennett (age 14)



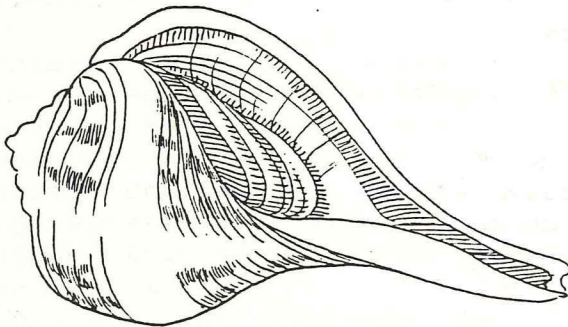
THE LACE COLLAR

Joanna Lundy is a new resident of Vernon. She is a feminist, a writer and a re-connect street worker. Her work and her identification with battered women are inspiration for many pieces she writes.

In this excerpt from her novel, The Lace Collar, Geraldine, a battered woman, is reliving her past while imprisoned in a mental hospital. She is unable to speak and communicates with her psychiatrist, Gerald Manley Hopkins, through a bizarre exchange of poetry and letters.

#####

It came back to silence. I had been on a spiral journey, finding peace in my quest. I sat quietly, thinking absurdly of sea shells. When I listened closely I could hear in their spiralling softness the roar of silence. I traced their spirals in memory...



"Nana," I said silently, "I am tracing your spiral; I am ready to listen to your story." I heard a ringing in my ears, then a soft hiss as my breath slowly rose and fell. It sounded like lace being ripped. I saw your hands, now silent, on the lace.

Your gnarled hands slowly selected the pebbles. A small pile of rejected stones, too fine, were cast aside. You carefully knotted your thread, using your skills as a seamstress. There would be no mistake. No pebble would slip through the lace.

I saw you slowly, purposefully, wade into the pool, your neck already straining with the unaccustomed weights.

No! I reached for you, but I couldn't touch you. Slowly, bubbles rose to the surface. Two grey plaits floated in the murky water. I felt the weight of those stones around my heart. My eyes were blurred with unshed tears. I could not see any more. Emily, I do not want your lace collar!

I was pleasantly surprised to receive Dr. Hopkin's letter. This time it was bulkier than usual. I eagerly tore it open.

It read:

Dear Geraldine,
I read Emily's poem through four times. After the fourth reading I confess to being still as confused about its significance for you. I am not a magician; I must have facts to assemble the truth, so that I can help you.

I was drawn to this lace collar while browsing in an antique shop on the weekend. It reminded me of you and Emily. It seemed to belong to you. Passion and rage beneath the lace. Yet if lace was her prison, she found freedom in wearing it. She never confused her two worlds.

G.M.H.

The lace collar was exquisite. It was the colour of yellow ivory; once it had been snow

white. The collar was pointed, like daggers to the heart. I marvelled at the workmanship. It must have taken painstakingly long hours to produce this beautiful creation. Each stitch sealed its creator's fate. Then came the shame and humiliation of having to wear it, chains that fettered.

His implied question lay unanswered between us. What was my lace collar? I laid the collar flat on its open package. Then possessed of curiosity, I touched it and picked it up. What would it feel like to wear it? I wondered.

EACH STITCH SEALED ITS
CREATOR'S FATE. THEN CAME
THE SHAME AND HUMILIATION
OF HAVING TO WEAR IT ...

I fastened it around my throat. My throat was so dry that I couldn't get air. Where the lace collar touched my skin I could feel tiny pinpricks of heat. I sat there, unwilling to divest myself of my lace collar that I wore as a hairshirt. How well he had chosen his gift. It would always be there to tingle my skin. The moment passed, like a broken spell. Had I imagined my fascination for the lace collar? My skin felt cool to the touch. It was just an ordinary yellow lace collar. As I unfastened it, I thought, I can put it where I'll never see it.

In the days that followed, I could not put the lace collar away. It remained tucked away at the back of my bedside table with other bits of rubbish from former occupants. But whenever I walked into that small, grey room, my flesh met lace. Some-

where in a dark corner of my mind, a flame was lit. I was a moth, drawn to it against my will. Yet my fascination for the light overcame my fear of burning flesh. Where lace met my flesh, I had failed. I wanted to break free of the lace collar, free of myself, but I couldn't. I could still, in my imagination, feel the prickly heat of that collar.

It was not just the lace collar that bound me. My fear was nameless. I wished that I were Catholic, like Gerald, so that I could offer my lace collar as a penance. Would confessing it make it go away? I had this image of Emily imprisoned in her room. Did she wear her lace collar there, while she spun her evocative poems that held and fastened me?

My pride had spun out my lies, like a fine cobweb. I had trapped myself there. Was I the black widow spider who devoured her mate? As a mistress of deceit, I was deceived by my own lies. Despite her lace collar, Emily knew the truth. Emily's way meant finding my way through the lies to the truth.

I had two choices, Emily's or Dr. Hopkin's. Was it my imagination, or in exchange for the gift of the lace collar, was he asking for my soul? Was it worth more to me than my silence?

I could not let him have my soul to prod, dissect and destroy. Couldn't he see what he was doing to me? I had to make him see. It was there in every poem I sent.

"Help me. Please, Emily!" I prayed. Did she have a poem about possession?

I experienced a freedom from my husband Gerald's possessiveness of me when I left. I took a

holiday once without him and found my soul again. Somewhere, amidst the ruins, was my inner child, Nina, huddled and frightened. Nina was the pure innocent child I once was. Gerald beat her with scathing, subtle words. I believed the lies he told me, because the truth mixed with them made them stand for truth. And in some dark, lonely place, my inner child whimpered for the comforts of warmth and light. I deserted her because I believed the lies that Gerald told me.

I couldn't go on with my memories. They were too painful to relive. What brought on that spiralling journey into the heart of darkness? Emily. You prodded and ferreted the truth out of me. It was time to make Dr. Hopkins see the truth. I took up my pen in an unsteady hand. I wrote:

Dear Dr. Gerald Manley Hopkins,

I still have some doubt as to whether that really is your name. I appreciated your provocative gift - the lace collar.

I would like you to read this next poem. Perhaps if I spell it out, you will be able to embellish it. It's about possession. Here's one of your hard cold facts.

Geraldine

He fumbles at your soul
 As players at the Keys
 Before they drop full music on -
 He stuns you by degrees -
 Prepares your brittle nature
 For the Ethereal Blow
 By fainter hammers - further
 heard -
 Then nearer - Then so slow
 Your breath has time to
 straighten
 Your brain - to bubble cool -
 Deals-One-Imperial - Thunderbolt
 That scalps your Naked Soul -
 When Winds take Forests in their
 Paws-
 The Universe - is still-
 Emily Dickenson

I lay back on my bed, physically exhausted, and pulled the faded greenish-grey coverlet over my body. Time to sleep and wait. I had pushed my letter under the door and strained for any sounds of life. I squinted through the crack, motionless for at least an hour. Still no one had come



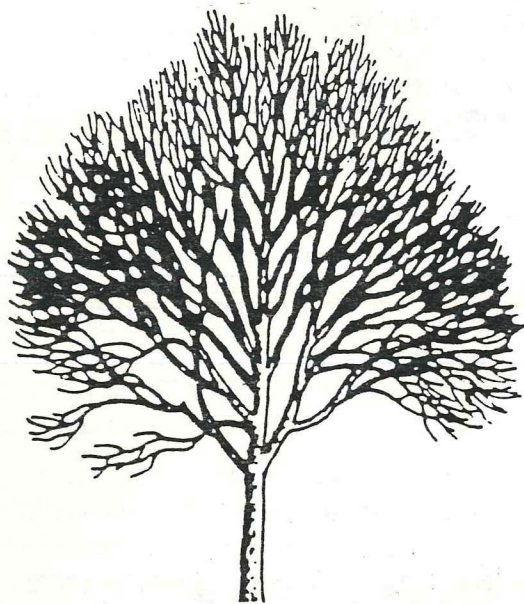
He laughed at my Jewish blood. When I fought back, in the heat of our arguments, he taunted me that my strain of Jewish blood made me crazy, like a bitch in heat. "Love makes me crazy," I said. What was it, love, passion or sex? He had a mesmerizing quality that I begged for like a hungry slut. Love confused for sex. What I was looking for was some comfort and warmth. We were hungry for it, like two drowning souls. I gave up my soul to the sea of our passion, and it never returned.

He had Sarah mesmerized too. I could hear her bright, uncluttered laughter, the laughter of a child adored. I watched her worship him. I watched them from afar, whispering together like conspirators. I stifled my fears as I saw him cultivate her wor-

to pick up my letter. I felt as if I had ceased to exist; I was all alone. Why should I even care if he answered? Finally my muscles were too sore from their unaccustomed straining and I gave up my crouched position for the comfort of my bed, letting my thoughts wander. I stared up at a piece of plaster that was hanging by threads over my bed. I had this dread that it would fall crashing down upon me in my sleep.

All I could do was wait in hope that he would read and understand Emily's poem.

I felt pulled inside out, naked and exposed, as if someone had pulled out my pockets and laid out the contents on a table; stale kleenex, dirty odds and ends, and old cigarette butts. I stood there foolish and vulnerable, unable to conceal my pockets' contents. My humiliation was acute. I had always felt disdain for older people who wet their beds at night. Now I understood. Thank God, I thought, I at least have control over my body. I fell asleep dreaming of being a tree, stripped bare of foliage. ♀



SYMPTOMS OF INNER PEACE

by Saskia Davis

Be on the lookout for symptoms of inner peace. The hearts of a great many have already been exposed to inner peace and it is possible that people everywhere could come down with it in epidemic proportions. This could pose a serious threat to what has, up to now, been a fairly stable condition of conflict in the world.

Some signs and symptoms of inner peace:

- * A tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than on fears based on past experience.
- * An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.
- * A loss of interest in judging other people.
- * A loss of interest in judging self.
- * A loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others.
- * A loss of interest in conflict.
- * A loss of the ability to worry. (This is a very serious symptom.)
- * Frequent attacks of smiling.
- * An increasing tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.
- * An increased susceptibility to the love extended by others as well as the uncontrollable urge to extend it.

WARNING:
If you have some or all of the above symptoms, please be advised that your condition of inner peace may be so far advanced as not to be curable. If you are exposed to anyone exhibiting any of these symptoms, remain exposed only at your own risk.



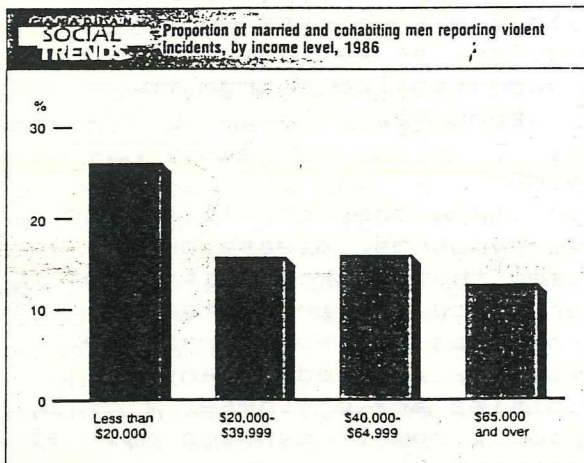
The family can provide a private setting for the development of love and companionship. But the very privacy that fosters emotional attachments between partners also allows the expression of violent antagonism.

When surveyed under circumstances guaranteeing anonymity, Canadian men aged 18 and over reported that they had committed significant amounts of violence against their partners. In many instances, the violence was not an isolated incident, but had occurred several times during the previous year.

Overall, 12% of men reported that they had pushed, grabbed, or shoved their mates at least once during the previous year, and in two-thirds of these cases, the incidents had occurred more than once. Another 9% reported they had thrown an object at a mate.

Rates of more serious types of violence were lower: 6% reported kicking, biting, or hitting with a fist, 5% reported slapping, and 5% said they had hit with an object or had attempted to do so. Fewer than 3% reported beating their mates, while less than 1% claimed to have either threatened to use or actually used a knife or gun.

Almost one in five (18%) married or cohabiting men had committed at least one of eight listed violent acts.¹ The figure rose to about 30% among divorced or separated respondents. Considering only the five most serious acts, each of which carries a high risk of serious injury, about 10% of married and cohabiting men reported at least one such incident.



CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS — AUTUMN 1989

A CO-DEPENDENT LOVE SONG

The yes I say
Yes I understand
I hear you
Yes I hear you restless
Resentful of too much
Too close
The yes is mind-yes

My heart knows and no's

It longs for longing
Finds refusal a usual
and useful drug

dreams customary
comforting
addicted
dreams

weaves daisy chains of desire

clenched
my heart is like this hand
grasping
fingers tight

I pry up each habit
to loose you painfully

I am free

Robin Ledrew



GREENPEACE

TOXICS

Stepping Lightly
on the Earth:

Everyone's Guide to Toxics
in the Home



Industries pollute, especially the chemical manufacturing industry. They release billions of pounds of toxic chemicals into the air, water and soil each year. Much of this toxic pollution is the result of poor management—faulty equipment, out-of-date processes, poorly-designed products, etc.

But households play a crucial role in the toxics crisis too. Individuals and families can choose products for their homes and personal care that make their homes “safe havens” from toxic pollutants . . . or they can buy products that give off toxics and accumulate as household hazardous waste.

Changes in the toxic habits of industries come at great public expense and effort—lengthy political and legal processes in addition to massive, tax-supported regulatory agencies. Changing purchasing patterns at home can be quick and easy, save money, solve house-

hold toxics problems . . . and support industries that don't add to the toxics crisis.

There is no easy way out for household toxics. Community programs for collecting leftover paints, pesticides, and other “home-grown” toxic wastes don't prevent toxic pollution. They only shift the point of impact. These household toxics are taken to so-called disposal facilities—landfills, incinerators and injection wells—that blow, leak and leach toxic pollutants into the environment.

The solution to toxics problems, at home and in industries is *not* new disposal sites, it is *source reduction*—avoiding the use and production of toxics in the first place.

That is what this guide is all about—practical ways to “detox” your home.

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Just Say No... To Health Risks

Clinical ecology, a new branch of medicine, deals with the health effects of synthetic and natural substances common to modern life. Clinical ecologists suggest that many diseases are *environmentally induced*. Constant exposure to low concentrations of numerous complex substances, especially those that are alien to all known life forms, creates a "chemical stress" on the body's defenses, such as the immune system.

"Chemical sensitivity" occurs when prolonged or heightened exposure to one or more substances pushes a person over the resistance threshold. Effects can include a wide variety of behavioral and physical health problems. Clinical ecologists find that chemical sensitivities are often dismissed as the "flu" or recurring and persistent "colds."

These diseases are often linked to pollutants in the communities and workplaces of the sufferers. In fact, clinical ecologists have repeatedly tracked the offending substances right into their patients' homes.

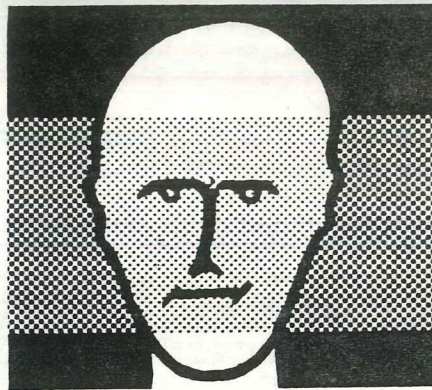
Reducing health risks from toxics at home is, in large part, a matter of developing new habits. The first step in "detox-ing" your home is knowing what substances to say "NO!" to:

Plastics

Plastics are popular because they are cheap. Their price tags—like those of many other highly-processed petroleum products—don't include the health and environmental debts incurred during their production and disposal. Plastics cause toxic pollution during all stages of their production and use. Some forms of plastic, such as styrofoam and vinyl, constantly give off harmful gases. At home, toxic emissions from plastic products add to indoor pollution problems.

Solvents

Petroleum-based chemicals are used as solvents in thousands of household products. These synthetic solvents are sold alone as cleaners and degreasers. The solvents in many household items—paints, polishes, cleaners, glues, correction fluids, and thinners—evaporate quickly, filling the air with toxic fumes.



Aerosols

Banning ozone-destroying propellants did not end the aerosol problem. The unrecyclable canisters are a waste of resources and a long-term pollutant. Every time you use an aerosol product, minute particles of the propellant—along with polish, paint, or hairspray—contaminate the air you breathe.

Biocides

Entomologists are finding that more than 99% of the insecticides and herbicides applied to U.S. farmland misses the target organisms and spread through the ecosystem. Many of these highly toxic, persistent substances bioaccumulate as they move up the food chain. For example, the bodies of cows fed on biocide-treated grain may selectively absorb the toxic chemical, so the cows end up with higher levels of the biocide than the grain they ate. By the same process, people who eat meat or dairy products from these cows can, in turn, end up with higher levels of biocides in their systems than the cows had.

Contaminated Foods

More than 12,000 substances are added to our foods, including preservatives, antioxidants, stabilizers, pesticides, plasticizers, and artificial colors, flavors, and sweeteners. Some are listed on labels, but many aren't. Some are said to be harmless, and some are known to cause birth defects and cancer and to suppress immune systems.

The Alternative: General Principles

Source Reduction

Source reduction means stopping the toxics problem before it starts—eliminating

the sources of toxic pollution instead of waiting to cope with its effects. *Source reduction means never having to say you're poisoned.*

Recover/Reuse/Recycle

Newspapers, glass and cans are well-known recycle/reuse items, but there are many more. Rather than discarding things out of habit, we can examine our "trash" for its reuse potential. Bags, both paper and plastic, can be reused; partially used paper can be made into telephone scratch pads; old furniture and clothing can be routed to those who do want them. That old saying, "One man's trash is another man's treasure," may be trite...and sexist...but there's truth in it.

Simple and Natural

Natural materials—items and substances that occur in nature—usually involve less pollution and interact more gently with the environment and our bodies than do highly-processed, synthetic materials. Rather than using a product with several complex chemical ingredients, put a simple substitute together yourself, or buy one.

Zero Toxics: The Ultimate Goal

One of the major myths of the industrial era is that of "safe" or "acceptable" levels of toxic contamination. So-called "acceptable levels" of lead, radiation exposure, etc. keep dropping as scientists study health effects more closely. Predicting the health effects of only one toxic chemical is endlessly complex and costly. How much will it cost and how long will it take to estimate the impacts of even simple mixtures of a few of the more common toxics?

Read Between the Lines

Don't automatically assume a product is safe just because it's on the market; and don't assume the label tells the whole story. All government safety standards are a compromise between economic pressures and the health needs of humans and the environment. Many of the chemicals in foods and household products have never been tested.

Think Globally, Act at Home

Toxic pollution will not be stopped by one or two worldwide changes. It will be stopped by millions of people making many small changes at home, at work and in their communities. A world that is free from persistent, bioaccumulative toxics is not only possible, it is vital.

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The Alternatives: Specifics

Basic Ingredients

Five basic ingredients serve as the building blocks for most home cleaning needs:

Baking Soda Cleans and deodorizes. Softens water to increase sudsing and cleaning power of soap. Good scouring powder.

Borax Cleans and deodorizes. Excellent disinfectant. Softens water. Available in laundry section of grocery store.

Soap Biodegrades safely and completely and is non-toxic. Available in grocery stores and health food stores. Sold as liquid, flakes, powder, or in bars. Bars can be grated to dissolve more easily in hot water. Insist on soap without synthetic scents, colors, or other additives. Synthetic detergents cause more poisonings than any other household product. Even phosphate-free, biodegradable laundry detergent contributes to water pollution.

Washing Soda Cuts grease and removes stains. Disinfects. Softens water. Available in laundry section of grocery store or in pure form from chemical supply houses as "sodium carbonate."

White Vinegar Cuts grease and freshens.

General Cleaners

Use the simplest, mildest formula that will get the job done. First try warm water mixed with soap (or vinegar if the surface will show spots), adding vinegar, borax, washing soda, or baking soda if needed. (For metric conversions, see *References*).

Air Freshener Commercial fresheners work by masking smells, coating nasal passages, and deadening nerves to diminish sense of smell. Instead:

- find sources of odors and eliminate them;
- keep house and closets clean and well-ventilated;
- grow lots of houseplants;
- to absorb odors, place 2-4 T. baking soda or vinegar in small bowls in refrigerator and around house, and pour ½ c. baking soda in bottom of trash can;
- for natural fragrance, boil sweet herbs and spices.

All-purpose Cleaner Mix 2 t. borax and 1 t. soap in 1 qt. water for a cleaner you can store in a spray bottle.

Ammonia Use ammonia only when other cleansers won't do the trick. Ammonia cuts heavy grease and grime, but can be dangerous. Fumes irritate eyes and lungs and can be harmful to people with respiratory problems. Always provide good ventilation. *Never mix ammonia with bleach or commercial cleansers—deadly fumes may form.*

Disinfectant For a hospital-quality disinfectant, use ¼ c. borax dissolved in ½ gal. hot water. Keeping surfaces clean and dry reduces the need for disinfectants.

Scouring Powder If available, buy a powder without chlorine, colors, detergents, or talc; or scrub with a sponge or firm-bristled brush, soap, and one of the following: borax, baking soda, or table salt.

Cleaning Methods

Carpets Remove stains promptly by scraping up solids and blotting liquids; follow by dabbing with a solution of water and vinegar. Sponge with clean water and blot dry. For getting rid of odors and greasy soil, mix 2 parts corn meal with 1 part borax, sprinkle liberally, leave one hour, and vacuum. Using doormats or removing shoes at the door will lessen the need for cleaning. (Again, as a last resort, a solution of water and ammonia can be used; if used, neutralize spot with weak vinegar solution.)

Dishes Use liquid soap or powdered soap. For tougher jobs, add 2-3 t. vinegar. In automatic dishwashers, use equal parts borax and washing soda, increasing the proportion of soda if your water is hard. Standard "dishwashing liquids" are detergents designed to create unnecessary suds.

Drains Again, prevention is top priority. Some rules-of-thumb: never pour grease down a drain, always use a drain sieve or hair trap, and clean metal screen or stopper mechanism regularly. If necessary, remove hair with a ¼-inch bend in the end of a coat hanger. Once a week, as routine maintenance, plug overflow drain with wet rag, pour ¼ c. baking soda down drain, follow with ½ c. vinegar, and close drain tightly until fizzing stops. Flush with 1 gal. of boiling water. If flow slows

or stops, plug overflow drain, dissolve 1 lb. washing soda in 3 gal. boiling water, pour down drain, and use a plunger with petroleum jelly on its rim for a good seal. If clog persists, flush drain with same formula and use a plumber's snake instead of a plunger.

Ovens Prevention is top priority. Avoid over-filling pans, scrape up spills as soon as food is cool enough to handle, and put a cookie sheet or a piece of foil on bottom rack when baking pies. When clean-up is needed, use steel wool and washing soda with a small amount of water. (As a last resort for particularly bad grime, use ½ c. ammonia dissolved in 1 gal. hot water for scrubbing; provide plenty of ventilation.)

Tub, Tile and Toilet Scrub with sponge or firm-bristled brush, using powdered soap and a scouring powder of baking soda, borax or table salt. Use undiluted vinegar to loosen lime deposits.

Windows and Mirrors For routine cleaning, use 3 T. vinegar with 1 qt. warm water. If glass is particularly dirty, first wash with warm soapy water.

Laundry

When making the initial switch from a detergent to a soap laundry cleaner, wash items once with washing soda only. This will eliminate detergent residues which might otherwise react with soap to cause a yellowing of fabrics.

Bleach Substitute ½ c. borax per washload to whiten whites and brighten colors. If needed, occasionally use powdered, non-chlorine bleach.

Detergent Add ½ c. washing soda to water before placing clothes in machine and substitute soap flakes or powder for detergent. Add ½ c. borax for additional cleaning power. If you have "hard" water, use a phosphate-free detergent.

Dry Cleaning Buy items you can wash or clean on your own. Most dry cleaning solvents, such as perchloroethylene, are toxic. If you must dry clean, air clothing out thoroughly before bringing indoors. Many garments whose labels specify "dry clean only" can be safely handwashed using mild soap or vinegar.

Fabric Softener Add 1 c. vinegar or ¼ c. baking soda during final rinse. To reduce static cling in tumble dried synthet-

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ics, dampen hands when folding or line dry instead.

Presoak Soak heavily soiled items in warm water with ½ c. washing soda for 30 minutes. Rub soiled areas with liquid soap.

Spray Starch Dissolve 2 T. cornstarch in 1 pint cold water in spray bottle. Shake before each use. For delicate fabrics, dissolve 1 package unflavored gelatine; or add 2 T. granulated sugar to 2 c. hot water. Dip corner of fabric into solution to test; if fabric becomes sticky when dry, add more water.

Stain Remover Take immediate action! Soak spot in cool water at once and sponge away as much of stain as possible. Treat remaining stain as outlined below, observing these additional rules: test remedy on hidden area to make sure fabric isn't harmed; repeat remedy if necessary; air dry fabric, since dryer heat can "set" some stains permanently.

Blood Soak in cold water 30 minutes, rub with soap, rinse in cold water. If stain persists, put a few drops of ammonia on stain, rub with soap, rinse. If necessary, wash with borax.

Chocolate and Coffee Soak in cold water, rub with soap and a mild borax solution, rinse. Wash in water as hot as fabric can tolerate.

Fruit and Wine Soak in cold water 30 minutes, rub soap into remaining stain and wash in water as hot as fabric will stand. Bleach with lemon juice and sunlight if needed.

Grass Rub with glycerine (available in drug stores), let stand 1 hour, wash.

Grease Pour boiling water on white cottons, rub with solution of washing soda in water. For other materials, blot with towel, dampen stain, rub with soap and baking soda. Wash in water as hot as possible, using extra soap.

Ink For ballpoint stains, sponge with rubbing alcohol, rub with soap, rinse, wash. For felt-tip stains, rub with soap, rinse, wash.

Lipstick Rub with cold cream or shortening to dissolve color, rinse area with solution of washing soda in warm water to remove grease. Wash in soapy water as hot as fabric will stand.

Mildew Wash with soap and water. Rinse well and dry in sun. If spot re-

mains, apply lemon juice, rub with salt, dry in sun, wash.

Perspiration Rub with solution of vinegar or lemon juice in water.

Rust Saturate with lemon juice, rub with salt. Place in direct sunlight until dry, then wash.

Soiled Diapers Presoak in 3 T. baking soda dissolved in warm water.

Urine Rub with solution of baking soda in water, rinse in warm water, and wash.

Personal Care

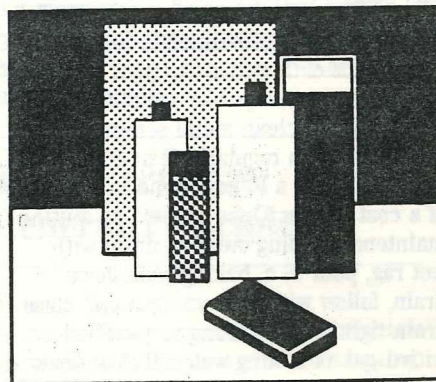
Bath and Hand Soap Use soaps without artificial scents or colors.

Deodorant and Antiperspirant To minimize body odors, apply coconut oil, baking soda, or baking soda mixed with corn starch.

Hair Conditioner For normal hair, saturate hair with olive, sesame, or corn oil, wrap head in very hot, damp towels for 20 minutes, and shampoo. For dry hair, mix ¼ c. honey and 1 c. olive oil, and warm. Apply 2 T. to scalp and massage. Cover head with very hot damp towel for 10 minutes, then shampoo. For treating split ends, massage hair and ends with warm olive or avocado oil and wrap head in towel for 8-12 hours. Wash with shampoo to which one egg yolk has been added, and rinse with diluted vinegar.

Hair Shampoo (a) 1 c. liquid castile soap with ¼ c. olive, avocado, or almond oil and ½ c. distilled water; or (b) liquid castile soap diluted in an equal amount of water.

Hair Spray Use hair styles that don't require sprays; or chop 1 lemon and boil in 2 c. water until volume is reduced to half. Cool and strain. Refrigerate in a spray bottle.



Insect Repellent Apply very small amounts of citronella oil.

Medications Follow your doctor's advice for all medications. But for diseases and toxic pollutants alike, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." The formula is familiar and it works—clean, whole foods, fresh air, exercise, laughter, rest, etc. Many people find folk medicine and herbal cures at least as effective for some diseases as complex drugs. (See *References*).

Mouthwash Dissolve 1 t. baking soda in a glass of water or 1 t. salt in a glass of warm water; or use sage, birch, or mint tea.

Nail Polish Powdered, dried henna (the leaf of an Asian tree) is available in several colors. Combine colors to produce desired shade. Mix ¼ t. with water to make a paste. Rub into nails, allow to dry, then buff.

Perfume Buy "natural" rather than "synthetic" or "artificial" oils. Use very small amounts. Essential oils can be substituted.

Shaving Cream Use a thin lather of plain soap.

Suntan Lotion Sesame oil acts as moisturizer and sunscreen. Also try cocoa butter, or a mixture of olive oil and cider vinegar.

Toothpaste Use plain baking soda or baking soda mixed with peppermint extract or your favorite essential oil or extract.

Baby Care:

Baby and Body Powder Substitute corn starch.

Baby Oil Substitute vegetable oil.

Diapers Use cotton diapers rather than disposables. Diaper services usually cost no more than disposable diapers.

Office Products

Adhesive Tape Use paper clips, staples, string, or non-toxic glues whenever possible.

Carbonless Copies Use traditional carbon paper.

Glue Use stick-type glue or basic white glue. Avoid glues and cements that emit the smell of solvents (e.g. rubber cement, hobby glue).

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Markers Use crayons, china markers (wax pencils), or colored pencils instead of solvent-based markers.

Typewriter Correction Fluid Use correction tape that covers errors or lifts them off without the use of solvents. When you must use fluid, use the water-based type made for photocopies.

Polishes

Floors Preserve existing wax as long as possible by sweeping regularly, wiping up spills as they occur, and damp-mopping occasionally. When necessary, mop with warm soapy water. When rewaxing is needed, instead of a solvent-based wax, use a water-based "self-polishing" product. A do-it-yourself option for wood floors is to melt $\frac{1}{8}$ c. paraffin in a double boiler, add 1 qt. mineral oil and a few drops of lemon essence. Apply with rag, allow to dry, and polish until completely smooth. Avoid "one-step" products which apply wax with each use, causing wax buildup.

Furniture

Light Polishing Use a damp cloth to clean most surfaces, and the luster of wood can often be brought out with a soft, dry cloth.

Unwaxed Wood Dissolve 1 t. lemon oil (or 1 c. lemon juice) in 1 pint mineral or vegetable oil and apply with a soft cloth. Buff hard with clean cloth until completely dry and smooth.

Waxed wood Melt $\frac{1}{4}$ c. paraffin and $\frac{1}{4}$ c. vinegar together in a double boiler; soak a clean soft cloth in the mixture for $\frac{1}{2}$ hour and wring; when dry, use as a polishing cloth.

Metals Rub with a soft, damp cloth as follows, then rinse, and polish with a dry cloth.

Aluminum Dip cloth in lemon juice and rinse with warm water; or soak overnight in a mixture of vinegar and water, then rub.

Brass Mix equal parts salt and flour with a little vinegar, then rub.

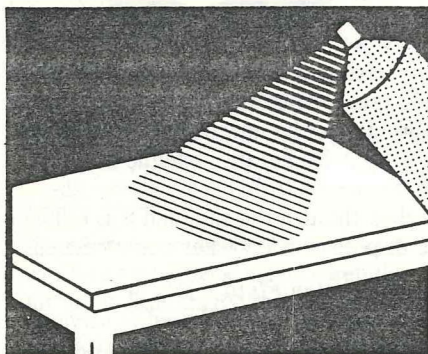
Chrome Rub with undiluted vinegar.

Copper Rub with lemon juice and salt, or hot vinegar and salt.

Gold Wash in lukewarm soapy water, dry, and polish with a chamois cloth.

Silver and Stainless Steel Rub with a paste of baking soda and water.

Shoes Make a non-toxic polish from walnut or other nut oil, or olive oil. Apply and buff. Buy shoes made of canvas, suede, or other materials that don't require polish. If you must use commercial polishes, avoid products whose labels don't list contents and those containing toxic solvents—trichloroethylene, methylene chloride, nitrobenzene, etc. Use good ventilation, and allow to dry completely before wearing shoes.



Furniture and Building Materials

Provide ample ventilation if toxics-emitting materials are already installed. Non-toxic sealants can reduce harmful emissions from chipboard, plywood and woods treated with hazardous preservatives such as pentachlorophenol. "Off-gassing" from furniture and building materials does tend to diminish with time. However, for future home improvements, think non-toxic. (See *References* for books listing suppliers.)

Asbestos This carcinogen is now restricted from use as an insulation and pipe covering. It is still found, however, in older buildings and in stoves, furnaces, appliances, and in some roofing, flooring and siding materials. *Avoid it at all costs.* Seek expert advice before removing or handling suspect materials.

Caulking All liquid caulks emit solvent fumes when drying, and do-it-yourself brands emit them for months. Use roll type soft caulk or permanent moulding instead. When you must use a liquid caulk, have a professional use a "double-component polyurethane." Provide ventilation as long as odors linger.

Carpet and Flooring Avoid synthetics in favor of naturally-occurring materials such as wool, cotton, and wood. Buy rugs and carpets that have not been treated with insecticides and fungicides. When

rugs are cleaned, insist that no pesticides be used. Buy real linoleum (a long-lasting composite of wood flour, linseed oil, pine resins, and burlap) instead of imitation.

Insulation The safest bets: probably "rock wool" or aluminum-backed fiberglass. Get as many facts as you can before buying any insulating materials.

Harmful gaseous emissions, cancer-causing or irritating particles, etc. are common among the following insulating materials: urea-formaldehyde; polyurethane (blown-in-place and rigid panels); asbestos; fiberglass on kraft paper with asphalt adhesive; cellulose; vermiculite and perlite.

Paint Use water-based paints instead of solvent-based to minimize toxic emissions and allow clean-up with water. Paint when windows can be opened for good ventilation and when warm air will dry surfaces more rapidly. Vacate painted rooms until odors subside—about 2 weeks for water-based paints. Emissions from the more than 300 toxic chemicals that have been identified in solvent-based paints may linger for months after the paint is applied. When removing old paint, wear a mask; sand or scrape as much as possible to reduce the need for solvents. To remove old paint from brushes, place in an old pan with vinegar, boil several minutes, and wash with soap and water.

Plastic Use wood, rock, concrete, paper, and other "soft-tech" materials that don't add to the toxics burden at home . . . and in the world at large . . . that accompanies the production and use of plastics.

Plywood and Particle Board Use whole woods whenever possible. Formaldehyde emissions from plywood and particle board are major contributors to airborne toxics in homes. If accessible, these materials may be sealed to reduce emissions.

Used Construction Materials Avoid used railroad ties and utility poles. These materials have been treated with pentachlorophenol, creosote or other toxic, persistent chemicals. Contaminants can spread to people, pets, soil, and groundwater. These ties and poles should *never* be burned or used to construct barbecue pits. Stone, brick or cement are non-toxic alternatives for lining gardens and walkways.

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Water Pipes Use steel or galvanized pipe and lead-free solder. Lead pipe and lead solder are *not* suitable for water-carrying uses. Both contaminate drinking water with this heavy metal which has harmful effects at very low concentrations. Lead pipes, which can still be found in older buildings and communities, should be replaced.

Wood Finishes Use natural oils or beeswax rather than products containing solvents or synthetics. Simple non-toxic finishes can be used to seal interior woods and many exterior woods. (see *References*).

Wood Preservatives Use rot-resistant woods (redwood, cypress, and red cedar), concrete, and construction techniques designed to eliminate the need for preservatives. Otherwise, apply less-toxic preparations: for indoor applications, boric acid and acetic acid products; for outdoors, copper or zinc formulas. (See *References*).

Wood preservatives containing pentachlorophenol (Penta), are among the most hazardous of consumer products. Despite well-known health risks, Penta is still widely used in Canadian and U.S. wood products and is available over-the-counter in Canada. This persistent, bioaccumulative toxic has been found in more than 80% of U.S. citizens.

Car and Garage

Use bikes, walking, public transportation, and carpooling as much as possible. Reduce pollution from your car as follows:

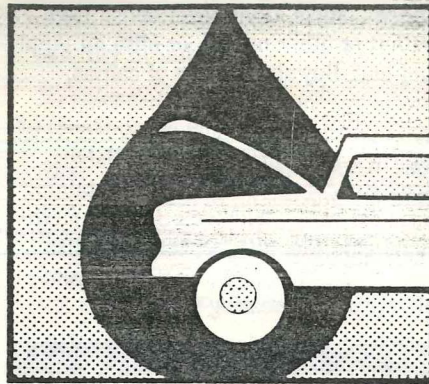
- use unleaded gasoline (along with an additive if your engine was designed for leaded);
- keep engine well-tuned;
- make sure the catalytic converter is functioning properly;
- avoid jackrabbit starts and high speeds;
- avoid skin contact with used oil and other automotive liquids; they contain metals and other highly toxic compounds and require special disposal.

Use appropriate disposal for products used in car maintenance.

Antifreeze Place directly in sewer; do not pour on soil, in alleys, etc.

Motor Oil and Batteries Deliver to a service station or reclamation center for recycling.

Solvents Store contaminated kerosene, diesel fuel, and other solvents in closed



jars until particles settle out, then strain and reuse. When thoroughly used, these solvents may be mixed with waste oil for recycling. Do not use gasoline as a solvent since its toxic chemicals are absorbed through the skin and it is difficult to dispose of safely when contaminated.

Transmission Fluid May be mixed with waste oil and delivered to service station for recycling.

Controlling Indoor Pests

Rules-of-Thumb

- don't overreact; one or two insects are not an invasion, and some, such as spiders, help keep others under control;
- locate and block pests' points of entry;
- keep kitchen, floors, and garbage pails clean to eliminate pests' food supplies; and,
- remove clutter to eliminate nesting areas.

Ants To get rid of carpenter ants, use boric acid, silica/pyrethrin insecticides, or electrical-control devices available in hardware stores. Block cracks and other entry points tightly. Plant insect-repelling herbs, such as mint or onions, outside house to repel intruders.

Cockroaches Caulk all cracks along baseboards, shelves, cupboards, pipes, sinks, etc. Use "roach motel" or other non-toxic traps to monitor population. Some commercial products and services now use an effective mixture of borax and diatomaceous earth. To repel from food storage areas, place bay leaves in cupboards. Apply a light dust of borax around fridge, stove, ductwork, and other sensitive areas or try a mixture of 2 T. flour, 1 T. cocoa powder, and 4 T. borax (keep out of reach of children and pets). Another option is to buy and use a 99% boric acid product formulated for insecticidal use. Allow 2 weeks for these methods to take effect.

Fleas and Ticks Routinely rub pet's coat with brewer's yeast and add it to their food. Wash pet with warm soapy water, dry thoroughly, and use this rinse: ½ c. fresh or dried rosemary in one quart of boiling water; steep 20 minutes, strain, and cool. Spray or sponge evenly onto pet and allow to dry. Do *not* towel dry. Also try "insecticidal soap," or a shampoo containing d-Limonene (available in pet shops), Avoid flea collars containing pesticides.

To rid a house of fleas, vacuum frequently and use flea traps: lights suspended a few inches above shallow dishes filled with soapy water. Heat-seeking fleas will jump toward the light, fall into the dish and drown.

Fruit Flies Build a trap: pour ¼ c. beer into a wide-mouth jar; poke a pencil-sized hole in a sheet of paper; cover the mouth of the jar using this paper and a rubber band. Fruitflies, attracted by the smell of the beer, will enter and be trapped.

Houseflies Use sticky untreated flypaper; or make your own with honey and yellow paper.

Houseplant Pests (see *Lawn and Garden*)

Mice and Rats Keep storage areas clean and tidy, and seal holes in walls. Use mousetraps or a cat; or mix 1 part plaster of paris with 1 part flour and a little sugar and cocoa powder; sprinkle where rodents (but not children or pets) will find it.

Moths Keep vulnerable clothes clean, dry, and well-aired. Store clothes in cedar-lined closet or trunk. Seal clothes tightly in boxes or bags with moth-repellent sachets: small cotton bags filled with cedar shavings, dried lavender, or equal parts dried rosemary and mint. Avoid conventional mothballs and flakes, which are made of toxic chemicals.

Silverfish Prevent dampness that encourages silverfish. Make a trap by placing 1 part molasses to 2 parts vinegar in a dish near the problem area.

Spiders In general, leave spiders alone—they eat other insect pests. Otherwise, trap them in an inverted jar and toss them outside.

Termites Special construction techniques or structural changes can prevent infestations. For minimally toxic options, contact the National Coalition Against

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Misuse of Pesticides, or the Bio-Integral Resource Center (see *References*). Spot treatment is preferable to whole-house treatment. Do *not* apply or allow the application of the conventional termiticides—chlordane, heptachlor, aldrin, and lindane. These are highly toxic, persistent halogenated hydrocarbons that cause harmful effects at very low concentrations.

Lawn and Garden

Many good books and periodicals are available on modern organic gardening and lawn care. Check *References* section, and visit your library. The general principles of indoor pest control also apply outdoors.

Barriers Collars of stiff paper, fitted snugly around stems on top of soil stop larvae from burrowing around plants. Fine netting such as cheesecloth protects seedlings from insects, cats, and birds.

Companion Planting Certain pests dislike certain plants, and you can put this to good use. For example, *beans* can be planted near potatoes to ward off both potato beetles and bean beetles; and, *chives* will chase aphids from roses.

Fertilizer Compost lawn, garden, and food wastes for a dirt-cheap supply of soil-enriching humus. Used with other additives such as bone meal, wood ashes and granite dust, compost yields rich healthy soil. Don't use any artificial fertilizer without a soil test. Avoid highly-processed fertilizers which add to pollution problems.

Handpicking Time-consuming, but unbeatable as a non-toxic alternative. Both weeds and pests can be handpicked. Wearing gloves, remove all offending invaders. Dandelions are edible but, if they unnerve you, cut them off several inches below the ground and reseed the bare spot.

Insect Repellents Many garden pests can be repelled from foliage (indoors and out) with sprays. For example,

Hot Peppers blend 2 or 3 very hot peppers, ½ onion, and 1 clove garlic in water. Boil, steep for 2 days, and drain through cloth. Can be frozen for future use. Avoid contact with eyes, skin, and mucous membranes.

Soap 2 T. of liquid soap per quart of water. Use only pure soap; additives and detergents may damage plants.

Another option is to use "insecticidal soap."

Insecticides A wide variety of non-toxic and less-toxic insecticides for lawns and gardens are commercially available. Ideally, these should affect only a few target pests, they should not release toxic pollutants to the air or water, and they should break down quickly to avoid polluting soil and water. The following examples meet some or all of these criteria, although labels must be carefully checked for "inert" ingredients that may be harmful, and for precautions in use (keep children and pets away, etc.):

Diatomaceous Earth the powdered skeletons of tiny marine creatures (avoid inhalation);

Pyrethrins extracts of certain chrysanthemums (check labels carefully for other toxic ingredients); and,

Bacillus Thuringiensis one of numerous bacteria which attack insects.

Mulching A protective covering of compost or sawdust (from untreated wood) on the ground around plants reduces evaporation, prevents erosion, enriches the soil, and controls weeds.

Plant Varieties Grasses adapted to local conditions will yield a lawn that requires less work. This goes for other plant varieties, too. Bluegrass is popular in many areas, but not necessarily best suited for all areas. Use pest- and disease-resistant plant varieties in the garden also.

Predator Insects Whether picking or spraying, leave predators such as spiders, ladybugs, snakes, and praying mantises alone. They're on your side.



Miscellaneous

Bags Whenever possible—use, reuse, and *ask for* paper rather than plastic

bags. If you can't avoid plastic bags, reuse them until they are completely useless.

Batteries Instead of disposable batteries, use rechargables wherever possible.

Charcoal Lighter Fluid Use regular charcoal, rather than the self-lighting kind, and patiently light the briquettes using crumpled paper and untreated wood kindling. Barbecuing pollutes the air and loads foods with toxic substances. If you feel you must barbecue, don't compound the problem by using lighter fluid.

Cookware Use glass or steel pans rather than aluminum. Avoid plastic "non-stick coatings" on cookware and on burner reflectors.

Food *Ask for* and buy organically grown produce and meats. Eat and shop where foods aren't encased in plastics.

Hard Water If you live in an area where the water is loaded with minerals ("hard") and don't have a household softening system, you should be able to use soap for most purposes by adding a little washing soda, baking soda, or borax to wash water as a softener, preferably before you add soap; this will tie up the minerals so the soap can do its job. To figure out how much to use, run a quick experiment. Putting ½ t. washing soda, 2 c. warm water, and 1 t. soap in a quart jar and shake. If suds develop and last several minutes, the water is soft enough. If not, repeat with the same amount of soap and increased amounts of washing soda, baking soda, or borax. When suds persist, that is the proportion of softener to water you will need for future cleaning chores. Unfortunately, though, soap won't work well in laundry with hard water, so use a phosphate-free detergent.

Heating Appliances Gas appliance flames should be blue, not orange or yellow. Have gas stoves and furnaces inspected periodically; they can be a major source of carbon monoxide and other indoor pollutants. Fireplaces must be well ventilated and their use minimized. Kerosene heaters should be avoided altogether.

Lubricants Use castor oil or mineral oil on hinges, doorknobs, and latches. Use powdered graphite on locks. Avoid lubricants containing solvents.

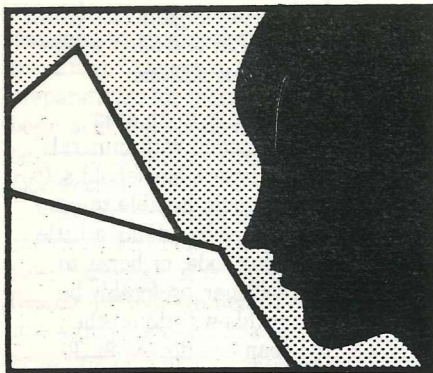
Radon If you live in an area where this naturally occurring radioactive gas is a common problem, have your basement tested.

TOXICS

References

Measurement Abbreviations and Metric Equivalents

teaspoon (t.)	5 ml
tablespoon (T.)	15 ml
cup (c.)	240 ml
1/3 cup	75 ml
1/4 cup	60 ml
pint (pt.)	1/2 L
quart (qt.)	1 L
gallon (gal.)	4 L



Magazines and Newsletters

- *Common Sense Pest Control Quarterly*, Bio-Integral Resource Center, (see below); discusses least-toxic methods for controlling insects, weeds, diseases.
- *Harrowsmith*, Camden House Publishing, Ltd.; 7 Queen Victoria Road, Camden East, Ontario K0K-1J0, CANADA; six issues per year on natural living and natural gardening.
- *Pesticides and You*, National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides, (see below); five issues per year on many pesticide topics.

Organizations

Bio-Integral Resource Center
P.O. Box 7414
Berkeley, CA 94707

National Coalition Against
the Misuse of Pesticides
530 7th Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

Books

- *Artist Beware*, Michael McCann, 1979.
- *Blueprint for a Green Planet: Your Practical Guide to Restoring the World's Environment*, John Seymour, 1987.
- *Natural Formula Book for Home and Yard*, Dan Wallace, 1982.
- *Nontoxic & Natural: How to Avoid Dangerous Everyday Products and Buy or Make Safe Ones*, Debra Lynn Dadd, 1984.
- *Office Hazards: How Your Job Can Make You Sick*, Joel Makower, 1981.
- *Well Body, Well Earth: The Sierra Club Environmental Health Sourcebook*, Mike Samuels & Hal Zina Bennett, 1983.

Greenpeace has compiled the information contained in this factsheet from a variety of sources and can assume no responsibility for the effectiveness of the suggestions. Caution is urged in the use of the cleaning solutions and pest-control substances. **Keep them out of the reach of children.**

Greenpeace is an international environmental group with offices in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, West Germany, United Kingdom and the United States.

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Pacific Southwest
Fort Mason, Building E
San Francisco, CA 94123
(415) 474-6767

Southeast
Box 50489
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32240
(904) 241-4310

FEET OF CLAY

I am a woman of the Universe
Bound to the Planet Earth
This pathetic dying world
That is as filled with violence
As I am with anger
So deep and cold that I have no tears to cry.
Just outrage, fear and terror.

Like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle
Which over a period of time
Fall into place.
And create a picture which is
Pornographic in its very ugliness.

What have they done to us?
These creatures who like to
Think they rule our world,
Who wield their power for
Power's sake.

Don't they know how many children
They are killing?
Murdering, starving.
Or how many women walk the streets
With souls that are dead?

What have they done to our world?
Our shining and beautiful planet.
With violence they are destroying it,
Destroying us.
The children, the women,
The whales and the ozone layer.



If I were a Christian I would
Say a thousand prayers.
"Please God. Strike them down.
The politicians. The men whose
Wealth and power control the
Fate of unborn children. Whose
Oil stinks up our seas and
Kills our world."

But I am not a Christian
So my prayers are never answered.
I cannot believe in myths
While our world dies
All around us.
Helpless, grieving
Just another senior citizen.
A mother
A grandmother
A woman

No, it is not for myself that
I grieve. But for Sarah Jane
And Anna Leah, for Catherine
And Trina Rose, and Jamie
And little Max
Aged one month to eight years.

May they live and
Sleep in peace.

Muriel Hurry

WOMEN DEFEND THEIR LEGAL RIGHTS IGNORANCE IS NOT BLISS

In a small room above Mexico City's merced vegetable market, seven women listen attentively. Carolina is explaining how her husband has run off with their children; after a year of searching she is desperate to get them back.

Carolina doesn't realize that Mexican law protects her right to custody of two children both under the age of five. As the women calmly explain what needs to be done, Carolina relaxes and begins to talk about the beatings and threats that her husband -- a policeman -- constantly subjected her to.

The women tell Carolina to look after her health and not to think she is responsible for abandoning the children. They understand her anguish because they come from neighbourhoods where violence inside and outside the home is commonplace.

Until this year, six of the seven women would probably have offered Carolina comfort but little hope. In January they qualified as Mexico's first defensoras populares and today they are telling women all over the city how they can defend themselves against violence and abuse.

For six months the women studied elements of Mexican law; they learned how to press charges at the police station and how to deal with judges and lawyers.

"For thirty years I dedicated myself to washing the floors, ironing the clothes and bringing up eight kids," Ramirez says. "At the age of 48 I learned that I have rights, I have value as a person and I am not too old to study."

The course was organized by Sedepak, an internationally funded human rights organization. Fifteen women studied three times a week for six months. The only qualifications for entry were the ability to read and write and the support of a social group concerned with women's issues.

Patricia Quezada, Sedepak's relations manager, explains that the course must be kept small for financial reasons and because study-visits to police stations and courts wouldn't be practical with a larger group. But because each defensora is also a member of a larger organization, the knowledge is spread to other women's groups, neighbourhood assemblies and work co-operatives.

"THE IDEA WAS NOT TO OFFER A LEGAL SERVICE TO WOMEN ... BUT TO SHOW THEM THEY CAN SOLVE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS."

The defensoras have been involved in producing a booklet that highlights the articles of Mexican law that are designed to protect a woman from violence. The booklet speaks a language that the women understand and is illustrated with cartoon sketches of Fulanas in curlers and bruises answering back to their burley husbands.

Ramirez first became aware of a need for change after the 1985 earthquake. She joined a neighbourhood assembly to help the homeless and injured in her

area. Ramirez took part in meetings to discuss housing issues but admits that she often went to sleep because she didn't understand what was going on.

"Now I'm the first to say 'Yes, I'll join the committee; I'll be on the march.'"

Sedepak intended to create a group that would become independent rather than always relying on highly qualified office staff for help.

"The idea was not to offer a legal service to women," Quezada says, "but to show them they can solve their own problems."

The defensoras meet every Tuesday to discuss the work of the past week and, when necessary, to counsel women like Carolina. They are joined by Rosa Ramirez, a qualified lawyer who co-ordinates the project for Sedepak.

From all over the city the women arrive at the market, trailing kids and bags of vegetables. They trade stories from their colonia neighbourhoods until, amidst laughter, someone insists the meeting should begin.

"We are relying too much on Rosa ... spiritually," says Laura Vargas, who feels that further study would help the women to work more independently of the Sedepak lawyer. "We need another course," she says, "I'm afraid we are stagnating."

The atmosphere is far from stagnant. Stella Montiel, a middle-aged woman, announces that she is forming a new women's group in her neighbourhood and that none of the members have belonged to an organization before. Ramirez says she wants the defensoras to talk to the women in her neighbourhood assembly where many members would like to join the next Sedepak course.

Carmen Solis Flores, sitting with her two-year-old son on her knee, says that a group of Mazahua indigenous women want to know more about their legal rights.

The idea for the defensoras scheme grew from a study that Sedepak carried out last year.



KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS The Sedepak brochure tells women who have been beaten that they should always ask for a doctor's certificate. Above the sketch, printed text explains the procedure a woman can take to press charges.

Queseda says that the organization was horrified to discover how little Mexican women know about their protection under law. "They didn't know a that domestic violence is a crime," she says, "they recognized the violence outside but not within the four walls of their home."

Quezada points out that in Mexico, 80 percent of people taking part in protest marches and meetings are women. "Yet nearly all leaders of the protest groups are men."

The Asamblea de Barrios is just one case in point. Membership of the organization that fights for better housing, food subsidies and other social causes is overwhelmingly female. Yet the director is a man and the group's symbol -- Superbarrio-- indisputably masculine.

The defensoras are gaining the confidence to confront such paradoxes but the personal costs are high. Each woman dedicates time, not just to the project but to the other group she belongs to. All are women with family responsibilities who are usually trying to hold down at least part-time work as well. A defensora is more likely to be a maid than to have a maid.

Sylvia Velasquez arrived at the meeting late. In addition to domestic responsibilities she runs a stall selling bananas. Velasquez says she feels guilty leaving home to attend meetings and that her marriage is suffering.

The other women console her. Ramirez, who also runs a stall, says that Velasquez has too little time to think about herself. "You mustn't feel responsible for problems in your home," she says.

Ramirez has faced her own share of conflict. Her husband said to her: "either you give up your meetings or I leave."

"Leave, then," she told him.

But he hasn't. ♀

Reprinted from the Mexico City News.

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words softly spoken
a clenched fist
a hand ready to strike
at a phantom
because I am not there.

Blows felling me
like a tree
without roots to withstand the storm,
rainy weather, wet
the tears drip silently, seeping
through the words,
and terror of being alone --

the night waits
tension builds -
suspense hangs like a
tear
waiting to fall
down
nightfall

am i real?
can i taste the salt of my own tear?

here?
where reality and fantasy dance
uncertainly, like two awkward strangers
unused to each other's feel
am i a phantom
or am i real?

night falls
and slowly slips into an orange tango
throwing one last smile over its shoulder
lingering into a teasing glance...
did I hear

words softly spoken
did I taste fear --
did I feel the clenched fist slice
through the phantom
and cut through to me?

night falls
a tear
slowly
drips
and
falls

I can taste fear
and my tear
nightfall.

I fall
and slowly slip in reality's arms
to dance a painful tango
where there is no fantasy
i am real

N
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by Joanna Lundy

TAPESTRY...19

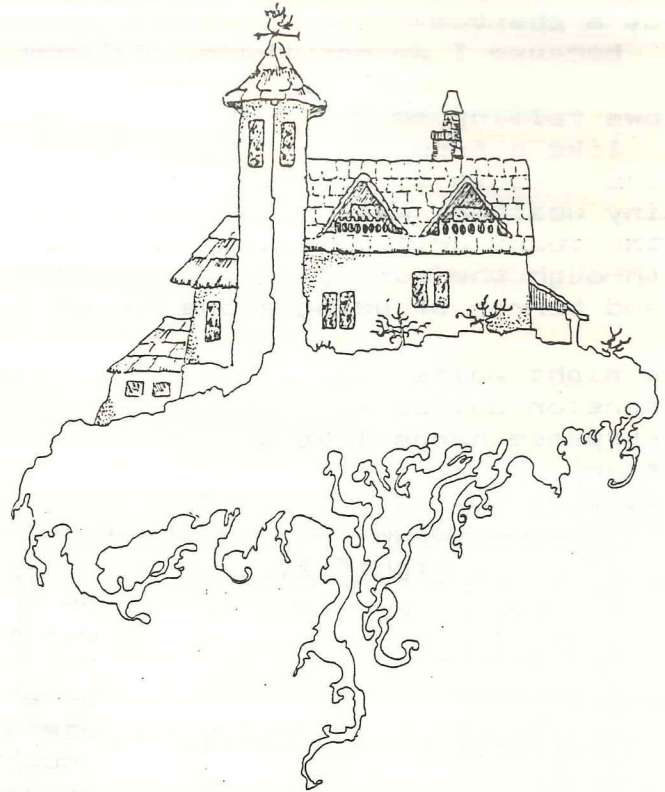
GOING OUTSIDE

a short story by
Luanne Armstrong

Going outside and then -- taking the long way down, over the places between, the swampy grass, the long passage between the fences and then, trees at the edge of the grass where the cows live, and going inside, up the path that you know, made by deer and small delicate feet, until you come to the place, turning as you come into it to myth, castles and elephants, you the shadowy child-princess; here is a room, a chair, sit and be welcome -- bowing to yourself, lordly, from room to room, pursuing, entering each room, entering the silence, as if someone has left, or hiding, and stopping to wonder, to ask permission. This place is not yours -- you understand that --but you belong here.

Entering and leaving is the same journey, breathing the different air, not quite stopping to listen but ears at attention, slow steps, not to break a branch, strip moss from granite, not to disturb. Going inside, you shiver, liking the feel of your jeans, comforting after the long day at school in a dress, the noise still receding, blind from it, the noise and the grey shudders, never quite gone, wanting, wanting, this place, this balm, this not anything place.

From room to room, there is the one place for sitting and being still, from here you can see everything, see the distance, the faces in the blue hills, the green/black depths of the lake water, sun murmurs on the washed flecked granite, humming. The rocks sing in the afternoon; your mother told you it must be



only echoes, bees, something, but they do sing. You have heard them.

After the long day, and the hardness, and the grey blindness behind your eyes, you rest, small, the world outside here is hard. You are not there for now. Today, the teacher almost got you to cry, but you don't cry any more. That's for little kids, sissies. The other kids laugh at you for reading all the time, and at recess, you sat on the swings, ignoring them, while they taunted and jeered, knowing if you lasted, you would get a turn at the next one to be singled out. Fighting after school, wrestling and not quite strong enough to get him down. He used to be afraid, but today you knew he could hurt you, but you didn't let on, couldn't ...wouldn't.

Going to catch the bus, avoiding the old man in the store, been avoiding him ever since he caught you, pulled you onto his lap, could feel him trembling, his old face, wanting to kiss you, "kiss me," he said and you, paralysed, being polite, this is a grown up, but not wanting, not wanting, squirming to get off, get away, saying, "I've got to go now," and finally running, so embarrassed and shamed, never telling, never ever ever telling, coming down off the school bus, the gladness of cookies and being home, almost safe, almost, and coming again outside, the long way down the pasture and the slow sleepy cows, the edge of trees, going inside, and gone, your everyday refuge, place of dreaming, safety, place to disappear.

Coming back outside, slowly. This time, through the trees is scary. It's dark, and there are black places between. Wondering, all the way back, whether to go, a crack of light still showing over the blue mountain line, all the way back, until, standing in the yard, you can watch your mother through the window, standing at the sink, your father in his chair by the table, brothers and sister, no one is missing you at all, you could leave now, turn around and go, back to the secret wild places, where the deer lie with ears and eyes open in the dark, you could stay and stay, but you stand in the yard, still as anything could be, and whether it is the cold that decides, or your mother looking out the window at the darkening yard, unseeing, or the turnipy smell of stew, there you are coming into the light, blinking and wary, and your mother fussing at you to close the door, close the door, it's cold. ♀



In Visible Colours

An International Film / Video Festival and Symposium

Celebrating the cinema of Women of Colour and Third World women

Robson Square Media Centre
Vancouver East Cinema
SFU / Harbourside

November 15 - 19, 1989

The tremendous volume and quality of works produced by these women generates interest whenever they are screened. Yet an inspection of the literature of film or the catalogues of distributors reveals a distinct lack of recognition or representation of these film and video makers, many of them pioneers in their medium.

Taking place at three Vancouver venues from November 15 to 19, 1989, In Visible Colours is sponsored by Women in Focus and the National Film Board, with support from the Vancouver Society on Immigrant Women. Canadian audiences will be given a rare opportunity to enjoy this unique cinema.

FEMALE VICTIMS OF CRIME

The Canadian Urban Victimization survey shows that Canadian women experience a lower frequency of victimization than men but express greater fear for their personal safety.

The first-hand experience with victimization is only one dimension of fear. Repeated exposure to threatening situations, vulnerability to the aftermath and the consequences of violence, and the lack, real or perceived, of adequate avenues of redress all influence perception of risk, and therefore fear. Particularly relevant in understanding women's fear is an appreciation of the kinds of violence women are most vulnerable to, especially the experience and the impact of domestic and sexual violence. Some women live with the imminent threat of assault from someone in their own households, and many women live with more general fear of sexual assault, concerns which rarely intrude into the lives of men.

Large numbers of women feel unsafe walking alone at night and women attend evening activities outside the home less frequently than men. While avoidance of high risk situations may well be an important element of prevention, there are obvious limits and cost to a strategy of withdrawal. First, the occurrence of sexual assault is not restricted to outside locations. Second, withdrawing from social activities results in a reduction of social support systems and can have the reverse effect by compounding fear. Even moderate withdrawal can diminish an individual's sense of personal autonomy and have a negative impact on the overall quality of life.

The survey showed that women

were seven times as likely as men to experience a sexual attack and young women are at the greatest risk of being sexually assaulted. Sixty-eight percent were under twenty-five years of age. (Respondents were all sixteen or older.) Risk was also highest for unmarried women, and for those who described themselves as "students" or "looking for work". Lifestyle as measured by evenings out is related to the risk of being the victim of a violent crime and sexual assault is no exception.

OF PARTICULAR CONCERN IS THE RISK FOR WOMEN OF BEING ASSAULTED IN THEIR OWN HOMES AND BY SOMEONE KNOWN TO THEM.

Forty-one percent of all sexual assaults, however, involved victims and assailants known to one another. Twenty-one percent of the incidents occurred inside the victims own residence.

The fact that sexual assault can be a component of break and enter no doubt contributes to women's generalized fear and feelings of vulnerability. Over half of the sexual assaults which occurred in the victim's home involved illegal entry. In the rest of the cases, acquaintances or strangers (such as repairmen) were allowed into the home. Fear will be particularly great once the victim no longer believes that her home provides safety.

Agencies which offer support to the victims of sexual assault have long maintained that the police become aware of only a

fraction of all sexual assaults that occur, and that the reason many women refuse involvement with the legal system is the strong belief that such involvement will only add to their trauma. The responses to the Canadian Urban Victimization Survey support these concerns. Fully sixty-two percent of female victims did not report their victimization to the police. These women were "concerned about the attitudes of the police or courts towards this type of incident"; one-third said that "the incident was a personal matter and of no concern to the police". "Fear of revenge" was also a primary consideration in deciding not to report. Sexual assaults by strangers were more likely to be reported (45%) than incidents involving acquaintances (36%) or relatives (22%).

Of particular concern is the risk for women of being assaulted in their own homes and by someone known to them.

For many reasons - changing perceptions of what constitutes assault, and the economic, physical and sometimes emotional dependency of the woman on the man she lives with -- domestic violence remains very much hidden from public view and from sources of support for victims. The police became aware of such incidents in about forty-five percent of assaults by a spouse and fifty-one percent by a former spouse. If victims of domestic violence do not themselves report incidents to the police, other witnesses are not likely to do so.

Fear of retaliation and the perceived social stigma of being a victim of inter-spousal violence keeps many women afraid to seek assistance from the police or anyone else.

Over the past several years

increasing attention has been paid to the impact of criminal victimization in physical and emotional terms.

The incidence of physical injury was high among female victims. Sixty-one percent of sexual assault cases, twenty-eight percent of non-sexual assault cases and thirty-five percent of robberies resulted in injuries requiring medical attention. Women were more likely to be injured in assaults involving family members.

Far more difficult to measure than physical injury is the emotional trauma of violent crime. Emotional distress can persist long after the actual experience, disrupting the victim's normal functioning, her trust in others, and her sense of personal security.

Respondents to the survey were asked whether they thought emotional or psychological counselling should be made available. Female victims were more likely than male victims to agree. Eighty-one percent of victims of spousal assault believed that counselling should be available.

The findings of the Canadian Urban Victimization Survey contribute to a growing awareness of the special needs of female victims of violent crime. These special needs result not only from the actual incidence of violence against women, but also from the vulnerability of women to some of the most serious forms of violence. The survey data point to an urgent need to develop a multi-disciplinary approach and a wide range of strategies for assisting female victims of crime. †

from the
Canadian Urban Victimization
Survey
Solicitor General Canada 1982

MOTHERS of INVENTION

From the Bra to the Bomb, Forgotten Women and Their Unforgettable Ideas

ETHLIE ANN VARE
and GREG PTACEK

All of the following were discovered or invented by women:

- nuclear fission
- pink champagne
- solar heating
- the bra
- invisible glass
- drip coffee
- radioactivity
- the Barbie doll
- pulsars
- the ice cream cone

MOTHERS OF INVENTION: From the Bra to the Bomb, Forgotten Women and Their Unforgettable Ideas.

Ethlie Ann Vare and Greg Ptacek.
New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1988.

In 1983 when 81 year old geneticist Dr. Barbara McClintock won the Nobel Prize in Medicine and Philosophy, few recognized the significance of the award. For McClintock it meant recognition for 50 years of ground-breaking, solitary work that had been denounced by colleagues unable to understand its complexity. For women inventors who have long sought acknowledgement of their contributions, few events have proven so invigorating.

MOTHERS OF INVENTION is Ethlie Ann Vare and Greg Ptacek's tribute to women inventors through-

out history, those unsung heroines who, like McClintock, have had their work denounced, ridiculed, forgotten and ignored.

Beginning with Miriam the Prophetess, the first century A.D. scientist (more widely known as the sister of Moses) and inventor of the double boiler, through the ages to Lady Mary Montagu, inventor of the smallpox inoculation, (a century later credited to British physician Edward Jenner) to Betty Nesmith, inventor of liquid paper, Vare and Ptacek chronicle over 100 women inventors who have had their names removed from history and have had their work stolen by and credited to men.

Interspersed throughout the well-documented biographies, Vare and Ptacek provide numerous examples and some analysis about why women inventors have gone unrecognized, pointing out that as late as 1984, not one inductee in the Nation Inventors Hall of Fame in Washington, D.C., was a woman. Why, they question, were the following women not included: Marie Curie, who discovered radioactivity and invented the geiger counter; Lise Meitner, who created and named nuclear fission; and Catherine Littlefield Greene, the inventor of the cotton gin, whose ideas are still erroneously attributed to Eli Whitney, one of the greatest idea thieves of all time?

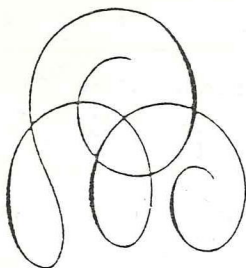
The authors are also concerned about why prominent contemporary women inventors, such as Dr. Grace Murray Hopper, Rear-Admiral of the U.S. Navy and inventor of the first computer compiler and COBOL programming language, are today systematically ignored in textbooks and given little media attention.

Blatant sexism is, of course, the only answer. It is still unacceptable for women to invent. And when they do, they encounter a patronizing misogyny typified in the remarks of C.D. Tuska, who in his 1957 book, *INVENTORS AND INVENTIONS*, states, "I shall write little about female inventors...most of our inventors are of the male sex. Why is the percentage (of women) so low? I am sure I don't know unless the good Lord intended them to be mothers."

Certainly in 1957, Tuska knew that Hattie Alexander had invented meningitis serum in the 1930s and that microbiologist Gladys Hobby had produced penicillin and treated patients with it in 1940. Tuska may have even known that physicist Dr. Chien-Shiung Wu had proved the existence of parity violation by 1957. But Tuska published his rot, ignoring centuries of women inventors and effectively removing them from history.

For all of these women and for those of us who are inspired by them, Vare and Ptacek have done a great service. *MOTHERS OF INVENTION* is a thoroughly researched and exceptionally readable, often humorous look at the monumental, the silly and the practical inventions of women, which proves that "the hand that rocks the cradle ... probably designed and built it as well."

reviewed by Teresa Murphy



TAPESTRY SUBMISSIONS

We welcome contributions from any interested women. We publish fiction, non-fiction, personal stories, reports on women's activities, essays, book reviews, poetry, letters, humour and graphics. Please type or write your submission neatly. Materials must be signed and include an address and phone number. We reserve the right to edit. We are unable to pay for subscriptions but all contributors will receive a one year complimentary subscription.

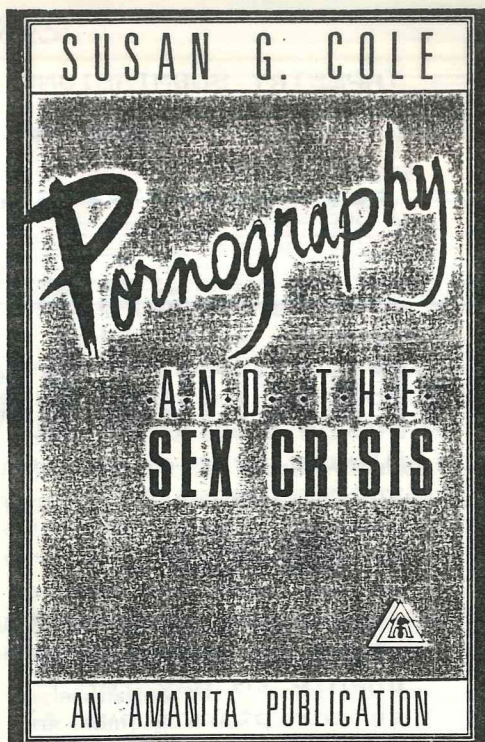
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There is a small box around
my soul.
It is made of fear.
It comes over me and
falls unexpectedly.

The walls of it are murky.
Sometimes I can see through.
But not often.

The ceiling is black.
I must cling to it for
there is no bottom
and I am afraid
of falling.

Kimberly Cormack



PORNOGRAPHY AND THE SEX CRISIS
Susan G. Cole
Toronto, An Amanita Publication

In 1977 Susan Cole became aware of pornography as an issue which could move people, when media attention was given to an angry group of protestors who successfully shut down a Toronto theatre for showing the film *SNUFF*. This film featured, according to its producers, the murder of a woman as sexually stimulating entertainment.

From this protest Cole learned two things: that pornography is a complex and passionately charged issue and that it divides feminists. Most importantly, this protest led Cole to twelve years of research which culminated in this book.

PORNOGRAPHY AND THE SEX CRISIS is Susan Cole's description and analysis of the pornography industry, those who organize to protest and to defend it, and strategies for dealing with it.

In this groundbreaking book, she puts women first and takes them seriously, asking questions such

as -- Who are the women in pornography and how did they get there? What is porno-graphy and what does it do? What is the impact on consumers and what does it do to women's status in society?

Pornography is not, according to Cole, merely images, depictions, representations or pictures. Neither is it fantasy or ideas. It is not benign and it does not serve as a cathartic safety valve. It is a practice which exploits those who are weakest and have the least power in society. It is so systematic and effective and has so distorted our perceptions, we are almost unaware of it. It has turned violence against women into an erotic spectacle and has equated violence with sex. This is the "sex crisis."

Cole offers rational and practical solutions to this crisis. On a legal level, she recommends, instead of the ineffective Bill C-54, a new women-initiated law which would give civil remedy in the form of financial compensation from producers and distributors to the victims of pornography.

On a personal level, Cole suggests a whole re-examination of society's narrow definition of sexuality and sexual norms and advocates new terms of sexual pleasure based on eroticized equality.

PORNOGRAPHY AND THE SEX CRISIS is an exceptionally well written, thoroughly researched book. Most important and most unusual, it puts women first and urges them to examine and validate their own experiences of pornography and to decide for themselves what constitutes the erotic and the sexual. It also encourages women to speak out about pornography.

reviewed by Teresa Murphy

FILM
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Although this misperception is slowly being changed, other attitudes towards the issue are equally damaging in their complacency. The Crown Prince echoes this when Billy tries to rationalize his father's behaviour, assuring himself that his mother would have left the home if the situation was really "that bad".

But the reasons a woman may not seek immediate shelter from an abusive husband are far more complex. It is crucial for both battered wives and children to understand that there are alternatives, that they need not acquiesce to violence. Of course it is also necessary for abusive men to realize that violence is, both legally and morally, an unacceptable response to emotional crisis in the home.

The action in *The Crown Prince* surrounds a tumultuous midnight domestic dispute involving Billy's parents. It becomes obvious during this scene that Billy and his young brother are well accustomed to this kind of violence. But this time the argument is worse than ever before. Over Billy's protests, his brother seeks help from his school teacher. Billy is caught between loyalty to his father and a growing realization that his father is a criminal. His steadfast refusal to discuss his family's problem dramatically puts into motion a traumatic chain of events.

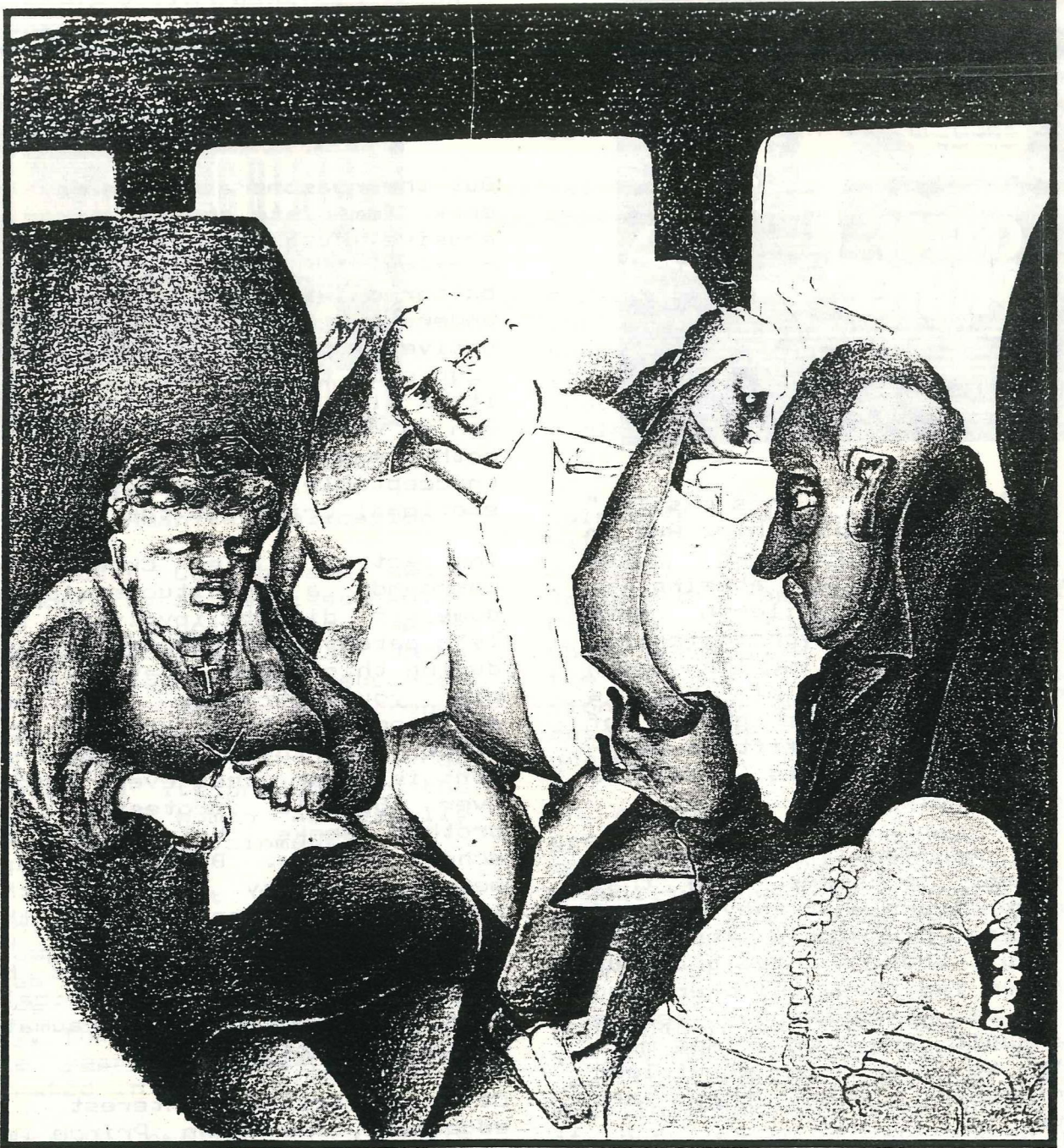
Of particular interest to educators, *The Crown Prince* is a significant contribution to an important ongoing dialogue regarding wife assault and family violence. Through the eyes of Billy, an adolescent man, we are forced to confront the implications of his boyhood dream, his dream to grow up to be "just like Dad."

"A man's home is his castle," Billy's father tells him. And in his "castle" this king rules with an iron fist, abusing his wife and two children both physically and psychologically. In the new NFB film, *The Crown Prince*, the issue of abuse is considered from the point of view of Billy, the fifteen year-old "heir" to his troubled father's realm.

As far as family violence is concerned, it seems true that children "learn what they live." Statistics alarmingly show that many adult abusers have grown up in abused families. Children who grow up as witnesses or victims of assault are ten times more likely to live in a violent relationship when they are adults.

"Western society is only now beginning to confront the issue of wife assault," said director Kim Johnston. "Historically, wife battering has been abetted by attitudes accepting women's status as mere "property" within the marital contract."

TRAVELLING PEOPLE



by Heidi Thompson

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