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TIGER LILY

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On the Origins of Tiger Lily

Culture is not an elitist past-time or a yuppie's conversation piece. It is the invisible thread that binds a society.

Without it, the fabric would unravel and chaos would reign. In my home, I was fortunate to experience an interweaving of many cultures, faiths and languages from both my direct and extended families, which has deepened my understanding and appreciation of the importance of culture.

Every October there was a gathering in my grandmother's home. The women in my family would come together to celebrate *Womanhood.* It was during those occasions that we learnt, through the art of storytelling and mime, about our history, our people, and the richness of our cultures and languages. My love of books, appreciation of music and dance, and the importance of documenting material came out of those gatherings.

It is from this rich and diverse cultural background that my interest in the spoken and written word was keenly developed. In 1978, I became a partner in a publishing endeavour. Eventually, my two partners abdicated from the rigorous task of publishing. But instead of disbanding, I continued. Our mandate was to publish a wide variety of multicultural books including fiction, drama, poetry, histories and translations. The company evolved under the imprint of Williams-Wallace Publishers Inc. I decided to further expand our publishing circle by co-founding a magazine — **Tiger Lily.**

The magazine began to take shape in late 1984. Over the intervening two years, we brainstormed, shaped our ideas and gathered our international board, our contributors and editors. Discussions with enthusiastic women and women writers were fruitful — the timing was right.

In 1986, the Year of the Tiger, we feel confident and excited with the launching of the premiere issue. The concept to publish works by Women of Colour is not entirely new. However, what *is* new, is that Women of Colour are coming together as a creative, financial and social force to publish a magazine that accurately reflects the way we see ourselves and our position in the contemporary world.

Our writers will be from the Black diaspora, Latin America, Native North America, South and East Asia. We hope that **Tiger Lily** magazine will offer to both established and new writers the opportunity to explore writing fields that hereto many have been excluded from. We are dedicated and committed to publishing a magazine that fully acknowledges our contributions in our society and strengthens the bonds of sisterhood. The cultural diversity of women — symbolized through flowers.

We chose the name **Tiger Lily** since we felt it aptly reflected our concept of the magazine. The Tiger Lily flower comes in many colours, is rooted and at the same time rootless; it survives under any conditions and grows in most countries throughout the world. Though it is known by different names, the Tiger Lily flower has retained its strong identity both in foreign and indigenous soils. The title of the magazine and its contents expresses our strengths and our vulnerability.

"We create
and what we create
is our future"
Spirit Flower
Della Burt

Ann Wallace

Ontario

The Premier
of Ontario

Parliament Buildings
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1A1

November 7, 1986

On behalf of the Province of Ontario I am pleased to extend warm congratulations on the publication of this inaugural issue of Tiger Lily magazine.

This is a new venture in Canadian journalism providing women of Black, Native, Asian and Latin American heritage with an important forum within which to share their thoughts and experiences with one another.

I commend Williams-Wallace Publishers for their initiative in addressing this vital and dynamic segment of our multicultural society, and offer my sincere best wishes for the success of this exciting project.

To the readership of Tiger Lily magazine I would like to convey a special word of greeting on this occasion because, most of all, this publication is for and about you. May it instill within each of you a sense of community identity and accomplishment as well as pride in your cultural legacy.

David Peterson

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The Time Has Come

Strategies for Controlling Our Destiny

It is essential for women of colour to create and control our own images and break down the stereotypes that historically, society has created for us. **Tiger Lily** is about building our own realities—how *we* see *ourselves* and *our experiences*. As women we have to express ourselves in our own way—our voices must represent us—our honesty, our authenticity, our passions: *our truths*.

My hope is that our lives will declare
this meeting
open

June Jordan "Metarhetoric" 1976.

The time has come—it is crucial that as women of colour and women of the global village, we must speak from within, talk about our day-to-day experiences, and our oppressions —racism, class and sexism. Hopefully we can help to eradicate the cultural and social biases and other forms of oppression. (White feminists will have to deal with their female racism and attitudes of class.) We all have the power and the capacity within us. I am optimistic that women can work together and transform humanity—a challenge the world faces as we enter the 21st century.

Tiger Lily has created a space for global women to dialogue and network. We will fuse our energies, affirm our diversity and strengths and our common ground as we work towards our goals of sisterhood and solidarity. We must learn to laugh *with* and *at* ourselves. A sense of humour is power—women's laughter is revolutionary! We must learn to celebrate and articulate the joys and richness of our lives. In this premiere issue and forthcoming issues **Tiger Lily** will explore a variety of topics—education, health, sexuality, language, the arts, business, ways of working together, politics and peace. The time has come....

"But no matter whether my probings made me
happier or sadder,
I kept on probing to know."
Zora Neale Hurston,
Dust Tracks on a Road, 1942.

Ayanna Black

Delia Domínguez, Woman Without Background Music

by Marjorie Agosin
translated by Cola Franzen

Visual images of third world women abound. Silently, bent over their weaving of luminous colours, kneading clay or bread, meticulously perfecting their forms and the intimacy of their aroma, the women seem totally absorbed, absent, almost invisible to the busy world around them.

Architecture in Latin America accurately reflects the different physical spaces occupied by men and women. A sharp visual dichotomy remains in force to this day. In every tiny, dusty town in Latin America there is a plaza where the men gather to discuss in loud voices the latest headlines, even those from the censored press, and in every village there are cantinas where again only the men go to meet and talk and drink.

One can easily see that women belong to the sphere of the home — castle and prison. The only public places where women are regularly seen are extensions of the home: in the markets buying food and other necessities for the family, on the banks of nearby streams washing the family's clothes, and in church.

This spatial schism also exists for women writers in Latin America. They are also not seen in the plaza; their books are not to be found on the shelves of the bookstores; their participation in the public arena of literature is marginal. Men organize the "cultural events"; men edit the newspapers. Women's writings remain, for the most part, outside these two main outlets of dissemination. In the history of Latin American literature, women writers are regarded as little more than a footnote in the thousands of anthologies in which they are either excluded altogether or are included but dismissed with the pejorative "poetess."[1]

In Chile, a country with an extraordinarily rich poetic tradition, there are almost no critical studies of women poets.[2] Even Gabriela Mistral, the first Latin American to win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1945, was aware of the extremely marginal position of women writers. She said, "I don't need to tell you what I think about the situation of feminine literature in general, without concentrating on any one writer in particular. Mountains of disdain and ridicule are heaped on those of us women who write."[3] Mistral's words still hold true today. Women's writing, especially poetry, continues to be ignored or dismissed. Here is what the Marxist critic Jaime Concha said in a recent study of feminine poetry: "A large part of the most recent feminine poetry follows in the footsteps of Mistral to the point of caricature, so far is the imitation of the voice of the poetess carried. This is a poetry that is superfluous, an excrescence of comfort, an expensive esthetic knickknack . . ."[4]

Concha's assessment continues to be used to characterize much of the work of women writers in Latin America. The moment a woman picks up a pen she is considered an anomalous, unstable figure. For her, writing becomes not an act of bravery or the exercise of power, but an act of survival. Women poets and novelists feel that their only legacy for the generations to come will be their texts of lovelessness, loneliness, and hope.

The poet Delia Domínguez uses the image of blue bottles to describe her situation as artist. No one knows where the strange bottles came from or how they came into her hands. The poet says that perhaps they belonged to some old German settler, or perhaps they were washed up by the sea. In any case, Domínguez cherishes them as if they were priceless relics:

In the blue bottles I keep the air
that I'll give to you someday
when everything comes true.[5]

The truth contained in the blue bottles, the

new history of feminine poetry in Chile and the rest of Latin America, will be revealed when the silence of women is erased and the voice of the woman who writes is not just a small part of a poetic tradition dominated entirely by men.

The present study will now concentrate on analysing briefly the essential features and themes of the most recent poetry of Delia Domínguez[6], one of the most interesting poets in Chile today. Domínguez, like Mistral, comes from a rural background. She was born in 1931 in Osorno, a village in the extreme south of Chile. (In fact, it lies exactly on Km 14, just south of parallel 40.) Her poetry is territorial, rooted in the piece of earth where she still lives, alone, removed from urban life, inextricably enmeshed in her surroundings.

In writing about frost, she personifies it as a witch, arriving in her coach "without announcement or greeting,/ barging into the house/ clouding the window/ because she is invited every year/ she makes herself at home/ burns the crysanthems/ then/ she doesn't want to listen to anyone/ but just to close the door of the patio/ so that we two can remain alone/ to greet the face of winter." ("La invitada de todos los anos"/"The guest of every year," p.71.)

An atmosphere of fog, ice, and insatiable rain permeates the poetry of Domínguez. We can smell the damp woods and underbrush; we can feel the obstinate frost. All aspects of nature are present, but above all, we are aware of the poet's sense of belonging, of her being an intrinsic part of a whole. "This is the house/ here you have it with the door open/ and the fire lit/ Here I live/bound by the night of the fields/ this is the climate, foggy and stormy/ but above all/ a harsh gospel." ("Esta es la casa"/ "This is the house," p.17.)

Along with the elaboration of all the images of the country (the smell of wood in the old house), there appears in the poetry of Domínguez a hardness associated with living alone within oneself, with feeling deserted, and with being invaded by a sense of the absence of others: "My feet are like ice/and nobody is going to come with wool socks/ to keep me company/ because yesterday on the road the owl/ crossed my path going from south to north." ("Nocturno con los pies helados"/ "Nocturne with freezing feet," p.11.) Note how the sense of desolation is interwoven with the ambiance of superstition and magic in the colloquial lines "because yesterday . . . the owl/ crossed my path. . . ." Such an event is commonly taken as an omen of bad luck in rural Chile.

Domínguez is not an isolated figure of the Chilean *lares*, (a poet who writes in a rather nostalgic way about rural life). Instead, it is as though her physical body and her poetry were inseparable parts of one geography: "This is the faithful fiber of wood/ where in silence they raised me/ among settlers and women/ who returned to the clay." ("This is the house," p.17.)

The silence of her childhood is an introspective silence connected with her sex; she is one of the country women who returned to the clay, the essential material of nature which can be moulded and used for building. Domínguez uses clay as a metaphor to describe the texture of her poems that "do not serve for songs or for books." ("This is the house," p.17.) Her poetry is the kind that springs up in the midst of "the tools and the earth." ("This is the house".) Tools represent a language that can be spoken and incorporated into the close, concrete life of her small rural area. In "La vida está en la calle"/ "Life is in the street," for instance, the elements of the poem are concrete ones: the village and the women herbalists who live there. The natural scene is animated by people and objects. "Life is in the street of the village/ between the post office and the market/ and the parish of St. Matthew/ life is in the street the same as death/ and anybody knows that with a bit of common sense/ I learned that when the woman in the street/85 years old/offered me herbs along with recipes for love."

Direct contact with women such as the herbalist and the fog-witch forms part of the women's habitat that we find in the poetry of Domínguez. The poem perhaps most representative of this aspect of her work is "Mujer sin música de fondo"/"Woman without background music" (p.35). In this poem there is a kind of cry of affirmation that tries to rescue the country woman from oblivion and silence. Domínguez places a silent woman in the midst of an isolated southern landscape and brings her to life:

> *Here you are/ burdened with the silence of life/with the silence of death/ and your valor resembles the wind/that never stops blowing and the lime/ from the wall slashes your cheeks/ the weight of the salt/ that is swallowed pierces the chest/ from one side to the other/because Our Father who are in heaven/ sometimes/ lets the sky fall on our heads/ and a woman can find herself lying in bed at night/with a razor-sharp lightning bolt in her arms.*

All the desolation of a country woman without help, always filled with children, is projected in this poem. It reminds us, too, of those poems of Gabriela Mistral in which she expresses her preoccupation with the Indians and with barefoot, illiterate women. Domínguez is part of the tradition of poets obsessed with the forgotten ones of society. The "woman without background music" is described in strong, almost crude, images as imperturbable. She is a survivor. Despite the physical and emotional scars she bears and despite being forever relegated to the background, she endures, with her own story, courageous and involved, "because you don't need background music/ your blue blouse is enough/ the freedom to move around/ and the earth you step on." (p.35).

The nexus of woman and nature is accentuated by Domínguez when the story of the individual woman, always pregnant and solitary, is transcended to become a collective history of country women. Against the menace and poverty of the world of the country, these women are survivors, attacking hostile forces. Their attachment to the earth is an organic part of their being.

Domínguez's recent book, *Pido que vuelva mi ángel/ I ask that my angel return*, carries the instinct of survival even further. The woman in the poem "Silla de Viena"/ "Viennese Chair" (p.14) feels ambiguous about her place in the world, yet she wins out over her adversaries: "And even if you don't know if your house of boards/ is standing in this world because/ you hide your ghosts when/ what matters is the courage/ to bend down/ to speak with love/ even while your roots are dying."

The poems of Domínguez, especially those having to do with popular lore, the power of herbalists, and the woman without background music, enter a wider and more urban sphere. They also suggest a way to change the world based on the knowledge of women.[7]

"And if the world would drink tea made of artemisia
it grows wild south of the 40th parallel
it might even mean
we could stand face to face
clean
as newborns."
("Agua de hierbas"/ "Water of herbs," p.28.)

In another poem the concept of a woman without background music is expanded, and the lyrical space is opened for a self-portrait of a woman in her solitary oppression. The poem is called "Tango" and might be regarded as a resolution of "Woman without background music," cited earlier. The woman in "Tango" appears like a broken word, "a chord in the air over the blind box." She is the equivalent of the woman without background music, lacking a voice with which to sing. Nevertheless, face to face with this adversity "There is no mask possible/no zero hour/ no saving lie/ Dawn/ a guitar grieves in the memory/ I invite you to dance/ on the fake dance floor/ of this strophe of tango." (p.26.) The woman is again the one who makes her music — even with a broken sound box; she is the one who hears a guitar like a corpse and still invites the reader to the reading, "to dance/ on the fake dance floor/ of this strophe of tango."

The reader is left to interpret what the "fake dance floor" might be. It is worthwhile to recall that the tango is a type of Argentinian folk music, or soul music, full of passions and rancours, danced by couples. The lone woman on the "fake dance floor," recognizes life's treachery and loneliness and insists on dancing anyway, thus accepting the ritual of life and death.

Domínguez, like Mistral, often uses the themes of women's lives and stories. Both reflect their own situations as women living alone and writers who are at best outsiders in Latin America and at worst regarded as mad. In fact, both have written about mad women — Mistral in her famous *Historia de locas/History of Mad Women*[8] and Domínguez in "Picture in the Dining Room." Written out of her southern solitude, she envisions herself and a cadaver next to her: "it's growing dark in the South/ true picture, a woman awakens thrown into a grave/ and all the misfortunes begin." (p.40.)

Landscapes and people are mixed in Domínguez's poetry, giving a sense of immediacy and drama to her lyrics. Her poetry is no mere description of her native place; rather, the scenes of nature form the stage where women live out their lives, immersed in an enormous silence. These are women who mix up the sense and value of words: "Words don't say what the sound of them says/ one has to learn the keys of silence." ("Cuadro de Comedor"/ "Dining room," p.40.) These "keys of silence" might be considered a way of entering what used to be considered a prohibited area, the world of women described in poetry written by women.

Domínguez takes risks in every line. Her language is colloquial and direct. She uses a

wide range of images, with women as the central metaphor; women's voices are the ones we hear in her poems. "Everything was still/ a girl in a canvas apron/ stops to chat with her dead grandmother." ("En las encinas canta el tuque"/ "In the hickory tree the tuque sings," p.34.)

As we penetrate deeper into the poetry of Domínguez, into her world of vegetation and roots, we feel there is a permanence about her vision of the world. We sense that from Santa Amalia, Km 14, 40th parallel, this woman from the south of Chile will continue forging her words in the solitude of her country and in her solitude as woman.

"Here I will be when the rains return/when the house is again a silent realm/like the memory of an old woman."
("Aquí estaré"/ "Here I will be," p.36.)

There is no doubt that Delia Domínguez is the poet who expresses the most passionate feelings of what might be called *heimat* in Chilean poetry today. However, she remains essentially alienated and anonymous even within her own generation — the 1950's — which saw the emergence and recognition of such men as Enrique Lihn, Efrain Barquero, and Jorge Tellier. In a recent interview Domínguez spoke about her marginal condition. She said, "In general terms I belong to the generation of 1950. . . . But within this category I belong to a solitary generation, especially as regards my age and my sex."[9]

This kind of isolation becomes a sort of tradition imposed by the women poets on themselves. Nevertheless, in the continuous struggle women are beginning to sow their own seeds in Latin American soil. In the strong, unique voice of Delia Domínguez:

"They say that I have stayed
stuck in the earth
poetry dying
in my fragile humid region
but it doesn't matter to me
whether I am revived, dear sister
my task is a true one
a root was born to us
a harmonious trembling valley
a crude and fragrant spasm
Juana or Carmela or hard heroic people
my voice is your furrow
where you can grow your seeds and songs."

("Obertura Siglo XX"/ "Overture Century XX," p.71.)

Marjorie Agosin, is originally from Chile and is a poet/writer and teaches Spanish Literature, Wellesley College, Boston, U.S.A.

FOOTNOTES

1 For an interesting study of women's participation in Latin American poetry anthologies, see the introductory chapter by Beth Miller, "Some Theoretical Considerations," in *Women in Hispanic Literature: Icons and Fallen Idols*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982, pp. 1–26.
For a study of women in Chilean poetry and their minimal presence in anthologies of poetry, see Juan Villegas' "Feminine poetry and literary value," in *Estudios sobre poesía Chilena*, Santiago: Editorial Nascimiento, 1980, pp. 82–94.

2 Chile can count among its poets two winners of the Nobel Prize for Literature: Gabriela Mistral in 1945 and Pablo Neruda in 1971. Other renowned Chilean poets are Vicente Huidobro, Nicanor Parra, and Enrique Lihn. For a panoramic view and analysis of contemporary poetry in Chile, see "Contemporary Poetry of Chile," by Marjorie Agosin, in *Concerning Poetry*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1985, pp. 43–54.

3 Gabriela Mistral, "Letter to Eugenia Labarca in *Antología General de Gabriela Mistral*, Santiago de Chile, Ediciones Orfeo, 1948, Nos. 23–27, pp.168–169.

4 Jaime Concha, "La poesía Chilena actual," in *Cuadernos Americanos, ccxiv*, No. 5, Sept.–Oct., 1977, p. 212.

5 Until otherwise noted, all citations referring to Domínguez are from *El sol mira para atrás/ The sun is looking backward*, Santiago: Editorial Lord Cochrane, 1977.

6 Delia Domínguez is the author of the following books: *Simbólico Retorno/ Symbolic Return*, Editorial Universitaria, 1955; *La tierra nace al canto/ The earth is born from the song*, Ediciones Grupo Fuego, Santiago, 1958; *Obertura Siglo XX/ Overture Century XX*, Editorial del Pacifico, Santiago, 1961; *Parlamentos del hombre claro/Parleys of the clear man*, Editorial Universitario, 1963; *Contracanto/ Countersong*, Editorial Nasciemiento, 1968; *El sol mira para atrás/* The sun is looking backward, Santiago, Ediciones Lord Cochrane, 1977; and *Pido que vuelva mi ángel/ I ask that my angel return*, Editorial Universitaria, 1982; *Pablo Neruda*, Boston, Twayne Publishers, 1986.
In spite of her extensive poetical production, there has been no study dedicated to the work of Delia Domínguez apart from the present article. Moreover, Domínguez remains an essentially untranslated poet.

7 From here on, citations in the text are from *Pido que vuelva mi ángel/ I ask that my angel return.*

8 Gabriela Mistral, *Historia de locas/History of mad women*, Editorial Porrua, Mexico City, 1973.

9 *Interview with Delia Domínguez* by Marjorie Agosin, Hispania No. 2, May 1982, p.297.

Thriving/Surviving in New Soil

by Leah Creque-Harris

i have a daughter/mozambique
i have a son/angola
our twins
salvador & johannesburg/cannot speak
the same language
but we fight the same old men/in the new world

we are so hungry for the morning
we're trying to feed our children the sun
but a long time ago/we boarded ships/locked in
depths of seas our spirits/kisst the earth
on the atlantic side of nicaragua costa rica
our lips traced the edges of cuba puerto rico
charleston & savannah/in haiti
we embraced &
made children of the new world...

(Ntozake Shange, *Bocas: A Daughter's Geography*)

In the early twentieth century, the African diaspora was underway again, as it was during slavery in the fifteenth century, when they were taken to the new world. This time, Africans were fleeing from agrarian societies which no longer provided sustenance and from belief systems which had deteriorated in a colonial, post-slavery environment. Villagers moved from the bush to newly created urban cities as far away as Europe and North America in the quest for education and wealth.

In the West Indies, Caribbean blacks who had syncretized their own unique culture left their tiny islands to seek prosperity in the United States.

> ...And as they left, the West Indians slowly edged their way in. Like a dark sea nudging its way onto a white beach and staining the sand, they came. The West Indians, especially the Barbadians who had never owned anything perhaps but a few poor acres in a poor land, loved the houses with the same fierce idolatry as they had the land on their obscure islands.
>
> (Paule Marshall, *Browngirl, Brownstones*)

At the same time, blacks in the southern United States sought an escape from racism in the teeming cities of the North. The great migration of blacks throughout the world proved to be a painful and dubious adventure. The status and lifestyle sought by these divergent African bloodlines proved to be unattainable in the face of discrimination. Sacrificing the hope of attaining education and wealth, many blacks found themselves striving for mere survival. These migratory experiences served to enforce the role of the black woman as the self-reliant head of the household, upon whom the entire family depended for survival.

Modern women writers of the diaspora have eloquently described the immigration experience and its impact on black women. Buchi Emecheta speaks to the black female immigrant experience in her two semi-autobiographical novels, *In the Ditch* and *Second Class Citizen*. Emecheta and her heroine, Adah Obi, are from the Nigerian village of Ibuza, where the Igbo people are known for their expert cultivation of the land, their cunning as traders, and their love of storytelling. Emecheta carries on the tradition of storytelling as she unfolds the saga of Nigerian women in modern times — from Ibuza to Lagos and beyond Lagos to Europe.

Paule Marshall, a Barbadian writer raised in Brooklyn, portrays the assimilation of a West Indian family to life in New York City and the intense and aggressive struggle of the Barbadian community for property and status in *Browngirl, Brownstones*. The experiences of the novel are seen through the eyes of Selina, the daughter of the aggressive Silla Boyce, who observes Barbadian life in New York as she

matures into womanhood.

Both authors accurately depict the universality of the black female experience throughout the world. Each reflects a striving against the odds — against racism and sexism, against the loss of family stability, and against the diminishing cohesiveness with others of the same race.

The common thread that binds Emecheta's Adah Obi and Marshall's Silla Boyce is the complexity of their origins and background. Both women came from unfortunate circumstances in their native lands. Adah's father died when she was very young and she had to connive boldly to obtain an education in a Nigerian society where only boys were granted the privilege — if the family had sufficient resources. Adah was self-motivated and attained her greatest ambition — to become a "been-to," a person who had been to the United Kingdom for an education. Like Adah, Silla Boyce experienced hard times in Barbadoes and left by herself at the age of eighteen to seek her fortune in New York City and fulfill her dream "to buy house."

The dreams and ambitions of each of these women became the source of tension and conflict in their relationships with their husbands. Adah prayed "that the two of them would be strong enough to accept civilisation into their relationship. Because if they did not, their coming would have been a very big mistake." While the chance for a new life abroad challenged these determined black women, the hardships and discrimination they encountered destroyed the fragile egos and self-esteem of their spouses. Adah's husband, Francis, whom she supports through his studies at the university while working, mothering, and studying herself, seems content being a second-class citizen in London and having Adah as breadwinner. He resigns himself to his discomforts and continual failures in school and forgets the Nigerian definition of manhood. He abdicates his responsibility as father, husband, and provider, then seeks to destroy Adah because she remains strong. When Francis confronts her about leaving him he says forthrightly,

> "In our country, and among our people, there is nothing like divorce or separation...My father knocked my mother about until I was old enough to throw stones at him. My mother never left my father."
>
> "Yes," agreed Adah again, "but was there a month when your father did not pay the rent, give food money, pay for all your school fees? ...No, Francis, you broke the laws of our people first, not me."

Silla Boyce's husband, Deighton, also broke the laws of his people and did not support his wife's ambitious plans "to buy house." Instead, he preferred to return to Barbadoes, to the little plot of land his sister left him. Silla complains,

> "Here every Bajan is saving if it's only one dollar a week and buying house and he wun save a penny. He ain got nothing and ain looking to get nothing..."

Deighton proudly responds,

> "How you mean I ain got nothing," ...I got plenty. I ain like wunna Bajan that come here hungry from down some gully or up some hill behind God back and desperate now..."

When Silla contrives to sell the Barbadian property, he vengefully blows the money rather than put it toward the ownership of a Brooklyn brownstone. Emasculated because of his inability to work, he then turns his allegiance to a religious cult. When Silla angrily has him deported, he becomes demented and drowns on the way back to Barbadoes, rather than return as a failure.

On the surface these women appear harsh and maniacal in their ambitions, seemingly contributing to the marital discord that ensues. Selina, who blames her mother for her father's downfall, describes Silla as "the mother hacking a way through life like a man lost in the bush." Yet before her life of drudgery as a cleaning woman, Silla used to be a soft and carefree young woman. In a pivotal scene in the book, an old friend coaxes Silla to dance with him by reminding her of the woman that she used to be:

> "But what wrong with you, Silla, that you change up so since you come to these people New York? You don does dance! You must think I forget how you used to be wucking up yourself every Sat'day night when the Brumlee Band played on the pasture. You must think I forget how I see you dance once till you fall out for dead right there on the grass." (p.144)

They dance to a calypso song loaded with meaning ("Small Island Go Back Where You Come From") as Deighton arrives late and condemned, symbolizing his estrangement from Silla and his exclusion from the aspiring Barbadian community.

and punished Adah for having a good job and adequate daycare for her children. When they denied her their friendship and, ultimately, housing in their neighbourhood, Adah wondered

> ...whether the real discrimination that she experienced was not more the work of her fellow countrymen than of the whites. Maybe if the blacks could learn to live harmoniously with one another, maybe if a West Indian landlord could learn not to look down on the African, and the African learn to boast less of his country's natural wealth, there would be fewer inferiority feelings among the blacks.

In contrast, the Barbadian community was very supportive of each other in their quest for economic prosperity in New York City. Most people belonged to the Association of Barbadian Homeowners and Businessmen, which provided self-help and a much-needed social outlet for its members. However, if any one defied the common goals and aspirations of the group they were ostracized — as was Silla's husband when he wouldn't buy a brownstone, Selina, who didn't follow middle-class conventions, and Suggie, who wanted only a good night's romance.

Support and unity are found among the Barbadian women who gather in Silla Boyce's kitchen to chatter and cluck about their daily lives. Their encouragement gave Silla the nerve to keep trying to purchase a brownstone and to take revenge on her husband. As the novel progresses, one can see the Barbadians taking over one neighbourhood of brownstones after another.

In *In the Ditch*, Adah's neighbours from a variety of ethnic backgrounds organize against the British welfare system and their treatment. The loss of the extended family is particularly acute in Emecheta's novels, and very few instances of family or community intervention on Adah's behalf can be found.

The single most forceful source of inspiration and support comes from these women themselves. The inner voice in the midst of their trials prevails. Adah calls hers the Presence; it directed her towards her achievements since she was eight years old and entered school without permission. We can hear Silla Boyce's inner voice as she scrubs "the Jew floor," begging "Lord, lemme do better than this. Lemme rise!" These voices carry them beyond their disillusionment and betrayal and on to their victories: Adah's degree and novel and Silla's brownstone and improved lifestyle.

As mothers, they are self-sacrificial and determined to earn a better life for their children. Adah declares that she

> brought her children from the clutches of your family, and God help me, they are going back as different people; never, never, are they going to be the type of person you are. My sons will learn to treat their wives as people, individuals, not like goats that have been taught to talk. My daughters...God help me, nobody is going to pay any bleeding price for them. They will marry because they love and respect their men, not because they are looking for the highest bidder or because they are looking for a home.

Silla Boyce imposes her own ambitions on her daughters. For Ina, she wants a comfortable middle-class marriage and for Selina, a medical school education. It is in this way that these noble women change not only themselves but also the world order for generations to come. Their rebellious spirits fight the forces that oppressed and stifled their lives and embrace the new opportunities they provide for their children.

The new sense of identity and integrity which these women developed as a result of their experiences as black female immigrants is transmitted to the next generation in surprising ways. Like Selina, who "glimpsed the sad tinge to that happiness ...the slow blurring of self, the steady attrition of the soul over all those long complacent years...," the second generation does not want the same things for itself. Eschewing education and property, the bold ones of the second generation seek their identity and authenticity in a return to their ancestral roots. But like their mothers, their sojourn will also be solitary, self-directed, and enriched with the "small strength" bequeathed to them from those lives that had endured life's sores.

....there is no edge
no end to the new world
cuz i have a daughter/trinidad
i have a son/san juan
our twins
capetown & palestine/cannot speak the same
language/but we fight the same old men
the same men who thought the earth waz flat
go on over the edge/go on over the edge old men
you'll see us in luanda. or the rest of us
in chicago
rounding out the morning/
we are feeding our children the sun

(*Bocas: A Daughter's Geography*)

Leah Creque-Harris is a fundraiser at Spelman College and completing a Ph.D. in French West African Literature.

Migration and Mental Health

by Dr. Victoria Lee

Introduction

The history of North America is full of inspiring tales of immigrants who have made good in the land of opportunity. But immigration is not an easy process. For every immigrant who succeeds, there may be another for whom the experience is devastating. Since the 19th century, there has been interest in the impact of immigration on mental health. The topic is still relevant as waves of migration continue to occur throughout the world.

The 1981 census figures for the city of Toronto reveal that a large proportion of the population was born outside Canada. About 27% have a mother tongue other than English or French (see chart). As a physician practising psychiatry in Toronto, I frequently encounter mentally ill immigrants. Is there something special about these individuals, or about the immigration process itself, which has led to illness? More importantly, how can these people best be helped?

The goals of psychiatric treatment are, first of all, to *understand* the patient, and then to attempt to relieve his or her suffering. This is difficult enough in general, but when the individual comes from a foreign culture or does not speak the language of a new country, the task becomes formidable. The very real possibility exists that our ignorance prevents the mental health needs of a significant proportion of our society from being adequately or appropriately met.

This article will attempt to bring some understanding to this very complex topic.

History

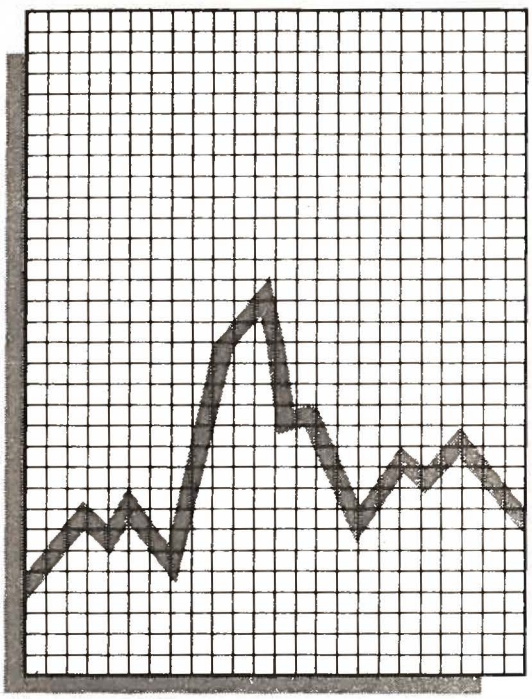
Early North American studies from the beginning of this century point to the disproportionate number of foreign-born individuals

in insane asylums. Several European studies describe mental disturbances in individuals who found themselves in a foreign environment. An important investigation conducted by Odegaard in 1932 compared first-time psychiatric admissions for native-born Minnesotans, Norwegians in Norway, and Norwegian immigrants to Minnesota. He found the highest rates in the immigrant group, especially for schizophrenia. Other investigators have looked at internal migrants, those who *move within* a country, and likewise have found increased rates of psychiatric hospitalization in this group.

EXPLANATORY HYPOTHESES

There have been two major theories to explain this apparent association between mental illness and migration.

1. *Social Stress Theory.* This theory suggests that the process of migration is so stressful as to precipitate mental derangement in otherwise normal people. If we examine the psychological processes involved in migration more closely, the logic of this theory is seductive.



Migration can usefully be conceptualized as a process of *change* necessitating adaptation. The changes the migrant must cope with are loss and culture shock. Losses include (a) concrete losses such as loss of property or job, (b) more subtle losses such as loss of social status and the familiar cultural milieu, and finally, (c) loss of important interpersonal relationships. Culture shock involves learning to adapt not only to (a) new phenomena such as learning to use public transit or (b) a more formal social structure such as learning the importance of arriving on time for work, but also (c) more subtle sociocultural rules such as the North American ideal of individual freedom.

What are the emotional consequences of these changes? With loss, there can be grief reactions such as unhappiness, loneliness, idealization of the past, and a sense of isolation. With culture shock, there can be confusion, anxiety, insecurity, and feelings of being threatened. Even highly motivated migrations involve these reactions to some degree. If we consider these reactions to be at one end of a continuum, it takes little imagination to envisage depression, panic attacks, or paranoid psychoses occurring in vulnerable migrants.

2. *Social Selection Theory.* But perhaps it is precisely those who are vulnerable who migrate. Odegaard's study took a closer look at the case histories of the mentally ill Norwegian immigrants and discovered that in the majority, pre-existing psychiatric difficulties appeared to have precipitated the move to Minnesota. A number of well-known North American studies have shown that the mentally ill tend to drift into the larger urban centres.

However, more recent investigations do not always support the association between mental illness and migration. Some show no differences between native- and foreign-born individuals, while others indicate even lower rates in immigrants.

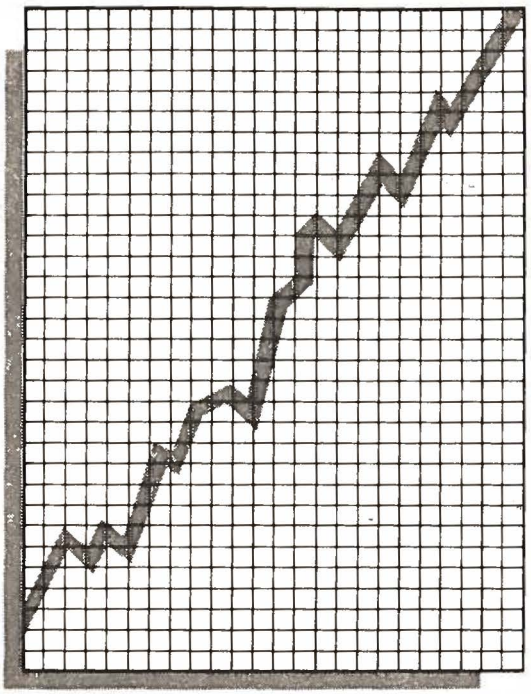
METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

Some of the conflicting results may be explained on the basis of problems in methodology. For example, what is the definition of a migrant? How many years should elapse before an individual is no longer considered a migrant? Should refugees be considered equivalent to voluntary immigrants or, as some suggest, at greater risk? Also, because most studies have concentrated on *hospitalization* data, there may be factors which bias towards higher rates of admission for certain ethnic groups —for example, socioeconomic class, degree of education, and knowledge of the language. There is also abundant evidence that certain minority groups, although ill, underutilize health services and will therefore never come to our attention. Finally, the dubious practice of lumping all "foreign-born" together in studies ignores the fact that immigrants are not a homogeneous group.

MULTIFACTORIAL APPROACH

Even given some of these difficulties, it should be evident that advocating a one-to-one relationship between mental illness and migration is entirely too simplistic. Granted, migration is a stressful experience, but not all migrants become ill. It is best to consider migration as a process of interaction between characteristics of the migrant and characteristics of the environment. Depending on the nature of this interaction, migration can result in either positive or negative consequences.

A useful way to categorize the various factors is to consider factors operating prior to, during, and after migration.



1. *Factors Prior to Migra-tion.* (a) Previous psychiatric history. (b) Degree of personal strengths. (c) Degree of trauma suffered. For example, Allodi and Cowgill (1982) have found a number of psychiatric disturbances in torture victims. (d) Original culture's attitude to migration — positive or negative. (e) Migrant's attitude to migration — a means of bettering one's life, or an escape from alienation. (f) Quality of goals in new culture — focussed or vague, realistic or overly optimistic. (g) Degree of preparedness for and knowledge of the new culture, including the degree of language skills.

2. *Factors During Migration.* (a) Actual degree of difficulty moving. (b) Whether the move was forced or voluntary.

3. *Factors After Migration.* (a) Opportunity to return to old culture. (b) Attitude of new community —welcoming or rejecting. (c) Degree of support by family, and ethnic community. (d) Magnitude of discrepancy between one's goals and actual achievement in the new culture.

SYMPTOMATOLOGY

A wide range of psychiatric disorders can be found in migrants. However, the true prevalence of the different disorders is unclear, for two reasons mentioned earlier: Most studies have concentrated on the more severe psychiatric illnesses requiring hospitalization, and there is underutilization of services by many groups.

The strongest association in the literature is with schizophrenia. But is it really schizophrenia? We hear of horror stories involving people who do not speak the language, have endured long years of psychiatric institutionalization, and are later found to have been wrongly diagnosed because of the language barrier. But misdiagnosis can occur in a more subtle fashion. For example, certain types of symptoms ap pear to be more common in particular ethnic groups, but without the usual significance. For example, a number of English studies have shown a high frequency of persecutory symptoms in mentally ill West Indian and West African immigrants. The majority were more often diagnosed as schizophrenic, even though they lacked other symptoms typical of that illness. This is important to note, since the consequences of receiving a label of schizophrenia can be far-reaching.

Because the emphasis has been on more serious psychopathology, there is little information on the many immigrants out in the community who may be suffering from anxiety, depression, marital and family breakdown, but receiving no professional help.

MANAGEMENT

We may only meet these people when they get into serious trouble. We are then confronted with the problem of treating them in a manner which will be most relevant and helpful.

Treatment. When dealing with the mentally ill immigrant, as when dealing with any psychiatrically ill individual, the health professional must have a sympathetic and understanding attitude. Understanding can be fostered by educating such personnel about the psychological consequences of migration.

Secondly, a proper evaluation of symptoms is imperative. This involves trying to understand the particular person's culture and how it may affect the expression of his or her symptoms, attitude toward mental illness, and willingness to seek help. If the person cannot speak the language, good translation is important. Unfortunately, the situation is often less than ideal, usually involving psychiatrically unsophisticated lay staff coerced without proper preparation into providing translation. In this situation, valuable verbal and nonverbal information can be lost. Pressure should be put on hospital administrations to provide well-trained interpreters. Failing that, special care must then be given to properly brief and debrief lay translators. Especially important is the issue of confidentiality. As well, the interpreter should have the opportunity to ventilate any feelings aroused by the interview.

When treating this type of patient, flexibility on the part of the therapist is necessary. The form of treatment must be relevant to the needs of the particular patient. For example, adhering to a confrontative, insight-oriented approach may prove too threatening to a southeast Asian patient unaccustomed to revealing his innermost feelings to outsiders. An approach which is supportive and more action-oriented may be more useful.

Finally, community services can be a valuable resource. For example, mental health workers from the same ethnic background may be more easily accepted. The church could be an important support for some individuals.

Preventive Measures. Most importantly, however, we should aim toward preventing illness. This could be aided by the provision of information prior to migration, if possible. Immigration workers could distribute information about conditions in the new country — the geography, climate, customs, economic situation, etc. Secondly, social services that promote self-confidence and self-reliance rather than passive dependence should be available — for example, language classes and job training. Thirdly, ethnic identity should be allowed to be preserved to some degree. Although some decry the existence of "ghettos," the availability of ethnic enclaves can help smooth the transition into the new society. Finally, on a broader level, citizens of the new culture should be educated about immigrant groups in such a way as to encourage acceptance. At the highest level, government must be prepared to stress the positive aspects of multiculturalism.

Conclusions

Migration is a complicated process involving a certain amount of sociocultural change which requires some adaptation. Successful adaptation involves moving from a state of disorientation to one of reorientation.

If the adaptive capacity of an individual is overwhelmed, illness can result. Because migrations will continue to occur, the potential for associated human suffering will also continue to exist. It is hoped that educating ourselves about the various aspects of migration will foster a more humane understanding, which will then allow us to diminish this suffering.

1981 CENSUS OF TORONTO

Population	2,998,947
Place of Birth:	
Canada	1,842,855
Outside Canada	1,832,640
Mother Tongue:	
English	2,136,975
French	45,455
Italian	219,925
Portuguese	78,785
Chinese	67,910
German	58,390
Other	391,505

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(A more detailed list may be obtained from the author.)

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Dr. Victoria Lee was born in Toronto of parents who emigrated from Mainland China. She is a physician in her final year of specialty training in psychiatry in Toronto and is planning a career in geriatric psychiatry. ➤

Village Women will Lead You

by Claire K. Harris

Claire K. Harris is a poet, editor and teacher. Her book "Fables from the Women's Quarters" won the Commonwealth Prize for Poetry (1985). Her most recent books of poetry are "Translation into Fiction" *and* "Travelling To Find a Remedy". *She lives in Calgary, Alberta.*

NO GOD WAITS ON INCENSE

for R who thinks of visiting Nicaragua

while babies bleed this is not the poem i wanted
it is the poem i could though it is not that insistent
worm it will not burrow through deaf ears
lay its eggs in your brain yet it is all
for change
and it is not that beautiful weapon
it will not explode in the gut
despite your need this poem is not that gift
it brings you nothing you who insist on drinking
let your bucket into green and ruined wells haul
in darkness village women will lead you smiling
step back polite in face of skulls
this poem will not catch you as you fall
not a net no it is nothing this poem
not a key not a charm not chicken soup
and it is no use at all at all
nothing at all
it won't beat a drum it can't dance it can't
even claim to be written in dust if this morning
the Bow sky-sheeted in light the silver air is bright
with balloons yet it talks from a dark bed
this poem though no!
no woman can lie curled beneath its covers
can hide before boots
can hope to be taken for bundles of clothes can
hope
not to cry out when the knife probes
pray her blood not betray her nor the tiny sigh
no this poem not even a place where any one is
safe
it can nothing still nothing still nothing at all
at all you will leave you will leave sprinkled
with words but in the night and disinterested air
this poem leaves no wound

* * *

She knows
he does not
see her
not as he used to
naked
in the eyes of
others
their rush of kindness
bitter
as herbs Uprooted
dry pressed
between the pages of his
culture
the rough cut of her
foreigness
is faded to nuance
he approves

A SMALL SAD POEM

to be free you said
to escape forever

and took as your route
a length of hose
a locked garage
your yellow bug

fine

i made a twist of your poster
'easeful death'

burnt the books
the clothes
the car
the tickets

life is not a poem

from the porch
your canoe half-hidden

snagged
among reeds
abandoned

ANOTHER SMALL SAD POEM

if you
had written out
of this

the sun would sing through east windows
and dust sift into my typewriter
you would pile up papers unread

all this
made muscular
frequent

but i
only this

outside a world
inside no presence
everywhere this ice

there are days
i write

poems *silence* or no
without *and* poems
words *vastness* in/deed

Autonomy for Native Women

by Anne Noonan

In Toronto this summer the first Native Business Summit, a conference and trade show, provided a unique opportunity for Native business people of Canada to exhibit their products and services. The Summit was attended by 1200 delegates from all parts of Canada.

Many aboriginal businesswomen presented their work and businesses to the Canadian public. One such woman was Sheila Bonspielle, a member of the KANESATAKE Mohawk Nation of Oka, Quebec.

Sheila and her mother, Grace Bonspielle, established their business "Sheila's Furs" in 1981 following three years of intensive research into the manufacturing and retailing of fur coats. Now in 1986, Sheila's Furs employs ten native people (50% of her staff) who manufacture quality fur coats using raccoon, beaver and Alaska fur seal pelts with trims of blue indigo fox.

Only through tireless efforts, has her initial concept become a reality. In planning a business, Sheila noticed that her Indian reserve suffered from a lack of economic and employment opportunities. In her role as an alcohol and drug abuse counsellor, she discovered that "unless native people have something on the table besides welfare—it's no use to counsel."

"One reason I chose the fur business is that native people have an historical relationship to the product and I wanted to get tangible results for our efforts—something we could be proud of, to me it is an art form."

Her Indian reserve is thirty five miles from the metropolis of Montreal, Quebec which is the historic and present centre for the fur industry, an industry worth one billion dollars to the Canadian economy. In launching Sheila's Furs, Sheila pursued government agencies to access funds to provide training for local Mohawk women in the production of fur garments. It was at this point she encountered entrenched negative attitudes from government officials towards native peoples' ability to establish a successful business operation in the fur industry.

With little money of her own to invest, she had to depend upon government agencies for financial support and bridge financing, as banks ignore businesses operating on an Indian reserve because Indian lands are held in trust by the federal government and therefore are not mortgageable property to secure bank loans. This leaves the Indian business person on reserves with government financing as their only option to secure operating capital for their business.

The federal government is presently offsetting this financing problem through the establishment of a $345 million dollar Native Economic Development Fund directed by a

Board of twenty members, a majority of which are aboriginal people from across Canada.

In order to develop manufacturing skills, Sheila's Furs operated as a sub-contractor to a Montreal fur manufacturer which allowed the Montreal company to obtain fur garments at below market price because Sheila's Furs was being subsidized by the government. Sheila said that "we had to accept these conditions in order to develop the business."

Sheila is now in the position to develop her own line of fur coats—"a Native Collection" which she hopes to launch in March of 1987 at the Frankfurt Fur Collection in Germany.

She plans to develop a line of twenty-five coats with designs which will be produced on seared beaver and the durable and elegant Alaska fur seal. "I want to work with furs harvested by aboriginal people; I want to demonstrate to the world that we can do it and eliminate the middleman in the fur industry by buying direct from aboriginal people and passing on more benefits to them."

Sheila is now up against the powerful animal rights movement as the United States is considering the suspension of the International Fur Seal Treaty of 1911 under pressure from animal rights groups. This will adversely affect her potential suppliers, the Aleut people, aboriginal people of the Pribilof Islands, off the Alaskan coast. This will damage the economy of the Aleuts who have carefully managed their fur population, and who under the International Treaty were allowed to harvest for commercial purposes since they could now be limited to use seals only for food and native crafts. Ironically, this planned suspension by the U.S.A. will open up fur seal harvesting to other countries which may lead to the demise of the species.

Through Sheila's Furs exposure at the Native Business Summit she has received orders from Eaton's of Canada, one of Canada's largest department stores, and Sheila's Furs was invited to B.C.'s Expo '86 to show her products at the Northwest Territories Pavilion in October.

Unfortunately her dream to launch her own line of furs and contribute to the Aleut's economy is now being threatened.

Gerry Many Fingers, a Blood Indian from Southern Alberta, is another aboriginal businesswomen who has designed her first two sample coats in 1982. She now has 22 samples which she exhibits through fashion shows throughout Alberta. Her coats are contemporary designs featuring Pendelton Wool and Hudson Bay Blankets. The unique characteristic of Pendelton Wool is that the vivid colours never fade as the dye is milled right through the wool. Gerry's designs feature blue fox, timberwolf and coyote fur trimming, elkhorn buttons and caribou hair tufting.

Her small cottage industry is operated from a studio in her home in Cardston, Alberta. Gerry Many Fingers is also the Head of Commercial Development for the Blood Tribe of Southern Alberta; the largest Indian reserve in Canada occupying 345,000 square acres of land and sustaining a population of 6500 Blood Indians, members of the Blackfoot Confederacy.

At present, she does not have to advertise since her contacts are made through her fashion shows. She wants to market to specialized boutiques on a limited order basis in order that her designs remain unique in style for an individual look.

Her latest plan is to go international as she will be presenting her work through an Alberta government trade exhibit this October on Alberta Day in London, England.

Gerry's future plans are to develop a strong cottage industry utilizing the skills of other Indian women in design, pattern making and cutting. Her intention is to keep her operating expenses down and create work for Indian women.

Anne Noonan is a businesswoman who is very active in the Native Community. She lives in Ottawa, Canada. ➤

They Put 'Im So

By Theresa Lewis

"Barry!"

"Yes, Papa."

"Finished yer homework yet?"

Fleeting defiance drew its spider's web of lines across Barry's handsome face before he half turned as if he were going to speak further to his father, who stood at the foot of the steps leading up to their house. Then he deliberately turned away, lifted his arm high and threw the ball. It spun in the air before it struck the makeshift bat of coconut palm clutched expertly by the eight-year-old boy a few yards away and was returned in Barry's direction with one keen swerve of the boy's arm.

Only then did Barry turn back to his father who had been looking at him with an expression of blissful outrage. Morris Brill was too annoyed to say any more as he looked at his son in amazement. Barry went past him into the house. His father wondered whether Barry was regressing or whether his recent expressions of undisguised rudeness and open hostility, as well as his association at every opportunity with children much younger than he, were only tricks to cause his parents further embarrassment.

The change in the boy had seemed quite sudden, yet if one thought about it one would realize that there had been danger signals for some time. Barry had started skipping school, going off to heaven only knew where. Once a promising, intelligent thirteen-year-old, he now retreated into moroseness, subtle insolence and pretences of not hearing or understanding what was being said to him or, worse, of not caring. Now his mother constantly kept an eye on him to ensure that he changed his clothing, for he was adopting the habit—the unforgivable habit — of wearing dirty clothes.

That it should be Barry—and not one of the others—who was giving trouble made it all the more disturbing, for he was the brightest. Hadn't he got that scholarship for college? He had shown the keenest aptitude for music, teaching himself at an early age to play the piano. The money now being spent on music lessons would be well worth it. They had hoped it would take his mind away from wanting to "beat pan".

It was all well and good to talk about national culture and to be proud of those putting the country on the map with their steel drums. He, Morris Brill, had nothing against that, but he preferred to see his children at concert recital with violin or piano. Marvin, now eleven, was struggling with the violin and Nancy, who at nine, one had to admit, wasn't exactly the cleverest of persons academically, was managing on the piano too.

Barry's marks at school had begun to drop as his *laissez faire* attitude increased. It wasn't yet twenty four hours since he, Morris, had sat down with him and given him a good talking to—something he did periodically with them all as a matter of principle. He had told him about the virtues of education and the need to make something of himself, especially since he had opportunities which *his* parents and *their* parents before never had. He had pointed out his own case and the struggle which had preceded his becoming principal of the high school. He had reiterated the story of the sacrifices made by his mother before the attainment of her recent post as a Divisional Superintendent at the hospital—an honour which few of her sex had as yet enjoyed. No! his children would not be permitted to waste time. They would be professionals, no matter what the cost. Thank goodness that his wife, Clothilde, saw things in the same way—at least, where the children were concerned. She too saw to it that the younger ones had extra private lessons after school.

He wished, at times, that he were less busy—what with being on the Prison Visiting Committee, the Administration Board for the Orphanage, and all the official bodies, some in which Clothilde was also involved, apart from her being on the Board of Governors for the new School for Handicapped Children and the Reformation Committee of the Women's Branch of the Church Board Association. But it was necessary that they be among the vanguard of leading citizens of if they were to have a voice in what was going on in the country. Only that morning they had received their invitation to the Governor General's Ball. That reminded him—he must speak to Bernice about not being sloppy when she served drinks. Mind you, she was almost one of the family now, having been their servant for many years. But she should be more careful though, when important people were around, for any sloppiness would reflect badly on him and his family.

Later, as Barry sat carelessly at the piano, his fingers moved across the keyboard with a knowledgeable deftness. He was wishing that Debussy had never been born or that he had died, at least, before composing the *Suite Bargamasque* with his *Clair De Lune*. Ping ping ping ping went the notes, but in his mind the sound was being made by a cricket ball glancing off a bat. *He* was the batsman. He was on a cricket field. The other players were shadowy. The ball flew through the air when he swung his bat. PING! It went towards the boundary as the fielders tried to intercept it. The batsman was making his runs. Suddenly, he halted. He was limping. He couldn't make it to the end of the pitch. His left leg was in a tight, heavy cast and he was dragging it. The Umpire was looking at him disapprovingly. He couldn't recognise the Umpire's face, because it was overshadowed by those of the other players. But he was calling out that Barry was out... stumped! He felt pain. In both legs. In his arms. In his entire body.

But now the liquid notes flowed from the keys beneath his fingers; they were eager and much livelier than the timing of the music on the page before him demanded. He was giving it his own interpretation, ripping away some of its solemnity.

"What yer doin'? What yer think yer playing boy? Calypso or jazz?"

His mother's presence filled the room. There was no space left for him to breathe now. It was squeezing, squeezing, squeezing the life out of him. P-o-n-g p-o-n-g went the notes. Then he saw the eyes. They were stuck to his fingers—one large dark, heavy eye on each knuckle. He couldn't get rid of them. Accusing eyes! Fascinated, he stared at them. They weighted down his hands, and he couldn't lift them. Stone eyes. No, leaden ones! And the keys—they were stuck together, wooden and gnarled. He must shake off the eyes in order to move his fingers and to unstick the keys and get the notes to harmonise the way he wanted them to do—not in the way the piece was written. He wanted to jazz it up a bit—to rearrange it. But the keys wouldn't move because his fingers couldn't strike them. So heavy were they with leaden eyes stuck on.

And all the while the umpire was telling him that he was out. He had been bowled out. His mother was there too, on the cricket field, yelling something he couldn't understand, her voice over-riding that of the umpire.

Barry jumped up, overturning the piano stool, and ran from the room, his mother's voice in irate pursuit: she would let his father deal with him; that was not why they were expensing themselves on piano lessons—so that he could play jazz.

But *he* really didn't know *why* they were expensing themselves, when he had taught himself to play anyway—but not Debussy nor Chopin. He would "dig those cats" on the side. Now he just wanted to be left alone to improvise—to play jazz ... calypso ... and ... and ...

"Here, eat that," Bernice said to him later that day, as she placed a plate in front of him. On it she had put a warmed over pastille and a delicate looking meat pattie, which she had fished out from the back of the fridge where they had been well hidden. When Bernice was her gruffest with Barry, she was merely pretending that she wasn't spoiling him—when, in fact, she was. She kept an eye on the kitchen with a zealot's watchfulness and, most of all, she kept an eye on the delicacies to ensure that, should Barry be absent when they were being served—as he always seemed to be lately—she could secure his portion.

"I don't know what happen to yer, yer know boy. Yer was the best of them all, no look at yer. It look jess as if they put yer so," she added.

Barry kept his eyes on the plate and picked at the food. Since he had run from the piano some four hours earlier, he had just returned "from wherever he does go when he leave the house now," as Bernice usually put it. His father entered the room and Barry tensed.

"I want to speak with you when you are finished eating," Morris Brill said and left.

Bernice frowned. She had not been spoken to, so she could say nothing, although there was plenty she wanted to say.

When Mrs. Brill came in, however, Bernice motioned that she wanted to speak with her outside. Barry's mother had her say before leaving though.

"From now on," she said to Barry," you don't leave this house unless you say where you are going...you hear? You ain't a man yet—at least, not here. Is only one man here, your father, and he doesn't ever go out without saying where he's

going. That should be enough example for you and the others. I hope yer listening to me, Barry, enough of this now. From now on, don't leave this house without saying where you are going." She had repeated her warning in a firm voice.

Barry kept on picking at the food as Mrs. Brill followed Bernice out of the kitchen. When they were out of earshot, Bernice said, "Yer know, Madam, I was thinkin' ... that boy ent right. Something happen to him."

"So?" Mrs. Brill retorted.

"Well," Bernice went on, "I think yer should get somebody to have a look at 'im. Well, yer know what ah mean. It have plenty of jealousy about, he being such a bright boy. Plenty parents jealous of 'im ... an' of you an' Mr. Morris too. Yer know what ah mean?"

"No, Bernice, I don't know. But I suspect what you getting at. So far as anybody looking at him is concerned, Dr. Joseph has already seen him and said that he may be studying too hard, that's all. You yourself know that the pills he gave Barry made him sleepy and so we only let him have them at nights now—the tranquilizers. There's nothing else we can do, except make sure he doesn't rule us around here. Not a thing is wrong with him that a good "cut ass" wouldn't cure."

"But, Madam, he wasn't always so. He was a good boy, studious an' all that, an' suddenly he actin' like he 'tootoolbey'. That ent right yer know, Madam. It have no reason fer a decent intelligent boy from such a good home as this to ac' like that ..."

"You wouldn't be suggesting he's heading for the St. Ann's sanitorium, would you?"

"No, Madam, but you dohn' know, he might. The boy look as if they put han' on him. If I was you I'd take him to see somebody. It have a lady does cut cards in Laventille—"

"Thanks for your advice, Bernice, but so far as I'm concerned, the matter is closed. We'll deal with him in our own way."

"Yes, Madam, ah was oney thinkin' ... that's all."

Bernice pouted her way back to the kitchen, but Bernice was not easily discouraged. She herself had often said, "If I was not a woman with plenty sticktoitiveness, I'da been dead long time. When I say I doin' something, I doin' it," But she never said *what* it was she was doing.

Bernice soon coerced Barry's parents into letting him go with her to the country for a few days. She was going to visit relatives, and she would get Barry away from the house and give *them* a break from him, she said. They complied. He would be away for about five days.

It was a muted clatter of pans in the kitchen which made Mrs. Brill aware that Bernice was back. Exactly what time she had got in no one knew. It was even stranger that Barry had not announced himself.

When Clothilde Brill entered the kitchen, Bernice seemed particularly offhanded. They were used to her temperamental lapses, but there was a decided air of coldness about her now.

"What time did you get back, Bernice?" asked Mrs. Brill.

"Jess now. A minute or two ago. I was goin' to come and let you know." She continued preparations for breakfast.

"Where's Barry?"

"Ah leff'im."

Wh..aa..t?" What do you mean? He was supposed to be back with you. Who gave you permission to leave him?"

"Madam, yer should see that boy. Jes the way he uses to be. The boy laffin. The boy helping the ... the .."

"Yes...?"

"Well, Madam, to tell yer the truth, ah did take him to see ah obeahman, ah ole man who know the business .. who know what he doin. He ent one of them quacks..."

"Bernice, you must be crazy. You take my son to some ... to some..."

"Listen till I explain, Madam. That boy was acting funny. I was worried about'im yer know! Well, I decide it kiar do him no harm if the ole man jess take a look at im, jess in case. Well, he an the ole man take to the one another right away—like duck does take to water. Every day he over by the old man place next door... helpin him in his provision garden...fishin in the river...."

"Digging vegetables? His hands...what about his hands? He's not used to country living. Are you mad, Bernice?"

"Wait, Madam! Well, in no time Barry was laffin again. He was runnin about like he was born there. He teach the dog at my Tanty so much tricks, yer never believe he was so clever. He clime the coconut trees. He pick fruit and help around...."

"Climbing coconut trees? He has to play the piano, Bernice. His hands ... What got into you?"

"Ah din have the heart to bring him back so soon, so I decide he could stay the ress of the week. It ent have no school till nex week anyway."

'*You* decided? Since when ..."

"Yes, Madam. Yer see, the obeahman say is true what I was thinking: "*They put'im so.*"

Mrs. Brill tensed.

"Who ... Bernice ... who?"

"His parents, Madam."

Bernice turned and walked away with the regality one who has just safely delivered a crown jewel to its rightful owner.

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Popular Images of South Asian Women

by Himani Bannerji

The following article is based on a talk given by Himani Bannerji at "The Heat is On: Women on Art on Sex", a three-day conference held in Vancouver in November 1985.

The usual 'orientalia', such as* Passage to India *or* The Jewel in the Crown *are more concerned with the imperial saga of the Raj in India than in objectifying Indian women.

Even though South Asian women are members of the so-called 'visible' minority groups —and visibility should have something to do with visual images— research shows that there is a remarkable paucity of their images in the Canadian media (a situation not unlike that of Native Canadian women). The few images of South Asian women that do exist are primarily non-sexual and are of passivity, docility and feminity. There is a small subcategory of sexualized imagery, but this subcategory of pagan, exotic, over-sexedness, judging by Pratibha Parmar's article in *The Empire Strikes Back*, seems to be more prevalent in ex-colonial Britain than in Canada. However, this absence of visual images of South Asian women does not connote the absence of our images from the social space as a whole — in fact, this absence is compensated for at other levels of society, and this general absence and the few types of images that exist are intimately connected at the source.

My point that the scarcity of visual images is compensated by other types of images, on other levels, needs elaboration. In order to do this, the situation of South Asian women has to be contrasted to that of middle-class white women. We have to acknowledge that we do not have to suffer from the obsessive preoccupation the advertisement agencies or the sex industries, for example, show towards the bodies and faces of white middle-class women. South Asian women are not seen as aids to trade and, as such, are not used to sell a wide variety of objectified sex to gadgets —which uphold the happy, white bourgeois home. That an Indian woman likes a certain kind of toothpaste is obviously no recommendation for the product, and certainly the sexual appeal of a garment is not enhanced by being

modelled on a Sri Lankan woman. Needless to say, the clothes that we bring with us — our saris, shalwars or churidars — are not seen as an aid to beauty. The small sub-category of images which straddle the sexual and the exotic are insignificant in number and dissemination. They are to be found in the occasional tourist poster or in the occasional film such, as *Siddhartha.* But the usual 'orientalia', such as *Passage to India* or *The Jewel in the Crown* are more concerned with the imperial saga of the Raj in India than in objectifying Indian women. If anything, these projects are engaged in such over-all reification that they do not waste time with piece-meal attempts at individual objectification. In any case, the women who clean Heathrow airport, or work in their usual jobs in the factories of Canada are hardly associated in the Canadian mind with the world portrayed in these (or any other) films. They are considered a pair of working hands.

From all that I've written above, one may jump to the mistaken conclusion that I am competitively and aggressively seeking to get ourselves a shelf in the marketplace of images. That definitely is not my project. I am simply saying that there is no reason to believe, from the general absence of our images, that we have escaped the fate of others in being objectified and packaged as commodities. Our situation is even worse, in that we can be treated as objects directly, without the necessity of creating a separate plane — that of representation — for our de-humanization. The status of social subjects who, at the least, need a secondary level of visual images in order to be made the creatures of a capitalist patriarchy, is denied to us. So while we do not have to worry about our representation in the media, we do have to worry about the fact that, negatively or positively, we live in a vacuum, in a state of constant facelessness. If one were not aware of statistics there would be very little to suggest that in the province of Ontario tens of thousands of South Asians are trying to make their homes. It is as if we were not here, even though Mackenzie Porter of the *Toronto Sun,* in his infinite kindness, has pronounced the verdict that it is indeed okay for Sikh members of the police and armed forces to wear turbans. How have we arrived at such a state of exploitation and non-entity?

In answering this question, a little history and a little knowledge of Canadian political economy goes a long way. Our social location of here and now was developed through the long history of colonialism and imperialism in which white settler colonies like Canada played subordinate but favoured roles. The economy still continues along the same imperialist path, and its long worked-up justificatory ideology of racism still continues to be the important ideological force. This, combined with the neo-colonial nature of the South Asian countries, ensures South Asian women our place on the lowest level in the scale of exploitation in Canada. One should not forget that Canada's economic involvement with South Asia has been very profitable to Canada (for instance, investments in major hydro-electric projects or manufacturing industries in our so-called 'free-trade' zones such as Sri Lanka). Neither should one forget that bringing in and keeping in place a vulnerable labour force is profitable and therefore, to the profit-makers, reasonable. This becomes twice as easy when using a population about whom there has existed a substantial body of racism from English and American sources. How we are seen or not seen can only be accurately determined from the *terms of our entry* into this country. We were not allowed in to create the middle-class or, even, the skilled labour class. In fact, whatever skill we did possess became de-legitimised upon our entrance to Canada. Farm work, factory work — these are our labour mandates. Since we have already been allocated a space in the lowest level basement of Canadian society, it is entirely appropriate that we are visually and socially invisible. This invisibility is physical as well as geographical. Many researchers have shown, for example, that South Asian women are generally found in factories which are farthest away from dense population centres, working in areas with almost no transportation, in the lowest or the

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inner-most part of the factories. Even as white-collar workers, they tend to be put in jobs that do not demand much public contact. This is the analogue, in practice, to our visual absence from the social space.

This visual absence, as I have mentioned above, does not mean an absence of images; but the images that exist are best understood as images of 'mind' which, in the current language of social analysis, are called 'stereotypes'. They form the common-sense of Canadian society and work as a device for social regulation of South Asian women. The social environment is suffused with them and expectations and images are spun out of them. Passivity, docility, silence, illiteracy, uncleanliness, smell of curry, and fertility are some of the common-sense things that the dominant culture 'knows' about us. They provide the content of our racist experiences — that well-aimed spit or cry of "Fucking Paki bitch!" These assumptions function as expectations and injunctions at the same time, and they operate not only at the level of direct exploitation, but also indirectly in other areas of education and administration. These stereotypes are images of sorts, but of a particular kind — and they are best summed up as images of ascription and prescription. They are created in the process of ruling and help to maintain that rule by signalling to keep us in a place that has already been assigned for us. They produce us as objects of the ruling social organization. However, since in spite of this continual objectification, we go on being the subjects or authors of our actions, our political struggle at this level consists of the production of images and accounts which we might call images of resistance. They consist of descriptions of our lives as they are actually lived, they refer back to the historical and present relations of exploitation. They give a sense of how we really live and, as images of resistance, they also embody how we want to live. This not only helps at the level of culture, but also at what we call the social, that is, our lived reality, to politicize the environment.

But before we go on to talk more about what could be called a war of images —which we must wage in all areas of social production, attacking the images of mind as well as visual images — we have to spend some time thinking through the relationship between our being ascribed a status of 'visibility' and the overall invisibility of South Asian women in the superstructural areas of this society. This category of 'visible minorities' is a perplexing one. On the surface it seems to be a simple euphemism. It seems to work as a way of classifying or categorizing, without appearing to be in any way racist. It seems to be an attempt at nicety. But its first impact is one of absurdity to anyone who bothers to reflect on it. All forms of material existence except air, as we know, have visibility. All people, black or white, South Asian or Scandinavian, are visible. So in what way are we more visible than others? Thinking along this line of greater visibility brings home to us the fact that this category, upon closer examination, actually reveals more than it hides. Some people, it implies, are more visible than others; if this were not the case then its triviality would make it useless as a descriptive category. There must be something 'peculiar' about some people which draws attention to them. This 'something' is the point to which the Canadian state wishes to draw our attention. Such a project by the state needs a point of departure which has to function as a norm, as the social average of appearance. This well-blended average, 'normal' way of looking becomes the base line, or 'us' (which is the vantage point of the state), to which those others who have been marked as 'different' must be referred and in relation to which 'peculiarity' is constructed. The 'invisibility' of these men and women depends on the state's view of them as the normal and, therefore, the institution of them as dominant types. They are 'the' Canadians, and those others, no matter what citizenship they hold, are to be considered as deviations from the way Canadians should look. The category, then, is actually based on notions such as 'different', 'not normal,' 'not like us,' 'does not belong.' One might say that this category encodes rather than blatantly states any of these things. This categorization uses physical attributes of people, puts them into groups, and assigns the

This category of 'visibility', and the construction of one's self as a 'minority' (a suffered member of society, even though a citizen and socially productive), are ways of rendering people powerless and vulnerable.

slot of 'us' or the 'other'. This 'us and them' distinction is based on criteria of normalcy which are very similar to those used by the Nazis or those which are used to organize apartheid in South Africa. They put everyone, no matter where they come from, if they don't have white skin, into one category — the 'visible minorities.' Needless to say, this practice totally overlooks the difference in the histories and the cultures of the people themselves. They have no identity or entity other than the one conferred upon them by the Canadian state, and racist attitudes and practices of a people long used to pillage, plunder, genocide, colonial and imperialist exploitation. 'Visibility' in such a case means that people are 'selected-out' as not only being different, but also as inferior or inadequate. Thus, their own bodies are used to construct, for them, some sort of social zones or prisons, since they cannot crawl out of their skins, and this signals what life has to offer them in Canada. This special type of visibility is a social construction as well as a political statement. There is no intrinsic truth to it.

This category of 'visibility', and the construction of one's self as a 'minority' (a suffered member of society, even though a citizen and socially productive), are ways of rendering people powerless and vulnerable. They work as operative categories not because they possess any truth, but because they put into operation the racist and imperialist relations which are already in place. They are injunctions, or codes of command, which bid us to be silent, to remove ourselves from areas or places where we may be seen. To be labelled 'visible' is to be told to become invisible, to get lost. It matches the stares — not just of curiosity but of contempt — that we get in public places. This category is the abstraction of that 'look' which cuts one out from that necessary anonymity without which no ordinary life can be carried on. The incredible cost in terms of emotional energy in fighting against that singling out and the reducing cold look is compounded by other actions which reinforce this, actions like, for example, having no one sit beside you on the bus. This 'look' interestingly enough, is both a look and a judgment. It is also the look of the mentally blind which does not see what is actually in front of it, but only sees inward into a mental image — those terrible stereotypes which are pasted onto us with invisible glue every time someone looks at us! Throughout this process we are standing in a third degree light that streams out of the stares, the administrative procedures, the assembly lines, against the white wall that has been erected around us. Often, intensely desiring relief, we wish we were other-wise. Skin bleacheners, straightening of hair, dressing with obsessive care, are all a part of the same response. We forget that those who make the rules can change them and that while we can make small gestures of self-mutiliation, we can not really flay ourselves out of our skins and features. And even if we could, this wouldn't help. In situations where visibility was ostensibly lacking in physical terms, as in Nazi Germany, it has been constructed by the forced pinning-on of symbols which marked people out, cut people apart from the rest of society. The yellow star of David, the red star for communists, the pink triangle for homosexuals, were all so many ways of producing visibility. There were also images of gross and grotesque kinds, both of eye and of mind, but people who were being imaged had no right to produce their own images. Their 'visibility' was a token of absence of power.

How can we convey to the world that many more women in South Asia are involved in political struggles, including armed struggle, than have ever been involved in the history of the west?

Living in the interstices of an imperialist society and state, what can we do to counteract these images of mind and eye? Each time we open a newspaper or a television we see ourselves as images of despair and hunger, extending our begging bowls to the west, to America, to those who in the first place produced our misery and continue to aid it. How can we combat the menace of charitable organizations who find a reason for their existence in fabricating our helplessness, and give alms to our hunger but not help to our struggles? How can we convey to the world that many more women in South Asia are involved in political struggles, including armed struggle, than have ever been involved in the history of the west? And how can we bring across the struggle of our women, of ourselves, a struggle in which these so-called passive women show the resourcefulness and endur-

ance of guerilla fighters? How can we convey in images as clear as crystal, that from the Pizza Crust factory of Toronto to Grunwick in England, South Asian women have said "no" to racism and the hydra-headed oppression of their bodies and their minds? How can we vindicate our intellectual, political, cultural life in the face of the imagistic assault of the passive, obedient woman, not the least of which is the myth of inverted motherhood? I call this inverted in view of the fact that the myth of the Holy Family is not operative for us; to the Imperialist eye, there is nothing beautiful in the motherhood of South Asian origin. That beatific vision is replaced by an animal-like fecundity, which complements her mindlessness with her unending breeding capacity. These are images of ascription and prescription, of ruling, and they are not retrievable even through the magic of the so-called 'disarticulation'[1] process. But the question that faces us is what are we to do about these images? What should our strategies and tactics be in this war of images?

This war cannot be waged unless we remember that we continue to be substantive entities even though we are not in a position to control all aspects of our lives; that we are not and never were wholly subsumed; that even though we do not control the means of cultural production and reproduction, we continue to generate images which validate us within our own communities. Within languages, lores, social interactions, festivals, and all other aspects of an everyday life, we continue to generate that strength which are forms of resistance. But this is not enough. We must be able to produce, be in a position to disseminate and validate militant, resisting images of ourselves. And for this we must not only turn to the histories of our countries in anti-colonial struggles, but to the history of the South Asians in Canada. The memory of Kotagatamaru,[2] the fight of the farmworkers in British Columbia, the strikes of South Asian women in different sectors of industries must all be revived, resurrected, and put forward in whatever cultural work we engage in. We must revive also the memories of women fighting in other parts of the third world, and take strength from the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, or the resistance put up by the women of Vietnam. These images, which are rightfully ours, must provide the third dimension of our struggle to fight against the images of mind which both express and create the conditions of our domination. In short we must fully politicize ourselves, in the smallest details of our everyday lives. As a part of this process we must also resist the attempt by the 'anthropologists' of the ruling class to 'discover' and incorporate us.

In conclusion I have to point out that it is not at the level of images, of commercial newspaper photographs, or pornography magazines that our real subsumption or objectification happens. This happens to us actually, physically, in our daily life. When a people can be commanded to be silent, *to become the images*, then it is obvious that it is the practice of social, political and economic domination that has overdetermined the image. Therefore the thing to remember is that although images do have an effect on us both in terms of our own and others' perception of us, it is not the image but the relations of domination —the practice —that kills. We can not even begin to fathom the presence, the absence, the nature of the images, unless we stop thinking of them solely as a set of, or a system of, cross-referencing signs, of reality as discourse. We can only begin to read this code when we approach it from what it is that they en-code. Visual images in that sense are congealed social relations, formalizing in themselves either relations of domination or those of resistance. The politics of images is the same as any other politics; it is about being the subjects, not the objects, of the world that we live in.

When a people can be commanded to be silent, to become the images, then it is obvious that it is the practice of social, political and economic domination that has overdetermined the image.

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Himani Bannerji is a poet, writer and educator. She lives in Toronto.

NOTES

1 See Ernesto LaClau's article in *Marxism and Ideology* for a discussion of the disarticulation process.

2 The name of the ship which carried Sikhs to Vancouver in 1914. The Canadian government would not allow them to disembark, and prevented water and supplies from reaching the ship.

Working With Collectives

by Ayanna Black

The Oxford dictionary defines *collective* as "collecting many into one; compound; representing or including many; combined or aggregate or common effort of many workers; to express many individuals; ownership by all for a common benefit."

Heresies, a feminist publication on Art and Politics says..."Working collectively means creating something out of individuals ideas, feeding off each other and tapping into the tremendous skills and powers we have, sharing them, creating something that could not be done by one woman, something larger than self...."

Women's collectives in North America were born in the consciousness-raising (CR) groups of the '60s. I vividly remember the first group I attended at the Ontario College of Art. We all gathered in one of the classrooms, some women sitting on the floor because of the lack of chairs. These sessions were usually at lunchtimes. As we bit into our sandwiches we read, listened to, and absorbed the words of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, which was then our Bible. We were all looking for our lost culture, for me — a black women's culture — and seeking a feminist perspective on our lives. Involvement in this challenging process fuelled us with energy and new insights into such issues as *why inequality exists, why so few women write, (or are published), and why there is such a shortage of social services* and *satisfying jobs for black women.*

We soon realized that our goals were attainable and that social changes were not only possible but inevitable. There was no turning back; we women were finally taking control of our lives. Consciousness-raising groups such as ours mushroomed into various collectives.

Women — usually white and middle class — with common interests formed collectives, often without including women of colour. Special-interest groups, being politically correct, (sometimes from need) began to include lesbians, French-speaking women, the disabled, and housewives. But rarely did they include black women, Native women, — women of colour. Silent voices were beginning to be heard, except for 'visible' minorities. Immigrant women were often given token attention — sometimes under the umbrella of multiculturalism.

In 1968, black consciousness and black pride had reached its peak in America; the sixties would revolutionize the way blacks were viewed. This consciousness spread to Canada and strengthened the Canadian blacks action against racism and discrimination. Black women were part of the struggle, yet their skills and abilities were often unrecognized and unrespected. To my surprise, I was even told by some socially and politically astute black men that my involvement with feminism or what I called activism — was dividing the race.

In most collectives, decisions were made by consensus. Planning and policy making relied on the collective and was crucial to the whole

organizational structure. Management systems flowed from that. Collectives that hadn't implemented the basic valve of planning usually operated on an informal, ad hoc structure. Often they found it was necessary to resort to a more formal plan when a decision had to be made. For example, planning was needed to secure a line of credit to pay the printers to get journals to the stores on time. Or the computer collective had to change manufacturers because the present ones were lacking in service parts and customer services were poor. Without planning, decision-making became a response to a crisis. Consequently, consultations within the group became much less of a consensus.

Consensus means that each collective member has an equal share in all decision making and members agree on their interests. For consensus to work effectively members need to invest in the collective, to really allow it to function and grow, and to ride the rough roads together. It can be a rewarding process, but it is not always an easy one. "It's impossibly frustrating sometimes but it's also one of the reasons why we've survived and still love each other." (*Heresies*, Vol. 2, No. 3)

In some collectives, blocking periods (difficulty in coming to a consensus) sometimes occur. These are often caused by lack of information and lack of communication, which is why it is crucial to establish a back-up decision-making method to facilitate a process if consensus cannot be reached in some predetermined length of time.

I have worked in several collectives over the past twelve years — Times Change Women's Employment Centre, The Metro Women's Credit Union, The Toronto Women's Writing Collective, and Fireweed Collective, — and each has been a different experience.

Most of them were made up of white, middle-class women actively working in the feminist movement with no analysis of why women of colour weren't more involved. In most cases, little or no outreach was done to actively solicit members from other cultures. Some collectives felt it was up to black women, — not the group — to recruit other women of colour. Many white women felt that since they had no black friends they couldn't do the job. I was often the only black women in the group and I often wondered why, as feminists, the group didn't see it as a problem for all women. They certainly worried about every other problem you could imagine! They didn't want to accept this as a form of racism. Unfortunately, some collectives evolved into what I call a "colonized collective."

bell hooks who has had a varied background working in the U.S., comments in her 1984 book, *Feminst Theory: From Margin to Centre*... "they (white women) may not have the conscious understanding of the ideology of white supremancy and the extent to which it shapes their behaviour and attitudes towards women unlike themselves. This conscious maintenance and perpetuation of what supremancy is dangerous because none of us can struggle to change racist attitudes if we do not recognize that they exist...."

This is the first in a series of articles and interviews with women who have worked or are working in collectives.

Ayanna Black's first book of poetry is No Contingencies, *and she has been active in the women's movement for many years. Her ideas initiated the Toronto Arts Against Apartheid Festival in May, 1986.* ➤

Balancing Hats

An Interview with Senator Anne Cools

by Judith Sullivan

In August, Tiger Lily *spoke with Canada's only Black Senator—the Honourable Anne Cools. At that time, Senator Cools interrupted her busy summer schedule to share her thoughts on women, politics and success in a man's world.*

Hon. Anne Cools was born in Barbados, West Indies. She was educated in Montreal—a social worker and one of the founders and Ex-Officio Director of Women in Transition Inc. Member of National Parole Board. She was elected to the Canadian Senate, January 1984.

TIGER LILY

How does one become a Senator in the Canadian Parliament?

COOLS

It's very difficult to become a Senator. It is an appointment made by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. So whoever gets chosen has to obviously enjoy the confidence of the Prime Minister of the day.

Our Parliament has two houses, a bi-cameral system. The upper house is the Senate; the lower house is the House of Commons. Even though it is named the Senate, it is patterned after the superior courts and its powers are extensive, including an absolute veto over any legislation. We meet when the House of Commons meets and the systems are virtually identical, in that every bill has to successfully complete three readings in both houses before it becomes a law.

TIGER LILY

Is it difficult being the only Black Senator?

COOLS

I have to balance all my hats. On the professional level there's the woman, the politician and the racial minority. On the other hand I am a woman, a person, and a racial minority. I cannot be any one of them at any point in time without being all of them. At the same time I must preserve those areas of my life that have shaped me. How does one balance being a woman and being black when the opposition at a given time may be a group of Black males? It's sometimes very difficult. One has to constantly strive to be a balanced human being.

At times there are huge obstacles to that goal. I'm still caught off guard by racial jealousies and ill-intended feminine challenges, but you learn to be like the Rock of Gibraltar, a Rock of Ages. There are times when one has to walk through very, very harrowing situations, but a strong will enables you to get through it.

TIGER LILY

Do women have a special role in the Senate?

COOLS

No. We seem to want to garner power as women but not to accept the responsibility or other problems that accompany it. The sacrifices are immense. Women tend to try to find safety and security at all times.

TIGER LILY

What are the sacrifices you have made?

COOLS

I am constantly in the public eye. The total erosion of privacy is awesome. There is personal anguish. I am a woman without children. It is natural for a woman to have children. I don't believe that is *all* they should do, but I will never know that pleasure. For instance I shall never have the pleasure of bequeathing to my offspring the pen that I signed my name with when I was sworn into the Senate. Some will think that's insignificant, but not having children is a huge sacrifice.

The hardship of the task itself—taking the flagellation, the lashings, and the hustings in the electoral battlefield. One has to be constantly on the firing line, constantly struggling.

All of that has a cumulative effect. We all know the wear and tear that such stress takes. It's had its effect on my outlook. I'm always very serious, very intense.

TIGER LILY

What gives you the energy to keep going?

COOLS

I wonder about that sometimes. I'm a great believer in the collectivity of humanity. If I

have skills that other people don't have, then it's my responsibility to do what I must. Humanity can only operate when we all make a contribution. What keeps me going is the belief that I owe it to humanity. I'm not always sure if it's personal conviction or destiny that propels me.

TIGER LILY

How did you learn to have so much faith in yourself?

COOLS

A long time ago I learned to draw on myself. I often wonder where that faith comes from. Perhaps it was innate, or perhaps it comes from pain and sorrow. I don't know. If you're around me though, boy, you can feel it! I have always been propelled by the belief that one can affect one's environment. And I constantly reach into my soul for the sustenance I need to keep going.

There's a line from a poem that says, "She would bend to no one, but her sorrow." I'm a little like that.

TIGER LILY

What do you do to unwind? To relax?

COOLS

I exercise. Going to the gym for me is an absolute must! I listen to music. I find the hardest part is finding the time to do the things that are relaxing, such as reading for pleasure. When you are gone from home every six weeks, it can be rather trying. There are times when you have to jog your brain and say, now where is home?

TIGER LILY

How do you feel about reform in the Senate?

COOLS

I tend to think that reform is something that is always necessary. Any measures that I see are so related to total Parliamentary reform that I don't understand why there is a focus on the Senate. The House of Commons needs reform, too.

I would like to see more power given to Parliament. I'm one of those who believes that Parliament is the repository of power. Too much power is being taken away from parliament and parliamentarians, and being placed in the hands of tribunals and agencies.

So my idea of reform is to return to Parliament it's powers.

TIGER LILY

Do you feel that the Senate adequately reflects the Canadian mosaic?

COOLS

I think it properly reflects the people who are actively involved. The question is do the people who take action in society about life's conditions—whether it's political action, voluntary action in the community or whatever—do these persons adequately reflect the mosaic? When people are being chosen for positions of influence and power, the choice takes place among those who have already taken action at some level.

It concerns me when in this day and age, there is still the phrase, "*I was the only one there.*" Where were the rest of us?

It hurts a lot.

TIGER LILY

What do you see as the challenges ahead as we approach the 21st century?

COOLS

Most of the things that the social activist groups have worked for are in place. We have free education, a sound medical program, a marvelous transportation system, and an excellent social service network. All the things we have wanted to create are here. We have to make some serious assessments now: If I have all those things I wanted to make me free, now what? We have to face ourselves—modern man has to free himself, and answer the question, Why don't I like this group?

As for minorities, they are the "other"; they are the alter-ego of the person in power. We have come out of the bowels of the Western experience and we have an extremely complicated past. We are a Western people now. And, I daresay, we will have a very complicated future.

Judith Sullivan is a freelance writer who lives in Toronto, Canada. ➤

Education —Myths and Realities

by Zanana Akande

North America, with its unclaimed land, underdeveloped resources, and entrepreneurial opportunities, was for generations viewed as the new frontier. Many people believed that it would grant them the attainment of monetary success and the elevation of status to the middle or upper classes. But the Cartwrights, the Masseys, and the Harrises were few and far between. For most settlers, competition from large companies, the railroads, and successful farmers made for an uneven contest and they succumbed gratefully to hand-to-mouth survival and the chance to earn a living.

The rapid growth of industrialization brought some prosperity, but it also brought conflicts and problems, and the working class realized that with few exceptions their status had not changed. A new ideology of opportunity was needed to motivate the masses, and education became the new frontier. The 19th-century cry "Go to America! Go to Canada!" became the 20th-century exhortation to the sons (and sometimes even the daughters) of the working class to go to college. The folklore of capitalism was revitalized: Elevation of status was possible and the door was open to all who had the intelligence and determination to make it.

The new philosophy of education had two motivating forces. There were those who championed the cause of the masses, either out of deeply rooted beliefs or in the quest for political support. They claimed that higher education was a right earned by the working class through its contribution to the economic development of the continent. There was also a growing recognition, although sometimes

reluctant, that for the country to enjoy continued growth and advancement it had to improve the abilities of all its citizens and the leadership of the most capable, not just the economically advantaged. Equality of opportunity became the philosophy and education, identified as the Way, became the dream of the working class, the motivation of thousands of immigrants working toward a better life for their children. The movement was out of the factories, stores, and small businesses and into the colleges and universities. People were secure in the belief that school and schooling was an objective competition, that education was the path by which one achieved an end to economic strife, that one's achievement was limited only by one's intellect, talent, and motivation, and that those who failed to measure up had only themselves to blame.

The movement into the institutions of higher education was slow at first, admitting diligent and highly motivated students who were prepared to imitate, if not assimilate, the attitudes and beliefs of the middle class, even if their own backgrounds and environments denied their relevance. Such apparent acceptance of North American middle-class standards seemed for some a small price to pay for a good job and the eventual elevation of status. But the dream of higher education quickly became the expectation of all. At the same time, the population was changing from the acquiescent followers of the pre-'40s and '50s to a new breed who expected to see their reflections in the school — and indeed, in the society. Theirs was a population that did not and would not readily identify with or assent to the goals of a system designed for the middle classes. Likewise, the school's evaluation of their failure to meet its goals did not alarm the new generation.

The populations of the '60s, '70s, and '80s made demands. They demanded multicultural studies, language transition and upgrading classes, support programs. They criticized the placement of their children in vocational schools and courses not preparatory for university. They criticized the use of IQ tests for culturally different children and the poor. They united in a loud cry against the educational establishment, and their voices were heard and responded to.

The response was the achievement of multicultural programs (some offered during the regular school day), support classes for language transition, compensatory resource programs, the limited use of IQ tests, and even a modified curriculum that reflected the reality of the students' lives. The working class and culturally different were also handed the same package (some of which they really did not want, had they been able to recognize it). Many students were given a modified curriculum that allowed them to succeed without challenge, while directing them into low-paying jobs. Curriculum modification even at the university level seemed to imply that a reduction in standards was necessary to admit minorities. The system acquired more support programs and a modification in testing techniques, requiring more subjective evaluations that depended on the good judgment and goodwill of the evaluator. The prevalence of children of minorities and the poor in the resource programs, other than those teaching English to newcomers, sometimes leads to the inference that these students have less ability.

The truth is that while parents achieve what they continue to demand, they create an obstacle to their ultimate goal, the attainment of professional and higher socio-economic status for their children. The fact remains that the universities are not prepared to lead their new students to higher education — that they now admit — even in limited numbers. The addition of new cultural programs, as they are separately presented, does not achieve the easier acculturation of the new student into the majority society. Further, these programs emphasize a sense of heritage and belonging that may in itself be restrictive and limiting. To the new student, modifications in curriculum and support programs are sometimes seen as ends in themselves, setting expectations to achieve within them, but not without them, in the more traditional curriculum demands. And even those who graduate from academic institutions having majored in less traditional curriculum may not be accepted into the professional and corporate world. An analysis of the patterns of successful achievement through education shows that with few exceptions, "education serves only young people with abilities and interests that are developed through traditional academic discipline -bound curriculum" (New Society).

Ultimately the question must be asked: Are we limiting the achievement of our children because we are confused about what to ask for? Or could it be that the means we have chosen to attain our goals have become goals in themselves, blocking our view of the wider picture and limiting our place in the wider society? These questions must be studied.

Zanana Akande, a school principal now completing a Ph.D. in Education, lives in Toronto. ➤

The Magic of Fundraising

by Janice Brangman

Voilà! One Million Dollars ... Just like that!

And why not? Everybody is doing it today — one can hardly visit a corner store or get through a work day without noticing some form of fundraising appeal. Let's face it: The appeal for funds is deeply embedded in our daily lives. We live in a money-related culture of garage sales, bake sales, dinners, auctions, lotteries, donation boxes — not to mention the multitude of "AID" programs in the form of live, band, and farm....

As a fundraiser, I have been approached by many new groups in many different ways. The usual opening is "my organization needs to raise funds for this (worthwhile) program and we need these funds (yesterday) and you can claim a percentage of what you raise —okay? Now we're all very busy, but here is one of our files and when can we expect these funds (within the next three weeks)? You *are* a fundraiser...aren't you?"

"Amazing!" I say.

Is this fundraising magic real? You don't just pull funds out of a hat and expect the unexpected. The magic is in commitment, in applying the right principles, and in developing a long-range plan that will determine the ultimate success and sense of achievement. Fundraising is a total commitment, not by one person, but through the organized activity of people with knowledge and resources — including a whole gamut of good sound business principles and bottom line "bucks."

Let's just take a moment and explore this fundraising "magic." What is it? Why does it matter? Who really benefits? What are the rewards? Why is it so necessary and most importantly, how does one get started?

The concept of fundraising is not a new idea by any means. Generally, it is the act of collecting or developing funds in the financial interest of a specific cause or project with a marketable appeal. This marketable appeal can range from the emotional and serious through a sense of goodwill and "what's in it for me?" motive.

In the past, most traditional non-profit fundraising ventures centred on people and the provision of essential needs in the areas of health, education, nourishment, culture and the arts, politics, religion, research, and the elimination of poverty.

Your ability to raise funds will matter, if you are convinced that what you are doing will make a difference. The difference is between hunger and food, knowledge and ignorance, disaster and relief, the fortunate and the unfortunate. If your presented project will make a difference, fill a gap, or be missed if discontinued, then the need for it has been established and your case can be stated. The benefits exist between choice, free will, and self-help.

The principles of fundraising are basic. Once you have determined the need for your project through a thorough needs assessment and market profile, then you are ready to get started. Start with the development of programs that are highly marketable and measurable. Develop support for your programs with expertise, interest, and demand. The non-

profit fundraising campaign spectrum is broad, involving all aspects of business and life skills. It includes research and evaluation, analysis and prospecting, targeting and goal setting, strategy and planning, people and resources, materials and supplies, communication and public relations, monitoring and reporting, training and development, managing and problem solving, and recognition.

First,...you must obtain a sense of real commitment and need. You must realize who you are and set your limits and explore your boundaries. You must clearly define who you are and why you exist. Identify why the absence of your project would be missed. Decide the most likely benefit to your prospective donor, your client or audience, and yourself and/or organization. Can these benefits be measured and qualified? Can your project or service exist without outside funding, such as fees for service, subscription, or sales? Is your program or project new, or can you offer comparative experiences?

Why do people give? Understand what motivates your prospective donor. Determine, if possible, whether your prospective donor has a history of donating to particular projects. If so, find out which ones, why, and how much was donated. You will find that a high percentage of your prospects have a history of donating to various projects. The most common practice is to target prospects with a history of donations, do not, however, by any means limit yourself to those prospects. Today's donations market is extremely competitive and you will be competing with the experienced as well as the creative.

The most common funding sources are corporations, government, foundations, and wealthy individuals. Yet there is a wealth of sources virtually untapped, such as small businesses, clubs, individuals, and special-event ideas. The latter requires not only a sound case statement, but creative and selective cultivation.

Let's take a moment to view today's donor market. Unlike in the past, when contributing was based on tradition and a sense of goodwill, today's donor market is much more scrutinizing; the typical donor now seeks the real benefits of financial investment in your cause. Far from being a mere giveaway, donations in the 1980s are more of a calculated gesture with clear demands of "what's in this for me?" This is not to suggest that individuals and organizations are no longer donating — on the contrary, donations are on the rise — but to emphasize that your approach has to meet the requirements of change and real sophistication.

You will inevitably discover that some donors contribute because of a personal identification with the service and others in response to personal financial planning such as tax shelters. Some donors act through tradition or goodwill, and others due to pressure or a favour to a friend. The most effective donation, though, is contributed in response to the right "ask." People in most circumstances give to people, not to causes. The cause will usually inch the sale, but the thought begins with who is doing the asking. The "ask" is the bottom line of any fundraising venture, so develop a level of comfort in this capacity.

When I was first asked to develop a corporate fundraising campaign, my comfort zone grew when I realized that I am among the world's greatest consumers. My grocery bill is outrageous and my five-year-old falls for every cereal and toy that the TV advertises. My clothing habit is that of a junkie, and when I think about my role as a "professional" buyer, I realize that I'm not begging for nothing! I am simply a neaningful part of a system.

If you, as an individual, were to sit down and tally your annual consumer investment, you would realize (as I did) that a small percentage of this investment multiplied by the group or people you represent is not asking much. Remember that corporations have sense enough to build charity into their profit base, and government will even make allowances for their generous gesture to you.

So I say, "Why not...ask!" But know *why* you are asking, *what* you are asking, *to whom* you will make the ask, and whether the ask is of the most benefit to your organization and the prospective donor. By all means, get the right person to make the ask so that your case is made clear. And most importantly, don't hesitate to build a bridge which will enable you to ask again.

Another rule of fundraising is to give. Understand what it is like to make a donation decision. Give until you feel it! Then write down the reasons you gave and why the amount you gave was most appropriate. Keep a record of your reasons for contributing and compare notes with other members of your group. You will probably discover that the reasons for giving are common and basic...not magic!

This article is the first of a three-part series.

Janice Brangman is a professional fundraiser who lives in Toronto, Canada. ➤

Music
Politics of Identities

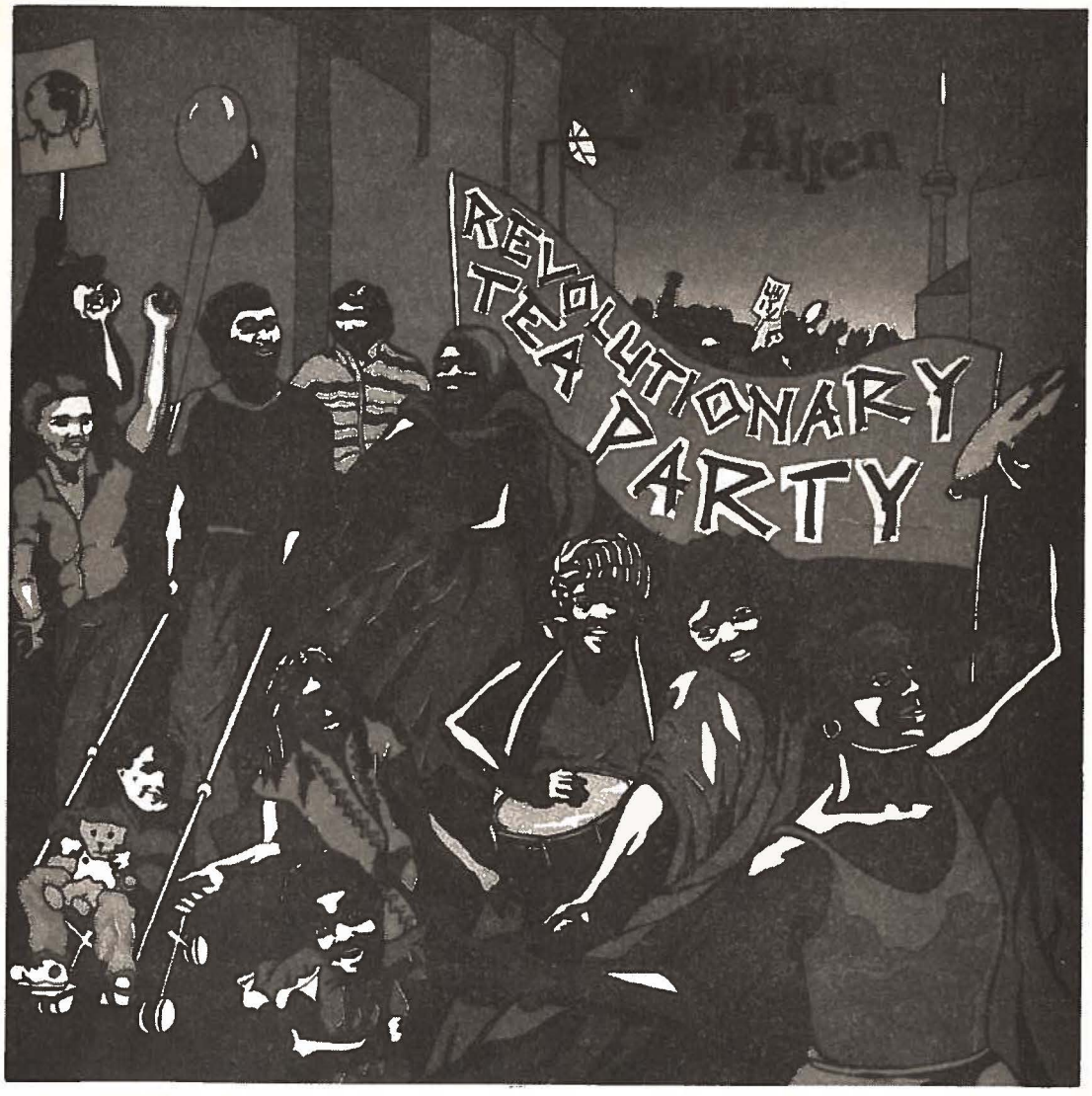
by Marva Jackson

GOOD TO GO LOVER
Gwen Guthrie
Producer: Gwen Guthrie

WISHFUL THINKING
Lorraine Scott
Producer: Kussin & Russ Boswell

REVOLUTIONARY TEA PARTY
Lillian Allen
Producer: Billy Bryans

Gwen Guthrie, a singer, songwriter, producer and arranger, began her career in the music business working with people such as Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder and Roberta Flack. During a trip to Jamaica, Guthrie met ace rhythm team, Sly Dunbar and Robbie Shakespeare who became the producers of her self-titled LP *GWEN GUTHRIE.*



Marva Jackson

With her new self-produced album, *GOOD TO GO LOVER*, Gwen Guthrie explores different facets of that illusive jewel called love. Through the pain, passion and reality, the results can be too unpredictable, too intangible.

The first song is a cover version of a Hal David/Burt Bacharach composition "(They Long To Be) Close To You", a big hit for The Carpenters who painted a rather cool and aloof picture. Guthrie provides a more intimate, warmer atmosphere. Her vocals are confident and dynamic, a sensitivity reminiscent of the excellent songwriter, Syreeta. "Ain't Nothin' Goin' On But The Rent" could have been just another disco-dance single, but listen to the honesty of the lyrics:

> "...Bill collectors at my door
> What can you do for me?
> No romance without finance
> Boy, nothin' in life is free...."

Guthrie tells it like it is—Money, one of the chief causes of stress in relationships. Even more, now that women are also footing the bill.

GOOD TO GO LOVER, meant for a Top 40 funk-oriented audience, has a strong rhythm and blues flavour. Sly collaborates the drum sections with musicians like drummer Steve Farrone and keyboardist Bernie Worell of the Talking Heads. Ira Seigel's guitar mixes subtly with Onaje "Maestro" Gumbs' strings and synth, and Dave Conley's understated work on synths. Only half of the Dunbar/Shakespeare team participate in recording Guthrie's newest LP.

GOOD TO GO LOVER, a solid production effort for Gwen Guthrie, should propel her even further into that elusive crossover world called pop.

In a radio market where few openings exist for a vocalist whose style is *definitely* soul, Lorraine Scott's third record, *WISHFUL THINKING*, a 12" single, showcases her voice. Available on her own label, SLAK Records, a new Canadian independent, Scott spoke about getting airplay on commercial radio in Canada.

> "You know that the barriers (music) exist, but you have to keep trying to break them down...I know the odds I'm up against as a woman and a black...I've suffered because of it. But these things happen...it makes me stronger, I've found ways to deal with it...I keep my head on straight and work hard...."

Last year Scott received considerable airplay in the United States with *ALL ALONE IN LOVE*. Still, she says it's worthwhile to continue working regularly in the clubs in Canada with people such as jazz musician Bill King and hot Canadian talent Micah Barnes.

WISHFUL THINKING/AFTER THE DANCE contains instrumental versions of each song; she co-wrote both songs with keyboardist Al Kussin. Produced by Kussin and Russ Boswell, the a-side, WISHFUL THINKING, a moderate ballad, is more effective than the b-side, but more soul is needed to compare with Scott's vocals. The r & b feel is more developed, allowing her to use some of the early experience she gained

singing in the local Baptist church choir. Scott should look to her gospel roots and more colourful musical arrangements in her next recording venture, a full length LP.

Dub Poet Lillian Allen recently reached a crucial point in her personal and political life with her debut album *REVOLUTIONARY TEA PARTY*, produced by The Parachute Club's Billy Bryans. She consolidates her ideology with the art she practices, and the result is exciting.

The crystallization of what is termed *Dub Poetry* began in the early 1970's in Jamaica. The roots of Dub Poetry exist in African society where they combine social commentary with poetry and music. Allen follows the tradition; her themes focus on the problems of immigration, poverty and the social ghetto.

A strong grassroots supporter and a community development worker, Allen sings from life experience. A joyful description of her baby's delivery, "Birth Poem," constrasts with the agony of one of the album's most poignant songs, "Nelly Belly Swelly"—the story of the rape of a thirteen-year-old girl who becomes pregnant and is ostracized by a society who teaches that responsibility for the crime is hers.

"...nothing heralded it
when this feminist was born.
Nellie."

"I Fight Back," the story of an immigrant worker's problem as a mother raising her child in absentia while making her living as mother to another's child leaves a bitter taste:

"...And Constantly they ask
"Oh Beautiful Tropical Beach
With Coconut Tree and Rum
Why did you leave there
Why on Earth did you Come?"
AND I SAY:
For the Same Reasons
Your Mothers Came...."

It's been a long time since the first African slaves came to North America but Allen would like to see more effective social changes:

"...On the slave ship
Is a long long time wi knocking
An everytime yu slam de door
sey no job
discrimination injustice
a feel the whip lick
An its the same boat...."

The lyrics from "Rub A Dub Style Inna Regent Park" featuring dj rappers Ringo Junior and

Screecher Nice, reflect the degree of frustration with society's closed doors and two different reactions—one of violence, the other a more positive alternative:

"...dj chant out, cutting it wild
Man hafti dub it inna different style...."

Allen realizes that as human beings the power of transformation is within us all:

"...You who create with yu sweat from the heart
Let's talk. Let's make art. Let's love...."

In three minutes she captures not only the people's thoughts but also the spirit of survival and celebration. The title song "Revolutionary Tea Party" could be sung by millions around the world:

"...We who create the wealth of the world
And only get scrapings from them in control...."

Drummer Billy Bryans enhances Allen's distinctive vocals with good production values featuring keyboardist Laurie Conger and vocalist Lorraine Segato, members of the Parachute Club. Terry Lewis' steady bass compliments both the work of guitarist Dave Gray and Truths and Rights percussionist Quammie Williams.

Allen takes her place as a world class songwriter combining strong reggae rhythms with lyrics written from a people-point-of-view. This dance music is required listening.

Marva Jackson is music programmer on the alternative community radio station CKLM-F88.1 in Toronto. ➤

NGAMBIKA
Balancing the Load

by Leslie Sanders

Ngambika: Studies of Women
in African Literature
Edited by Carol Boyce Davies
and Anne Adams Graves
Africa World Press, Inc.
pp. 298/$17.95 Can.

The editors inform us that *Ngambika* is the Tshiluba word for "help me to balance/carry this load." The load, of course, being the double load of race and gender, burdens only because of racism, colonialism and chauvinism. A marvellous introduction to African fiction and poetry by and about women. *Ngambika: Studies of Women in African Literature*, makes an important scholarly contribution to African literature and feminist criticism.

The eighteen essays in the volume are divided into three sections: the first, "Defining 'Woman's Place': Female Portraiture in African Literature" examines a range of male writers, and illustrates how their portraits of women romanticize or marginalize them. An exception, notably in the work of the Senegalese writer and film-maker Ousmane Sembene, women are portrayed as central to African liberation, powerful and speaking in their own voices.

The second section, "Towards A Critical Self-Definition of the African Woman: Writers and African Women's Reality" explores women writers such as Flora Nwapa, Ama Ata Aidoo, Mariama Ba, Buchi Emecheta and the Hausa poets who preserve poetry in a particular Islamic tradition, but who are revolutionary in that they are the first women to have published Hausa poetry at all. This section also discusses Henri Lopes and Ngugi wa Thiong'o, both male writers in whose work women's issues are a major concern.

The final section, "Social and Political Themes: Women's Issues in African Literary Criticism," deals with social and political issues as they are depicted in African fiction. For example, Tobe Levin considers female circumcision as it is depicted by Ngugi and several female writers; Elaine Savory Fido surveys mythology that explores the female principle in Igbo culture in her discussion of Christopher Okigbo's poetry; Carole Boyce Davies compares portraits of motherhood in the works of Igbo writers Chinua Achebe, Buchi Emecheta, Flora Nwapa and Onuora Nzekwu. Davies has a fine introductory essay that surveys literary criticism of African writing from a feminist perspective, and develops a definition of African feminism and the range of tasks that African feminist critics have only begun. The work concludes with a helpful bibliography.

Ngambika: Studies of Women in African Literature is an academic work, but the general reader will find the essays enjoyable and illuminating. For those new to African women's writings, the work provides both an exciting reading list and perspectives from which to contemplate what one reads; for those more familiar with African writing and the largely male-centered criticism, this book will be both stimulating and refreshing. *Ngambika* truly helps to balance the load.

Leslie Sanders teaches Afro-American literature at York University in Toronto, Canada.

What would it take to extinguish the spirit of an eight-year-old boy? Going blind could, but it didn't. If you look beneath Kevin's blindness, you'll find the spirit of a typical eight-year-old burning bright. Thanks to Kevin's exceptional courage and lots of support from the United Way.

Kevin and thousands of others in our community are fighting to overcome misfortune, tragedy, or devastating disabilities through sheer force of will and determination. But they can't do it without the support of people like you who contribute to the United Way. Last year, the lives of one person in three were touched by the helping hands of United Way agencies and their 50,000 volunteers.

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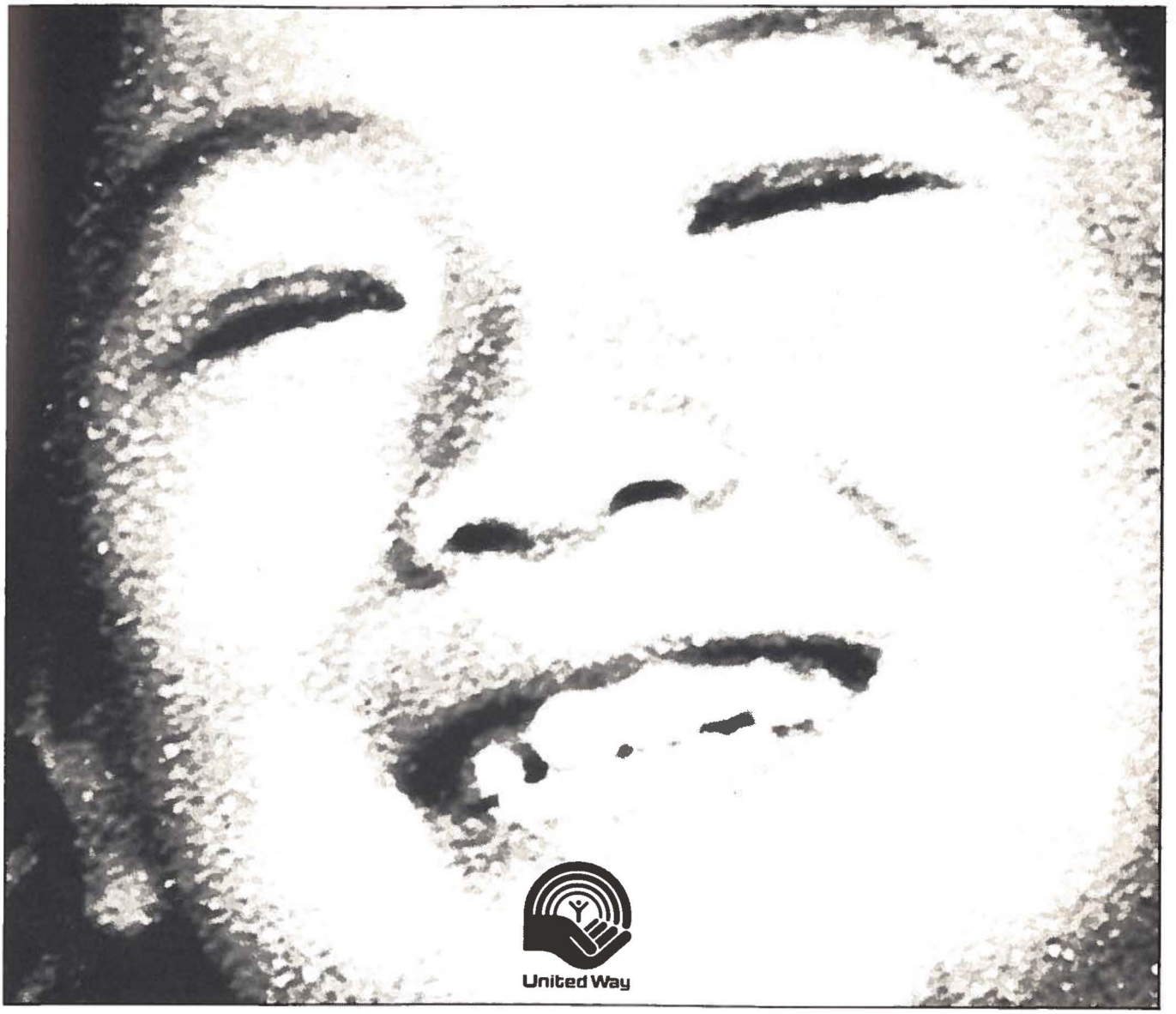
IS THIS THE FACE OF A BOY WHO CAN'T SEE ANYTHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO?



Where there's a will, there's the Way.

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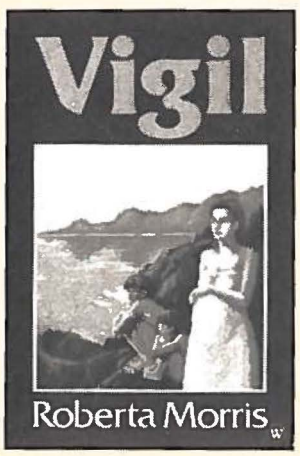

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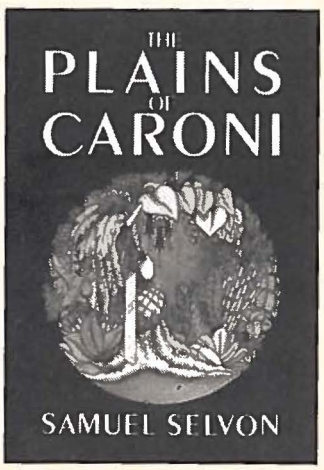

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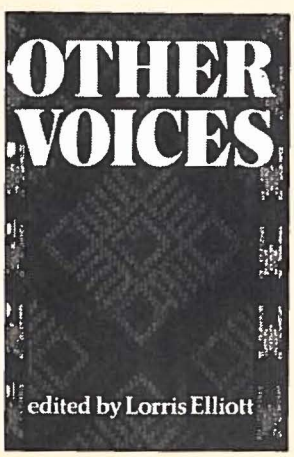

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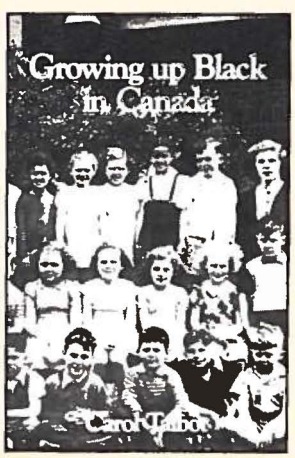

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