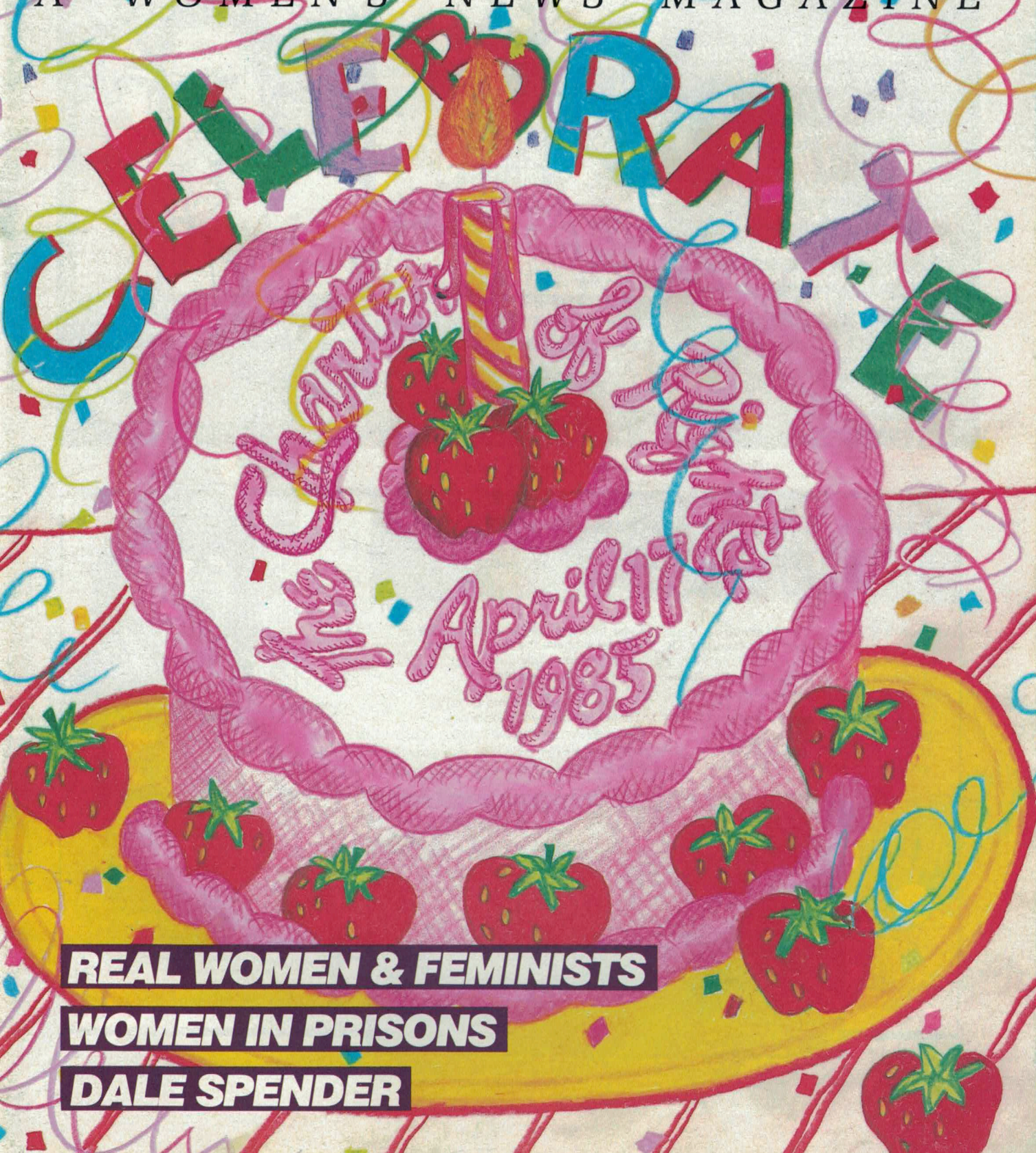


APRIL 1985 VOL. 3, NO. 3 \$1.75

HERizons

A WOMEN'S NEWS MAGAZINE



REAL WOMEN & FEMINISTS

WOMEN IN PRISONS

DALE SPENDER

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Ida Dale, 50, has a few words about

FAIRNESS

"I've worked at Eaton's for 17 years. My husband, Dennis, has been there for 31. We're both on strike now in Ontario for lots of reasons. For one thing, we need to know we'll have decent pensions when we retire.

We know Eaton's employees don't. When my friend, Vera Sumka, retired after 26 years at Eaton's, her pension was \$115 a month. Clara Boone's

was \$70 after 16 years. Thousands of people have the same problem. And young people don't want that to look forward to.

You can help cut into Eaton's unfair control over people's lives. We're striking for fairness. Please don't buy from Eaton's."



Fairness for Eaton's employees

I'm returning my Eaton's Account Card in support of people like Ida and Dennis Dale.

Please send me a button saying "I've cut into Eaton's".

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

If you want to show your support for fairness for Ida, Dennis, Vera and the young employees who could be in their position someday, please shop elsewhere. If you have an account card, cut it up and send it with this coupon to the Manitoba Federation of Labour, 104-570 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 0G4. That way, you'll receive a letter of appreciation and a special button.

To explain why you won't shop at Eaton's until the company helps settle the strike with a fair agreement, write to Fred Eaton, President, T. Eaton Co. of Canada Ltd., 19th Floor, Eaton Tower, 1 Dundas St. W., Toronto, Ontario, M5B 1C8.

Even if there's no Eaton's near you, you can jot down a few lines of support for the employees.

Produced by the Manitoba Federation of Labour, in conjunction with the OFL Committee for Fairness at Eaton's and the Canadian Labour Congress. For more information, contact your local labour council or the Manitoba Federation of Labour (204) 775-4575.

HERizons

APRIL ■ 1985

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"Every woman should know this Charter. This is not a document for lawyers and judges. This is a document for people. This is a document for women. This is a document about our rights. And we must be involved in the fashioning and interpretation of it."

Shelagh Day, former Director of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission

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Why our differences can't all come out in the wash

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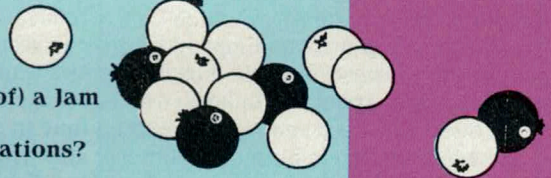
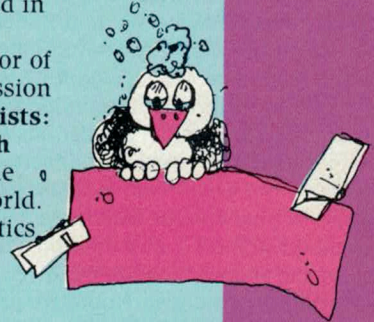
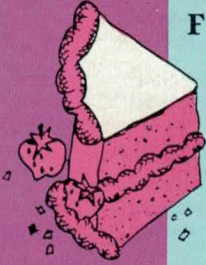
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editorial

If You Can't Send Money, Send Encouragement

Springtime around the *HERizons* office means Review Board time. As preparations begin for our annual financial review by the board presiding over the government grant portion of our budget, Pat, our Financial Manager, and Debbie, our Managing Editor, go into hiding for two months, while the rest of Mother Earth's creatures emerge from a frigid winter of blissful slumber.

During this time, when Pat and Debbie converge on the year's financial statements, revenues, expenditures and projections for the coming year, something inexplicable happens here at the office. Numbers are punched into Pat's desk-top adding machine for weeks on end, day long meetings proceed into the evening, and not uncommonly well into the next morning; we strategise, brainstorm, panic, rejoice and HOPE. . . that when all the ribbons of tape are collected from the floor, we'll be on track. Down the hall in the editorial office, Brigitte and I can hear the whirring of the desk-top adding machine as we busily continue to put out this month's magazine, wondering for a moment if it will be our last. . .

We all take turns at being confident and pessimistic, vacillating by the day, hour and even by the minute. Projections from last year's Review Board are analysed, strategies updated. Mona, our Advertising Manager, reviews the year's ad revenues and Marie, our Circulation Manager, keeps updating us on subscriber totals. When Pat and Debbie emerge bleary-eyed and delirious from Pat's office, the rest of us offer moral support. As we develop a new perspective on the strategies we will present for the upcoming publishing year, we consult experts, re-think our positions and inevitably emerge invigorated, prepared to present ourselves in true business form.

The whole process seems to be fuelled by a kind of visionary determination that we stir up to keep ourselves optimistic. It's a bizarre combination of fear and underdog determination that has as its end product a weighty, professionally-styled proposal which becomes the basis of our publishing future.

This year our calculations tell us that we need to raise \$8,000 outside our expected subscription and advertising revenues if we are going to face the Review Board with our heads above water. Since last year when we first expanded to become a national magazine, our subscriptions have soared by over 400 per cent! Our circulation has increased remarkably and all indications are that expanding into the national market was the right move to make.

Unfortunately, success doesn't come overnight in the publishing industry. Most publishers will tell you that the last year has been a tough one for the entire industry. The fact that we're still publishing *HERizons* makes our stability more enduring with each month that passes. We know we've got a magazine that thousands of Canadian women enjoy but our undisputed growth over the last 12 months may not be enough to ensure that our funding is renewed. In spite of our confidence, it may be naive to ignore factors such as the politics of government bureaucracy and pressure from anti-abortion groups.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE CAN ADDRESS OUR REVIEW BOARD WITH THE CONFIDENCE AND REVENUES WE NEED TO PROVE OUR VIABILITY. If we can meet our projected revenues from subscriptions, newsstand sales and advertising and still raise \$8,000, we will be that much closer to our break-even point two years from now.

The encouragement and support we get from women across the country continues to be our greatest source of nurturance. At a time when the political climate for social change appears to be headed for an ice age, *HERizons* is more vital than ever. For these reasons it really is an exciting time in our publishing lives. We're also providing writing opportunities for over 100 writers every year. We provide jobs for over a dozen people who work directly and on contract for *HERizons*. Spinoff work for visual artists, printers, distributors, and retail stores is also important.

Right now we need your support if we are going to raise our target of \$8,000. Statistically that's less than \$1 per reader, but you might want to give a few extra dollars for those readers who can't afford to donate. In return, we'll publish your name as one of our supporters.

So, go for it. Buy your way to fame and fortune by giving generously to Canada's own feminist magazine. Fill out the inserted card which is on the flip side of our subscription card, and accept our thanks.

pm

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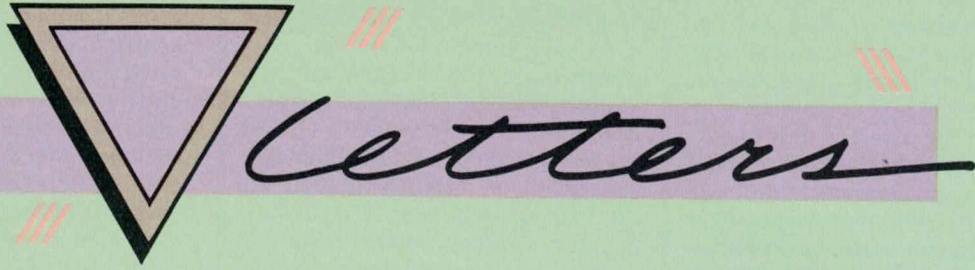
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The aim of this magazine is to provide an alternative means of communication with a feminist perspective in order to stimulate, to inform, to effect change, and to unify women's strengths, serving as a forum for women.

HERizons magazine is located at 200-478 River Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R5L 0C8. Phone (204) 477-1750. *HERizons* is published monthly, except for combined June/July and January/February issues. Subscriptions \$15 per year for individuals; outside Canada add \$5.00. *HERizons* is a member of the Canadian Periodical Publishers Association and is listed in the Alternative Press Index. Submissions are welcome. Editing rights reserved and submission does not guarantee publication. A self-addressed, stamped envelope will ensure submissions are returned to author. Views expressed are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect *HERizons* policy. Second Class Mail Registration No. 5899.

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Letters

Dear HERizons,

I am writing to express a long held concern of mine.

The November '84 issue of *Kinesis* carried a column announcing the national distribution of *HERizons*.

Editor Debbie Holmberg-Schwartz was quoted as saying "The U.S. has had *Ms.* and other magazines to address their concerns . . . Finally (Canadian women) have something."

Recently a Toronto radio program referred to Stephen Leacock as "Canada's Mark Twain." I have heard a Canadian Olympic athlete referred to as "Canada's Mark Spitz".

We have struggled for many years, as women, to be recognized for ourselves, rather than identified through men. No more are we only this one's wife or that one's mother. Yet, as Canadians, we continue to be identified through others. (Canada's *Ms.*)

I am not taking an anti-American stance. Being a Canadian nationalist is no more anti-American than being a feminist is anti-male. (By the way, machismo and militarism are not the only expressions of patriotism.) Having struggled so long against male domination, our American sisters hardly need to be pushed into a similar dominant role over Canadian women.

I am not an isolationist. I cannot criticize anyone for finding inspiration in a good idea, wherever it originates.

I am asking; why can't Canadian publications, authors and athletes stand by themselves? Why must our every thought, word and deed be considered in an American context? Let's dump our national inferiority complex along with our feminine inferiority complex.

Sincerely
Nancy Bruce
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Editor,

I think it all happened when I turned 17 in a hick town in southwestern Ontario and something caught my eye.

"There's no life like it." They sure were not wrong! Five years and a few months later, three postings, and here I am stuck in northern Alberta and going nowhere. Why, you might ask? The answer is simple. I am Woman!

You might say "so what". That little "so what" means a lot from a man's point of view. As far as they are concerned, we're treated equally in my trade of twisting wrenches, changing oil or playing the role of grease monkey.

The not so many in my field of "pioneer women" are hitting brick walls with every new twist of the wrench, and then behind our backs are being called "split asses", useless good for nothing broads.

For us to be good we have to be better, so of course most of us are better but only considered good.

What can I say or write about for that matter. Lots, that's what. I am writing this in my double life now and can't go on until I am brave enough to *stop* living this double life. Then I will enter the real world, where I can pioneer and feel I am accomplishing something.

Yours truly
Two people

(gay-straight-the love story continues . . .) in the Canadian Armed Forces

**Letters and responses
welcome from readers.**



**HERizons Magazine
200-478 River Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3L 0C8**

HERizons,

I am writing in regards to Leah Steele's article *Preppies to Punks* (*HERizons* Jan/Feb). It is fine to generalize when attempting to classify the many subcultures that today's youth have formed, but when the name calling becomes negative the writer should consider others' feelings before saying that "Brains . . . still seem to prefer those old fashioned thick lensed glasses that magnify the eyes to twice their normal size and produce a ghoulish effect."

This is a blatant lack of empathy for anyone who has poor eyesight. I resent the fact that Leah did not stop to consider the ridicule that wearers of thick lensed glasses go through because people like her ostracize them from her "normal" world. She has no business criticizing an intelligent person; maybe it is her inferior feelings that keep the blinds over her eyes. Let's hope they open soon.

In sisterhood
Carrie Gray
Toronto, Ontario

dear HERizons women:

mi main frustration with herizons is that it has consistently tokenized the reality of witches/lezbians/healers — and therefore the reality of myself. i began reading the dec issue with hope, only to return to mi original critical stance — herizons did not present mi reality from an affirming/strong/critical/supportive position. you stuck it to meeh again.

erica smith's review of *stepping out of line* was a catalyst for the frustration, sadness, anger and betrayal i feel with herizons, and with the feminist community of winnipeg. the language and assumptions of all three are homophobic, reformist and give no real image to lezbian's.

although *stepping out of line* is 'wor-

thwhile' and 'invaluable' for 'anyone interested in starting or facilitating a workshop' and 'broad enough to apply to all kinds of workshops'. erica then proceeds to talk about what is not between the covers. if only one other book can be found that states the pain of many lesbians in the feminist movement, then yvette yvonne and nim's statements of these our pains is in/deed a radical/risk filled beginning. we can talk for ever about what is not in a book, or who lesbian's are not. our reality, however, is more actively about who we are, than about who we are not. a book is about what is between its covers. everything else can be used as a context for analysis. it is our reality and our connections to our context that i feel are lacking in the heterosexual feminists analysis of who and what weeh are.

i feel erica has abdicated her responsibility to offer support/questioning/committment to where she is in the emotional violence of heterosexual and lesbian relationships. based on this article, i feel she is perpetuating the violence against meeh. as weeh lesbian's are everywhere, then weeh are part of every woman's struggle, and that include's erica's. i wish she had brought her knowledge as a struggle-ing feminist into this article in concrete ways. ask many of the lesbian's who were part of this feminist movement — the pain, struggle, defensiveness, fear and heterosexual-priviledged-rhetoric that is sohh tight laced with homophobia moves many of us beyond the reformism of much feminism to the readicalism of some of our lesbian sisters. and yes, weeh are part of perpetuating this violence — but weeh alone can not end it. weeh should not be expected to beeh god like paragons of male virtue sohh this violence does not start. we are all responsible and accountable for emotional violence. how can we expect each other to change when there is still sohh much risk? sohh much blame?

in erica's discussion of myths — weeh are given no words that express what our sexuality really is. lesbian's are womyn in a homophobic patriarchal heterosexist society, so yes, weeh have many struggles with our sexuality. weeh are also bi definition, revolutionaries — and there are no words here that express the integrity, clarity, strength and joy in our sexuality, and

our literal un-covering of ourselves.

mi imagination does not 'falter' in mi struggle to move beyond 'oppressor/oppressee' aspects of mi sexuality. it is mi imagination that lead meeh toward mi first tentative touches that leads meeh beyond the limited accessibility on information about mi self; that has lead meeh to, thru and often-times beyond 'oppressor/oppressee' male imposed definitions of who i am. mi imagination can not falter — for who will create ideas/visions/realities? it is mi imagination and the writings/voices/passions/touches/lives of lesbians that make mi visions realities. lack of imagination must beeh an added horror of male defined reality. i will not accept their definitions.

feminists seem to find us, lesbians, acceptable (read valid, non-threatening, self-contained) as long as weeh don't touch you. i am grounded in mi skin, and if you block us here, there will all ways beeh something stopping us from moving into the question of ourselves. i will not beeh cut into units of 'political' and 'intellectual' so that you feel safe to march beside meeh. the fact that we are 'acceptable' as a political or intellectual concept' and at the same time 'lesbianism is seen as a purely personal choice with no political implications' leaves meeh confused — such blatant double think. bi cutting meeh into pieces and turning us into a concept, you never allow us to touch you — not your politics, not your intellect, not your soul, not your skin. touch is about risk (at least in this warped society) and risk is about change is about impact to believe that you can accept meeh only in political intellectual conceptual terms but deny

mi realities visions impact is impossible. this is not accepting — that is tokenizing and patronizing.

i find it all most impossible to imagine that weeh lesbian's are in 'danger of being permanently submerged' into the feminist movement. weeh are the ground/work the present the history of all most all radical feminist organizations. the fact that weeh are not identified as lesbian's does not mean weeh are not present — it means that our invisibility has become your credibility — your ticket to acceptance. weeh are usually the 'unruly feminist' that provide the 'momentum' for y/our beginnings. if the feminist community (read heterosexual thin young acceptable etc) is feeling their (erica's 'our') movement would suffer for association with lesbian's, i suggest that feminists look at who is accepting feminism in conceptual terms but denying the realities of womyn — at whose standard of acceptability you have chosen — at what rewards and benefits are used to buy your silence — and if all this will result in your future invisibility and death.

for meeh, the feminist movement is no longer mi movement. i am a lesbian witch and all that is and creates. come-ing from, and carrying with meeh feminism and heterosexuality, i am never really separated from you. i think what is one of the most realistic and immediate questions heterosexual feminists must ask themselves, is what will you dooh as more and more lesbian's leave, and more of us come to know, the heterosexual feminist community is not open to us, and move with other lesbian's?

we womyn are 'the women's movement.' to define us as a 'tough old bird' is to define the power of change out of our hands. it is us that has the 'indomitable survival instinct/s'. dykes witches womyn have been strangled drowned burned beaten preached argued debated to death for centuries. the risks are very real, and the threats come from all directions — yet weeh continue, as the 'un-ruly' feminist weeh are — to live.

i am sohh much more than a 'complex issue', and yes, feelings and intuitions will help you/us/i learn to talk about sex — but taking the risk to answer the touch — to questionly touch — to beeh open to possibilities and realities and choices — this will bring us back to our lives.

lahl sarson



PRAIRIE REGION**WOMEN AND WORDS/
LES FEMMES ET LES MOTS —**

This writers' support group in Winnipeg meets the second Tuesday of each month (**April 9, May 14, June 11, etc.**) at 7:30 PM at the Manitoba Writers' Guild, 374 Donald St. (204) 775-9852.

**WOMEN AND PEACE
ORGANISING —**

To develop alternatives to global violence, aggression and social injustice and to include women in the negotiations and arms control process a regional Women and Peace Conference will be held **May 10-12, 1985** at St. Andrew's College, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon. This conference is in preparation for the international conference from June 5-9, 1985 in Halifax. Cost approx. \$50-\$100 (income adjustable). For information call Saskatoon: Joanne Blythe (306) 244-3630; Winnipeg: Erica Smith (204) 667-4882.

**UNITED NATIONS DECADE
CONFERENCE ON WOMEN —**

This conference in Nairobi, Kenya in **July, 1985** will mark the accomplishments of 10 years of sustained international effort to acknowledge, understand and improve the lives of women and children in our global community. We are organising a charter trip to Nairobi. In addition to arranging transportation and housing and providing travel information (visa and health requirements) we will arrange side-trips on request. Approx. \$2,000 CDN. per person. For information call Stella Lejohn, St. Mary's Academy, 550 Wellington Cresc., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3M 0C1 (204) 452-3737; Sari Tudiver, Women and Development Project, 418 Wardlaw Avenue, Winnipeg (204) 453-3494.

**LESBIAN MOTHERS' DISCUSSION
/SUPPORT GROUP —**

Open to Lesbian mothers and other concerned women. For more information, meetings dates, and location call Sue or Anne at the University of Manitoba, Womyn's Centre (204) 261-9191.

MEDIA WATCH MANITOBA —

Call for a presentation on improving the media image of women in radio, television and print. Media Watch

bulletins

response forms are available and suggestions as to how individuals can respond to advertisers and programmers. For information call Lynne Gibbons at (204) 453-1811 or Lydia Giles at (204) 453-3879

KLINIC NEEDS VOLUNTEERS —

People interested in volunteering in the Sexual Assault and Crisis Counselling Programs call Klinik, Inc. at (204) 786-6943.

**SELF PERCEIVED OVERWEIGHT
SUPPORT GROUPS —**

This support group will aim to provide emotional, social and medical support from a women's perspective to women who feel that they are preoccupied and/or depressed about their body, weight and relationship to food, and to women who are anorexic or bulimarexic. The group will not focus on losing weight but rather on enhancing feelings of self-acceptance. For information call the Women's Health Clinic, 304-414 Graham Avenue, Winnipeg (204) 947-1517.

EASTERN REGION**ENVIRONMENTALLY INDUCED
ILLNESS —**

A panel discussion on environmental illness will take place at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Room 201 at 7:30 PM on **April 13, 1985**. Cost is \$10. Speakers will address food chemicals, candida albicans and pollution in the schools.

A foundation for research about candida albicans has been established. This condition which has been shown to have links to premenstrual tension, schizophrenia, arthritis and many other illnesses seems to affect more women than men and traditional medical treatment may make the condition worse. For information on the foundation and support group write to: Candida Albicans Research Foundation, 155 Marlee Avenue, #2102, Toronto, Ontario M6B 4B5.

THE FEMININE FACE OF GOD —

Women discovering together a new sense of the spiritual on **May 10-12, 1985**. In a safe, beautiful environment Sherry Rochester and Joan McIntyre will guide us into the arms

of the Great Mother. We will sense our deep connections to each other and to our home, the earth. Call: Marcia Weiner, Primal Centre, Toronto (416) 928-0216.

BRANCHING OUT ART SHOW —

An all-lesbian art show is set to open in early **May, 1985** at the Sparkes Gallery, 1114 Queen Street West, Toronto M6J 1H9 (416) 531-1243. The show is jointly sponsored by Branching Out Lesbian Productions Inc. and Sparkes Gallery.

WESTERN REGION**A MOSAIC OF FAMILIES —**

The 23rd Annual Conference of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts is being held on **May 22-25, 1985** at the Westin Bayshore Inn, Vancouver, B.C. The Challenge of Multiculturalism in the Courts will address how to work through cultural and linguistic barriers to understanding and the use of kin and friendship networks, community organisations and religious advisors. For information call: University Extension Conference Office (604) 721-8470, University of Victoria, B.C.

SOUTH OF THE BORDER**NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
WOMEN MINERS —**

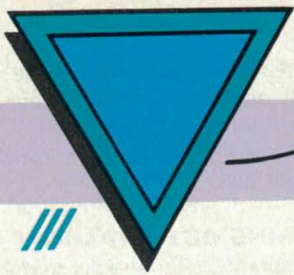
The Advisory Committee of this seventh annual conference to be held in Price, Utah from **June 21-23, 1985** is interested in suggestions and ideas. Please send to Advisory Committee, c/o Coal Employment Projects, 16221 Sunny Knoll Court, Dumfries, Virginia 22026.

**THIRD ANNUAL GODDESS
GATHERING —**

This event is to be held at Echo Hills, Ohio on **June 20-23, 1985**. For more information write Riversong, POB 1966, Youngstown, Ohio 44506.

**WOMEN'S MOTORCYCLE
FESTIVAL —**

Races, tent camping, recreation, canoeing, boating, swimming and much more is scheduled at this Seneca Lake location of the '85 festival. Write for info to 7 Lent Avenue, Le Roy, New York 14482.



Ontario mothers fighting for family benefits

Susan Wilkes

For the past three years, Ontario's Conservative government has been quietly trying to integrate family benefit allowances with general welfare payments. Their plan is to transfer the province's responsibilities to the already financially-strapped municipalities.

The Mother's Action Group has been fighting this proposal for three years. A spokeswoman for the group, Maria Ociepka, says they have been travelling across Ontario letting people know what is going on. They have managed to hold off the government for the time being but she says they "aren't sure how much longer (they) can do it."

If the province is successful, single parents in Ontario will be strongly affected. Since the municipalities are already in rough financial shape, family benefits could decrease, although Ociepka says that will "not necessarily" be the case. There is also some question as to whether single parents will have to continuously prove that they are eligible for benefits as general welfare recipients now do. In effect, they are saying that "poor women don't contribute to society unless they've

got a paying job."

Ociepka feels that the government is ignoring certain realities like the fact that "it takes money to work." They are telling poor women that their families needs aren't that important, she says.

Although the province claims that the proposal would first be implemented only as a test, many women are skeptical. Dawn Heiden, a sole-support mother of two in Toronto, used to live in British Columbia. She compares the situation in Ontario to something the Bennett government discussed a couple of years ago. Their plan was to withhold welfare payments from single parents of two children if one was over 12, or from single parents of one child if (s)he was over six months old. The proposal never materialised, but it was a definite threat, and Heiden says she "wouldn't be surprised if that kind of thing happened here."

One disturbing fact in all of this is that very few women, even those who would be directly affected, know what's going on. Heiden says she doesn't know what all this means but if it means less money or anymore hassles, she doesn't want it.

Minimum wage for domestics

In December the Ontario Government announced its much-awaited changes in the labour laws affecting domestic workers. The news is both good and bad.

The minimum wage for domestics finally rose to the standard rate of \$4.00 per hour on March 1, 1985, thereby ending the discriminatory differential of \$.50 per hour in effect since 1981.

Since 1979 the International Coalition to End Domestic Exploitation (INTERCEDE), a community lobby group, has been campaigning for changes in the labour laws that would provide protection for Ontario's estimated 75,000 domestics. Co-ordinator Judith Ramirez says that while overtime pay has also been extended, it is still legally possible in Ontario for a live-in domestic to either work or be on call to her employer for up to 120 hours a week.

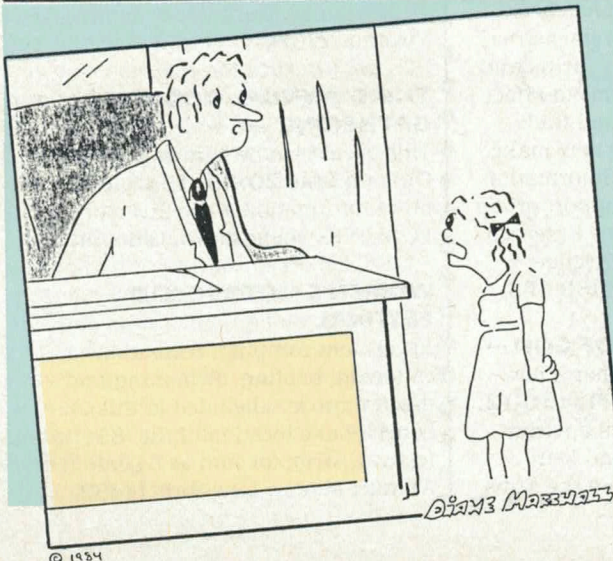
This reduces a live-in domestics' real wage rate to \$1.47 per hour and utterly fails to recognise and pay for overtime during the regular work week. In other words, live-in domestics are still wide open to exploitation.

The new regulations also leave babysitters, companions, and part-time domestics completely stranded, an omission which has been condemned by The Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues.

Also unchanged are the room and board deduction of \$55.00 per week which INTERCEDE recommended be lowered, and the explicit bar to unionisation of domestic workers in the Labour Relations Act.

The new regulations, rather than provide effective protection from exploitation to Ontario's domestics, will only recognise, in principle, their right to receive equal pay and overtime like any other group of workers.

**International Coalition
to End Domestics' Exploitation
Newsletter**



I wanted to speak with you about the promotion you will not give my mother 'cause she has children, you don't know what a complex this is giving me!

A festival of rainbow women in the arts

Stephanie Martin

There was much to celebrate in the first ever Festival of Rainbow Women in the Arts, held in Toronto. The idea, a fledgling dream, became a reality and a success in the fall of '84.

Faith Nolan, singer/songwriter and organiser of the weekend festival said she conceived of the idea in the spring of '84.

"My idea was to form a performers' collective. I wanted to provide Women of Colour from different cultures with a platform where we could come together and display our art and recognise what we do as a viable art form in this city."

In the spring and summer months Faith and Sharon Fernandez, another member of Multi-Cultural Women in Concert, organised cafe performances at the Trojan Horse in Toronto. More than 60 women who were interested in the idea came together and performed. Nolan then approached Womylny Way Productions with the idea of jointly sponsoring the festival with an advisory committee which included many of the artists who were to perform, as well as many other women representing a variety of communities.

The Festival, with financial assistance from Wintario's 'Celebration Ontario' was designed to highlight the contribution that Women of Colour have made to Toronto's cultural community and to raise the consciousness of women not familiar or in touch with Women of

Colour artists from different communities.

The concert featured an evening of theatre, dance, music and poetry honouring the diverse achievements of Canadian women. Performer Makka Kleist brought to the stage an insight for non-native Canadians that was powerful and educational. Her theatre performance spoke to some of the real problems faced by Native peoples.

Monique Mojica, Artistic Director of the Native Earth Performing Arts — a contemporary theatre company composed of Native performing artists — presented excerpts from her theatre piece *Double Take a Second Look*.

Poet Dionne Brand, author of five books of poetry, (her latest, *Chronicles of the Hostile Sun*, was written during her 10 month sojourn to Free Grenada) captivated the audience with her sharp cutting poetry. Joy Kogawa, author of *Obasan* and Himani Bannerji, poet and short story writer, also performed from their current works.

Rina Singh, a classical dancer performed an exquisite dance piece, *Kathad* — the Ancient Court and Temple Dance of North India. Audrey Rose currently artistic director of CHEETAH Dance Centre performed a creative dance piece. A wide ranging repertoire of classical and folk music of different cultures was presented by the Ring Ensemble, formerly called the Chinese Chamber Ensemble. Faith Nolan and Friends, (Faith Nolan, Susan Howlett and Sheila Jones) ended the evening with a dramatic and captivating performance. Most of the band's original music was written by Nolan.

Salome Bey was the special guest m.c. for the evening and joined the entire cast of performers at the end of the evening in songs, dance and fun.

The workshops which took place on Saturday and Sunday were educa-



Photo by Stephanie Martin

Makka Kleist

tional, informative and provided a unique opportunity for performers and workshop attendants of different cultural backgrounds and artistic fields to creatively interact and share their knowledge and experience.

"We would like this to be the beginning of an annual event, where we can meet and support each other," added Nolan.

The Rainbow Women eventually hope to bring part of the show to primary and high schools to demonstrate multi-culturalism in the arts.

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Photo by Stephanie Martin

Audrey Rose — of the Cheetah Dancers



Faith Nolan

Legalised mid-wifery: Coming soon to Ontario?

Deborah Clarke

Ontario midwives are hoping to take giant steps towards legal recognition of their profession. Recently they submitted a brief to the Ontario Health Professions Review Committee outlining a detailed proposal for a mid-wifery care system in Ontario.

The Review Committee has been set up by the Ontario Ministry of Health to review existing health care regulations and to consider the possibility of licencing various health profes-

sions which aren't currently licenced. Acupuncturists, massage therapists, herbalists and midwives are among the applicants wanting to be added to the list of five health professions currently licenced in Ontario.

The proposal of the Midwives Coalition outlines the need for a self-regulated, licenced profession of mid-wifery and for the establishment of a recognised three-year educational program which does not require a nursing or medical degree.

Holly Nimmons of the Midwifery Task Force feels the biggest catalyst behind the movement for legislation has come from the grassroots level — from parents who want a level of childbirth care they aren't getting from doctors. Aside from their relatively inadequate training in childbirth, fewer GPs are attending births because of an increase in the malpractice insurance fee which is mandatory for doctors who want to practice obstetrics. In addition, the Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons (CPSO) has put pressure on doctors not to attend home births, claiming they are unsafe. In March 1983, they issued a statement which claimed that "in Great Britain the mortality rate is 60 per cent higher for home births than overall." Believing the CPSO figures to be in error the Midwives Coalition wrote to the British College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists asking for the correct statistics. They learned that the Infant Mortality Rate for home births was two per thousand — an excellent record in comparison with Canada's hospital birth record of 9.6 deaths per thousand (1981 figures).

The result of this pressure from the CPSO has been that while a few years ago there were seven or eight doctors assisting home births in Toronto, there are now only one or two. With fewer doctors accompanying home births, midwives have been forced to take on much more legal responsibility.

Legislation in Ontario (as in most other Canadian provinces) bars the practice of midwifery by anyone who is not a licenced doctor. The actual

charge that a midwife could face is "practicing medicine without a licence," or in the case of a stillbirth, "negligence." Thus far there has been only one conviction, in British Columbia, but midwives are taking a legal risk each time they practice.

In Ontario the major obstacles to legalisation are the CPSO and the Ontario Medical Association. While they claim that they are concerned about safety, many feel their opposition is rooted in a reluctance to give up their position of male dominance, a belief in the need for ever increasing technology (however inappropriate for normal birth), and a desire to guard economic control over what has become a lucrative business.

Better relationships between the medical establishment and midwives may be developing however, as physicians sober up to reality. Sue points out that "the College is aware of how much support midwives are getting and they are shocked at how organised we are — they thought we were a bunch of hippies doing crazy things." And the brief indicates that the CPSO agrees that the midwives' proposal "would fill the vacuum created by the decreasing number of family physicians practicing obstetrics."

Support for the midwives is coming from various and sometimes surprising sources. Instead of coming out against homebirths or midwives, the juries of the 1982 inquests said there needed to be regulations and standards set for midwives. Midwives working as labour coaches at Toronto General Hospital are meeting bimonthly with the hospital nursing staff to establish regular lines of communication. The Ontario NDP has recently introduced a private member's bill proposing an amendment to the Health Disciplines Act which would establish midwifery as a health care profession, and the Coalition feels that the Health Professions Review Committee itself has been supportive of their proposal.

Overall, the mood of midwives is optimistic: "Some kind of midwifery for Ontario is coming soon," says Vicki Van Wagner of the Midwives Coalition. "The question now is how, when and where?"

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Breast screening study releases findings

Jane Mitchell

Over 500 cancers have been found in the 82,000 Canadian women that have been examined as part of the National Breast Screening Study (NBSS) since the first screening centre — Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital — opened in January 1980. The goal of the study's 15 centres is 90,000 screenings by the project's end in March.

"Originally we were accepting women between 40 and 59," says Charlotte Turnbull, the study's national co-ordinator, "but the response from younger women has been overwhelming and we're now only accepting women 45 to 59."

Breast cancer is the leading cause of death for this age group and the mortality rate has not changed significantly since 1941. Researchers agree that early detection of breast cancer reduces deaths, but not how best to detect it.

The NBSS results will probably be available in 1990, two years after the

study closes. The results include suggestions for the age at which women should start having examinations and how often. In December, the American Cancer Society recommended mammographic exams annually for women 50 years and older and once every two years for women 40 to 49. This would save the lives of 7,500 American women according to an American Medical Association report.

Women more likely to develop breast cancer may require screening more frequently or at an earlier age. Researchers hope to identify risk factors based on the detailed demographic, medical, dietary and occupational information collected from each woman during her first visit.

Nurse-examiners (part-time physicians in Quebec) teach the participants how to do a breast self-examination (BSE) while doing a physical

examination and stress the importance of doing it monthly.

Marie-Claire McLean, Buckley's co-worker, says that many women are reluctant to touch their breasts because they were taught not to.

"Some of them give you the feeling that they are just not going to do it," McLean says. "The women that are the most conscientious are those who've had a personal experience with cancer."

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Battered Women: The Silent Cry For Help

Leona Geller

Once shrouded in secrecy and shame, the problem of woman abuse is now the target of a major media campaign in Manitoba. With a price tag of approximately \$90,000, the campaign is intended to increase public awareness by using television, radio, posters and pamphlets to get the message across.

"Public awareness can break down the barriers and encourage women to speak out. We can then show or measure the more realistic (approach to the problem) but it is a cruel phenomenon because the victim is being used to express the need," says Judy Wolfram, executive director of the Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse (MCWA). "But you don't dare not express that need."

The MCWA offers Manitoba women a toll-free province-wide, 24-hour crisis line (1-800-362-3344; in Wpg. 942-3052). Volunteers and staff supply support, understanding, counselling and limited referrals for shelter housing, financial and legal information.

Once the needs of a battered woman are felt and spoken, she must have help and viable choices so that she may get on with the rest of her life. Wolfram says available resources in Winnipeg are still inadequate.

Arlene Eliuk, program analyst in the Child and Family Services department of the Manitoba government challenges the assumption that available services are pitiful and do not meet the needs of the battered woman.

"There are a lot of services in addition to the MCWA," she says. She cites Osborne House, the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre, Klinik and Family Services as places with facilities and staff to help the battered woman in Winnipeg.

"In addition, we have (within our department) Health and Community Services offices with support workers for battered women." She adds that her department accepts budgets from, and provides grants and information to rural wife abuse groups. "From our perspective, our department is doing an incredible amount. In one year, we've gone from having virtually no programs to having a major program for wife abuse."

Despite the government's good intentions, a battered woman in Winnipeg has few choices when a violent crisis forces her to leave her home

and seek safety. Osborne House, while offering information and support to battered women, has only limited space and charges women and their children \$26.50 per person per day. Baldwin House also offers emergency housing but it also limits availability because it will not accept male children over the age of 15.

Manitoba has recently been the scene of two significant violent crimes involving woman abuse. Michele Jewell, 25, and Elizabeth Woss, 47, were murdered by their partners, following years of mental and physical cruelty.

In February, 1983, Manitoba's Attorney General, Roland Penner, issued a directive for police officers to lay charges in cases of wife abuse. By December of that year, 609 men were charged. Some were fined, but many were only warned.

Karen Schmidt and Cornelia Wicki, counsellors at Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre, began a phase II group for battered women January 29, but the Centre faces closure due to lack of funds from the federal government.

When asked her opinion concerning the options available to battered women, Schmidt said, "I would say things are disgusting and despairing. Crisis intervention is one step but I think the whole province has gone about it backwards. I think we first have to get long-term transition housing. Then when a woman looks at changing and leaving at least she has somewhere to go.

"In order to help these women, I think that you have to have an analysis of why violence happens and that must include some understanding of male power and oppression. I guess with that analysis comes a feminist perspective. Here, we call that peer counselling. We counsel with the belief that all women are equal. No one has to be an expert. By calling it peer counselling we don't alienate women who probably have a feminist perspective but who also may be frightened of the label. The analysis of male power is essential. And that is often lacking (with other

available services)."

This sentiment is echoed by others in the Winnipeg community. Linda Barker, former volunteer co-ordinator of the MCWA says, "Battered women need support and education coupled with child care and advocacy groups. But all that costs money. Even advocacy costs money. If you're an advocate, then you might have to take your car downtown and pay for parking while you help some woman and her three kids get through a day in court. The woman you're with is feeling as if she's going to fall apart because she has to testify against her mate. There's no money for a babysitter so there's also the kids to worry about. The advocate should at least be compensated for her parking fees and her mileage."

Wolfram, of the MCWA, has this to say about funding: "In policy terms, it's always argued that short term funding capitalises on the enthusiasm of people who are working from commitment. My own feeling is that funding is a major problem but it is not the only problem." She adds, "Other organisations who are trying to deliver services to the victim and the offender are also facing uncertain and insecure funding. Particularly, now that men are charged in the courts we are getting a ripple-effect; other services are badly needed."

Education to increase public awareness is a step in the right direction. But it is only a small step. More permanent funding should be allocated for the realisation of transitional housing and for the growth of agencies like the MCWA. Professionals in other agencies must be sensitised to the emotions and experiences of battered women.

Social agencies often become frustrated with their attempts to help battered women when they refuse to testify. They resent the fact that these women often return to their violent situations. Woman abuse must be acknowledged as a crime not simply a "problem" that is jointly owned under the "family violence model" of treatment.

Another important element to combatting violence is the courts. The justice system is only one of the social institutions that needs drastic change in order to address the severity of the problem of woman abuse and its possible consequence — death.

To Susan Tatoosh, native spirituality has proven a help in her struggle to pursue a successful business career.

The Kamloops-born member of the Shushwap Indian Nation is part owner of a native-run construction firm, a founding board member of a forestry consulting firm and the former owner of a corporation that operated condominiums.

Yet Tatoosh seems as much at home in the boardrooms of Northern Native Development Corp. of Kamloops as she is in the sweat lodges of her native Indian band. But as a woman, a native and someone who spent years recovering from a tragic accident, it has not been easy to carve out a niche in business circles that are predominantly male and white.

"The strength that I get from my spiritual beliefs through fasting and cleansing helps me because it keeps me from becoming that white oriented person," Tatoosh said during an interview at a conference in Winnipeg on native women in business.

It is not unusual for her to participate in clan ceremonies or confer with elders. For Tatoosh, these are not empty rituals but essential underpinnings that provide balance in her life.

Native women in business

Nelle Oosterom

Native spirituality, she says, has given her the strength, conviction and confidence that she never felt while practising the Christianity she grew up with.

The rediscovery of her traditional religion grew side by side with her pursuit of a career that is exceptionally difficult for native women to break into. Both came following a traffic accident that killed her husband, almost made her crippled for life and left her to raise three children alone.

With some work experience — she had been a radar control operator in the Armed Forces before getting married — she obtained a job with B.C. Telephone. Later, Tatoosh was approached to go into partnership with an all-male group of shareholders in Northern Native Development.

"I think they were looking for someone who had some business experience, some capital, and, I

suspect, someone who could make coffee as well."

It took some time, but Tatoosh eventually learned that if she was to have a real voice in the company, she would have to stop doing menial duties that were expected of her as a woman.

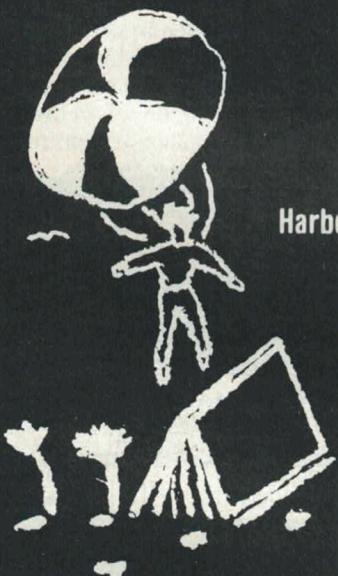
"I stopped making coffee. When they (fellow board members) saw me on the job sites talking to the men and the crews as one of the bosses, their whole attitude changed."

Although native women are a minority in business-oriented occupations, Tatoosh suspects there are more of them than people realise. That's because they tend to keep a low profile.

"It's the nature of native women that they are quiet. You don't brag, you just do your thing."

Tatoosh also served on a federal committee that held hearings to find ways of boosting the number of native women in business. The Winnipeg conference (held in January), officially called the Aboriginal Business Women's National Economic Development Conference was the first of its kind in Canada, and attracted about 130 participants from across the country.

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When Mary Kinnear spoke to the small crowd at a recent Women in Manitoba History conference, she voiced that "still familiar complaint."

It was Jane Austen, the 18th century novelist who said it first, when one of her characters complained that: . . . history, real solemn history, I cannot be interested in . . . I read it as a duty, but it tells me nothing that does not either vex or weary me."

The reason? As Austen observed: "The quarrels of popes and kings, with wars and pestilences, in every page; the men all so good for nothing, and hardly any women at all — it is very tiresome. . . ."

Two centuries later, said author, historian and teacher Kinnear, society is redefining work, private and public spheres and redefining history. "Previous generations of historians have too often regarded women as transparent. But with this new professional sensitivity, women's history is seen as an integral part of social history and in turn, social history as an essential component of mainstream history."

"In the process, we are letting ourselves see the women," she said. And that's what the conference set out to do.

What conference delegates got was a preview and a chance to glimpse some women in Manitoba's past who were remarkable, not for their celebrated lives, but for their untold influence on everyday events.

There was Little Mary, a Cree woman who lived with Methodist missionary Eggerton Youngs and his family in Norway House in the 1860s. She joined the family after her enraged husband attacked her "with an axe that lodged in her back" and made her stoop forever — the reason for the



Historian Mary Kinnear points to one of the names stitched into a patchwork quilt at the recent conference on Women in Manitoba History.

Photo by: Barb Robson

W omen in Manitoba history

Barbara Robson

nickname, said Jennifer Brown, author and associate professor of history at the University of Winnipeg. Brown told how the Cree woman was nursed back to health by the missionary's wife, then installed herself as the Youngs' family nurse after their son was born.

There was Harriet Walker, publicist, drama critic and wife of C.P. Walker, founder of the Walker Theatre — now Winnipeg's Odeon Theatre where some of the best touring shows once appeared.

Carol Budnick, acting head librarian at a University of Manitoba faculty library, told how the young Harriet spent years in New York watching some of its best theatre while her widower father attended his lodge meetings. At 13, she joined a performing company and later toured North America with another, before settling in Winnipeg.

Under the pseudonym of Matinee Girl, she wrote reviews in the form of letters to the editor in *Town Topics*, Winnipeg's weekly society paper. At first neither the editor nor her husband knew the Matinee Girl's identity, although in a few years it became an open secret.

It was a recurring theme among the historians, archivists, museum curators and a playwright who took part in the two-day event. Those chronicling women's lives on the Prairies are walking a new path. "I think we're at the beginning, but we're not at rock bottom," said Kinnear.

Many of the celebrated women have been traced, but there hasn't been much about their contemporaries, she said. "It was fine for Nellie McClung, for example, to have an Irish girl to do the housework but how many households could do that?"

What the 100 delegates heard was a score of suggestions for more research. They also heard that material and written records are just waiting to be tapped in museums and archives. Kinnear and a colleague have been working on an archival bibliography that should clear the ground for future researchers.

For too long women have been the marginalia in history, she said. "It's the turn of women now to select what's going to be written."

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judgements.



The new city of West Hollywood, California, has introduced legislation that would allow unmarried couples to register their relationships with the city and, if the relationship met certain conditions, would provide medical insurance and other benefits to unmarried partners of city workers.

★ ★ ★

The U.S. Supreme Court last month let stand a \$50,000 award to a Texas woman whose nude photograph appeared in *Hustler* magazine without her okay. *Hustler* was also ordered to pay damages to her husband, who took the photo.

★ ★ ★

Florence Shipek, the widow of a San Diego oceanographer exposed to radiation during U.S. nuclear bomb tests in the Pacific, has won the right to sue the U.S. government for the wrongful death of her husband, on the grounds that he wasn't warned he could develop cancer.

Female employees in two Los Angeles area divisions of the social security administration this month settled a class-action complaint of sexual harassment against their supervisors. Under the settlement, which may affect as many as 285 women, the employees can apply for "remedial relief" in the form of back pay, retroactive promotions or priority consideration for advancement.

★ ★ ★

Associated Motor Lodges Limited, owner of the Holiday Inn in Tewksbury, Massachusetts, has agreed as of January to stop requiring its waitresses to wear hot pants. The six waitresses involved in the suit will also receive an undisclosed amount in damages. Three waitresses originally challenged the dress code because they said their costumes made them the target for sexual harassment from customers.

Her Say

PUTTING THE PENTAGON ON THE STAND: The forces in the Pentagon may find themselves fighting it out in the unfamiliar surroundings of a courtroom one day soon — all thanks to a sex bias suit brought by seven women.

Thelma Barnes was dismissed by the Army Reserve when higher-ups learned she was a single mother with custody of her child. Now Barnes and six other single mothers are charging that, although military rules are supposedly "gender neutral," they actually wind up discriminating against women, since they account for 14 of every 15 single parents with custody.

Five of the six women are black, and say the court papers, for this group of women, the military is an especially vital source of benefits and skills — the "employer of first and last resort," as the papers put it.

The Army and Air Force, meanwhile, say earlier rules letting in single parents led to more absenteeism and other problems, and add that the military forces are not "federal job programs, child agencies or 'social experiments' in opportunities for married or unmarried parents."

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DES linked to breast cancer

New reports on more health problems for people exposed to DES point to the urgent need to identify all people who have been exposed to the drug. In its November 29, 1984 issue, *The New England Journal of Medicine* stated that DES mothers have a risk for breast cancer that is nearly 50 per cent higher than for non-exposed women. Three thousand women exposed to DES in pregnancy were compared to the same number of women who had not been exposed. They found that there was no significant difference in the rate of breast cancer among the two groups in the first 20-25 years following exposure to DES. However, beyond 25 years, the risk of cancer with the exposed group rose and appears to increase with age. Women who have been exposed to DES in pregnancy should be sure to do regular breast self-examinations and see a physician for the same on an annual basis.

The December 7, 1984 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association* carried a study showing that

DES daughters are twice as likely to have dysplasia of the cervix or vagina as are young women who have not been exposed to the drug. Dysplasia is the presence of abnormal cells on the cervix or vaginal walls. While in most cases, the dysplasia will disappear by itself with time, it does need to be carefully monitored. Treatment for dysplasia for DES daughters may vary from that for non-exposed women. DES Action offices can provide you with the names of physicians in your area who are familiar with proper screening for DES-related problems.

Although no legal suits against DES manufacturers in Canada have been brought to court to date, there is a growing interest in pursuing the issue from a number of Canadian DES daughters. Because our legal system is so different from the U.S. it remains to be seen whether Canadian women will be able to gain the same retribution against the drug companies as our American sisters.

Now with chapters in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Ottawa and Nova Scotia, DES Action/Canada is entering its third

year of operation under the direction of Harriet Simand, its founder.

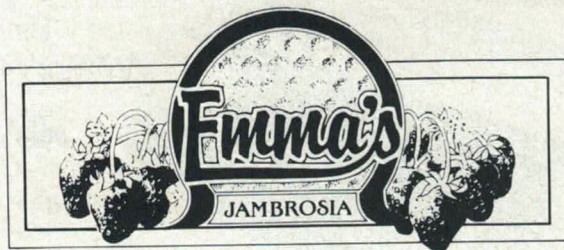
Bonnie Andrukaitus of Studio D, National Film Board in Montreal, is nearing completion of her hour-long documentary on DES in Canada. DES Action hopes to coincide a nationwide release of the film with DES Awareness Week, April 21-27, 1985.

If you live in an area that has not been visited by DES Action and would like to have a lecture and presentation, contact DES Action/Canada, Snowdon P.O. Box 253, Montreal, Quebec H5X 3T4, tel 514-482-3204.



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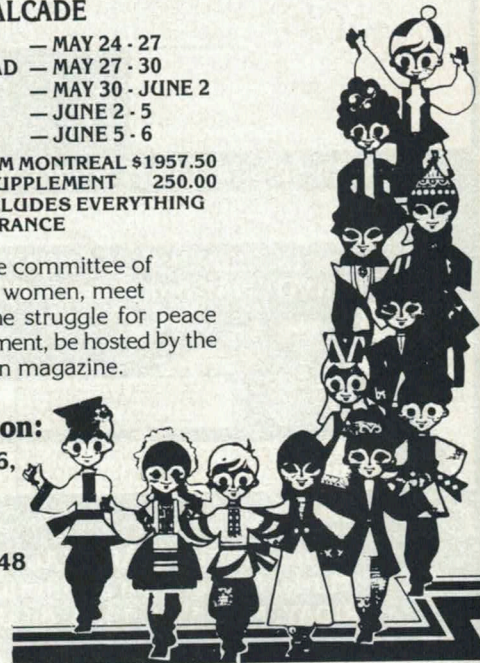
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the Charter of Rights

our just Deserts

After many years of discussion, federal provincial conferences, and negotiation, Canadians now have a constitution and a Charter of Rights. Many of you were part of that lobby which telephoned and visited governments, and fought successfully for the improved wording of Section 15 in the Charter. The result of women's efforts is a proclamation that women are to be equal before the law, under the law and that they are to have the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination.

You were also among the women who lobbied for the last minute inclusion of Section 28 into the Charter, which says, "notwithstanding anything in this Charter, the rights and freedoms in it are guaranteed equally to male and female persons." That is our Canadian Equal Rights Amendment provision, and that lobby showed to men and to women just how effective Canadian women can be if they organise and exercise their political power.

Governments sought and obtained a three year moratorium on the equality rights provisions in the Charter of Rights — the only such clause to have a moratorium placed on it. The reason

was to get their house in order; to amend the offensive legislation in order to meet the requirements of Section 15. But the women of Canada have not been content to leave this process to the government. A group of women in Ontario called The Charter of Rights Educational Fund has done its own audit of Ontario and federal legislation in areas affecting women's rights. The British Columbia Coalition on the Charter has published its audit of the B.C. statutes, and an audit is near completion in Manitoba. As well a mass survey is under way in Manitoba through a thousand women's groups, to identify areas of discrimination that are most important to the groups. (Contact CORC in Manitoba if you want a copy of the questionnaire.) These audits give women a catalogue of discriminatory legislation, so that they can lobby for legislative changes or challenge them before the courts as unconstitutional.

Now that April 17, 1985 is upon us and the moratorium on Section 15 has expired, it is more important than ever that Canadian women understand why the Charter of Rights is important. The Charter is now part of the Constitution of the laws of Canada. It is not just

another law like the Bill of Rights or the human rights legislation, but, in fact, is a super law under which all provincial and federal laws, regulations, and agencies are scrutinised. In the two and a half years since its enactment, the courts have used the Charter to strike down language laws in Quebec, censorship laws in Ontario and search and seizure laws under the Combines Act in Alberta. Clearly, the courts have taken their task very seriously. The Charter strengthens the rights of the individual in society against the government and has required governments to exercise their legislative authority with more care in some cases. However, the possibility also exists that others will use the Charter potentially to our detriment. For example, in the United States, men have challenged maternity leave as discriminatory on the bases of sex and won. History has taught us that it is in women's best interests to form coalitions to fight for our rights because if we leave it up to the individual woman to defend her rights, we will get ad hoc results which may well be losses.



Every woman should know this Charter. This is not a document for lawyers and judges; it is a document for people; a document for women. The Charter is a document of our rights and we must be involved in the fashioning and interpreting of it. Beth Atcheson, Mary Eberts and Beth Symes, three Toronto lawyers active in the establishing of a legal defence fund for Charter challenges, have co-authored a study on women and legal action for the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. The study examined the history of litigation of women's issues in Canada and came up with case after case of women who had fought hard, and lost, to have discriminatory legislation struck down.

Irene Murdoch, was an Alberta ranch wife who, on the breakdown of her marriage, sought a share in the ranch held in her husband's name. Irene Murdoch had actively worked on that ranch, haying, raking, de-horning and vaccinating cattle, and had maintained the family ranch while her husband worked elsewhere. In 1974, the Supreme Court of Canada held that Mrs. Murdoch's contribution was no more than that of any

ranch wife and that it did not create an interest in the land.



Stella Bliss was a woman from Vancouver who gave birth to a child. She did not qualify for maternity benefits as she had not worked at the time of conception of the child and she had been fired because she was pregnant. After birth, she was unemployed, but ready, willing and able to return to work. She applied for regular unemployment insurance benefits which would have been available to her had she been a man, but was disqualified because of the Unemployment Insurance Act. The act stated that from the period of eight weeks before birth until six weeks after birth, women could only receive maternity benefits, and could not receive regular unemployment insurance benefits. Stella Bliss appealed her case alleging that she had been discriminated against by being denied regular unemployment insurance benefits because she is a woman. That case was appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada and in 1979, the Court dismissed her appeal and said that she was denied the benefits not because she was a woman

but because she was pregnant. The discrimination arose not because of law, said the Court, but because of nature.

Yet out of these losses came women's strengths. Women mobilised to lobby their governments for changes in the law. Irene Murdoch became a negative symbol of women's inequality in Canada. Within five years of that decision, every province in Canada had enacted Family Law Reform legislation so that another Irene Murdoch case could never happen again. And out of the Stella Bliss case, women learned hard lessons as to what equality really means. The present wording of Section 15 of the Charter is broader than the narrower interpretation the court gave to equality protection. On January 1st, 1984, the unemployment insurance laws were amended to delete the "magic 10" rule and to delete the denial of women to regular unemployment insurance benefits. And in 1985, amendments to the federal Human Rights Code enshrined that discrimination on the basis of pregnancy is discrimination on the basis of sex.



Guide to the Charter

SECTION 1. CONSTITUTION ACT, 1982, PART 1.

Guarantee of Rights and Freedoms:

1. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

This section guarantees all the rights in the Charter but at the same time provides a possible loophole. Protection of

rights is dependent on how the courts will interpret "reasonable limits" prescribed by law. What test of "reasonableness" will be employed by the courts? Will this give the courts a tool to justify sustaining clearly discriminatory legislation because it appears reasonable by community standards?

SECTION 15 Equality Rights

15(1) Every individual is *equal before and under the law* and has the right to the *equal protection and equal benefit* of the law without discrimination and, *in particular*, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical ability.

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



What exactly does Section 15 mean for Canadian women then; what will we have on April 18, 1985 that we didn't have before?

Section 15 states: "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability."

Section 15 is more than a legalese phrase of entrenched equality; it is more like a masterpiece. It not only commands equality in the administration and application of the law (*before*), in the text, on the fact and in the provisions of the law (*under*), in the coverage or reach of the law (*protection*), but in the benefits of the law, or in the results that flow from the law (*benefits*). These rights will be entrenched. We won't have to run to court each time we feel we've been victims of discrimination: the Charter ensures that we won't.

In addition to broadening the language of Section 15 and working to

close the truck-sized holes which had been driven through the Bill of Rights language by our Supreme Court, women also worked for clear language in the Constitution that would indicate that the right to equality on the basis of sex is a primary right, not to be waffled with or maybe'd with. The inclusion of sex in the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination in Section 15 was not enough.

By the fifth version of the Constitution, a specific sex equality provision had been included, which later became known as Section 28. By virtue of Section 28, Canadian women have the equivalent of an Equal Rights Amendment, putting us far ahead of our American sisters.



This is, of course, the reason why American women have been seeking, and are still seeking, the adoption of the Equal Rights Amendment — so that it will be clear that sex, like race, is an inherently suspect basis of classification. Under U.S. law, discrimination cases are weighed according to certain classifications. Race discrimination, for example is in the highest classification, and in such cases the onus is on the state to

prove that it was necessary to discriminate.

In addition to establishing the fundamental principle of equality, Section 28 has some other effects as well. It functions like a trump card. It trumps Section 27 for example, which is the section which provides that the Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multi-cultural heritage of Canadians. More specifically, if the preservation and enhancement of any particular culture requires denying equal rights to women, then 28 makes it clear that equal rights for women are more fundamental than cultural heritage.

Section 28 also trumps Section 33, which was the part of the struggle that women made around the Charter that is most known and best remembered. In November of 1981, when our government leaders emerged from a late night kitchen conversation with something that almost all of them could agree to, Section 33 made history. What almost all of them could agree to was to betray Quebec, abandon aboriginal peoples, and make all substantive rights and the specific guarantee of equality between men and women subject to an override clause (Section 33). It was women's outrage to this "compromise" that led to the tying up of politicians and officials' phones for days in a storm, and an avalanche of phone calls, letters, telexes, telegrams, deputations, demonstrations and denouncements, both private and public.



As a result, the override provision was removed from Section 28, and it can not be overridden by an Act of the Parliament or the Legislature, and since Section 28 says "notwithstanding *anything* in this Charter," it appears that Section 28 now overrides the override.

Women worked hard and effectively during the period of the formulation of the Charter and made some crucial improvements in the language of the guarantees. That part is done and was done well. But getting the language is not the end, it is just the beginning and, if the Charter is to work for us, women will have to take the same active role now in the interpretation and application of the Charter that women have taken in the formulation of its language.

Women's groups fought long and hard to obtain this section. It says that every individual is protected against discrimination based on sex as well as other grounds. The Canadian Bill of Rights provided for equality of the sexes *before the law* and equal *protection of the law*. These phrases were believed to be insufficient guarantees for women so the phrases "*under the law*" and "*equal benefit of the law*" were added to fill the gaping holes.

Section 15(2) also entrenches the concept of Affirmative Action and says that by giving special attention to a disadvantaged group, legislation is not contravening the equality provision in Section 15(1).

SECTION 28

28. Notwithstanding anything in this Charter, the rights and freedoms referred to in it are guaranteed equally to male and female persons.

This section underscores and highlights the sexual equality rights set out in Section 15(1). A more important function is

that it acts as a red flag to the judiciary that discrimination on the basis of sex will not be tolerated.

It is significant that of all the grounds of discrimination (age, race, etc.) *sex was singled out as needing the extra protection of Section 28.*

Another role for Section 28 may be that it will ensure that no government can opt out and override Section 15.

This section gives the provincial and federal governments the right to expressly override the protection of Section 15(1). This is a very serious threat to sexual equality and some provincial governments have already indicated that it is their intention to opt out. The result will be that discriminatory legislation may be passed in some provinces which would be impossible in other provinces.

Section 33(1) permits legislatures to opt out of Section 2 or Sections 7-15. It does NOT permit the override of Section 28. By the words "notwithstanding anything in this Charter," Section 28 appears to override the legislative right to opt out of SEXUAL EQUALITY right in Section 15(1).



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Litigation is a new tool for women to achieve equality, but it should not be used in isolation. It is merely part of an overall strategy to achieve equality for Canadian women. The education and lobbying efforts which women do so well must continue. There is no need to stop pressuring governments to continue to amend their legislation to comply with the Charter voluntarily, as it is a much speedier and cheaper way of achieving law reform. For example, the Charter may be a tool to force compliance of Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value on the part of governments, without women having to go to the expense of a court challenge. In fact, lobbying governments might prove a more effective means of eliminating discriminatory laws because Canadian courts have a history of taking a middle-of-the-road approach to discrimination cases.

Challenging specific laws immediately gives women the advantage of taking the bull by its horns. Litigation is a lengthy, costly process which is very hard on the individual plaintiff. The decisions under the Charter will have wide impact. If we win cases, doors may open. If we lose a case, the door may be slammed shut, perhaps forever. This strategy involves defining a litigation goal, taking winnable cases in an organised manner one step at a time, to maximise our gains in order to further strengthen our position for the next case, and so on. "Winnable" means those cases in which discrimination is blatant, such as the religion of the child is the religion of its father, the Workers' Compensation Act which denies benefits to widows who live in common-law relationships, but does not deny those same benefits to widowers. Some will be much more substantial matters like the serious abridgement of the rights of Indian women in the Indian Act.

The first winnable cases should have simple facts so that money and resources are not spent arguing over the factual basis of the case. It is preferable to have individual plaintiffs, that is, Canadian women who have been discriminated against, so that we don't get lost arguing equality cases in abstraction. It is easier to have a real woman before the court who can win the sympathy of the court and the public. And once the cases are taken, it is important to consolidate winnings and to lobby to reverse losses. Then, we must move on to the next stage, and repeat the process until the goal is achieved. By taking some measure of control of our destiny,

the aim is to set positive legal precedents immediately to make gains for women's equality for our futures as well as our daughters' future.



A current example of the problems that women litigants face is the human rights complaint which Action de Travail des Femmes laid against Canadian National. CN had not hired women for blue collar work in the St. Lawrence region. Thirteen per cent of blue collar workers are women. But at CN, only 0.7 per cent of their blue collar workers were women. CN had mechanical aptitude tests which were not relevant to the job involved, but which screened out women. The plaintiffs were successful. The Human Rights Tribunal found that CN had engaged in hiring practices which were discriminatory to women. The Tribunal ordered mandatory affirmative action programs at CN to hire one woman for every four places until the percentage of women in the blue collar work force equaled 13 per cent. CN was ordered to abandon the mechanical aptitude test and to modify the way it advertised jobs. This case took 33 days of hearing and much expert evidence was called. Action de Travail des Femmes raised \$30,000 towards its legal cost. Their lawyer donated the bulk of her legal services. And now, CN has appealed. Action de Travail des Femmes

has no money and has limited ability to raise more funds. But it must contest the appeal or else CN will be successful on appeal.

The importance of securing finances for the launch of Charter appeals cannot be overstated. That is why the Legal Education and Action Fund, known as LEAF needs the financial support of women and men across Canada, to set up a reputable, organisation with a systematic approach to litigation. And while LEAF should not, and will not be the only means of striking down discriminatory laws, it is an important, positive step we can take to get the ball rolling after April 17. The fund must finance cases for all Canadian women, especially those in double jeopardy because of disability or race. We must litigate in the issues of social security because the majority of the poor in Canada are women. Particular attention should also be paid to reproductive health issues, such as the right not to be forced on early maternity leave, or denied a job because of pregnancy or discriminated against because a woman is of child bearing years.

In times of restraint when things are bleak and getting bleaker, it is important that we litigate so that women have a fair share of the economic opportunity in Canadian society.

As women did not leave the formulation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to governments, officials, and lawyers, we should not leave the interpretation and application of the charter to governments, officials, lawyers and courts. The Charter is a new tool in the struggle for equality and if it is to be a useful one, it will be because women have taken hold of it, learned it, made it their own and wielded it for their own purpose.

Ridding Canadian laws of discrimination may not be as formidable a task as it first sounds. We already have some documentation of outstanding problems and reports like The Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, and the United Nations "Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women" are good places to start if we run out of ideas. Women are also at an advantage since they will be identifying discrimination on an issue basis rather than on a statute by statute format. To facilitate this enormous challenge, women could ask for public dollars — without strings — to support Charter litigation. (We needn't expect that this money will be made available,

since the government will be spending tax money defending its discriminatory laws, but it doesn't hurt to try.)

Another route for Charter litigation is through Human Rights Commissions. Complaints through Human Rights Commissions will provide a publicly-funded route for undertaking some challenges which can be based on both human rights legislation and Section 15. However, if this is to be a satisfactory route, Human Rights Commissions and human rights legislation must be strengthened, since no human rights commission in Canada currently has sufficient money or staff, or independence to properly fulfill the mandate given them to eliminate discrimination.

Finally, it is essential that women's organisations be involved in identifying the cases which will be litigated, since the women's organisations that are involved with their communities are in the best position to know which are the important obstacles to challenge. It is important that every woman know the Charter of Rights. This is not a document for lawyers and judges. This is a document for people. This is a document for women. This is a document about our rights. And we must be involved in fashioning the interpretation of it.

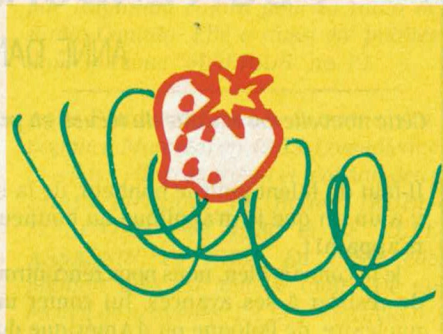
Whether litigating or lobbying, the Charter is a valuable tool. The Charter is a promise, a fundamental promise of equality and it is a promise we must ensure is fulfilled.



This article was compiled from two speeches: one given by Beth Symes to Charter of Rights conferences in Calgary, Edmonton and Victoria on the Persons Day weekend of October 19-20, 1984; the other was delivered by Shelagh Day, former Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission Director to the annual meeting of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. A special thanks to these women and Marilou McPhedran for her assistance and to Mona Brown, currently doing an audit of Manitoba laws.



Donations can be sent to the Legal Education & Action Fund (L.E.A.F.), P.O. Box 7989, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X7.



The following are addresses for Charter of Rights Coalitions across Canada active in lobbying and in preparing for litigation:

Newfoundland and Labrador: Charter of Rights, c/o Dorothy Inglis, 9 Maxse Street, St. John's, Nfld. A1C 2S6

Prince Edward Island: Advisory Council on the Status of Women, P.O. Box 2000, Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 7N8

Halifax: Thelma Costello, Public Legal Education Society, 1127 Barrington Street, Halifax, N.S. B3H 2P8

Quebec: Federation des femmes du Québec, 506 rue Sainte-Catherine est., Bureau 801, Montreal, Quebec H2L 2C7

Ontario: Charter of Rights, 75 Riverdale Avenue, Toronto, Ont. M4K 1C2

Manitoba: The Manitoba Teachers' Society, 191 Harcourt St. at Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Man. R3J 3H2

Saskatchewan: Charter of Rights, 2523 Truesdale Drive, Regina Sask. S4V 0W3

Alberta: RRI CLOW, Women's Counseling Services of Edmonton, Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta T8L 2N7

Calgary: Charter of Rights, 6930 Leaside Drive S.W., Calgary, Alberta T5N 2R1

British Columbia: Fran Watters, Vancouver Women and the Law, 3-2375 West 7th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1Y4; National Association of Women and the Law, Victoria Caucus, 1624 Amphion Street, Victoria, B.C. V8R 4Z6

Yukon: Yukon Status of Women's Council, 302 Steele St., Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C5

FICTION

POUR ENDORMIR MA MORT

ANNE DANDURAND

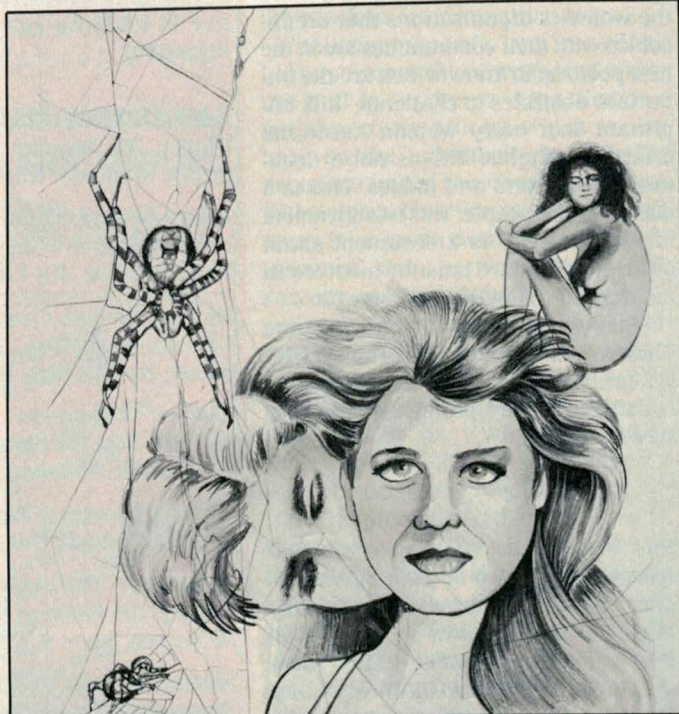
Cette nouvelle est extraite du recueil en préparation LE JOURNAL DE L'ARAIGNEE.

Il faut du talent pour le bonheur, de la lucidité, un combat sans complaisance. Il y a un an que je m'applique au bonheur. Mais ce matin en m'éveillant ma mort m'apparaît.

Je la connais bien, nous nous rencontrons régulièrement. Je n'ai qu'une seule façon de résister à ses avances, lui conter une histoire neuve et intrigante. Pas de nucléaire, de Pologne ou d'Amérique du Sud, ça elle connaît trop bien.

Alors assieds-toi près de moi, ma mort si parfumée, cale-toi dans les coussins que j'essaie encore de t'endormir.

ILLUSTRATION - JOANNE BERGER



C'est la nuit. Mon amant dort, bien enclavé dans mes bras. J'ai appris un nouveau tour de Jeanne Couteau, la sorcière. Il me faut ton sommeil profond, mon bel amour, un sommeil de mort, si je veux bien réussir mon coup. Et là-dessus je n'ai aucun doute. Ce soir au dessert, rappelle-toi ce gâteau, cette religieuse si délicate, si aromatique, que je n'ai pas touchée. Elle cachait dans sa crème un narcotique puissant, du datura haché fin. Comme j'aime te voir manger ce que je concocte: tu y mets tant d'enthousiasme! Tu t'es assoupi très vite, sans même avoir le temps de t'interroger. Je t'ai déshabillé tout doucement, je me suis glissée, nue, le long de ton dos.

Toute la chambre attend. Les poupées aux yeux de verre ont repris leur souffle nocturne, les meubles palpitent pesamment.

Je te respire, ô l'heureuse odeur de ton corps, je touche à peine des paumes ta poitrine si satinée, je te mords un peu la nuque pour voir si tu dors vraiment, tu ne bronches pas. Avec mon genou je pousse ta jambe, tes cuisses baillent, je passe ma rotule entre tes fesses dont la forme m'émeut tant, j'effleure tes testicules et tu as beau dormir tu bandes tranquillement. Du bout des ongles j'agace ton sexe qui me répond avec des battements, je flatte ce point si sensible entre les couilles et la queue.

Soudain je m'interromps. Dors-tu toujours? Je me soulève, te scrute. Mais ton visage est si calme, tes rides et tes soucis ont fui, le sourire de sphynx se dessine sur ta bouche. Amour, mon bel amour. Je me colle plus étroitement à toi. J'enserme tes jambes des miennes. J'étreins ton sexe des deux mains. L'en-



AINSI SOIT-IL

Chaleur, pourquoi m'as-tu abandonnée
m'entourant de cruauté immaculée
figeant l'arrivée du fruit de mes entrailles
crispées, bouillantes, agitées, boursouflantes

Etrangle ce vent hurlant
de pleurs, de cris écartés
écorchant ma chair
gémissante, suppléante

Sèche mes lèvres gonflées d'eau salée
mes yeux brillant d'obscurité

Tire arrache ressort
nome beni baptise

Cette vie nue ridée
courbée de nouveauté
frissonnante, séchant, gigotante
enflammée d'une étendue inconnue

Perdue

Passe Anne-Marie
qu'elle s'adouce de mon souffle
se fond au sein de mon corps
s'allaitant
glissant dans une rêverie de calme.

© Nicole Pribilski

chantement se déclenche.

Le lit bascule, le gouffre s'est ouvert dessous, enlacés nous croulons dans le vide.

Nous tombons dans mon passé. Heureusement, tu dors. Les fantômes les plus récents remontent déjà vers nous, ceux que j'ai aimés et qui ne m'aimaient pas.

Celui-ci, qui me prenait pour une autre et qui se cramponnait à son obsession, nous frôle le premier. Il a conservé sa tête et son torse d'adulte, mais ses membres ont ridiculement raccourci, des jambes et des bras de bébé.

Cet autre, qui me mentait toujours, ouvre à présent une gueule gigantesque, baveuse, à l'haleine insupportable. Le troisième, les poignets maintenant soudés au sexe, se branle éternellement, la face convulsée.

Je n'ai pas peur d'eux, pauvres revenants difformes. Le troupeau der-

rière eux s'épaissit, spectres tordus, souffrances oubliées. Je ferme les yeux, nous poursuivons notre descente à travers cette glaire évanescence, ces gémissements glacés. Puis peu à peu je n'entends plus que le sifflement de notre chute.

Tiens, ça sent la lessive fraîche, le soleil de quatre heures et la chaude fourrure d'un chat. Les moments heureux nous entourent, petites fumées graciles et fugaces. Mais déjà elles se sont envolées au-dessus de nos têtes. Malheureusement, tu dors.

Enfin nous atterrissons sur un sol souple et rose. Nous sommes arrivés, mon bel amour. Voici les limbes où ni le passé, ni le présent n'ont accès.

Pour un temps indéfini, nous serons à l'abri du nucléaire, de la Pologne, de l'Amérique de Sud et de la mort.

Pour remonter à la réalité, il faudrait que tu me caresses pendant mon som-

meil. Mais je ne crains rien: je ne te dirai pas le truc, et surtout je garderai les yeux bien ouverts.

Cette nouvelle a été lue le 9 octobre 1983, à l'émission "ALTERNANCES", réalisée par Raymond Fafard pour la radio de Radio-Canada. Elle a aussi été publiée dans la revue "MOEBIUS" no 19.

Anne Dandurand est née en bonne compagnie à Montréal en 1953. Comédienne (parfois), elle scénarisait et réalisait deux courts métrages de fiction (RUEL-MALENEANT, en 1980 et LE REVE ASSASSIN, en 1981). En 1982, elle publiait avec sa jumelle Claire Dé un recueil de nouvelles: LA LOUVE-GAROU, aux Editions de la Pleine Lune. Depuis 1983, elle gagne (chichement) sa vie en écrivant des articles et des nouvelles dans Châtelineau, la Vie en Rose, Montréal ce Mois-ci, Au Masculin et Québec-rock. ▽

She just look like
nothing to you
crumpled down
and propped up
sliding eyes
SHUTTERED AND SHARP
watch her
talk to the lady
she could tell you
a thing or two
ABOUT the BLASTING lights
the angry sounds
and sleeping on cement so that the
cold pulls your own warmth
into the stone AND THE WET
MAKES YOUR GUTS SHUDDER
And the girls in the hotel washroom
with new track ... marks
up their arms oh girls not again
WHO sees you and pretending
They don't CARE WHO SEES them
AND smoking even always smoking
what else is there to do in these
little plaster water-stained rooms.

But DANCING
• watch that lady.
WHOAH can that honey dance
that pile of ragged polyester
she can kick up her FEET
WAVING her arms like a CRAZY TREE
like a -wickedly-
like a lizard
an elegance bird
spinning and stomping
and standing on heels
taller than the pillars
of the royal bank.
Swooping in her cardigan
LAUGHING her wide mouth
or shutting it tight.
or crumpled like rainy wrappers
emptied AND SMASHED on the street
HAS she known better?
Oh you know you know better
BUT SHE KNOWS BETTER THAN YOU.

Sue Dymont

REAL Women and Feminists...



Their slogan is "women's rights but not at the expense of human rights". Their name, printed in bold, black letters across the bottom of their pink newsletter, boasts a women's symbol as part of its motif — REAL Women. The symbol looks conspicuously captive, as it sits among the anti-feminist words on the page, denouncing feminists and their "anti-family, anti-life mentality".

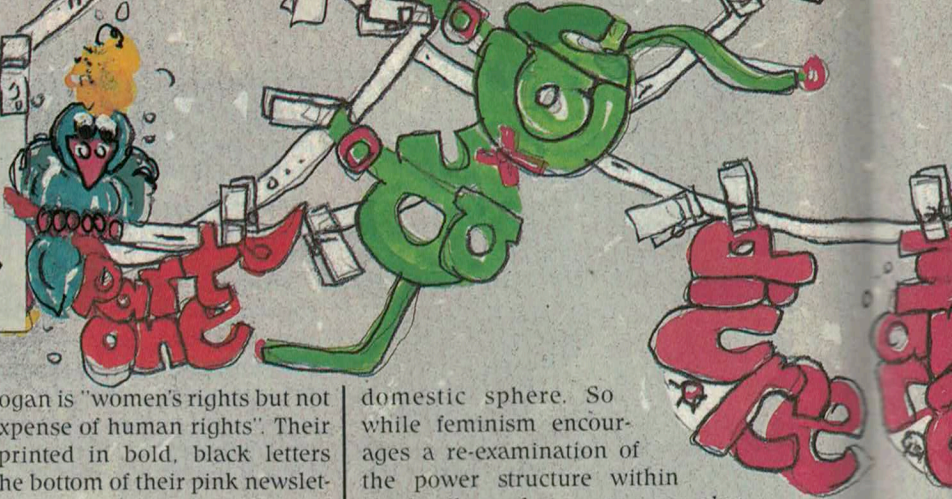
REAL Women (Realistic, Equal, Active, for Life) of Canada is a national, Toronto-based organisation of women who came together a year ago to organise a formal opposition to feminism. Their simultaneous embrace of the term "women's rights" and rejection of most feminist platforms challenges us to look at these women; at first perhaps out of curiosity, but more importantly to help us solidify our own positions by re-examining them from the viewpoint of a woman who rejects them.


The first thing that comes to mind after reading *Reality*, REAL Women's newsletter and a booklet containing their philosophical positions, is: why do they fear the goals of feminism so much that they have established an organization whose stated goal is to oppose us? President Grace Petrasek states on the front page of their fall newsletter that REAL Women are tired of the negativism espoused by feminists and she accuses us of undervaluing the work done by women in the home. The real women's issues, they say, are the protection of the family and recognition of the value of women's unpaid work in the home and community. To REAL Women, the goals of equality and liberation are in direct conflict with their stated purpose. Feminism, which argues that the nuclear family has historically been the first bastion of male dominance, is heard to be telling women that they have no power or status in the

domestic sphere. So while feminism encourages a re-examination of the power structure within the family so that women can play a more positive role in it, REAL Women may well fear the equality espoused by feminism as a dismantling of their territory into uncharted terrain. If this is the case, then it answers why REAL Women are opposed to feminists, and not the powers which oppress them. And while the realities of wife abuse, divorce inequities, lack of enforced child support and the low economic status of women in the home are undeniable, women's power base in the home is the one which is valued most by REAL Women. Unfortunately, they would like us to agree with their priorities.

A women's movement speaking out for wide social, economic and political reforms is inevitably going to encounter opposition. We are constantly reminding ourselves of this whenever our skin is scraped by opposition or backlash, but in this case it is not enough to simply dismiss REAL Women, because as a pro-women movement we can't help but to feel the pain of REAL Women's alienation because, after all, we know what that pain is like. That empathy is what pushes us to try and understand the philosophy of REAL Women, and then leads us to ask the inevitable: why aren't all women feminists?

For REAL Women to adopt a feminist understanding would be to also surrender the power of the traditional wife and mother roles in the context of the nuclear family. From this vantage, it becomes easier to understand the seigementality of REAL Women, which seems to be their keenest source of energy and rebellion. What appears to be a naive attitude in regard to the issues of women's poverty and family abuse begins to look more like a calculated fortress, built to protect their territory from the reality of women's lives. REAL Women claiming to represent 15,000 women, does not want government funded day cares, or equal pay for work of equal value, or access to abor-





... Why our differences won't all come out in the wash.

ations. But beyond that, their worst fears seem to be that we will abolish marriage, force them into the paid workforce and separate them from their children; they are worried not so much of what we say are our goals, but that we will force them into a position of making choices they aren't prepared to make.

REAL Women's greatest complaint is that feminist organisations such as the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) don't represent their interests. Gwendolyn Landolt, legal counsel and consultant to REAL Women is angry that feminist organisations get government money and media attention, while claiming to represent the interests of all women. She says that feminists don't want real equality for all women, just women who fit into the narrow mould of acceptance defined by feminists.

"Don't ever say that the women of Canada want this," she says, calling the generalisation an insult. "There is a huge army of women who haven't been heard," she says angrily.

An example is the constitutional lobby in 1982, which brought together various womens organisations throughout the country to lobby for the inclusion of two equality clauses in the Canadian constitution. Landolt says that clause, the equivalent of an ERA provision, wasn't won on behalf of Canadian women, just feminists. Landolt told the members of REAL Women in an article in *Reality* that:

"If these feminists are successful in obtaining the interpretation of the Charter that they wish, it would mean that women would lose their special position in society, which now provides them with at least some protective legislation to enable them to be the nurturers of their families."

In a telephone interview, Landolt maintained that women do need human rights protections, such as employment standards, and anti-discrimination laws. She also credits the suffragists with performing courageous acts to help win the vote for women, and says that if

she were alive a hundred years ago she would have been among their radical ranks. However, she stops short of crediting suffragists with winning the vote, saying the government would have given women the vote anyway because of the absence of male voters in the country during World War I. On today's issues Landolt favours equal opportunity and equal pay, but she resolutely denounces the women's lobby during the last federal election, saying the structure and questions of the NAC televised debate showed the feminists to be "queen bees and elitists." She accuses feminists of being too pro-Ed Broadbent, and points to the fact that only 18 per cent of women voted NDP compared with 40 per cent who voted Conservative as proof that feminists failed to represent women's issues. Landolt, who says she is a feminist doesn't want to be called a conservative. She saves some criticism for the other political parties too, condemning women politicians who want to get elected on the women's vote. Her conclusion is that women's issues are the same as men's issues: inflation, jobs and interest rates.

It is clear from looking at the platform of REAL Women, that their issues are not espoused by a single male-led political party any more than the feminists'. They want increased tax exemptions for mothers who stay home and larger family allowances. They feel that if a woman who pays for child care can get a tax exemption then a mother who stays home should have the same right. REAL Women favour pension splitting and equal treatment in the divorce courts, but their thrust remains on keeping marriages together. Recognizing that ours is a society which values economics over human relations, Landolt



Peniti Mitchell & Charlyn Toews

Glen D. Wilson argues in *The Psychology of Conservatism* that the characteristics of conservative thinkers (pro-establishment politics, emphasis on the moral behaviour of individuals, religious fundamentalism) stem from a psychological state of "experiencing threat or anxiety in the face of uncertainty." The positions of REAL Women certainly reflect a perceived threat from feminists and the changing status of women in Canada. Barbara Klich states in *Reality* that there "are many young women today who are confused, uncertain, and wondering about their roles in society. Some have become the victims of women's liberation." Klich, who is more direct with her attacks on the feminist movement than Landolt says of feminists: "these women have taken over the soapboxes and dictated on everything from open marriage and free sex to abortion and the death of the family as we know it."

Little wonder that a backlash to the feminist movement has evolved; a movement which has politicised the bedrooms and kitchens of the nations and made matters of sex and motherhood political issues: wife abuse, reproductive health, sex education, pornography, incest and sexual orientation. As Robyn Rowland, editor of *Women Who Do & Women Who Don't join the women's movement* quotes in the introduction to her book, "Feminism calls forth all those unspoken personal relations and renames them as political questions, questions of power and social determination." (R.P. Petchesky) Already

a backlash to the backlash is evident among feminists. A common reaction to the presence of REAL Women is to dismiss them as naive, or blind to their own oppression, or to suggest that

they just haven't become feminists... yet. Many of us have even fantasised that they are just tools of men assigned to wedge apart the women's movement, and although it would be tempting to dismiss REAL Women as right-wing fanatics, that would be oversimplifying their motivations. We could say that they are manipulated by men behind-the-scenes, but that would be trivialising their integrity. Adrienne Rich comments in her book, *On Lies, Secrets and Silence*, that "it is pointless to write off the anti-feminist woman as brainwashed, or self-hating, or the like. I believe that feminism must imply an imaginative identification with all women... and that the feminist must, because she can, extend this act of the imagination as far as possible."

However, again and again, the feminist v.s. Real Women argument compels one to analysis. Mary Daly, a Boston University theology professor and the author of several books on women and religion and feminist theory argues that the extreme of the right wing women is a dangerous philosophy which compels women to self-loathing and spiritual decay. Pointing out that Phyllis Schlafly has been cited as calling the nuclear bomb "a marvelous gift that was given to our country by a wise God," Daly says this of Schlafly: "As a sort of female Doctor Strangelove, Schlafly illustrates a consistency of pathology, combining machine-like callousness toward women with the same sort of indifference to all of Elemental nature and to all of life, except in fetal form." (*Pure Lust*) The Phyllis Schlafly extreme is seen by Daly as a tool of the patriarchy; women rewarded for betraying their own sex. Following the Daly philosophy to its conclusion, she explains that the limited options women have for achieving power in society, often lead them to adopt the role of pimping over other women.

Sensitising ourselves to the existence of REAL Women need not be a disempowering exercise, and is in no way akin to changing our minds or softening our positions. Explaining feminism in REAL Women's terms would lead us to conclude that feminists decided that women should work for a living and then invented unhappy marriages to prove their "anti-family" position. One could conclude that some bored, uppity women decided one day that they were oppressed so that they could expand their career choices, all the while ignoring the fact the women's movement evolved in response to the reality of oppression faced by women daily.



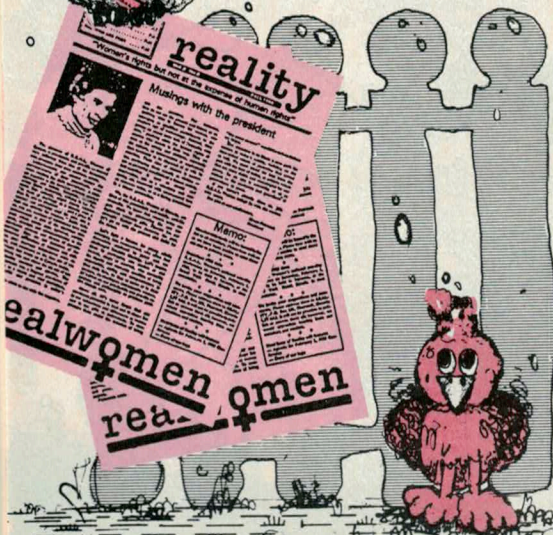
For the women's movement, labels of communism and child-hater are not new; in fact their occurrence is unrefreshingly familiar. Today when anti-feminist crusader Barbara Amiel attacks feminist thinking as 'permeated by a marxist fog', or likens affirmative action to nazism, we can at least find comfort in knowing her paranoia is not original, nor is it an indication that we really *have* gone too far this time. Amiel reminds us that fundamental opposition to our goals exists and she puts added fuel into our fiery spirits.

In the U.S. struggle for suffrage, the U.S. women's movement was slandered in a massive red-baiting campaign in the 1920s. A spiderweb chart of women's suffrage groups was circulated by the Navy, indiscriminantly smearing the General Federation of Women's Club, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the YWCA, the American Association of University Women and the League of Women Voters. Early feminists were accused of advocating "free love" for demanding improved birth control, and "unnatural motherhood," as well as undermining the family as an institution of God.

Manitoba suffragist Nellie McClung, and many others noted that there were campaigns to discredit the suffragists' cause by attacking their feminine features; they were portrayed as ugly, loud women who hated children and wanted to be men. McClung quotes a conversation she overheard on a train one day, in her memoirs. A man, whom she recognised as a civil servant was talking about her to another woman: "She's a big woman," he said, "badly dressed, with a highpitched and strident voice, a regular rabble-rouser and tumble type. Irish, you know, Shanty Irish, with big hands and feet."

Although radicalism characterised many early organisations, the social milieu and political climate of the times took more kindly to women as public wives and mothers rather than as equal political citizens. Therefore, "maternal feminism" gained favour, subduing women's calls for equal rights as human beings, but enhancing the status of women *as women*.

Groups such as the National Council of Women and the Women's Christian



Temperance Union sought to extend the nurturing roles of women into the public sphere, to combat the evils that accompanied growing industrialism, urbanisation, and immigration. Goals included female enfranchisement, temperance, urban reform, child welfare, public health, and protection of child and female labour.

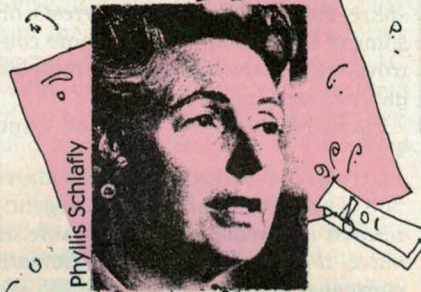
The *Canadian Home Journal* of August, 1897 declared that the modern women could be found in important positions everywhere, "with their tender care and brave hearts. . . (who) wherever they go carry with them the influence that purifies and refines." REAL Women President, Grace Petrasek, in *Reality*, Fall, 1984, speaks of "... real women, single or married, who exemplify the dignity and womanly qualities of being responsible, caring and compassionate in their daily lives, be they at home or in their careers."

REAL Women of Canada may appear to be a throw-back to maternal feminism, but there are important differences. There is a striking similarity to comments made by late 19th century maternal feminists and late 20th century REAL Women. The differences lie mainly in the target groups that maternal feminists and REAL Women seek to aid. While maternal feminists were concerned with social reforms aimed primarily to help the working poor, including working women and children, the wives and children of new immigrants, intemperate men, orphans and others in need of nurturance and moral guidance, REAL Women of Canada were formed as a reaction-to group; their biggest platform is that feminists shouldn't be claiming to be working in the best interests of all women.

REAL Women's approach

REAL Women are interested in advancing the interests of women in the traditional family, sometimes at the expense of women and children who are not in this social arrangement. For example, their position on marriage and divorce states that the law should protect marriage and families "by prescribing improved health through supportive legislation." Instead of funding day cares, the government should provide assistance to parents looking after children in their own homes. Clearly this position is aimed at reducing the quality

of day care of children whose parent(s) choose to or must work outside the home, and further assumes that the familial home is always the best place for all children to be, ignoring issues of in-home violence such as child abuse and incest



Their positions on equal pay for work of equal value and affirmative action show that their concern for single women is fleeting at best, particularly as their main problem with affirmative action appears to be that it could discriminate against qualified males. Their position on prostitution would approve of increased harassment of prostitutes, and seems to be aimed mainly at keeping this activity away from their neighbourhoods.

According to Margaret Eichler (*Families in Canada Today*), the conservative view of the family held by REAL Women ignores the reality that many family structures and arrangements exist in Canada today and paints a rosy image of families which largely ignores the effects of family violence and neglect. The response of REAL Women to the disclosure of these realities is like shooting the messenger. It appears at times that REAL Women are clinging to the hope that if they attack feminists long enough and loud enough, family violence, rape, pay inequity and poverty will disappear.

Joanna Bogle, an activist in the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children in Britain, typifies the extreme view of women who lash out at feminism:

"No, we don't want women's liberation. From a generation which has seen rocketing divorce rates, widespread venereal diseases and a sickening increase of crimes of violence including rape, comes a plea for a restoration of the dignity and femininity of womanhood."

Many of us naively expect that if women can't participate in the liberation we are working for, they should at least agree with us in spirit that what we're working toward will at some level be beneficial to all women.

Gwendolyn Landolt of REAL Women, when asked whether there are two

kinds of women, responds without even pausing to compose her response:

"Each of us is but a thread in the tapestry of women's interests," she says resolutely. The problem is that "the radical feminists think they speak for all women and they don't". In spite of this, Landolt doesn't discount the possibility of women's groups getting together on certain issues they do agree on, such as the Conservative government's social service cuts and tax changes that affect women.

Betty Friedan, in her book *The Second Stage* concludes that there is "an evolving continuum of American women defining their own personhood today both within and beyond the context of the family, in varying and ever changing proportions for each woman." The continuum includes women who have 'made it' in the male world and continue to deny that discrimination exists; women like Barbara Amiel, who claim to be the 'real' feminists, all the while debasing the social movement for women's liberation. It also includes women working to change power structures in institutions such as business and government from the inside — women who may not call themselves feminist, but who are quietly and systematically making the workforce a more womanly place to inhabit. It includes housewives and women in non-traditional jobs, who are there not to make a social statement, but because they always wanted to work as a diesel mechanic, or as a mother. Even the specific-issues-antagonists like the Pro-life groups who don't attend anti-nuclear demonstrations are not of a different species than us; nor are all welfare mothers, immigrant women, or all lesbians a different breed, something that *isn't-like-me*.

In spite of the distance between feminists and REAL Women, it may come as a relief that we at least share the belief that there aren't two kinds of women: good ones and bad ones, pro-choice and pro-life, real women and not-so-real women. We come from a common experience which will not allow us to be neatly stacked into two piles; although we will continue to confront one another on issues and argue about what is important to achieve women's equality.

suggests that marriage counselling should be a tax-deductible item to give it a more elevated status. Also among the organization's list of demands are courses on parenting and marriage to properly train people how to cope with the stresses of those roles. As a member of the board of Children's Aid, Landolt says she fully understands that many families need support systems in the community in order to cope with the complexities of life. One of those sup-

ports may be shelters for battered women, but REAL Women has no published stand on shelters and Landolt says that the group isn't sure that it is women who should be forced to leave their homes if they are abused. Undoubtedly, feminists and REAL Women share many of the same interests on some of these issues, but the more controversial issues wedge a formidable gap between the two.

Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value

isn't desirable because it leads to "bureaucrats determining equal value and leads to government wage control." Landolt also suggests that if employers can't pay a woman less for a job, they'll hire a man, which won't help women in the paid workforce. REAL Women also opposes homosexuality, lesbianism, erotica and pornography, no-fault divorce and anything which doesn't lead to, or enhance women's status as a married woman and mother. She insists that

Who is the REAL woman?

"We, the REAL Women of Canada, are tired of this pessimistic anti-family, anti-life mentality. We know that women today can gain much by celebrating life and our ingenious womanly gifts. Therein lies our strength. Rather than damning the past, let's get on with the present and build for the future."

Grace Petrasek, President
REAL Women of Canada

They aren't devoted to the mother as housewife and nothing else philosophy. They recognise that women often work outside the home, but they do not acknowledge that work as important in comparison to her work within the traditional family setting. One of the reasons they formed an organisation was feminists' successful lobby to have an equality clause included in The Charter of Rights and Freedoms of the Canadian Constitution. REAL Women don't want women to have their equality enshrined in the Constitution because it threatens to give women rights "at the expense of other's human rights". Another reason for organising was their anger in response to former Status of Women Minister Judy Erola's criticism of the tax exemption for husbands whose wives aren't in the paid workforce. Erola criticised the exemption because the rebate would not go to the women who had no income of their own, but to their waged husbands. REAL women were outraged by this seeming trivialisation of women's role in the family and what they saw as a lack of recognition for women's work in the home. In response to government-funded status of women groups, which they say do not speak for them, REAL women has developed positions on nine issues: Marriage, Divorce, Day Care, Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value, Affirmative Action, Pornography, Prostitution, Reproductive Choice, and Pension Reform.

MARRIAGE-A 250 word position on

marriage states that permanent marriage is possible, desirable and urgently needed in Canada. Easy, available divorce, it goes on to say, has traumatic consequences for spouses, children and as a whole is destructive to family life.

DIVORCE-The real tragedy, REAL Women states, is "not so much in the fact that some marriages fail, but in that so little is done to help those that could survive." They oppose no-fault divorce on the grounds that it erodes the concept of the permanence of marriage and that it could make it easier for men to evade child support payments.

EQUAL PAY FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE-They are against it because they insist there is no objective way to evaluate different factors such as skill level and experience, and more so because it would create a huge government bureaucracy and lead to government wage controls. The solution to increasing women's wages is increasing education and job skills so that women have access to higher paying jobs. They do support equal pay for equal work, which is a more general non-discrimination clause.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION-They oppose it because it is "reverse discrimination against qualified males as well as minority groups such as ethnics and native people". They also believe that the fact that men "occupy the vast majority of high-paying positions... is not necessarily evidence of sexual discrimination. Rather, this may be a reflection of the fact that women, until recent years, either have not trained for or participated on any large scale in the job market."

REPRODUCTIVE CHOICE-"Reproductive choice is exercised prior to conception because conception and birth are consequences of reproductive choice, not choices in themselves. Anyone who is not certain that there is a second human being growing within the pregnant woman should clearly give that human life the benefit of the doubt."

PENSIONS-They favour improved pensions for homemakers through a relocation of existing money. They do not want to increase the tax burden on the public. They support pension-splitting.

FAMILY ALLOWANCES-REAL Women want family allowances to be increased to \$85 per month for children under 12 and \$140 for mothers with children over 12.

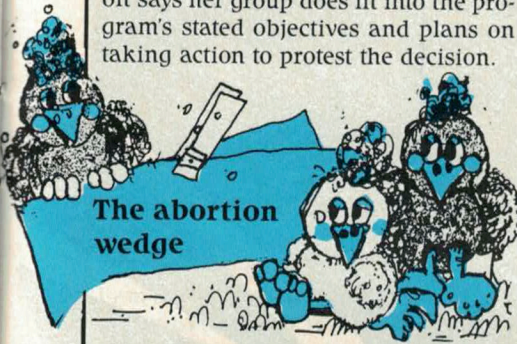
MOTHER'S BENEFIT-Because women's work in the home is undervalued by society, REAL Women believes that a mother's benefit payment separate from family allowance should be available to cover the mother's contribution to the Canada Pension Plan. They also want the drop out provision in the Canada Pension Plan extended to allow women to remain in the home until children are 16 and not be penalised with regard to CPP.

DAY CARE-REAL Women oppose universality for day care, but say that when it is absolutely necessary it should be of the highest possible quality. They recognise the need for government and private day cares and assert that women should have a choice, financially and socially to stay at home with children when they are young. They would like the government to promote courses on parenting.

PORNOGRAPHY-They're against it, and erotica and want the Criminal Code strengthened to fight both. They also make links between child pornography and sexual abuse and want to stiffen controls on child pornography.

PROSTITUTION-They are against it because it "demeans" the dignity of men and women and "removes the dignity and bonding of the sexual act from its context of a loving relationship." They see prostitution as harmful for prostitutes, residents, as well as teenagers who will get the impression that sexuality is "merely recreation and sport". They also point out that prostitution decrease property values in residential areas.

feminism discriminates against women who hold on to traditional family values, and it was this belief that lead REAL Women to apply for Federal Secretary of State funding under the Women's Program. They were refused, and Landolt says they were told that "the promotion of a particular family model is not within the spirit of the objectives of the women's program. The program concentrates on supporting groups who are looking to support all options for women as they work towards equality in a society that is changing rapidly." Landolt says her group does fit into the program's stated objectives and plans on taking action to protest the decision.



The abortion wedge

Unequivocally, abortion is murder to REAL Women, unless a woman is dying. Rape or incest is no excuse for abortion. Landolt insists that the trauma of abortion on top of rape trauma makes the woman's life more unbearable, adding that in abortion after rape "the baby is executed because of its father's sins".

Kristen Luber, in "The War Between the Women" (*Family Planning Perspectives*, May/June, 1984) examines the differences between pro-choice and pro-life women. Activists on both sides of the issue are similar in many ways; the major difference is their power base. For pro-choice women, the power base is economic independence and equality of rights and responsibilities. For pro-life women, "small families, contraception, abortion, nonfamily roles for women (and) day care. . . diminish the value of children, or dilute the unique value of mothers." Their power base depends on their motherhood or potential motherhood. "Since pro-life men and women believe in, and live in, a world of separate spheres where each sex has its appropriate task, for them to accept contraception (and by extension, abortion) would devalue the once secure resource pro-life women have — the private world of home and hearth."

Pro-life advocates agree that our society does not value motherhood and children, but their remedy (outlawing abortion) is part of our opposition to combat the same undervalued status of women and children.

It is important to note that there are different vested interests in the male anti-abortion outlook. From a male perspective, a woman having the right to an abortion diminishes his right to have his children born; diminishes his 'right' to his family. Listening to male pro-life activists, it is clear that the sanctity of life, and the value of motherhood are not necessarily their primary concerns. J.C. Wilke, the first male national president of the National Right to Life Committee, said regarding feminists and Planned Parenthood groups:

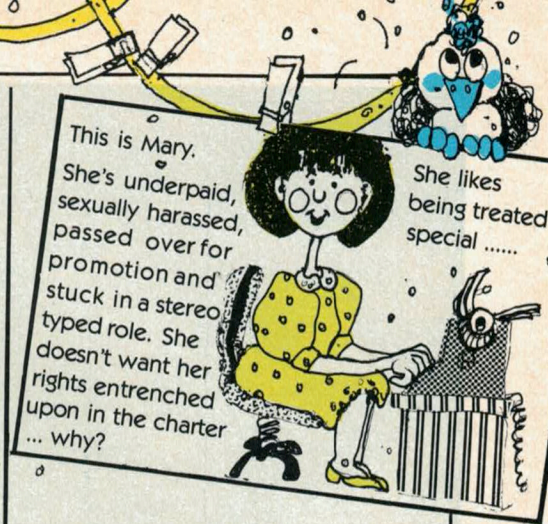
"They do violence to marriage by helping to remove the right of the husband to protect the life of the child he has fathered in his wife's womb." (*Women Who Do & Women Who Don't*)

In an essay on abortion, Landolt comments that the rights of the fetus are disregarded simply because it is inconvenient or unwanted. "Nonsense," she responds, "I was incensed over this disregard for the rights of the unborn child as I had previously been over the disregard for the rights of women."

In trying to understand this rationale, it is not hard to see how feminists motivations and even feminist jargon have been misinterpreted. The right to safe and affordable abortion services has been interpreted as a privilege-kind-of-right, not a right in the sense of a right to adequate health care. After all, rights that are privileges involve a kind of enjoyment, or honour, and abortion is not an honour at all but an unfortunate last resort; it is not even a choice, in the sense that a woman is not "free" to choose. Mary Daly explains:

"This is a demonically double-sided trap, for of course reforms, such as legislation of abortion aid many women in desperate situations. However, because the "changes" that are achieved are victories in a vacuum, that is, in a totally oppressive social context, they do not essentially free the Female Self but instead function to hide both the fact of continuing oppression and the possibilities for better options and for more radical freedom." (*Gyn/Ecology*)

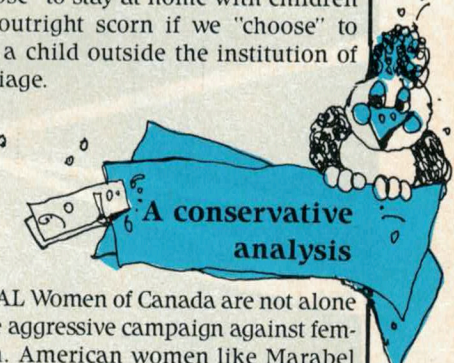
For pro-choice women, it is precisely because abortion is an unfortunate last resort that the final choice must be the woman's. The anti-abortion backlash has kept us so steadfastly defending women's choice as the bottom line on the abortion debate, that it has kept us from getting on to the business of trying to effect changes to the world which will make it a better place for mothers and their children. Abortion is not THE answer to unwanted pregnancy, or in-



This is Mary.
She's underpaid,
sexually harassed,
passed over for
promotion and
stuck in a stereo-
typed role. She
doesn't want her
rights entrenched
upon in the charter
... why?

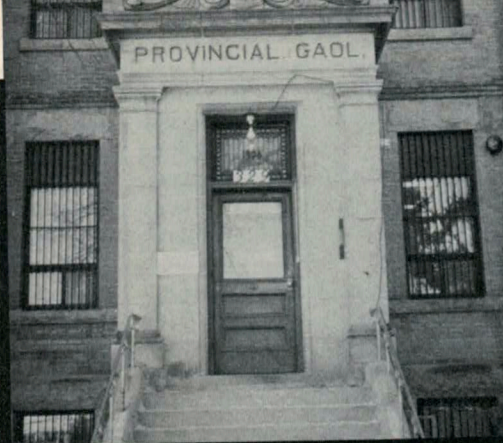
She likes
being treated
special

adequate birth control, or forced sterilisation, or poverty, but it is a right-to-health issue which is unfortunately and inextricably tied to the general condition of women in our society. We know that there is nothing victorious or pleasant about abortion, but we know women must have access to it because we live in a world which victimises us with inadequate and harmful birth control, few community supports, inadequate maternity leave, little support if we do "choose" to stay at home with children and outright scorn if we "choose" to have a child outside the institution of marriage.



A conservative analysis

REAL Women of Canada are not alone in the aggressive campaign against feminism. American women like Marabel Morgan (author of *The Total Woman*) and Phyllis Schlafly are more ardently anti-feminist than REAL Women, but their reluctance to comprehensively embrace the diversity of the lives of women today are a commonality they share. Phyllis Schlafly, who ardently opposed the ERA on the grounds that it would diminish women's rights and endanger women's special status in society was sponsored to come to Canada by the Alberta Federation of Women United for Families. In 1982 she told the United Families audiences that feminism is a disease linked to lesbianism and unhappiness and that it would lead "to the building of a gender free or sex-neutral society." Unlike REAL Women, Schlafly believes that family allowance is akin to state interference in the family. REAL Women has no formal affinity with the U.S. based Eagle Forum or other U.S. anti-feminist groups, Landolt says.



Portage Correctional Centre for Women
Photo: Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba

PRIVATE & PUBLIC

PRISONS

**Women and The
Justice
System**

BETH
FOLLETT

The Portage Correctional Centre for Women (PCCW) stands foreboding and seemingly windowless in the city centre of Portage-la-Prairie, Manitoba. Two heavy automatically locked doors separate the outside from the inside: They close with a solid click. Once buzzed through this set of doors and introduced to my hostess/correctional officer, I was escorted through a series of locked doors and empty halls to the recreation room; mostly barren except for a well-used pool table and an errant dime novel. A summer researcher for the Elizabeth Fry Society, I fidgeted nervously wondering who these criminals might be with whom I was about to share my

Friday evening. I had discovered previously that one of the incarcerated women had assaulted a man. . . . And the others? . . .

The theatre troupe I had accompanied here was ready to perform, and slowly the *residents*, as they are referred to by staff, began to filter into the room, eyeing me as I sucked on my cigarette. I tried to hide my nervousness behind a direct glance, and quite unexpectedly I was looking into eyes I recognised and which knew mine. Our eyes fell away instantly; then slowly they connected again, we shared a greeting, then turned to watch the performance.

Afterwards we were invited to share in

some coffee and conversation with the women. And finally we were given a tour of the institution. When women first come to PCCW, they stay in a block of eight caged cells each containing a single bed and a toilet. There is no privacy; four cages face four cages, the eighth is monitored by a surveillance camera for women requiring round-the-clock attention. Later the women are issued a room. Some have decorated their rooms with posters of rock heroes, and stuffed animals, other rooms are stark. Each room has a window in the door; small, eye level. The classroom for life skills training holds only a few desks; the library needs updating.

When we'd finished our tour, I went back to say goodbye to the young woman I knew, and to promise a visit in the near future. We drove back to Winnipeg, stunned and silent.

I've asked a lot of questions since that Friday in July, of people both in and outside of the criminal justice system, and I am still asking, because the woman I recognized at PCCW — 18 years old, incest survivor, single mother, undereducated, with few employment options — seemed more a victim of society than an offender.

In my questioning, I came across Ann Jones' bold piece of work entitled *Women Who Kill*. "This book," she writes, "is mostly about fear: the fears of men who, even as they shape society, are desperately afraid of women, and so have fashioned a world in which women come and go only in certain rooms; and about the fears of those women who, finding the rooms too narrow and the door still locked, lie in wait or set the place afire."

This is the story of women who kill or steal or use illegal drugs or set their world on fire, wanting desperately to survive. I dedicate it to my young friend from PCCW, now returned to the outside; pregnant for a second time, single, on welfare, shamed, confused and angry, who says even yet, "There's no way I'm going back there. I've gotta make it this time, gotta turn myself around."

Noelle DesLauriers, superintendent at Manitoba's Portage Correctional Centre for Women, is by her own admission "no feminist". There are aspects of this woman, however, that suggest otherwise. She has worked at Portage for 15 years, attempting to keep up with the demands of the community. I asked Noelle to describe in profile a typical resident of PCCW: "They are women from all walks of life in all communities. In my estimation, there is nothing uni-

que about the women who come to serve time."

It is true that women from all walks of life can be offenders who end up incarcerated. But the unfortunates most selected for punishment and rehabilitation by a capricious justice system which fills its prisons and seldom asks for details about the nature of the crime or the women, are the poverty-stricken, the sexually and physically abused, the battered, the isolated. Their crimes strike one as last ditch attempts to break out from their abysmal situation of powerlessness and dependency.

When feminist critiques of women and crime first came to the public bookshelves, a panic was created through the mass media which led to the appearance of an increase in the rates of crimes and an escalation in the reports of violent and criminal offences by women, and of delinquency in girls. In 1975, Rita Simon and Freda Adler suggested that women's seemingly increased involvement in crime was due to the efforts of the women's movement. In her book, *Sisters in Crime*, Adler concluded that as "libbers" rushed to emulate men so would there be a wave of crime by women. In actuality, crimes by women are increasing on a par with crimes by men. There has been no demonstrated increase in crimes of violence committed by women.

I asked Noelle to comment on the notion that violent criminal activities by women have increased, and asked her whether there is a new attitude towards women by the criminal justice system.

"Well, I think judges no longer view women as mere accessories to crime, but see them more as free agents." And then she said something all too familiar to my ears: "Part of the emergence of women entails that they become more like men in their negative aspects."

This suggests that, given similar situations, women will behave like men. But this conclusion removes women from our own context, one which is vastly different historically, socially and economically as we struggle in a world not of our own making. What is the fine line which separates Gloria Steinem's "outrageous acts and everyday rebellions" from criminal acts? Both are moves toward change, both refusals on the part of women to sit passive and "ladylike" in restricting lives and women behaving either way have been labelled deviant. Perhaps the most radical thing a woman can do is take control of her life to make it meaningful to her.

Traditionally, criminological research

on women continually thrusts the deviancy on any individual woman, and does not relate the female offender's situation to the socio-economic status of women in general. Theorists in the late 1800s argued that the female criminal was a biological throwback, or more masculine, or weak in her maternal senses. In the 1930s, female criminality was viewed as resulting from women's inherent emotional instability, predisposing subsequent delinquency, particularly sexual delinquency. As later, and feminist theorists have pointed out, the refusal of earlier researchers to take into account sex, race and class differences has resulted in criminological perspectives which are sexist, racist and classist. Women (and women offenders) have been described in the literature as devious, intellectually dull and passive, and delinquent because of unsatisfactory relationships with the other sex. Otto Pollock's theory, written in 1950, is particularly worth noting.

"Women who cleverly hide monthly menstruation and routinely fake orgasm can lie about anything, and all women are vengeful — ready to lie, cheat, connive, manipulate, and kill — because all have suffered the trauma of that first menstruation which blasted forever their hopes to become a man."

Sex as a variable effecting criminal behaviour has been sorely overlooked by theorists and in university curricula. Yet it is known that women have lower rates of crime in all nations, all communities within all nations, for all age groups, for all periods of recorded history, and for practically all crimes. The "chivalry" notion has been posited to explain the low rates of females charged with criminal behaviour. That "chivalry," however, if it is bestowed, seems to get extended only to those women who conform to female sex-role expectations. Those women who are not "ladies" by chivalrous standards — lower class women, Native women, prostitutes — are overrepresented at every phase of the criminal justice process. "Chivalry," writes Jones, "is part of a much larger system of race and class prejudice that weights the scales of justice."

In 1982, the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies conducted a survey of female prisoners in provincial and territorial institutions and found that of the 788 women surveyed, 75 per cent were imprisoned for non-violent offences, 35 per cent for theft and fraud alone. Women generally commit petty crimes — shoplifting, passing bad

cheques, minor assaults — crimes which have been seen as sex-role expressive and often economically motivated. Ann Jones writes that in the United States, the rate of arrests for all crimes between 1967 and 1976 rose 15 per cent for men and 64 per cent for women. This represents not a wave of criminality but rather an antifeminist backlash taking shape as a wave of law enforcement.

In Canada, the federal criminal justice expenditure rose from about \$100 million in the early 1960s to over \$1 billion in the late 1970s. The number of federal and provincial police officers increased from 1.8 officers for every 1,000 population in 1969 to 2.3 per 1,000 in 1977. These and other figures make Canada one of the most intensively policed societies anywhere in the western world (*Perception*, March/April 1984). Even more disturbing is the criminal justice system's enforcement of female sex-role expectations rather than, or in addition to, the law. Female offenders are often tried in courtrooms for two crimes; the alleged offence, and for suspicion of deviant sexuality, for no true "lady", socialized to be selfless and passive, would be capable of offending against another. A woman convicted of murder was labelled "the most dangerous woman in Canada" by the press, but nowhere did they mention the fact that she was gang raped by her brothers as an adolescent. I personally watched case after case of shoplifting charges during which the court took a verbal short-cut through the complexity of each

fences, usually petty, range from shoplifting, breach of probation, embezzlement, and unpaid fines, to manslaughter, murder and serious assault.

Native women are particularly victimized by the Canadian justice system not only because they are poor and powerless, but also because they are different, and more visible. Forced off the reserve if she marries a non-Indian man, often with children to support, many Native women attempt to survive in the downtown streets of Canadian cities where they become "public nuisances" in the eyes of the law. Their offences and their rate of incarceration in both provincial and federal institutions differ greatly from the non-Native female inmate. In 1983, Native women represented 30.9 per cent of the inmate population of Kingston Prison for Women, the federal female correctional institution. Twenty-two per cent were committed for property offences, and 70 per cent for violent offences (murder, attempted murder, wounding, assault and manslaughter).

"The Native woman," comments Josie Hill, Transition Worker for the Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba, "is at the very bottom of the social totem pole." In an interview she cites the case of a woman currently incarcerated at PCCW for default of a fine payment — a \$1,000 fine — one which her low economic status made virtually impossible to pay. Although the Fine Option Program (working off the fine through supervised community labour) may have been offered to

terms, and the fine will be left unpaid.

Imprisoned women are often called "the forgotten offenders" because of their small numbers and short incarcerations. In general there is one correctional centre in each province that houses women, aside from local detention centres. The average daily population for any one of these provincial institutions is between 30 and 50 women. The Kingston Prison is the only Federal Penitentiary for women in Canada. It houses up to 145 women serving sentences of two years or more. Some women serving federal sentences are housed in provincial institutions through federal-provincial transfer agreements.

Poor quality accommodations and overcrowding, inadequate health services, unavailability of interpreters and court workers, loss of civil rights, and the removal from home territory, family and friends constitute only part of the daily life of female offenders. In 1980 a Human Rights complaint was laid by Women for Justice, a lobbying/advocacy group, against the Federal Solicitor General. The complaint incorporated several grounds of discrimination against federal female prisoners, including: lack of educational, vocational, social, cultural and recreational activities; inequitable employment opportunities; the use of a maximum security environment regardless of security classification; and geographic dislocation. The complaint was prompted by a concern that the only accredited course for women at Kingston was in hairdressing, while there was a wide variety of choices in male penitentiaries. Why is it that programming for female prisoners is aimed at making them better housewives and mothers, while the aim for men is their obtaining marketable skills? Institutional programs are based on the view that there must be enough interested inmates to make the hiring of an instructor cost effective. Since there are rarely enough women interested in or able to undertake a program, there are few options available to them.

Women generally commit petty crimes — shoplifting, passing bad cheques, minor assaults — crimes which have been seen as sex-role expressive and often economically motivated.

woman's situation, indicating only that she had somehow failed in her duties as mother, wife and/or woman. This double morality serves as a double defence of the existing social order. The feelings of powerlessness which it engenders in women can lead to lassitude, self-negation and guilt.

Women in public prisons

In 1980-81, 6,515 women were incarcerated in Canada. This figure constitutes approximately four per cent of the offender population, a percentage which remains relatively constant. It has been estimated that 75-90 per cent of all female crime is alcohol-related. The of-

this woman, the responsibilities and required lifestyle changes inherent in such an alternative are unrealistic. The personal histories of Native women, set in a political system of invalidation and race bias, make the accepting of responsibility and the understanding of the need for controls and self-discipline difficult at best. For the Native and non-Native woman seeking change, there is often a lack of appreciation, both on her own and the helping agent's part, of the tremendous adaptations necessary, and of the stress and the time involved. Finding the responsibilities overwhelming, and the community support negligible, she may revert to old more familiar pat-

The private prison

Public assistance policies are formulated on the assumption that women have, and are supposed to have, a private supporter. A single mother receiving mothers allowance can have her benefits cut off if it is decided that she is "living as a wife"; that is, having a man stay in her home. Although figures on the number of "welfare fraud" charges are unavailable, it is known that they are laid regularly in Ontario.

Women's real socio-economic position has been made invisible. Non-intervention, based on a philosophical belief that the government has no business in the bedrooms of the nation, betrays women whose marital arrangement signifies, for the most part, a life of economic, psychological, and physical dependency on a man. Non-intervention has also disguised the magnitude of domestic violence. The police and social authorities' inability or unwillingness to intervene in cases of domestic violence against women and children reinforces the practice of individualized solutions for the "troubles" of private life, for surely the effects of such abuse eventually get translated into behaviour that comes to the attention of the community. In response to these troubles, many women "adjust," but more do not. Some go crazy; hospitalization and tranquilization have been the prime methods of controlling "unofficially" deviant women. Some women develop a political analysis of their situations and become feminists. And some turn to taking the law into their own hands.

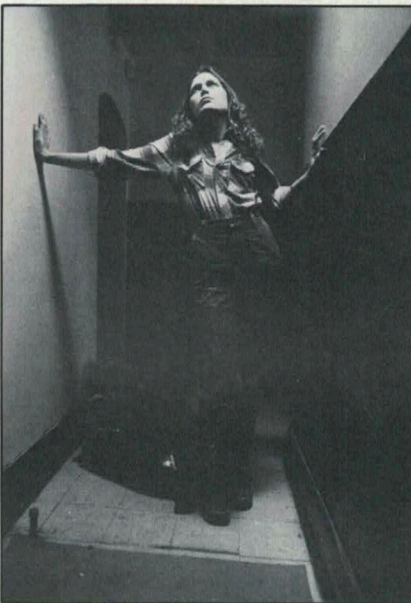
A special CBC documentary in which women at PCCW were interviewed revealed an overwhelming number of incidents of sexual abuse in the personal histories of these women. Most women at PCCW are between 18 and 25 years. Many have been through the child welfare system. Some have never experienced any home life, or like "the most dangerous woman" have been seriously violated by family members. These women may return to abusive situations on release as this is the only environment they know or understand. For some, violence is an indication that there is some concern and love on the part of the abuser. For others, the fear of harsher violence should they report it, or try to leave, keeps them in their place. Their dilemma is much like that created by the "bouncing Betty Booby traps" used in the Vietnam war: Stepping on them was not the fatal problem; it was stepping off which caused them to explode.

The Women for Justice had their complaint upheld by the Human Rights Commission in December 1981, and since that time there have been a few changes, though the situation for women continues to be bleak. The downside of the response of the Correctional system to the complaint was that it brought into Kingston the rules and regulations from men's prisons. The women in Kingston, once able to personalise their living space with their own belongings, for

example, are no longer able to do so. The complaint was finally dropped: the Corrections department stated firmly, "We do not discriminate."

In an informal brief prepared by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (September, 1980), it was suggested that women's perspectives could only be adequately represented in the Correctional Service of Canada by having women employed in senior management positions; that advocates for women prisoners — such as the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies — must be consulted on policy decisions; and that implementation and monitoring of standards for correctional institutions and agencies should be a national exercise which would include agencies from the private sector who are concerned with, and knowledgeable

Photo by P. Adams



about, the needs of women in prison and in society as a whole.

There have been some changes at provincial institutions as well.

The Portage Correctional Centre for Women now allows pregnant inmates to keep their newborns (up to one year of age) with them at the institution. PCCW permits extended visits by young children, and also arranges for mothers to work at a local day care centre attended by their children. When children are brought into temporary care of the state during the mother's incarceration, and when circumstances permit, PCCW works with the local Children's Aid Society to arrange for foster care in the

area to facilitate family contact. In some cases, sentences are suspended for pregnant women until they are ready to bring their children, if necessary to prison. Josie Hill provides a particularly invaluable service by liaising for the women on the inside with their families on the outside. She, and women like her in other Canadian provinces, attempt to create links between existing community resources for women and the women prisoners, so that they are not "forgotten" on release or forced to return to their communities invisible except for the glaring stigma of having been incarcerated. The importance of networking for these and all women cannot be understated.

At present, there are questions still needing to be asked of the correctional agencies. Why are women being sent to provincial prisons in their present few numbers in light of the fact that they do not pose a threat to the community? And why are services which could be more preventative — career counselling services, non-traditional job training, assertiveness training, sexual assault crisis centres, and Native community services — chronically starved for funding?

What is Needed

The private and public prisons women inhabit have many common features: deprivation of freedom and the power of self-determination, loss or ignorance of rights and choices, restrictions on mobility, access to economic security and free time. Institutional programs aimed at rehabilitation in prisons usually involve maintenance of the building itself (cooking, laundry, cleaning), some education upgrading, occasional sewing, hair-dressing and typing courses, and recreation. The programs do not address employment needs, the impact of being a racial minority, the possible motivations behind alcohol and drug abuse, or the need for change in self-image. Both in "prison" and in "public" arenas of women the basic thrust has always been towards individual adjustment rather than a working towards wide-spread societal alterations. Yet women's individual choices are limited by sex-role socialization and informal as well as formal social control. Alternative choices have to be opened up before they even exist for an individual. Women's isolation has meant that they are not made aware of what resources exist for them nor how to use them.

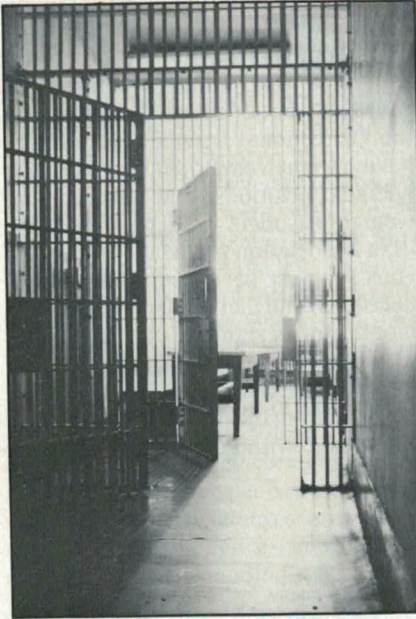
Incarcerated women need insight into the way the existing system works, as

well as help in establishing a sense of their own identity within that system. They need to be made aware of their rights, and educated so that they can make decisions for themselves. They need to be linked with community resources which can serve their goals.

"Invisible" women come into the courtrooms of Canada lacking knowledge of their rights, lacking advocates, lacking self-confidence. Trained mouths speak on the woman's behalf, but not often does the woman speak for herself. "What would happen if one woman told the truth about her life?" queried the poet Muriel Rukeyser. "The world would split open." But the legal system does not want to hear; it is afraid. Or at least it would be afraid were it not so sure of its power and mythology. Women who commit offences are processed through the criminal justice system as through most other systems — their needs trivialised, their actions not taken as serious threats to the social order, their deviancy "sexualised."

A woman who shoplifts a package of

Photo by P. Adams



cheese slices and winds up in prison for default of fine payment speaks clearly and powerfully about Canadian society and about the situation of many women in Canada. We need to ask again and again: what does any woman need to help move her out of her private prison? We must insist on economic and social policies that authentically work in the universal interest of women.

As well, it is essential to review the prevailing profile of the female prisoner in Canadian institutions to determine just how the criminal justice system achieves its interests, and at which women's expense. The great wall of male defined society stretches far and high, and its doors are few. For women in Canadian prisons, the barriers can seem insurmountable. Advocacy on the part of women for women chips slowly and consistently at the prison walls. A button being distributed at Elizabeth Fry last summer read: "I dreamed I visited the Prison of Women and no one was there."

That is the dream . . .

TALKING TO EACH OTHER at the Kingston Women's Prison

KATHLEEN
MISENER

Elizabeth is more often called Annie, a nickname she acquired as a child.

Annie carries her 35 years well. She is of average height with a slight frame. Her thin expressive face is crowned by short, thick, dark hair. And her glasses, well, she wouldn't be Annie without them.

She emits a warmth attained by few. The natural flow of her sincerity draws people to her.

For most of us, just the thought of having lived her life seems unbearable. Yet in her own rhythm she grows, and laughs and reckons with life.

She was raised by strict grandparents who had 12 children of their own, one of which, unknown to Annie, was her mother. Her mother was 14 when she gave birth to Annie. Later in life her mother married a man who was not Annie's father and he did not want Annie with them. At the fragile age of 10, Annie was told who her mother was. This trauma was amplified when she learned her stepfather didn't want her. (Annie does not know who her actual father is.) Annie started drinking at 13. As her life unfolded she felt desolate, and the drinking increased. By 21 Annie was an alcoholic.

Very early in adolescence Annie suffered repeated sexual abuse from the uncles, (brothers), she had grown up with. She felt she couldn't tell anyone and she never did. At 16 Annie became pregnant by one of her uncles. This is also when her education stopped. She had attended an ungraded school and left unaware of her standing. Annie gave birth to her uncle's child and feeling she had nothing to offer a child, she put the child up for adoption. (Today she can recall the exact weight of that child, 6 lbs. 1 oz.)

By this time in her life she had grown to dislike men. Annie couldn't understand herself; she was fighting homosexual feelings. She knew homosexuality was a taboo and so she got married.

Annie didn't love the man she married but hoped she could grow to love him. Despite the fact that she didn't grow to love her husband, the marriage lasted 10 years and produced three children.

When Annie was 25 her grandparents died, the only family she had shared any affection with. She felt a tremendous void and turned to her natural mother but they couldn't relate — another disappointment. The following year Annie began to get into trouble with the law.

Sitting in a prison cell one evening, Annie agreed to talk. When we finished, Annie commented that she was surprised at herself, she said she hadn't spoken that freely with her doctor. Then she laughed and said I could use it (the interview), if I wanted to, when I got out.

Kathleen M.: When you started getting into trouble did you ever think that you would end up in the penitentiary?

Elizabeth B.: I never ever imagined this place. I never ever thought about this place.

Kathleen M.: How many times had you been in jail before you were sentenced to the penitentiary?

Elizabeth B.: Five times.

Kathleen M.: What kind of offences?

Elizabeth B.: Armed robbery.

Kathleen M.: You're here on an armed robbery also?

Elizabeth B.: Yeah.

Kathleen M.: What was your feeling when you finally were sentenced to the penitentiary?

Elizabeth B.: The first time I got pen time was two years ago. I got 3 years for two counts of armed robbery, and at that time, I had stayed out of trouble for two years. I thought I was doin' good. Then when I went to court I thought they would maybe give me probation or maybe six months, at the most, because I had people backing me. I had a cleaning job in a school that would be waiting for me and I had good people that would be writing letters to the judge. I had seen doctors and the doctors wrote in. On the day I was sentenced I was sort of jokin' about it, it was summer, I said, "oh I'll make it to the exhibition tonight." It was Friday and after everything was said in court, he (the judge) said, "stand." There were two of my friends in the courtroom and my lawyer. He said, "I've read this report from the doctors three times," and he says, "I see no rehabilitation in you whatsoever. I sentence you to three years." My legs just froze, I couldn't move, I couldn't speak, and he said, "you can leave now." I couldn't even turn around and walk out.

Kathleen M.: You were really shocked.

Elizabeth B.: I was shocked. "Here I am goin' to the big house," I said, "and I don't wanta go there." So, I just imagined all these weird things happening to me.

Kathleen M.: The stories you had heard frightened you.

Elizabeth B.: Yeah, I was frightened by the stories, but what frightened me most is the three years. He says, "three years" and that's three years of my life ya know. I didn't even look at my girlfriend, she was crying. So finally the guy (court clerk) had to turn me and push me towards the door and when I made it through the door I just broke down, I started to cry.

Kathleen M.: Now that you're here you don't think there is any difference between pen time and provincial time.

Elizabeth B.: The living conditions are a lot different. In the other jails, it was so small. There is a lot more movement here and a lot more to do.

Kathleen M.: Do you find the people here, in prison, ruthless?

Elizabeth B.: Some of them, some of

them, and there's some good people, very good people.

Kathleen M.: Do you find because of how the penitentiary is set up, it allows the people who are ruthless to bully the rest of the inmates? Whereas, in the provincial system, which is set up differently they can't bully other inmates?

Elizabeth B.: Yes, in the provincial system there's so little girls there, that they (the guards) watch so closely, that if anything, anything happens, right away they (the troublemakers) are locked up. In here they know, but because it's so big and so many girls that they don't do anything.

Kathleen M.: Do you feel there is less security in federal jails?

Elizabeth B.: Less, very less security and very less caring from the people that work here. I've had a matron come up to me and say, 'we know what's happening but we can't do a thing.' I say, 'why not?', answer, 'because of so many girls and things could happen.' I said, 'why do you let it happen, why can't you take that one that's causing all this out?' They say they just can't do that because this friend's got friends and they can't do that. It's just like a big circle, they just don't care. When something really bad happens they do it. They say they can't prevent it from happening.

Kathleen M.: Are you saying that there is no preventative security?

Elizabeth B.: There's none, none!

Kathleen M.: When you say, "something really bad," what do you mean by that?

Elizabeth B.: For instance, if they know if something is goin' to come down (a stabbing or a beating) to two inmates they can't stop it, they won't. I was told by a matron again that they have known times when two girls were fighting, but they don't stop it. They won't. They could but the matrons are afraid, they live in fear just as we do.

Kathleen M.: In other words a federal penitentiary has a higher personal risk than a provincial institution.

Elizabeth B.: Yeah, very high. There's a lot of being ruthless mentally and I think it's worse. It preys on your mind and doing time in such a big place, you don't have anybody you can talk to or really trust. I feel it just deteriorates your mind everyday. It deteriorates you so much, you can see it happening but you can't do nothing, you're scared to talk to anybody because there is no trust in this building.

Kathleen M.: Do you receive any professional help here?

Elizabeth B.: I see a psychiatrist. I see one now for my personal problems at home, my family, my drinking problem, and my living problem.

Kathleen M.: Is part of your living problem being gay?

Elizabeth B.: I accept being gay, it's just being alone. I have in a sense, in a way, needs too. I need someone to be with.

Kathleen M.: You're approaching release soon. Do you think you will be able to function and relate to people in a normal way after being forced to function the way you have in here?

Elizabeth B.: I think I will, because the way I'm living in here has really taught me. What I'm trying to say about people is it's taught me not to trust so much, not to believe in a person so much.

Kathleen M.: Do you think you could ever adjust to living here?

Elizabeth B.: The day I adjust to this jail is the day they can throw away the key. I'm afraid of it, I'm afraid that if I stay here any longer it will change me.

Kathleen M.: When you get out, if you reach for that drink do you think you will be conscious of that drink being able to put you back here?

Elizabeth B.: If I ever pick up a drink, yeah, I will know that drink will cost me SOME time. I want out so bad I'm ready to do what I have to. The little time I've spent in here, little compared to some girls, has taught me enough to know I want to stay out.

Kathleen M.: Living in here as long as you have, what things do you think should change?

Elizabeth B.: Living conditions. In my mind I think the nice people should be with the nice people and the bad people should beat each other up in a corner somewhere.

Kathleen M.: Have you developed a patience that will be of value to you on the outside?

Elizabeth B.: Very much so (with an infectious smile).

Kathleen M.: Is this a positive for you?

Elizabeth B.: Oh yes!

Kathleen M.: Do you have a general comment on this institution?

Elizabeth B.: Destroy it.

[After staying out of jail for a lengthy time, unfortunately Elizabeth is headed back into jail.]

▼
Kathleen Misener is on full parole living and working in Toronto. She was released from prison December 1, 1983. On January 2, 1984, she began working in a secretarial position, for a small corporation.

PROFILE

Dale Spender on Seasons, Privilege and Support

Dale Spender talks about her work and the women's movement.



Photo by Jill Posener

MARILYN McLEAN

Dale Spender's books include "Women of Ideas and What Men Have Done to Them" 1982, "There's Always Been a Women's Movement in This Century" (1983) and "Man Made Language". Her books are in part a recording of women's accomplishments which have never been written down in widely-distributed books, if, in fact, they have been written down anywhere. As well, Spender is the founder of Pandora Press (a division of Routledge and Kegan Paul which prints books by women), and the editor or co-editor of "Men's Studies Modified" and "Feminist Theorists". She also edits "Women's Studies International Forum", a journal.

I was more than a little nervous as I approached the downtown Toronto hotel where I was to interview Dale Spender. She was a feminist "star" to many of the women I knew in the Toronto women's community, and her list of accomplishments lengthy. Her book *Man Made Language*, a study of the ways words exclude, alienate and — to use Spender's phrase — "silence" women, had been one of the most popular books among the feminists at the university I was attending in 1980.

So with all of this in my head I stepped into the lounge where we were to meet. I peered about to discover a small woman sitting at a table back in a quiet corner. She had a cigarette firmly ensconced in one hand and a scotch in the other; she was watching the goings-on in the bar with an inquisitive look. As I was led up to her she greeted me with

one of the sunniest smiles I had ever seen. My nervousness decreased by half. It decreased even further as we chatted about the women's movement in Canada and I launched into my list of questions.

Marilyn M: Who do you see your audience as being, and has your vision of the audience changed since you started writing?

Dale S: I think it would be foolish to say that I ever saw my audience as being *all* women. Literacy and education have a huge effect on what people read and it would be pretty arrogant of me to say the audience included all women. The woman who types my manuscripts is a working class single mother who tells me that most of her friends wouldn't read most of what I write, and I have to be aware of that. Also I think the audience has changed slightly in the last couple of years in that there are many, many women who call themselves feminists these days who wouldn't have back in 1979 when I was writing *Man Made Language*. They aren't all of the same feminist ilk as I am, but I'm certainly not going to exclude them.

So, I think my notions of the audience are wider now and I want to make it so that . . . is it conservative to say so that people aren't put off? It's difficult. I'm not trying to dilute what I'm saying, I'm just trying to take into account that there are people coming from different places whom I don't want to think, "oh, this is ridiculous, I'm not going to read any further." So I'm a little more gentle sometimes before I punch. Also, there are lots of younger women who haven't read, say

Kate Millet, so I have to take that into account as well. But I think the audience, in an ideal world, would be as wide as possible.

Marilyn M: It seems to me that much of your recent writing — and here I'm thinking of *Man Made Language*, *Women of Ideas and What Men Have Done to Them*, and *There's Always Been a Women's Movement in This Century* — have been concerned with ways women have been silenced and taught to devalue themselves by being cut off from their past, their history, their culture. In these books you talk both about how women are outside of man-made history and language, and at the same time you dig out parts of women's history that have been exciting and empowering. Often what you have uncovered and written of contradicts the idea that I — and I suspect many other women — had while growing up that until the 1970s women never did much of anything, certainly nothing exciting or important.

Dale S: *Man Made Language* is about the way women are silenced in the spoken word and almost everything I've done is simply applying that thesis to a different area. *Time and Tide Wait For No Man*, (Spender's most recently published book, which is about women and politics in Britain in the 1920s) really came about because of that well-known wisdom that after women got the vote they all went back home to wash and gave it all up. And of course in the 1920s in Britain they started up this journal, *Time and Tide Wait For No Man* which disproves all of that. But I found incredible obstacles in getting access to the material I needed for the book. And I talk about that in my writing, I talk about the sort of obstacles involved in reclaiming our history.

You see, it's not just that there's women's history and we can say, "Let's go have a look at it." In fact, the most incredible forms of censorship are operating to stop you getting to it. I don't think that there are people sitting there saying, "This is something that is women's so we're not going to let you have it," but they do think that it's dangerous. They don't call it dangerous, they call it trouble-making, they call it nuisance, they call it inconvenient. But in fact,

they don't want a challenge to their ordered world. Now it may not be malice, but in the long run if it were malice it would have the same effect.

Marilyn M: When I read *Man Made Language* it seemed to me that many of your basic ideas about the ways in which women are silenced could be applied to other oppressed groups who also weren't in on creating language and whose histories have either not been recorded or have been misrepresented. I'm thinking here of working class people, people of colour, and gays and lesbians for example. Do you think that this might be the case?

Dale S: Well, I think that one of the major definitions of oppression is being deprived of your culture. I also think that it's no accident that slaves weren't allowed to learn to read and write. I think that if you look at any totalitarian regime, it tries to suppress any of the reading and writing of anyone who disagrees with it. I'm not saying that we live in a totalitarian regime in one sense, but in another sense I think we do. Being deprived of your culture, being deprived of your history, I think that's what gets your mind. That is what convinces you that you are without precedent, that you haven't done anything worthy. It erodes your confidence in the most insidious way. And that's why I think that it's highly political to reclaim women's culture.

Marilyn M: Do you think that in some ways, in North America and Britain, a classically totalitarian state is not necessary because as women we believe — as any oppressed group is taught to believe — all of the things we are told; we believe we don't have any history or culture or value of our own?

Dale S: The real state of oppression is to believe the words of your masters. And the halfway house is when you don't believe them any longer, but you haven't had the chance to discover a culture from which to negotiate with their culture. I think as women we are still in the process of discovering our culture together, finding it, or even inventing it!

Marilyn M: In the introduction to *There's Always Been a Women's Movement* you talk about how important it is to learn from women who have been "invisible", whose lives and histories have never been written down or acknowledged, often even by the mainstream feminist movement. I'm wondering how, knowing that you need to learn from these women who don't share many of the privileges you you, you try to learn from them?

Dale S: A big part of it is putting

yourself in position to listen. I was talking to some of the young women in the King's Road in London. I stopped about three 15 or 16-year-old girls and asked if I could buy them coffee. That was important because the boys have got the space there which is public space and it takes money to get into the private space, to buy a cup of coffee. I was reminded of what it is like to be an outsider because the proprietor of this particular coffee shop, who knows me, checked with me to make sure that I was going to pay for these girls before he would allow them in.

I talked to the girls and asked what they thought about the women's movement and they said, "oh, god, what's that?" One said, "oh, yah, we had a teacher who was a women's libber once — god, she was awful." Here were 15 and 16-year-olds and the women's movement gave them nothing they could identify with. They had little money, were unemployed, and much of their lives were devoted to attracting boys. But I couldn't go home and say, "They're wrong," because I think that denigrates them. Anyway, they ended up saying, "You're alright — but you're not really one of *them* are you?" To which I said, "Well no, not *really*." The lies one tells for credibility!

Marilyn M: When I read *There's Always Been a Women's Movement*, I had really mixed feelings. Part of me was surprised — I remember you expressed the same feeling in the book yourself. I had no idea that back at the turn of this century women had such a strong understanding of men's power, that there were such strong feminists. That was incredibly exciting to discover. But at the same time it was a little frightening because I wondered why I didn't know about any of these women or what they had thought and written. I also wondered why that wave of feminism had subsided when, from reading about these women, I could see that it had been so strong. So I'm wondering, first of all, why you think it is that we don't know more about the early feminists, and secondly if you think that the present women's movement will suffer the same fate, particularly in light of the rise of the new right?

Dale S: Well, I think there's an enormous amount of ageism in our attitudes. Rebecca West lived around the corner from me and it never occurred to me to go and talk to her. It's only when I was writing *Women of Ideas* and quoting her that it occurred to me, "I could go round the corner and ask her about this." Talk-

ing to the women my first response was a bit like yours: "goodness, it just died out." But my second response is that we know very, very little about the world, but one thing that's reasonably obvious is that there are seasons. And I think that the women's movement has its seasons. My very strong feeling now is that even if winter comes it is followed by spring; and I think there are winters and there are springs and there are summers in the women's movement and that to fight that or to resist it, or to pretend that it's always a great long linear progress is absurd. I think the seasonal model is much more in tune with women's values anyway. Even if at the moment we may be in late summer and find that the fall is about to come, I'm not going to be too perturbed because it will be followed by spring.

Marilyn M: Recently there seems to be a trend in Canada which involves institutions — particularly the government — using the buzz words and language of the women's movement and then hiring feminists to help solve what those institutions see as being women's problems —

Dale S: Yes, when there's mileage in being a feminist it's time to be nervous. When you can get a job on the basis of it, then you should look closely at the job.

Marilyn M: Has that same trend been occurring in Britain?

Dale S: Not to the same extent. It's happening in Australia where they have what they call "femocrats." There you have heads of women's programmes, women's departments, women advisors to the government — all these positions have been created, but nothing's changed. Of course, in Britain this is all complicated by Mrs Thatcher who says, "What do you mean, discrimination?"

Marilyn M: I've noticed today and in your writing that you're quite critical of institutions, particularly government and academic institutions. Would it be fair to say that you don't believe women can effect change from within those systems?

Dale S: I'd *never* condemn a woman who tried to do it and I know I've profited from women in positions of power inside institutions. I never would have got my PhD if there wasn't a particular woman professor supporting me.

I'm not about to say you don't do that or it's wrong. What I am saying is that institutions are unwieldy and I think they desiccate you. I think when I was working at the University of London Institute of Education I would have sworn

on a stack of bibles — or Freudian volumes, whatever you like! — that they were not stopping me from doing anything I wanted to do. Then a year after I'd left I said, "How could I have been so stupid?"

What I know is that all the research I've done would never have been funded by an institution, and I think that research has been important to a lot of women in a lot of places. So when I put the two things together — that things that are important don't get funded by institutions, well . . . I've got a privileged position these days in that I'm not directly allied with any institutions. Of course, it won't last if my books don't sell. I also am privileged to get support from friends and family. Being a white, middle-class Australian I've had access to more privilege than almost anyone else in the world. I think though that the issue is what you do with it.

Marilyn M: Speaking of privilege, as you know, the women's movement in North America and Britain has recently been criticised by women who are not among its generally white, middle class base for being too narrow and for not advancing the interests of *all* women. I'm thinking particularly of Angela Davis documenting in *Women, Race and Class* numerous examples of the racism and classism in the movement, right

from the early days in the last century. Do you think it is crucial to address the challenges of making the women's movement one which includes *all* women?

Dale S: There are all sorts of groups within the women's movement. I think that if I were a black woman I would be as suspicious of white women as I, as a woman, am suspicious of men. I'd put them on probation; I'd want to see their credentials. I'd say, "prove it" before I'd accept them. I think that there is going to be lots of pain. I cannot say that I am not racist — I will do my damndest *not* to be — but I can't say that I'm not.

Marilyn M: I think that any person growing up in this racist society absorbs racist values. It is certainly our responsibility to change them, but I agree that it's important to acknowledge them.

Dale S: Right. We're part of a racist society, just as we're part of a sexist society. To say that I'm not racist, or that I don't have some internalised sexism, would be deluding myself. The issue is what you do about it. I see my role in relation to black women in exactly the same way as I see men's role in relation to women.

Marilyn M: What is that role?

Dale S: I think it's to support as much as I can, and to try to give as much space as I can to give people who suffer from forms of oppression — room to define their own agenda. I think that's about all you can do —

Marilyn M: That's what I would expect from men; support in what *I* and other women determine to be the key issues. Also a constant attempt on their part to change their sexist attitudes.

Dale S: Yes. And the men I know who are the most supportive are the ones who would never claim to be feminists. The ones who come running up to me and call themselves feminists make me think "Huh — here we go again." It's another way of controlling women: men pretending to be on our side and then expecting us to be bloody grateful to them. One man who claimed to be a feminist started to tell me what I had got all wrong about feminism.

Marilyn M: What do you think about the ability of the women's movement to affect change in this most recent "season" of feminism?

Dale S: I think it's difficult and I think you have to set your priorities. I think you have to define what's achievable because one of the things that the women's movement has done stupidly, foolishly, has been to set this enormous target that we can never achieve and therefore we

feel that we are failures. I'd rather feel a success than a total failure in terms of having achieved change. And there have been enormous changes. When I think of what I was 20 years ago it's painful and it's amusing, but it certainly doesn't feel like me. And that to me is a revolution. Do you know I spent many years of my life whining "Why should I have to wash your shirts?" I can hardly credit that now. Even my 16-year-olds in the King's Road have benefited from it. Their values are so different from what mine were at 16, even if they do think that the women's movement is a bunch of old crones. They have inherited some sort of changed value system from its force. Talking to them, even if they did condemn those "women's libbers" I had a little smug smile on my face listening to them talk about boys in a way we certainly would never have done in my generation.

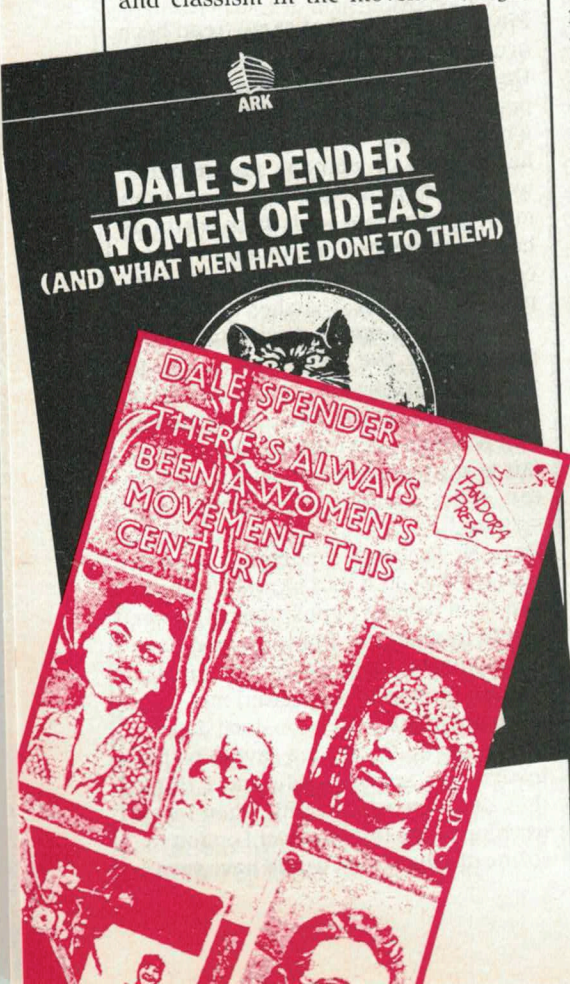
Marilyn M: What are the experiences in your life that you think have made you political?

Dale S: Marriage. Things like me doing two jobs while he only had one.

Marilyn M: Anything else in a more positive vein?

Dale S: My mother. Mother worked and she didn't shave the hairs under her arms and she didn't wear make-up and she rode a bicycle instead of driving a car because she liked riding a bicycle. She'd show up at school meetings on her bloody bicycle — without having shaved under her arms — and at 15 I felt an enormous embarrassment about it, then at 25 she was my haven. Politicisation implies giving some sort of information — and I think that's true — but it also means having some place where you can go and where you see that there can be options.

I've been incredibly fortunate. My sister is my closest friend in the entire world and I have a circle of very supportive friends. My father says to me "You mean those Americans are going to pay *you* for saying all that rubbish? You mean you write books that people buy about all those things you used to harrangue me about at the dinner table?" But my family has been one of my biggest resources. There's always been support and understanding. I always refer my critics to my mother. Even when people say to me, "You're vicious, you're nasty, you're abrasive, you're rude, you're a ballbreaker," my mother says "Dale? She's a lovely, she's a lovely person." I keep that in mind and I think that support has been more important to me than anything else in my life. ▽



PROFILE

k.d. lang Rocks Country Punk

There is something about k.d. lang that makes people talk funny. They say things like "Yah-hoo!" and "Let's have a hootenanny!" Newspaper people and music writers are even worse. They write phrases like "She's a hoot"; "She's hotter than a spud in a potatoe stew"; and her debut album *A Truly Western Experience* is selling like "hot tamales."

After she leaves town, and often before she even gets there, acres of print are dedicated to what she looks like. "Visually, she is the female answer to Buddy Holly, with horn-rimmed glasses and buckets of energy." "Her hair, was black, in an army buzz cut." She certainly looks "demented". . . "geeky". . . "masculine." And my favourite, "a country punk Lucy Ricardo who seems to have tied one on permanently."

As for her singing ability, writers tend to get more serious. "There's something in her voice that's chillingly authentic." "k.d. lang delivers honesty and purity." And, her "powerful yet soothing voice is crying out in the country wilderness for a change." Oh my.

So what do I think about this young critter from Consort, Alberta, who's one wild western gal, with the spirit of a spring colt in clover, with a mature, haunting voice which calls out for understanding from inside our collective western consciousness?

I'd say she's a role model. And the longer she can get away with it the better off it's going to be. Pardner.

First there is the little matter of her clothes. In theory there is nothing wrong with a used pair of sawed-off cowboy boots with work socks rolled down over the tops. But, they are not high heels. Her hoedown skirt with little plastic cowboys sewn all over it shows creativity and humour, but it still covers her knees. As for her glasses, ("Let's face it boys, these are not pretty glasses") a whole generation of us wore them for real and I know from deep personal experience, they stood between me and true love.

Then there is her hair. It's short. And it seems we still live in a culture where people can't tell the difference between a man and a woman unless one of them is wearing rollers. I'm afraid that buzz cuts and shaved heads on women are viewed as a symptom of a shortage of

CONNIE SMITH

estrogen. But k.d. is not discouraged. And with a certain take-it-or-leave-it-but-I-know-you're-going-to-love-me attitude, she changes peoples' minds about what kind of woman is beautiful.

"I've always been pretty self-confident. My beliefs and my spirituality really help. I live a very straight, clean life, contrary to popular belief. And just knowing I have the support of Patsy, John Lennon, people up there, I have no qualms about doing anything really. I feel a bit shy during the day, when I'm not on stage. But on stage, there's nothing I probably wouldn't do."

This is true. Obviously k.d. was never exposed to those dance instructors who believe that the only proper way for a woman to dance is with her legs together. k.d. dances on table tops and on the backs of booths. She picks up her skirt and kicks up her legs. She lays down on the floor. She runs around in circles. She freezes in position and then breaks out into a series of jerking movements. This is not ladylike behaviour. And watching it sure feels good.

Her overall stage presentation has a certain artistic bent. Sometimes she hangs a tired old rocking horse from the ceiling and once I saw her throw at least five loaves of bread to her audience. ("Here's a little song for you to digest.") She also does a Nancy Sinatra impersonation, complete with wig, and she's been known to travel with a go-go dancer to whom the term attitude dancing has the word bad in front of it. Nothing, however, compares to the moment she walked out on stage at the Commodore Ballroom in Vancouver in a full length wedding dress and veil and announced her engagement to music.

Oh holy night. Is nothing sacred? Well, one thing is.

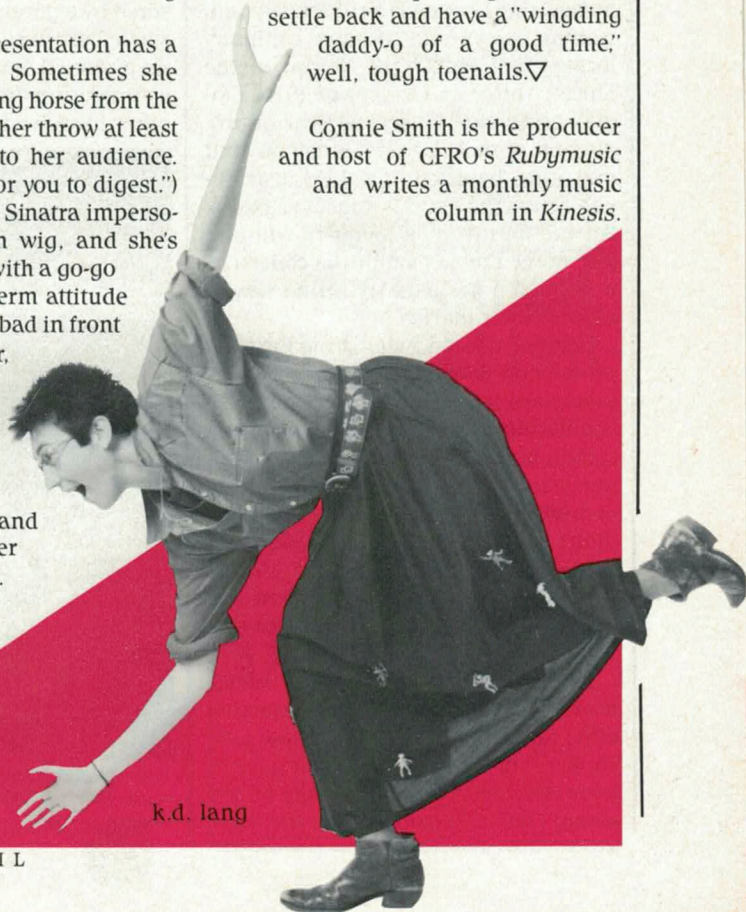
"I fell in love with country music four years ago because it seems to have had the greatest influence on people and on other forms of music. It's true to life. It gives people what they need. It makes contact."

There are a lot of myths about country music and the folks who listen to it. k.d. lang knows this. So for the people who are drawn to her because of her performance art, but who consider country western music straight out of Hicksville, she gives them honest, gut-wrenching, working class music which can break a heart or make a body bleed.

For the ladies, she resurrects in song, if not in spirit, the likes of Patsy Cline and Kitty Wells. She gives us back our country women and reminds us that we have heroes with names like Dolly and Loretta.

k.d. never makes you feel like you are crashing a party between her and the men in the audience. When she performs she takes one thing for granted: that we are all created equal. And if someone can't accept that premise and settle back and have a "wingding daddy-o of a good time," well, tough toenails.▽

Connie Smith is the producer and host of CFRO's *Rubymusic* and writes a monthly music column in *Kinesis*.



k.d. lang

ENTERPRISING WOMEN

Emma's Jambrosia: Women In (and out of) a Jam

Despite being situated in the midst of an area of economic disaster, a group of B.C. women have managed to find themselves jobs — and a successful business.

Nelson, B.C., population 8,000. This unusual Canadian small town is bordered by the Selkirk and Purcell mountain ranges, divided by the powerful Kootenay river system, and in the shadow of the Kokanee Glacier. It remains beautiful in a province blasé about natural wonders. For many years, Nelson enjoyed a reputation as the cultural centre of the Kootenays, with David Thompson University Centre sponsoring drama, recitals, and readings featuring some of Canada's most talented writers and performers, before being closed down by the B.C. government last year. Nelson also enjoyed a less visible reputation as a centre for alternative lifestyles, with a sizeable feminist community unusual in a small Canadian town.

In the midst of this economic disaster area, where the recent closing of Kootenay Forest Products left 200 unemployed, there is one small Kootenay company that is managing to weather the economic storm. Emma's Jambrosia Manufacturing Limited is a collectively-run, woman owned and operated company located just outside of Nelson in the Slokan Valley. In October of 1984 Emma's celebrated its second year of production of their honey-sweetened fruit melanges by extending their distribution across the Prairies and into Ontario. For the four ex-Winnepeggers who are part of the Emma's Jambrosia collective, it seemed a particularly fitting way to expand their market.

Heather Gibson, who is the factory's production co-ordinator, moved to the Kootenays in the fall of 1981 after encountering a large and strong women's community there during a summer visit. She stayed to become one of the founding members of Emma's Jambrosia. "We didn't initially start with the idea of a jam factory. When we first started meeting, in early 1982, all we knew was that we wanted to start a business that would become self-supporting."

The group considered three ideas: making children's furniture, extracting ethyl alcohol fuel from jerusalem artichokes, and making jam. Their government advisors urged them to hire professional consultants to explore the feasi-

SUSAN WHITE

bility of the ideas, but the Emma women were adamant that they would do the studies themselves — despite the fact that none of them had ever done a feasibility study before. The result was, says Gibson, "the best feasibility study they had ever seen. It's still being used as an example of how to do one."

The studies convinced the collective members that jam making was the idea to pursue, given the area's history (two jam factories, the McDonald and the Kootenay-Columbia, had flourished in the area until the mid-1940s) and potential as a fruit-growing area (which could mean spin-off jobs and industry). The federal government supplied \$166,000 as a start-up grant, the collective members invested their own money, and Emma's Jambrosia was off the ground. It faltered almost immediately. Karen White, another former Winnipegger who is now Emma's office manager, feels that many of their first problems can be traced to the fact that they were an all-women company partially sponsored by a government grant. "When we started setting up the factory in Nelson, we assumed that there would be a lot of co-operation from our landlords and other local businessmen. But from the

beginning they refused to take us seriously. They seemed to have the attitude that, because we were women, we weren't capable of running a business. They acted as if the only thing holding us together was our government start-up grant. They seemed to expect that the factory would never really materialise."

Emma's advertisement for a new home elicited only one response, from a Slokan Valley farmer, who became enthusiastic about the project despite the skepticism expressed by his friends and neighbours. With a more co-operative landlord, the collective was able to have the factory built to their specifications, and were especially satisfied that much of the work was done by themselves. Marcia Braundy, a collective member and journeywoman carpenter, worked on the construction of the building from the beginning, and the collective members constructed the 123 cubic metre freezer themselves.

Three months later, in October 1983, the first jar of Emma's Jambrosia fruit melange rolled off the assembly line. Prepared to be the harshest critics of their own product, the collective members were themselves impressed by the quality and taste. "We knew we had the right idea," says Gibson, who is also a chemist and worked on the recipes. "None of us had eaten jam for years



Left to right: Susan White, Karen White, Micki Mitchell, Heather Gibson, Sophia Dricos.

Photo by: Georgette Ganne

because it was so sickeningly sweet. But even the honey-sweetened jams we had tried had tasted like honey rather than fruit. So we were pretty surprised that, on our first try, we got a real fresh fruit taste."

With production under control, the group's next task was to sell their product. Given the taste and quality, they had expected that part to be the easiest. It wasn't. One of the first problems was their inability to call the product jam. Explains White, "Everyone expects jam to be called jam. The average consumer knows nothing of Canada's labelling laws, which say that anything calling itself jam or preserves or fruit spread has to be two-thirds sweetener — sugar or honey. So even though we knew we'd made the best jam anyone had ever tasted, no one else knew exactly what we were."

In the health food market, where they had expected more consumer consciousness, they encountered competition from products that labelled themselves "unsweetened." According to Sophia Dricos, who does most of the cooking at Emma's, that label is actually a misnomer. "When fruit is cooked for any length of time, the water boils off and the sweetness of the fruit sugar increases tremendously. So some of these so-called unsweetened products actually end up having a much higher sweetener content than if they had added sugar in the first place. Besides, there's not much food value left in anything cooked that long. Our compromise is to cook the fruit very briefly and add a little bit of

honey." Dricos points out that Emma's melanges have lower calorie and carbohydrate counts than all of their competitors, including "diet" products.

Emma's Jambrosia celebrated their first anniversary with the introduction of two new flavours (blueberry and plum were added to the existing line of peach, raspberry, and strawberry), a new label design, and the hiring of their sixth full-time employee. That month also marked their expansion into the Prairie market, and the addition of Emma's fifteenth, and for the moment final, collective member. Despite the size of the collective, and the factory running at full-scale productions, decisions continue to be made by consensus. The workers' collective, composed of those working full-time at the factory, meets every Monday morning to plan the week's work. They also make most business decisions. Major decisions, such as policy or major expenditures, are referred to meetings of the entire collective, held every two weeks. Considering the size of the collective, meetings are surprisingly short and efficient.

Some Emma members feel that support from women for their product will make a difference to the extent of Emma's success. "This is a product worth buying all on its own merits," says coordinator Gibson. "But we hope that women who know the story of the company will make an effort to look for Emma's Jambrosia, and ask for it if they don't find it on the shelf. The food business is highly competitive, and basically controlled by the large multinationals. Their first concern is profit, not quality or taste. Despite that, we have managed to get a foot in the door. Now, if more people know about us and seek out Emma's Jambrosia, we'll be assured of being able to stay there."



Filling and capping; Micki Mitchell, Heather Gibson.

Photo by: Georgette Ganne

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NOTIONS AND POTIONS

How Safe Are Vaccinations?

For many years now, Canadian parents have accepted the necessity of vaccinating their infants and young children. The Canadian medical establishment recommends that babies be started at two months with the combination DPTP (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio) shot which is repeated at 4, 6 and 18 months. Then at 12 months, the combined measles, mumps and rubella vaccine is given. Booster shots of the DPTP are recommended at 4-6 years of age, followed by additional boosters of diphtheria, tetanus and polio at 11-12 years and 16-18 years.

Parents are assured that the risks of vaccination are practically nil — maybe one in a million and certainly nothing to worry about. We are told that the killer diseases of the past decades have been conquered through the mass vaccination programs and that the big epidemics could come sweeping back if the immunisation cycle is broken.

Yet records and statistics from around the world clearly show that most of the major diseases had declined by 80-90 per cent before the introduction of these vaccination programs. Research into the history of infectious diseases reveal that the reason for the decline was threefold — improved hygiene, public sanitation and improved nutrition.

Every year in Canada, thousands of babies are vaccinated. Most mothers find that their babies have some reaction — fretfulness, fever, screaming episodes, sleepiness, and appearance of shock-like collapse. We are led to believe these are normal reactions — nothing to worry about.

But many of these reactions are not normal and are clearly listed by the manufacturer in vaccine package inserts as strong contra-indications not to continue giving the child the scheduled series of shots. There are many contra-indications to vaccination and in particular to the pertussis, or whooping cough vaccine, which has an abysmal history of adverse reactions as well as failure to provide long lasting immunity.

Studies going back to 1949 (John A. Toomey — *Journal of the American Medical Association*) warned doctors that "No child should receive injections of pertussis vaccine in large amounts who has (a) any family history of convulsions (b) a present history of convulsions or (c) illness of any kind, especially if it per-

EDDA GOLDMAN

tains in any way to the central nervous system."

In families where there is a history of allergies, extreme caution needs to be exercised when considering vaccination as allergies are an indication of immunological malfunction and may predispose an infant to an extreme and adverse reaction to the vaccine. At two months of age, the child's constitutional makeup is an unknown factor and the parents' health profiles need to be carefully examined to determine whether vaccination might place the child in jeopardy.

Nevertheless, extreme reactions can occur with no warning. When my youngest child Keri was 15 months old, she had a violent reaction to the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccination. To see my baby terribly ill with the very disease she had received "protection" from, prompted me to question the safety and efficacy of vaccination schedules in early childhood. I began to read the medical literature and discovered that in-

deed, measles can be vaccine-induced and may erupt in a much more virulent and destructive form than ordinary measles acquired through ordinary contact.

And then, a few years later, I met a mother whose three month old baby had died three days after a DPT shot. Subsequently, I have continued to come across information that implies a relationship between Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and the DPT shots.

On questioning the safety and efficacy of some of the vaccines, many parents have found their concerns are met with a denial that there are problems. It is implied to those parents who do raise these concerns that the benefits of the vaccines by far outweigh any risks and that they would be less than responsible parents if they were to deny their child the "protection" which vaccination confers. It is further implied that parents who deny their children the benefits of vaccination are compromising their child's health and well-being.

But concern is growing and information is beginning to get out. On January 14th, 1985, "The Journal," a CBC news-magazine aired a 15 minute segment on the DPT controversy and interviewed an Ontario family whose baby has been permanently brain damaged after receiving a vaccine. The parents have exhausted all the medical diagnostic possibilities in Ontario and are repeatedly told that there is no connection between the child's dissability and the vaccination. They have travelled with their child to the United States to a clinic in Philadelphia which specialises in teaching patterning techniques to help the development of brain damaged children. They were told by specialists at the American clinic, who have seen numerous cases of vaccine damaged children, that there is no question that their child is a DPT victim.

How many children have been damaged and to what degree? Do the benefits outweigh the risks? Dr. Gordon Stewart, renowned British Epidemiologist, in speaking about whooping cough vaccine has said, "I believe that the risk of damage from the vaccine is now greater than the risk of the disease." Reports from Sweden and West Germany have determined that the rate of serious brain damage to children from the pertussis



Publish and be Damned

LYN COCKBURN

vaccine ranges from between 1-46,000 children to 1-39,000.

On December 13, 1984 a *Globe and Mail* article reported that "A Canadian drug company will stop sales in the United States of a whooping cough vaccine that causes complications and brain damage in a small number of children but will continue to sell the Canadian-made version here." Connaught Laboratories Ltd. 'made a policy decision' that its U.S. subsidiary will stop manufacturing, distributing and selling the whooping cough vaccine because of a spate of recent lawsuits that are costing the company more than the vaccine brings in."

In the United States, Britain and other European countries, parents, by uniting with each other have formed strong groups and have succeeded in obtaining compensation for their vaccine damaged children. In Canada, The Committee Against Compulsory Vaccination is developing an information network to help families make informed decisions about vaccination. The Committee's goals are to provide the public with a balance of information about vaccination and to lobby the government to implement a viable reporting system of adverse reactions and policy of informed consent, so that parents are made aware of the risks, using accurate and internationally accepted data when undertaking to vaccinate their children.

For further information and support, please contact The Committee Against Compulsory Vaccination — 325 Connaught Avenue, Willowdale, Ontario M2R 2M1; telephone (416) 221-5345 or 533-3697.

DPT A Shot In The Dark - Harris L. Coulter & Barbara Loe Fisher - 1985
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich

DPT - Vaccine Roulette - NBC
Documentary - produced by WRC
Washington

Altered Reactivity to Measles Virus -
Dec. 18, 1967 Journal of The
American Medical Association - Vol
202 - #12

RESOURCE LIST - An extensive resource list which includes the above materials and many more is available through The Committee Against Compulsory Vaccination. ▽

In these days of rampant permissiveness, it is encouraging to note that the police in one of our cities are willing to do something about decaying values.

Recently, the police in St. Catharines, Ontario raided several public washrooms, found men engaging in homosexual acts, arrested them and then released their names to the media. At least one radio station put the names on the air. One man named was so upset that he doused himself and his car with gasoline and lit a match.

This incident proves that the simple expedient of publicising the names of those whose behaviour we don't approve of is effective. It certainly makes people change their behaviour. It is, of course, regrettable that the man in St. Catharines changed his in such a drastic and tasteless manner. Nonetheless, it seems obvious that this method of behaviour modification is useful.

Take abortion. The police in Toronto blew it when they merely, it is alleged, followed a woman home from the Morgentaler clinic and forced her to have an examination at a hospital. Not good enough. They should have given her name to the media because it is apparent that picketing hospitals and clinics, arresting Henry Morgentaler and harassing patients is not working. Women are still getting abortions. It is time that the names of all women who have or apply for abortions are made public, including those who are the victims of rape or incest.

One of our maritime provinces is leading the way in prostitution and has already published the names of numerous ladies of the night. This practice must be extended nationwide. There's been a suggestion that the names of the johns be published too, but that's obviously going too far. If the prostitutes weren't out there on the streets, the johns would have to stay home. And never mind the recent study which shows that 60 per cent of hookers are single mothers who can't find work which will allow them to support their children. These women ought to be searching for men to look after them instead of cavorting on the street corners and the only way to motivate them to do so is to publish their

names, in the *Globe and Mail* and on CBC, so they'll not be able to move about at will.

The pornography controversy could be solved overnight if the names of all women who act in porn flicks were published. Without the degenerate acts of such women, there would be no pornography problem and the sooner we shame them into waitressing jobs and scrubbing floors, the better.

It will be of great help to the economy of this country if the names of all those people receiving welfare and unemployment benefits are published. Given the job situation, this practice might initially take up a lot air time, but I guarantee that within a few weeks, the numbers of welfare and UIC cheques will dwindle and Brian won't have to bother hiring 700 or so new employees to ferret out abusers of the system. And it wouldn't hurt to send a few reporters to the food banks and soup lines to gather names. Before long, the unemployed and hungry will disappear, allowing the rest of us to get on with creating a new Canada.

Then there's the peace movement which has basked in anonymity for far too long with only occasional harassment by the RCMP as a deterrent. It is not enough that our defense minister sneers at the peaceniks; it is time these leftists were exposed. If the movement continues to grow, there is a danger that it may eventually influence the number of Pentagon defence contracts awarded to Canadian firms. And the only way to ensure that it does not grow is to publish the names of all those involved and, of course, of any employer who refuses to fire workers who are named.

The police in St. Catharines have proved that publishing names is an effective method of behaviour modification, so let's use it.

And once we have dealt with gays, prostitution, porn queens, peaceniks and the unemployed, we can turn our attention to other citizens who practice distasteful behaviour, such as men who want to become nurses, women who want to become hockey players, couples who use anything but the missionary position and mothers who insist on breast feeding in public.

REVIEWS

BOOKS

WORKING-CLASS WRITINGS

Reviewed by C.T. SAND

Contemporary writing inspired by working class experience and sensibility is rare. Few creative women from poor or working class backgrounds can run the gamut of lack of opportunity or education, tools or time, to embrace the precarious, fickle world of the arts. Those who do write often find their stories misunderstood, dismissed or censored. Helen Potrebenko of Vancouver, for example, has had editors tell her to change the cause of her characters' problems from outer to inner struggles. They have tried to convince her that narrative tensions should be created by individual failings, *not* by a system putting enormous economic pressures on people. Just recently a black activist was commissioned by a publisher to write a children's story, insisting that her main character be from a middle-class family. The author's own working class identity and perspectives were ignored. In the title song of her latest album, *Shadows On a Dime*, Ferron dramatises the psychic tangles of a working class artist always mindful of her past; her escape from wage labour based on a talent, currently but not necessarily forever in demand.

Lillian Halegua, a writer I have just discovered, explains that she completed a degree and is working in a library full-time because she "must feel secure in the knowledge that she can feed and clothe herself before she can return to the arts." Her creative energy, in other words, like a dam rerouted for safety, must be put on hold. My initial respect for Halegua became even more pronounced upon reading her novel *The Pearl Bastard* published by The Women's Press in London in 1978. Dense and lyrical, *The Pearl Bastard* concerns teenager Francine McGuire who sets out on the road north of New York City looking for a job and a sense of independence from her family. Not far into her journey she is raped and left — cold

and hungry — on a beach in the middle of nowhere. A motel keeper helps Francine by offering her a job and giving her time to figure out her next move. When Francine discovers that she is pregnant her initiation into womanhood is dramatic and tragic. Despite its title the writing in *The Pearl Bastard* is subtle. Francine is limited by class, gender and race prejudices — the motel keeper (Willie Haver) is Jewish, a fact that bothers Francine to the point of her own self-destruction and yet, the theme is expressed with sparse, poetic metaphor. There is a kind of air constriction conjured up in the reader's mind as we read of Francine's tightly controlled world. I associate shortness of breath with poverty of opportunity and this image is powerfully evoked in *The Pearl Bastard*. Lillian Halegua has written numerous other novels and short stories I have yet to read but I trust they bear her mark of tremendous talent.

An unknown British writer by the name of Pat Barker has recently helped to expand the seams of the classbound publishing world with her first novel *Union Street*. Originally published by the feminist publisher Virago Press of London and reprinted by Ballantine Books in New York, *Union Street* was called the long overdue working class masterpiece by a *New Statesman* critic. No doubt it is as well as being a priceless addition to the canon of literature by women about women. *Union Street* is reminiscent of Gloria Naylor's *The Women of Breuster Place* which won the 1983 American Book Award for a first novel. The two novels share the narrative technique of chapters divided according to character. The women's lives in both books overlap and intertwine which creates the community essential to their survival. Both novelists use the metaphor of a street to tell the stories of women living their lives of hard work, fear and frustration, and in Gloria Naylor's work the added burden of racism.

The news gets better. Pat Barker's second novel is now available and I think it is superior to her first. *Blow Your House Down* is about violence against women. The protagonists are prostitutes and their story rumbles and moans with ferocity and intensity. Not since reading Adele Wiseman's *Crackpot*, published in the early seventies, have I enjoyed such excellent writing about the lives of hookers. No doubt inspired in part by

the Yorkshire Ripper who killed so many women in Britain a few years back. *Blow Your House Down* is guaranteed to raise your consciousness in a way that the film *Hookers On Davie* failed to do. We bear witness to prostitution as an everyday job for women unable or unwilling to work in the local chicken factory. Women raise kids, pay the bills and ward off fear and degradation in a brutal world of male supremacy. The suspense in this novel is unbearable at times and my admiration for its gutsy women increased with each quickly turned page. I read *Blow Your House Down* in one sitting during a ferry crossing to Newfoundland and in more ways than one the world did not look the same in the morning.

Having lived and worked in Newfoundland a decade ago I turned to another book with a different kind of enthusiasm. I hoped that Claire Mowat's *The Outport People* (McClelland & Stewart 1985) would stir up my memories of the warm and generous people I had lived amongst. Not only does Mowat share my love of this unique island, she beautifully uncovers the much more obvious class system of outport Newfoundland. Mowat remembers the characters and events of a fishing village owned and controlled by one merchant family. And in the person of 11-year-old Dorothy Quayle, Claire Mowat raises to the level of myth the fate of creative, energetic girls who must fight against overwhelming odds to realise but a fraction of their potential. It is the stories of such girls and women that Halequa, Barker and Naylor concern themselves with — stories too long unavailable to those of us longing to read and write them. ▽

FILMS

SUPERGIRL

Reviewed by DEBRA PILON

Faye Dunaway plays Selena, an evil witch with red hair. Helen Slater is Cara, a supergirl with blond hair who occasionally appears with a brunette coiffure while portraying Supergirl's cover.

FALLING IN LOVE

Reviewed by DEBRA PILON

the lovely Linda Lee. I think Miss Clairóol is the real heroine of *Supergirl*, a movie which — if I may be allowed to allude to a slogan from the smelly world of chemical hair colouring — is *not* worth it.

Only the most vacuous mind could find anything even remotely entertaining in *Supergirl*, the motion picture industry's attempt to capitalise on *Superman* by giving Clark Kent a younger, female cousin over whom teenage boys can salivate. As *Supergirl*, Helen Slater fills out her colourful caped uniform in fine cross-your-heart form. It's too bad this young actress has been given such atrocious dialogue to work with and that *Supergirl's* amorphous screenplay is on a par with *Animal House*. Slater should be allowed to do better. She has potential which should be explored at some time, although *Supergirl* may brand her as a loser forever.

Faye Dunaway, on the other hand, will never, in my mind, be able to live down her ridiculous performance as *Supergirl's* nemesis, the wild-haired and wide-eyed witch Selena. With Brenda Vaccaro playing her cigarette-puffing, wine-slopping sidekick, Dunaway turns in a majestically horrid performance replete with rolling eyes and high-level histrionics which give witchcraft a bad name it does not deserve. Dunaway's acceptance of this "role" shows a lack of integrity as well as a decided predilection toward being anti-woman. If she only did it to make a few bucks, it seems to me she is in peril of losing respect both within her profession and from discriminating audiences — not that anyone with an I.Q. over 100 would want to be seen at a theatre showing this movie.

Supergirl is really so bad it numbs. Peter O'Toole and Mia Farrow have also sullied their names by appearing in it. And the movie's special effects are just as bad as what passes for a plot.

In summary, I wonder: is it best to be cynical and say we should have known *Supergirl* would never live up to *Superman's* glory? Or should we examine the dynamics at work here a little more closely and ruefully acknowledge the fact that when Hollywood decides to trash women in movies like *Supergirl*, the producers and directors (of patriarchy) are simply fulfilling a God-given mandate to devalue all things female? In either case, it hurts to be the brunt of such sexist movie-making. ▽

It's hard to be generous about Merle Streep's performance in *Falling in Love*, although based on her triumphant role in *Sophie's Choice* as well as other films, I feel benevolent enough to say *Falling in Love* may be just an unsightly pimple on an otherwise flawless acting career. Let's hope so, anyway.

Not much is illuminating or exciting about this stereotypical heterosexual love story of boy meets girl, boy tries to seduce girl, girl runs from boy's advances although she really is attracted to him, girl's psyche crumbles when he finally stops pursuing her, boy tries again, girl comes running to him but by then it's too late and boy and girl continue with their respective lonely lives. The twist in *Falling in Love* comes as a result of both boy and girl being married to another boy and another girl. Unfortunately, all this "twist" does is open the door for married and/or moralistic film-goers to feel self-righteous about the movie's underlying theme: the sanctity of marriage. Streep's character, although she is only half-heartedly married to a chilly man, won't break her sacred wedding vows to engage in a hot fling with Robert de Niro. He is sickeningly "typical" in his lust for Streep whom he sees as an ethereal dream woman — in this case, a woman who doesn't have potting soil (as his wife does) under her fingernails.

Why are movies like this made? Someone probably figured this third-rate screenplay could somehow be rendered respectable by super-imposing big name actors on it. Wrong. Neither Streep nor de Niro rises above the trite dialogue or contrived plot. Streep suffers particularly by allowing herself to portray a woman who just can't make up her little ol' mind about what it is she wants in life.

For his part, de Niro drools convincingly whenever Streep is beside him. He is also good at playing a slimy, manipulative man-on-the-make. Should we be surprised, given the kinds of men he chooses to portray? Remember *Raging Bull*?

Neither of them is loveable. And although some people may think that what passes for romance in this movie is exciting because it happens on commuter trains, I found all the scenes on trains had me reaching for Graval. ▽



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FAIT D'HIVER

Par JANICK BELLEAU

Office national du film/Ouest

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LA DEPOSSESSION

Tout commence avec le ciel bleu et rouge de la plaine
dans l'hiver manitobain.
Un bleu froid, reflet de la solitude.
Un rouge enflammé, expression de la colère.
Des couleurs à l'image des personnages.
Hélène, la douce patience;
Benoît, le désespoir querelleur.
Le fait: une famille francophone dépossédée de son territoire,
terre emportée par la dernière crise économique.

L'ESPACE MANITOBAIN

L'homme rageur et, ô combien, vulnérable
dans la plaine infinie au froid de loup:
"Maudit pays. Maudite prairie."
La femme en attente à sa fenêtre:
"Maudit pays. Maudits hommes."
"Pour moi, a dit le poète, crier et hurler (. . .)
sont déformations normales de la solitude."

LE COUPLE

Ils sont là, tous les deux, l'homme et la femme:
Lui, seul, dans la poudrerie, avec l'image tenace
du sourire heureux de sa petite famille.
Elle, seule, à sa fenêtre,
une chanson aux lèvres:
"Sur les dunes de la mer,
sur le sable du désert,
tu pourras toujours rêver."



Une production française/Ouest
et une distribution de
l'Office national du film du Canada

FAIT D'HIVER

Un suspense dramatique dans l'hiver glacial de l'espace manitobain.
Une terre à blé balayée par la tourmente.
Les mouvements introspectifs d'un couple.

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WOMEN'S DIRECTORY of Winnipeg business and professional women has been published. Partially modelled on directories found in other cities, it includes the names of approximately 350 women and one and two page profiles of some to serve as role models. The directory includes women who perform voluntary as well as paid work. Coordinated by Donna Marion during a summer employment project, copies of the directory will be circulated to schools and employment counselling centres. Copies can be obtained from Donna Marion at (204) 475-7789.

CHILDBIRTH: FROM INSIDE OUT A Videotape series produced by Jack McGaw and Sandra Rinaldo of CTV and sponsored by Proctor and Gamble will be made available FREE OF CHARGE to all childbirth educators across Canada. The six, 30 minute segments cover all aspects of pregnancy and birth and are available in either French or English. Contact: Iris Weverman, Promotional Consultant, Professional Publishing Assoc., 45 Charles St., E. Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1S2 (416) 964-8903.

LITTLE BY LITTLE: A Portrait of Immigrant Women is a new videotape from TVOntario in which the experiences of a group of women participating in a job-training program for immigrants. Order from: TVOntario Customer Services, Box 200, Station Q, Toronto, Ontario M4T 2T1.

GETTING STARTED tells you everything you need to know about starting a program, training volunteers and setting up a Board of Directors. The four part kit includes three manuals and a video, Unclaimed Treasures, which portrays the delights of being a grandparent by choice. Write: Volunteer Grandparents Society of B.C., Susan Kallweit, Exec. Director #3, 1734 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1Y1 (604) 736-8271.

HOT WIRE, is a new women's music and cultural journal featuring articles, interviews, coverage of festivals, news, music industry articles and much more. Token payment for articles on aspect of women's music (photos and graphics too). Subscriptions \$14 U.S., for 3 issues per year: Hot Wire, 1321 W. Rosedale, Chicago, Illinois 60660.



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