

THE CANADIAN MAGAZINE BY WOMEN FOR PEOPLE

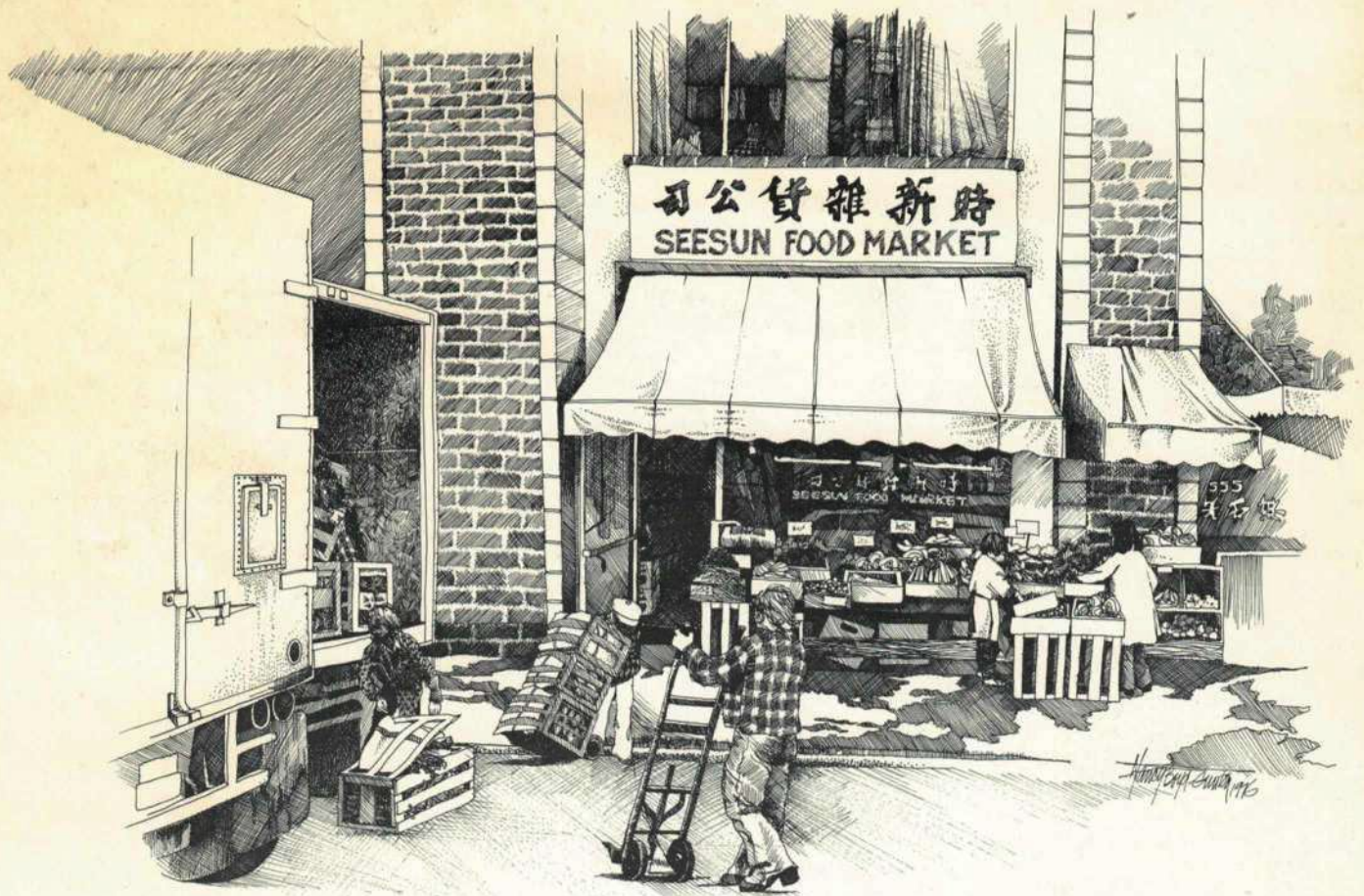
MAKARA

VOLUME ONE / NUMBER FIVE

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 1976

ONE DOLLAR TWENTY FIVE





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SHARON POLLOCK: IN THE CENTRE RING

by Margo Dunn

Unlike the writer who exorcises private ghosts with the autobiographical extravaganza that leaves nothing more to say, playwright Sharon Pollock moves in the opposite direction. Much of the impetus of her early writing came from external political events she still feels strongly about. Now she is linking those concerns with her personal roots. The recent *My Name Is Lisbeth* is her first play with a female protagonist. She seems to have achieved a consistent blend of private history, external influence and imagination that only playwrights as rare as Eugene O'Neill or Federico Garcia Lorca have maintained in their work.

Sharon Pollock grew up in Fredericton, New Brunswick. She married in her second year at university and soon moved with her husband to Ontario. After five children and eight years of housewifery, a growing sense of personal survival coupled with marriage breakdown led her back to New Brunswick. In comparing herself with other women in unsuccessful marriages, she sees herself as very lucky, "I had someplace to go."

She then began the succession of jobs typical for any ex-housewife. She sold tickets in the box office of the New Brunswick Playhouse, then became secretary to Major Wardell.

Being on the theatre scene led to some acting roles, travel to other theatres across the country, and more odd jobs "between engagements". In 1968, she moved to Vancouver, where she lives with actor Michael Ball, her six children and a menagerie of dogs and cats.

Sharon Pollock has had five full-length stage plays produced professionally in the last four years. As her skills have grown, so has her reputation as a powerful, provocative voice in Canadian theatre. In September she will begin a year teaching playwriting at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, and write a play commissioned by the Citadel Theatre Company.

A singular energy and a through-line of knowing what she wants now characterizes Sharon Pollock's hectic life. It was not always so. She says that while growing up she never questioned what she was *supposed* to do; life would include university, marriage, children. "I wouldn't describe myself as a mainstream conformist, and school reports often said I was 'cryptically critical', but basically I knew who I was *supposed* to be."

Sharon Pollock committed herself to the feminine ideal. "I don't ever remember making a decision to have five children... I don't ever remember making a decision to have one of them. I don't remember being disturbed that I had five." She spent her time with the children, wrote short stories that were sometimes therapeutic, and acted in some amateur productions. Gradually, the funnel of her life began to grow narrower. She felt some things were wrong and began some self-criticism: "I am too this... I am not enough that... I shouldn't argue this... definitely, I shouldn't argue that... but I know exactly who I'm *supposed* to be and all I have to do is turn myself into it. Then one day, all of a sudden, I said, 'I am a

valid person as I am' and that was the beginning of the end."

This change began a development which has been actively continued since the early 60's. It began by Sharon's gradual awareness of world political events. A pivotal point was the Cuban missile crisis. "I was sitting with my children one day and I realized that I could die because some asshole who I don't even like in a country I despise decides that missiles in Cuba are worth something.... Perhaps the easiest to examine is the exterior, the political and gradually from that you begin to go interior. I see political scenes and class oppression in a personal way. Yet as I look at my own plays, I can see them moving closer and closer to looking at very personal things as well as an exterior political scene."

One of Sharon's powers is that she writes what she wants to write. *A Compulsory Option*, her first full-length play, resulted from her desire to have a play produced by an Equity company. A new playwright's first effort has a better chance of being produced with a small cast and one simple set.

A Compulsory Option explores the interplay of external reality and paranoia. Three male teachers meet in the living room of the house they will share for the school term. Is Bob really being persecuted for his student activism? Is Lesley as affected and mystical as he seems? Is Pete, the mediator, really neutral or anyone's pawn? The dialogue and stage business are funny; the outcome, violent. The play won the Alberta Playwriting Competition in 1972 and



was produced in Vancouver by the New Play Centre.

Walsh (1973) sets the trend for Sharon's later plays. Custer's last stand and loss at Little Big Horn led to the flight of Sitting Bull and the Sioux to Canada ("they won the battle but lost the war"), and their encounter with Major Walsh of the Northwest Mounted Police. Although the staging, including many minor characters, major use of sound effects and bar-room songs gives a glimpse of the historic panorama, the focus remains on the inner and outer struggles of the characters:

Walsh and Sitting Bull are eating in Sitting Bull's tipi:

Walsh: ... *My chief says the Queen is not responsible for you... The Great White Mother has made peace with the Americans.*

Sitting Bull: *Whose "Red Children" are we, then?*

Walsh: *It was decided that the Sioux belonged to the President in Washington.*

Sitting Bull: *It was decided... You are few, and we are many. Will you try to drive us back across the line?*

Walsh: *You're welcome to stay here... so long as the Sioux are self-sufficient. The Queen won't feed or clothe you as she does her own Indians.*

Walsh is torn between his compassion for the political refugees whose means of livelihood are on the American side of the line and his duty as an agent of Canada's policy of genocide through starvation. His sell-out leads to his own spiritual destruction, the death of Sitting Bull, and Canadian abandonment of the remaining Sioux to an American reservation.

We hear Sitting Bull's voice as Walsh slowly lifts both hands over his head.

In the beginning... was given... to everyone a cup. A cup of clay. And from this cup we drink our life. We all dip in the water, but the cups are different... My cup is broken... It has passed away.

Walsh slams his hands down on the desk.

The search for background for *Walsh* took eight months in libraries in Alberta and Nebraska. At first, the material felt like it belonged in a radio play. Then, it seemed cinematic, appropriate for film or TV. "I'd have had to cast all the Sioux as paraplegic if we couldn't have horses on stage. I had to have horses." John Juliani encouraged Sharon to think of *Walsh* as a theatre piece. At first, the play took form around three central characters — Walsh,

Sitting Bull and Louis, the Metis who can understand both white and native worlds. From there, the concept grew to a cast of thousands, then was pared back to a workable group of officers, settlers and Sioux.

A weakness in *Walsh* is the weakness of the women characters. They have little to say or to do in the play and represent a universal helpmeet (I wonder if any such archetype exists). In the Stratford production, Donna Farron played the four characters: Pretty Plume, the wife of Sitting Bull; Mary, Walsh's wife; Mrs. Anderson, a racist settler; and Jennie, a bar-room belle, to further reinforce the concept of all the women as aspects of universal womanhood. I feel the play could be even more dynamic if the women characters grew and changed as the men do.

Since *Walsh*, there has been a marked progression in Sharon Pollock's use of women in important dramatic roles. While *A Compulsory Option* has no female characters and women have little importance in the three characters' world view, and *Walsh's* female characters are stereotyped as universal symbols, Sharon's third play, *And Out Goes You?* (1975), centres around Goose: grandmother, matriarch, inspiration and leader.

Goose's son, George and his three children live in east end Vancouver (or the east end of anytown). They care for Goose, in a coma since the Regina Riot of 1939. When Bob Handal, agent of the land speculators, tries to buy their house from under them, Goose awakens and directs the revolution as though there had been no slippage in Canadian political awareness since 1939. Part of the action is a play within a play which can change to suit the time and place of each production, and satirize current governmental foibles. The fun ends when forces polarize. Although she claims it was all a game, Goose is shot and the rebellion quelled.

The Komagata Maru Incident (1976) interlocks historical and imaginary characters in yet another "theatrical envelope". In 1914, while World War I was breaking out, a ship carrying 376 Sikhs was refused entry to Canada. It sat in Vancouver harbour for the entire summer while the passengers starved and suffered. The stage action is moved along by an emcee, T.S., representative of opportunist and racist Canadian attitudes, and the play centres on Hopkinson, the immigration officer responsible for the situation. He spends much of the time in Evy's brothel, where information can be gathered from

his spies in the East Indian community. Meanwhile, Evy gains sympathy for the people on the ship who are represented by "The Woman" who grows more resilient as the pressure increases. Although Hopkinson succeeds in his goal of having the ship turned back to India, he is forced to confront both his racism and Anglo-Indian heritage. He is assassinated, along with the other traitors to the East Indian community.

In *The Komagata Maru Incident*, Evy and Sophie, the brothel-keeper and the whore, perform essential functions in the movement of the dramatic action. Evy becomes the only character to move out of the confines of racist and bureaucratic attitudes, and although we cannot project where she will go, we know she will survive.

The Woman on the ship acts as both an individual and a symbol for the East Indian people trapped in the Vancouver harbour. The play centres around the personal and business conflicts of a government agent, as does *Walsh*. This reflects the historical reality that men did exclusively hold such positions in Alberta in 1892 and in Vancouver in 1914. But *The Komagata Maru Incident* seems more complete because of the balance within the play of male and female characters, that "half of the sky" which we hold up is included and the play is richer for it.

My Name Is Lisbeth (1976) tells the story of the celebrated Lizzie Borden and the events that led her to murder her parents in Fall River, Massachusetts, on the hottest day of 1892. The play, for Sharon Pollock, presents another change, another growth. She does not concern herself with the much debated question of Lizzie's innocence or guilt. It is a psychological given in the play that Lizzie murdered her parents; murder was the only way out of her typically female dilemma. The play examines violence and what leads to it, thus making it less mysterious and less perversely fascinating. Sharon sees Lizzie's violence rising from her circumscribed life, "Women are forced to gauge reaction and conduct that isn't stated; we know if we aren't doing it right because we get punished for it."

Lizzie's motive is clear. Her elderly father has decided to sign over a farm, which she loves, to his wife, Lizzie's stepmother, whom she hates. Now 34, Lizzie has always wanted to escape her comfortable but uneventful life.

Lizzie: *I'm supposed to be a mirror. I'm supposed to reflect whatever they want to see, and everyone wants something different. If nobody looks in the*

mirror, I'm not even there. I don't exist.

Tensions mount from the murder of her stepmother, through the establishment of an alibi between her and the maid, to the unexpected arrival of her father, and his murder. Lizzie explains herself in the play:

I've decided there's a formula, a formula for being a 'woman', a magic formula; every girl baby receives it at birth, just before birth... it's the last thing that happens. It's stamped, the formula... KA-THUD!... indelibly on the brain... And through some terrible oversight, maybe the death of my mother, I didn't get that... KA-THUD!... I was born defective. No. Not defective. I don't like that word... I was just... born.

My Name Is Lisbeth explores, in Sharon's words, "the purity of emotion and motivation in any kind of extreme action, which gives you insight into the very clouded things of your own, emotions you feel but can't handle. You gain insight because someone else has gone the whole way." Sharon describes *My Name Is Lisbeth* as the most personal of her plays to date, the "only one written from a woman's point of view."

Is Sharon Pollock a feminist? How does she define feminism? "I don't know how to define it... I don't know how to define it... I don't have to define feminism to answer why women characters are important in my work. I think, like other writers, I'm discovering all along. Part of the reason a person writes is to try to see some design, to create order out of chaos, to try to understand things about myself as well as the world around me."

The actual process of writing a play deeply immerses Sharon in her research, her characters and their historical background. Ideas come from a variety of sources. For example, Sharon reads about famous murderers, as a diversion from writing or housework. (Actually she does her reading while lying on the kitchen floor because it is so uncomfortable that she won't go to sleep and stay away from work too long.) In the many accounts of Lizzie Borden, Sharon saw a pattern emerging from the personal lives and trial statements of the protagonists. More important, she gained sympathy for Lizzie and, in some ways, came to identify with her.

It is this extensive research which I trust in Sharon Pollock's plays. At the end of the first act of *My Name Is Lisbeth*, Lizzie's father kills her pet pigeons with a hatchet. If I saw such a cliff-hanger in a play by a writer who 'churned

them out', I would feel someone was trying to gull me with gross and unnecessary symbolism. But I trust Sharon Pollock's historical accuracy and her stagecraft. Of course, truth being more mysterious than fiction, the hatchet incident did occur.

After all her reading and note-taking, Sharon puts the raw data aside and allows the play to ferment. This involves a lot of walking — "I have to



walk in a circle. I can't walk up and down curbs or have to decide which way to turn because that disturbs me. I have to walk round and round the living room or around a track. Sometimes a strange thing happens, very simple, like someone getting up off a park bench and turning around... I can't hear what they're saying... it's just an image that hits me and the image triggers something off... That's where chance comes into it, such a strange thing...".

Basically, a play takes about two months to write. "The first draft has the meat, but the connective tissue may be

missing. I have a lot of highs happening, but I haven't fleshed out between those highs. I begin to do that in my second draft. In *The Komagata Maru Incident*, I use that technique knowingly in places because I want short scenes cutting back and forth to what's happening in Evy's house. In *My Name Is Lisbeth*, some of the transitions were too abrupt at first. The thought process was there, but there weren't enough verbal clues. For example, in Lizzie's first speech directed at the audience, she used to begin by saying 'I daydream. I dream that my name is Lisbeth and I live up on the hill in a corner house, and my hair isn't red.' And then she would go on to, 'When I was little my knees were always covered with scabs.' I could make that transition in my head through a pause, but the pause was too long to hold early in the play, so I put in the pieces that I had been thinking, like 'I hate red hair. When I was little everyone teased me. When I was little, we didn't spend our summers here, we spent them out on the farm. I remember my knees were always covered with scabs.' That's me as a writer, I jump to the tops of things, and I find I have to put in the dips."

Sharon sees *My Name Is Lisbeth* as a step forward in her stagecraft. She omits subplots and moves still farther away from the "well-made play" than she did in *Komagata Maru*. Her theatrical style always changes and explores. Sharon has written in the absurd and documentary modes and has used dramatic devices like 'the play within the play', song, music and mime, as well as some that are her own invention. What she calls the 'theatrical envelope' must be appropriate for the content of each play. In hindsight, *A Compulsory Option* is the only play she would change. There she tried to pretend that the stage was not an illusion. Now she has moved to the direct affirmation that "a play is just a play", much as Brecht did. Today, she would write *A Compulsory Option* "from inside Bob's head".

A number of processes are involved in writing for the theatre that are not involved in writing strictly for publication. Sharon Pollock, luckily, has been able to work closely with most productions of her plays. Actors contribute their own particular insights into a character's words. A sensitive actor can understand how a vivid monologue may explain a point intellectually but actually impede the flow of action and emotion, the getting-to-the-point of the scene. A creative set designer like Jack

Simons who designed for the first production of *Komagata Maru* in Vancouver understood the emotional relationships between the characters and their entrapment in their environment in very apt visual terms.

Some directors, like John Wood of the Neptune Theatre in Halifax, enjoy staging new work. Despite Sharon's luck in having veto power in the casting process for most of her plays, sometimes an actor cannot make the lines or the character work, since he or she has a different concept of how the play works than the author. And, sometimes, the necessities of box office draw cause a play to masquerade as something it's not. The script of *And Out Goes You?* reads very differently from the publicity given it by the Vancouver Playhouse where it was a mainstage production in 1975. It was advertised as a topical and biting satire on B.C. politics, and two supporting characters, the President and the Premier, were cast to broadly imitate Barrett and Bennett of B.C. This distorts the broader message of the play, which is the most politically relevant of Sharon Pollock's plays that I have read.

And Out Goes You? examines the contemporary situation of ordinary people attempting to organize against capitalist forces that would drastically alter their lives. In this case, it's the real estate developers. Goose's legacy of thirties radicalism has dissipated. Elizabeth, her granddaughter, "gives at the office"; Richard, a letter carrier, stores the mail at home because it's too depressing to deliver; Frankie's a street musician. When Goose awakens, so does the old consciousness and fighting unity. The family fight for their house. Sadly, they are defeated. When Goose is shot, the family capitulates.

Sharon originally wanted to kill off the Premier and the President at the end of the show and have the family march out and bring about the revolution. But the feedback from those connected with the production was "Would people really do that? The truth of the matter is there isn't a revolution happening here, now." Now Sharon is "not so sure" whether it would have been wrong to do it anyway. "I think my characters would have followed Goose if she hadn't been shot at the end. Jamie Portman of Southam Press made the most astute critical comment when he interpreted my point: 'there are good brave causes left to fight for, but there are no good brave people left to fight for them.'"

"Notices of my plays are often prefaced with 'much discussed...'. I fit two

categories... I'm the token Canadian and I'll write the play that causes a token stir. One of the dangers of writing political plays is that I will stop there, that I won't do anything more about class oppression..." Her next play, about prisons, will gel when she figures out where she stands on the question of prisons. "I can see my anger and hostility and I know that I would be there too, except for my economic back-



ground." She has researched some of the events leading to the death of Mary Steinhauser at the B.C. Penitentiary although what form or what emphasis the character of that person and her murder will take in the final production is still undetermined. One of the initial tasks in writing any play is Sharon Pollock's figuring out exactly where Sharon Pollock stands on her central issue.

Sharon Pollock's characters are not symbols and it annoys her when critics judge them so. Each character in each play functions as a person in those

circumstances would function. Characters loaded with symbolic connotations as rich as those surrounding The Woman in *The Komagata Maru Incident* change and grow as real human beings as the action progresses. In this case The Woman moves from her position of powerlessness in a culture where women are assigned a particularly subordinate role (she can only vote on her destiny because she is the mother of a male child) to a position of real strength as the ship is attacked:

Woman: (laughing) *Do you know something? My son's lips have swollen and burst from the thirst... they are covered with grease from the engines... My legs are like sticks. If I smelt a real meal I would vomit... and you think a few guns will make our knees knock?* (she stops laughing) **SALE HARAM-ZAADE!! Give us supplies and we will leave!**

Neither is T.S., the master of ceremonies, named symbolically. Sharon named him T.S. since writing for "Number One" or "A" is confusing. The initials of the original Eaton entrepreneur, T.S. Eaton, stuck in her mind. But some viewers see him as T.S. Eliot, and Vancouver critic Max Wyman confidently has proclaimed that, of course, T.S. means *The System*. The manipulative bureaucrat functions as all of these T.S.'s and more, but also as the human being who knows that Hopkinson's file may show he is of Eurasian descent, the human being who can pressure the Japanese ship-owner into declaring that his passengers have mutinied, the human being who understands why the Canadian government brings in immigrants as cheap labour.

What is important is that Sharon Pollock creates characters which we as audience and critics can symbolize for ourselves, find as large a part of the collective unconscious as is there for us. I like to see Goose in *And Out Goes You?* as both Canada Goose and Silly Goose, because for me that character combines two factors of my personal "goose" mythos. In the author's mind, the name "Goose" was chosen from the typical names given grandmothers, like 'Gampers' and 'Gimpers' and 'Gaga', as well as a remembrance of the snow goose of Gallico's story about Dunkirk.

Sharon's family is supportive of her work although she says "I'm a hard person to be supportive of." She laughs about her "seizures", her "personal play" of "Someone threw out the best thing I ever wrote" which continues

into "If Shakespeare had lived in this house he never would have written a line" and "If I opened a vein I'd be lying there and no one would ever notice until they ran out of clean clothes...". She "feels responsible for everything in the house". Even though she can intellectually tell herself "that's a stupid way to feel", it still happens.

Her children, five daughters and one son, ranging in age between twenty and eight, rarely read Sharon Pollock's plays, although they often see productions and are "brutally frank about everything they don't like". Some of the girls read *My Name Is Lisbeth* and one commented "If I lived there, I'd have been crazy too."

Success in Canadian theatre is hard to measure. The playwrights who have been at the top for many years pull in a comfortable living from their writing (while the most reliable part of their incomes derives from university appointments), although their names are hardly household words. Try the names James Reaney, Robertson Davies, George Ryga and see if they ring a bell. If so, which bell? David French is judged a great success because his play *It's All Right Now*, *Jamie Boy* earned him \$20,000 through productions at most professional theatres in the country. But if French does not produce another hit for two, three, five years, his averaged writing income submerges beneath the poverty level.

The answer for the Canadian playwright, in financial terms, would be to write for radio or TV. Sharon Pollock says, "Sure, if we need to pay the rent, I can think 'What would sell to the CBC...'. In Canada, once you make a name for yourself the media jumps on you, and that's nice, because the money's there. But it's also very easy to lose sight of why you began writing in the first place, which is to share what you think is important with somebody else. Let's face it, Arthur Miller or Tennessee Williams don't write TV scripts. I'd like to write more film and TV scripts if I can work with people I can learn from, who can extend me. It's so different than writing for the stage because of all the technological things in between. Don Williams, of CBC in Winnipeg, whom I know and respect, and who respects my work, has just produced a play of mine called *The Larsons* for regional television. I'd rather work with him than with Toronto which treats you like a sausage factory." But in television, you really can't be half so controversial as in theatre (and there are limits to controversy in theatre). You're

really in TV to sell toilet paper, to fill in the gaps between commercials."

The advantage of writing in Canada is that a playwright has the chance to try things that may not work, and to develop dramas with colleagues who will explore a play in order to make it better. A commission by the Citadel Theatre does not mean a command to "produce something according to a formula that has been successful before". Sharon Pollock is commissioned to write the play of her choice because she has been acknowledged, in her own understatement as "not a bad writer".



Sharon feels that other groups besides playhouses and universities should also commission plays. "Unions should be producing plays like *Waiting for Lefty* in union halls. Plays can be brought into factories, as Brecht did at lunch breaks. Live theatre has tremendous importance for educating people about labour history, as long as it relates to people's real situations. More of that kind of thing should be happening, rather than everyone leaving political theatre to the alternate groups, which people think of as 'freak' theatre or to the establishment theatres like The Vancouver Playhouse or the little theatres which are trying to be like little Playhouses."

Canadian publishing for the theatre is in a state of disarray. Many plays which have received professional productions have never been published and have been permanently lost. Of Sharon Pollock's five plays, only *Walsh* has been

published, by Talonbooks of Vancouver. Even this house, which recently sold \$10,000 worth of manuscripts to the archives at Simon Fraser University, publishes at the whim of the editor more than by popular demand. Although several educational institutions have expressed interest in *The Komagata Maru Incident*, a play similar to *Walsh*, which has made money for the publisher, Talonbooks thus far has refused to publish it. In the words of editor David Robinson, "It runs only 85 minutes." "What does *Krapp's Last Tape* run?" asks Sharon, "and what has that to do with anything? Someone in this country should be publishing every play that has had a professional production."

Distribution, everyone's problem, is Talonbooks' as well. Their sales policy seems to be to wait for schools and universities to order books rather than actively to place them in the shops. Major bookstores often do not have copies on the shelves, although they receive many requests for *Walsh*, which has just gone into its second run of 1500 copies. Author's royalties do not come through, although income tax forms indicate the money has been paid to the author. "I don't know why they can't put my 10 cents, or whatever, for each copy sold into some account that says that's for me instead of my having to wait for their Canada Council grant. Are they overextending themselves in publishing: is money from *Walsh* subsidizing things that nobody wants to buy? As a playwright, I don't see why I should have to do that."

Why doesn't Sharon Pollock go to New York, to the big publishing houses, to a large American festival company? "Someone in New York has called me about producing *My Name Is Lisbeth* and a company in Iowa will produce *Walsh*. If things go that way, that's fine." But the rewards of working in Canadian theatre are different. There can be enough money to live on, as well as the opportunity for a person like Sharon Pollock to work with other professionals in similar situations, Canadians with top-flight theatre skills who enjoy being where they are and find the resources to stretch themselves artistically in this country. "What I write is quite Canadian-oriented. I couldn't live in the States. I couldn't work for the States either. I really believe that the artist has a *job*, a responsibility not just to her/himself but to the society s/he comes from. I represent the kinds of questions some Canadians are asking, and my responsibility is here." ①

"Representation of the world, like the world itself, is the work of men; they see it from their own point of view, which they confuse with absolute truth."

Towards a Women's Film Aesthetic

by Bonnie Kreps

This quote from Simone deBeauvoir's *The Second Sex* applies not only to art but even to the term "aesthetics", which should properly be understood as a male term and not a generic one. It is a term applied by men to art by men in a world where a male culture predominates. "Good art", and even more so "great art", are highly charged political terms and should not be considered objective in any sense.

My own definition of "great art" would be something like a "masculine term used by masculine critics about masculine work". All of which is to be regretted, since it makes things just that much harder on those of us who are females and who want to produce work out of our own experiences and feelings. What befalls the woman artist in current society is the choice of either producing male-oriented work or of running into lack of understanding and downright ridicule of her work.

Basically, women's art is obviously that which is considered "not serious" and usually "not important". At best, we women artists are given a sort of interlude during which we hopefully will stop diddling around and eventually produce something that male critics will approve of. This pernicious attitude is also held by lots of women, even by well-meaning feminists who like to see women produce "good work" and are proud of them when they do. Those women are liable to do the male trick of equating "women's art" with "kitchen art" or just plain junk, and of fervently hoping that we women artists will "take our work more seriously" and measure up to those supposedly objective aesthetic standards.

My own particular area of art is film-making. I am often called a "women's film-maker" or even a "feminist film-maker", and these terms are not entirely inaccurate. It is certainly true that I am a film-maker who is also a woman and a feminist — and that there is a close connection between these three facts. I am a woman first (although I lived for well over 26 years thinking I was a man — what feminists call a male-oriented woman); I became a feminist about ten years ago and a film-maker in 1969. Not surprisingly, perhaps, the first film I made was a radical feminist one called *After The Vote: A Report From Down Under*.

In the eight years or so that women have made films *as women*, and often as feminists, there have emerged three distinct phases of women's films. I've come to see this pattern emerge because of my own involvement in it. Gradually, as I attempted to make the kinds of films which pleased me, I saw that my work was exhibiting an evolving pattern — the beginning of my own film aesthetic. When I looked around at what other women film-makers were doing, I realized that this pattern applied not only to me but to a whole lot of us. It is closely connected with the evolution of the women's movement; we seem to share an historical development in our art. I'm going to use my own work as examples of this aesthetic development, because I feel most familiar with it — and also because I agree with Moshe Safdie when he says, "I have learned that ideas and process cannot be separated, that they must become one if we are to bridge the gap between concept and reality."

In 1968 I got a job in straight TV doing public affairs programmes. I stayed inside for three years, during which time I learned many useful things in the technical realm and also that I didn't belong there.

With few exceptions, public affairs TV is very male-oriented. It is what I used to call "hit and run TV", in which you certainly want to be "serious", since you're usually talking about the end of the world or something equally momentous. The procedure was virtually a formula: get an "expert" (meaning a man, and preferably someone from Harvard), interview him, shoot film to cover what he was talking about — do this a number of times and put it all together into a programme. There would be no attempt to get into a rapport with these experts, to have any feelings emerge (except maybe one of nervousness, since the interviewer

usually was trying to get the expert to say something he hadn't wanted to say). When the interview was over, the crew (almost always male) would pack up and leave. Scene over.

I soon began to realize that this wasn't my scene, and my first move was to try to remind the producers that there were actually lots of women around in this world, though one would tend to forget this happy fact when viewing the tube.

CTV was very good to me and allowed me to make my first film when I was still a neophyte. This was in 1969, and the film was *After The Vote*. This film is a good example of what I call "phase one" of women's film aesthetic. In this phase a lot of us were taking serious and often humorous looks at a sexist culture and the results of sexism, especially as it affected women. *Vote* does the same thing. I used a lot of material from our culture — news footage of beauty contests for women and for little girls, pictures from bridal magazines, from *Playboy* and other grossly sexist uses of women's bodies, music like "I Enjoy Being a Girl" and other wonders of womanhood, and so forth. These I wove into ironic twists on what was going on in the film — which was a fairly straightforward assessment of sex roles, socialization of girls and boys, the "homemaker" role as central to women, and a whole host of other concepts which now are pretty well-known and which are central to a radical feminist analysis.

The film was shown on W5 and was then used extensively for feminist organizing purposes by our group "The New Feminists" in Toronto. It worked very well and is still in use, though it is somewhat dated now. My most amusing incident with the film was showing it to 127 male and 3 female members of the Canadian Armed Forces College. To my pleasant surprise, the men laughed in the right places and for (hopefully) the right reasons. The subsequent discussion was very positive, and I eventually received a letter from the commanding officer saying that I had raised the level of consciousness nine levels, or something like that. I always wondered how the Army does this kind of measuring. Most efficiently, I'm sure.

By 1971 I left CTV and went independent. I was entering "phase two" in that I was now pre-occupied with doing a different kind of filming and doing it with women. I had seen a huge display of photographs of women by women and was deeply moved by it as well as intellectually stirred. There were

hundreds of photos showing "woman's world" and showing old women, naked women, women loving women, and so forth. And not a prurient or alienated shot among them. I decided to make a film with women and about older women.

Such a choice is quite characteristic of phase two of the women's aesthetic. First, we took a look at a sexist male culture. Then we began to have the self-reliance to make films about our own experience rather than the usual male one we see on film. Any women's film festival will have lots of films from this phase: films about ourselves, our mothers, our daughters, childbirth, abortions, loving women, etc. We were telling ourselves that "our world" was important (at least to us) and worth putting into our art. I think we were also experiencing the joy of working this way rather than in the old alienated ways — making films which had relevance to our own lives, to the lives of our sisters. This was "coming out", and it felt great.

My own film from this phase was *Portrait Of My Mother*, filmed in the fall of 1972. After several months of searching, I had managed to find a woman camera technician. We soon became good friends, and went off to film my Mother. I had chosen my Mother, because I wanted to make a film for all those women who supposedly are "over the hill". I used to see them on the bus every time I went home to my house in the suburbs of Toronto. Women who are too old to be sex objects and whose role as mother is over because the children have grown up. Women who had bought the feminine mystique and who now were past the functions which the mystique said were every woman's true destiny. Women who still had 25-30 years to live, perhaps. I used to feel an immense empathy for them and wanted to show them that they need not be in the position of Caitlin (Mrs. Dylan Thomas' terrible phrase, "Leftover Life to Kill").

Now, true to phase one, *Vote* had been an examination of what was wrong. This time, I wanted to show something positive and without any analysis or comment — just a strong, positive life being led by women who also were (in chronological age) "over the hill". I also wanted to try out some aesthetic theories which I now see as very central to phase two. Not only did I not like the old "hit and run" method — I mean, it was a drag to work that way, never really getting into anything and often feeling as though you were ripping off some

hapless expert — I was beginning to see that this method of filming actually precluded most of the world as subjects. Only those who were highly verbal, intellectual, hard to rattle, and who could whip out a string of quotable nuggets at a moment's notice were really "good material" for public affairs TV.

In *Portrait*, I tried for a number of things, all of them reactions to what I felt was lacking in the kind of filming I had been involved with before. First of all, I wanted only women in front of the cameras and only women behind them as well. I felt that something different and probably beautiful would emerge just from these two choices. I also knew that filming my Mother would be a good test of my theory that, with a less masculine approach to filming, people who were usually invisible could become visible. My Mother was a good test case, since she is a "nobody" and was so shy about picture-taking that she used to look strange even in snapshots. I figured that if I could make *her* come across in an actual film, I would have given a blow to the exclusive domain of the old Harvard professors.

I was constantly reminded that I was doing something unusual — even strange and probably not worth doing. At the border, for example (my Mother lives in the mountains of Wyoming), the customs men would ask what I was filming down there. When I said I was going to make a film about my Mother, they invariably asked with interest, "Oh, who's your Mother?" If I felt generous, I would explain my purpose in filming her; if not, I would just say, "She's the President of General Motors."

We filmed for 10 days, living on the old ranch where she lives, and had a marvellous time. Without the usual narration used ad nauseam in TV films (I get so tired of being *told* what I'm seeing and feeling), a portrait of a quiet woman of 58 emerged. A woman who looked gentle, but who climbed mountains and rafted on rivers; a mother whose daughter was also in the film, yet there were no role-playing numbers going down; a woman who related with ease and grace to women ranging in age from 12 to over 70; a woman who was at peace with herself and her environment.

Another important thing which happened because of that film was this: my own life changed profoundly. I came to a new assessment of my Mother and to a new view of our relationship. This is an important feature of women's films, I think. I had been involved in

making dozens of programmes for TV while working for CTV. Many of them had been interesting, but not one of them had any profound effect on my own life. The really beautiful thing about making films out of your own experience and making them with your friends is that this activity is central to your own growth, not only as a filmmaker but as a person. What is normally called "achievement" in the male world is usually quite alienated from this kind of growth. It's an "achievement" to be president of General Motors or to be the fastest runner in the world; not to make a meaningful connection with another person or with something deep within yourself. Making *Portrait Of My Mother* not only confirmed my emerging aesthetic theories; it set me firmly in the path of wanting only to make films which had a real relevance to my own life.

According to my analysis, we are now in "phase three" of women's filmmaking. This phase is not so much *about* our world as *out of it*. We have begun to understand where we came from, what "woman's world" means to us, where our roots are. Now, we look at the world at large with this knowledge and experience behind us. New eyes on the old scene, is what it feels like. The films which will come out of this phase will therefore not necessarily be "women's films" in the obvious sense; rather, they will be made from a viewpoint not really seen hitherto. And they will be made without apologies to masculine critics.

My own film in this category has just been finished in Vancouver. It is a dance film called *Mountain Dance*. Modern dance, created and filmed by women. It's in four parts and is intended to show a certain kind of relationship of women to women, to our bodies, to nature. The first part is a strongly stated solo dance using mountains, water and dawn mist as natural effects incorporated into the dance and the film as a whole. Then there is a whimsical playing with sheer rock faces (the dancer is on a climbing rope) and with rock formations in general — this dance was actually created principally at the editing bench and thus gave me a chance to try a kind of choreographing, myself. There is a burlesque tango in the style of Rudolph Valentino, done by two naked dancers in a natural hot springs pool. And there is a very ethereal solo, filmed at sunrise and using river mists and a double image technique which in effect makes the dancer dance with herself — this to the

incredible flute of Paul Horn in the Taj Mahal.

As a whole, I think *Mountain Dance* fits phase three very well. It is a women's film in the sense that women made it and made it out of their own experience. It makes an oblique rather than overt statement about a state-of-mind-and-feeling, about women's relation to each other, to their bodies, and to their environment. It probably could have been made by men, but I think it unlikely that it would have been.

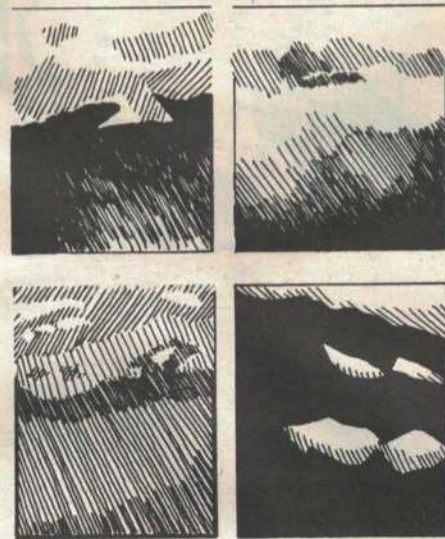
There is one aspect of women's film-making which I have not mentioned so far and which has a profound influence on what we produce. That's the financial end of the process. For the most part, women film-makers work with ludicrously small budgets and consequently under ludicrous conditions.

This situation does, however, have very positive aspects to it. Once you are over getting producer's ulcers over having to make a film without anywhere near the budget you should have, you begin to see that scrounging has its good points. For one thing, it means that you only work with people who are there for the love of the film — or of you, or both. You also work with

people who will pitch in at whatever is needed. Carol Betts, who shot *Portrait* and *Mountain Dance*, also washed dishes, cooked dinner, scaled mountains, slept in a camper van, and so forth. This kind of positive involvement with the process shows up clearly in the end product; you get a film which, whatever its flaws, looks as though it was made with love. In a film world where we seem to have progressed from James Bond, who fucked and killed, to Charles Bronson who just kills, we can use some lovingly-created films.

This is by no means intended to imply that it's okay that serious film-makers have to work under such low-budget conditions. It merely — as do most things, I suppose — has its positive aspects. The negative ones are very serious. There seems to be a feeling around that, if you are really committed to a project, you will somehow put up with a whole host of hassles in the process of carrying it out. And so you will. The point is, should you have to? Why this accepted inverse ratio between commitment and budget? Having come out of the "school of low budgets", our film-makers could — with more generous working conditions — really flower.

I don't know if there will emerge yet another phase in our film aesthetic. For myself, I want to continue making films that fall within phase three. I suspect this will be true for a lot of us women film-makers. There is a lot to look at in this world, and most of it has hitherto been seen with only one set of eyes. We need a new mirror on the world, and women's films will go a long way towards providing one. ①



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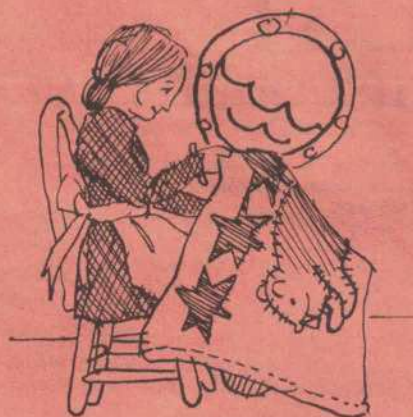
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BEING A COLLECTION OF COMMENTS AND ODDMENTS FROM OUR PAST

"Preparations are being made for our arrival at Quebec; and, as it has been discovered that there is no Canadian flag on board, my maid, Mrs. Dent, is busily engaged in trying to manufacture one. Nobody is quite sure what it is, but all suppose that there must be a beaver and a maple leaf in it."

Lady Dufferin,
My Canadian Journal 1872-1878



"The Fathers of Confederation chose the title 'Dominion' for the country they had made. Typically it was a second choice, after their British rulers, afraid of offending the United States, rejected the titles the Canadians wanted."

William Kilbourn,
Canada: A Guide to
the Peaceable Kingdom,
1970.

"The Oneiochronons (who form one of the five Iroquois nations) had a very peculiar form of government. The men and the women therein administer alternatively the affairs; so that, if now it is a man who governs them, after his death it will be a woman, who during her life will govern them in her turn, except in what regards war."

Father Jerome Lalemant,
Jesuit Relations,
1639-43.

"In the judgment of many Canadian intellectuals and politicians, past and present, Canada has suffered more than a century from a somewhat more orthodox and less titillating version of Portnoy's complaint: the inability to develop a secure and unique identity."

Ramsay Cook,
The Maple Leaf Forever,
1971.



"Behind every successful man, there is a surprised woman."

Maryon Pearson

"Hemingway seemed very much not to have liked Canada."

Gertrude Stein



"Of books published in the Colony, we have very few indeed; and those which have been issued from a Canadian press have generally been got out, either by subscription, or at the expense of the author. It is almost impossible for any work published in Canada to remunerate the bookseller.... The same may be said of the different magazines which have been published in the Colony."

Susanna Moodie,
The Introduction on Mark Hurdleston,
The Gold Worshipper,
1853.

In 1842 Major John Richardson applied to the Legislature of Upper Canada for a grant to publish a book on the War of 1812 on the grounds that he was 'generally known and acknowledged as the only Author this country has produced, or who has attempted to infuse into it a spirit of literature'. He was given £ 250.

Aspects of Nineteenth Century Ontario,
ed. by Armstrong, Stevenson and Wilson

"In speaking of means of conveyance the snowshoe must not be forgotten. Everybody knows what snowshoes are, and not a few wonder how anybody can walk with them. They are an embarrassment of course, but less inconvenient than might be supposed... On an unbroken sheet of snow, two, three, or four feet deep the snowshoe is a necessity... It ought not to be supposed, however, that snowshoes are an indispensable part of every Canadian's ordinary footwear."

William Parker Greenough,
Canadian Folk-Life and Folk-Lore,
1897.

In 1666, Jean Talon, Intendant of New France, carried out the first official census in the history of Canada. The white population of the St. Lawrence colony was 3,215, plus about 1,000 soldiers and about 30 priests and nuns. Nearly a third of the population was under ten years of age.



"Canada was never Hollywood's favourite word. In fact the movie-makers went out of their way not to use it. In scores of cases, the only way you knew a movie was about Canada was when a Mountie or a French-Canadian trapper hove into view."

Pierre Berton,
Hollywood's Canada,
1975.

"The Canadian girl is regarded abroad as a child of Nature. In the literary Mecca of New York she is always first of all 'an authority on outdoor sports'. At home she may have posed as an authority on Browning and Greek verbs, but to the editors at the point of gravitation she blooms forth as one who has shaken off some of the rusty shackles of social conventions, and revels in the delights of sunlight and breeze."

Hector Charlesworth,
"The Canadian Girl" in
The Canadian magazine,
1893.



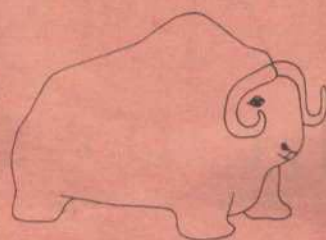
"Perhaps the most surprising discovery to emerge," said Percival, "was the comparative weakness of the Canadian male compared to the female. Basically, men should be 50% stronger than women, yet we found that proportionately, pound for pound in body weight, women were stronger than men in every age group up to the age of 40."

Lloyd Percival
of Lloyd Percival's Fitness Institute,
1972.



"Metchosin. The inhabitants of this village may be saddened to learn that its name (an Indian word) means 'stinking fish'. Apparently the carcass of a whale rotted on the beach of nearby Parry Bay over a century ago."

G.V.P.J. & Helen B. Akrigg,
1001 British Columbia Place Names,
1969.



Seals must have air to breathe yet they live all winter in the sea under six feet of ice. The polar bear is a land animal but spends most of his life in the sea. Musk ox resemble, but are not related to, buffalo or ox, nor do they smell of musk; they are relics of a bygone age, descended in unbroken line from species first evolved one million years ago.

Douglas Wilkinson,
The Arctic Coast,
An Illustrated Natural History
of Canada,
1970.

An Arctic phenomenon called white-out occurs most often when a low overcast of light clouds occurs above a uniformly snow-covered land surface, or sea ice surface, or glacial ice surface. Under such a condition the eye can see, but it cannot see anything; or if it can see objects, it is unable to see them in perspective.

Douglas Wilkinson,
The Arctic Coast,
The Illustrated Natural History
of Canada,
1970.

Even today, in mid-twentieth century, with very few exceptions Canadians are afraid of their Arctic coast region; only about one-tenth of one percent of Canada's population lives there, and of this miniscule proportion it is quite probable that at least one-third would rather be anywhere but where they are.

Douglas Wilkinson,
The Arctic Coast,
An Illustrated Natural History
of Canada,
1970.



LADIES OF THE COURT

THE EDMONTON GRADS 1915-1940

by Nora Delahunt Randall



*Pickles, Ketchup, Chow, Chow, Chow,
Chew 'em up, Eat 'em up,
bow, wow, wow;
Hannibal, Cannibal, sis, boom, bah,
Commercial Graduates, rah, rah, rah.*

It was a different time.

The First World War had started, but it had not yet become mechanized slaughter. Canada was sending men and horses to Europe. Cartoons could still cry out, "Contrary to all rules of war, Prussian aeroplanes deal death to helpless women and children."

Merchants in Vancouver ran ads in the *Sun* promising they would not raise prices to profit from the War.

In entertainment, Lucille Mulhall, "that daring young equestrienne marvel" was touring Canada with her "genuine Wild West show" and Mary Pickford movies were popular.

It would be two years before Emmeline Pankhurst toured Canada talking to women's groups.

And on the sports page, the only women's names that appeared belonged to race horses.

But in Edmonton, 1914 was the year J. Percy Page started coaching girls' basketball and that beginning was to ensure women a place on the sports page right up to present day.

It was Page's first year at McDougall Commercial High School. He and Ernest Hyde flipped a coin to see who would coach the boys and who the girls. Hyde called the toss, picked the boys, and won obscurity. Page was left with the girls and together they created a twenty-five-year event in Canadian history.

The official years of the Edmonton Grad's basketball career are 1915-1940. It was in 1915 that Page's first girls' team graduated, but they enjoyed the game so much that they voted to keep on playing and Page was willing to continue coaching them. So the first Grads lived at home, worked as stenographers or teachers during the day, and played basketball at night. This routine continued with little public notice until 1922. True, the Grads had been winning the Provincial Championship every year since their beginning, but in 1922 they raised the money to go east to play against the London Shamrocks for the Canadian Championship. When the Grads won, Edmonton began to take notice of their women's basketball team. This 1922 team is the team usually referred to as the first Grad team. It's the team that had so much influence in setting the distinctive Grad spirit and tradition. Later players looked to this team for

their inspiration.

I went to Edmonton to do research on the Grads and while I was there I got to talk to some of the women who had played for various Grad teams over the years — Daisy Johnson, Abbie Scott (Kennedy), Winnie Gallen (Reid), Babe Daniel (Morgan), and Betty Bawden (Bowen). Then, when I returned to Vancouver, I talked to Dot Johnson (Sherlock), Mildred McCormack (Wilkie), Margaret McBurney (Vasheresse), and Helen Stone (Stewart). Now that their playing years have settled comfortably into history, it's not their knock-out record which is the source of their countless stories, but their own fine spirit and the people they met and the places they played.

Their spirit is a magical blend that has its roots in another time, continues in the present, and looks toward the future. Helen Stone Stewart said, "I'm not one for remembering the past; I like to think about the future." However, this spirit, alive as it may be today, is the product of a time past. The Grads don't think it could happen now and neither do I. The Grad spirit is a sole survivor and an endangered species.

Abbie Scott Kennedy said, "We were pure amateurs, probably the only ones around." What she means by this is that the Grads differed from most of the women's basketball teams they played, especially the American and European teams, in two significant ways. While the other teams recruited the best players from around the state, region, or country, all 38 of the Grads were Edmonton girls. In fact, all but two of them were graduates of McDougall Commercial High School. While this shows that Page was not finagling for star players from all over, it doesn't mean the girls weren't maneuvering to make the team. After the 1922 team set the tradition, every Edmonton girl wanted to be a Grad. Winnie Gallen Reid said, "I was at Eastwood studying to be a nurse. Eastwood didn't have a gym. While those kids at McDougall were practising every day with Mr. Page. I had to make a decision, nursing or the Grads. So I transferred to McDougall... The height of luxury was when I made the team and Mr. Page said, 'Go on down to Dominion Rubber and get yourself a pair of running shoes.'"

The second way the Grads differed from other amateur teams had to do with spending money. Though amateurs couldn't be paid, Babe Daniel Morgan remembered an amateur hockey team whose members received \$5. a day in "spending money". This was a common

practice. "Spending money!" laughs Abbie Scott Kennedy. "When we were in Paris we were going to have a day's shopping and Mr. Page doled out 35 cents, or was it 55 cents, per person for lunch. That was it. I remember Connie and I found a nice little sidewalk teashop where of course everything was in French and we found out later it was a teashop for diabetics."

There were also independent amateurs. Most of them were working girls who worked all day before playing their games at night. All their playing tours, with one exception, were paid for by themselves or from their gate receipts. The exception was their trip to the 1928 Olympics in Amsterdam. For this trip they didn't have quite enough money, so different business men around town reached into their own pockets for the difference.

The Grads were, above all, a team. Over the years players came and went but the team maintained a steady standard of excellence. There were no stars who were irreplaceable and no player's retirement threw the team off balance. Even talking to the women today, I found that while their personalities are all different, no one person sticks out.

They were pioneers, too. Basketball, when they started playing it in 1915, was only 24 years old. The Grads played on cinder courts outside, contending with sunburn along with their human opponents. In Wetaskiwin the outside court was covered with dust a foot thick. It was impossible to breathe, much less dribble. The Grads played on indoor floors that had supporting pillars on the court; at a gym in Sunnyside, the roof was so low that they had to either loft the ball through the rafters or shoot straight away at the basket. In Barrons they had to wait for the store downstairs to close before the gym lights could be turned on.

Their own floor at McDougall was no prize either. The wall was right behind the basket and had radiators sticking out from it. Babe Daniel Morgan said, "You had to watch out, 'cause when you went in for a lay-up shot, if you didn't turn quickly, you'd hit the radiator." Not only was the floor a liability, but the McDougall gym also had no showers. "After a game," said Abbie, "you'd wash your face and go home."

The old university gym where they sometimes practised in the early days wasn't much better. Abbie Scott broke two toes running into the wall.

Later they moved most of their games and practices to the Edmonton

arena, where the floor went on endlessly. Of playing with the Grads, Daisy Johnson said, "We certainly had to adapt ourselves."

J.P. Page contributed a lot to the Grad spirit. Trent Frayne wrote in *An Illustrated Canadian History* that: "The Grads were a reflection of their creator, their one and only coach throughout the quarter-century, John Percy Page, steady, conservative, thorough, solemn, dedicated." Most of the publicity Page has received has pictured him this way, so Daisy Johnson brought me copies of the *Commercial Chronicle* to show me that he also had a sense of humour. The *Chronicle* was a news-sheet that Page used to make up for the girls and pass out each day of the long train trips on their tours.

The Commercial Chronicle
April 3, 1926.

There was a monster celebration here this afternoon on receipt of the good news from Winnipeg. Both supporters of the Grads went down to Charlie Hepburn's and ordered a Coca-Cola.

Same tour.

The lady in the hairdressing parlour who thought Kate's black-and-blue spots on her arms were a sure sign of a honeymoon, probably spoke from experience. It's a tough life, Kate.

April 2, 1926.

Maggie McBurney bade a touching farewell to Bill Kostuk at the Depot tonight. It was pitiful to see the two young things in such despair. However, hopes are held out for their recovery.

Not only the humour, but his affection for the girls comes through in these missives.

The girls returned his affection. One of the stories Winnie Reid tells is about the time they travelled to Toronto to play a series.

Winnie: *When we got off the train there were reporters to interview Mr. Page. They wanted to know what he thought about Toronto bringing in Stella Walsh, who was a fantastic player.*

Daisy: *Supposed to be an amateur of course.*

Winnie: *Mr. Page was manager and coach and everything, so he was pretty busy when we arrived somewhere with luggage and whatnot. Anyway a reporter asked him what he thought of Stella Walsh, and I can't imagine him saying this, but he did. He said something like "Oh well, I don't suppose it will matter. I doubt whether she'll score more than*

4 points anyway." So the next day there's this big headline in the paper: "Page says Walsh won't score more than 4 points." So he got a little worried and that night he went to Etta Dan who was going to be guarding Stella Walsh, and he told Etta he was in a bit of trouble and depending on her to get him out. Well, Stella Walsh didn't score a point and Etta scored four."

When I asked the Grads what Page expected of them, they were unanimous. "J.P. always said we were to be ladies first and basketball players second. And we had to produce."

One of the reasons why the Grad spirit was a phenomenon of its time and cannot be recreated today is the present corrupt definition of a lady, as opposed to the "lady" of the Grads' playing days. When I was growing up I was told a "lady" would never run as fast as she could, nor would she consider playing with and certainly not beating boys. She would also not sweat in public.

The ladies that J.Percy Page wanted on his basketball team were obviously a more vigorous bunch than their successors.

As far as specific rules about smoking, drinking, curfews and practices, there were none. The older Grads said they never even would have thought to smoke or drink, since most women didn't do either in public in the Twenties. The younger Grads wouldn't consider it because they wanted to follow the tradition that had been established and they wanted to keep fit enough to stay on the team. No mean feat, since *after* a practice they had to run around the arena. As for curfews and attendance at practices, they all agreed that there were no set rules, but everyone just knew what Page expected and did it.

There were, of course, exceptions to this perfect accord. Page had a rule against the girls dating boys on their tours. This rule was always observed. "After all," said Helen Stewart, "those were our mating years."

As far as their style of play went, it was strictly meat-and-potatoes. Page thought that if the Grads knew a few basic plays well enough to do them in their sleep, they could play good basketball. Their play was characterized by short, quick passes and an unrelenting running game.

The training programme developed over the years. In the beginning Page invited girls to try out for the Grads, but by the Thirties, Page had a well-established farm system teaching his style of play. It consisted of school teams, the Gradettes (a feeder team for

the Grads), and the boy Grads who practised against the Grads to keep them on their toes.

Behind all this was a belief in competition. Babe Morgan said, "I think people face their problems in life with the same spirit they competed in as a youth. If the going gets rough you can't roll over and play dead." Winnie Reid agreed: "There's nothing wrong with competitiveness. You just have to know how to win and how to lose."

This magical blend produced a record as startling as a cabbage grown by fairies. The Edmonton Grads:

- played 522 games over a 25-year period. They lost 20 of these.
- won 147 consecutive games, lost one, then won 78 more.
- won the provincial championship 23 out of 24 times they competed for it. In 1921 they won against the University of Alberta but the University contested the win on the grounds that Connie Smith was still a high school student therefore not eligible to play. The game was replayed — the Grads lost.
- won all 21 games they played for the Western Canadian Championship.
- won every Canadian Championship from 1922 to 1940.
- won the Underwood Trophy in Canadian-American competition every year from 1923, when it started, till 1940 when the Grads retired and the trophy was given to them permanently.
- won 3 out of 4 of the International Championships played between the Canadian Champion and the American Champion.

And

- although Women's Basketball did not become an official Olympic event until 1976, the Grads played 27 exhibition games at 4 Olympics and won them all.
- Margaret MacBurney set a record of 61 consecutive free throws without a miss at a Grad practice.
- Noel MacDonald was voted the outstanding Canadian athlete of 1939 and appointed to the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame.
- J.P. Page was appointed to the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame.
- The Grads and Mr. Page were appointed to the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame and the Edmonton Hall of Fame.

Though it's a smashing record, it doesn't convey the excitement and



affection this team generated. When they returned to Edmonton from the 1924 Olympics, there were 20,000 people at the train station to meet them. The Rotarians invited them to lunch.

In 1926, Chicago sportswriter Don Maxwell saw them play and titled his article "Girls War Like Amazons on Basket Floor". He went on with this description:

Folks who went to the game expecting to see a lady-like struggle fainted in the first quarter... Pretty little Dot Johnson, right forward for Edmonton, once fell with a knee out of joint.

The crowd waited for the stretcher-bearers. She lay on the floor and waited to have the leg jerked back in place, and jerked it was. Sister players held her shoulders and the good leg flat on the floor while another sister pulled and pushed at the leg that was awry.

A husky football player might have called for an anaesthetic. Dorothy called for time out.

The leg finally cracked into joint and Dorothy hobbled back into play.

Sports writers even wrote poems about them. In 1927 the Grads played the St. Louis Undertakers for the Underwood Trophy and won. At a luncheon in St. Louis afterwards, Daisy Johnson found this at her plate:

Let Her R I P

*There was a young girl named Johnson,
Daisy,
Whom you might think kind of lazy*

*But they say on the day
That she passed away,
She drove all the undertakers crazy.*

In 1930 the Grads played the Chicago Taylor-Trunks for the Underwood Trophy in Edmonton. They lost the first game, 24-34. It was the first time in seven years that the Grads lost on their home floor. Edmontonians, quick to see that this would be a hot series, paid the \$1.50 admission fee, despite the Depression, and packed the arena for the second game until the fire marshalls closed the doors leaving a couple of hundred fans still in the parking lot. The Grads, spurred on by this record-breaking attendance, took the series from the Taylor-Trunks by beating them 40-13. Even though all Grad games were by this time broadcast on the radio, there were an estimated 100,000 to 150,000 telephone calls asking for the score of the second game, causing the overloaded Edmonton telephone exchange to blow up.

Three years later when the Grads lost the first game in a series for the North American Championship to the Durant Cardinals, the telephone company tried to get ready. This notice appeared on the front page of the *Edmonton Journal*:

*Ring No. 6 tonight/Basketball Score
Arrangements have been completed
by the Edmonton Journal in co-operation
with the city telephone department
to give basketball fans up-to-the-*

*minute service on tonight's game
between the Grads and the Durant
team.*

*Dial No. 6 for results. Do not ask
for the score, simply ring the number
and the operator will give the score.*

However, the telephone company was out of luck, as were the Grads. The Grads lost the second game and the exchange blew. Then, on the night of the third game, both the Grads and the telephone company made history. The Grads dropped the third game, making it the first and only time they lost a series. As Albertans rang up in disbelief, telephone technicians frantically put toothpicks between the connections to save the exchange. To no avail, however. The exchange blew again and Edmonton was without telephone service for 20 minutes.

Not to be outdone by the city folk, small-town people also worshipped the Grads. One fan from Wainwright called Cappy Kid used to come in for every game wearing a gold tie. (The Grads' colours were gold and black.) When the Grads finally came to Wainwright to play an exhibition game against the Gradettes, he had a wooden floor built especially for them.

Another time the Grads went by motorcade to Lloydminster to play an exhibition game. The car with their uniforms got lost. Scheduled to play at four o'clock they couldn't play till ten that night. It was pitch dark, but all kinds of lights were hung around the



The Grads were, above all, a team. Over the years players came and went but the team maintained a steady standard of excellence. There were no stars who were irreplaceable and no player's retirement threw the team off balance.

floor, and the Grads played. Ninety per cent of the spectators had waited.

While the Grads' history is mostly a collection of stories such as these, they are by no means the only stories.

Once, when they were playing against an American team, Etta Dan and Mabel Munton sneaked into the arena to watch their opposition practice, only to discover that the American team was being coached by the man who was supposed to referee the game.

Another time they travelled to a small town for an exhibition game. Not only was there no place for them to change so that they had to put coats over the windows and change in the cars, but there was no water, so that they had to ride back to Edmonton in their sweat-soaked uniforms.

Often during their career, the fans, both assured of and bored with the Grads' continuing dominance, would lose interest. As a result, when they sometimes lost a game they would be accused of doing it deliberately to bring the fans back. "That used to make me so mad," said Babe Morgan. "We would never think of doing a thing like that." "Mr. Page never would have stood for it either," said Winne Reid. "Why, I remember one time, we were playing some team, can't remember who, and

we were ahead and I guess kind of taking life easy. Well, at half-time, Mr. Page lined us all up on the bench and went up and down flicking a towel in front of us to cool us off. There weren't any fans or anything. He was really mad at the way we were playing, but J.P. never raised his voice. He went up and down that line, just snapping that towel. 'That's the worst basketball I've ever seen,' he says. Well, you can believe we played differently the second half."

The Grads also had to contend with prejudices against women in sports. A belief that dogged the Grads then, and can still be heard occasionally today, was that women who play sports have blue babies. Another "old husband's tale" that circulated in the Thirties was the theory of George Chalmer, then Secretary of the British College of Preceptors. Chalmer maintained that "Women as a sex will no longer exist if they continue in the masculine mode of physical instruction, that their functions of motherhood are being impaired, and in consequence they are giving birth to an emasculated race of men." On one occasion in the Thirties when women's basketball was specifically attacked as being too strenuous for girls, J.P. Page took to print to say that on the contrary

he found that basketball was beneficial to women because it helped to keep them in shape.

In the latter half of the Thirties, public support for the Grads began to wane. They were winning all the time and the fans failed to see the sport in that. Then too, the Second World War was looming larger. In 1940, the Grads decided to disband. The Air Force was using the Edmonton Arena for an armoury, and Page wanted to retire to devote more time to provincial politics. The time seemed right to end. The Grads then settled into thirty years of uncomplaining obscurity. One day many years later, Betty Bawden Bowen who was working at the Victoria School, saw the Underwood Trophy go by under a kid's arm.

"Hey, where are you going with that," she asked.

"We're decorating the gym and we need something to put flowers in," he said.

The Grads, who had formed a club

and still kept in touch with each other, decided it was time to get the Alberta Provincial archives or the City archives, to take their souvenirs. It was not an easy task. "No one seemed much interested," said Winnie Reid.

Abbie Kennedy said, "Well, they were so used to us they couldn't care less. Let's put it that way."

With the help of George Rice, a local broadcaster, they got the Provincial Archives to take their mementoes. (For which I am very grateful, since that's where I got most of the information for this article.)

Then, around 1973, interest in the Grads began to pick up again. This was probably due, first of all to the fact that Page died in 1973, and his funeral recalled the Grads' story to the press; secondly, the current interest in women in sports and what they've done make the Grads a story again.

Also, women's basketball finally was declared an official Olympic event at the 1976 Olympics in Montreal — 52

years after the Grads asked the Olympic board to recognize basketball as an official event. It is 40 years since the Grads last played in exhibition games at the Olympics, and 40 years after the Olympic recognition of men's basketball.

It is both fitting and ironic that the first official women's Olympic basketball should take place in Canada, the home of the Grads. But how pale this Olympic first looks in comparison with the Grads' trips to four Olympics in Europe, during an era when "to go to Calgary and stay overnight was a big event".

The Grads maintained a steadiness through it all — the obscurity, the interest, the incongruity. They hold reunions every five years where, reports have it, they talk as they used to play — non-stop. The last one, in 1975, held in Victoria, was a howling success. These women have made success a part of their style. Abbie Kennedy typified their spirit when she said, "As long as we can, we'll do it." ●



GIVEN A SPORTING CHANCE

An Interview with Barb Robertson by Renate Wilson

Renate Wilson in conversation with Barbara Robertson, who holds a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of British Columbia, now studying for her Master's degree in Kinesiology at Simon Fraser University. She is the Women's Athletic Coordinator at SFU, a women's basketball coach and a past member of the Canadian National Basketball team.

R: Do we have to feel slighted when we are termed the weaker sex? Are the areas where we are physically less capable — or said to be so — really significant?

B: I personally don't feel weak or weaker, but that is because I am a trained athlete and in first-rate physical condition.

It is perfectly true that men are stronger. The best trained male will do better in most sports than the best trained female. But far more important is the fact that there are greater differences within the same sex than between the sexes in the general population, between myself and untrained females than between myself and trained men.

Another point to remember is that in recent years women's best times in clocked sports are approaching the best men's times of only a few years ago. In the 100-metre sprints (track), men have improved 0.3 seconds in the last 25 years and the women 0.7 seconds, bringing them within 0.9 seconds of the men's record. Minute fractions maybe, but where records are broken by a few hundredths of a second, these figures are significant. Or to put it differently, where men were 16% faster in some swimming events, they are now only a little over 7% faster than women.

R: Women can never build as strong and bulky muscles as men because it is the male hormones, especially testosterone, which are partially responsible, even though we do have a small amount of this ourselves. Is that the only reason for women's slightly lower sports performance? I always thought we are put together

differently and that's what causes the discrepancy.

B: Actually, there are more similarities than differences between men and women. We have identical nervous systems, the number and types of bones, joints and muscles are the same. We are said to have a somewhat differently shaped pelvic structure which might affect running, but here too it has been found that some of these differences at least can be determined by race, heredity and other factors as well as sex. Our hearts are smaller, bones generally shorter which gives them less leverage for various movements used in sports. On the other hand, we may possibly have stronger knee joints and we certainly show better resistance to disease and a high pain threshold. A lot more basic research is needed to establish the *true* biological differences.

R: I would like to add something I found out about "menstrual engineering or programming". It is now possible to administer selected hormones in such a way that a woman's period will start on a pre-selected date, so that she will be in peak form for a special sports event like Olympics or a national championship. Also that if she has problems with her periods, these can be knocked out completely for a time. What do you think of this playing around with a woman's hormonal clock? Should we ask all female athletes to consider this in their quest for records or medals?

B: Olympic records have been set by women who were in the middle of their period or during the time of pre-menstrual tension which can also have an effect on athletic performance.

To me, this whole subject is bound up with the ancient word "the curse" and the idea that in order to excel we have to get rid of it. I do understand that there are women who have problems with their periods and in that case they benefit from some form of hormonal treatment. The idea that all women working

towards a spot on national teams should be part of such a scheme "just in case" disconcerts me; I don't like it at all.

R: Are there sports particularly suitable for women?

B: Not really, and I don't believe that there are female-appropriate sports and male-appropriate sports. People tend to classify sports in a very superficial way, mostly according to how they look. Parents are quite happy to see their girls go in for gymnastics and figure skating because these sports look graceful and skaters have the added advantage of wearing very pretty dresses. In actual fact, skating and gymnastics are about the most demanding sports imaginable, requiring enormous amounts of mental and physical strength and stamina.

We also hear a lot about the danger of women's "vital parts" being hurt in the rougher sports, but tend to forget that men's "vital parts" are much more exposed than ours.

R: You are one of those women who are frequently told that you play basketball or any other game just like a man. Do you in fact move, run, jump, or throw like a typical man and not like a typical woman?

B: This is really a joke and I would laugh if it weren't so silly and, in some ways, such a sad statement. I play basketball the correct way. Watch how I throw the ball — from the shoulder, through the upper arm, elbow and to the hand. Then have a look at the way many girls throw a ball, as if they didn't really mean it.

R: All right, then, why is this so? Are you unusual? Why is it that the majority of girls simply can't use their bodies to execute a proper throw?

B: The only difference is that I was taught by my father and other coaches who believed that girls could play as well as boys. There often weren't enough people to make

up a basketball team, so I played with and against boys in high school. I was picked because I was a good player, that was the only reason. In fact, when I came to Vancouver, I was the only girl who could do a jump shot. For the longest time girls weren't even taught that, because it was believed that their hip size would make it impossible. I was coached properly and I was fit, so I was a useful player, not because somehow I acquired male attributes.

R: Once we know that we can play games as well as men do and are given equally good coaching, would this ensure that we get better women athletes?

B: It would help, but unfortunately the really big problem is that the image so many women have of themselves interferes with athletic success. Many of my players still feel funny jogging by themselves, but will do it as a team. I think they feel a bit exposed and the object of some snide remarks. There is also the idea that being proud of our body, of being physically active and allowing ourselves to enjoy using our body, is somehow not feminine — the jock image which women seem to fear.

Athletes have been known to try and hide their shoulder muscles because people were pointing to them as unfeminine, although there is nothing unsightly about well-defined muscles and sportswomen look a lot better than their flabbier, untrained sisters.

R: Do you think we are afraid of being too good, because it might make the men uncomfortable?

B: That is what we are always told, but I question whether this is really so. There are now enough really first-rate women athletes who are completely comfortable about their femininity and this surely transmits itself to those around them, men and women alike. It is the women who lack confidence in their own ability and consider themselves as freaks, who have this identity problem. Of course it doesn't help that parents still call girls who are good at sports tomboys and are shocked when a small girl turns somersaults while wearing a dress.

I was interested to see a report done in the United States which

studied top women executives and came up with the information that a great many of them had been considered tomboys when they were little. One reason for their subsequent success in life could be that they had been allowed to develop as well-rounded people who were encouraged to experience everything available. The physical aspects of their growing-up years were not neglected, which they so often are.

R: Let's talk about numbers. Is it true that fewer women than men are interested in physical activities?

B: Yes, until recently this was so, but it is also a sort of chicken-and-egg question. We don't really know whether fewer of us engaged in sports because we were told we shouldn't for health reasons, because it wasn't socially accepted beyond a point, because there was not enough money, leadership, interest or opportunity.

Traditionally, the men have always been supplied with better coaching and facilities as their right, while women had to prove themselves first. "Show us that you really want sports programmes and then we'll see what we can do for you" is the attitude, or worse: "Women don't really need such activities.... It is more important for men, so let's put our money where it is needed most."

Sports facilities are invariably designed by men, for men, funded and staffed by men and far too often without thought for the women users.

R: I suppose the authorities can point to fewer women needing the facilities as a reason for their actions?

B: Not with the newer buildings. There are now more women entering the kinesiology credit courses than men. Also the general education programmes, which are the structured, non-credit physical education activities, have more women enrolled.

R: What about the university's athletic teams, how equal are they?

B: We have 115 males and 75 females on the teams. But for the men there are 7 full-time and 4 part-

time coaches, while I am the only full-time coach and have also 3 part-time ones. But remember, at the same time, I am also the women's athletic co-ordinator, which is a pretty busy administrative position. Generally the women play more games, but have a much smaller budget with less money for food, tournaments and travel.

R: Have you any explanation why organized women's sports events are considered less important?

B: The general public still has this idea that women's sports are not as exciting to watch, nor that we are as involved or have as much at stake. The difference seems to be in the way men's games appear to the fans — you know, the bodies are bigger, sweat shows up more, players seem to be working harder and therefore entertain the crowds more. So they get the cheerleaders, the big bands and the announcers even if they play an unimportant game, while we may be playing playoffs for national championships and hardly anybody will bother to come.

R: Why do you think we now see more women in sports?

B: For one thing, our women athletes are doing so well in international competition and bringing back more medals than men. That almost automatically inspires more girls to think of sport seriously. Women excel in other fields, so they also do it in sports. Perhaps the sheer weight of numbers is forcing schools to make more time available to girls' activities. Perhaps the message that women need physical activities as much as — or more than — men is finally being heard. We still have far too few women in sports administration — only two women are heads of physical education departments in Vancouver secondary schools, in spite of equal numbers of boys and girls.

R: What about the future, where are women athletes heading?

B: Certainly not in one direction they are always accused of wanting to go, that is to beat men's records. We want to set women's records; if these are rapidly approaching the

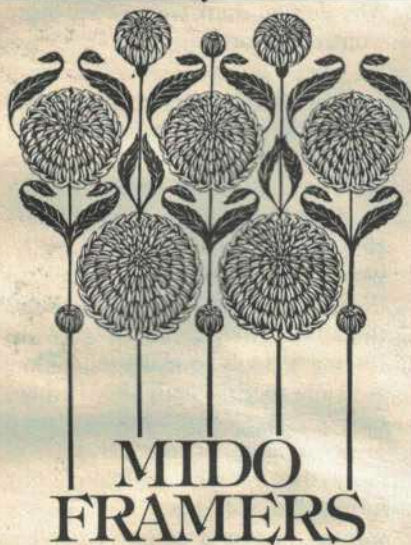
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men's best performances in many sports, it is up to them to do better too.

R: Do women want to play on men's teams?

B: No. I think in many respects that would be a dangerous move which might wipe out women's sports. If you were to open up all games, the women would lose out because of their lesser bulk and strength as compared to men — a comparison that just isn't realistic.

On the other hand, we do play a lot of mixed intramural games, mixed tennis games are quite usual and the equestrian events are not segregated either. I like the side-by-side aspect we carry out in practices like our basketball workouts, which are now held in adjoining courts with the men's team, where previously we had to yield the best times to them. The swimmers too train together, which has the advantage of the girls swimming as hard as they can to catch the boys and the boys working as hard as they can to keep ahead of the girls, so everyone gains.

R: How can women overcome the hurdles which seem to be in their way towards full equality in sports?

B: *Search out all programmes available to us, press for more to be started in Y clubs, community schools, and centres, colleges, universities. Many of these places now have day care centres, which is useful. Use swimming pools during daytime, when they usually are not busy.

* Ask that school gyms be kept open for use at night, on weekends and holidays. It is a crime to see these locked up tight just at times when they should be fully used.

* Find out how much phys. ed. the girls get in school. Don't just phone or ask; you are likely to be told boys and girls activities are equal, but this may not be so. You have to do some research or get on to school boards to improve matters. Find out how many qualified phys. ed. teachers there are in your school, especially in the elementary grades.

* Don't be horrified if your daughter wants to throw a javelin or go in

for bicycle racing; instead, see that she gets the best coaching in any sport she wants to enter, good equipment and lots of encouragement. Make sure she knows that you expect as much from her as from her brothers.

* Tell your little boy not to be miffed if some little girl runs faster or jumps higher than he does — before the age of puberty the sexes are pretty equal, provided they get the same opportunities to train. If a pre-adolescent girl works harder than a boy, she'll do better and the boy better recognize this.

* Work as hard as you can — or want — to become proficient in your chosen sport. Being half-hearted about it isn't feminine, it's just silly. Remember that a woman who is in complete control of herself, who knows what her body can do for her physically, will have a much stronger self-image.

R: Can you translate that last statement into more personal terms?

B: Certainly. I am frequently in meetings with men only, many of them ex-athletes. Sitting among them, working with them, I feel very positive and strong about myself. I know what I am capable of in all areas, both physical and mental. I know what I look like, what I am worth. As I said before, I don't consider myself the weaker sex. Frankly, I also know that I am in much better shape than most of the men at these meetings.

It is not that I am downgrading my education and my mental capabilities, rather that physical fitness gives me that additional dimension.

You may ask why I particularly mention feeling this way in the company of men. It is because I know so well the attitude many of them have: "Let's give her a hearing and then we'll do what we want.... If she contradicts us she's probably having one of 'those days'."

I can afford to wait a little while these thoughts flit through their minds and then show them how wrong they are.



notes and other musical opinions

By Patricia Case

The first time I heard Ferron sing was an early morning August in Point Grey two years ago. She appeared at breakfast that day, after having been up all night making music in the full moon down at Jericho Beach. We all had coffee out on the porch where you could see the gardens at their finest all the way down to the water where the sun shone on the tankers in the bay. It seemed like a ridiculous time for me to be leaving Vancouver.

"Tell you what," she said, "I'll play you a song so you'll be sure to come back." Her laugh had behind it the shyest full-blown ego on the West Coast.

Then, as now, I was intrigued. A lot of women I know play the guitar and a lot of them write their own songs. But usually something's missing; most frequently another person with another instrument, occasionally another vocalist, even another arrangement. But not Ferron. She's got it all taken care of.

FLY ON MY NOSE

*The wind's all a-whisper, the
Sky is a fly on my nose.*

*I'm in between corners and thinking how so many go.
There's streetlight and moonlight and
Leaves all a-glow in the rain,
And I'm thinking on bus rides and high tides and love ties
And if I'll be back here again.*

*I remember my years by the people that enter and go,
And I know they were good years by
Amounts of emotion I flow...
How I lost some and won some and
Gave some away to my friends,
But you find that it's still you
You ought to be true to
To get you to some pleasant ends.*

*How I altered some moments,
How some moments sure altered me,
And in trying to be chained down I
Constantly found myself free.*

*On the face of the sky shines the faces
Of loves long ago, how they
Caught me
And taught me
And let me go gently,
I'm thinking they might never know...*

*How the world is a huge place, my
Memories can grow huger still,
At the end of my travels do I
Find myself perched on a hill looking
Down at the changes and patterns that
Make up my way, and no
sighing or crying or
Fist-fighting trying can
Cause the Direction to sway...*

*And the wind's all a-whisper, the
Sky is a fly on my nose.
I'm in between corners and thinking how so many go.
There's streetlight and moonlight and
Leaves all a-glow in the rain,
And I'm thinking on bus rides and high tides
And love ties and
If I'll be back here again.*

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Her songs are good poetry; they develop smoothly and finish clearly. Unlike many "balladeers", her use of repetition is effective and she doesn't resort to contrived meter to mesh the words with the melody. She sings about experiences from her own life—not abstract concepts or landscapes, but stories of personal encounters with lovers, friends and some who just won't feel. Her stories are enhanced by a frank, humorous hindsight that makes you think she's got the right to be a cynic but would rather be a Rambler.

Audiences love it. Whether it's the first time or a familiar experience, they sit with rapt attention until she breaks their composure with an "Aw, shucks" delivery of some totally outrageous patter. She delivers the songs in a throaty voice that fills out the clean flat picking on acoustic guitar. It's a distinctive sound that doesn't remind me of anyone except Ferron.

At her performances that I've been to lately, a lot of people have been singing along. That means two things: 1) she's got good material and 2) it's time she started showing it off in other cities.

*Now most of my thinking
don't flow 'til I'm singing,
When I'm tanked in a corner
I don't know anything.
But I know she was searching
the place down to find me
I knew I didn't know
what discovery could bring...*

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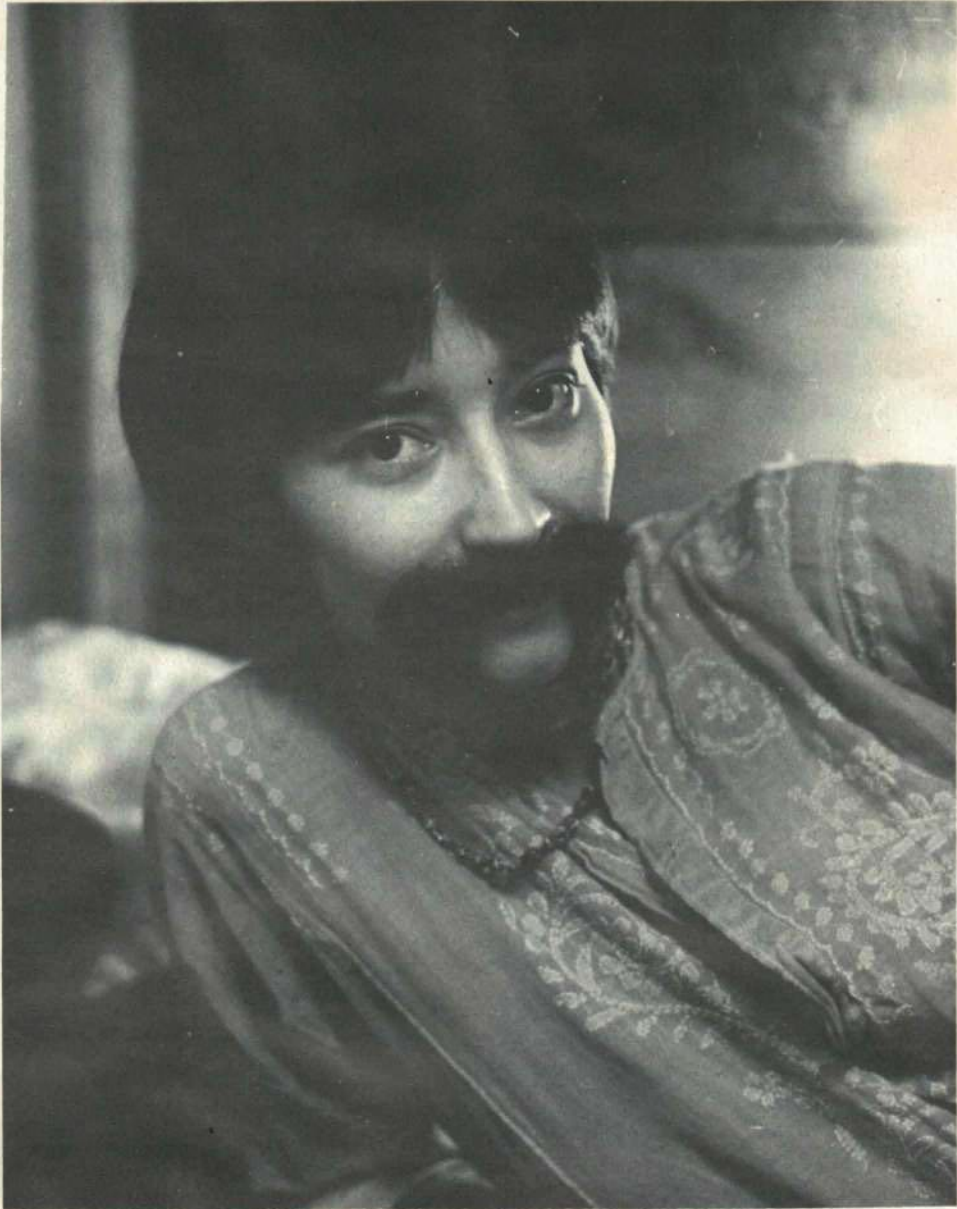
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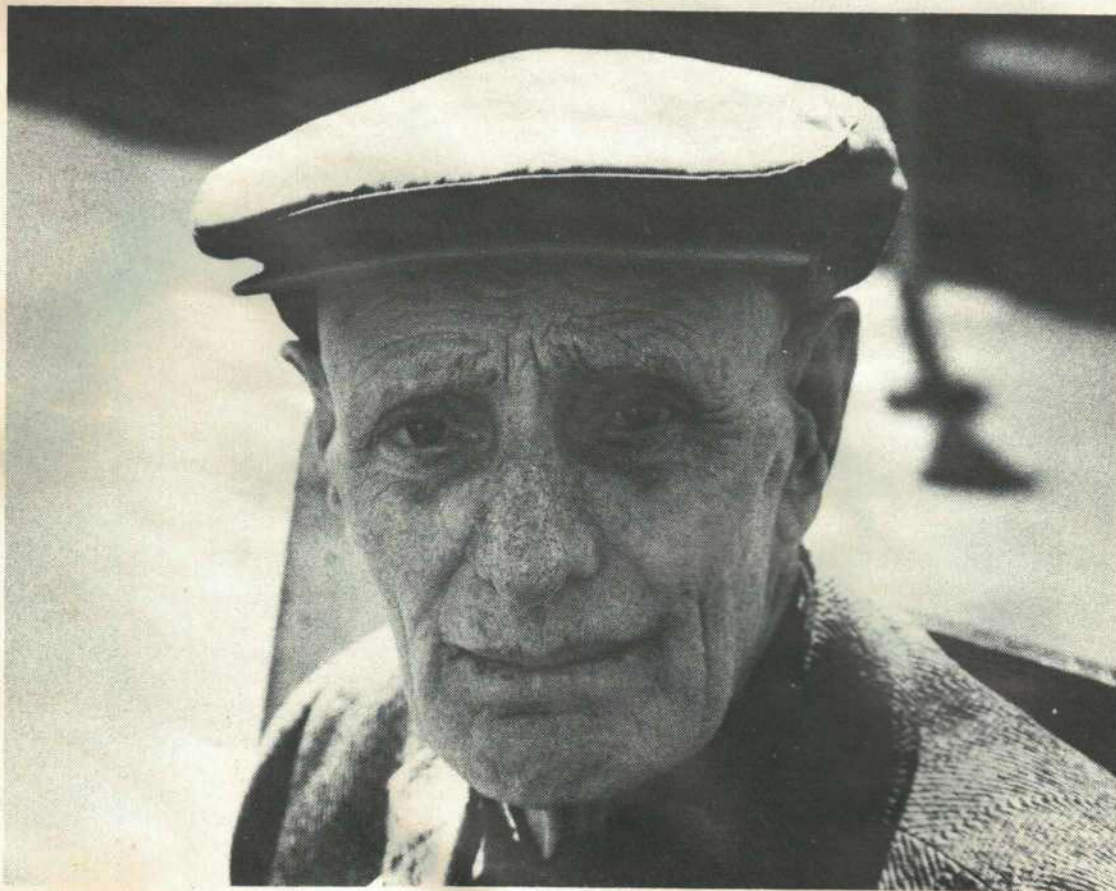
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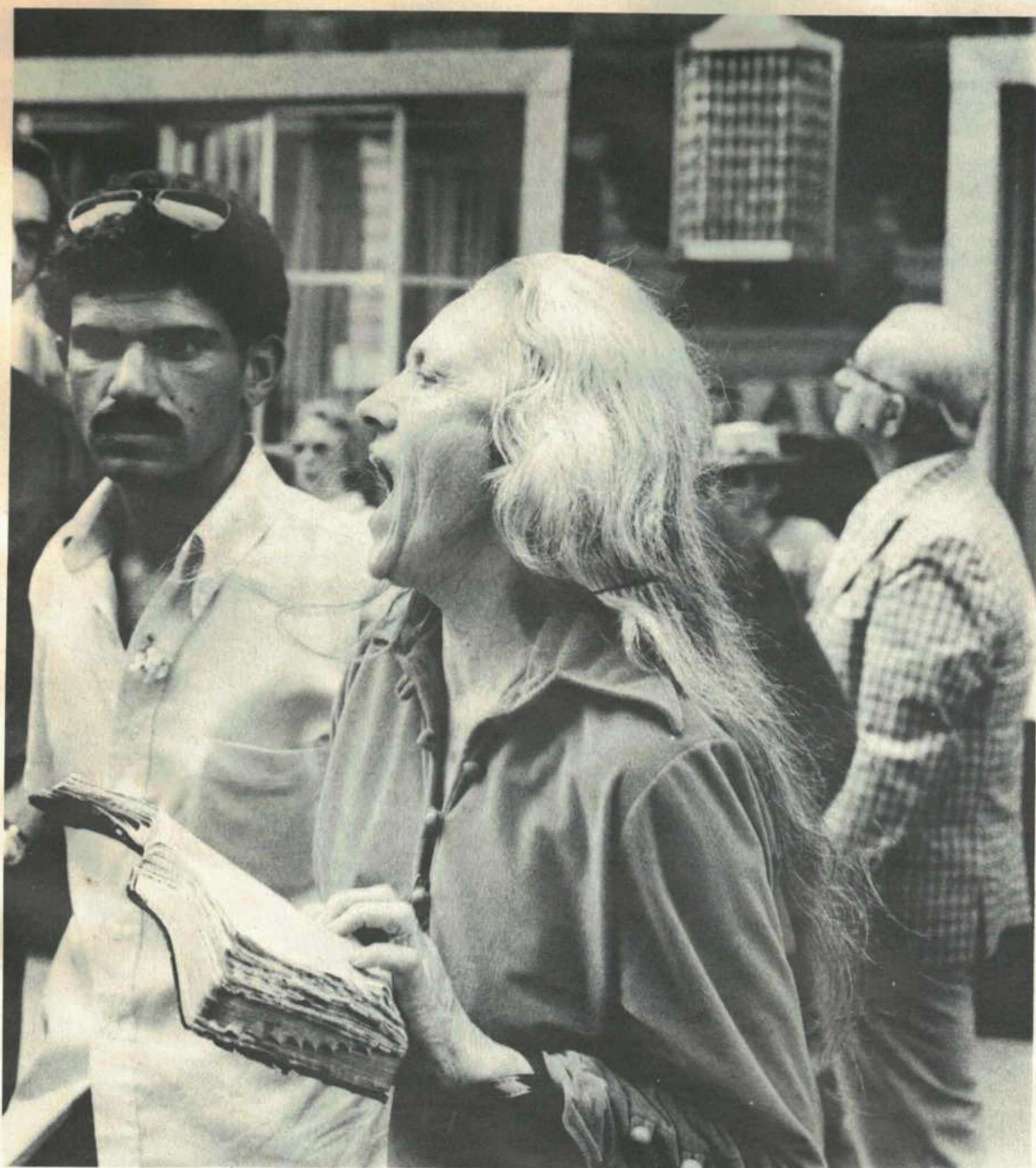
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1. *Judy Lynne, friend*
2. *Karen Huska, friend*
3. *Met on park bench in Edmonton*
4. *Hadassah, friend in Toronto*
5. *Gay Liberation Rally, New York City, 1970*
6. *Father and son*

ALIVE BUT AILING

Children's Books in Canada

by Linda James

The week I was about to spend at the Pacific Rim Conference on Children's Literature at the University of British Columbia was getting off to a good start. It was still early on Monday morning, my son had been dropped off at daycare, the van was running and the tape recorder worked.

The Pacific Rim Conference was meant to be an international gathering of publishers, writers, illustrators and librarians from countries on the Pacific Ocean but, of course, since it took place in Vancouver, many of the guest speakers and delegates were Canadian. I hoped to have a chance to talk with some of our own authors and illustrators of children's books whose work had impressed me. I also hoped that the conference would unravel the mysteries of the Canadian children's book industry and answer some questions:

Why are there so few books written for and about our children? Thirty books a year is not a lot.

Why are so few of these books brightly illustrated?

Why are even those few so often unavailable?

After five days of lectures, discussion groups and workshops, some answers began to emerge. The answers were tied to the financial and political issues which affect the quality and quantity of books for our children. The picture was gloomy, but not without hope.

This brings me to the three serious problems facing the children's book industry in Canada. The conference attempted to deal with them in more or less serious, more or less successful, and more or less significant ways, under the following categories:

Special Problem I:	Sexism
Special Problem II:	Racism
Special Problem III:	Nationalism and Subsidy

SP I — Sexism: Since I am first a woman, I will deal with sexism first. Most major publishers have written guidelines for the use of their authors and editors to eliminate stereotypes in new books. One publisher in Canada, Gage, made available its succinct guideline (one of the best I've seen) in an article in the April issue of *Quill and Quire*, the newspaper for Canada's book industry. Gage defines sexism as "the attitude that one sex is inherently superior to or more able than the other". The guideline also defines racism and classism, goes on to show examples of such prejudiced thinking and how they affect people, and ends with specific suggestions for avoiding stereotypes. For example, "Avoid 'he', 'him' and 'his' in reference to a hypothetical person"; alternatives suggested include using the impersonal 'one', the plural 'they', and saying 'he or she'. Another point was that "Women and girls should be portrayed as active participants in the same proportion as men and boys in stories."

In spite of the fact that people are taking sexism seriously these days, many conference participants and delegates side-stepped the issue.

Imagine if you can a quiet sincere young librarian from the prairies or Toronto or anywhere at all — her first day at the conference. At 9:30 a.m. she is treated to a speech by Dr. Bain, an educational psychologist at UBC. Two minutes into his speech, he grins and requests that she *of course* realize that he is including the female gender when he uses the words man or he. Dr. Bain could easily have referred to the article on sexism in *Quill and Quire*, which gives many alternatives to specifying a person's gender. Huge stacks of the paper were free for the picking at the reception desk.

At three o'clock the same day, the same librarian joins a

discussion group led by Patricia McAllister of the Women's Press, Toronto, entitled "Sleeping Beauty Wakes". She then hears that not all publishers, in spite of their guidelines, are capable of discerning what is and what is not sexist. As one woman pointed out, "If it takes them twenty pages (referring to publisher McGraw Hill's guideline), they just don't know."

In addition, the librarian has been listening to women writers who, throughout the conference, have made such statements as "when *he* finishes *his* book", although they are referring to their own work. Publishers have also been constantly called *he*, although over half of them are women. By Friday, Patricia McAllister was tearing her hair. So was the perplexed librarian, who wanted to know how to change the consciousness of people in her community, but was instead confronted with many writers, publishers and educators who didn't care about the problem, let alone solutions.

Even procuring good non-sexist books is not easy. Many of the new non-sexist books are too often moralistic pamphlets with no other reason for existence than to publicize the message or cash in on the demand. Publishers and authors agree that now it is time to go on to natural stories from non-sexist authors.

According to Patricia McAllister, there is a larger proportion of non-sexist children's books published in Canada than any other country in the world, but they are not always available to most Canadian children. If librarians stop buying new racist and sexist books, publishers will refuse to print them, authors will stop writing them, and these types of prejudice will disappear from children's books.

SP III — Racism: Racism? Yes, and I am not referring to black and white Americans. Canadians also have racist attitudes. Racism, as it exists in our literature for children — especially in stories about Canada's native Indians — is finally becoming an issue. With five different discussion groups ranging from "The Emergence of Indigenous Minority Cultures" to "The Dialogue Between Native and Non-native Retellers of Indian Legends", including three speakers lecturing on Indian legends from different perspectives, native literature was definitely a focal point at the conference.

Ann Anderson, a Métis author from Edmonton, spoke out frankly: "Many white people have written the Indian legends, and always they do it wrong." Ann is almost single-handedly responsible for preserving the Cree language and its legends. She has transcribed the oral Cree to a written language by composing a 15-letter alphabet and has compiled an English-Cree dictionary. Her deepest concern, aside from saving her Indian culture, is for the Indian children. Her painstakingly hand-lettered colouring books naming the animals in Cree, her picture books of short legends, grammar books and readers, are all written in what she describes as "the old primitive explicit Cree". She refuses to use the anglicized or French combination words which she feels are just a step in the disintegration of a minority language.

Directly following Ann Anderson was Kathleen Hill. Kay Hill is a white Nova Scotian reteller of Indian legends who has transcribed the Micmac legends of eastern Canada in children's books and for radio. Taking what she described as "crude uneven stories", she fits them neatly with a beginning, middle and end for white readers and listeners. She talked about the extensive research she had done before writing her stories, but admitted that she had made only two brief visits to Indian communities and had never spent any appreciable time with Indians. Her sources are tape recordings made by missionaries.

This same cursory, condescending perspective is echoed by the illustrious critic and conference co-ordinator Sheila Egoff in her book *The Republic of Childhood*, probably the most es-

teemed critique of children's literature in Canada. In Chapter 1, she makes such statements as: "Indian legends often lack the dignity found in other mythologies." "The same artlessness that makes the Indian legend so loose in structure also makes for baldness in presentation — the Indian story is not only difficult to tell orally, but is almost impossible to recall." Since the Indians have handed down their legends orally for many generations, the difficulty in presentation obviously lies in the difference between European and Indian cultural attitudes, and the white people's (all too usual) assumption of possessing a superior culture. Now that the natives of Canada are beginning to tell us their legends themselves, they will enrich our understanding of their culture.

SP III — Nationalism and Subsidy: After four days of conferencing, I'd almost forgotten whether SP referred to special problem, super paranoid, or social predicament. However, the question of a national children's literature and the related need for government subsidy of the children's book industry was by far the most important issue at the conference, emphasized by the fact that Friday was labelled Canada Day. No solutions for the dire financial problems were offered, but the problems of nationalism received a great deal of attention from many sides — publishers, illustrators and writers.

May Cutler, outspoken publisher of Tundra Books in Montreal, attacked the Canada Council soundly: "There is no money for publishing children's books in Canada. Canada Council is pouring thousands of dollars into international fairs which are utterly worthless to authors and publishers."

Also speaking from the publishers' perspective, Patricia McAllister maintained that one of the main reasons why the Canadian children's book industry is in such bad shape is the fact that librarians don't respect Canadian work. The old 50's adage that anything that is written in Canada can't be good still hangs on.

"Canadian books sell better in the trade [bookstores] than they do to libraries. In every other country, more books are sold to libraries than through the trade," she explained. Bookstores don't buy what won't sell. Obviously there is a market.

Even award-winning Canadian books are left out of most of the libraries of the country, and this includes the school libraries as well. Imagine the disappointment of Bill Freeman, who won the 1976 Canadian children's book of the year award for *Shantyman at Cache Lake*. After his book was published, he toured across Canada, but no one had heard of him or his book. The only libraries that had a copy of his book were in Toronto and Ottawa. It is the responsibility of librarians to see that good Canadian books are made available to children.

The cost and problems of publishing illustrated children's books was a recurrent theme throughout the conference. Librarians and booksellers are crying out for more picture books, but publisher May Cutler who has published more excellent picture books for children than any other publisher in Canada, explained that "It costs as much to publish a high-quality picture book as it does to produce a major art book, the difference being that the art book can sell for \$20 while \$10 is the absolute top price people will pay for a children's book."

Illustrators also had some comments to make. Ann Blades said, "Publishing in Canada is very difficult because there is no money, and colour illustrations are often refused because they are too costly to produce.... Unfortunately, books are being published because of cost, not quality." And Elizabeth Cleaver quipped that she "would love to get up to the poverty level". Both are award-winning writer/illustrators; neither can make a living from creating children's books.

The author's point of view on financial problems, nationalism and subsidy was presented by Claude Aubry, French-Canadian author of four books — *Agouhanna*, *Le Loup de Noël* (*The Christmas Wolf*), *Les Iles du Roi Maha Mahall* (*The King of the Thousand Islands*), *Le Violon Magique et Autre Légendes du Canada français* (*The Magic Fiddle and Other Legends of French Canada*) — and winner of 2 awards. He explained that if a Canadian author is printed at all, it is usually at a rate of approximately 1,000 copies per printing, after which the book is no longer available — it is out of print.

Claude Aubry commented wryly that "To be a writer, especially of children's books in Canada, you are expected to be able to live off the morning dew and the snow in winter," before going on to plead for government money to give our children a sense of Canadian identity. "Because we are assaulted by mass production of a similar or lesser quality, especially from the U.S., we need government help, if we want to keep our literature for children. If this remains a low priority our literature for children will die and our identity will die. Canada will have lost its soul."

If that sounds bleak — well, it is. However, as always, it was the people who kept the conference from being an entirely depressing affair.

The Pacific Rim Conference certainly brought together some very intriguing personalities. The minds of authors of every age and perspective from all parts of the country were available for the picking. This was fortunate, since the artistic side of children's books — things like style, content and imagery — were hardly mentioned except in private conversation. Ann Blades, Susan Musgrave and Ruth Nichols discussed these aspects...

Ann Blades, Vancouver author/illustrator of the 1971 Canadian children's book of the year award winner *Mary of Mile 18* and a later book, *A Boy of Taché*, is a very real and practical woman. When she isn't writing or illustrating she works as a nurse, partly for financial reasons, but also because, as she said, "It is important to maintain contact with all sorts of people." No elitist artist here.

Both of her stories reflect the realistic life situations of the children in an unpretentious tone. Her simple, vibrant colour illustrations have been both her triumph and her despair. They have brought her acclaim and ardent requests for more, but she has problems in finding a publisher in Canada because of the cost problems in producing colour illustrations.

In spite of such discouraging conditions, she has written a new story about a pup she received at Mile 18, his adaptation to Taché, and later to city life. While searching for a publisher for it, she is working on a book about Crescent Beach, a cottage community 30 miles south of Vancouver, where she spent her summers as a child playing with friends and cousins, building tree forts and contrasting her life with those "awful rich kids who came to stay in the gracious summer homes up the lane".

Susan Musgrave had published three books of poetry — *Songs of the Sea Witch*, *Entrance of the Celebrant* and *Grave Dirt and Selected Strawberries* — before her children's book, *Gullband*, was published. She has not been as seriously hurt by the problem of earning a living by writing as many of the writers at the conference, having received three Canada Council grants.

Susan, who spent several years on the Queen Charlotte Islands, speaks of mythical homes and the magic of places; she also uses abstract concepts, feelings and sensations in her poetry for children:

*Grim wished
He could see a noise and
Taste a sound.*

Gullband is a fantasy in poetic form written to and mainly about a cat. It contains such characters as Grim (a frog "with a mouth like a dry crust of bread") and Thrum (a seahorse "like a creature who knows where dragons live"). She slowly reveals their complex natures until we are drawn in by their magic and believe in them. *Gullband* is very different from most Canadian children's stories. Like a precocious child, it has been criticized for its adult content and profundity. Susan believes it has much of the charming deviousness she felt in Ireland, where she spent the year prior to writing, exploring her Celtic roots. At any rate, her book shatters the myth that all Canadian children's literature is dull and unimaginative.

Ruth Nichols, in her excellent novels of fantasy for children — *A Walk Out of the World*, *Marrow of the World*, and *Song of the Pearl* — presents hope as a central theme. Hope is the reason Ruth Nichols writes. She believes it is the most important thing she has to offer her readers and that in fantasy lies the alternatives to the school of realism/hopelessness which surrounds children today. "Hopelessness is a hideous perspective to give children," she said.

Ruth claims that fantasy and reality are inseparable, raising the esoteric questions: What is real? Does the intensity of a perception determine reality? She says that fantasy is essential.

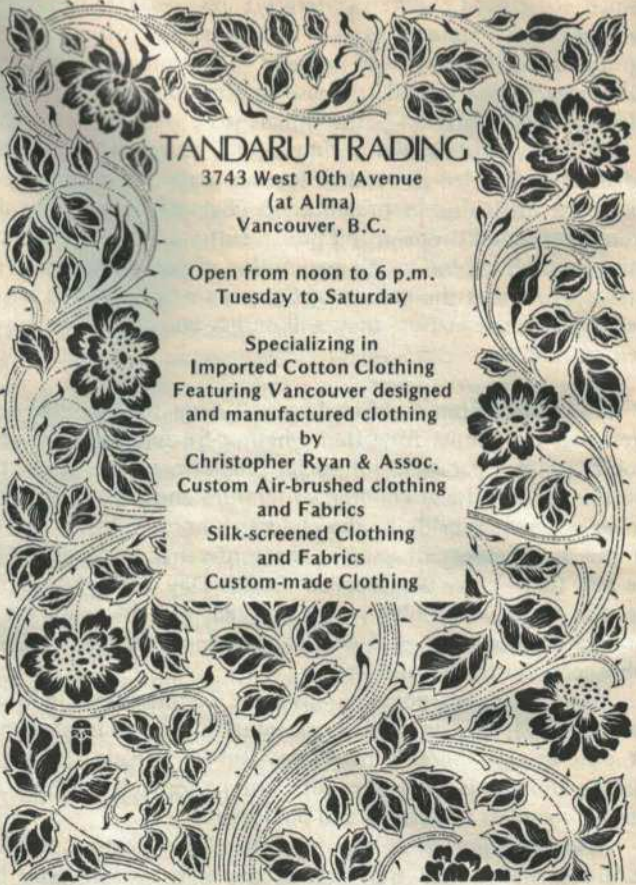
"It is the essence of a situation which is most real, not necessarily the physical surroundings in which it takes place. Fantasy is as multi-levelled as consciousness." Out of these expanded concepts in her view, come the hope and solutions of the future.

Ruth is now working on a book in which "the shifting of the forces of dark and light happen within the world itself and a second 'allegorical world' is not necessary." She hopes the publishers are ready for it.

As the Pacific Rim Conference on Children's Literature drew to a close, I asked publisher Patricia McAllister of the Women's Press about her reactions as an insider to the five days of meetings. She had some criticisms about two important subjects which had received little attention. The first was the Wilkerson study of the Canadian publishing industry in 1975, which found that there was a lack of communication among publishers, authors and librarians. In view of the report, Patricia thought that there should have been discussions about ways to deal with these gaps in communication. In fact, while attending the conference, I had noticed the lack of dialogue among these groups during the meetings.

"Another topic for open discussion should have been the new Canadian Children's Book Centre, which the Canada Council has approved," Patricia pointed out. I had heard very little about it during the conference — just enough to make me curious — although it certainly was the only piece of hopeful news about the future of the children's book industry in Canada that I took home with me.

The Canadian Children's Book Centre was inspired by publisher Carol Martin (of Peter Martin Associates, Toronto) and librarian Irma McDonough, who also edits *In Review*, the only publication which reviews all of the children's books published in Canada. The Centre will attempt to provide an incentive to Canadian writers through offering prizes and publicizing and promoting their books. In addition, it will make reviews and information quickly available to libraries across Canada. The Centre is a new and exciting venture which will provide a valuable service. Let's hope that it will also help to create interest in and support for the Canadian children's book industry. Our children must have books which reflect their lives, their homes and their culture.



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After we finish each issue of the magazine, the MAKARA staff sits around and discusses what we did right, what went wrong, and how to do better. Now we want to know what you think — please put some of your energy into MAKARA by answering this questionnaire. And don't let it stop you from writing letters if you feel you have more to say. P.S. To thank those who fill out this page and send it in, we will send a pair of beautiful West Coast post cards that Josie Cook designed.

- I want more articles like

34. Any additional comments?

...thanks

WORKING FOR WOMEN WORKING

by Helen Potrebenko

The Service, Office, and Retail Workers Union of Canada (SORWUC) has been conducting an organizing drive in Vancouver. This drive is aimed at organizing a larger percentage of the 418,000 women in the labour force in B.C. Only about a quarter of these women are in unions.

Women's participation in the labour force is increasing — almost half of women 15 and over either have a job outside the home or are looking for one. They are not working by choice, but by necessity. Nor do they have a choice about the kind of work they will do. Most women work in clerical and service occupations and in spite of propaganda to the contrary, they are more concentrated in these jobs now than ever before. The skills they bring to these jobs are under-rated and under-paid. Some of the statements made in the name of Women's Liberation dismiss women's work as unimportant and imply that women can only achieve liberation by working in what are now considered men's jobs. But the problem isn't with women's work; the problem is low pay, poor working conditions, low status that go with it. If these were improved, occupational segregation would disappear all on its own.

The gap between men's and women's wages is not decreasing. Now we have wage controls which work towards widening the gap between the lowest and the highest wages. The regular trade unions are dominated by male bureaucrats and have little interest in organizing those occupations which employ a majority of women.

SORWUC was formed in October, 1972. The process which led to its formation began with the Working Women's Workshop begun in January, 1970 as part of the Women's Caucus, the Women's Liberation organization at that time. In October 1971, the Working Women's Association (WWA) was formed as an independent organization with the intention of supporting the struggles of working women through actions such as leafletting, joining picket lines, etc. The WWA also engaged in public educationals regarding equal pay, day care, job security, and other concerns of working women. A number of pamphlets were written, printed, and distributed. In addition, the WWA participated in the struggles within the Hospital Employees' Union for equal pay for women members, which eventually resulted in pay increases for hospital workers.

Educational work is in itself insufficient if there is no effective force to back up demands. We thought women should be in unions but the existing unions were neither interested in having them nor willing to fight for women's rights.

Among the educational seminars held by the WWA was a series on how to form a union. Resource people from various unions talked about how it was done. The women of WWA decided that since they now knew how, they should take the next step and form their own union.

The first organizing meeting was held October 12, 1972 and

the founding convention about two weeks later. The charter meeting of Local No. 1 was held on the same day and SORWUC was born. The purpose of the new union was stated as organizing workers especially but not exclusively employed in such establishments as retail stores, offices, and restaurants. The 24 charter members were all given the power to sign up new members.

The constitution was designed to fulfill the requirements of the Labour Relations Board for what makes a legal union, and to be as democratic as possible. For example, the members of the executive are not paid. Any paid officer of the union must be elected by the membership and can only keep the job for one year. The salary of any paid officer cannot be any higher than the highest salary in SORWUC's bargaining units. In this way it was hoped to avoid the problems of an entrenched bureaucracy which loses contact with the problems of workers.

Since 80% of working women in B.C. were not in unions, it was felt that an independent union run by the workers themselves was necessary as the existing unions were ignoring the specific needs of women workers. It was decided at the Founding Convention not to affiliate with any of the labour bodies such as the CLC or CCU but to try and maintain friendly relations with them and with sister unions such as AUCE, a union formed by the workers at UBC. The question of affiliation was to recur a number of times in the following years.

After its founding, SORWUC and the WWA continued doing support actions in working women's struggles. They helped the strikers at Wardair and did a few support actions for the workers at Sandringham, a private hospital in Victoria.

In the spring of 1973 there was a bitter and protracted struggle resulting from a labour dispute at Denny's restaurant at Broadway and Birch, Vancouver. The waitresses there had walked out to protest some serious grievances and were fired as a result. An injunction was obtained to keep them from picketing. WWA organized picket lines of persons unknown to the restaurant managers and continued protest. Ultimately, four people were charged with breach of the injunction. They got off, but only on a technicality and the judge left no one in any doubt that if they or anyone else came before him again, they would face a jail term. Most people felt that going to jail would serve no useful purpose and the picketing was called off. The time and energy required, and the sense of defeat some people felt after this contributed to the demise of the WWA. SORWUC went through a period of doldrums when no one seemed to have any energy left, but ultimately recovered.

There was also the feeling of being isolated from the regular trade unions. SORWUC was accused of promoting feminism at the expense of the trade union movement and other absurd charges like that. A meeting with Madeleine Parent, secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Textile and Chemical Workers Union, also demoralized people. Parent said the best way to combat sexism in the CCU was by joining it and fighting from within. Parent also said that people like waitresses were part of an "unstable" work force and that we should work with more stable places like banks and offices. It was argued that wherever there was low pay there was a high turnover and that this was a false issue on which to base the decision of where to organize.

In the interests of organizing wherever we could, strategic or not, members of a small legal office were signed up as a result of personal acquaintance with union members. SORWUC's first application for certification was May 1973 and on July 27, 1973 the momentous news was received that SORWUC was indeed a legal trade union within the meaning of the Act, and was certified to bargain on behalf of the three legal secretaries.

The first contract was signed October 18, 1973.

It is a peculiarity of the labour laws that a union cannot know whether or not it is legal until it is certified to bargain on behalf of all the workers in some work place. If anything has been done wrong, the union won't know about it until the certification is turned down and since there are no written rules nor is the LRB required to give reasons for its decisions, it may not know even then. Thus it was with considerable relief that SORWUC members greeted that first certification.

Now that we knew we had done things right according to the legal definitions we expected things to happen right away but nothing more happened. A great many enquiries were received and a lot of people who sounded enthusiastic came and went, but nothing concrete resulted. This completed the demoralization. A few people were convinced that independent unions just weren't where it was at. The problem is, of course, that people expect instant results and this just doesn't happen — years of patient organizational work is required. The way to measure success is not by instant victories and even now, four years later, SORWUC is just beginning.

In December 1973, the Association of University and College Employees (AUCE) at UBC applied for certification and in April, AUCE was certified to represent 1265 clerical and library workers at UBC. AUCE had been organized by UBC employees who felt that they must organize themselves. They raised money from among themselves and did all the necessary work. Some SORWUC members working at UBC were involved in the organizational work. Soon after the successful organizing drive at UBC, other college and university employees followed suit and locals of AUCE were formed at Notre Dame in Nelson, Simon Fraser University, and Capilano College.

For SORWUC members, AUCE's success showed our theory was good even if our practice was foundering.

In June 1974, SORWUC finally got another bargaining unit when we applied for certification for 11 employees at Transition House. This was followed by a series of certifications for other social service type agencies such as five publicly-funded agencies in Surrey, South-hill Day Care centre, and several others.

This raised a plethora of new problems peculiar to groups funded by government grants. The legal "employer" is a Board of Directors which has no control over funding. Some Boards refused to admit they were employers even though they had the power to hire and fire employees. When a Board is convinced they are the legal employer and that higher wages are necessary, they must ask the government for the money to fulfill their obligations. The government has, thus far, not looked too kindly at the proceedings. Further complications have arisen with the change of government which has resulted in the cutting of funds and laying off of half of some of the bargaining units. There isn't a lot the union can do about it except agitate for more money from the government.

SORWUC is also certified to bargain on behalf of the employees of three day care centres, the Simon Fraser Student Society and the Legal Services Commission. In all, there are 15 bargaining units representing about 100 workers. Nearly all the

members are women. (To show that we do not discriminate against minorities, a token man has been elected to the executive.)

The day care centres present special problems of their own. Day care workers are required to take a two-year training programme and work long hours but some are paid as little as \$500 a month. Many have had no pay increases for two years. The Boards which run the day care centres are made up of parents who would like to see the staff get a decent wage but are unable to raise the necessary funds. The government threatens to cut down on the number of day cares in spite of the severe social problems which would result. The question for day care workers and parents is how best to achieve quality day care, which includes a decent wage for the staff.

While the Boards of the day cares are usually made up of parents, they can run the centres only according to the rules set up by the government and the government also sets the fees. It is important that the parents, who are also working class, should view the workers' demands sympathetically.

An interesting development has been the co-operation between SORWUC and SSEU, who also represents the employees of some day care centres. Together the two unions are trying to organize the non-union centres. They are also working to make all aspects of day care a public issue.

There is no immediate solution to the problems of the three day care centres SORWUC is certified to represent. Their fate is tied in with that of all other day care workers, and the recognition of the right to quality day care for all children. In order to get their contracts implemented, they must work for public acceptance of the idea of day care as legitimate and a right of all children.

In the meantime, the contracts negotiated and implemented on behalf of SORWUC bargaining units include some unusual clauses which are of great importance to women workers. One of these is full pay for maternity leave.

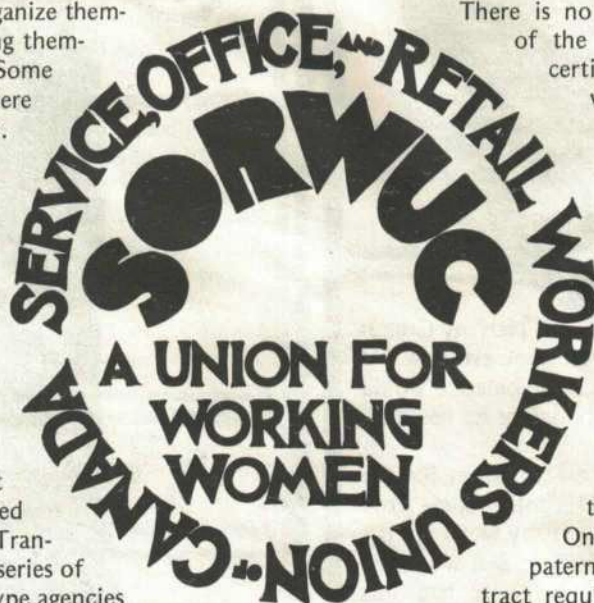
One contract also allows two weeks paternity leave with pay. At least one contract requires that the employer contribute to employees' day care costs. Most contracts include International Women's Day (March 8) as a statutory holiday.

All employees in SORWUC bargaining units who have a contract work less than a 40-hour week — 32 hours at Bolton, Rush and McGrady; 34 hours at Transition House, etc. This clause is of particular importance to women, most of whom have another job, as a housewife, to go home to.

Extra time at lunch time for union meetings with no loss of pay has been negotiated at some places. This is designed to enable women with family responsibilities to attend union meetings regularly and helps maintain union democracy.

There are personal rights clauses in all contracts to provide that the boss cannot regulate the employee's dress, nor ask employees to perform personal services such as bringing coffee.

The contracts also include provisions which are generally found in union contracts — job security, a grievance procedure, promotion according to seniority and, of course, better wages.



JOIN US!

FOUR LITTLE STORIES

& A TYPEWRITTEN MESSAGE

BY VERA B. WILLIAMS

Here are some stories I wrote on my typewriter as they were told to me by four small friends of mine: Tolly who is 6, Martin who is around 10, and Soo Soo and Jill who are twins and both 5. They know my work is writing and illustrating stories. That's something they like to do too so they visit me and get me to write what they tell me on my electric typewriter. Then they take the copies home to make pictures or sometimes they leave them for me to illustrate. Sometimes we even tie all the pages together to make a book. They'll be excited to see their stories in a real magazine.

The first story is what Martin told me. He said, "You know my great Uncle Anthony?" and I said, "No, I've never met any of your relatives."

"Oh well," Martin said, "You'd know him if you saw him. He's the tallest man you ever saw." But anyway...

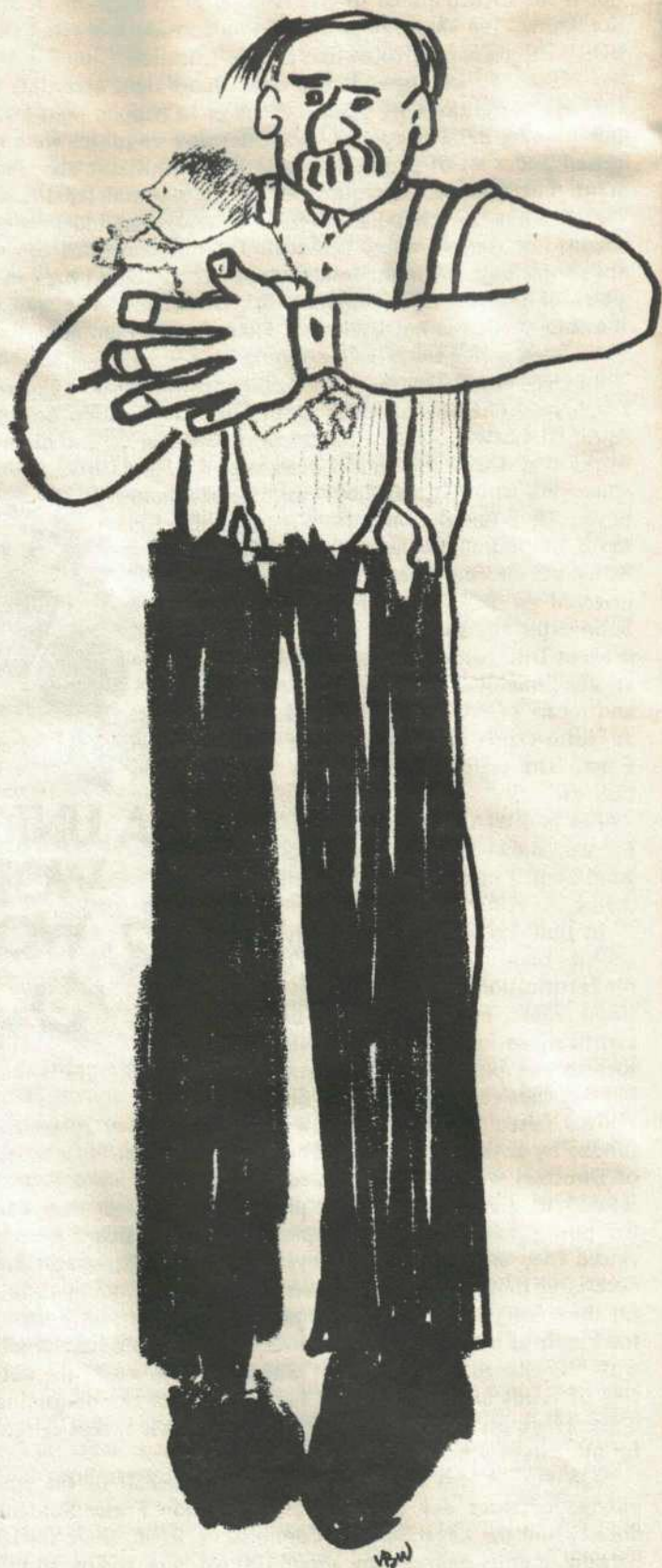
Martin's Story

One day my great uncle Anthony came over. He's my Grandpa's brother. He has the biggest hands and feet you ever saw. He stands up so straight we always make fun that someone would have to come and unlock him in the middle before he could sit down.

My mom asked Uncle Anthony and me to listen for the baby. Mom needed to be down in the field planting some little apple trees we just got. While she was out, the baby woke up. It's my little sister and she's really funny. I like her. But when she cried Uncle Anthony looked like something really bad was happening upstairs and he ran up the stairs and got her from her crib. He held her leaning against his shoulder. He looked real uncomfortable like he was afraid she would wet him or spit all over him or something, patting her little back with his big hand like this and saying "there there, there there, now be a good baby and don't cry." "Babies never used to cry when I was a kid," he said to me. But my baby sister cried louder and louder. Finally she was screaming.

I could tell she wasn't comfy leaning on great uncle Anthony's stiff shoulder like a log of wood. Uncle said I should go quick and get my mom before baby cried her head right off her shoulders. But I told him mom really needed to finish planting the little trees before it got too hot (she had explained about the tree roots drying out in the sun if they weren't covered). "And besides," I told him, "it's no emergency. I can look after the baby." He said, "Are you sure?" And I said, "Of course, I do it a lot." But he never listens to anyone he has to look down at so he walked out to the field to get Mom just the same.

Meanwhile I took Annie, my little sister, and laid her on a towel in the middle of the big bed where she couldn't roll off.



Then I ran and got her diaper and a cloth to wash her off with and some corn starch to powder her with; I fixed her all up nice. She hates to be diapered, so I gave her my bean bag to hold while I did it. It sure is hard to do those special pins. When she was diapered I lay on the bed by her just like she was my kitten and let her play with my finger and my hair.

Then I carried her all around the house and told her about all the rooms and all the things in them. I'm sure she understands much more than people think she does. She just can't say yet. When she's bigger we'll be able to talk and talk. We'll build wagons and bake cookies and run races and we'll sleep in a tent in the bush which is what I like best. She'll probably like that best too.

After a while I sat down with her in the porch rocker. She's little but she gets pretty heavy. Our dog came over to sit with us too. We rocked and I watched a bird come down and get twigs for its nest and fly back up. That bird took just one at a time and did it over and over. It was nice sitting there. Of course I knew Mamma wouldn't come running all the way back to the house and leave the little apple trees to dry out just for nothing. She knows how well I can look after Annie and how much Annie likes me.

Uncle Anthony doesn't understand this. It's much different than he's used to, Mom says. But she'll try to explain and get him to help her plant the trees instead of fussing. Then someday when the trees get big and the apples get ripe and Annie gets big we can invite him over and bake him a pie. He'll understand *that*.

That was Martin's story. He said to be sure to put Martin's story on top of it. The next one is Soo Soo's. She said Martin took way longer than one person's turn. Martin said he just told what went together. Soo Soo said he didn't need to have told about the bird and the twigs. Martin asked her why not but Soo Soo said, "Oh, never mind! Please put a new piece of paper in the typewriter so I can tell about my balloon that went away. And can I have the typing in a colour?"

Soo Soo's Story

Once Aunt Sarah bought me a balloon. It was a helium balloon. That has a kind of stuff in it that is even lighter than the air. Aunt Sarah said, "It will go way up high if you don't hold on to it." Mine was red... And very big. I saw a little girl with a blue one. It was big too and I was looking at it so hard I let go of mine. We chased it but it went too fast and high — wayyy up over the trees. I watched it till I couldn't see it. Then I started to cry. I wanted my balloon back. My Aunt Sarah is especially nice. My Mom says she's *too* nice. But how can anyone be *TOO* nice? So she went back and bought another one. This one was just as red and just as fat. This time she tied it to my wrist. I kept it all through the park and in the bus it rested right bump against the ceiling. Then we took the ferry to go home. I love the ferry. If you stand in front there's lots of stuff like soapsuds and a big curly wave. I was looking in the sky where there were lots of puffy clouds and a helicopter too. Aunt Sarah was looking the other way to the mountains. She loves the mountains she says. I wriggled the balloon string off my wrist and sent my balloon to follow the helicopter. Aunt Sarah saw it in the sky and said, "Look Soo Soo! Someone else has lost their balloon too. Isn't

that sad?" Then she turned around and saw that it was really my balloon again and that I was smiling at it. She put her arm around me and we both watched my balloon go far far away over the water.

I wonder why I did that.



That was Soo Soo's story. When she finished it Martin asked, "Yes why *DID* you let your balloon go, after Aunt Sarah was such a sucker and bought you another one?" Soo Soo said Aunt Sarah was *not* a sucker — that she was nicer than Uncle Anthony anyway *AND* anyway Martin had no right to ask questions because he wasn't even there when it happened.

Martin said that didn't make sense; a story was to explain

things to people who weren't there when it happened because if they were there they would *be* in the story. Then they would know. "That's what a story *is*," Martin said. "And it has nothing to do with Uncle Anthony. He HAS to be in my story because my story is *about* him whether you like him..."

"Come on you two. Don't argue," Tolly said. "Everyone thinks different things anyway. Mom says it all depends. Now I want to tell about the MEAN swan and PAPA. Could you take Soo Soo's page out of the typewriter and put in three papers and two carbon papers for my story. I want a copy for Papa."

"Who's the other copy for — the mean swan?" Jill asked.

"No, silly. It's in case I lose my first copy. That's what's so good about typewriters."

Tolly's STORY

Papa took me to feed the swans. I didn't want to go. Papa said the swans were fun. I said I was afraid of them. Papa laughed and said that was silly, that swans weren't scary.

Along the way I said, "Swans are very big." Papa said, "No, they're not; they're just birds. They'll be glad to get this bread we're bringing." I walked slower and slower as we got close to the lagoon. There were lots of ducks and I like them but Papa says that swans are better, you don't see them nearly so often.

When we got there Papa gave me a roll to hold out to the swan. I was afraid to hold out my roll to the swan and I just stood. I didn't want to stand there but I didn't run away because I didn't want Papa to call me "silly." I didn't know what to do. A big swan walked right up close and snatched the roll right out of my hand. He nipped my fingers in his big hard beak. I ran away screaming. Papa came running after me and picked me up. I didn't want him to. I was mad at him. I wouldn't look at him at all. I made myself stiff till he put me down.

I just kept walking around the lagoon. I was going far away from Papa and sit on a swing and swing by myself. The swings were high. I had to jump up to get on one and I could only rock it a little bit. Then Papa came and sat on the swing next to me. My feet stuck out and I couldn't give the swing a good start. Papa's feet reached right to the ground so he could make his swing go like anything when he wanted to. But now he was thinking something.



"You know what?" he said. His voice sounded nice so I listened. Just a little bit though. I was still mad at him.

"You're right," he said. Swans ARE big. I just think they're little because they're littler than I am. If I went to feed a bird as big as myself, I'd sure be scared too."

Then we sat a little more. I wasn't sure about Papa yet. But then I laughed. Papa said, "What are you laughing at, String Bean?" They call me String Bean because I'm skinny. I said I was thinking about a bird as big as Papa with Papa's clothes on too and that it was funny that that bird was going to bite Papa's nose RIGHT OFF.

Papa said, "Would that bird leave me alone if I promised to swing you really high?"

I said, "Maybe he will."

So Papa pushed me really high on the swing and ran all the way under it too.

That was Tolly's story. Jill said it was just like what happened to her from the big Goose at Grandma's farm that chased her all over till she fell in the mud.

"But I don't want you to type about that. I really want you to type about how high I jumped from. I want to show it to Martin so he can see how good I can do things. He says I'm not good enough to play ball with him."

"I don't have to read it, Jill. I'm hearing it. Besides you talk so loud I'd hear it outside even."

"Well, I want you to read it so you'll *know* it's important. So I want two copies, please. And can you type me an envelope, too. And give me a stamp. Then I can send it to him," Jill said. Then she told her story:

Jill's Story

My Ma and me were walking down the street. We came to some high steps going up to the top of the wall. I climbed up the steps. Then I stood and looked down over the edge. My Ma came and stood in front of me down on the sidewalk.

"Want to jump?" she asked.

"I'm afraid," I said.

My Ma held out her arms and said, "I'll catch you." I looked down and shook my head. My Ma came closer in. "Don't be afraid," she said. "I'll catch you for sure." I shook my head again and turned around and walked back down the stairs. My Ma was already walking down the block ahead of me. She always walks faster than I like to walk. But I was walking slow because I kept looking back at the steps by the wall. When my Ma turned around to look for me I was running back to those steps. I climbed up the steps real fast. I took a big breath and I jumped. It was a big jump. I called to my Ma:

"Mama, Mama, look at me what I can do!"

I went back up the steps and jumped again. My Ma came back and watched me. "That's pretty brave," she said. "That wall's higher than you are."

I jumped again and again and again and again and AGAIN. Then I jumped all the way down the block. SO THERE!

That was Jill's story. When she finished telling it and I had it all typed, she asked, "Did you put in all the AGAINS just like I said them ...again ...and ...again ...and again ...and ...again ...and ...again? I showed her what I had typed for her to count. "There are only four," she said. "Well, that's what you told me," I

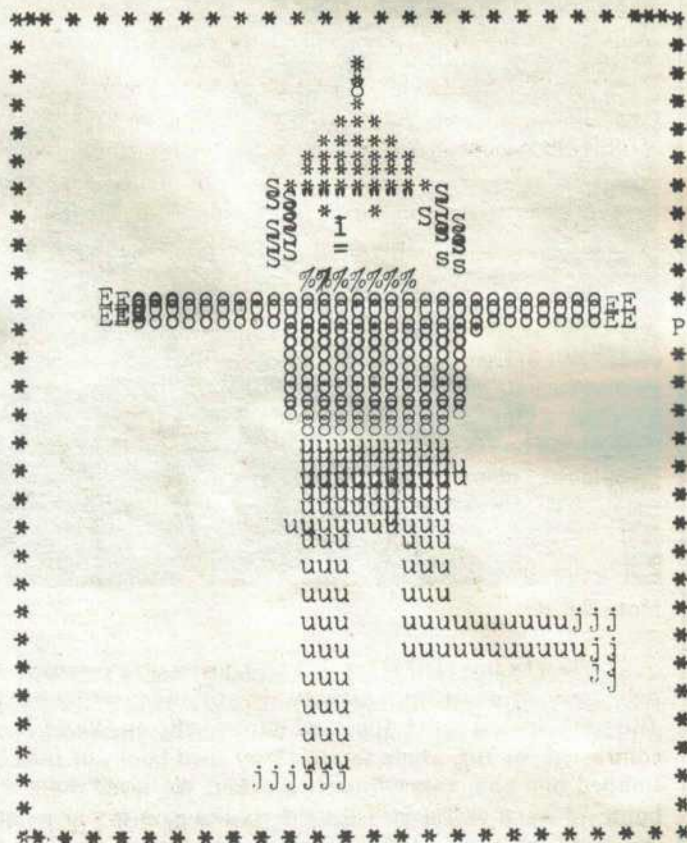
said. "No," she said. "I told you five. You should put in the other 'again' so it will be right."

So I typed it over correctly and typed the address she told me on the envelope and I gave her a stamp.

I had to go out then. I told my friends they could stay and make themselves some cocoa if they wanted. They said, "Ohh, thank you." Then Tolly asked if they could try the typewriter themselves. I told them they couldn't use the electric one but I put out my old one for them and showed them about it. Then I said, "See you later" and went away.

When I came back they were gone but they had left this message in my typewriter. It was almost perfect and there were about 11 other copies crumpled up in the wastebasket. ①

Everyone's Message



We'll come back and visit you

so you can type our stories true

Than k you for the cocoa too ; ; ; ; ; ; ; ;

P.S. We are sorry we spilled some cocoa in your typewriter. We think we got most of it out.

THIS IS A HARD WAY TO MAKE PICTURES BUT IT IS FUN.....LOVE & XXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX X X X X X X

Tolly, 500, 500, Jill,
Martin

An excerpt from *Steveston Recollected*, a book published recently by the Aural History branch of the Provincial Archives of British Columbia. Aural history uses the tape recorder to document and preserve first-hand, personal accounts of the neglected history of cultural minorities. This particular book explores the vanished ways of life of the Japanese-Canadian community in the fishing village of Steveston, B.C. The actual interviews conducted by Maya Koizumi are combined with subjective impressions by Daphne Marlatt, photographs by Robert Minden and Rex Wyler, and historical accounts, documents and photographs to create a beautiful, moving, and honest look at the past.

IMAGES OF THE PAST



Moto Suzuki:

"When I came (1925) I was almost six months pregnant. It was in July, fishing season, so I started work in the cannery almost right away. It was a small cannery. The fish were cut by machine, Chinese men brought the cans, and I packed each can with fish. The work started about June and went to the middle of November. In those days we weren't paid until November. The Chinese contracted for the whole season. They used books of tickets, each book had 150 tickets. A box contained 24 cans. When you finished one box, they'd punch a ticket. We saved these tickets and in the middle of November we went to the Chinese mess house where they counted the tickets and gave us our money. We used to get \$3 for 150 tickets. In those days, you see, only those who washed the fish were paid by the hour — they'd get maybe 15 cents an hour. Now we're all paid by the hour.

"In the old days there wasn't enough fish for a whole day's work. Whenever the fish came in, they'd let us know by whistle, day or night. Sometimes we worked one hour a day, sometimes five hours, sometimes ten hours a day. There was a *mori* house (day care) where the mothers would take turns looking after the kids when we went to work. I was one of them the year after I arrived.

"We were all hired on credit payment so we didn't see any money for a few months. The fishermen, too, were paid yearly by the canneries. Even if they started fishing in the spring they didn't get paid until they finished at the end of November. Then they paid back the stores."

Asamatsu Murakami:

"In the winter there was no work, it was cold and snowy. But my brother was a shipwright so I'd help him build a boat. If I didn't work, I couldn't eat. Sometimes I went to the Island to fish, sometimes I worked in a sawmill. The fishermen all went different ways in winter and then when spring came they'd all come back to fish. That was our life.

"There were sawmills in Vancouver and there were lots of jobs in the mountains cutting shingles and logs. When I worked at a sawmill I'd stay at a boarding-house where the men ate and slept. A Japanese boss would provide the food and we paid him. As for the food, well, it wasn't a feast but we did eat rice, not a day without eating rice, *miso* soup, or something like that. No fancy food, but it was cheap, of course, so we didn't complain. It worked out to 7 cents or so for a meal, so it wasn't reasonable to expect fancy food. The boarding-house was cheap, too, 20 to 30 dollars for room and board, I think. We worked for a dollar a day so we had no money left over. Even if a man worked hard he could save only a little. I never saved enough to put in a bank. I earned a lot and spent a lot, mostly on food and clothing.

"I used to like to drink in my 40's and 50's. I don't have a drop now, never, but I drank a lot in my younger days. In Steveston at that time there were about 20 bars. All the men were single. Germans, Italians, Russians, all single men in temporary houses, so they all drank. The bars had small, round tables, like beer parlours today. Beer, whiskey. The beer was cheap, only 5 cents for a big glass. People drank like fish."

Hideo Kokubo:

"During the New Year's holidays, we often had a performance of a play or two. It would be an amateur show, but we all enjoyed it. Sometimes, too, we had professional shows from Japan. And there were *sumo* games (wrestling).

"We built our own *sumo* ring, I remember it being built in my childhood. A few people who did *sumo* in Japan and liked it taught it here. Judo and kendo were popular, too. And then there were movies — we didn't have talkies, but we had silent movies accompanied by an orator. I remember the pictures on the screen, and the orator stood beside it and explained it. We had a little hall called the Opera House where these shows were held.

"I didn't go to the restaurant-bars on Powell Street (Vancouver). I was still young and besides we were hard pressed for a living. As the proverb says, 'No rest for the poor'. In the summertime, the cannery opened and Mama and my sisters went to work there. And sometimes they picked strawberries as well.

"The first time I earned money was when I was 12. I earned it at a Chinese farmer's picking strawberries and peas. I worked all day and got a dollar. That was half-wages as I was still a child, but a dollar was quite a lot for a child then. The following year (1913) during the summer vacation, I went to Haney to pick strawberries for room and board. That was hard work. Haney wasn't developed then, it was just a logged-off site in the bush. There were such swarms of mosquitos I used to sleep with my feet and legs wrapped up in newspapers so I wouldn't get bitten. Just walking down the road you had to carry a dry fern to drive them away. If we wanted a bath we had to fill the tub with water from the well, so we used to carry water in our spare time. We didn't have much spare time. We'd get up at 6 and start in to work by 7:30 a.m. — there'd still be some dew on the ground — and we'd work until late at night, until the sun went down. Since we were always bending, we'd get sore backs and knees. And our feet got sore, too, because the ground was full of rocks and pebbles; remember, it was only recently cleared. But I couldn't complain, I was only a worker, I wasn't there for pleasure. For the first time in my life I realized how hard it was to earn money. That's when I began to appreciate the value of money."

Henry Kokubo — Nisei Fisherman:

Kokubo-San greets us at the door, gesturing broadly for us to come in. For such a small man, his gestures are forceful, decisive in their hospitality. We take off our shoes on the little landing just behind the front door, halfway up and halfway down. A 6-foot cactus, ivy winding live around it, a bird singing somewhere. Far down in the basement, where our light glares blue off his eye, a dog growls, seeing us as intruders.

Upstairs, the whole house comes alive. Plants everywhere, fish, flowers. A bird suddenly wings past our heads. There are three of them, says Maya, canaries. And down the hall, in a room at the far end, something gleams black laquered wood and gold, the family shrine. I want to look at it, but will Mr. Kokubo feel I'm intruding? No, it's okay. But where is he? Down the hall and there he is, a moment's confusion as I hover tall and awkward above him, may I? Maya explaining in Japanese. Go ahead, go ahead, shoos me in. The room is full of clothes (ironing?), other things, but there is the shrine with photographs, and that bird, or its brother, fluttering around. I ask who the photographs are, who's the young soldier seated so elegantly? His wife's father. His own parents — their quiet, older faces stare more intimately, side by side on top.

The bird's fluttering distracts, and Mr. Kokubo seems to be hovering at the door, wondering no doubt what I'm wondering, or what I see.

Back in the living-room we find our places, settling around the coffee table where Maya has set up the tape recorder, Rex and I on the floor, Maya next to Mr. Kokubo on the chesterfield. We want to ask you some questions. Not difficult questions? He grins, and there is something engaging in that grin, just as there's something chaplinesque about his walk, his body small and wiry in the dark, knitted shirt tucked into baggy pants, hair combed down, face scrubbed by the wind. The simplicity of a man who knows what he is doing, just as he knows the elements of his trade — sea, fish, water.



Past images: he is standing on the wharf in his Ohmi netting cap, hands in pockets, laughing — introducing us to men who can tell us about the past. Or in his driveway, looking at the Volkswagen laden down with nets and floats he'd given us for our exhibit, an amused look. We ask, are you coming to see the show? Oh (a shrug), duck-hunting starts this week-end (and that grin again) — more interesting!

Now his answers are brief, matter of fact, to the questions about his sense of community, what is happening to the *nisei*, will he feel sorry to see the old customs die? Mm, things change. Like the *miyage* custom? Sure, it's expensive. He ought to know, he's leaving in a week on a trip to Japan, one of many he's made. Everyone gives you something, but then you have to bring something back for them. He understands why third generation doesn't want to keep that up. But, no, he's neither for nor against it: he knows these things so well, after all he's living their changes, there seems nothing much to say. But he's willing to wait, maybe we'll ask an interesting question.

Do you know about the old Hong Wo store down on Dyke Road? The one that's boarded up? Ah, that closed some five years ago. Used to serve the company houses round there, for 50 or 60 years. No, he doesn't know why it closed, well the houses are all gone. But whether the people died or moved away — maybe the building's too old. There used to be a general store there and a poolroom and a barber shop. And he's off recounting what the town was like before the war.

Suddenly we are talking about the evacuation, how they refused, he and other young men, to go off to work in bush camps and leave their families behind. "We said, 'let our families come, we will worry about them if they stay behind.'" And how, one day, the Mounties knocked at his door and took him away in a car. How he and others were shipped to a concentration camp in Ontario, his family sent to Slocan. He was there for four years. "Were you bitter, angry?" "Oh, some were. But what could you do? It was the war." They worked hard, but the hardest part was no women for four years — he grins.

On the ship back to Japan after the war was over — well, their daughter had been over there when the war started, they didn't know if she was alive or dead, so they decided to go back. Didn't know until the last minute when he boarded the ship whether his wife and children had been allowed to come with him. They met on board, but couldn't stay with each other. Twelve hundred people on that ship and the men had to help cook, serve, weren't allowed to sleep with their wives.

We're astounded. After all that time? He smiles: oh yes. It's the simplicity of that smile: that's the way it was, here's the sea you can drown in, here's the fish. But it's getting late, he's expecting friends for dinner, we have to go. Looking back, it's the smile that stays. This fisherman, standing in the lighted door of his house full of birds, plants, his unseen wife, photographs of grandchildren and parents, the live and the dead, waving, as we straggle out past the carefully tended garden, over the ditch that is almost a canal, and into the rotting-cabbage smell of the delta. ●

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LETTERS

Dear MAKARA,

Habitat Forum construction workers may have been surprised to read that they asked to put in free overtime at the site (p. 5 of the Habitat analysis in Issue 4).

Actually "workers asked..." should have read "workers were asked..."

Furthermore,

Love,
Jeannine Mitchell

Dear Sisters,

I recently read and enjoyed the article by Margo Dunn [in Volume One, Number Two].

I am interested in learning more of Salome because during my stint as a stripper in the Lower Mainland, I had a costumed act including the head of John the Baptist and was criticized by many for my interpretation of Salome's dance. Many club owners would not allow me to use this act as they thought it in "bad taste".

Margo Dunn's article was a great eye opener for me and I hope to see more of her work in print.

In Sisterhood,
Connie Meisner
(Connie Collins)

Dear MAKARA,

Someone I know and love has just left a copy of MAKARA on the coffee table. Your first article [Volume One, Number Three] on Claire Culhane has prompted this letter, my first to an editor in several years. I have known Ms. Culhane for her involvement in the anti-Vietnam war and financial aid to Vietnam movements.

I think your interviewer, Jeannine Mitchell, has captured the real Claire, the tireless Claire and the heroic Claire Culhane. This article should be required reading for her critics, and she has many. I have seen her dismissed with the wave of a hand by people who were still in diapers while she struggled to save the Rosenbergs.

An added note on Ms. Mitchell's interview style. I don't know if it's new but I found it interesting and a genuine pleasure to read.

Add me to your list of MAKARA readers. On payday I'll be writing for a subscription.

In Brotherhood,
Martin Thompson

Dear Sisters,

As a native Indian woman, I would like to make a few comments on the March 22nd Women's Rally.

My mother and I are proud that we were part of this historic action. We were most impressed by the initiative, enthusiasm and organization shown in Victoria that day.

However, I am not happy over the astounding ignorance about Indian problems which was displayed by the majority of the women at the workshops and at the Legislature.

When I urged support for the Indian Land Claim, I heard it said aloud and more or less accepted by most women there that our Land Claim "is too political". Mercy me! Maude, let feminists of B.C. avoid *political issues*, by all means!

Our Land Claim is the *only answer*, the only hope for Indian problems. We will never solve all our problems until we can do it *by ourselves* with money that we feel is truly *ours*. This position was what prompted last year's rejection of government money by the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs and the B.C. Association of Non-Status Indians. These two organizations were working in the fields of Welfare, Housing, Education, etcetera, for Indian people. Both organizations had large, talented Indian staffs; large amounts of government funding, and large beautiful offices. Yet all their work produced very little in the way of results. This is the way it has and will always be as long as we are forced to accept charity and hand-outs. No matter how much money is poured into our social problems, it will continue to be

like putting Band-Aids on open festering wounds.

The root cause of all our terrible distress was the White Man's invasion and usurpation of our lands, which eventually deprived native people of the ability and opportunity to provide their own livings. The beginning of Society's welfare system for natives was what really destroyed our people, even more than the stripping-away of our culture.

The only cure will be affected by US, not you. And we will do it with our *Land Claim Settlements*!

If the middle-class mentality must exist among feminist groups, send your used clothing and sympathy to Guatemala. We Indians do not want it. We want support in our struggles, and the first of these is our Land Claim. If you are unwilling to learn about Land Claims and become supportive, forget about Indians once more. We need no more Band-Aids.

It truly amazed me to be *asked* to express our needs and wishes, and then to be told in several instances that I couldn't do this very thing. The most glaring and hideous example was when I was asked to prepare a *short* (2½ minutes) speech for the afternoon of the 22nd and then to submit this in writing for *censorship*. *Censorship* at a Freedom Rally? This is what was done to me and I'm obviously not happy. Two and one half minutes to tell of 300 years of oppression and agony! I guess that the Committee was afraid that I might get "political" again.

I've heard the complaint that native women are not becoming involved in the women's movement. Considering the treatment which I received from the probably most enlightened group of women in B.C., it is no wonder we stay away in droves. We recognize *tokenism*. We have suffered it for many years. We know exactly what it is and what it means.

If women's groups sincerely desire to "help" us, *learn* about us. Educate yourselves about our Land Claim, *then* talk to us and we will answer.

In Sisterhood,
Donna Tyndall, President
B.C. Association of Non-Status Indians,
Local 146,
Courtenay, B.C.

(Ed. note: MAKARA hopes to include an article on Land Claim Settlements in the October issue.)

FICTION:



A FAMOUS EGYPTOLOGIST

by Barbara Ebbeson
for Ricky

illustration Barbara Wood

Franny hadn't made herself tall for such a long time that she had almost forgotten what it was like. It started just as she left to walk home from school and it felt like the sky was pulling her up and up.

The taller she got, the easier it was to grow. It was a matter of looking at things far away and making them closer. First, as she was coming down the front steps of the school, she grew taller than the big wire fence that enclosed the schoolground and she could see right over it. Then, walking toward the spruce trees along the edge of the park, she was sure she could have touched their prickly tops with her hands if she'd wanted to. By the time she had walked three blocks, her head was level with

A couple of invisible trees were growing up out of the sidewalk, so she paused to uproot them with her bare hands.

School had always been so rotten before. Mr. McKinley didn't like her. He didn't think she was very smart and he was the one who had phoned her mother about the pills. Every day, after he had phoned, Franny's mom gave her a pill after breakfast before she went to school. Once Franny had asked what they were and her mom said, "Shut up and take it. It's good for you... the doctor and Mr. McKinley said so." Then, Franny had known for sure that Mr. McKinley didn't like her. It took her a while to figure out what to do, what Gran would have said to do. Every morning, she spit the pill out and buried it in the gravel of the driveway. Then, after that, she pretended to be good in school. She didn't talk to anyone during class, she didn't play outside, she didn't ask any more questions and when she had to say something, she didn't use any big words. Mr. McKinley didn't guess that anything was different.

the clock tower on City Hall. Finally, when she was as tall as Mount Baker, the pom-pom on her toque was up inside the clouds and all the grownups and children down below looked like bugs crawling around. She was careful not to squash any of them — at least not on purpose. One had to have compassion.

Each time she took a step, the whole town vibrated and the bug-people scrambled to get out of her way. Her footsteps were making a 'Boom-Boom-Boom' sound just like the giant in Jack-and-the-Beanstalk. When the tiny yellow schoolbus drove past, she was very tempted to give it a little kick with her foot. She thought better of this, though, and made her big leg stop in mid-air, placing it gently back on the ground. Some of her friends were probably riding on that bus. Instead, she strode great giantess strides home, balancing huge invisible boulders she'd ripped down from the mountain-tops, one on each hand.

Mr. McKinley, the grade four teacher, had given her class a special assignment today. Everybody had to write a story about ancient Egypt and it had to be finished by Monday. Today was Friday. On Monday morning, every single person in the class had to read the story out loud and in front of everyone. When Mr. McKinley told them, she had nearly fallen out of her desk in astonishment. While all the other kids were groaning "Aw... do we have to?" and mumbling about hockey practices, she had been secretly rubbing her hands in delight. This special assignment was her biggest chance because, of course, she knew nearly everything about ancient Egypt. She had been studying it for so long, she was practically an expert. And now she could show everyone who she really was. For as long as she could remember, she had wanted to be an Egyptologist. She rarely told people about it now because they always laughed and didn't believe her. In fact, the only person who hadn't laughed was Gran. Gran had believed her. Gran had said she could be anything she wanted to be and Franny had always known that, one day, she would become a world-famous Egyptologist.

School was an ugly, boring place. They had to read condensed baby books like *Jean Val Jean* when she and Gran had already read *Les Miserables*, the whole thing, a long time ago. Franny had to pretend that *Jean Val Jean* was really hard to read, when, in reality, it only took her a few hours. She hated *Jean Val Jean* and she hated school.

She churned her huge hand in the air and made an invisible, but deadly, tornado. It nearly blew the library over. She used to hate school but now everything was going to be different. She would prove to everyone, especially Mr. McKinley, that she really was going to be a famous Egyptologist. She had read lots of books about Egypt and she didn't just pretend to know about it. Her story was going to be better than anyone else's because, naturally, she already knew everything about ancient Egypt. Probably, she even knew more than Mr. McKinley.

Because she was a giantess, it took Franny a very short time to travel almost any distance. Soon, too soon, she was approaching the small, brown condominiums where she and her mother lived. It was good to know that, if she wanted to, she could kick all the condominiums to smithereens. Her mother was inside, though, and Franny didn't truthfully want to kill her.

She let herself stay a giantess for a little while longer and stomped toward the condominium play-yard. She was going to show Mr. McKinley. She was going to show everyone! She would be the greatest Egyptologist in the world. Then, she remembered about Gran. She only wished that Gran was here so she could tell her about the school assignment. Thinking about Gran made her start to be small again. Gran was dead.

The condominiums were very big — much bigger than Franny. Even the slide and swing-set loomed large in front of her. She knew that being a giantess was only pretend, just a

game Gran had told her about, but, all the same, it made her sad to be small again. All she could ever see, unless she was standing far away, were people's stomachs. Stomachs, stomachs, stomachs — a person got tired of looking at stomachs. She had been small for an insufferably long time.

"Fran--cis!", her mother was screaming for her to come inside. It was cold out now anyway and Franny went in the fast way — over the patio rail.

After supper, when she was helping her mom with the dishes, Franny couldn't keep from telling her about the Egypt assignment. Her mom said, "That's nice Franny, wipe the table will you?" While she was scrubbing at the crusty oilcloth, she tried to make her mom know how important the Egypt story was.

She said, "I'm going to just work and work all weekend mom! It's going to be the best story anybody ever wrote!"

Her mother was tired and didn't hear her. "Hmmm..." she said. Her eyes had brown circles around them. They were always like that because Franny's mom was getting old, at least that was what her mom said. Franny told her again, louder, and she jerked around, her face starting to look like she was getting into a bad mood.

"Well, don't think you're going to get out of any work to write a silly story!" she snapped. "I've got enough to do around here as well as to work without... Humphhh! Grade four kids writing stories... they ought to teach you how to read first."

"But I *can* read, mom," Franny cried, "I can! Not just baby books either! I read all those books Gran showed me about Egypt. I know more about pyramids than anyone in the whole class!" She jumped up and down excitedly, her shoes clacking on the kitchen tiles. "Boy oh boy! Am I ever gonna show them...!"

Franny's mother told her to calm down and it made her mad. Ever since Mr. McKinley had phoned, she was always saying, "Calm down, calm down..." even when Franny was calmed down.

"I *am* calm!" she almost shouted.

Her mother went into the living room and casually lit a cigarette. "Calm, eh?" she commented slowly, raising her eyebrows. Her work uniform had ketchup and mustard and stuff all over it. She always was crabby after work too. Dust rose from the chesterfield when she sat down. "You don't sound very calm to me... and you'd better stop that lying, Franny. You and I both know you didn't read those books of Gran's. They were grownup books and too hard for you. Gran made you think you could read them but you couldn't really. You were only playing, weren't you?"

"I could! I could! I did read them!" Franny didn't want to cry. She hated it when her mom asked questions that weren't really questions, only statements.

Her mother continued deliberately and she looked very mean. "Mr. McKinley says you only pretend to read grownup books. He says you can't understand them at all. He says you only read them to act important."

"I do not! I do not!" Franny wailed. She was crying now but only because she was angry.

"Calm down and stop that crying! Stop it!" her mother ordered. "Try to understand... Gran wasn't like normal people when you knew her, Franny. She was 'senile', don't you know what that is? That's why she helped you do a bad thing and steal those books... I'm certainly glad I found out about it in time so I could stop her!"

Franny hated her mother because of Gran. When the book-man caught them that time, the old age people's home locked Gran up. She couldn't out go shopping anymore by herself. And Franny wasn't allowed to visit her anymore by herself. It was all

because her mom had told the old age people's home about the books, that Gran died.

"You stop talking so mean about Gran, mom! I won't let you say that... if it wasn't for you..." Franny stopped, blustering, before she said it all. She wasn't crying anymore and she felt really pissed off because her mom was about to turn on the T.V. After the T.V. was on she didn't listen.

"I'm not talking mean about Gran!" her mom yelled pulling her hand back from the T.V. to hit her. Then she stopped her hand, drew in a breath and began talking more quietly. "I just said that Gran didn't know what she was doing anymore... she was old... she didn't understand that you weren't a grownup, that's all... give me a break, will you honey? Calm down and go play. I've had a hard day."

Franny wanted to hit her mom too, hard. "Gran understood about me better than anyone did! She said I could be a famous Egyptologist if I worked hard... and I will be! You'll see! You'll find out!" She was so mad that she was banging the old chesterfield with her fists to keep from hitting her mom. The only reason they had to steal the books was because her mom wouldn't buy them. She said they were too hard, that they would make Franny's mind 'tired'. And the nurses wouldn't give Gran her money and Franny couldn't get them at the school library; the librarian wouldn't let her out of the primary section. She began to pound the chesterfield harder. "I hate you! I hate you! I hate you!" she was yelling.

Her mother went out into the kitchen in a hurry. Franny could tell she was getting the pills because she heard the cupboard opening. She tried to run away but her mom grabbed her.

"You Fucken Bitch!" she screamed when her mother was trying to shove it back on her tongue. "YOU FUCKEN BITCH!"

Franny didn't work on her Egypt's story that night. She was very tired and her bum was still hurting from the licking. She went under the blankets and cried. Her mom didn't hear anyway. She was watching 'Emergency'. Franny talked to God and told Him to tell Gran to come back. She told Him to just tell her, without giving details, because Gran would know, anyway, what she meant. Besides, she knew that He wouldn't understand, probably, that her mom was mean. Franny didn't like her mom anymore.

Later on, her mother came into the bedroom and sat down on the bed. Franny rolled, sleep-heavy, away from her. "Go away," she said, snuffling, her eyes closed. Her mother didn't go away. She hugged Franny instead. Franny hugged her back but she said, "Go away. I don't like you anymore. You hurt me." She was talking like a baby but she couldn't help it.

Her mother kept hugging her and whispered, "I'm sorry I had to hit you, Franny, but you know you can't say things like that to me. It hurt me when you said those words."

Franny started to feel mad again. She pushed her mom. "Don't you think it hurt me when you were putting those pills in my throat? I should report you to the police — I could be a drug addict!"

Her mother laughed. "Here we go again! Quit sticking your lip out like a spoil brat. You're just saying what Gran used to say to the nurses. You know darn well those pills are for a reason. The doctor told me to give them to you. We were lucky that Mr. McKinley noticed you were hyper in the first place. I'd never've guessed. You'll grow out of it..."

Franny was still angry and she didn't know why and she couldn't understand why her mom was saying all these things to be nice again. She kept pouting and muttered, "Mr. McKinley only says I'm hyper 'cause he doesn't like me. He says all the bad kids are hyper. Those pills only make us tired so we can't do bad things."

Her mother looked funny for a minute, like she was embarrassed, but then she smiled and said, "When you're older, you'll understand, honey. You go to sleep now." She was tucking her in and getting ready to leave.

Franny kept talking.

"When I'm older, no one'll dare do anything to me. Gran says it's not fair that grownups can hurt kids and make them do things... she says they will find out when they're old people. They treat you like babies when you're really old. They even used to hit Gran and they made her take pills too!"

"Franny, try not to think about Gran anymore. She was old. She didn't know what she was saying to you. Poor old soul, she's poisoned your mind without even knowing. You try to forget what she said, okay?"

Franny went on talking because her mom wasn't mad at her, she was mad at Gran who was old and dead and that was even worse.

"When I'm a famous Egyptologist, no one had better try anything with me! Famous people have power you know. And when I'm old, really old, and they try to put me in an old age people's home, I will jump in front of a train and kill myself. That's what Gran said to do, just jump in front of a train!"

"Franny!", her mom sounded dangerously mean now. "You're only nine years old and you cut with this crap or I'll... I don't know what I'll do!"

"What? Give me another pill?" asked Franny. "Shut me up?" She was still thinking about what Gran used to say and she didn't think her mom would be mad. Then her mom hit her.

Franny began to cry. "You're mean," she sobbed, "just so mean! You pick on me because I'm smaller than you! I wish you guys didn't kill Gran so I could go and live with her!" She cried harder and harder but her mom didn't hit her again, she started hugging her instead.

"Oh baby," she was saying, "You have to forget about Gran. She died six months ago. I know you miss her, I miss her too, but people get old, Franny, and they die... no one killed Gran, you have to see that... she was old..." Then she could hear her mother crying and this surprised her. Her mom didn't really like Gran. Gran was Franny's dad's mother and he 'buggered off'. No one liked Franny's dad except Gran. Her mom cried for a little while and then she started to go away.

"Night mom," she called anxiously. "I still like you."

Franny's mom looked relieved to hear this. She came back over to the bed. "Goodnight sweetheart. Don't you worry, I still love you and so does Gran. She's laughing in heaven right now at how silly we both are." She kissed Franny and went to the door.

"Mom?"

"Yes?"

"Do you think I'll be a famous Egyptologist?"

Her mother paused, then said, "If that's what you really want, Francis, I'm sure you'll be good at it. Goodnight now." She shut the door behind her.

Her mom called her 'Francis' — that was all Franny could think about. Her mom called her 'Francis' and that really meant something. All at once, she started to feel good again; almost too big to fit in her bed. She would show everyone! She had Saturday and Sunday left and she was going to write the best story Old McKinley had ever seen. He'd have to admit that she wasn't only pretending to know about it. She could remember everything it said in the Egypt books. It was going to be a story about a slave girl named Amae who had to help build a pyramid for one of the great pharaohs. It was going to be such a good story! She could hardly wait to start writing it. Then, she was asleep and dreaming about pharaohs and the Sphinx and slaves



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dying because they had to work so hard. The desert was yellow, the sky was deep-blue and the Nile was as green as a dragon.

The next morning she felt so cheerful that she even helped with the housework so her mother could get to work on time. She said she was sorry for fighting last night and her mom said that she was sorry too.

Franny started work on her Egypt story right away. She got out her favourite pencil and her green exercise book and used the coffee table for her desk. It was hard to concentrate sometimes because she was always stopping to daydream about what Mr. McKinley would say when she read her story in front of the class. Maybe all of the kids and Mr. McKinley would clap. Maybe they would give her a merit pin in front of the whole school on Awards Day. Maybe they would send her story and her picture to Professor Leaky. After all, the kid who won the grade seven essay contest about the Monarchy got her picture sent to the Queen. Then she saw the blank page in front of her and started writing again. It was silly to pretend she might be the best in the class until she could produce something to prove it. She wrote a few more sentences and launched into another dream. Maybe she would win the Governor General's award. Did they have an under-ten category?

She had to stop once in a while to play because writing was hard work. Also, her mother kept giving her all sorts of extra chores to do around the house. Still, despite everything, the story was all finished by Sunday night.

Amae was a slave girl and she was older than Franny — nearly twelve. Her job was to gather straw in the fields and to carry it to the brickmakers who made the pyramid blocks out of straw and clay. They mixed it together in mud-holes with their feet and they put it in square molds to dry hard in the sun. Lots of times the slaves died while making the bricks or cut-

ting the big stones and dragging them over to build the pyramids. Amae couldn't understand why so many thousands of people died just to make a tomb for one person. She especially couldn't understand why the overseer had let a big stone get dragged over her old grandmother instead of stopping — just like in the movies. Amae was very angry about this and it made Franny mad too. So, she decided to let Amae do something no other slave child in Egypt had ever dared to do. She became friends with the chief architect of the pyramids and persuaded him to fix the building plans so that the pyramid would collapse on top of the pharaoh when the very last stone was put in place.

In the story, Amae's plan succeeded. And, when the pyramid fell down, the Sphinx came alive and rescued all the slaves. Somewhere in the bible, the 'beast' who was supposed to save everybody after Jesus was taken away looked just like the Sphinx. He had a man's head and a lion's body. Gran used to always say that the beast didn't have anything to do with the Sphinx but Franny thought they were close enough.

She was very pleased with her story when it was finished. She wrote it all out on white paper in her neatest handwriting and she had just finished correcting all the spelling mistakes when her mom yelled at her, for the very last time, to go to bed. She put it on the dresser so she could see it from her bed, then climbed under the covers just in time, because her mom was coming. While her mother was tucking her in, she said, "I finished my Egypt story and it's really good. Don't you want to read it?"

Her mom didn't look like she wanted to read it very much. Her favourite television show was just starting. But she picked it up and read with growing interest while Franny watched proudly. When she was finished she looked amazed. "Did you write this all by yourself, Franny?" she asked.

"Yep!" Franny said and grinned.

Her mother was very surprised. "You've never written anything like this before... why, it's nearly ten pages long!"

"I never had any reason to before," she boasted. "Besides, they make you write baby stuff at school or they accuse you of trying to act important. They make you take pills and stuff."

Her mother ignored the part about the pills and asked, "Are you sure? I mean, all these big words, Franny... you don't talk like that. Are you sure?" She looked suspicious and Franny started to feel scared.

"I don't use big words when I talk or even when I'm thinking but I can use them when I'm writing them down... it's easy to do 'cause you can think longer..." she explained. "Don't you believe that I wrote it?"

"Well... uh... did you?"

"Mom! I did! *Honest!*" Franny grabbed onto her arm. "Why don't you ever believe me?"

"Alright, I believe you," her mom said and smiled. "If you wrote this, I'm very proud of you. You must be a smart little girl." She paused, "... but, you never did it before...."

Franny reassured her, "I wrote it, mom. You'll see. I'm gonna get an 'A'. Mr. McKinley will be really surprised!"

Her mother kissed her and left to catch the remaining half of the television show. For a long time, Franny couldn't sleep. Now that her story was finished, there could be no doubt that she would soon be a famous Egyptologist. She wondered why her mother hadn't thought she'd written it to begin with. Well, anyway, she had said she was 'proud'. Her mom was going to be really proud of her when she graduated from Egyptology school. She might even go there next month.

Mr. McKinley would be sure to see that she knew what she was talking about. Especially when he read the part about the Book of the Dead and how the pharaohs took food and animals with them when they died to help them through their journey in the Underworld. They had to sneak past the Mafia and their big dogs. Then, they got to paradise.... She thought about the big Sphinx opening his eyes, moving so slowly, really slowly, then faster and faster like a mountain, smashing all the pyramids and carrying the slaves and all the children away in his huge stone paws... and then, she was fast asleep.

The next morning, even before her mother was awake, Franny jumped out of bed. Her story was still there on her dresser where she'd left it. She read it over again, carefully, to make sure she hadn't just dreamed about writing it. It was even more beautiful than she'd remembered. She put it in the Egypt travel satchel Gran had given her and hurried back to her dresser. She had to get ready. Rummaging in the drawers she finally found the olive-coloured dungarees that were just like Professor Leaky's. She pulled them on and began the search for her khaki shirt. It had shoulder pads and straps and pockets like an archaeologist shirt had. She found it under some sweaters and buttoned it on. Then, she put on green socks and her boots. Pulling her hair into a pony-tail, she donned the grey straw hat with the real crocodile sweat-band and posed in front of the mirror. Now, she looked just like a famous Egyptologist. The only things she didn't have were a light on her hat for searching dark tombs and a belt with all the instruments Egyptologists use hanging from hooks. But it was close enough and Franny was very happy with her new image. She looked extremely dignified.

She peed, brushed her teeth, left a note for her mom and took a pill to bury in the driveway. She didn't have time for breakfast today. Egyptologists had to leave early, particularly almost-famous, dignified ones who never hurry.

She walked slowly and solemnly to school, clutching her satchel tightly over her shoulder. She didn't even make herself

tall because she had no time for pretend games — she would soon be a recognized Egyptologist. She arrived at her classroom long after all of the other kids were sitting in their desks. They giggled a little when she made her entrance but she strode haughtily to her desk and ignored them. They could laugh if they liked — dumb kids; they didn't know the first thing about Egyptology.

When Mr. McKinley came in, he seemed to be mad about something. This was not unusual. He always looked mad, even when he smiled. Franny wondered if maybe he was angry because she hadn't been there to pray and sing O Canada and everything. He didn't say so. Everyone had stopped talking but he hit the desk with his fist anyway.

"Alright class!" he said gruffly. "Now, we're going to find out who does their homework and who doesn't. And I'm not accepting any excuses for work that isn't done!"

At this, a few of the children, the 'hyper' ones, wriggled uneasily in their desks and Franny felt so excited inside that she wanted to sing out, "I've done mine! See! It's really good!" But she kept her face as grave and as solemn as possible and only smiled when she forgot. "We Egyptologists have to think of our public image at all times", she thought and chuckled behind her hand.

"Okay, now," continued Mr. McKinley, "Let's get started. Everyone has to read his story to the class and you can't get out of it. Anyone who doesn't have the assignment done is in serious trouble! We'll go according to the roll-call."

Franny was so delighted she could hardly hold it inside. Hers was the fourth name on the list. She wouldn't have to wait long. The first kid was Susan Atkin who was absent. The next two stood up and stammered through stories written in scrawly handwriting. Their stories were so lousy than Franny lost some of her dignified Egyptologist poise in spite of herself. Their stories were all written in baby language and it was clear that they didn't even know what a pyramid was, let alone all of the things Franny knew. And they had, at most, a half a page of writing while Franny's story was *ten pages long!* After they were finished Mr. McKinley said "Very good" and smiled. She couldn't wait to hear what he'd say when he heard her story. It was very hard to maintain her Egyptologist composure under all of this strain but she managed somehow.

When her name was called, she had a nervous feeling in her stomach but stood up bravely and plucked her story off the desk with a sweeping gesture. Now, she was going to show them! She began to read:

Ra, the Divine God of the sky, causes all, even the greatest pharaohs, to lower their eyes before Him.

His light is so brilliant that the slaves are forced to bow more humbly to their work to avoid His brightness than they bow to avoid the overseer's whip. The slaves and their children have to work hard, churning their legs up and down in the yellow mud to make the pharaoh's bricks. The mean overseers stand over them, beating them cruelly and cursing. The fat pharaoh's men sit comfortably in shaded hand-litters, eating fruit and the Nile flows like a green serpent through the land. This is what Egypt was like.

Far away from the river, the brick-wallows, the drying molds and the deep stone quarries, even past the field where the women glean straw for the bricks, the ancient pyramids, dead pharaoh's palaces, stand unchanged in the desert heat. Beyond them is the Sphinx, the majestic beast-messiah with man's head and lion's body. He came to help the slaves but the Egyptians froze him in stone and all was lost.

As Amae was crossing the fields with her load of straw...

"Stop! Stop this, at once!"

"Pardon me?" Franny was confused. Mr. McKinley's face was all red. He was yelling at her to stop. She thought that he must be embarrassed because he had been so mean to her before. But, this certainly wasn't the time to apologize — not when she was reading her story in front of the whole class. She made a motion with her hand for him to wait until she was finished and tried to continue.

As Amæ was crossing the fields with her load of straw she...

"I said, be quiet, Francis Blake!"

Franny stopped reading and glanced at him. Something was wrong. "What's the matter?" she asked quietly, fingering her story. He looked really mad, the way he looked when he sent kids to the office.

"And just what do you think you're trying to prove, young lady? Do you really expect us to believe that *you* wrote that?"

"Yes...", Franny replied, bewildered.

"Where did you copy that from? You'd just better tell me right now!" he shouted. Mr. McKinley had long, long teeth like an American or a policeman.

"I... didn't copy from anywhere... sir."

"I didn't copy from anywhere sir!" Mr. McKinley mimicked her with a whiney voice. Everyone laughed.

"I didn't copy it! I didn't! I wrote it myself!" Franny cried. She was terrified. Maybe they wouldn't believe her.

"Alright Francis, that's quite enough. Sit down."

Franny's mouth was open. She didn't sit down.

"But I haven't finished reading it yet...." Maybe they were playing a joke on her. Maybe...

"Sit down!"

Franny sat down. She felt very tired suddenly. Her stomach was sick. The other kids were laughing.

"And take that silly hat off! Immediately!"

She took off her Egyptologists's hat and tried not to think about Gran. Gran had said it was a beautiful hat. Everyone was laughing at her and Gran. She wanted to die.

"And," Mr. McKinley said, "I'll see you after school. Then you'll find out what happens to students who cheat and then lie about it!"

Franny jumped up angrily. "I didn't cheat and I didn't lie! You try to find my story in any other book!... You just try!"

"Be Quiet!" he shouted again. "I'm certainly not going to bother checking through every florid Tarzan comic book you've ever read! I know you couldn't write that. And another thing I'm going to talk to you about is that ridiculous outfit you're wearing. Don't you know that it's against the rules for girls to wear pants to school? Just look at that getup!" he said to the class.

Then, they were all laughing at her. Franny remembered about Gran. Gran was dead and they killed her. She felt tears on her face but she wasn't sad she was angry.

"You Fucken Prick!" she screamed, running from the room. Mr. McKinley came after her but he didn't get her. She ran away from him, out of the school, away from all of them. She ran down the street to City Park and into the trees where she could hide. When she was all alone and too tired to run anymore, she lay down under some shrubbery where no one could see her. She cried there. She cried because they laughed and because they killed Gran. She cried because now Gran wouldn't come back.

After a while she stopped crying. She stopped doing everything except breathing and only stayed heavy on the brown earth like a rock. There were tiny, tiny bugs, aphids, clinging to the twigs of her bush. Their bodies were grey and it was hard to tell them apart from the bark. Mostly, they stayed on one spot

pretending to be dead. In the bare dirt, a little distance away from her, a family of ants was moving out of their home. They were carrying their white pulpy eggs away to another nest. Some of the ants came over to bite her but, after a while, they stopped. She guessed they mistook her for one of their eggs. She didn't like being under the bush with all the other bugs but there wasn't anything else left to do. She was too tired to find a better place to hide. She had to stay where she was and wait for the grownups to come and get her.

After a week, Franny's mother took her back to the school. She had to go into the Principal's office and get the strap.

"Cry!" he kept saying when he was hitting the strap down on her hands. She couldn't cry just because he told her to and he hit her hands for a long time.

After that, she had to sit on a chair in the outer office. They had said for her to sit there and not to get up. She didn't feel like getting up anyway. Her hands didn't hurt at all. Some of the kids were sneaking up to give her the finger through the open office door. She didn't care. Her eyes were half-closed and she wasn't thinking about anything. Now she had to take two pills every day instead of one. There was no chance to bury them because her mom waited while she swallowed them. That was what the doctor told her mom to do...

She could hear her mother now, inside, listening to the Principal. Her mom hadn't believed her either — hadn't believed that she didn't cheat. She guessed that Mr. McKinley must have phoned again. After a while, she'd thought that she must have cheated anyway or they wouldn't all keep saying that she did. She didn't know anymore. She kept forgetting. Pretty soon she would have to go back to her classroom. That didn't matter anymore either.

The door to the Principal's office was ajar and when she bothered to listen, she could catch some of the words...

"... slight emotional problem..."

"... can still function in the system..."

"... under proper care and discipline..."

"... needs a male figure..."

"... hyperactive..."

"... Mr. Robson, our psychologist..."

... And her mom sighing. And her mom always saying, "I guess so."

Then Franny heard Mr. McKinley's loud voice say, "Don't worry about her, Mrs. Blake. She isn't a bad child. She needs help, strong discipline, if she's ever going to get over this. And as for this cheating business — in my experience, you have to take a firm line with them from the beginning. You simply have to nip them in the bud."

And that was all. Franny felt drowsy. She didn't care about Mr. McKinley now. She didn't care about anything because now Gran was gone. They had frozen a piece of Gran into stone and had pushed it down to the bottom of Franny's stomach. She couldn't remember Gran's face anymore — only the small headstone her mother showed her in the graveyard yesterday.

She understood about the Sphinx now too; what he must feel like, being made out of rocks and never moving. She sat quietly, red painless hands dangling, on the chair where she had been ordered to remain because children weren't allowed to be Egyptologists. She didn't want to run away. She was too tired.

The chair was almost the same shade of brown as the flared dress Franny's mother had told her to put on this morning. It was a lot bigger than she was; her feet only reached half-way to the floor. A secretary bustled by and didn't even notice her sitting there. She stayed motionless, resting lightly, almost invisibly, on the brown chair like an aphid on a branch. She was breathing. ●

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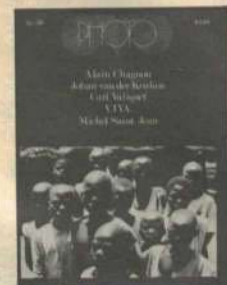
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NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS:

PATRICIA CASE — formerly a printer and plate-maker; someday a designer and writer as well. *My ideal is to be a Renaissance woman with technological capabilities.*

HOLLY DEVOR recently moved to Vancouver from the East. She has been freelancing for 5 years, and her work has been published in a variety of major and minor artistic, commercial and feminist publications around North America. She had a one-woman show in Oshawa, Ontario in 1971.

MARGO DUNN is a writer whose work has appeared in MAKARA [issues 2 and 3] as well as *Room of One's Own*.

BARBARA EBBESON is a writer living temporarily in Langley, B.C. and an English student at the University of Victoria. "A Famous Egyptologist" is her first publication.

POLLY FAMINOW is a print-maker who has recently completed her 4th year at the Vancouver School of Art.

BARBARA FARKAS is a member of the Press Gang collective and is currently staff photographer for MAKARA.

LINDA JAMES is a single mother living on welfare. She writes for community newspapers in Vancouver and is becoming more and more interested in writing for children.

BONNIE KREPS, born and raised in Denmark, has been organizing feminism in Canada for 9 years. She wrote "Hotline for Women" (a feminist Ann Landers column) for *Chatelaine* for 4 years. She now lives in the Kootenays and is busy building her own house.

HELEN POTREBENKO's poetry and fiction have appeared in MAKARA, issues 2 and 4. Also, Helen has published a full-length novel, *Taxi!*

NORA DELAHUNT RANDALL is a member of the MAKARA collective; she wrote a children's story for issue number 1. Other works of Nora's have appeared in *The Pedestal*, *Women Poets Reading*. A short verse play, *Sounds Like a Carnival*, was performed throughout B.C. by Hot Flashes Theatre.

TERESA REIMER is a printmaker now on staff with the MAKARA collective.

VERA B. WILLIAMS is currently writing and illustrating for children and adults. She did the water-colour illustrations for a children's book, *Hooray for Me*, published by Parents' Magazine Press. Her work has appeared in *Room of One's Own* and *Event* magazine and Co-op Radio, Vancouver.

RENATE WILSON is the author of many articles, broadcasts and two books: *House Without Windows* (Peter Martin Associates, 1974) and *For the Love of Sport* (J.J. Douglas, 1975). She is now working on *For the Love of Music*.

Belated thanks to the Artists' Gallery, 555 Hamilton Street, Vancouver for their loan of the drawings reproduced in MAKARA, No. 3.

BARBARA WOOD, now residing in Vancouver, is a freelance illustrator and graphic artist. Her recent one-woman show, featuring illustrations for *The Lord of the Rings*, a calendar, and a children's book, was held at the University of Waterloo and was well received. Her latest works include a Calendar of Mythology for 1977.

NOTES ON OTHER STUFF:

The credit for the cover illustration of MAKARA, number 4, should have read: Catherine Calkin Shapiro.

Rental and Sales of Bonnie Kreps' films are arranged through: Canadian Film-Makers' Distribution Centre, 406 Jarvis Street, Toronto M4Y 2G6.

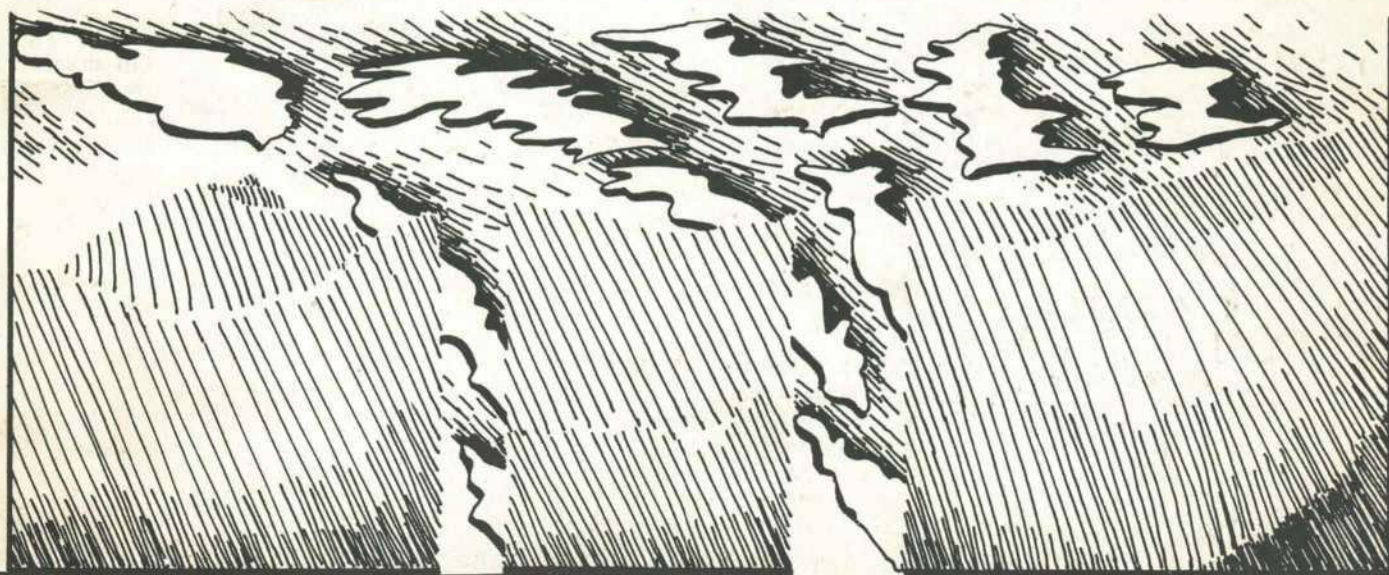
SORWUC may be contacted at 3484 Oxford Street, Vancouver V5K 1N9, tel. (604) 294-6176.

A few corrections have come in regarding our "Publications Resource Catalogue" in the fourth issue:

1 - RAIN magazine is a *monthly* publication (10 issues/year) rather than a *bi-monthly*.

2 - *Sharing Smaller Pies* is \$1.50 from Tom Bender, 2270 N.W. Irving, Portland, Oregon USA 97210.

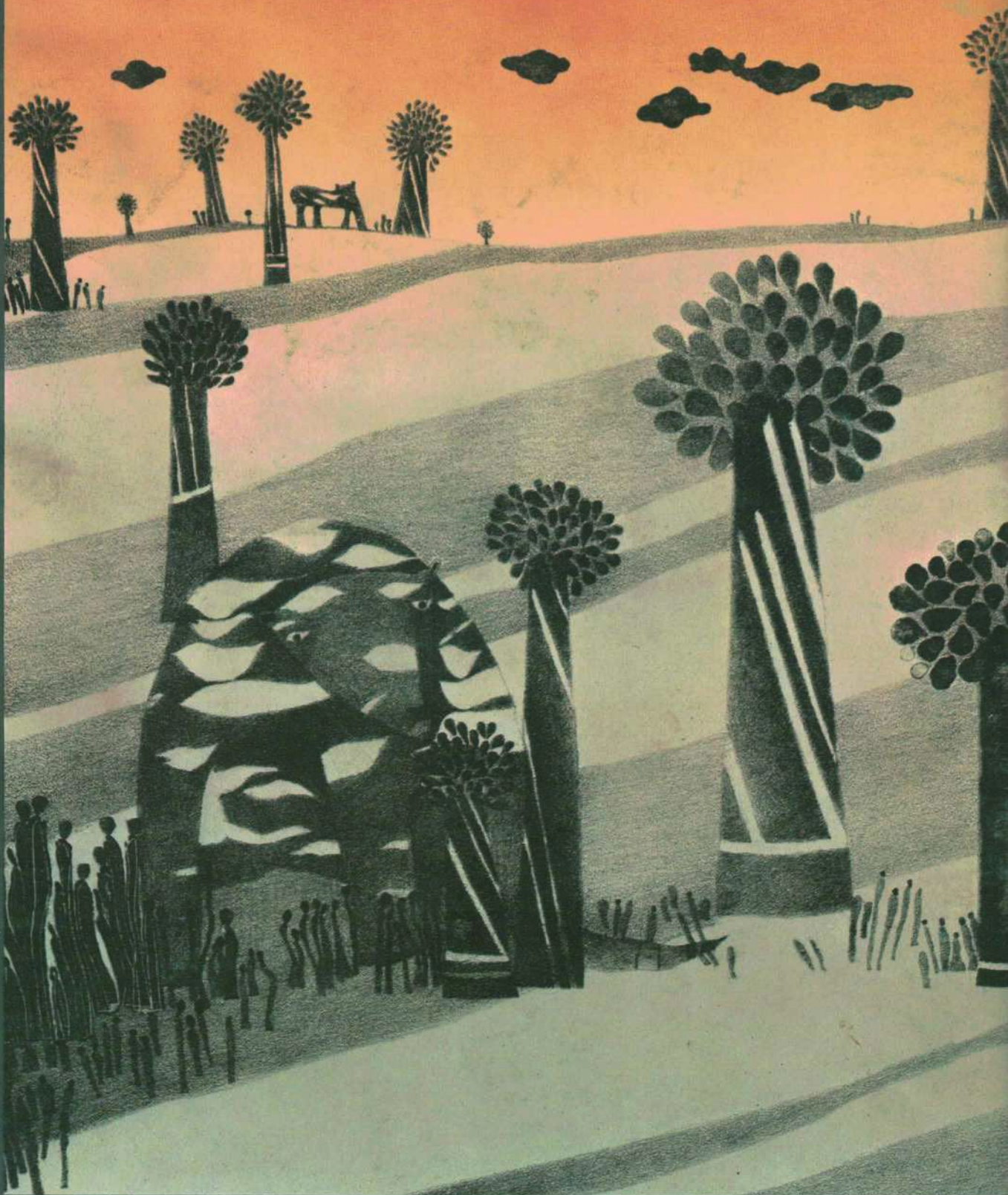
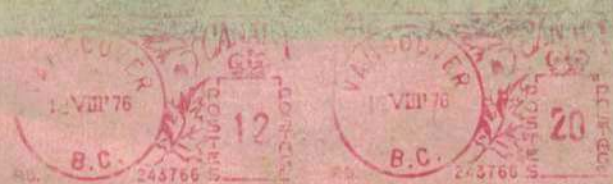
3 - *Co-Evolution Quarterly*, Box 428, Sausalito, California USA 94965 has gone up to \$8.00/year.



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