

Lifting the lid off

Pandora

Halifax, Nova Scotia

December, 1987

Volume Three Number Two

FREE!

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TOO VISIBLE?

"We can only be threatened by something if we are afraid of it."
See the editorial on page four.

Cole challenges current values, while Goldstein insults audience

Megan Ardyche

I attended the pornography debate between Susan Cole, of Broadside, and Al Goldstein, publisher of Screw magazine held at Dalhousie University on October 7, 1987.

Goldstein spent the first five to ten minutes on stage standing up and shuffling papers at his table. I reacted to his body language — standing up — feeling that he was trying to create a larger, more imposing presence in the mind of the audience. He was not being introduced or speaking during this time.

Goldstein talked at length on the dangers of censorship, saying that censorship can be used by any group that happens to be in power to withhold information from the general population. He made a direct appeal to the young university students there and who were, possibly, living away from home for the first time. He appealed to their sense of defiance and independence by equating the control of pornography with parental control.

In talking about violence in pornography, Goldstein stated that he personally does not promote rape, pedophilia, or other forms of violent coercive sex, and therefore the pornography he disseminates cannot be linked to such actions. This seems an illogical argument to me because he is equating his personal morality with the morality of his readers. It occurs to me now that he did not say what he believes about overtly violent pornography.

Goldstein talked about pornography as fun and liberating and implied

that most of the women in the pornography trade are in it because they are horny. According to Goldstein, acting in a porn film "is the healthiest manifestation of sexuality possible" for a woman.

When the time came for Goldstein to respond to Susan Cole's presentation, he was insulting to the audience ("try listening and letting thoughts into your brain — you might like it"), and he did not rebut Cole at all. He went back to talking about the dangers of censorship even though Cole was not advocating censorship; in fact, she did not think that was the best tool to use in dealing with pornography.

In his comments to the audience, Goldstein was clearly stating that anyone who disagreed with his views was close-minded, anti-sex, and anti-pleasure. He defended himself by saying he is simply doing what the public wants. His "public" is very narrowly defined, to be sure, since there are large segments of the public who do not want Goldstein's product.

When the question period came up, Goldstein commented that the men in the audience had all been pussy-whipped because they weren't getting up and asking questions.

Vagina as weapon — a new twist, even though Goldstein had scoffed at the concept of the penis as weapon.

Susan Cole tried to engage the audience in a dialogue about values. She addressed the issue of consent by talking about women making 59¢ on the dollar and the only profession in

which women make more than men is in prostitution, so what does this say to the issue of consent? She sees a connection between pornography and economics: it's hard to get a raise if we're seen as the sum of our genitalia.

Cole called Goldstein the "bed-room police" because he's working to maintain the sexual status quo. Cole called for a "sexuality of resistance," an erotica that celebrates sexuality in an egalitarian sense because anyone who consumes pornography is complicit in ensuring that people's lives, and particularly the lives of women, will not change. She challenged the audience to redefine what pleasure means to us.

I found Cole to be provocative (in a

positive sense) — she challenged the current values and the issue of pornography without advocating repression of anyone. She was, in my view, advocating "power from within" in asking people to look at how they define and perceive their sexuality and how they express that sexuality.

The standing-room-only crowd showed that there is considerable interest in this issue and I hope that some people left there with a start on a different perspective.

□ □ □ □ □

Megan Ardyche is a volunteer at Pandora, and is thinking about the possibility of a feminist debating series sparked by this pornography debate.

Reactions to the Great Porno Debate

Cole's strength and eloquence help listener tackle inequities

Amanda LeRougetel

I bought my ticket well ahead of time, not wanting to be disappointed on the night of the debate. I was really looking forward to the event, not so much for the subject matter, but more for Susan Cole herself.

I had seen her in action at several women's conferences in the past and have been very impressed with her passion and eloquence in matters feminist.

I arrived early, with a friend, and soon saw familiar faces in the crowd which was gathering outside the doors. The crowd grew almost by the minute and the noise level increased accordingly.

I began to feel uneasy.

They have all come here, I thought, to see a feminist desecrated by a jerk disguised as a champion of freedom of speech. How is this going to turn out, I began to wonder.

The doors were opened and we filed in, the seats in the first rows filling quickly. I sat with friends, glad to be there and yet wishing it were over.

Laughter and snippets of conversation came my way. People seemed anxious for the debate to get under way. The crowd had grown to absolute capacity by eight o'clock.

When the speakers were finally ushered in at 8:15, we greeted them with anticipatory silence.

The moderator introduced the event and the speakers beginning with Al Goldstein, whose many accomplishments were listed off. He was arranging stacks of books and magazines on his table the whole while. He wore a loud Donald Duck t-shirt and sported half-glasses and a beard. He was given an apprehensive round of applause.

Susan Cole was given a shorter introduction, poured herself a glass of water and arranged her notes on the table in front of her. The crowd gave her a definite round of applause.

I was surprised and pleased. Maybe the audience had truly come to hear a debate and were in fact more supportive of the radical feminist than the pornographer. Maybe my fears were

unfounded.

In that the two speakers held radically opposing views on the subject of pornography, the debate was predictable enough: Goldstein talking about pleasure-hating feminists, the evils of censorship and the choices that women who work in the pornography industry make; Susan Cole talking about feminists as freedom fighters, the need to fight for a sexuality of resistance and the concept of eroticizing equality.

Goldstein's dogmatic whiny defense of freedom of speech was not well received by the audience; Susan Cole's energetic and compelling call to intellectual action was.

My mind was made up before I ever bought the ticket for the event. I attended the evening because I wanted to be there for it. I sat through the debate with a mounting sense of pride in Susan's strength and eloquence. I came away from the two and a half-hour show feeling stronger and more sure of myself and my politics. Watching Susan put herself on the line has renewed the power of my convictions and spurred me on to tackle the manageable inequities I see around me every day.

I am not ready to debate an Al Goldstein on stage. But I am ready to carry on the feminist freedom fight in my life.

Wolfville

Carolyn Campbell

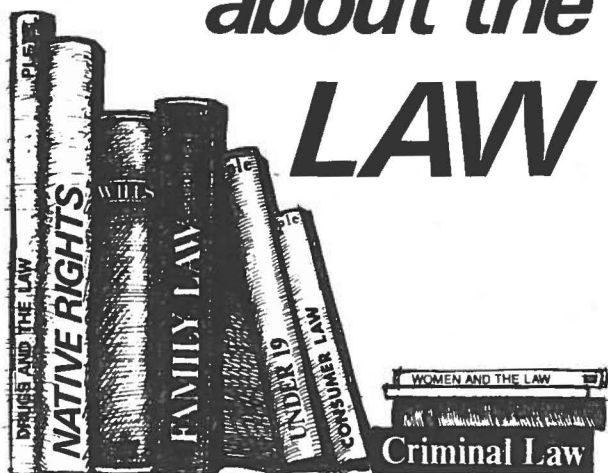
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Local journalist condemns sexist bias in media

On November 7, MediaWatch and Centre for Investigative Journalism sponsored a panel discussion on "How Women Make the News: Bias in the Canadian Media". We were so impressed with Sharon Fraser's presentation, we asked her for permission to reprint it in Pandora.

Sharon Fraser

This week, I've been hoping that someone would ask me if I had a title for the presentation that I'm going to make. I thought of two good ones. I thought I would call it "What did you do in the war, Mummy?" or "Feminism is an F-word, too."

Years ago, when I was still a student, I didn't really like the study of history and I wasn't very good at it. This was a surprise both to me and my teacher because I was pretty good at everything else. I told her that I was very frustrated because I wanted to know more about the people: I wanted to know how they lived, what their houses were like, what toys did the children play with, what was their food like, how was it cooked, who cooked it, where did they get it, what did they wear? I would have been fascinated if I could have found this information, but I could never work up much enthusiasm for the Peloponnesian Wars or strings of dates that chronicled all manner of manly pursuits.

It was many years later when I realized that what I was missing was the history of women and children.

And now, when I read or listen to those outlets that are responsible for recording our day-to-day history, I see the same thing happening all over again. In general, what makes the news and how it's reported has very little to do with the reality of most women's lives.

I want to begin by telling you briefly about one of the story meetings when I was at CBC radio. The three participants before me brought up story ideas about a new potash mine, about

rising mortgage rates, and about changes in the downtown traffic patterns. They were all feeling pretty good and had big male plans to talk to the minister of natural resources, the president of some financial institution, and the mayor.

When it was my turn, I reported that the tellers in my bank had all been told when they came in that morning that they were being cut from full-time to half-time, their wages were being halved accordingly, and they were losing all their benefits. They were given no notice; they were not even afforded the courtesy of an explanation. They were simply told. Before I was even part way through this short presentation, I observed six eyes glazing over with indifference, and could sense the barely-stifled yawns. When I finished, the producer said, "So what's the story?"

I thought I had given enough for a

"We've already done women stuff this week."

story proposal, but I went a little further and said, "I think it happened this way because the tellers are women and whoever is responsible for such decisions would simply assume that the women were working for supplementary family income." And that's when the groans became audible. At least one person said, "Oh no, not that women stuff again"; somebody else said, "We've already done women stuff this week." And finally the producer said "If you can prove — if you can get the manager of that bank to tell you by three o'clock this afternoon that the tellers' hours were cut because they're women, you've got a story."

Otherwise forget it. What else have you got?"

Around the same time that this happened, I was a judge in a competition to choose the best community newspaper in Atlantic Canada. Anyone who's familiar with the weeklies knows that, in some cases, they're doing some good journalism. But that

year, I came away from them with the certain impression that the women who made it into their pages were winners of beauty contests, victims of rape or domestic violence, or graduating from a heavy equipment operator's course. Today, I'd add "or sleeping with rich and/or powerful men." The major dailies are not doing much better.

Now why is this? The first reason is that we still live in a society where what is seen to be important and significant is determined according to a male agenda. Our institutions — the educational systems, the governments, and certainly the media — have never acknowledged the realities of most women's lives and therefore have covered women's issues as afterthoughts and fillers at best, with tongue-in-cheek and journalistic contempt at worst.

Just as women and children are the first to fall through the safety net of our inequitable economic system, so too are stories that deal with women's issues the first to be cut when editors and producers lack space or time.

The chic notion that there are no women's issues but only people issues is one that keeps being raised, along with the mainstream media's continued use of the words "post-feminism" — the implication being that, with the co-operation of all the helpful and sensitive men we know, everything's been taken care of, we've now reached

a reasonably equitable society, and now things can get back to normal.

But there are women's issues. They're women's because they've been there forever and men haven't done anything about them. If women don't keep them in the forefront, those issues will become invisible again. Some of those issues are child care, reproductive rights, equal pay, women's health, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, pornography, stereotyping in the media — all the issues that are responsible for so many glazed eyes and so many stifled yawns in so many newsrooms.

There are also people's issues — but even they are not covered in a way that's meaningful to the majority of women. The single thing that gets the most coverage is the economy. Understandable, because economic issues affect everyone — especially women, who make up the greatest number of poor people in this country. Many

I have been told that I shouldn't call myself a feminist right out loud.

women don't relate to the coverage of the ongoing stock market crash as it's being covered in the daily media but would be interested in coverage that came closer to understanding our lives. What is the threatened recession going to do to me when I'm already working for a less than spectacular wage? Is an increase in mortgage rates going to give my landlord another excuse for raising the rent? Will the price of oil go up?

Free trade: it's covered and covered and covered. We know what the Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Manufacturing Association and Bob White and Margaret Atwood think of it. But how is it going to affect women specifically? On a level playing field, will the family allowance cheques be on the table? Will medicare be altered? How will women's work be affected?

Marjorie Cohen wrote a book about it and there was a little flurry as she passed through on her book tour and that was that.

The point is that in these issues, as in so many others, the coverage is geared toward white middle-to-upper class males — men with jobs, mortgages, car payments, stocks and bonds, credit cards, insurance policies — all those trappings which our media assumes to be common to everyone.

On the other side on the coin: women who are in the news business — like me — are something like women who play roles in male politics. I want as many women as possible to get into both, but the truth is, unless the male agenda is changed in some very fundamental ways, and unless the woman in question has a very strong sense of women's politics, it often doesn't matter much whether the person filling the seat is a man or a woman. Women have also been socialized to

believe that our concerns are not very important and we shouldn't whine so much about domestic violence and sexual assault when there are really important things — like wars and strikes and uprisings.

The CBC meeting I described earlier wasn't exaggerated and it wasn't atypical. In that job, I became completely demoralized. In other jobs no one has ever told me to draw the line at certain issues — although I have been told that I shouldn't call myself a feminist right out loud — but I know myself how much restraint to exercise. With many women reporters and editors, lines are drawn not because of an employer, or a superior, or co-workers, but because of the audience. Readers and listeners too have been conditioned to believe that some things are more important than others and in order to keep their attention and respect, it's often necessary to make sure you're not doing too much women's stuff.

And that reminds me of Maxine Tynes, the Dartmouth poet who wrote a story called *In Service*. The first criticism she got of her story was that it was "too black." "But I looked in my mirror," Maxine said, "and I saw black. What's too black?"

I have a similar question. On the subject of issues which — for so many years — have been hidden, misrepresented, ridiculed, lied about, and mostly ignored, how could there possibly be too much women's stuff in our news coverage?



A large audience listened with interest to the speakers at the Women in Media panel discussion held on November 7th at Henson College in Halifax. As well as Sharon Fraser, editor of

Atlantic Insight, whose presentation is printed here, the panel included Ron Crocker, CBC; Judy Steed, Globe and Mail; and Doug MacKay, Daily News. (Photo by Debbie Mathers)

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Pandora

Pandora is published four times a year by Pandora Publishing Association, a non-profit organization of women in Nova Scotia.

Pandora is a newspaper produced by, for and about women. We actively seek participation on any level from women who do not have access to mainstream media. We welcome submissions — written and photo/graphic. We cannot accept material that is oppressive or intolerant. We are, however, committed to working with women to help them express their experience in a non-oppressive way. We encourage women to tell us when we do not meet our own standards. Not everything submitted can be included and we reserve the right to edit, especially for length. However, we will let you know if we make substantial changes. Please write to us.

Our editorial guidelines continue to evolve. See Issue 2-4 (June, 1987) for more details and let us know if you have concerns about material that appears in the paper.

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NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS:

Pandora is now being distributed free to various locations throughout the province, due to a lack of womanpower to do the distribution to and follow-up of bookstores. The editorial committee also felt that free distribution would allow us to make the paper available in other outlets such as libraries, health clinics, etc. (If any of you women out there would be willing to do distribution in your areas, please let us know.) This is in no way a statement that Pandora has so much money that it no longer needs to charge for the paper. We are, in fact, hoping to get more subscribers this way. If you want the paper mailed to you, subscriptions are \$5.00 for four issues. There is a sliding scale. Women on limited income, send what you can. We ask women who can afford more to provide a contributing or sustaining subscription to help support the paper.

Cover: Photos by Lori Meserve

Presswork by Kentville Publishing

Why does "that word" have so much power?

Recently, at an all-woman gathering, I met several women who are readers of Pandora. I asked one, as I usually do in such circumstances, how she liked the latest issue of the paper (which focused on birthing).

"Well... I don't know how to say this tactfully, um..., but it didn't seem to be as directed to, um..., a 'particular' type of person as others have been."

Well, I knew immediately what she meant — lesbianism.

"It's funny you say that. I've heard others say the same thing about the paper."

This short exchange started me thinking, again, and I decided to do a bit of research on Pandora. I checked all the issues that have been produced to date (not including this issue) and found that there have been a total of 391 stories and letters. Thirty-five articles (nine per cent) had lesbianism as their main topic, and of these, 12 were letters to the editor. Indeed, one of those letters was from a woman who was complaining about the amount of lesbian content in the paper.

Pandora has produced 6,139 column inches of text to date (not including supplements), of which 516 inches dealt with lesbianism (8.4%).

The number of lesbian articles in each issue ranged widely from a low of two articles (3.5% to 21%), and from a low of 27.75 inches to a high of 123.75 inches (4.8%-19%).

To compare even further, we have published a total of over 559 column

inches on various art topics, yet we have never been accused of over-representing the arts community. We have also printed 583 column inches (34 stories) dealing with birth control/birthing/abortion; motherhood/daycare; prostitution; marriage/divorce/custody; housework; which could be considered to be representative of (and many of which directly portray) a heterosexual lifestyle, yet we are not challenged for being too traditional.

This leads to questions: How much is too much? How much is enough?

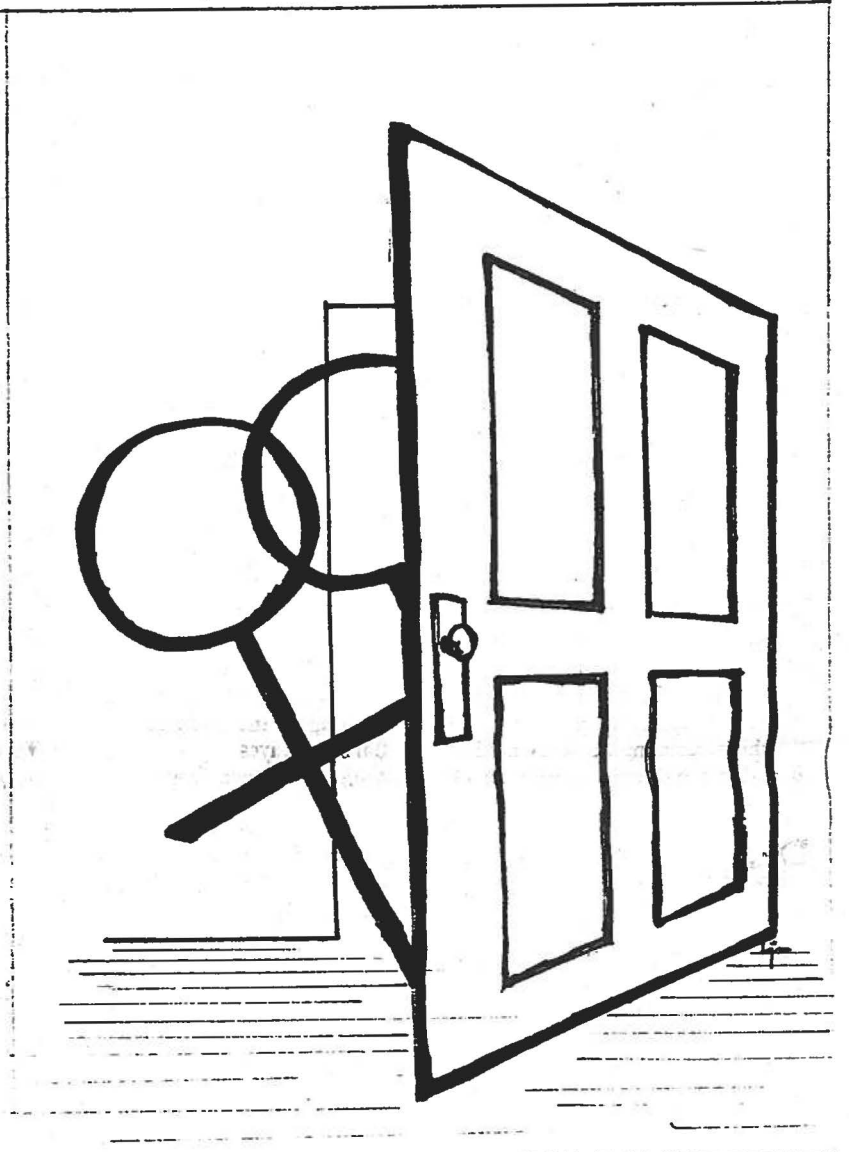
Most statistics confirm that approximately 10 per cent of all women are lesbians. So by that yardstick, at 9 per cent and 8.6 per cent, we're about right on the mark. But that is not the point. For those who are homophobic, whether the word "lesbian" appears once or 100 times, it's too much. For them, the sore point is not the quantity, but its very presence.

If you compared the amount of lesbian copy in our paper with the total amount of publicity given to heterosexuals in all the media they have as resources, 100 per cent wouldn't be enough to make a dent.

This is by no means a new issue. We have received various letters addressing this issue from the second paper onwards; some have said that

Pandora has entirely too many articles dealing with lesbianism; others have stated how good it is to read a newspaper where lesbians are not pushed to the side, where they can receive an affirming voice.

I am reminded of Dale Spender's research about talking. She has found that if women speak for more than 30% of the time, men think they are being pushy, aggressive, and talking "too much." Is it the same with lesbi-



Graphic by Lori J. Meserve

anism? Is 10% (or more) too frightening for some women to handle? Or do some feminists believe that having lesbians in "their cause" somehow undermines that cause? Is it the fear of being associated with lesbians, or of being called a lesbian? If so, why?

Is lesbianism a fundamental challenge to society? Is there something so "other" about lesbianism that it threatens the entire structure of our "reality"? Do many women still see lesbianism as "dirty" or "sick"? If not, what is the basis for the fear/antagonism/closed-mindedness?

One woman, who is often in the public eye, said that if asked whether or not she was a lesbian (because she is involved in issues that often include lesbianism), would respond by saying, "Whether I am or not isn't the issue, but I will say that I am in order to show support and solidarity."

If all women who called themselves feminist (or indeed did not call themselves feminist, but at least worked towards feminist ends) showed the same solidarity, many personal attacks would be diffused, and lesbians would feel less isolated, and much safer. Also, the word itself would lose some of its power to threaten. We can only be threatened by something if we are afraid of it.

Where do you stand?

Debbie Mathers, Megan Ardyche

Letters to the Editor

Voices Amongst Ourselves. Have a problem, a complaint, an enquiry, or perhaps something good or bad to say to other women? Well ... say it to our ... umm ... your, section titled **Voices Amongst Ourselves.** This can be your sisterhood column, a chance to channel your thoughts and energies to other women who can appreciate and understand what you've gone through or are going through. Just remember that nobody's different — we share the same experiences in one way or another. **Voices Amongst Ourselves** is about women, for women, whether you're a woman-loving woman, a feminist, plain ol' linear, or otherwise. It matters not; what does is that we all learn to grow together. So, we'd like to hear from you. Send your letters of 200 words or less to Pandora, Box 1209, Stn. N., Halifax, N.S. B3K 5H4.

Likes paper and willing to help by supplying articles

Pandora:

Yes, you must continue. We need you. We need a newspaper where women can speak honestly and openly on all the issues that are silenced in Nova Scotia — reproductive rights, sexual preference, education; so that lesbian is no longer a dirty word, or feminist for that matter.

It is not boring, never deadening (if you are referring to Pandora).

It is inspiring and the work done is hard work and, as Megan Ardyche mentioned in her article, the few women who put together Pandora are, I'm sure, doing a million other things in their lives.

Feminists have a lot of work to do and social change is where it's at.

I too realize that burn-out is always imminent, and I would like to respond to encourage you in regards to the options mentioned by Megan.

I think reprinting articles from other journals could be great — what comes

to mind is "Women of Power" for inspiration and powerful role models for women.

Yes, reprint from other journals, also ask other groups to contribute.

For my part, as I have urged you to continue then I must, in feminist conscience, contribute and share the load. What I could do is supply one article of an inspirational nature that I have come across in my discovering of feminist literature for each issue you put out. I hope that can be of help.

Also in response, we are all busy doing volunteer work, but I am personally learning to manage it better, learning to say no (when I'm over-extended) and passing on one article will not tax my energies. I only feel sorry I have not responded to thank and encourage you sooner. I do it now.

Many thanks,
Blessings of the Goddess
Barbara Hayes
Antigonish, Nova Scotia

Reader objects to author's analysis of class, privilege

Pandora:

I've just spent the morning reading some of your back issues which appeared — miraculously — in the student centre of Memorial University of Newfoundland last week. On the whole, I'm very glad to have been introduced to Pandora, and I would like to continue to read it. The tone of Darl Wood's article, however, ("Privilege silences poor womyn" 14.2.2), has me wondering whether my subscription would be welcome.

By virtue of Wood's definition/insinuation of class behaviour, my status as a student, my associations with middle class men (however nebulous), and even my ability to read all morning, must all serve to irrevocably plant me in the padded ranks of the middle class. Post-secondary education, she implies, is a mark of the privileged. The prestige of student life must then override the reality that my combined income from both student loans and swabbing out toilets still leaves me well below the official poverty line. I'm "privileged," I'm seriously in debt, and I resent being classified with "nouveau-yuppie feminist activists."

Personally, I find more arrogance in Wood's dismissal of the non-Poor as the Other Privileged Womyn, than in the (cringe) "I made it on my own" attitude. The caricature of the socialite feminist who spouts class analyses over politically correct vegetarian lunches is neither an accurate nor an amusing representation of the non-Poor feminists that I know of, nor of those, I suspect, in general. Neither am

I impressed with the feeble, final call to action, with its veiled threats that our personal privilege is "tenuous at best." Sisterhood is powerful, isn't it?

If my subscription fee is considered, in general, to be "money to support (my) political habits," then I would rather not be put on the mailing list. If not, then I certainly would be privileged to receive the next four issues of Pandora at the above address.

Shirley Stacey
St. John's, Nfld.

Welcome addition to women's centre

Pandora:

Enclosed is a cheque for \$30. for a 2 year subscription of Pandora. After reading several issues, it became clear it would be a welcome addition to our periodicals and our attempt to begin representing Maritime Women in our Centre. Thank you in advance.

In Sisterhood,
Rhonda Charney
Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Editor's note: Readers, please note that the opinions stated by authors do not necessarily represent the opinions of the editorial committee of Pandora.

Female offenders suffer from lack of "official" interest

Pandora:

Several issues of Pandora have reached me here in Kingston. As editor of this prison's magazine, I have added your name to our exchange of periodicals.

I am sending you the enclosed article, hopefully for publication.

I have been at P4W (Prison for Women, Kingston, Ontario) for two years as part of a life sentence with a ten year minimum to be spent incarcerated. Although I am from Antigonish, there is no other place in Canada, let alone a place closer to home, for me to serve this sentence. Effectively, I have been deported. It is unlikely that I will be able to maintain meaningful relationships over this long time and distance with either of my daughters who are still in N.S. It is unlikely that I will be able to continue meaningful contact with supportive members of my former community either.

Things are happening to women in the Canadian Correctional System and not for the better. In N.S., so little has been done that it may still be possible to move in a positive direction — if someone will take the initiative. The needs of the female offender are very similar to the needs of many, many other women: filling gaps in education, employment-oriented job training, drug/alcohol recovery programs (Women in Sobriety is starting here — at last), and resources for counselling on living problems.

Community-based centres and residences could serve far more than the offender's needs. I do not believe that there are not enough women to justify the expense. More to the point is the fact that the government does not choose to spend money on social programs for any women. At P4W, 80% of the women are here in connection with substance abuse, either through prob-

lems of their own or as products of addicted relationships. At least 60% have been sexually abused and/or battered as children or adults. At any particular time, about 10, maybe 15, women held in this prison could be considered "violent," leaving the remaining 90 or 100 left living in the same restrained conditions realistically needed for very few.

Concerned women could do a great deal for imprisoned sisters.

JoAnn Mayhew
Kingston, Ontario
(Editor's note: Please see JoAnn's story on page 11.)

Paper vital connector

Pandora:

Wow! Volume three! Well done! So Number One arrived and in my usual manner, I flipped through, reading the articles that pulled my attention, saving others for later. Eventually, each issue, every word is read.

Pandora introduces me to women I haven't had the pleasure of meeting and keeps me in touch and up to date with women I know well and see far too rarely.

Pandora is a vital connector for the N.S. women's movement, sifting as we do through ideas, plans and actions.

However, nothing is worth the cost of burned-out women.

I hope your call to women gets a great response. I will contribute as I can.

Take care of yourselves,
Alex Keir
West Branch, Nova Scotia

Please write
to Pandora

Readers appreciate stories in Pandora, offer help

Pandora:

Please find enclosed a cheque for my membership/subscription to your publication. I am co-ordinator and founder of DES Action/NS and may, at times, have the time to submit articles for publication.

I found your articles on home births very interesting and informative. In fact, I found the whole publication very good.

I also enjoyed reading Brenda Thompson's story — I just wish I could help her and I applaud her bravery and strength. I know how hard it is for her to deal with the politicians and men in power. I wish her the best of luck.

I also enjoyed Gwyneth Matthews' article. I met Gwyn in Sydney, NS, in 1984 at a conference of Women Unlimited. She is a fantastic lady! I'm very pleased to hear that she is considering writing another book. Good luck!

I look forward, with great anticipation, to your next publication.

Sincerely,
Pam Cathcart

Pandora:

A great magazine! I enjoy keeping in touch with what women are doing in Nova Scotia.

Keep up the good work.
Kit Holmwood,
Ottawa

We get thanks

Pandora:

Thanks a lot and keep that great stuff coming!

Nancy Cameron
Ontario

Appreciates Brenda's battles

Pandora:

Although my times/energies are limited, I can at least give a response as a reader.

For me, Pandora has gotten better and better. In the beginning, I would thumb through it; oh hum — so Metro-oriented. But the paper has developed wonderfully. There are a variety of topics and themes. It is definitely a women's paper. There's lots to read. I can't just whisk through it. And that's great.

And I want to give my personal appreciation for Brenda Thompson's article in the September issue. As a single mother, I have, like so many others, my own battles, exasperations, anger, fury, hatred (one could go on and on with the negatives) with the social assistance system. I congratulate her on her courage. The fury is not confined to the cities. There are a lot of us.

Diane LaRue
West Branch, Nova Scotia

graphic by Lori J. Meserve

♀'s events update

WAC NS — strong, active and growing

Sandi Kirby

The Women's Action Coalition of Nova Scotia (W.A.C.N.S.) is now 55 member groups strong. That means there are between 5,000 and 15,000 women who are members of an organization that works primarily to lobby all levels of government and secondarily to educate women of the province about issues of concern to us.

We have now had several council meetings; New Glasgow in May, Wolfville in July, and Bedford in September.

At each of these meetings, representatives from each of the regions and the members at large have met to discuss and debate the tasks of the organization. It has been a turbulent time for us as we struggle to make a new organization work on very thin resources and get to know each other's politics and objectives.

We have been active on a number of issues to date, among them Free Trade and the Meech Lake Accord. Marian Mathieson authored the "Brief to the Select Committee on Trade Negotiations, Nova Scotia Government" (Free Trade), and she will be presenting that at the Provincial Hearings soon.

We are also very active in the lobby around the process and content of the Meech Lake Accord. On October 13, 1987, we were one of five co-hosts of the panel called "Meech Lake Accord — What Women Need to Know."

From that information, the Meech Lake Committee of the Women's Action Coalition (Sandi Kirby, Pat Campbell and Cheryl AuCoin) are now considering the draft of "Brief on the Meech Lake Accord and Nova Scotia Women," authored by Sandi Kirby.

The same brief is under consideration by the Nova Scotia Ad Hoc Committee on the Meech Lake Accord [Henson College, CRIAW (Canadian Research Institute for Advancement of

Women), NAWL, Dal Legal Aid, CCLOW (Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women), NAC (National Action Committee) and LEAF (Legal Education and Action Fund)] for adoption as the stand we want to take in this province. Dawn Neill at Henson College was a tower of strength during the organizational stages of the Panel.

Further, we co-sponsored the Women Unlimited "Making Connections: Finding Our Power" conference on October 16-18, 1987 in Sydney. More than 300 women registered for the three-day series of workshops, plenaries, business meetings and entertainment by Amy Bozart.

This conference served as our mid-year meeting, but primarily was for us to learn some lobby skills and to get closer to some of the issues that concerned us. Secretary of State was particularly helpful in funding the conference and supporting the organizers through a number of difficult challenges. Cheryl AuCoin, our Co-ordinator, was also the chair of the conference organizing committee and is to be applauded along with her committee for such a fine, fine conference.

The Women and Poverty Committee (Lucille Harper, Chairperson) is working on the Nova Scotia Association for Social Workers Report and they are calling for submissions about Women and Poverty from concerned groups in Nova Scotia.

As a result of this committee's work, and some timely grant monies received from PLURA (Presbyterian, Lutheran, United, Roman Catholic and Anglican), a number of low income women were sponsored for the conference in Sydney. **SOME DIRECT RESULTS!!!**

Currently, we are looking into Secretary of State funding assistance. We are operating on monies collected from



Members of WAC NS have been meeting since its founding to lobby on behalf of the women of Nova Scotia. Shown here (l to r) are Josephine, Hope Fraser, Marion MacDonald, Sandi

Kirby, Cheryl AuCoin, Penny Mott, Deb Trask. Hidden behind them are Diane Crowell and Bernadette MacDonald. (Photo by Joanne Jefferson.)

the initial membership fees (April, 1987) and clearly do not have the financial strength to do the work of a provincial lobby group. Marilyn Keddy and Brenda Richard are the prime movers behind the grant application.

Brenda Richard is currently working out the ways to help the W.A.C.N.S. committees function more smoothly and effectively. With limited resources and issues that demand immediate attention, most of the committees are underway and beginning to effect change.

The committees are: Funding/Finance; Media/Writing; Reproductive Rights; Retirement Planning; Meech Lake Accord; Health; Prostitution; Membership; Child Care; Sexual Orientation; Election; Peace and Free Trade; Employment; Violence against Women and Children.

Many of these committees are in the preliminary stages of organization and we look forward to your participation in the W.A.C.N.S. For further information about the committees, please contact the W.A.C.N.S. (see address below).

We are linking with other non-member groups and with national groups in rapid fashion at this time. In particular, Pat Campbell is proving to be an extraordinarily resourceful Nova Scotia representative to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (if you are a NAC member then you have received the third NAC PAC since she took over the position in May of 1987).

NAC is undergoing a national organizational review to find out how the women's movement and the national lobby organization can work more

smoothly together.

The two women will tentatively be at the January 15/16 meeting in Antigonish. This is our opportunity to redefine our relationship with NAC in a way that fits the reality of living in the Atlantic Region. You may wish to attend. If so, contact Cheryl AuCoin, c/o the W.A.C.N.S.

If you, or your group, is not a member of NAC and wish to be, you can contact Pat Campbell through the W.A.C.N.S. (Address Below). The next meetings of the W.A.C.N.S. are as follows: January 15/16, Antigonish; March 5/6, Truro, April Annual General Meeting, Halifax.

For further information about the W.A.C.N.S. or NAC, please write to 84 Grandview St., Sydney, N.S. B1P 3N6 or call Cheryl AuCoin (564-5926) or Sandi Kirby (835-9434).

Meech Lake Committee fears women's rights may be lost

Jane Wright

On September 21, 1987, the Special Joint Committee on the Constitutional Accord tabled its report fully endorsing the Meech Lake package developed by the Prime Minister and the 10 provincial premiers.

For the hundreds of women and other concerned citizens who spent the last month of a beautiful summer trying to understand the implications of the Accord and to put together briefs, this action came as no surprise. Set up to conduct hearings in Ottawa, the Committee did little to hide the fact that its mission, from the beginning, was a *fait accompli*. Now the Accord awaits ratification in nine provincial legislatures (the Federal House of Commons, Quebec, and Saskatchewan have already endorsed the Accord in its entirety).

Women are angry because, for the second time in recent history, they have

been excluded from the constitutional process. Intended to bring about Quebec's full participation in the Canadian Constitution, the Accord, as currently worded, may jeopardize women's rights as guaranteed in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Women are also concerned that, because the Accord changes federal/provincial cost-sharing practices, new social programmes such as day-care may be adversely affected.

Dissension over the Accord has been growing throughout Nova Scotia. In September, women from all areas of the province formed an Ad Hoc Committee on the Meech Lake Accord. On October 13, a public information forum was held at Dalhousie University. Participating in this panel event were: Sylvia Gold, President, Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women; Jane MacMillan, Halifax-Dartmouth and District Labour Coun-

cil; Maureen Shebib, Dalhousie Legal Aid; Joan Dawkin and Wayne McKay of Dalhousie Law School. This event was recorded on videotape and will be available for viewing by interested persons in the near future.

The Ad Hoc Committee is launching a campaign to secure public hearings in this province so that Nova Scotians will have a chance to air their concerns about the Accord. The Committee is circulating a petition calling for public hearings and has launched a letter-writing campaign in support of women's proposal for a national conference on women and the Constitution.

At the mid-year conference on October 16, 17, 18, the Nova Scotia Women's Action Coalition resolved to lobby the provincial government for public hearings. The Ad Hoc Committee is also in the process of putting together an information package of materials on the Meech Lake Accord and this should be available in the very near future. Materials, such as the Special Joint Committee Report and copies of numerous briefs by national women's groups and other concerned persons, are available at the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women office. (For information, call 424-8662.)

Action must be taken to ensure that women's rights in the constitution are protected. For further details about the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee, contact Stella Lord (477-0094) or Sandi Kirby (443-4450 ext. 213).

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CHAPTER

Artificial insemination:

Single woman decides to have child using A.I.

Yvonne DeRoller

With the recent decision by the Salvation Army (who run the Grace Maternity Hospital in Halifax) not to continue performing artificial insemination except in cases using sperm and ova from a legally married couple, I find myself forced to respond.

Last week, one of the radio stations announced that the Grace had done only one AI (artificial insemination) for an unmarried woman; in other words, it hadn't been standard procedure. I had thought there were others. I had hoped, after seeing my determination over a period of years, that other women would be considered.

I have wanted a child (children) since I can remember. Parents want a child for different reasons: immortality, wanting to feel needed, knowing that for about 18 years you won't be alone, wanting a child who looks like you. I wanted to be a mother; perhaps too much.

I first approached my G.P. (general practitioner doctor) when I was 28. She thought I was crazy. I kept bugging her for about two years; finally she looked for a gynaecologist who might do it. She offered no promises. My daughter

owes her life to this woman.

I had a series of appointments/ interviews with the gynaecologist; he explained that it just wasn't done here and I could expect a lot of negative feedback. However, he felt strongly that I shouldn't be forced to go out and have sex with someone just to bear a child. (Adoption is out for a single mother if you want a newborn.) I don't know what I would've done if he had said no.

In the infertility clinic, I hid my hands so no one could see I wasn't married.

I went in twice a month, two or three days before ovulation, for over a year. It cost \$25 each time I went in. My friends thought it was a joke; not even the closest realized how serious I was.

I waited in the infertility clinic with all the married women who couldn't conceive. I felt awkward sitting there, like a freak. I hid my hands so that no one could see I wasn't married. I even wore a wedding ring to work to avoid explanations to students and their parents later, in case I did become pregnant.

The actual insemination took place in the Women's Clinic for legal rea-

sons. Something about aiding and abetting the birth of a bastard child. I didn't enjoy sneaking around and I failed to understand what difference a halfway made legally, but I wasn't going to argue. The staff were always extremely supportive.

After a year with no luck, I had a laparoscopy. Diagnosis — endometriosis. Endometriosis causes infertility, but guess what? The best cure for endometriosis is pregnancy. Catch 22. So

I went on birth control pills for six months, became a horrible bitch because my hormones were so messed up,

and tried again for another year or so before I finally got pregnant. The constant disappointments were finally over. My own doctor had left the Grace while I was on the pill, and I thought I wouldn't be able to continue. Luckily, another doctor took over his patients and didn't refuse me. I thought he might.

I was under a lot of stress that year — I was working three jobs and showing signs of pre-toxemia in the seventh month. If I did it again, I would take it easy. I think I was trying to prove to everyone that I could do it all on my own, and nearly collapsed. I was very



Photo by Kathleen Fianagan

Yvonne and daughter, Lauren

tired by the time Lauren was born and I looked awful. I delivered four weeks early — a blessed relief. The last four weeks would have been sheer hell.

Mostly, we were treated well at the Grace. I thought if I got a private room,

I wouldn't be treated like a "single mother." Wrong. You have to answer a questionnaire while you're in labor, and after the initial group, like "Did you attend pre-natal classes? Do you plan to breastfeed?", they ask you if you are going to keep your baby, and if you want a social worker. I'm sure they don't ask married women. If I hadn't been in pain, I would have said something tacky.

They sent a social worker in anyway; I kicked her out. While the other women sent their babies to the nursery after feeding, I just kept looking at my gorgeous little girl. I was finally a mother, at age 32.

As for the Salvation Army's decision. I feel outraged for all the married couples who cannot conceive without a donor. Many things can kill sperm.

The anguish of being unable to conceive is very real and very painful. Frequent miscarriage is even more depressing.

Of course, the more you want it, the more uptight you become, and the less likely you are to conceive. I wonder how many infertile people were in on the Salvation Army's decision-making process.

I thank God I had Lauren already. It is 100 times more difficult to raise a child alone. It is pretty rare that a woman chooses to have a child alone, plans it. You have no breaks. It is not a decision to be taken lightly.

I was incredibly lucky. I work hard at a good job. I have a big house on the ocean. I got excellent medical care (no episiotomy), have a vast network of friends who bought all sizes of baby clothes, and a bunch of parents who good-humoredly thought up ways to explain to their children how their violin teacher mysteriously got pregnant by herself.

The first year was a nightmare and I'm sure the next 50 will have their ups and downs. Most women aren't so fortunate as to be able to provide for their children alone. But in the end, I don't think there is anything more fulfilling for me than being a mother.

□ □ □ □ □

Yvonne DeRoller is the Director of the Suzuki Music School, a violinist with Symphony Nova Scotia, and the mother of a 20-month old baby girl.

Women's concerns ignored by reproductive technologies

Fran Isaacs

"Breeding machines for men" — that was how birth control advocate Margaret Sanger once described the role of women. In this century, changes in attitudes toward birth control helped ease the acceptance of rapid advances in reproductive technologies. When IUDs and the Pill appeared, it seemed that technology would finally make unwanted pregnancy a thing of the past, freeing women from victimization by our own biology.

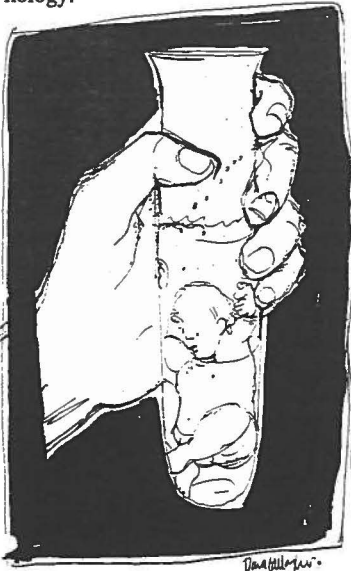
But intrauterine devices and extra doses of estrogen began to create another kind of victim — women with pelvic inflammatory disease or cancer. The technological advances that had held such promise seemed to have overtaken normally cautious scientific testing on human subjects.

The women's movement suggested that women's bodies were being treated carelessly because we had little social, political, or intellectual control of the technology involved. Women seldom made decisions as to how the reproductive technology would be developed or used. Alternative methods focusing on women's needs, as identified by women, were seldom incorporated into standard practice.

Hospital births, caesarian sections, and trials of midwives gradually came to be taken for granted. And, since the birth of test tube baby Louise Brown in England almost a decade ago, "in vitro fertilization" has become an accepted means of human reproduction.

As reproductive technologies head into the next century, shifting focus from birth control and birth to fertility, women's hold on technological decision-making seems as shaky as ever.

Louise Brown was born about 35 years after Margaret Sanger made her comment about "breeding machines". The irony is that reproduction is becoming more attached to the machinery of technology.



Graphic by Dawn Gallagher, reprinted from Healthsharing

A good example is in vitro fertilization (IVF). In vitro means "in glass" and refers to the test tube or container where a woman's egg, extracted from her ovaries, is fertilized by a sperm. This is contrasted with "in vivo fertilization" or conception within the body. Louise Brown was the first human who had developed from an egg fertilized outside a female body, although experiments had been carried out for years by scientists competing to be the first to accomplish IVF.

IVF is one of many reproductive technologies which range from artificial insemination (AI), embryo transfer from one uterus to another, embryo freezing for later implantation, gender determination of fetuses, and surrogate motherhood — all issues which have increasingly cloudy ethical and legal implications.

Some issues are less technology-based than others. For example, surrogate mothers have more to do with economics than medical technology. Artificial insemination, where previously "donated" sperm is kept alive and is inserted using different types of equipment, had its roots in cattle breeding. AI, unlike other technologies, is relatively benign in terms of unknown effects on women's bodies.

However, it is growing more difficult for an unmarried woman to obtain AI. Gena Corea, in her book *The Mother Machine* encapsulates this issue by quoting a man as saying about artificial insemination, "God, you are making us less and less useful and necessary. It is frightening."

Jane Gordon, a sociologist who teaches a course called "Perspectives in Birth" at Mount St. Vincent University, notes that "there are dilemmas within reproductive technologies. Most stem from the individual versus the collective good. The need to be fulfilled as a mother — how far does that go?" According to Gordon, women who seek to undergo the rigors and potential dangers of current fertility technology may be acting out the need to fulfill the societal pressure of becoming mothers rather than acting on individual need.

"New reproductive technology

tends to use women as a laboratory to make scientific reputations," says Gordon. "And the women are selected for certain social reasons." She notes that although IVF was held out as a promise of help to all infertile women, some of the women undergoing the program are not childless, and requirements for some programs include being married.

An IVF program is rigorous. The woman's ovaries are stimulated by fertility drugs to produce as many eggs as possible. She may also be injected with follicle stimulating hormone. Samples of her blood are taken regularly to measure hormone levels and vaginal swabs are also taken, to check for infection. The woman must monitor her own temperature and estrogen levels daily. She must also undergo ultrasound to determine the time of her ovulation.

Before the eggs reach the ovaries, they are extracted by a doctor using a laparoscope, a small telescopic device that can cause pain. The extracted eggs are then cultured in vitro with the sperm, fertilized, and inserted into the uterus about two days later. The embryo is implanted at the place where the fallopian tube meets the uterus, a procedure that has been described as unpleasant for the woman involved.

"Health care dollars are finite," says Gordon. "Who makes the decision to spend them on expensive fertility technology that will benefit only a few when so little is spent, for example, on infant food supplements for mothers?"

In assessing reproductive technology issues, Gordon suggests that women ask the question "Who does the technology really serve?"

All talk, no action:

Project needs more support

Susan Coldwell

Practical support systems for women who wish to start their own small businesses are lacking in Nova Scotia, especially for women with few resources, e.g. start-up capital, child care needs, and image management. Women Creating Business Options was a federally funded Job Development Program which ran from January, 1987 to July, 1987 in an effort to provide some of these supports.

The purpose of this program was to allow four women, two of whom were on social assistance, the opportunity to receive training in starting their own small business. These were all low income women with limited resources, and no prior experience in small business operation.

The model for this program evolved from my own experience of coming from within the Social Services system (as a recipient), which epitomizes the flaws and pitfalls inherent in any institution: One, the lack of availability of information. Often it is not a matter of trying to bend rules, as much as it is of finding out what the rules are in order to even enter into the play. Second, real

money available in any Women's Program (entrepreneurial or other) is generally overstated and therefore, any real funding impact is negligible — especially when dealing with women who are in the Social Services system.

The initial proposal for funding by Women Creating Business Options was made under the Innovations program.

As the originator of the project, my mandate was that it be a practical "learning by doing" program, with my personal goal being the opening of a tea room.

The actual training provided for these women was the highlight of the program. In addition to the business aspects — business plan, cash flow analysis, projections, marketing, etc. — each participant received training in micro-computer operation and extensive bookkeeping. Life skills were a major component as well: time and stress management, assertiveness training, image management. The focus was to get the women to see themselves as business people.

Feedback received from project participants, interested people in the



Susan Coldwell serves tea to Megan Ardyche in her recently opened business, the Leedham Cottage Tea Room in Fall River. (Photo by Joann Latremouille)

community, and government agencies indicates that the model itself is valid and the concept a good one; one that could open doors to women who would not normally have access to this particular opportunity. Statistics on rates of success of women-owned businesses support the value of helping women to establish a small business, cottage type businesses in particular, since women-owned businesses succeed more often than male-owned new business ventures.

Two out of the original four women who took the program have opened their own businesses, and another may do so soon. Therefore, we currently have a 50% success rate, and potentially a 75% success rate.

For myself, at this writing, I feel a sense of accomplishment in having opened the Leedham Cottage Tea Room, which was my goal. However, I

am still struggling half in and half out of the Social Services system.

It really requires a quantum leap and joint commitment between individuals and funding agencies for a program such as this to be really successful. I get calls from women each week asking whether the program will be offered again. The interest and demand is there. Women have ideas which would allow them to get out of the Social Services system; government now has to make its commitment.

□ □ □ □ □

Susan Coldwell, an award-winning poet, is currently the owner/operator of the Leedham Cottage Tea Room, mother of two girls, chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Sackville Family Day Care Program, and is politically active on the issue of women and children in poverty.

Smoking is much more hazardous for women

DID YOU KNOW:

•This year lung cancer is overtaking breast cancer as the primary cancer killer of Canadian women.

•Women who smoke and take oral contraceptives have a ten times greater risk of fatal heart disease.

•Pregnant smokers suffer more vaginal bleeding, spontaneous abortions and fetal death.

•The increasing incidence of cervical cancer has been linked to smoking.

•That the rise in tobacco-related premature death and ill health among women is the result of calculated exploitation by tobacco advertising of women's desire for freedom, emancipation and liberation.

•That as the proportion of male smokers decreases, women have become a major target for the industry.

•That teenage women are the "new smokers" and that they smoke to stay thin, and feel "free" and adult.

•That women's reasons for smoking are different from those of men — women's smoking is a reflection of unequal status in a sexist society.

•That as the educated and affluent women in developing countries quit smoking in increasing numbers, it is men and women in the Third World who are the newest targets of the tobacco industry's incessant quest for cigarette casualties.

•That women are not encouraged or able to put their own health needs ahead of others — a basic requirement for good health, fitness and quitting.

•That women's smoking issues and treatment programs have been neglected in Canada.

It is important to let your MP, particularly members of the Conservative Caucus, know that you are in favour of Bills C-51 and C-204, the anti-smoking legislation.

(Reprinted from ACTION, A bulletin from the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, October, 1987.)

Newcomer nanny's work hard and lonely



Lorraine Schmid is currently working on a project to document the experiences of another newcomer to Canada. The above photo illustrates Inge Joyoli's difficulties with travelling by an unknown public transport system. (Photo by Lorraine Schmid)

Lorraine Schmid

When we hear the word "lonely", most of the time it has a negative meaning rather than a positive indication. An instance comes to my mind where being lonely felt quite negative and disturbing.

My decision to venture to another country was very spontaneous. Travelling had always been exciting for me — to experience a different climate and vegetation, to eat food other than what I was used to, to be challenged with another language, to meet people. To learn from all this.

That's what I expected from my big move to Toronto (Canada). It all eventually happened, but in the process I got very discouraged. I think I learned very much the hard and cold way, like many of us.

I assumed that if I chose to do the work of a nanny, I would be able to meet people, learn the language and could save some money to do more travelling later, but very soon it occurred to me how tiring, nerve-racking,

sexist and racist, abusive and lonely my job was.

I was a replacement for the mother for three children and a proud possession for the father. All four of them made sure I had enough work to do all day long. So by the end of the day I'd be falling into bed not knowing if I crawled or walked there. Next day, same routine: washing, cleaning, cooking, more washing, ironing, dusting, more cooking, cleaning, bathing, read-

ing, and finally — sleeping. It felt like torture.

I realized how all this work was keeping me away from what I intended to do when I first came to Canada. I wanted to meet people, but where were they? All I had seen and gotten to know was this house on Broadway Avenue in the middle of this huge city, and its occupants, and I didn't believe they were interested in what I had to say or what my needs were.

Slowly but surely, the house started to collapse over my head. I watched it all by myself. The language didn't have the opportunity to develop and flourish the way I expected it. At that time in my life, I was taking a few steps backwards rather than moving ahead. Instead of making an effort to go out and meet people, I withdrew completely and felt even more lonely.

Joining an English as a Second Language class helped me to see that I wasn't alone in this situation; there were many other nannies, from all over the world, who had similar problems. Problems like being ordered to do slave work for a lot less than minimum wage and being insulted by the "man" of the house were on the daily routine, and, on top of all these struggles, many of us couldn't verbally defend our-

selves. This experience ended a little more positively than it started out, but I understand now how lonely the home can be.

□ □ □ □ □

Lorraine Schmid is now living in Halifax. She is a student of N.S.C.A.D., majoring in Art Education and textiles and enjoys Nova Scotia a lot.

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Poverty as women's problem still not recognized by society

Barbara Kowalski

I grew up in a very small community in Mill Creek, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, which consisted of approximately 10 families who were related in one way or another.

On the way home from school, my friends and I would speculate on what we would be having for lunch. I was the envy of all when I knew we were having macaroni and tomato juice (with

the pasta water still on the macaroni!); or better still, if we were having french fried potatoes and bread

made into sandwiches. I was 18 years old before I realized that no one outside Mill Creek ate such things.

I didn't know we were poor. I didn't know that meals such as those mentioned were foods served by our parents and relatives and grandparents during the depression and during the coal strikes.

Every child who went to school with me was in the same economic strata with the exception of the children of our local doctor and tavern keeper.

My parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, talked continually about World War II and about the Great Depression in which they had grown up. Compared to them, I suppose we were middle class.

In looking through books which discussed the issue of poverty, I realized that early writers focused on the issue of poverty as something men experienced, for example, Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, the Bible, and many others.

In trying to remember some of the stories of the coal miners' strikes, I turned to the writings of Don Fraser, the man who chronicled the travesty of justice in Cape Breton in the 30s. Again and again throughout his chronicles, Mr. Fraser mentions poverty as something that happens to men. The focus is entirely on men.

It has been expected through the years that women were poor and taken for granted as an acceptable way for women to be. On the other hand, when large numbers of men suffer from poverty, it is seen as a disaster.

Women, in general, have always been poor. It was expected and accepted as their lot in life. It made no difference whether women were working or staying at home. Sometime early

It has been expected through the years that women were poor, and it's been taken for granted as an acceptable way for women to be.

in the history of the world it must have been established that men supported women.

In Canada today, for instance, if we watch the newscasts, we see the focus is on the bread lines and soup kitchens. This is where the destitute male population in our society is flocking and this is where society is focusing its attention.

In western culture in the last 20 years, the rise of the women's movement has brought to light the injustice of a system which promotes poverty among women, a system which exploits women for profit.

The National Task Force on Women in the Canadian Union of Public Employees prepared a document which was adopted by its National Convention in 1983, entitled "CUPE Women: Survival in the Crises."

This document talked about the working poor; in particular the female working poor. The paper noted that in 1983 women earned 60 cents for every dollar men earned and that in 1931, in the height of the Great Depression, women's wages were at the same level — 60 cents for every man-earned dollar.

The majority of working women are poor. And yet the media focus is on the bread lines and soup kitchens while

women and female-headed families are as poor as they always have been. Society seems to take this for granted.

The British Columbia Federation of Labour published a bulletin entitled "Sisterhood." In the July 1986, edition, an article entitled "Who are the Poor?" noted "Poverty is far more common than most people think and there is a direct relationship between poverty and unemployment. The 1984 figures

show that 4,439,000 Canadians live below the poverty line, an increase of 874,000 people in

four years."

In March of 1985, the National Council on Welfare reported in "Poverty on the Increase" that certain groups are particularly vulnerable to poverty. Half the families headed by women are poor; almost half of the unattached women who live alone or with non-relatives are poor. Half of the unattached Canadians under the age of 25 were poor at last count, as were 50 percent of the unattached elderly. One in three families headed by persons under 35 are poor.

The struggle for equality and a decent standard of living for women in Canada today is not very different than it was in Canada at the turn of the century.

And so, growing up in Mill Creek, we ate macaroni and tomato juice. I suspect that children in the city of Sydney, N.S. and in Cape Breton in general are still living on such staples.

The women's movement has a hard struggle ahead when we recognize collectively that economic equality has to be gained in order to achieve what is rightfully ours — bread and roses.

□ □ □ □ □

Barbara Kowalski is a single parent living and working in Sydney, N.S. She is also chairperson of the CUPE National Women's Task Force.



Shaffer's film portrays powerful emotions

Studio D, the world-renowned women's film unit of the National Film Board of Canada, has completed a powerful hour-long documentary on incest entitled *To a Safer Place*, directed by Academy Award-winning filmmaker Beverly Shaffer.

To a Safer Place is a rare and sensitive account of one woman's life as a survivor of childhood incest. Sexually abused by her father from her infancy to her early teens, Shirley Turcotte, now in her thirties, has nevertheless survived her abuse and today leads a successful and fulfilling life as a wife, mother, and professional.

In *To a Safer Place*, Shirley revisits the people and places of her childhood — her mother, sister, and two brothers, all victims of her father's abuse, as well as the neighbours who were silent witnesses to her tragic early life. Finally, in

an attempt to come to terms with her past, Shirley visits the farmhouse basement where most of the abuse took place.

The frank discussions of Shirley and her siblings in the film clearly reveal the emotional confusion, denial, and self-blame common among victims of incest. Current statistics in Canada indicate that one-third of our female population are incest victims, although the silence and secrecy that surround it suggest it is even more pervasive. The film calls attention to basic societal attitudes and assumptions that contribute to violence and abuse in families.

To a Safer Place is available from NFB offices in 16 mm film or videocassette formats, along with a user's guide designed to accompany the film. (Reprinted from *Common Ground*)

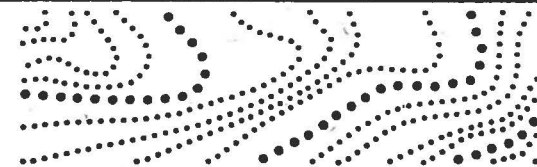


Sherry Bernard announces the next music selection during the show, *Future Visions*, a radio program featuring Black music and issues of concern to the Black community in Halifax. It airs every Sunday at 7:00 pm on CKDU, 97.5 FM.

Toni Goree, Tracey Mulder, Sherry Bernard, Delvina Bernard, and Kim Bernard-Morris work in teams of two to produce the show which first went on the air in August of

1987. The women are excited about working at CKDU because they can control both the format and the content.

Since Black music is not played on mainstream radio stations, they feel it is important to promote Black artists and address the issues being dealt with in the local Black community. The program also reviews Black literature, publicizes community events, and features historical profiles of Black women. (Photo by Sara avMaat)



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Conference generates power, connections

Jocelyne Marchand

I've been to many conferences in the last few years — peace conferences, labour conferences and women's conferences. I go to a conference because I enjoy seeing old friends, making new ones, discussing old and new concerns, and partying.

Making Connections: Finding Our Power, a conference for women held in Sydney this October, certainly was a good venue for me. As one of the founding members of Women Unlimited (co-sponsor of the conference) and a resident of Sydney for many years, I saw many old friends. Yet I was surprised at the number of new faces. I

thought that by now I knew all of the veteran conference goers.

The program was excellent. Workshops led by women of national stature and workshops led by women of the community were equally popular and informative.

Fifty per cent of the 318 women who registered for the conference wanted to sign up for the Women and Anger workshop led by Helen Levine. Half of the women who participated in the Women and Social Assistance workshop were women on social assistance. How Free Trade Will Affect Women, led by Marjorie Cohen, gave women such a good understanding of

the issue that many felt they could now spread the word.

The panel "Priority Issues for Women," which opened the conference was not as stimulating as it could have been. Some of the speakers went on way too long, thus diluting their message. But still, the message was clear — little has changed in our society: Women still make less money, worry about child care, deal with harassment, and hold little power.

For organizer Nancy Anderson, the conference was an unqualified success. But like many of the participants, she thinks that perhaps more time should have been set aside for mingling. Joanne Lamey of Dartmouth agrees. She felt time was needed to pull together the work done in the workshops, to allow a "knitting together of process."

My favourite part of the conference, I state without shame, was the partying Saturday night. Patty Cooper and Annette Coffin, known professionally as Amy Brozart, took us for a musical



Among those present at the women's conference, Making Connections: Finding Our Power, were the Coffin family. From left to right are Cheryl AuCoin, Kathy Coffin, Annette Coffin, and their mother, Dougie Coffin. In front is Kathy's daughter, Jenny Dobbs. (Photo by Amanda LeRougetel)

ride through the 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s. And what a ride it was!

Those talented musicians (Annette's a Sydney girl!!!) were just what the doctor ordered to bring some cheer to all those present. The cash bar didn't hurt. And the knitting missing from the day sessions happened easily when over 200 women got up and danced together.

There was some confusion as to whether or not resolutions could be dealt with by the conference as a whole or brought to the Women's Action Coalition of Nova Scotia.

One of the disappointments of the organizers of the conference was the media coverage it received. Those covering the conference appeared unwilling or unable to see beyond the "no men allowed" controversy. Little was said of what went on at the conference.

Only one journalist was assigned to do a story, yet this was a conference of national calibre, one which probably would have received more publicity had it been held in Halifax or Ottawa.

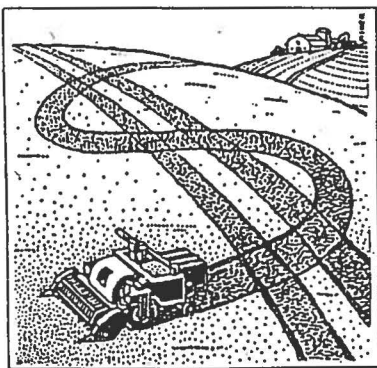
Will anything happen as a result of the conference? Time will tell. The Women's Action Coalition of Nova Scotia held a general meeting right after the conference and resolutions were made.

The Coalition connected with the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women for the first time. Women Unlimited of Sydney recruited 46 new members and some Dartmouth women are thinking of starting a branch of Women Unlimited in their city.

For most of the participants, the conference left them feeling more empowered, and much of this power was found in the connections made.

The conference ended on a high note with a special presentation to Cheryl AuCoin, outgoing president of Women Unlimited. An active member of the group since its beginnings, she has played a big role in the successes of Women Unlimited's conferences to date, and it was felt that her contribution should be recognized.

To Cheryl, the women of Sydney, and of Cape Breton, thanks for a great weekend. (When's the next one?)



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Downs Syndrome test available within year

Brenda Conroy

Within the next year a new test for Downs Syndrome and other genetic abnormalities should be available to women in Halifax who are over 35.

The test is called chorionic villi sampling and it involves passing a thread-like catheter up the vagina and into the uterus to take a tiny sample of the developing placenta. The procedure feels very much like a pap smear for the woman.

The developing placenta contains the chorionic villi, a material having the same genetic structure as the foetus. This material will be examined for genetic abnormalities, among them Downs Syndrome, and the results can

be available within a week. Besides the very short waiting time for results, this sampling can be done as early as nine weeks into the pregnancy.

This means that if the woman chooses to abort, it can be done early, with much less emotional trauma and physical risk than a termination at 18 weeks, the earliest time results from an amniocentesis are usually known.

Chorionic villi sampling is already approved for and offered to pregnant women in the U.S. and Britain. The Department of Obstetrics at Dalhousie University is currently doing clinical trials and is asking women who are about to have an abortion if they will volunteer to have the test done.

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MIRROR

WEDNESDAY, DEC 2 AND THURSDAY, DEC 3 AT 7 & 9:15 P.M.

Dir. Andrei Tarkovsky, USSR, 1976, 106 mins, colour, subtitled.

Tarkovsky's fourth feature film is thought by most critics to be his most difficult and yet most rewarding work. It is certainly his most complex, interweaving autobiographical events, newsreel footage and oblique political symbolism to tell the story of Tarkovsky's mother and himself as a child. Moving beyond the boundaries of most film 'art', Tarkovsky creates an entirely subjective landscape, a country based on dreams and memory that operates on four levels. Firstly, the real. The real relationship of a man to his mother and his son. Secondly, the memories of this person. Thirdly, his childhood dreams and nightmares. And finally, a fourth layer of newsreel footage that establishes time, place and circumstance. Long unavailable in Canada (this print comes from the U.S.), *Mirror* is an unforgettable essay on the art of memory. "We have a debt to those who have given us life and love: we must tell them of our love." - Andrei Tarkovsky

THE GOOD FATHER

FRIDAY, DEC 11 TO THURSDAY, DEC 17 AT 7 & 9 P.M.

Dir. Mike Newell, England, 1986, 90 mins.

The current revival of the British Cinema is beginning to leave North America behind if we examine the little notice that Mike Newell's *The Good Father* got from mainstream audiences. Critics like Andrew Sarris and Pauline Kael touted this as perhaps veteran British actor Anthony Hopkins' finest film performance. As Bill Hooper, he plays an embittered London publishing executive who has lost his wife and son to a kind of feminism he thought he had once supported and understood. His reaction is to goad Roger, a teacher he has met who is also in the midst of a bitter separation, into a nasty custody battle. This surrogate warfare leads through several comic displays of macho malice to a wrenching denouement on the field of family and fatherhood as Hopkins admits his own inability to love. It is a powerful moment, one made possible, as Andrew Sarris says, by a drama that explodes from deep inside the characters. Rather than a British *Kramer vs. Kramer*, *The Good Father* is a fully realized work that offers real emotion in place of neat ironies.

LIFE CLASSES - the story of Mary Cameron. A new feature by Nova Scotian filmmaker, William D. MacGillvary. JAN 1 to JAN 7 at 7 and 9:15 p.m.

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Pepsi bottles sexism, racism

Brenda Thompson

Just a thought — I don't know if you've noticed the new Pepsi commercial with David Bowie and Tina Turner. Personally, I find it an insulting commercial to women. Bowie, who plays a scientist, puts pictures of the body parts of women into a computer. Obviously, the computer is supposed to put the pieces together and spit out the perfect physical woman. However, Bowie accidentally spills his Pepsi on the computer, the computer chugs and churns, and explodes, and voila! out walks Tina Turner — the perfect woman. But what is interesting is that Tina Turner has a beautiful golden brown skin colour — the same colour as the Pepsi Cola. Now just imagine — what if Bowie had spilt a bottle of lime rickey into the computer? I like to think that instead of Tina Turner, he'd get E.T. It'd serve him right!

Correctional Centre male oriented:

Needs of women prisoners ignored

Jo-Ann Mayhew

I was held in the Halifax County Correctional Centre (H.C.C.C.) in the fall of 1985. This was during the thirty-day waiting period I was allowed before signing waiver papers that would allow the C.S.C. to transfer me to Ontario. This transfer was not 'optional'. Halifax has no facilities for women serving long-term sentences. My experience at the H.C.C.C. was brief but what I observed has been repeatedly confirmed by other women held at the same institution.

I was only permitted to stay in the main living unit of the female section a short time before the superintendent, Mrs. Finnigan, felt it was more advisable to revert to the standard policy of placing a federal inmate in a cell in the remand section. Being kept in what amounts to punitive disassociation conditions is standard treatment for federal females in some provincial institutions regardless of their individual behavior. However, before my removal from the population, I noted the following:

The female living unit consists of two dormitory rooms which hold from six to ? women depending upon the number of admissions. Limited institutional clothing is provided: used jeans, T-shirts, pajamas, underwear and sneakers. These may be stored in a cardboard box under your bed. One nightstand table provides the only additional space for any personal effects. These provisions are obviously intended for relatively short-term offenders. There is no provision for the arrangement of such materials as might be required for vocational or educational training courses. This is not an oversight — the H.C.C.C. does not provide such programs for women.

Financial survival is a matter of being dependent upon the good will and generosity of friends or family on the outside. No work, even for prison

wages, is provided. No hygienic materials, such as shampoo and toothpaste, are provided. The prisoner is responsible for buying her own from the prison canteen. Being able to afford tobacco or a bag of chips or a chocolate bar is a luxury. Not even the basics of decent living are provided.

The three meals that are provided each day are only worthy of note when

struction in "how to learn to crochet", nor was any mention made of developing this skill for saleable money-earning projects in the future.

The H.C.C.C. is an example of what happens to women who are incarcerated within a primarily male structure. They have the deprivation of prison, but no rehabilitation. The overall facilities are used exclusively for men. In Halifax, women are left without work in either the kitchen or the laundry. They have no access to training

facilities, the gym, the library, or the chapel.

While incarcerated, the women have little hope of effecting change. There are no formal grievance procedures to follow and questioning of the status quo results in being labeled a "troublemaker". The Inmate Committee is confined to male inmates and their issues.

A recent letter from Terence Donahoe, Attorney General for Nova Scotia, states that meeting the needs of the female offender in Nova Scotia is one of the priorities of corrections in that province. From an almost zero base, there is plenty of room for much-needed improvement.

□ □ □ □ □

Jo-Ann Mayhew is currently serving a life sentence in the Kingston Penitentiary for Women.

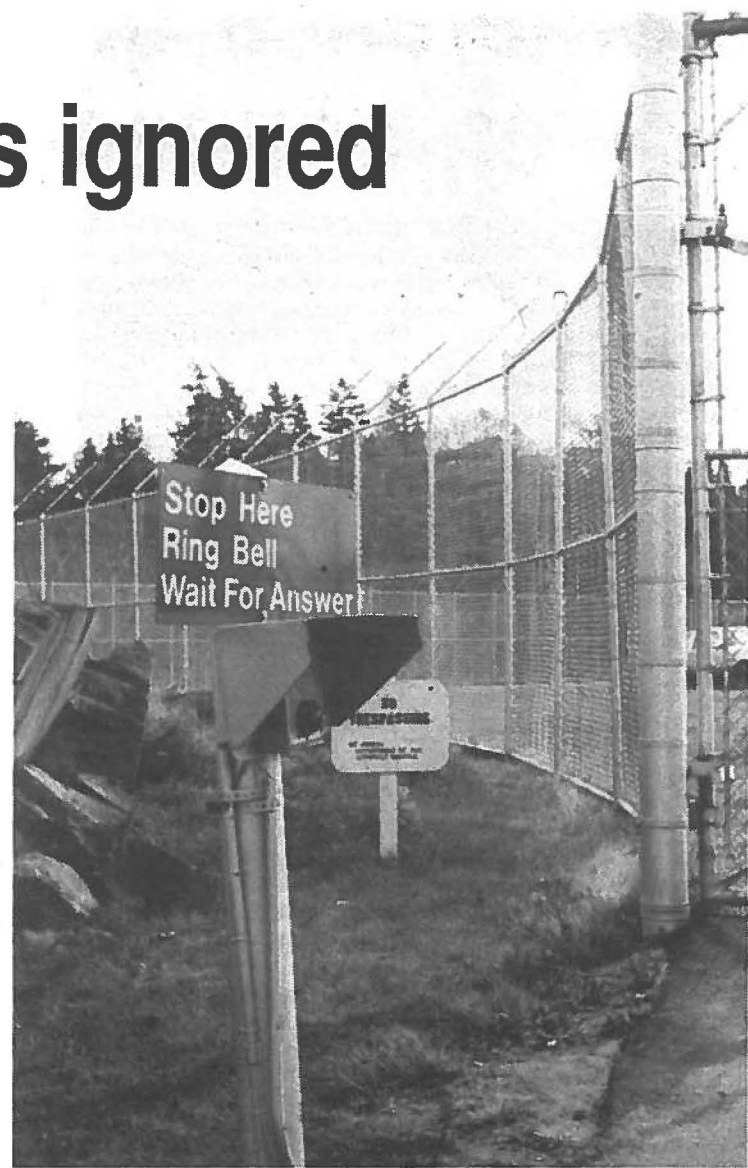
"The HCCC is an example of what happens to women who are incarcerated within a primarily male structure"

the food (prepared by men in a distant kitchen and eventually delivered by cart to the women's unit) is warm and recognizable. The food is steamed and heavy. Not even a charitable soup kitchen would serve it. Fresh food — even an apple — was a rare treat. Far more common was the appearance of green and gray tainted meat in the form of hot dogs and bologna.

Why isn't fresh fruit in season provided rather than the more expensive, sugary, canned variety? Just another indication of the low priority given to the welfare of prisoners.

More outstanding is the lack of program facilities for women at the H.C.C.C. Prisoners are expected to be up, dressed and to participate in a shared hour of housekeeping. Between two dorms, one day room and a common corridor, the scope for this activity, divided by the number of women being held, consumes very little time. Yet this is the main feature of each day. After this flurry, inmates sit in the day room. A black and white T.V. is allowed in the late afternoon and evening. A small outside yard suitable for tossing a baseball may be opened for half an hour if staff and weather permit.

The superintendent had vaguely proposed that prisoners could occupy their time crocheting doll clothes for future sale at a charity bazaar. This suggestion was not backed by any in-



Facilities for women at the Halifax County Correctional Centre are non-existent and women have little hope of effecting change. The fence around the Correctional Centre was photographed by Sara avMaat. She describes her experiences below.

Fence intimidates photographer

Sara avMaat

I drove up to this place and there's a fence, I don't know how high. It felt like a good 20 feet, a chain link fence with three big rows of barbed wire at the top. A few thousand yards away from the fence is a building — a long, long way away. It would probably be a five-minute walk from the gate to the building.

The fence was what impressed me when I drove up to it, much more than the building. The building was pretty innocuous — an old red brick building off in the distance, sprawling out, low and wide.

It's a big enclosure, you can't see where it turns the corner. Probably to walk around the enclosure would take a good half-hour, 45 minutes.

The gate was open. I drove up and parked the car outside the gate — there was a sign that said visitor parking — but I didn't get out right away. I was really trying to overcome my feeling that someone was going to come out and tell me I didn't have a right to be there and I didn't have a right to take pictures. I kept saying to myself "Don't be foolish; it's a public place. You can walk around; you have a right to be here." But I really felt nervous.

Then a car came along and drove past me and through the gate. I waited until it had gone, then got out of my car and walked around. There was a little sign on a box that said to push a button if you want a response.

I went back to the car and got the camera and felt like someone was going to rush out and tell me I couldn't do this. "This is a road, you're outside the fence and there's no reason why

you can't do this". Then I saw another car coming along. After it drove through, the gate closed, automatically, with a big noise, whirr... slam! I was on the outside.

So I got up my courage and got out of my car again with the camera and

"...barbed wire says to me: We will hurt you if you try to change this..."

this time I was all ready to take pictures. I walked up by the box and was framing the picture and the box started talking to me. This voice says "Who's there, please." I go uh-oh, I'm not going to tell this guy my name, so I tell him I work for Pandora, the women's newspaper, and I'd like to take a picture.

He says "You already did, didn't you?" and I answer "No I didn't, but I would like to. Is that all right?" And he says "Who did you say you worked for?" I told him again and he says "I guess so."

I took a whole bunch of pictures and the whole time I was waiting for the moment when the box would say "OK, you've taken enough pictures now" but it never did.

Other than the cars, there were no people visible. I wondered about that. Do they have an inside courtyard for recreation or do they use the grounds for that? Certainly I didn't see anyone out on the grounds. In fact, I have no idea where the voice came from. It was like some guy, way the hell and gone, was inside the building watching me on a TV screen.

It was so freaky that when I saw the second car drive up, I got back into my own car. I had had the camera in my hand and decided I needed a different lens. So when the car came by, I stayed in mine. I didn't just put the lens on, jump out, and go over. I was trying not to be covert; I was trying to tell myself, "Why do you have to hide this? All you're doing is taking a picture of a fence and a sign."

It was really creepy and it was hard to take the pictures. Barbed wire always gets to me; there's something about barbed wire. Maybe it's from when I was a kid and you hear all that stuff on the radio about the Berlin Wall and people going over the wire. The huge fence, in itself, didn't get to me emotionally, but when it has three strands of barbed wire on the top leaning in, then to me it's more than a barrier. It makes me feel emotional, it's frightening.

It's one thing to be confined by a fence. The fence says you have to be here — you have to be on the inside or you have to be on the outside, but the barbed wire says to me "We will hurt you if you try to change this. If you don't respect our rules, not only will we object, not only will we confront you, we will try to hurt you."

Women and Peace: A Resource Book edited by Wilma Needham

Besides illustrating visual art by women from a large exhibition entitled "Women and Peace: Visual Art of Resistance by Women from Across Canada", the book includes essays, poems, and a resource directory of peace and activism groups.

It celebrates the creative strengths of women and makes a special contribution to the Year of Peace. Photographs are from the exhibition "Women and Peace" at Mount St. Vincent University Art Gallery, 1985.

Essay texts are in French and English.

Publication date: January, 1987

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Lay sister preparing medications (Graphic from *Medieval Woman: An Illuminated Book of Days*, published by Little, Brown and Co. Boston)

*This article is excerpted from **Witches, Midwives and Nurses** by Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English (Glass Mountain Pamphlets), and is available from New Hogtown Press, Toronto.*

Women have always been healers. They were the unlicensed doctors and anatomists of western history. They were abortionists, nurses and counsellors. They were pharmacists, cultivating healing herbs and exchanging the secrets of their uses. They were midwives traveling from home to home and village to village. For centuries, women were doctors without degrees, barred from books and lectures, learning from each other, and passing on experience from neighbour to neighbour and mother to daughter. They were called 'wise women' by the people, witches or charlatans by the authorities. Medicine is part of our heritage as women, our history, our birthright.

Today, however, medicine is the property of male professionals. Ninety-three per cent of the doctors in the US are men; and almost all of the top directors and administrators of health institutions are men. Women are still in the overall majority — 70 per cent of healthworkers are women — but we have been incorporated into an industry where the bosses are men. We are no longer independent practitioners, known by our own names, for our own work. We are for the most part, institutional fixtures, filling faceless job slots: clerk, dietary aide, technician, maid.

The suppression of women health workers and the rise to dominance of male professionals was not a 'natural' process, resulting automatically from changes in medical science, nor was it the result of women's failure to take on healing work. It was an active takeover by male professionals. And it was not science that enabled men to win out; the critical battles took place long before the development of modern scientific technology.

WITCHCRAFT AND MEDICINE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Witches lived and were burned long before the development of modern

Witches represented a religious, political and sexual threat to Protestant and Catholic Churches alike, as well as to the state.

Two of the most common theories of the witch-hunts are basically medical interpretations, attributing the witch craze to unexplainable outbreaks of mass hysteria. One version has it that the peasantry went mad. According to this, the witch craze was an epidemic of mass hatred and panic cast in images of a blood-lust peasant mob bearing flaming torches. Another psychiatric interpretation holds that the witches themselves were insane.

But, in fact, the craze was neither a lynching party nor a mass suicide by hysterical women. Rather, it followed well-ordered procedures. The witch-hunts were well organized campaigns, initiated, financed and executed by Church and State.

Commonly, the accused was stripped naked and shaved of all her body hair, then subjected to thumb-screws and the rack, spikes and bone-crushing "boots," starvation and beatings. The point is obvious: the witch-craze did not arise spontaneously in the peasantry. It was a calculated ruling class campaign of terrorization.

The most fantastic accusation of all was that witches helped and healed those who had no doctors and hospitals, and who were bitterly afflicted with poverty and disease. The church told these sufferers that their torment was a mark of sin.

But the gout and apoplexy of the rich got plenty of attention. Kings and nobles had their court physicians who were men, sometimes even priests. The real issue was control: male upper class healing under the gaze of the church was acceptable; female healing as part of a peasant subculture was not.

The wise woman, or witch, had a host of remedies which had been tested in years of use. Many of the herbal remedies developed by witches still have their place in modern pharmacology. They had pain-killers, digestive aids and anti-inflammatory agents.

The witch-healer's methods were as great a threat (to the Catholic Church, if not the Protestant) as her results, for the witch was an empiricist; she relied on her senses rather than on faith or doctrine, she believed in trial and error, cause and effect. Her attitude was not

medical technology. The great majority of them were lay healers serving the peasant population, and their suppression marks one of the opening struggles in the history of man's suppression of women as healers.

The other side of the oppression of witches as healers was the creation of a new male medical profession, under the protection and patronage of the ruling class.

The age of witch-hunting spanned more than four centuries (from the 14th to the 17th century) in its sweep from Germany to England. It was born in feudalism and lasted — gaining in virulence — well into the 'age of reason.' The witch-craze took different forms at different times and places, but never lost its essential character: that of a ruling class campaign of terror directed against the female peasant population.



Midwife attending childbearing woman seated on obstetrical stool, 16th century. (Graphic from *New Our Bodies, Ourselves*, Boston Health Collective)

Medicine A history of

religiously passive, but actively inquiring. She trusted her ability to find ways to deal with disease, pregnancy and childbirth — whether through medications or charms. In short, her magic was the science of her time.

THE RISE OF EUROPEAN MEDICINE

Meanwhile the ruling classes were cultivating their own breed of secular healers — European medicine became firmly established as a secular science and a profession that excluded women.

Confronted with a sick person, the university-trained physician had little to go on but superstitions. Bleeding was a common practice, especially in the case of wounds. Leeches were applied according to the time, the hour, the air, and other similar consideration. Medical theories were often grounded more in "logic" than in observation. Incantations and quasi-religious rituals were thought to be effective. A frequent treatment for leprosy was a broth made of the flesh of a black snake caught in a dry land among stones.

Such was the state of medical "science" at the time when witch-healers were prosecuted for being practitioners of "magic." It was witches who developed an extensive understanding of bones and muscles, herbs and drugs, while physicians were still deriving their prognoses from astrology and alchemists were trying to turn lead to gold.

THE SUPPRESSION OF WOMEN HEALERS

Universities were closed almost without exception to women wishing to study medicine, and licensing laws were established to discredit the better off, more educated women-healers. In trials they were convicted on the grounds that as women they dare cure at all.

By the 14th century, male doctors had won a clear monopoly over the practice of medicine among the upper classes (except for midwifery). They then turned their attack on the great mass of female healers, the witches.

The partnership between Church, State and medical profession reached full bloom in the witch trials. The doctor was held up as the medical "expert" giving an aura of science to the whole proceeding. The Church explicitly legitimised the doctors' professionalism, denouncing non-professional healing as equivalent to heresy; "If a woman dare to cure without having studied, she is a witch and must die." (Of course, there wasn't any way for a woman to study.) Finally, the witch craze provided a handy excuse for the doctor's failings in everyday practice; anything he wouldn't cure was obviously the result of sorcery.

The proliferation and success of the witch-hunts led straight into an assault on the last preserve of women's medicine — midwifery. In the hands of non-professional barber surgeons who wielded forceps, obstetrics was transformed into a lucrative business which "real" physicians entered in force in the 18th century.

WOMEN AND THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL PROFESSION

In the US, the male takeover of healing roles started later than in England or France, but ultimately went much further. There is probably no industrialized country with a lower percentage of women doctors than the US today. England has 24 per cent, Russia has 75 per cent; the U.S. has only 7 per cent. By the turn of the century, medicine here was closed to all but a



Women surgeon performing Caesarian Section (An Illuminated Book of Days)

tiny minority of necessarily tough and well-heeled women. What was left was nursing, and this was in no way a substitute for the autonomous roles women had enjoyed as midwives and general healers.

In 1800, the U.S. was ripe for the development of a full-fledged "medical profession." The majority of practitioners constituted anyone who could demonstrate healing skills.

But a growing number of formally trained doctors began to take great pains in distinguishing themselves from the host of lay practitioners.

The most important real distinction was that the formally trained, or "regular" doctors as they called themselves, were male, usually middle class, and almost always more expensive than the lay competition. The "regulars" were taught to treat most ills by "heroic" measures; massive bleeding, huge doses of laxatives, calomel (a laxative containing mercury) and later, opium. (The European medical profession had little better to offer at this time either.) There is no doubt that these "cures" were often either fatal or more injurious than the original disease.

The lay practitioners were undoubtedly safer and more effective than the "regulars." They preferred mild herbal medications, dietary changes and hand-holding to heroic interventions. Maybe they didn't know any

or Magic: women healers

more than the "regulars," but they were less likely to do the patient harm.

Let alone, they might well have displaced the "regular" doctors with even middle class consumers in time. But they didn't know the right people. The "regulars," with their close ties to the upper class, had legislative clout. By 1830, 13 states had passed medical licensing laws outlawing "irregular" practice and establishing the "regulars" as the only legal healers. This early grab for medical monopoly inspired mass indignation in the form of a radical, popular health movement which came close to smashing medical elitism in America

women's access to medical training.

At its height in the 1830's and 40's, the Popular Health Movement had the "regular" doctors — the professional ancestors of today's physicians — running scared. Later in the 19th century, as the grassroots energy ebbed and the Movement degenerated into a set of competing sects, the "regulars" went back on the offensive. In 1848 they pulled together their first national organization, pretentiously named the American Medical Association (AMA).

The rare woman who did make it into a "regular" medical school faced one sexist hurdle after another. First there was continuous harassment — often lewd — of the students. There were professors who wouldn't discuss anatomy with a lady present. There were textbooks like a well-known 1848 obstetrical text which stated, "She (Woman) has a head almost too small for intellect but just big enough for love."

In the late 19th century, the "women's health movement" began to dissociate itself from its Popular Health Movement past and to strive for respectability. Members of irregular sects were purged from the faculties of the women's medical colleges. Female medical leaders such as Elizabeth Blackwell joined male "regulars" in demanding an end to lay midwifery and a "complete medical education" for all who practiced obstetrics. All this at a time when the "regulars" still have little or no "scientific" (sic) advantage over the sect doctors or lay healers.

MONEY AND GERMS SAVE THE REGULARS

Though no longer faced with organized opposition (they could not claim to control any special body of knowledge), the professional victory of the "regulars" was only made tangible through a lucky coincidence. Science and ruling-class support became available about the same time, the turn of the



Gynecological exam (Graphic from The New Our Bodies, Ourselves)

century.

French and especially German scientists brought forth the germ theory of disease which provided, for the first time in human history, a rational basis for disease prevention and therapy.

Meanwhile, the U.S. was emerging



Attending a Birth (Graphic from The Medieval Woman: An Illustrated Book of Days)

as the industrial leader of the world. Fortunes were ruthlessly built. The Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations appeared in the first decade of the 20th century. One of the earliest and highest items on their agenda was medical "reform": the creation of a respectable, scientific American medical profession.

Naturally the money to set up such institutions as John Hopkins was firmly behind the scientific elite, the "regular" doctors, leaving the smaller poorer schools (often special schools for blacks and women) to close. Medicine was established once and for all as a branch of "higher" learning accessible only through lengthy and expensive university training.

Medicine had become a white, male, middle class occupation. The doctor had become "the man of science" — beyond criticism, beyond regulation, very nearly beyond competition.

OUTLAWING THE MIDWIVES

All that was left was to drive out the last holdout of the old people's medicine — the midwives. In 1910, about 50 per cent of babies were delivered by midwives — most were blacks or working class immigrants. Potential profits for "professional" obstetricians were going down the drain.

Publicly, however, the obstetricians launched their attacks on midwives in the name of science and reform. Midwives were ridiculed as "hopelessly dirty, ignorant and incompetent."

A truly public-spirited obstetrical profession would have made the appropriate preventive techniques known and available to the mass of midwives. This is in fact what happened in England, Germany and most other European nations: Midwifery was upgraded through training to become an established, independent occupation.

But the American obstetricians had no real commitment to improved obstetrical care. In fact, a study by a John Hopkins professor in 1912 indicated that most American doctors were less competent than the midwives.

Under intense pressure from the medical profession, state after state passed laws outlawing midwifery and restricting the practice of obstetrics to doctors. For poor and working class women, this actually meant worse — or

no — obstetrical care. For the new, male medical profession, the ban on midwives meant one less source of competition. Women had been routed from their last foothold as independent practitioners.

THE LADY WITH THE LAMP

The only remaining occupation for women in health was nursing. Nursing had not always existed as a paid occupation — it had to be invented. Credit for the invention of nursing goes to a small handful of upper class women reformers whose prime interest was not in improving opportunities for women but in improving hospital conditions. In the view of nursing leaders like Florence Nightingale, the filthy and archaic hospitals of the time needed a "woman's touch." "The Nightingale nurse" who set the pattern for nursing education in

this country as well as England was conceived as the embodiment of "femininity" as defined by Victorian society.

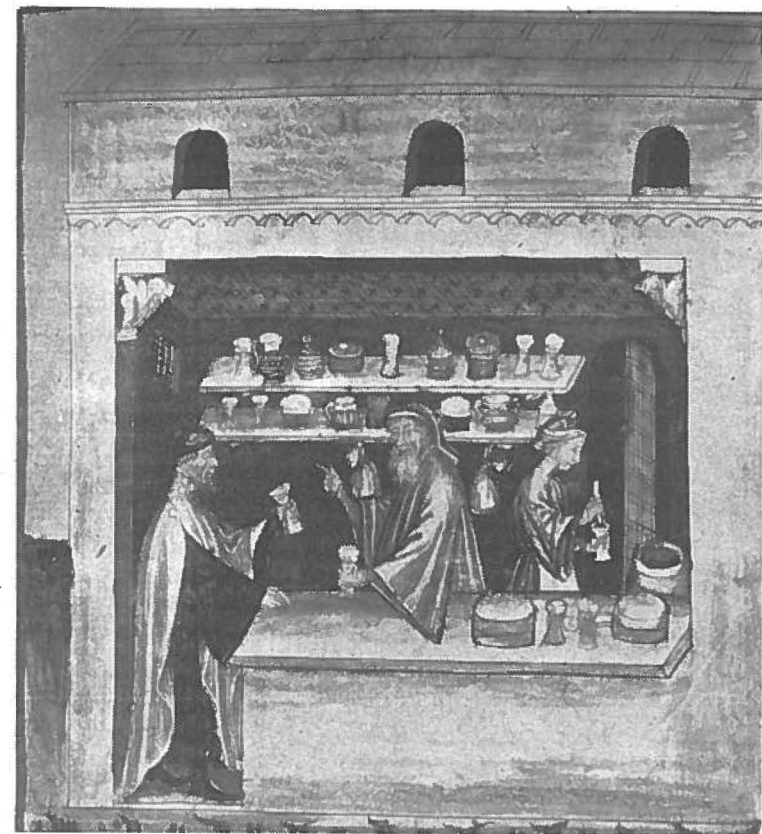
For all the glamorous "lady with the lamp" imagery, nursing at the time involved little more than household drudgery, with the patriarchal husband replaced by the lordly doctor. But just as the late 19th century women's movement had not opposed the rise of medical professionalism, it did not challenge nursing as an oppressive female role.

Women have not been passive bystanders in the history of medicine. The present system was born in and shaped by the competition between male and female healers. The medical profession in particular is not just another institution which happens to discriminate against women: it is a fortress designed and erected to exclude us. This means to us that the sexism of the health system is not incidental, not just the reflection of the sexism of society in general or the sexism of individual doctors. It is historically older than the medical science itself; it is deep-rooted, institutional sexism.

Professionalism in medicine is nothing more than the institutionalization of a male upper class monopoly. We must never confuse professionalism with expertise. Expertise is something to work for and to share; professionalism is — by definition — elitist and exclusive, sexist, racist and classist.

Our oppression as women health workers today is inextricably linked to our oppression as women. Nursing, our predominate role in the health system, is simply a workplace extension of our roles as wife and mother. The nurse is socialized to believe that rebellion violates not only her "professionalism," but her very femininity. This means that the male medical elite has a very special stake in the maintenance of sexism in the society at large. Doctors are the bosses in an industry where the workers are primarily women. Sexism in the society at large insures that the female majority of the health work-force are "good" workers — docile and passive. Take away sexism and you take away one of the mainstays of the health hierarchy.

What this means to us is that in the health system, there is no way to separate worker-organizing from feminist-organizing. To reach out to women health workers as workers is to reach out to them as women.



Woman apothecary preparing medicine in pharmacy. (Graphic from The Medieval Woman: An Illustrated Book of Days)

once and for all.

THE POPULAR HEALTH MOVEMENT

The Popular Health Movement in the 1830's and 40's is usually dismissed in conventional medical histories as the high-tide of quackery and medical cultism. In reality, it was the medical front of a general social upheaval stirred up by feminist and working class movements.

The Movement was a radical assault on medical elitism, and an affirmation of the traditional people's medicine. "Every man his own doctor," was the slogan of one wing of the Movement, and they made it very clear that they meant every woman too. The "regular" licensed doctors were attacked as members of the "parasitic, non-producing classes," who survived only because of the upper class "lurid taste" for calomel and bleeding.

The peak of the Popular Health Movement coincided with the beginnings of an organized feminist movement, and the two were so closely linked that it's hard to tell where one began and the other left off. The health movement was concerned with women's rights in general, and the women's movement was particularly concerned with health and with

Take back the night!

Women gather in solidarity to protest violence

Myrna Carlson

On a cool night in October, a group of women gathered together to march through the streets of Halifax to proclaim the right of women everywhere to walk at night. The "Take Back the Night" march is an annual event which takes place in most Canadian cities.

As a newcomer to Halifax, I was a little disappointed by the small size of the group. However, this was more than overcome by the enthusiasm and solidarity of the women who participated in the march.

"Take back the night" is a statement which evokes an array of emotions. First and foremost, it is a statement of strength; of women coming together to present a unified front. This was represented by the chanting and singing of the women in the march. Second, it is a statement of sorrow and of grieving for those women raped, beaten, or murdered by men. This was represented by the memorials for women who were victims of violence. Small signs were posted at various locations along the route where women had been attacked. Another emotion I experienced was anger; anger at those who would make women fear walking at night. This became most evident at the march when hecklers competed with the speakers. Abuse was shouted by a few men who stood on the outskirts of the group, reminding us there will always be men who feel threatened by women's strength.

Despite the sorrow we feel for our sisters who were victims, and despite our own fear of being victims of violence, the mood of the march was positive. Women came together to demand their right to control their own bodies and their right to walk at night without fear of men and without needing the protection of men.

The all-women social which followed the march allowed the participants to talk about these emotions and to make connections. My wish is that the spirit of hope and strength generated by the Take Back the Night march is carried within each of us all through the year.

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Myrna Carlson is a child-care worker who recently moved to Dartmouth from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. She is hoping to become an active member of the women's community in the Halifax area.



Maxine Tynes reads her poem "Nightsong" (reprinted here) after the Take Back the Night March. (Photo by Ariella Pahlke)



As part of the Take Back the Night March, Juanita Montalvo hammers a sign commemorating women who have been attacked. (Photo by Ariella Pahlke)

Nightsong: For we women who would take back the night

the night is a shadow of male intentions,
holding myth and fear
and pain that is too, too real
for the children
the men
the women who live each day
and each night.

the boy-child learns to brave the night,
the girl-child learns to fear it.

and, through it all,
orchestrating all of our growing-up years:
'Be home before dark!'
'Be careful of the dark!'
'Never go out alone at night!'
that leitmotif of warning and awareness.

the night beckons with a voice
that is, at once, seductive and betraying;

the night is a time of magic and dancing
and trysting by moonlight
in glitter and glamour
in satin and silk
and the stiletto heels of nightlife;
a little night-music, perhaps.

the night speaks in a voice that is
at once, seductive and betraying,
and demands a payment in a bruise,
blood, and unwelcome penetration.

Every campus is mine, and I'll walk it.
Every park is mine,
and I'll stroll around or picnic by day or by night.
Point Pleasant, are you listening?

Every alley and corner is mine, and I'll have it.
Every hospital ground, blackened by night-shade;
Every road, every crossing is mine, and I'll walk it.

I will rattle Morris and Hollis, and north and south commons;
striding over and up that hill called Citadel;
down Artz and Granville and Grafton and Sackville;
down Maynard and Preston and Seymour and Russell;
Spring Garden and Blowers and North Park and South Park.

Let me push back that shadow,
that night-ful, hurtful night shade;
or let me enter it, and fill it with my body, my name,
my self that is woman and strong and make it my own;

let me fill the night with my face and my stride
and my new-found woman-self;

let me rattle that block and that road,
and that street-corner lamp-post nighttime urban battleground
with this ordinary woman-courage
as I

as we
TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

Maxine N. Tynes
09/10/87

Take back the night!

Angry women unite to create strength

constance g. chevrier

What motivates us to achieve what we believe in? The organizers at Patchwork, a women's community resource centre at Dalhousie's Henson College, felt that there was a need to raise awareness of the violence committed against women. Therefore they organized a Take Back the Night March.

Prior to the march, meetings were held at Patchwork every Thursday. Approximately eight to ten women volunteered their energies to organize the event. Most of the women worked or attended school on a full or part-time basis. Between classes and in their spare time, they phoned contacts for speakers, room reservations, public support, food donations, and so on. Many women's groups were notified of the upcoming event. Wood plaques printed with "A women was raped here" were constructed. Publicity included a 30-second radio commercial on CKDU, an advertisement in the Dalhousie Gazette, and posters and flyers distributed throughout the city.

It was a biting cold and energetic night on Friday, October 9, 1987 on the Parade Square off Barrington Street as the women-only march commenced. Scheduled speakers spoke in front of a large group of marchers and continued to do so despite male voices belching obscenities like "sexism, sexism!", "rape the women" from outside the tightly women-woven circle.

The route led marchers around the downtown area, stopping periodically to share a woman's story of violence and nailing a plaque to a post. Chants complemented the significance of the march and were sung with powerful emotion. Marchers were friends, lovers, mothers, grandmothers, and children. Pots and pans — even cowbells — rang out into the night skies signalling other women to "Come unite. Take back the night."

After the march, refreshments kept spirits high as women were entertained by fellow marchers. Maxine Tynes, a local poet, shared her newest composition written just for the occasion. Her poem spoke of the powerful significance of women not being afraid of the night and she read from her recently published book "Borrowed Beauty."

It's unfortunate that despite the fact that so many women's groups were contacted about this march, so few women attended. Roughly 100 women took the time to participate in the march. There are many more committed and concerned women in the metro area who weren't there. Why?

So, let's go, sisters. Stop looking from the outside in and start looking from the inside out. Other women cannot participate for us, we must participate for ourselves. Let's start participating and integrating our energies within the Sisterhood — our Sisterhood!

It's time not only to unite and take back the night but also to unite and stand our ground in claiming equality. This can't be done when small groups of women work in isolation but only when women unite as a single force. The more we participate in each event, the more powerful our claims for change will be. We are like independent gossamer threads needing to be integrated into one tightly woven bond that can unify all of our womanpower and womanstrength together.

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constance g. chevrier is a first year part-time student at Dalhousie University. She is a pacifist and philanthropist who enjoys the ups and downs that accompany life's challenges in a male-dominated world.

MUMS alive, healthy, and raring to go

Darlene Dacey

I guess everyone has heard the rumour: MUMS is dying. Actually, it wasn't all a rumour.

In the beginning of 1987, MUMS was quite strong in numbers and most of the women were becoming quite strong feminists, learning to use their skills and gaining confidence in themselves. With MUMS becoming so well known and respected, the group's appearance was constantly in demand and we were asked to appear at numerous speaking engagements, conferences, panels, and such.

Sometimes the audience was sincerely interested but other times we were just the "fill in" for their agenda — the entertainment. We also felt it was important to have representation of low-income people on various boards throughout metro, and therefore spent much time with this. At the same time, a few of our dedicated core members moved away. (Although when Terri Drysdale moved out west, she started a MUMS TWO.)

As you can imagine, with all this and more, other aspects of the group, such as support and memberships, greatly lacked attention.

Support and membership is vital for MUMS and low-income women. The low self-esteem, living in various crisis situations daily, lack of friends, and other hurdles makes it very hard to motivate low-income women to go out to meetings and to fight for their rights. So this part of the group needs ongoing attention and constant nurturing.

However, with the new demand in public speaking and the notoriety of

MUMS members, supporting existing members was overlooked and we became business partners, not friends.

We began to attack one another for such things as not being able to find babysitters to meet the demands of meetings. Most members were attending five to six meetings a week, sometimes two a day. There was bickering about how much money should be given for childcare during meetings. In the past, the women told us how much money they needed for childcare and it was given without question. If a woman did take a dollar or two over the usual amount, it was not scrutinized because we knew she probably needed the extra for bread or milk.

Things we used to accept slowly became intolerable as pressures bore down on the group. We couldn't stop long enough to see what we were doing and eventually we turned into business men instead of women friends.

By the spring of '87, we were ... yes, I must admit it ... down to only three members, but despite this, Johanna Cromwell, Brenda Thompson, and myself put together and pulled off a successful demonstration giving support to Brenda and her unbelievable battle with Mr. "M," the Minister of Social Services. (I don't want to mention any names and ruffle any political feathers.)

We were quite happy that we managed to pull off this successful demonstration with only four days of concentrated work. But then we took a downturn. After the demo, the press realized that we were only three women and covered it negatively. The CBC inter-



Some of the current members of MUMS include (Left to right) Marie Marks, Joey Bayers, Laura Legere, Brenda Thompson, Pearl Williams. Not included are members Darlene Dacey, Judy Majors, Frances Buckler, Paul Bussard, Vera Pearce, Karen Billard.

viewed ex-MUMS members who had left the group on bad terms. The bad publicity was too much for the three of us and it blew the wind out of our sails. We decided to retire for the summer.

When Johanna moved to Pictou for a job, Brenda and I had to decide whether the group was to continue or not. It was a heavy load to carry and I kept putting off the final decision. In the meantime, I started receiving numerous calls from women in crisis — crises with the welfare system, new single parents in shock on the system, working moms who couldn't make ends meet on their minimum wage jobs and needed temporary help from welfare — the horror stories I heard were truly unbelievable. These women who were crying out for help and support are what made us come to the decision — we must go on.

So on we went. We now have a core membership of 12 and have totally renovated MUMS. We have a new mandate: to tackle the numerous concerns with the present Social Services system. Housing will still be an issue for us, but we feel we must concentrate on where the need is most. How can Mr. "M" and all of us live knowing that "...the present Social Services budget is 45-67 per cent below the poverty line"? Do you realize that there are approximately 12,000 single moms in this province on welfare who are suffering from various forms of malnutrition? If there are 12,000 moms on

welfare, just imagine how many innocent children are also suffering?

Much time and energy is going into support and membership now and the new members we have are terrific and very eager. We are also spending a lot of time organizing within the group. Recently, I was asked to do an interview for national television, and during the pre-taping interviews I became very frightened and realized that I didn't know a lot about MUMS history: the whys and whens of some of the

and phone numbers, tenants rights, welfare rights, and much much more. It is important to share the information since in the past women were afraid to speak out because they felt they didn't know enough and were intimidated by their ignorance. Now this guide will explain a lot of the mysteries of our government and the history of their treatment of single mothers.

On our immediate agenda is a demonstration. We are planning one to take place soon demanding that the Social Services Department be overhauled so recipients and their children can eat and live like deserving

Women were crying out for support and help

demonstrations, where the government is involved with housing, and other such issues.

I had been in the group for two and a half years at this point and it was only then that I realized how much the group had depended on Heather Schneider to do the press interviews. And because she was the only one doing the interviews, the groups didn't always know the details they should have known.

So the MUMS took on a new project to help reorganize themselves. After we got new members, I started putting together a guide for all the members so that they would know the history of MUMS, the reason behind each demonstration, the three levels of government and what their responsibilities are, facts and stats on single parents in Nova Scotia, listing resource groups

human beings. Later we will go after such issues as the lack of job incentives, access to further education, more subsidized daycare, special needs, and anything else that needs attention in this system. Also, we have volunteered our services and suggestions to a summit on welfare as suggested by Harold Crowell at City Council last month.

We ask your support on these things. Please take 45 minutes to attend the demonstration. There really is such a thing as strength in numbers as long as those numbers are loud and aggressive. We can never do enough when there is so much to be done.

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Darlene Dacey is a single mother on welfare who is a long-standing member of MUMS.

The Canadian Women's Movement Archives/ les Archives canadiennes du mouvement des femmes,

is preparing a computerized directory of the Canadian women's movement. This directory will index women's groups by area of interest and geographical location, and will be available soon on computer disk or as mailing labels.

If you belong to a woman's group that received a questionnaire please fill it out and return it to us. If you belong to a group that was not contacted, or know of a new group in your area, contact us.

The Canadian Women's Movement Archives/
les Archives canadiennes du mouvement des femmes

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Workers for choice still waiting for Supreme Court decision

Amanda LeRougetel

On the national scene

Morgentaler case:

•Plans are still in progress for actions across the country the day following the Supreme Court decision in the Morgentaler case. (See last issue for more information.)

•While pro-choice activists had initially thought the decision would be handed down sometime during the fall it now appears more likely that the judgement will come in the new year.

•Activists in Ottawa have decided to mark the occasion with a procession in that city the day following the decision. They will carry banners from all across the country to represent the spectrum of the Canadian pro-choice movement. Norma Scarborough, president of the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, will head the procession.

•Women will carry pink balloons if the decision comes down in favour of improved reproductive choice; they will sport black armbands if the decision is a negative one.

Coalition on Reproductive Technologies:

•At its recent mid-year meeting held in Ottawa, the national branch of the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League decided to join the National Coalition on Reproductive Technologies, a relatively new organization devoted to watchdogging the developing field of "advances" being made in reproductive technologies. The central question feminists seem to be asking about techniques like in vitro fertilization, embryo transfer and sex selection methods is: do these expensive, doctor-controlled procedures really provide women with increased choice in reproduction?

In Halifax, plans continue to be made for a PUBLIC GATHERING FOR CHOICE in the Parade Square downtown for the day following the decision. Call Amanda Le Rougetel at 835-9435 for further information.

The Abortion Information Referral Service is working well. So far, the line has provided much needed information to almost 50 women. It is run by CARAL/Halifax and can be reached at 422-4123.

South African women continue to organize despite intimidation

Liz Bosma

Peta Qubeka rubs her eyes as she sits up in her bed. Another interviewer interrupts her sleep. It's 10:30 a.m. and Peta is still groggy after a late night rap session with Halifax community activists.

Qubeka wryly comments that "sleeping in" is a luxury that she is rarely afforded at home.

Peta Qubeka is a grass-roots community organizer in the townships of Soweto. She works with those who bear Apartheid's greatest burden: South African women.

"South African women are left with the responsibility to clean up Apartheid's mess. A black South African woman is not only faced with child-care, but she must also provide for her family to ensure they get adequate food and shelter.

"The Apartheid regime has left many families without men. Many are killed or forced to go away to seek refuge or find work. So as you can see the women's role is an enormous one."

In the 1980 census, three-quarters of all African women were recorded as not having a paid job. Most of them worked at home. Although their work in maintaining households and bringing up children is vital, they are not paid for it, and the lack of income is a desperate problem for many South African women.

For those who can find a paid job, conditions are very poor, the work is strenuous, and the hours are long.

An average day for many African women is exhausting. The following is one woman's story that could be told by many African women.

Get up at 4:30 am. Breakfast quickly done. Run to catch the bus, then train. Walk ten blocks to work. Work all day. Take the train, then the bus, home again at 6:30. Fetch the baby from the childminder. Cook supper. Some washing to do. Iron school shirts. Clean up mess of the day. To bed—it's 11:30 pm.

Peta just returned from the International Year of Shelter conference held in Ottawa. Peta knows about homelessness. She is reminded daily of the acute housing shortage for Africans in urban areas.

"In my township alone there are 10,000 shacks. Most of these shacks are two room structures that house as many as 15 people. So you can imagine the health hazards and psychological strain that these squatters are subjected to.

"We are faced with a desperate situation. Homelessness and squatting are a result of forced removals that take place in other areas. These people are forced to immigrate to the urban areas. They build their shacks around our homes. This, as far as the government is

concerned, is illegal. But since people need a roof over their heads, they build them in our yards regardless."

For 15 years, African people have continuously been dispossessed of their land. The government expects Africans to live in "homelands" or bantustans.

Once Africans move to these homelands, however, they give up their rights as South African citizens. Africans can only exercise their political rights in one of the ten homelands or participate in the black town and village councils whose task is to administer Apartheid policies in urban areas.

The councils have no real power to change the cornerstones of Apartheid urban policy. Many Africans do not want to live in the bantustans because they are too small to accommodate the African population who constitute 80 per cent of South Africa's population. As well many can only find work in the urban areas.

Peta says that counsellors do not work in the interests of township dwellers. "Many counsellors are corrupt. They raise the rents but do not improve the living conditions in the townships. Now that the people are aware of such things, we are more united and refuse to pay rent."

Overcrowding and squatting compounded with no access to resources adds even more weight to South Afri-

their social change work is carried out within coalitions of labour, youth, and church groups.

"As women, we feel we are the most exploited and oppressed sector within the racist regime. But we feel it is important to work with other groups. That is why we are involved in the Living Wage Campaign with KOSOTU, the congress of South African Trade Unions. KOSOTO organizes workers and educates them about their rights as workers. There is a growing number of African women who work in factories. Women predominantly work as domestics and farm labourers."

Once a month, women's groups from all the townships in Soweto meet to assess their program of action and see how to best respond to day-to-day problems that come out of the oppressive system.

Regularly, Soweto women meet with other women from the Transvaal area. The Transvaal Federation of Women's Groups then speaks on behalf of these women on a national level.

To an outsider, the political organizing that these women's groups do may seem straight-forward. But women's groups are continually faced with obstacles that make social change or service work dangerous.

"Our government has always stopped people who provide aid to their communities and who raise people's

consciousness about their basic human rights and entitlements. In fact, the leadership in the Transvaal Federation of Women has been detained by the government; our president and office workers were arrested two years ago and they are still in prison."

The government not only uses detention to try to intimidate activists into silence, they also use bullets.

"It is not just a question of harassment or intimidation. The government judges their success by taking people's lives. Some people within our communities are used by the Apartheid system to divide and rule us. Vigilantes, people within the townships are paid to kill us."

Despite these brutal intimidation tactics, South African women are still on the move.

"The whole question of ways one adapts to state harassment is not something that comes automatically. It is something that one learns as the system employs new tactics to silence us."

For more information on women in South Africa, please contact the DE-VERIC resource centre at 1649 Barington Street in Halifax, or call 429-1370.

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Liz Bosma is a community activist looking for full-time employment.



Graphic by Joanne Sinclair

Jude

Alexandra Keir

A light rain spatters the windshield and melts the snow piled in heaps defining the road. There's a full moon somewhere but only headlights slice the night.

The dark has me stumbling over the fence, late and in a hurry across the pasture. Snow soft, melting and I sink over the edge of my boot, snow caught between boot tongue and my foot.

"You're late," and I look up from finding my way. The log cabin seems small compared to the light spilling from the door and the doorway seems small compared to the woman standing in it.

The kitchen must be hot; a too-small purple muscle shirt stretched here and tight there covers only a small part of her.

Short sweat-spiked hair frames bright eyes. One hand on her hip, the other fisted around a wooden spoon. She points with it, "Have you read the paper, it's amazing, the jerks," bright eyes dart, glad to see me, me too. "Come in, come in."

Warm humidity steams my glasses as I struggle out of winter wear and pull at wet laces. Pools of water form quickly on the shiny softwood floor. A quick hug and she's back to the stove, spoon back into the pot, long thick arm stirring spaghetti sauce moving in time with her mouth.

"Jerks! Did you see this?" A clipping appears. "Jerks! It's the money they want, it's the industry, so the monarch butterfly goes, so we all have lung problems. Jerks, I'll kill 'em... blow the whole thing wide open, money, jerks. Hold on, I gotta water the horse."

Calloused palm grips wooden handles, muscles flex and the hand pump over the sink coughs and spits. Water sloshes from the bucket across the floor and out the door which swings loosely shut behind her and the quiet surprises me. Dark log walls holding framed photos of a previous time seem to absorb the light, leaving the room dim.

Striding back in to catch the first drip of boiling over spaghetti sauce ... "There I was, ready for jail, but they don't sentence you right then. What's the point of doing an action if you're just going to bend over and give them the money. It's crazy."

Now, rocking frantically, she backs the old chair into the corner, her foot tapping.

Up again, two strides across the room, silverware out of a drawer onto the table. Dinner brings chatter. More relaxed as we unwind, a little gossip and do you use bay leaves or not, well, my mother doesn't like them, but I usually put one in. How do you remember that your mother doesn't like them? I think it's the only reference to bay leaves in my life... no, there's something else, I think they're good for fleas. Good for fleas? No. You know, at keeping them away.

A little time for strategizing too. If we blow it up, think of the mess, an environmental disaster; of course, we've already got that.

Dinner eaten, the guitars come out and we're off into our own tunes. The Budworm Song, right on. A love tune for the two of you and one for the two of us slows us down a bit from this catapulting pace. We should see each other more often, it would save us from drowning in all of the news. An agreement to get together sooner but... it's a long drive and winter is turning to spring. A promise to try.

Guitars back into cases, an offer of a flashlight out to the fence, thanks. A strong hug. It's good to know that we're there for each other. Take care.

In the rear view mirror, I watch the flashlight beam bob up and down and disappear in a crack of light, leaving me with the sound of rain. I flick on the windshield wipers.



From left to right are Yvonne Williams, Peta Qubeka (from South Africa) and Joan Mendes. (Photo by Cheryl Crawley)

can women's work load: many children suffer from diseases, have little or no access to education, and women walk over 200 to 600 meters to draw their water.

Faced with these almost impossible tasks, South African women are working together.

And that's where Peta Qubeka comes in. She works with grassroots women's groups to improve the living conditions in townships and to change the repressive political system that creates these poverty-stricken conditions.

Peta Qubeka says that in each township each women's group provides support to families whose heads of households are detained by the government, hold regular fund raising events, set up sewing cooperatives, and provide soup kitchens for the elderly who in turn take care of children.

These women's groups do not work in isolation from other groups. Much of

DAWN issues accessibility guidelines



Would you think of putting out a flyer saying: "Important feminist event featuring Ms. Daring Daisy, well known author. Nov 30, 8:00 pm., Everywoman's Hall. Admission Free. Childcare. Disabled women need not apply."

Of course not!

Yet often, even usually, that's what the publicity for feminist events says to disabled women... and you, the group responsible, may not know it, want it, or expect it. Your intentions may be, probably are (we hope) good. But we all know what road is paved with good intentions.

Your problem is usually that you just plain don't know what accessibility is. Our problem is that we can't get in to even tell you.

Accessible means different things to different people. What follows is the bare minimum for accessibility for most disabled women. And remember, disabled women are 18 per cent of all women.

For a woman who uses a wheelchair, accessibility means no steps (a good ramp and/or level entrance), an adapted washroom (with grab bars, a sink that her chair will fit under, room to get the chair into the cubicle and make a transfer sideways from the chair onto the toilet), and a place to sit, preferably with her friends.

For deaf and hearing impaired women, access means sign language interpreters. It means an office with a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) or a meeting with a loop amplification device. (These things are not as expensive as you think. Just ask your local DAWN—DisAbled Women's Network—group).

For blind and visually impaired women, accessibility means having printed matter (books, brochures, agendas, etc.) on cassette tape, in large print, or sometimes in Braille. It means that her guide dog is welcome and that you don't pet or feed that dog (it's working) without the owner's express permission. It means you offer to guide a blind woman to her seat.

You don't grab her by the arm and drag her there. That's not help; it's assault.

For developmentally disabled women, your attitude and language are the key to accessibility. When was the last time you jokingly referred to someone as "an idiot, imbecile, space cadet"? While we're on the subject, how do you think severely mobility impaired women feel about "basket case"? Or deaf women about "dumb"? Or psychiatric survivors about feminists who call other women "crazy, nuts, looney tooners, or really out of it"?

Another cliché to watch is, "confined to a wheelchair." You don't usually think of yourself as confined to your car even though you are incapable

of travelling 50 miles an hour unaided. Of course not. You drive your car. And we use our wheelchairs (and crutches, canes, walkers, etc.).



For most invisibly disabled women, those whose disability you can't see, access is often a matter of attitude and flexibility. For a woman with epilepsy, it means no strobe lights or flash bulbs. For a woman with diabetes, it means nutrition breaks. We thought non-disabled women liked to eat too, but we have been to all-day feminist events where no lunch was planned. (Is this the planning of a workaholic?)

For women with environmental illnesses, access means smoke free meetings and events. Yes, Virginia, smoking is an equality issue. If Mary dropped out of your planning committee, it may mean that Mary had an asthma attack after that last meeting from your cigarette. (And what about strong perfumes or deodorants? Many women have severe allergies to these items and cannot be among women who use them.)

For some women, accessibility means an attendant to help her with her basic needs. You will need to supply trained attendants or she may want to bring her own attendant. If she does, the

attendant should be admitted to the event free of charge. Even the Metro Toronto Zoo does this. An attendant is a technical aide in just the same way as a wheelchair is and no one charges two fares for a woman using a chair: one for herself and one for her wheelchair.

Even when events are accessible, you may not see disabled women out. This is often because of transportation. Accessabus, Halifax's alternative transit system, is separate from regular transit, but it is certainly not equal. Even though we are the poorest of all women (even old age pensioners get more), we must pay higher fares. And we must book from two to seven days in advance if we want to go somewhere. And there's no guarantee you'll get there. Or they might (often) get you there an hour late and pick you up an hour early. So much for spontaneity or last minute notice!

Last, but never least, accessibility means publicity. Organizers in the women's movement rarely seem to think of publicizing events in the newspapers or on the phone lines of the disabled movement. If you want us at your event, or in your group, advertise where we read.

And when you advertise events, every event should have information about accessibility. If the event is not accessible to disabled women, it should say so. If it is, the symbols shown should be used.

Be specific. For example, "Hall wheelchair accessible. Bathroom not accessible." And consult with DAWN. We know what's accessible — and what isn't. We know how to do it at the least expense and hassle. And we're

happy to be asked. We may even know about funding if you ask us far enough in advance.



At this point, maybe your heads are shaking and your finance committee is yelling, "It's not cost effective". (Perhaps the rest of you are simply saying, "It's too expensive".)

Being disabled has never been cost effective and it never will be. The same school of non-thought that calmly slaughtered millions of Jews, feminists, socialists, gays and lesbians and other minorities, fed us to the ovens because we "cost too much". The same argument is used to deny us jobs, decent incomes, housing, health care and everything the non-disabled take for granted — because it "costs too much".

But costs too much to whom? Why? So forgive us if we retch when we hear the same argument from feminist groups who have not put accessibility at the top of their agenda. And don't tell us that we're unreasonable, bitter, twisted, and even strident when you shut us out and can't cope with our rage. We must never, never, never shut any women out. All women are equal. All belong in the women's movement. Or it's all a big lie. You need to deal with your problem of excluding us. We won't go away. We are your sisters. And we are organizing around the world! Soon the spectacle of disabled women picketing inaccessible women's events will become a reality. Every minority has a point when collectively we say enough is enough. We are no exception. We are your sisters.

For more information contact DAWN, 122 Galt Street, Toronto, Ontario (phone 416-755-6060).

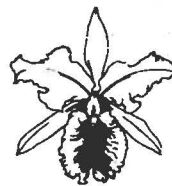
Seasons Greetings and a fulfilling New Year

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Mayor of Dartmouth



Dr. Leah Nomm

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Examining your breasts could save your life!

Willi Broeren

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women. Certain women are at high risk, but there is an appreciable risk to all women. It is estimated that one out of every 10 women in Canada will develop breast cancer in the course of their lifetime.

Moreover, this is a malignancy with no known method of prevention, which affects a sexually important part of the body, and can be emotionally and physically disfiguring. Fortunately, considerable progress is being made in the understanding as well as treatment of this disease.

There is no known single cause, but a number of genetic, hormonal and environmental factors have been implicated. The risk of breast cancer increases with age. Seventy-five per cent of cases occur after age 40.

Risk is also increased with early menarche (menstruation), late menopause, and family history. First pregnancy below age 30 is protective, but the effect of breast feeding on risk is minor.

Women with fibrocystic breast disease are also at greater risk. Ingestion of dietary fat is also suspected. Only recently, alcohol consumption has been implicated and one study showed an

increased risk with as little as three drinks per week.

Breast cancers are most often discovered as a painless lump by the woman herself on routine exam. Other signs include nipple discharge, bleeding, swelling, and skin changes. The majority of breast lumps are benign and are found most frequently in young women.

Many young women also have fibrocystic disease which frequently results in breast pain or premenstrual discomfort. Hence, it is generally recommended that all women examine their own breasts in a systematic fashion on a monthly basis. Pamphlets on breast self-examination (BSE) are readily available and a physician can instruct and answer questions about the normal "lumpy" characteristics of a breast. A yearly breast cancer check by a physician is also recommended. While there is no concrete evidence that BSE decreases mortality, it is hoped that early detection will allow for curative surgery with breast conservation.

In addition to BSE, mammography is a special type of x-ray designed to detect non-palpable (cannot be felt) lumps as well as assess palpable masses. In the U.S., the American Cancer Society recommends that all

women between 35 and 39 years have a mammogram and that it be repeated every one or two years in the 40-49 age group. All women 50 or over are advised to have annual mammograms.

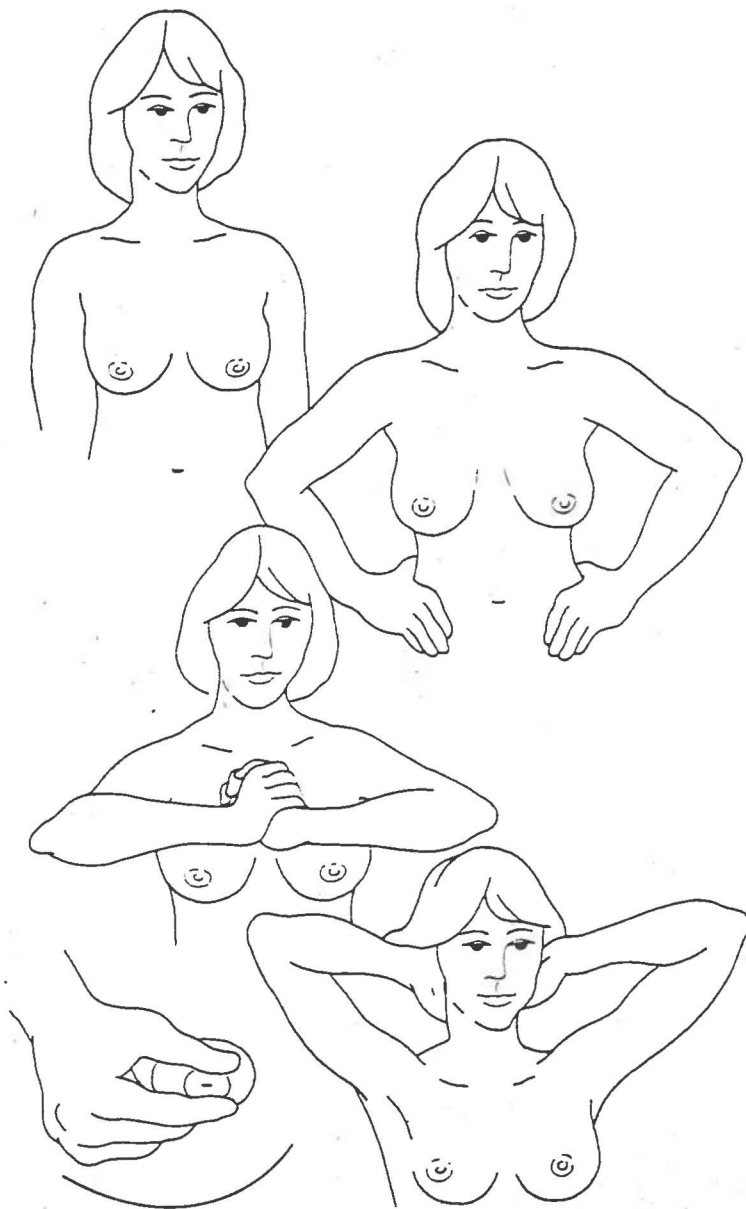
Physicians in Canada are generally less aggressive about regular mammograms because the benefits of mass screening (that is, the number of malignancies detected versus the cost) has only been evident in women over 50. To achieve these benefits also requires the highest quality equipment and skilled radiologists. The radiation hazard of mammography is not felt to be significant.

Over the past 20 years, significant changes have occurred in the management of breast cancer. In earlier years, radical surgery (with removal of the entire breast as well as underlying muscles) was the treatment of choice. Now the trend is toward more conservative treatment and only partial mastectomies. However, the advantages of breast conservation (lumpectomy) versus breast removal is still controversial. Radiation and chemotherapy are also options for treatment, depending on the extent of the disease.

In conclusion, breast cancer is a common and serious disease. Although not preventable, routine examination and screening may result in earlier detection and, hence, a better outcome for the woman.

□□□□□

Willi Broeren is a family doctor at the Fenwick Sports Clinic in Halifax with a special interest in all health issues affecting women, including sports medicine.



Breast self-exam: Inspection — Stand in front of a mirror and inspect your breasts in each of the four positions shown here. Then squeeze each nipple, looking for signs of discharge. **Palpation** — Lie down with one hand behind your head. With your other hand, start on the outside of the breast and, using a circular motion, palpate the entire breast. Repeat on the opposite breast. (Illustration and directions from *Womancare*, by Lynda Madaras and Jane Patterson. Avon Books.)



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When does ovulation occur?

Dark secrets of 'down there'

Brenda Conroy

A few years ago a friend gave me a booklet on using observation of your temperature and vaginal mucus changes to pinpoint when you ovulate (sometimes called the Billings method). One can use this method to either avoid or accept sperm, depending on whether you are trying to avoid pregnancy or trying to conceive.

I was fascinated, especially by the part about mucus changes. I learned very quickly to correlate the various types of my vaginal mucus with my monthly cycle. Although I wasn't using the information for any particular purpose at the time, it felt wonderful to have it. It made me feel powerful just to be less ignorant about my body.

Then I began to feel angry. Why isn't this information handed down from mother to daughter or taught to us in school? Why did I have to wait until I was in my thirties to know that I could recognize the wholeness of my cycle, not just the bleeding part? I remembered being asked by a doctor if my vaginal discharge was normal. Who knows, I thought, what in the world is normal? I didn't even know if it was normal to have a discharge at all. So what a revelation it was to me to find that that dark mysterious place of mine is not secreting strange, sticky substances completely at random.

Here is a brief description of temperature and mucus changes just in case there are any other ignorant souls out there.

Temperature:

At the time of ovulation, your temperature rises slightly and remains at this higher level until the end of your cycle. In general, you can be pretty sure ovulation has occurred when three consecutive readings are at least 0.4 degrees Fahrenheit above the previous six readings. Ovulation is the release of the egg or ovum, which then lives for only 12-18 hours unless it is fertilized. Sperm, on the other hand, can live inside the vagina for two or three days, or perhaps longer. So conception can take place if sperm enter the body a few days before ovulation or a few hours afterwards. For this reason, if you want to use this method for either contraception or to conceive, it is important to chart your temperature for a few months to see how regular your cycle is and whether you can predict ahead of time when ovulation will happen.

It is essential to take your temperature every morning, before getting out of bed, having a drink, talking, or smoking. You should use a basal body thermometer because it is easier to read the small changes in temperature.

Mucus:

The mucus which is felt at the entrance to the vagina comes from the cervix. In most women, right after menstruation, the mucus is thick, creamy and sticky, and not much of it is felt at the entrance to the vagina. The amount of mucus increases and changes to wet and slippery as ovulation approaches. For a day or two, right

around the time of ovulation, the mucus will be at its most slippery. It will by now be clear and rather like raw egg white in consistency. This clear, stretchy mucus signals that ovulation will shortly occur (or just has). After that, the mucus will again be sticky and you will be relatively dry until your period starts.

This mucus pattern can be difficult to detect because the amount and consistency of mucus is different for different women. Again, changes may need to be observed for several months before you know what to expect in your particular cycle.

Another interesting fact about our fertility cycle is that ovulation almost invariably takes place between 12 and 16 days (usually 14 days) before the onset of menstruation, whatever the length of your cycle. So, if you have a 28-day cycle, ovulation will occur more or less in the middle of it. But if your cycle is long, for example 35 days, ovulation will occur after the middle (day 19 to 23), or, if you have a short cycle, you will ovulate fairly early in that cycle (for example, day 8 to 12 in a 24 day cycle).

The above information isn't a complete guide to using temperature and mucus changes for contraception or to get pregnant. I write it because I felt empowered by the knowledge — we have been ignorant about ourselves for too long. More detailed information might be obtained by checking books on fertility in the library.

Still Sane evokes strong memories/fears/feelings

Still Sane by Sheila Gilhooley and Persimmon Blackridge is published by Press Gang. \$12.95. ISBN 0-88974-028-3.

Brenda R. Bryan

I've sat down a number of times to write this review. As I leaf through the book, yet again, I find it hard to keep my focus. I flip from centre to front and from front to back over and over again.

Finally I begin to realize where my aversion to this task comes from. My mind keeps flipping back to story after story of similar horrors that my lesbian friends have and continue to encounter all the time. This book, *Still Sane*, triggers my pain and fear. The visuals and text sink into my heart and I understand the importance of this work.

I think the reason I feel this impact so clearly is because the visual presentation and text leave no room for misunderstanding. The approach to Sheila's story is honest and direct, coming from the experience of the women themselves. This is what, to me, makes this feminist art.

In a male-dominated society, this is not as simple as it may seem, for most women are dealing with the indoctrination of this society and have been taught to believe that our values and feelings as women, and especially as lesbians, are not worthy of acknowledgement. Fortunately Sheila and Persimmon have fought past this and have told a story that illustrates the violence and malice that this society holds towards women, and, more intensely, towards lesbians.

The message is clear: our medical institutions are the tool of the patriarchy, and as such, are not to be trusted to look after the well-being of women. More important to me, however, is Sheila's victory over incredible circumstances. Incarcerated, drugged, battered by shock treatments, rape and

brainwashing, these medical institutions tried to "cure" her of her lesbianism.

It is hard to believe we are still in the



time of witch hunts.

It wasn't that long ago that I sat in my doctor's office as he advised me to see a psychiatrist. He told me I should go on the anti-depressant Desyrel for three to six months. He told me that it requires close observation to get the right dosage.

My first response to him was "I don't know of any head doctors I would trust given I am a lesbian. And no one in the community could really recommend one either." He responded in his consoling voice, said he knew of a couple, and wrote out a prescription.

At that time I was heading for Vancouver, on sick leave from my job. I took the prescription and told him I wouldn't start till I got to BC since the medication tended to make you sick for a while. He insisted I see a doctor as soon as I got there. I left the office with the information on anti-depressants and a terrible feeling of loss of control over my life.

In the airport, with pills in hand, I read the information. The fact that stood out strongest was that I couldn't stop the drug, even if I felt better. A close second was the fact that the drug was no more dangerous than shock treatments.

Give me a break! Caught in the dilemma of rescuing myself from pain and depression, I had forgotten my place in the world. Feeling helpless, I turned to what was readily available to me.

Unfortunately, what was available wasn't what I really needed. I didn't need a system that would neither recognize nor respect who I was.

The night I arrived in Vancouver, I put my hands on *Still Sane*. It was like a message from the goddess. *Still Sane* is the success story I needed and, unlike the many women who have no way of knowing there are alternatives, I never did take the pills.

This book is a reminder to all women of how vulnerable we really are. It is also a reminder that we do have the power to overcome incredible oppression. My thanks to both Sheila and Persimmon for their courage and strength in putting this work together.

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Brenda R. Bryan is now living in Vancouver. She has attended classes at Heartwood in California in healing and now does work as a polarity therapist and master hypnotist.



Still Sane is one woman's story of defiance and survival. It documents Sheila's three-year struggle against a psychiatric system that regards lesbianism as a sickness. All graphics on this page are from the book. If you are interested in her experience, she will be leading a discussion (after a showing of the video) on Sunday, December 6, at 7:30 pm at Veith House, 3115 Veith Street, Halifax. All women are welcome.

Feminist art tells powerful story of sanity and rebellion

Jo-Anne Fiske

Meanings attached to gender distinctions are arbitrary. Rooted in myth, they appear as the truth and henceforth as society's scripts for social order.

In the hands of psychiatry, gender myths are manipulated to define "reality" and "sanity." They deny the political nature of psychiatry's project — compliance with a male-dominated, heterosexual social order.

To confront and shatter the mythic order of psychiatry is to rebel, to transform reality through revolutionary language.

Still Sane, by Sheila Gilhooley and Persimmon Blackridge, is a collection of 27 sculptures and personal narratives that provide the essence of feminist politicized speech and renews our understanding of sanity and womanhood.

Persimmon Blackridge cast her sculptures by molding plaster over Sheila Gilhooley. The effect, captured in black and white

photography by Kiku Hawkes, is powerful. Chronologically, we are drawn into Sheila's three-year struggle in a mental institution. Her pain, defiance, bewilderment, anger, and ultimate triumph come alive in facial expressions and body posture to transcend and thus empower the accompanying social comments and "facts."

More quietly, Sheila's sparse recol-

lections vibrate with emotion as she relates how she was designated "sick" because she was lesbian, "insane" because she was resilient to patriarchal/psychiatric control.

Emerging from incarceration in a mental hospital, Sheila celebrates her sanity by coming out thrice over: coming out lesbian, coming out feminist, and coming out sane. By publicly announcing her sanity, she simultaneously denounces psychiatry.

The revolutionary power of *Still Sane* lies in three supreme qualities of its expression: in the power of the life-size sculptures; in Sheila's direct, honest and simple narrative; and the interweaving of these artistic expressions with equally terse, direct, factual statements which describe the full extent of psychiatry's intervention into the private lives of women.

Good art, it is said, shocks. *Still Sane* not only meets this criteria of art, it embodies the special project of feminist art. In intimate image and word, the political is personalized in social comment. The personal is politicized.

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Jo-Anne Fiske teaches sociology and anthropology at Saint Mary's University.



still sane

Video and discussion
with author
Sheila Gilhooley

Location: Veith House
3115 Veith Street
Halifax

Date: Sunday December 6,
Time: 7:30 pm
Cost: \$5

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Dressing fashionably causes discomfort, raises questions

Brenda J. Thompson

Last month I was tortured. My feet were burnt and blistered, my legs were twisted into unnatural positions, my spine was forced into an abnormal angle, my abdomen and ribs were encased in a painful bank of leather which made breathing difficult, and my breasts were bound with wire.

Sounds like I was taking part in a porno flick, doesn't it? Well, almost. I was in so much pain because I was dressed up "fashionably" and "ladylike." This means I was wearing a dress, high heels, pantyhose, an underwire bra and a leather belt.

The pantyhose made my legs and crotch sweat, the high heels made my leg muscles cramp and gave my feet blisters. The underwire bra had my breasts lifted up so high it felt like they were sitting on my neck — talk about double chins!

You see, since I've become a welfare mother, I've been forced by economics to dress in comfort — meaning jeans, sneakers, cotton socks and underwear.

But I wasn't always that way!

There was a time in my life, before motherhood, when I owned 32 pairs of high heels, 88 pairs of pantyhose, and wouldn't be

caught dead in a pair of pants. I coated my face in layers of foundation, curled my hair four to six times a day (depending on the weather), and considered the day a bust if I didn't get at least three wolf whistles from Joe Jocks.

Then, one day, one of those Joe Jocks gave me a little bit more than a wolf whistle and Motherhood set in. I became too busy with dirty diapers and managing a meagre budget to worry about whether or not I was fashionable.

That day, though, I had my chance to "feel like a woman again." I was to speak in front of a group of government pooh-bahs and I wanted to blow away the myths that welfare women looked like they just crawled out of a rummage bag. Never mind the fact that most of us have to shop out of rummage bags, I thought they would take me seriously if I fit their definition, at least visually, of a decent human being.

So I borrowed a dress, did up my hair, piled on the makeup, and stepped into a pair of high heels. I looked as if I would fit into any business office as I set out to smash the myths.

However I had forgotten one vital factor about dressing fashionably. You cannot possibly walk in high heels for any distance without committing hari-kari. Unfortunately I had to walk from Scotia Square to Red Herring Bookstore to Dalhousie University. I didn't have any money for a taxi. By the time I had walked halfway to the bookstore, I started to feel the pain. My back and feet were aching and I found it difficult to stride along with "that Charlie look" while my face was struck in a grimace.

"Why do women dress like this?" I asked myself as I watched men go walking past me, unhampered by their

clothing or shoes. By the time I reached Red Herring Bookstore, I was in considerable pain. I got inside and said to the guy behind the counter, "Look, I'm sorry if this offends you, but I gotta do this!" and I took off my heels.

"Thank God," I groaned. "Honestly, I don't know why women torture themselves by dressing like this."

"Don't you know," he said, "women only dress like that to attract men."

"Don't you think that's rather over-simplified?" I asked him.

"Well, you obviously don't dress that way for comfort or efficiency," this guy said, "and if you look at all the social conditioning and the tremendous pressure for women to attract men, then it's obvious that women are dressing that way to attract the opposite gender. Personally, I'm attracted more to a woman's personality than her designer-wear clothes."

"Hmmm," I said, "I'll think about that theory," and I thanked him for letting me use his store as a foot stool and left.

As I walked up Spring Garden Road, I stared enviously at the women around me who were smart enough to wear flat shoes and unrestricting clothing. They moved faster than I did, they were not in pain, and they looked very comfortable with their bodies and their appearance.

As I limped towards the University, I thought about the way women have dressed in the past and I found myself asking a number of questions I couldn't answer. For example, it is written in Deuteronomy that "the woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment." Failure to abide by a sex-distinctive dress code is an "abomination unto the Lord thy God."

Why should the Lord have cared so intensely about clothes?

Then I found myself asking why women for centuries had to conceal their bodies under layers of garments and petticoats and then, in a relatively short span of years, they had to reveal their bodies with the skimpy fashions of mini-skirts and string bikinis and such.

Why aren't pants, even in this day and age, accepted as proper business wear for women? Why is it that in different countries around the world women are required, by laws and religion, to dress in certain restrictive ways while men, the world over, dress in relatively the same manner?

Later that night, after I had taken off my fashionable clothes and put band-aids on my six blisters, I related my thoughts and questions to a good friend of mine who is a male and (getting to be) a feminist.

I declared to him that I didn't want to ever feel that I had to dress that way to be taken seriously again. He agreed that wearing fashionable clothes is probably uncomfortable for women, "but," he suggested, "you have to be able to express your femininity, Brenda."

So now I had a new question in my head. What the hell does "expressing my femininity" mean?

I mulled over these thoughts for a few days and I finally came to the conclusion that I am sure every other feminist in the world knows. The whole idea behind a feminist is being equal and having the right to choose for ourselves — choosing everything from controlling our bodies, to our own sexuality, to choosing our lifestyle, to choosing our own appearance (I hope I'm not oversimplifying what feminism is about!).

I can choose the way I wish to look and I shouldn't have to feel forced to dress in a certain way to "...feel like a woman." I've always said in the past that my hair colour depends on what mood I'm in when I'm in the Shopper's Drug Mart. Well, now I will apply that philosophy to my clothing.

I've thought a lot about clothing since that day, and I've

decided that I'm very comfortable with the way I look. If I want to dress in baggy uncomfortable clothes on one day, that's fine, and if I want to dress in dressy clothes on another day, then that's fine, too. I've also concluded that I've made an untraditional metamorphosis — from the brightly coloured fashionable butterfly to the "dowdy" caterpillar.

But this caterpillar doesn't have to worry about holding out her arms to show off her pretty wings. She has more interests, more freedom, and this makes her more appealing to her friends and to herself. It's taken me a long time to learn this, but I'm getting there.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I think I'm going to put on my comfy clothes and go talk to the guy at Red Herring Bookstore!

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Brenda Thompson is a new feminist who will be taking Women's Studies at Mount St. Vincent University. Look out world!

I thought they would take me more seriously if I fit their definition of a decent human being

Since I've become a welfare mother, I've been forced by economics to dress in comfort — jeans, sneakers, cotton socks and underwear.

Making Our Time

Alex Keir

breakdown — burnout — overloaded — wired — not enough time — if only there were 35 hours a day — exhausted — used up — wiped out — familiar terms in these feminist times these nuclear times.

We must change the language that we use to describe ourselves and our state of being or it will surely end the world.

Herstory trivia quiz

1. In what country is Mt. Jobe named for Mary L. Jobe, the first to map the headwaters of the Fraser River?
2. In 1975, Grace Hartman became the first North American woman to lead a major union. What was the Union?
3. Which famous female adventurer said "Women must try to do things as men have tried. When they fail, their failure must be a challenge to others"?
4. In 1949, who wrote the groundbreaking book, "The Second Sex"?
5. Wilkins, Watson and Crick won the Nobel Prize for describing the structure of DNA. Why wasn't the female scientist on the team, Rosalind Franklin, also honoured?
6. In 1727 Helen Morrison was placed in an asylum for four weeks because she was the first woman to place an ad asking for what?
7. Which female poet did Plato call the tenth muse?
8. Who was Canada's first woman Speaker of the House?
9. In the 1920s, according to Dr. Edward H. Clark, author of "Sex Education, or a Fair Chance For the Girls" what would happen to a woman who pursued Higher Education?
10. In which country were the first women ordained as Anglican ministers?

Answers:

1. Canada
2. C.U.P.E.
3. Amelia Earhart
4. Simone de Beauvoir
5. She had died before the prize was awarded
6. A male companion
7. Sappho
8. Jeanne Sauvé
9. Her uterus would atrophy
10. Canada

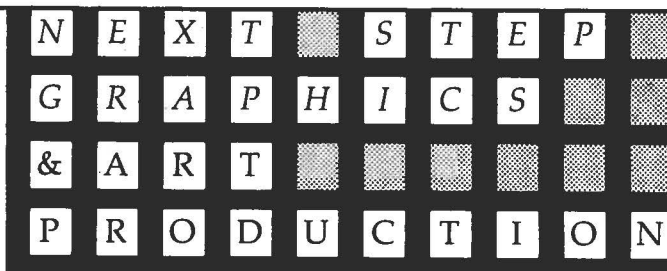
(Source: Ultimate Trivia, Judith and Garfield Reeves-Stevens, Penguin, 1984. Reprinted from Common Ground)

Urgent!

Feminist writer working on stage play exploring conflict between feminist Wicce and fundamentalist Christianity, needs input from practising goddess-centered feminist circles. Please call Marilyn at (902) 895-2152 or 895-8026 (message).

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902 422-6654

1820 Hollis Street 4th Floor Halifax Nova Scotia B3J 1W4

Lulu Keating begins her first feature film

In 1979, Lulu Keating returned to her native Nova Scotia after brief times of studying fine art in Vancouver and film at Ryerson in Toronto. She credits the Atlantic Filmmaker's Co-operative in Halifax with providing her real education — it was with Atlantic Filmmaker's Co-operative resources that Lulu began to make her own films.

Her first effort, *Lulu's Back in Town*, a two minute animation described modestly by its creator as "a self-indulgent piece of narcissism," was purchased by the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.

From that humble beginning, Lulu has gone on to make a series of

short films: *Funny Things People Can Do to Themselves*, *Forehead Play*, *City Survival*, *Starting Right Now*, *Rita MacNeil in Japan* and most recently, *Enterprising Women*. Having made herself comfortable with the 28 minute short, Lulu stands at the brink of shooting her first feature length film, *African Chronicle*.

With her mate, artist Rod Malay, Lulu shares the rearing of their son Calhoun, possibly the most travelled one-year-old in Halifax.

Q. Tell us about *African Chronicle*.

A. It's the story of a Canadian woman who is a volunteer in Africa. She's gotten involved with a man who is a merchant and ex-patriot. She also gets robbed. Her house-boy is accused and imprisoned for ten years. When she tries to get him free, she uncovers a whole underground of corruption associated with her boyfriend and his group of ex-patriots.

I hope to start shooting in Africa in the spring of 1988, but we won't know until a month or two before we're

scheduled to start whether we've got all the financing in place.

Q. Because of the amounts of money involved, how much do you have to sacrifice your initial ideas in order to get your own projects produced?

A. That's a really important question. It's a question of compromising your artistic vision because of the necessities of raising money and I'm hit slap up against it every day.

But every film is different. I don't

they wouldn't approve it to be shot in Zimbabwe unless I changed that.

I jiggled the characters around, made the white ex-patriots more corrupt and it didn't hurt the script to have this whole undercurrent of corruption without it being explicit. On the other hand, if they want some other things changed, there could be problems.

The whole basis of the film is this young Canadian's view of justice and injustice. The story is that there is a victim of injustice in an African country (which was not Zimbabwe in real life, by the way).

It's convenient for a little houseboy to be accused of a theft and sentenced in order for a Canadian woman to return home saying, "They're not barbarians over there. They have a judicial system that works. I was robbed but someone was punished."

Compromise is a hell of a big question and it comes up almost everyday.

Q. How does a film become a two million dollar film instead of, say a six hundred thousand dollar film?

A. When I first tried to do *African Chronicle*, it was a low budget feature, maybe \$40,000 - \$60,000, where people would be working for minimal wages or deferred rates. We tried to get agencies like Crossroads Africa or Canada World Youth to give us deals on travel through their organizations. I tried pretty hard for a couple of years but I couldn't make that film. It was rejected twice by the Canada Council.

Some films can be made on a low budget, but the way Telefilm (the federal agency funding film production in Canada) is set up, it's easier to make what they can relate to, which is a film with a budget of a million or more. I know of local film makers who have had difficulty making features with

think there's any set pattern. The last film that I did had almost 100% total artistic freedom, but it hasn't gone anywhere. It was a financial failure and it took a year and a half to pay off the debts.

Now with this current film, I won't be able to get it made unless it has some kind of appeal for people to put money into it. Right now that means a battle about who is going to play the lead. I have a first choice but she's not a known actress, so I'm auditioning another "known" Canadian actress. If she can give me the kind of performance I want, then her name will help attract financing. With a two million dollar budget, people are cautious. Every person putting money in wants to have some input. It's frustrating but that's only one concern of a lot of others.

With the script, for example, we want to shoot in Zimbabwe. Now Zimbabwe is very commendable in its determination to not go the way of other African nations which have corruption in high places. My script originally had a corrupt police officer and

"When you have a high profile, you have to be ready for people to pick at you a lot more"



Lulu Keating

Photo by Kathleen Flanagan

Telefilm because their budgets were low.

Q. It seems that a value system that includes the "big budget" is being imposed on a region of Canada that doesn't naturally think in those terms?

A. Yes. The centre, unfortunately, turns things a lot. I think regionalism is a centralist concept that is being imposed on those of us who live outside of Toronto. It's their way of dealing with the problem of people outside the centre wanting to do things.

There is no notion of Toronto's particular film vision being "regional" and it is. It's very much like American film for example. The real potential for Canadian cinema lies in what they call "the regions." Look at the films that have come out of Vancouver, *The Grey Fox* and *My American Cousin*. John and the Missus was from New-

I've decided, to be a major player in Canadian cinema.

Q. Your work is ultimately very public. Sometimes you get praise and sometimes you have to take your lumps. You take big risks, risks that a lot of women stay away from. Where do you find in yourself the strength to take those kinds of risks?

A. With my first serious film, *City Survival*, I just said I'll do the best damn job I can, and if I fail that's all right because I will have learned. I think you have to keep the attitude to do the best you can and not be ruled by how people respond to you.

What I've found helpful is just being able to say: "If this is my objective, what is holding me back from it. Maybe it's fear of success, or maybe it's fear of failure. Maybe it's just feeling that I don't know enough and I'm

petrified. Maybe it's fear of being laughed at." Whatever the particular personal limitation, once I recognize it, then I find the first small step I can take towards doing what I want

"It's a question of compromising your artistic values because of the necessity of raising money..."

to do and I take it. If I fail there, well, it's just one small step.

I think it's important to put negative criticism in perspective to see what can be learned from it. When you have a high profile you have to be ready for people to pick at you a lot more. People have expectations for you to be "really" good, and when you're not "really" good, they jump on you.

When I was a kid I always wanted to be famous, probably because I was from a big family and felt obscure among my siblings. I think it was always there, this flamboyant, narcissistic desire to put myself out front. I only had to learn what I was proficient at. My flare was not for selling cars.

□ □ □ □ □

It would probably be limited to occasional art house screenings. I do want to have a big audience. I do want,

Joann Latremouille has her own business as a landscape architect and is a freelance writer on the arts.



Mary Jane (Mary Colin Chisholm) considers the sophistication that could be hers if she would only take up smoking in

Lulu Keating's musical-comedy-message-film *Starting Right Now*. (Photo by Lulu Keating.)

What's new in women's books

Canadian publishers have a number of titles of particular interest to women, new or almost new this fall. Jocelyne Marchand of the Canadian Book Information Centre has gathered this information together and we hope you enjoy it. This is a new column in *Pandora*. If it is of interest to you and you would like to see it continue, please let us know.

Amazing Space: Writing Canadian Women Writing various authors

This is the most extensive collection of feminist literary criticism about Canadian women writers to date. The contributors — both franco- and anglophones — deal with such topics as: cunctipotence and the erotic; post-structuralism and "writing womanly"; feminist literary criticism, feminist writing and male reviewers; writing by native and black women. It challenges women to go beyond Margaret Atwood and Margaret Laurence. The essays bear witness to the changes feminism has effected in our practice of reading: our choice of texts, the language with which we speak about them. ISBN 0-920897-12-6, 427 pages, \$24.95 paper. NeWEST PRESS Co-published with LONGSPOON PRESS

A WOMAN'S ALMANAC

voices from Newfoundland & Labrador



1988

A Woman's Almanac 1988: Voices from Newfoundland and Labrador edited by Marian A. White

Here are more "voices from Newfoundland," from Yarn Point Crafts' Elsie Miles to Patti Au of St. John's. Designed for recording agendas, stories and special events, the Almanac also gives a glimpse into astrology, provides a sprinkling of highlights from our past, and reproduces twelve beautiful drawings by Janice Udell. ISBN 0-920911-22-6, 128 pages, \$11.95 paper. BREAKWATER PRESS

Intimacy: Living as a Woman After Cancer

Jacquelyn Eleanor Johnson

The author, a cancer survivor, draws on her own experience and interviews with other women to bring a message of hope to women, their friends and families, that one can live as a woman after cancer. Few women have access to qualified oncology counsellors or other caregivers; this book is an alternative. It is a good guide on how to live a full life after cancer. ISBN 1-55021-021-2, 192 pages, \$12.95. NC PRESS

Surviving Procedures After A Sexual Attack

Megan Ellis

This is the first Canadian procedural guide to what happens to a woman after she has been sexually assaulted. Written by a rape crisis centre worker who has gone through the medical, police, and court procedures with many women, this handbook explains women's rights, outlines the choices to be made and follows the steps in a sexual assault court case. ISBN 0-88974-005-4, 124 pages, \$6.95 paper. PRESS GANG PUBLISHERS

The Woman Upstairs

a novel by Mary Walters Riskin

Diane Guthrie thinks she has escaped from her own past. But when she returns to her dying mother, painful memories resurface and interfere with the present. This is a compelling portrait of a woman struggling between her sense of propriety and her intense need to believe that she is "more than a series of reactions to other people." ISBN 0-920897-18-5, 184 pages, \$8.85. NeWEST PRESS

The Regulation of Desire: Sexuality in Canada

Gary Kinsman

This book is a history of sexual expression with an account of how sexuality has been controlled. It confronts the many constraints on "deviant" and even "normal" sexuality. Methods used to uncover the history of the lesbian and gay communities are

described, an extraordinarily well documented book.

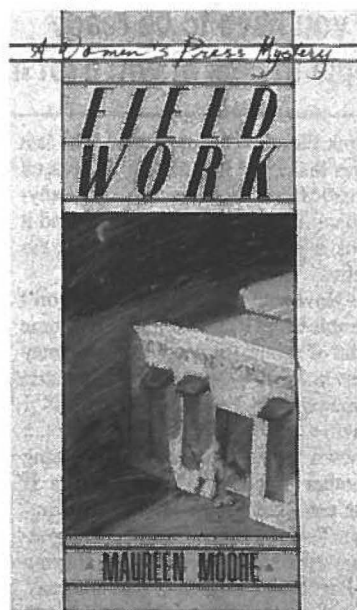
ISBN 0-920057-81-1, 236 pages, \$16.95 paper. BLACK ROSE BOOKS

Being Pregnant

Daphne Morrison. Photography by Robin Barnett.

This isn't a practical guide to being pregnant. In this book, fifteen women of different ages and backgrounds speak about what are often the hidden aspects of pregnancy: the social pressures, miscarriage and abortion, how being pregnant affects relationships. The book provides a revealing look at a commonplace yet profoundly personal event in the lives of most women.

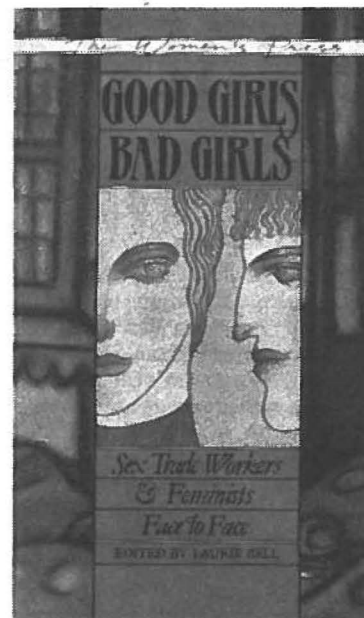
ISBN 0-919573-71-1, 208 pages, \$9.95 paper. NEW STAR BOOKS.



Fieldwork

a novel by Maureen Moore

A page-turning first novel with clever plot convolutions and political astuteness. Marsha Lewis, a student criminologist, gets involved in a murder investigation; women health activists are high on the police suspect list; the victim, a prominent local doctor. A treat for every mystery lover and those who thought they never would be. ISBN 0-88961-120-3, 180 pages, \$8.95. THE WOMEN'S PRESS



Good Girls/Bad Girls: Sex Trade Workers Confront Feminists

Edited by Laurie Bell
This book explores life for the self-proclaimed bad girls of today's society. Voices from the sex-trade industry are included with those of feminists in looking at pornography legislation, stripping, and racism. Long-held myths and illusions about sex-trade workers are discussed as well as their organizing efforts. A book whose time has come.

ISBN 0-88961-112-2, 200 pages, \$10.95. THE WOMEN'S PRESS

Enough is Enough. Aboriginal Women Speak Out

as told to Janet Silman.
This is the story of a small group of Native Indian women from a little-known reserve called Tobique in New Brunswick who rebelled against their chief, embarrassed the Canadian government and brought their plight to the United Nations. Their battle culminated in 1985 when the Canadian Parliament ended its legislated sexual discrimination against Native Indian Women.

ISBN 0-88961-119-X, 200 pages, \$10.95 paper. THE WOMEN'S PRESS.

All of these books are available from your local bookseller. For more information, contact the Canadian Book Information Centre, 1741 Barrington Street, 4th floor, Halifax, N.S. B3J 2A4 or call 420-0688.

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- 6 But What Will They Mean for Women? Feminist Concerns About the New Reproductive Technologies, Linda S. Williams, 1986
- 7 Sex-role Learning and the Woman Teacher: A Feminist Perspective, Rosonna Tite, 1986
- 8 Challenging Unions: Feminist Process and Democracy in the Labour Movement, Miriam Edelson, 1987
- 9 Gender-sensitive Theory and the Housing Needs of Mother-led Families: Some Concept and Some Buildings, Fran Klodawsky and Suzanne MacKenzie, 1987

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Borrowed Beauty reflects Tynes' spirit and energy

Joanne Light

Maxine Tynes' first book of poetry (*Borrowed Beauty*) draws you into a sea of chanting rhythms, waves of repetitively pounding words and the incessant energy of a proud spirit.

The musicality of fast-paced phrasing and a content, in its strongest moments, offers poems which both inform and move the reader. At other times, she settles into the motion of words which address particular groups, often in the celebration of feminism, the Black movement, or personal ancestry. But the voice of the storyteller is perhaps Tynes' truest voice.

In "Hollis Street at Midnight is not a T.V. Screen," Tynes' ability to tell a story that evokes both emotion and narrative power, is clear:

"Hollis Street at midnight is women walking their blues in the night of men walking their blues in the night of women and shadows

the collusion of currency and flesh and middle-class community angst Hollis Street at midnight is not a T.V. screen."

In "In Service II," one of the two prose pieces in the collection, Tynes' facility as a prose writer of narrative is demonstrated:

"She died in service." That described Helen. I was allowed to say her name. Velvet tams and Juicy Fruit gum every night in Mama's kitchen. When I was little, I was allowed to

stand by her and feel her tams. When I got older, she'd be there every night, watching me cry into cold dishwater.

"And still the tams were there. The ruby, the emerald green, the midnight velvet blue of them glowed richly against the grey-black, soft and wooly head. Sometimes she would reach up, too, to finger that soft glow; almost as if to make sure that lovely part of her

was still there. Helen's hands against such splendid velvet were like wounds; flags of the world of

drudgery that were her days."

In her "soul hymns," there is the pride of race and gender being shouted strong and feverishly as though this "speaking in tongues (through fingers)" cannot come fast enough, soon enough, or joyously enough.

She makes use of repetition: "women we keepers and sharers of ancient secrets of loving and making homes of houses of loving and making love of loving and making life of loving and making our men whole of loving..."

to set the record turning and flowing, etching the story in flamboyant strokes, perhaps to make up for a history that Tynes knows is lost to her.

When she writes: "I cannot possibly say to you I am a woman descended from the people of the plains — the



Maxine Tynes

(Photo by Sara avMaat)

Serengeti, of Kenya, of Ghana, the Gambia, or of Zaire — the heartland. I can only look to the vast expanse of Africa, that black mother continent, and say, that is who and what and where I am," we immediately learn why the need to plead this lost heritage comes through so obsessively. And so she writes in "The Profile of Africa":

"chart my beginning by my profile chart my beginning by my colour read the map of my heritage in my face my skin the dark flash of eye the profile of Africa."

Many of the poems in this collection are dedications. They are Tynes reaching out to identify with a person or group, be it Rita MacNeil, the women of Nicaragua, or a lover.

There is a strong thread of tying in many peoples with her life, both on a personal and international level. The empathy is there; the salute to honour many who suffer abuse, alienation and injustice is clear.

There are, however, a few souls

whom Tynes has cast off. The cynical voice rises up against Bob Geldof and his "live-aid lizards": Tina, Mick, Stevie, and the chameleon crew jumping from one technicolour skin to another.

In her "Live Aid in a Basket: The Reach Out and Touch Fantasy of the Century" she lambasts all these larger-than-life holy souls for thinking they can successfully integrate Mick and Tina's "leather-to-leather song and dance number" to "some black and hunger-shrivelled woman/bag of bones in rags and dust Ethiopia" and come up with an equation for compassion.

Her disgust for everything Live Aid stands for rages out in this poem. The incongruities that satellite television illustrate with such an event as Live Aid are certainly apparent. But is there no salvation for rock stars? Why does Tynes' compassion stop short of Geldof and the efforts of others? Why is the empathy, which has been so beautifully and bravely enunciated in many

of the other poems, absent here?

The litanous works in this collection sing the loudest praises, joyfully announcing the existence of histories and peoples that will help the reader broaden their understanding. It is the authentic picture that Tynes evokes in

her storytelling — the events from her childhood home or those she sees in her modern vista — which is the full

blossom to her audience. Only she can tell us of Helen and Mama and Aunt Lil; perhaps only she is there in spirit to paint the picture of a present-day Halifax with its north-end/south-end worlds. These are the writings that we need from Maxine Tynes.

Reprinted from Atlantic Provinces Book Review. © APBR Service. *Borrowed Beauty*, by Maxine Tynes. Pottersfield Press: Porter's Lake; 1987, 71 pages, paper, \$8.95 (ISBN 0-919001-38-6).

□ □ □ □ □

Joanne Light is the author of *Meeting the North*.

The voice of the storyteller is perhaps Tynes' truest voice

"...repetitively pounding words, incessant spirit..."

Season's Greetings and Best Wishes for the New Year



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MGHA is seeking live-in support people for their apartment program, which provides support to people who have experienced mental health problems. The role of the live-in support is to be a roommate, friend and advocate. Benefits include friendship, free apartment, free utilities, monthly financial incentive, and experience working in the mental health field.

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Please call Cindy Atkinson,
420-1515

Notices/Calendar

PLEASE NOTE: I think the calendar is an important part of Pandora. I like to think it helps keep women across the network informed about what is happening in the community. But it is a LOT OF WORK for one person to try and keep tabs on everything that is going on. PLEASE ... won't you call and let me know the dates of important events? Amanda at 835-9435.

The next issue will come out March 1, 1988.

The deadline for submission of material for inclusion in the March calendar is February 15th.

Notices

•I am conducting research to examine the court treatment of women who have experienced violence in the home. I would like to meet with professional workers and women who have experience with the courts. Call Judy Walsh Tuesday through Thursday at 477-4868, or leave message at 420-5871.

•Early 1988, the NDP Women's Rights Committee will be organizing study groups on the sexual exploitation of women. We hope to develop policy on prostitution and such related areas as pornography and reproductive technology. Write the Women's Right's Chair, Carolyn Wallace, c/o N.S. NDP, Ste. 422, 1657 Barrington St., Halifax, N.S. B3J 2A1, or phone 423-6046.

•Pandora is thinking of sponsoring a feminist debating series in 1988. Some suggested topics are: 1) Jesus was a feminist, but so what?; 2) socialism vs feminism; 3) sado-masochism; 4) feminism and patriarchy — how much is our responsibility?; 5) feminism and patriarchal concepts of romance — Is there room for romance in feminism?; 6) Can you be heterosexual and feminist?; 7) feminism and political correctness — is there pressure to conform? These are rough working ideas only! Any women who have ideas for debates and/or suggestions for debaters, write Megan Ardyche, 5535 Black Street, Halifax, N.S. B3K 1P7, or call 453-6364.

•A Womyn's Anthology is accepting submissions of poems, short fiction and art work from womyn loving womyn in Nova Scotia. Although silence and invisibility are known violences for all womyn loving womyn, we must remember that we have a voice and a tradition. Manuscripts may be submitted in French or English by December 31, 1987 to Anthology, 2466 Robie St., Halifax, N.S. B3K 4N1.

•Women Against Pornography has made available a series of audio tapes of the Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism Conference held in New York City in April, 1987. These include panels/talks given by Phyllis Chesler, Sonia Johnson, Florence Rush, Shere Hite, Andrea Dworkin, Susan Brownmiller, Mary Daly, Susan Cole, Kathleen Barry, Catherine A. MacKinnon, Charlotte Bunch, and more! To order your package of 9 cassette tapes for \$25 U.S., write to Women Against Pornography, 58 West 47th Street, New York, NY 10036.

•Velfara Minister Jake Epp announces new program

initiatives for AIDS research in 1987-88 under the National Aids Program. The funds are available through the National Health Research and Development Program (NHRDP).

The new initiatives, known as "Special Training and Career Awards for AIDS Researchers" will provide special funds as personnel awards and for project development. Priority in funding decisions will be given to projects of scientific acceptability and to research related to the human immunodeficiency virus infection in the Canadian context.

The NHRDP supports scientific research and related activities which provide information for the Department on issues concerning the health care system, environmental health, the health consequences of human behavior and the health status of selected populations.

Persons interested in obtaining more information on the new NHRDP initiatives for AIDS research may write to the Director of Research Administration Division, Extramural Programs Directorate, Health and Welfare Canada, Ottawa K1A 1B4. Ref. D.P. Brownlow, TEL. (902) 426-2038.

•Canadian Women's Movement Archives is preparing a computerized directory of the Canadian women's movement. The directory will index women's groups by area of interest and geographical location. If you belong to a women's group that received a questionnaire, please fill it out and return it. If you belong to a group that was not contacted, or know of a new group in your area, please contact the. P.O. Box 128, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2G8. Phone (416) 597-8865.

•MediaWatch holds its regular monthly meetings on the last Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. For location and further information call Carol Millett at 454-0570.

•The Women's Dance and Social Society held a very successful debut evening filled with music and fun in October. Future events are being planned. Don't miss out on a great time. Call Carol Millett for further information at 454-0570.

•M.U.M.S. meet every second Sunday. Call Darlene Dacey, 466-6321 or Brenda Thompson, 464-9651.

•The Abortion Information Referral Service is now operating. Women seeking information on abortion services in Nova Scotia can call 422-4123. The telephone line is sponsored by CARAL/Halifax. The number is listed in the White Pages under AIRS and CARAL/Halifax and is also listed in the Yellow Pages under Counselling and Information Services. Contact CARAL/Halifax group, 835-9435.

•Can your co-workers say the word lesbian? While in the presence of gay and lesbian clients, do they appear "homosexually challenged?" Atlantic Gays and Lesbians in Health Care and Social Services is a group which offers support and information to each other about issues affecting us and our gay and lesbian clients. For more information call Ken 425-6967.

•LAIG (Latin American Information Group) meets 7:30 pm the first Tuesday of each month at the Oxfam-Deveric office, 1649 Barrington Street, Halifax.

•Coalition Against Apartheid meets at 7:30 pm on the first Thursday of each month at the Oxfam-Deveric office, 1649 Barrington Street, Halifax.

•Listen to Women's Time on CKDU 97.5 FM, Thursdays at 4:45 during the Evening Affair. Any community women's groups who would like to announce their events, call Connie at 424-6469

•For information on gay and lesbian events and groups, call 454-6551. Run by the Gay Alliance for Equality.

•CARAL (Canadian Abortion Rights Action League) meetings, Amanda, 835-9435.

•The Pictou County Women's Centre in New Glasgow, N.S. has established a Rape Line. This line offers confidentiality, anonymity, information, and peer counselling for female victims of sex abuse, incest, and rape. The line is staffed by volunteers. Phone 752-2233.

•Halifax Professional Women's Network monthly meeting, Sheraton Hotel, 5:30 pm. 1st Monday each month 429-3131.

•Akala Point is a retreat offering a continuous variety of workshops, individual retreat space, as well as rental of the facility to outside groups for their own purposes. Massage and private counselling is available. Open House from 1-5 pm, the first Sunday of each month. Call 823-2160. We have no religious or political affiliations.

•We at Pandora don't know everything that goes on in the Maritimes. Any woman out there who attends an event you think others would like to know about, please write a short piece (500 words or less) to report on it. We would like you to use Pandora to network with other women. Let us hear about what is going on out there.

•Women's Employment Outreach holds monthly workshops on job search techniques and resume writing. They start the first Tuesday of each month. Contact 422-8023.

December

December 4-6
Coming Together, a conference by and for lesbians, will be held in Halifax. Featured speaker is Sheila Gilhooley, author of Still Sane. For info: P.O. Box 1209, Station A, Halifax, N.S. B3K 5H4, or call 453-9475.

December 6
Still Sane, a video and discussion with Sheila Gilhooley, will be presented at Veith House, 3115 Veith Street at 7:30 pm. Admission \$5. All women welcome. Wheelchair accessible.

December 8
Public meeting with Claudette Legault, OXFAM-Canada's Caribbean Basin Project officer, who will discuss the current political situation in El Salvador. Lutheran Church, Windsor Street, Halifax. Contact Merle Lister, 422-8338 or Marian White, 429-1370.

December 9
Aselection of National Film Board nominees for Gemini Awards includ-

ing Ikwe and possibly The Wake. 7 pm at the National Film Board, Barrington Street, Halifax.

December 10
•Wine and Cheese with CLANS, Metro Council and CCLOW. 3:30-5:30 at Halifax City Hall.
•Oxfam/DEVERIC network meeting, to discuss Oxfam's future work. 7:30 pm, Atlantic School of Theology on Franklyn St, Halifax.

December 11
Open house at Oxfam/DEVERIC, 1649 Barrington St, Halifax, from 10:30 am to 6:30 pm. Music and refreshments will be served. Premiers of the slide/video presentation **Common Ground** (about local and international agriculture) at 12:30 and 5:30.

December 15
Women's night at Rumours, Gottingen Street, Halifax. Finally!

January

January 1-7/88
Life Classes, the story of Mary Cameron, will be featured at Wormwood Cinema at 7 and 9 pm.

January 11/88
CCLOW meeting. Topic: Women and Management Training. 12 noon at Project Room, Halifax City Regional Library, Spring Garden Road, Halifax.

January 14 & 15/88
The Eye Level Gallery is sponsoring an evening of dance by the Montreal choreographer Dulcenia Langfelder, 8 p.m., at the Cunard Street Theatre in Halifax.

January 27/88
CRIAW. Dr. Deborah Poff, philosopher, Joan Dawkins, lawyer, Fionela Crombie, physician, will discuss Feminist Ethics. 7:30 pm, Nova Scotia Archives (Robie & University) in Halifax. Contact: Barb Cottrell, 423-9654.

And on...

February 1,3,4,8,10/88
Confidence building workshop (5 part series). Free. YWCA, Halifax. 423-6162 to register.

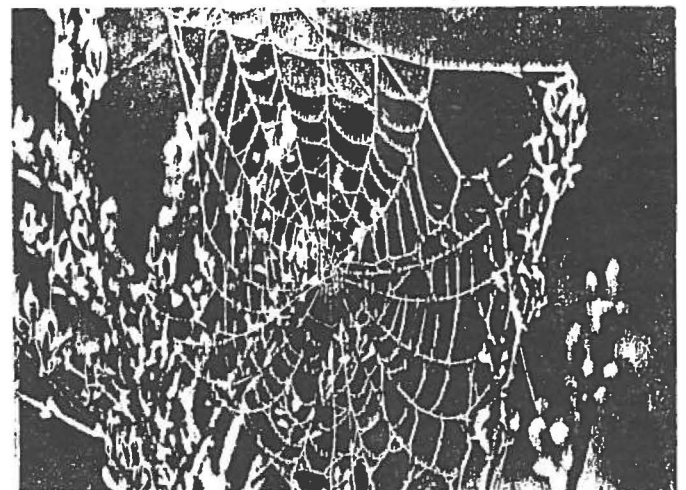
February 15/88
CCLOW meeting. Topic: The Older Learner. 12 noon at Project Room, Halifax City Regional Library, Spring Garden Room, Halifax.

February 18/88
CRIAW meeting: Sandi Kirby will talk about women and sport, Mary O'Brien about women and aging, and an overview of current CRIAW research projects. Place to be arranged. Contact JoAnne Fiske 420-5400 or Sheva Medjuck 443-4450

May 24-27/88
No More Secrets: A Conference on Child Abuse, in Toronto, for professionals. Feminist theories, current practices and experiences which impact on work will be shared. For info: CRI, 303A Melita Ave, Toronto, Ontario M6G 3X1.

July/88
5th International Lesbians and Gays of Colour Conference in Toronto. Send ideas, donations and inquiries to: ILGCC, Box 6597, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1X4.

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