

# Broadside

A FEMINIST REVIEW

Volume 2, No. 5

March 1981

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Moira Armour

## Toronto Celebrates International Women's Day

by Mariana Valverde

International Women's Day is here, and this year's celebration in Toronto is a show of strength as well as a day of fun and celebration. The International Women's Day Committee (IWDC), a socialist-feminist organization which is active all year round, sent out a call to hundreds of groups and individuals in order to form a Coalition to organize this year's events. As a result of that call, about fifty groups have come together and are working in the Coalition. These include women's services, such as the Rape Crisis Centre, and the Birth Control and VD Centre, immigrant women's groups, trade unions, and other groups such as Action Daycare and the National Action Committee. There are also a wide range of political organizations: Feminist Party, In Struggle, International Socialists, NDP, Revolutionary Workers' League and Workers' Communist Party.

IWDC organizers agree that this year's Coalition is much more successful than those of previous years. Many more groups have actually participated in the day-to-day business of organizing for March 7th, and the Coalition's weekly meetings have drawn from 60 to 90 women. Also, immigrant wo-

men are participating for the first time, which is a hopeful sign for the women's movement in Toronto.

Four issues have been singled out by the Coalition as the main problems facing women in Canada in 1981, and leaflet has been distributed throughout the city explain these issues. The first is *daycare*: universal quality childcare is one of our most pressing current needs, and government cutbacks make it necessary for us to organize in order to obtain it.

The second issue is *economic independence*. This includes such demands as equal pay for work of equal value, the right to non-traditional jobs, the right to unionize and to strike, and the right to not be discriminated against on the basis of sex or sexual orientation.

*Violence against women* is the third area of concern. Last year Toronto had two lively and successful Take Back the Night marches, and we need to continue protesting against the violence we experience in the street and in the home. We also need to protest against the harassment of lesbians and the racist attacks on immigrant groups.

The last issue is *the rise of the right-wing*,

including conservative and anti-woman groups, both here and all around the world. Feminists have been active in the campaigns against homophobic and racist groups — e.g. the Klan and the League Against Homosexuals — and also against the 'moral majorities' that want to push us back into the patriarchal family. And on the international scene, the Coalition has expressed its solidarity with women fighting in national liberation movements, for example in El Salvador.

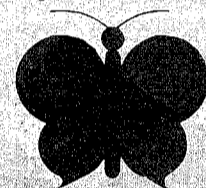
International Women's Day, 1981, is being celebrated on Saturday, March 7, with a short rally at Toronto City Hall Rotunda, at 11 am, a march throughout downtown streets, arriving at Harbord Collegiate (Harbord and Euclid) at about 1 pm, and a women's fair: groups are setting up booths inside the gym, and in various classrooms there will be films, self-defence demonstrations, displays on the struggles of women in other countries, workshops, poetry, music and food. Finally, the Women's Archives and *Lesbian/Lesbienne* will be co-sponsoring an all women's dance at 519 Church Street, from 8 to 1 am.

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# LETTERS

## Broadside:

The article, "What Price Status", in the February 1981 issue of *Broadside*, is the best I've read so far on the controversy swirling about the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Still, I would like to correct a few errors and make one or two comments.

The Executive of the Council is made up of the President, the three Vice-Presidents

and two members elected by the members of the Council. The vote in the January 9th Executive meeting to reschedule (not cancel) the February 13th conference, was five to one. The vote in full Council on January 20th to reschedule to May 29 and 30, was seventeen to ten. Doris Anderson, the former President of the Council, was present at and, indeed, chaired both meetings. She was also present when the Executive met with the Minister, the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, on January 9th. At no time did the Executive meet with the Minister without the President.

I am not entirely convinced that women's conferences are an embarrassment to governments, but supposing they are, why is a conference in May less embarrassing than one in February? I am not expecting that the delegates to the May conference (the same women scheduled to speak at the February conference) will come with words of praise for the government, are you?

There is no possibility whatever that the Council's conference papers (not briefs) will have to be scrapped or updated. Indeed, there was a serious question on whether these papers, now being edited and translated, could have been ready for a February conference. Now, for the conference

in May, the papers will be available to women at least a month in advance — probably earlier.

I don't think it is correct to assume that Doris Anderson and I have any great differences of opinion on the role of the Council. If I am a talented bureaucrat and Anderson is a great communicator, I think Anderson would be the first to agree that both talents are necessary here. It is not easy to persuade governments to bring forth legislation favourable to women and the Council must be able to work inside, outside and with all the skills available to us. On the structure of the Council, I am not sure, and I think I remember saying this to Judith Lawrence, whether it is better to report to Parliament than to an individual Minister. To me, there is not that much difference, but in reporting directly to Parliament one could, I think, lose a strong voice in Cabinet. I am not, though, any kind of expert on government machinery and I will be very interested to hear the ideas on structure coming out of the Minister's meeting with women's organizations.

To continue with structure — we have to remember that the Council is not and should never be, a one-woman show or a six-woman show. It is and must be a thirty-

woman show! It is a Council of women from different backgrounds and regions and in their varying experience, the members represent every issue of concern to women today. Represented on our Council are lawyers, teachers, doctors, accountants, nurses, academics, labour women, a city Counsellor, and women who work at home. We have, as it happens, the pioneer in the matrimonial property movement and the pioneer in women and health. They are women of long experience in women's rights and community work and it is very important that we work as a democratic Council so that the best advantage may be taken of their valuable experience.

Finally, I am not so "confounded" that recent internal incidents at the Council have become a media event, but I am rather taken aback by some of the careless reporting, the lack of questioning and of analysis and the extraordinary leaps to obvious conclusions. I don't know if this is a comment on the mystery of Ottawa activities to the rest of the country, plain laziness, or the horrible frigid climate of Ottawa!

Hellie Wilson,  
Vice-President,  
CACSW, Ottawa.

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## Broadside

### EDITORIAL

Philinda Masters, Editor  
Judith Lawrence, Photography  
Jean Wilson, Books  
Barbara Halpern Martineau, Films

### PRODUCTION

Philinda Masters, Co-ordinator  
Deena Rasky, Layout  
Moira Armour  
Elaine Johnson  
Wendy Mellanby

### DISTRIBUTION

Beverley Allinson, Co-ordinator  
Susan Power  
Carol Rowe

### CIRCULATION

Eve Zaremba, Co-ordinator  
Flora Macquarrie

### ADVERTISING

Ottie Lockey, Co-ordinator  
Karen Black

### FINANCIAL/LEGAL

Jane Hastings, Co-ordinator

### OTHER PARTICIPANTS:

Merle Hudson  
Dana Janssen  
Gina Jones  
Chris Lawrence  
Kye Marshall  
Linda Reichert

### COLLECTIVE MEMBERS:

Beverley Allinson, Susan G. Cole,  
Jane Hastings, Judith Lawrence,  
Philinda Masters, Deena Rasky,  
Judy Stanleigh, Jean Wilson, Eve  
Zaremba.

### Address all correspondence to:

Broadside  
P.O. Box 494  
Station P  
Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2T1  
Tel. (416) 362-4528

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## EDITORIALS

# Rub-a-Dub-Dub

When *Broadside* planned to provide coverage of the Ontario provincial election for this issue, we came up with the problem of what to say that's interesting and relevant. We thought of doing a story on what the average feminist-in-the-streets thinks about the election. The women we approached had nothing to say. These same women were willing to put enormous amounts of time and energy into the women's conference on the constitution in Ottawa. This is relevant; the election isn't.

Even the mainstream press has trouble coming up with meaty issues to discuss. A *Globe and Mail* campaign coverage column (February 17) was devoted entirely to the story of a liberal candidate's airplane being bogged down in the slush in Northern Ontario.

What are the issues? Tory leader Davis calls for support of Trudeau on the constitution issue. Voting for Davis means voting for the federal Liberals, which means voting for the party which post-

poned the Ottawa February 14 women's conference, a party that betrayed the women of Canada.

None of the parties has anything to say about women — they don't even give women's issues lip-service. Why vote for them? The Gay community is asking us not to support any party because of its disenchantment over the Tory government's role in the Toronto bathhouse raids and the silence of the other two parties on gay issues. A lot of people are completely disillusioned with the voting process anyway — after the Sewell defeat and the Reagan victory.

So to get another view of things, we phoned Anne Johnston, a recently re-elected Toronto alderwoman. She has made a surprise decision to run for the Liberals in the downtown Toronto riding of St. Andrew-St. Patrick. Johnston has always refused to acknowledge any party affiliation and maintained that there is enough for her to do at City Hall. So she wasn't surprised when *Broadside* asked her what made her run provincially, and for the Liberals, of all people.

Johnston told *Broadside* that she had become increasingly frustrated at City Hall. When she sat down for the eighth time to discuss a STOL airport on the islands in Toronto's harbour she decided she had to take a different approach. Many of the issues with which she is intensely concerned are provincial issues — land conservation, air pollution, rent review, sexual orientation, and historical conservancy.

Having decided to run, Johnston chose the party whose leader she thought she could best work with. "Stuart Smith is sincere, honest, and has good instincts. The provincial Liberal party has a good small-l liberal policy." She thinks the connection between the federal and provincial Liberals fairly tenuous — a situation to be noted in many provinces and all parties.

*Broadside* has come to the conclusion that the concerned voter's best bet is to seek out the candidate with the best platform and the greatest potential for being accessible once in Queen's Park and vote for that person: to hell with the party.

# No Room in the Pub

The Fly by Night, a Toronto bar catering to women, closed down on Monday, February 9.

The bar was one of the few places in the city where women could socialize in a setting that was comfortable and accommodating. More important, the Fly by Night was also a consciously community-oriented establishment, anxious to link women's services with feminist political events and to introduce both to Toronto's lesbian community. The "Fly", as it became known, was committed as well to the development of women's music and gave a host of women musicians the chance to play for pay to an audience that was always supportive. The sudden disappearance of the bar is a serious setback to the community.

When the building that housed the Fly by Night changed hands its new owner, Phil Stein, and Fly by Night management failed to negotiate a financial deal that the Fly could live with. The building owners maintained the position that unless the women worked for them, they could not stay. The Fly by Night refused, insisting on an arrangement that would allow them to keep control over the bar in the hands of the women's community. But the owners of the

building had the ultimate control. They evicted the Fly by Night, effectively closing the place down.

While gay men can choose between a number of gay establishments — bars or eateries — it was always somewhat unsettling that the women's community had only one place to go that was its own: now it is left with nothing. Already women are responding to the crisis, meeting to determine what should be the next steps. (If you are interested in attending these meetings, call 923-GAYS or 922-8744.)

But there has been trouble for the gay male community as well. On February 6, Toronto police raided four Toronto bathhouses and charged 20 men with keeping a common bawdy house and as many as 286 more with being found-ins. The raid, preceded by an intense six-month investigation by the intelligence squad — not the morality squad as is usually the case, had all the elements of terror and violence to suggest that the gay community is under siege.

Male heterosexual owners of gay bars find their business flourishing and remain untouched by police harassment, but the owners of the bathhouses — gay men — have been rounded up by the police intent

on a serious confrontation. At the very bottom of this economic order are lesbians who do not have the financial resources to open and maintain business in the first place, and who have discovered exactly how hostile the male heterosexual owners of women's bars can be. The owners' power in this case was total. The Fly by Night was a victim of economic repression while the bathhouse raids reflect political police harassment — a decision made at the highest level, not coincidentally during the provincial election campaign. Both in their different ways demonstrate the vulnerability of the lesbian and gay communities.

In the course of these disturbing events, there have been some promising political developments. At a meeting held in support of those charged in the raids, Pat Murphy, a member of the Fly by Night collective, and one of many women who has given support to the protesting gay community, asked Toronto gays to boycott the Quest, a local gay bar frequented by men, which is also owned by Phil Stein, the Fly by Night's ouster. Members of the gathering gave the Fly by Night their wholehearted support, the kind required in order that the gay male and lesbian communities resist the powerful forces working against them.

**Broadside:**

First, congratulations on a paper which is consistently interesting and thought-provoking; it fills a gap so sadly left by the death of *Upstream*. May you have a long and feisty life.

I appreciate the in-depth approach of many of your articles, and look forward to such a treatment of women in the work force, especially women in unions, and women in non-traditional occupations. Hopefully your next issue will carry some analysis of the failed strike by non-medical hospital workers, most of whom are women, and a large proportion of whom are immigrants. Since the failure can largely be attributed to the "illegal" nature of the strike, it would be interesting to know why such strikes are illegal only in Ontario, and one other province (I think PEI, but am not sure). It seems strange that these workers are so essential that they can't strike, but that hospital services are so expendable that they're a major source of government cutbacks. Strange, but not surprising.

As for women in non-traditional occupations, I found Judy Leifschultz' article intriguing. Doing a non-traditional job is fine — all you need is to get someone to employ you. This is difficult at any time if you're a woman, but doubly so in times of high unemployment when women are competing for jobs with men who've been in the trades for a long time. As an (unemployed) apprentice cabinet maker I've come across this with most of the 13 employers I've approached. Apart from those who wouldn't employ a woman anyway, there are those who say with some justice, "Why should I employ you when I can get an experienced worker for the same money?" What we need is assurance of that first year's work, so we have only our sex, and not also our inexperience, to cope with. As a cautionary note to women contemplating a non-traditional job, I'd suggest avoiding the "craftsman" trades — like cabinet making — which employ few workers in small shops and in consequence are not unionized. If I hadn't already invested 10 months, and a few hundred dollars in tools, I myself would switch to a high tech trade, where there will be jobs in the future, and a union to protect me.

Alma Norman,  
Ottawa.

**Broadside:**

It would be a pity if your readers were deterred from investigating the writings of zoologists like Richard Dawkins and Edward O. Wilson by the muddled ill-informed and perverse account of sociobiology in your Dec./Jan. issue ("Sociobiology: Monkeying with Science," Vol. 2, No. 3). I was staggered by the number of misleading or simply untrue statements made about what seems to me a crucial area of scientific inquiry.

Since there isn't space in a letter for a detailed refutation, I would urge your readers to see for themselves (by reading, for instance, Richard Dawkins' *The Selfish Gene*) how carefully much sociobiological theorizing treads with regard to the problem of how far the genetically-influenced behaviour patterns of other species can throw light on human behaviour.

It is important to realize that there need be no hostility between feminism and sociobiology. In fact I would suggest that feminism in general has a great deal to gain from a true understanding of much of sociobiological theory, as opposed to the kind of distorted and wrong-headed account that appeared in your journal.

David Palmer,  
Ancaster, Ont.

*(From Eve Zaremba: Anyone who finds any account 'muddled, ill-informed and perverse' not to mention 'distorted and wrong-headed' has an obligation to provide concrete examples, chapter and verse. We are certainly interested in other opinions and perhaps coverage of topics we did not go into. There can never be 'hostility' between feminism and science, properly understood: but one of our main points was that the claims made for sociobiology are very far from being scientific. Wilson is an erudite man and we would encourage anyone to read him. But his interesting extrapolations are not 'science', they are just his opinions. As for Richard Dawkins, let me quote Donald Symons in *The Evolution of Human Sexuality*: 'the rhetoric of *The Selfish Gene* exactly reverses the real situation: through metaphor genes are endowed with properties only sentient beings possess, such as selfishness, while sentient beings are stripped of these properties.' We would*

*love to engage in a dialogue on this subject. However, reader Palmer's letter does not qualify.*

**Broadside:**

I am writing to congratulate you on your February issue. It was excellent. I have been reading *Broadside* since October and enjoy it. This issue, however, was the best so far. While your other issues were good, they seemed to lack something I couldn't put my finger on. When I read your February issue I was caught up by the energy, feeling and emotion of the articles and realized this was it. I could feel happiness in the WCREC article and the anger in "Down Shrink Alley", and I enjoyed the many well done sarcastic remarks. The illustrations, e.g., from the abortion article and Anne Quigley's cover, were good. The subject content was also wide and interesting, e.g. articles on Hannah Maynard and Ella Manuel.

I also felt that many of the articles called out to women to act — to do *something*. In this respect, I hope the articles succeed. I will not miss a *Broadside* issue.

Shaazka Bayerle  
Mississauga, Ont.

**Broadside:**

Thank you for the thoughtful and well-written review of our book, *New Space for Women* (Vol. 2, no. 3; Dec 1980/Jan 1981). I appreciate the fact that you took the time to find Anne Chapman — a woman familiar with some of the issues. It was a pleasant way to start the holidays!

Gerda Wekerle  
Toronto

**Broadside:**

Good issue. Here's my subscription. Re: Constitution and "fetuses" (Vol. 2, no. 3) I think you are mistaken to say that wording has been changed to keep fetuses from having rights. In fact the wording is ambiguous and could lead to litigation in courts by anti-choice groups.

All you need is one right-to-life judge and fetuses are guaranteed rights. See CARAL brief to Constitution Committee.

Ruth Miller  
Toronto

**Broadside:**

Could you please send me the copy of *Broadside* which has an article about Dr. Helen Caldicott (Vol. 1, no. 4). I read it in *ISIS International Bulletin* no. 15.

I am a member of Bristol Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and on 2nd March there is to be a women-only discussion group. I am trying to collect as much feminist literature on nuclear power/ weapons as I can before that date.

I hope to be able to inspire women to start a women's peace group in Bristol, as there isn't one. I hope this will draw more women into the "fight" for peace, provide an atmosphere where women can freely express their ideas on peace, and also make connections with the women's liberation movement. I am a member of a political campaigning group in Bristol WLM, and strongly believe that women have much to offer the cause of world peace.

If you have any suggestions on other literature, I would be grateful.

Anita Laverton  
Bristol, England

**Broadside:**

I refer you to the article entitled "10-year-old Menace?" in your December 1980/January 1981 issue, written by Laura Rowe of the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre.

I am deeply concerned by the Minister's (Community and Social Services) support of the Children's Aid Society decision to leave the child in the home and not register the foster father on the child abuser's registry as an abdication of his responsibility. The minister has indeed shown his ignorance as to the nature of the crime. Sexual abuse, in any degree, is a crime, and should be treated as such. I question the minister's credibility as well as Pamela Ayland's and Barry Whalen's. It is apparent, from their remarks, that they are indeed insensitive to the plight of the child. Is it not the sole aim of the Children's Aid Society to benefit the welfare of children?

Betty Leech,  
Victoria.

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## Hospital Workers' Strike by Deena Rasky **Critical List**

As the mainstream media pats Polish workers on the back for their brave strike, the same action is condemned in our own backyard. 16,000 hospital workers are denied the right to strike because of the Ontario Hospital Labour Disputes Arbitration Act instituted by the Tory government in 1965. This act also makes all union contracts go through compulsory arbitration. In 1965, most hospitals were unorganized. The act was used by the Tories to block any muscle the CUPE organizing drives would have. Still the workers had a lot to gain from being organized, compulsory arbitration or not. CUPE presented a brief against the act and in 1966 an inquiry into hospital labour relations recommended to the government a limited right to strike. As with many inquiries both past and present, the recommendation was turned down.

The only other province that has similar legislation is Prince Edward Island, where there are only 12 hospitals in total. In Ontario, 65 hospitals are affected. The term 'hospital workers' covers the jobs of clerks, laundry workers, dietary aids, RNA's (Registered Nursing Assistants) — the usual pink ghetto support staff of any large institution. The average wage is \$6.64 an hour for a 37 1/2 hour week, lower than what the union workers in Alberta and Québec on average are making. In 1974, the Henderson Report on Cutbacks recommended ceilings on money going into civil service such as hospitals to pay off the phenomenal Ontario Hydro debt. This report was of course quite acceptable to the Conservative Government.

In 1975, the Anti-Inflation Board was set up and wage controls were imposed. Since then, CUPE has lost over 1,000 members. This is the effect of cutbacks and increased workloads. Full-time workers were replaced by part-timers or not replaced at all. Hospital volunteers were now essentially doing the same work as trained personnel only they weren't getting paid for it. The Ministry decided that instead of 5 or 6 beds per 1,000 people, 4 beds would now do. That's why, when walking through a hospital corridor, you see patients in portable beds waiting for a room. More surgery such as abortion is being done in the daytime on an outpatient basis so that the patient's stay is kept to a dangerous minimum. That's why more deaths through waiting for emergency services have been reported recently. The hospital workers know they're doing the work of at least 1 and a half persons each. The hospital conditions are getting increasingly more unsanitary and unsafe.

On management's side, Ross Hahn, president of the Ontario Hospital Association has been quoted as saying: "I cannot accept that hospitals should be expected to meet the needs of their communities for their services when funding levels are obviously inadequate ... Services will have to be cut. Up to now, savings have come from increased efficiency, but now it comes from cutting services." Which means uncleaned utensils, unchecked equipment such as anesthetic machines, and prison-quality food. Patients have been coming out of hospitals sicker than when they went in. The average family pays \$40 a month into OHIP for

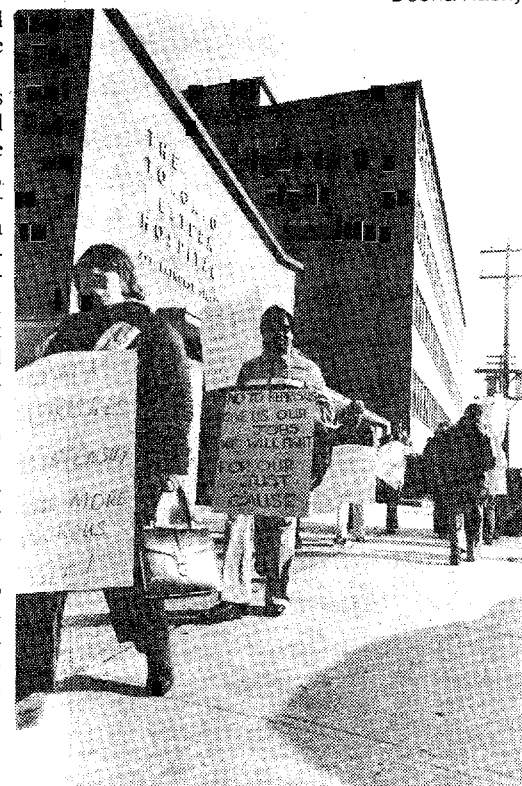
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91% of the hospital workers voted in October 1980 to reject the hospital's final wage offer of 65 cents' an hour increase each year for a two year duration of the contract and no change in having to wait 12 years before getting 4 weeks vacation.

The original strategy was for the workers to wait and not act until all locals were well briefed and the majority of workers were ready to strike. But when Grace Hartman, president of CUPE, was on a speaking tour across Canada, the press, hungry for a statement, got her to say that she was prepared to go to jail to get a better deal for hospital workers. This announcement took the workers off guard, as it was agreed not to talk to the media about their plans until they were ready to act. They weren't prepared to strike until later that month and they surely didn't want anyone to land up behind bars as a consequence.

The strike was unsuccessful. The strikers became paranoid about "breaking the law", the press continued to blame the condition of the hospitals on the workers, and management terrorized the employees who didn't participate in the strike. Taking further steps, the employers either fired or suspended the strikers and the local executive members. Morale decreased even further and it seems the people got royally screwed. Little wonder the hospital workers are angry and now attacking Ontario premier Bill Davis wherever he campaigns for reelection. After all, he and his party instituted the laws that Davis says the strikes are breaking.

Deena Rasky



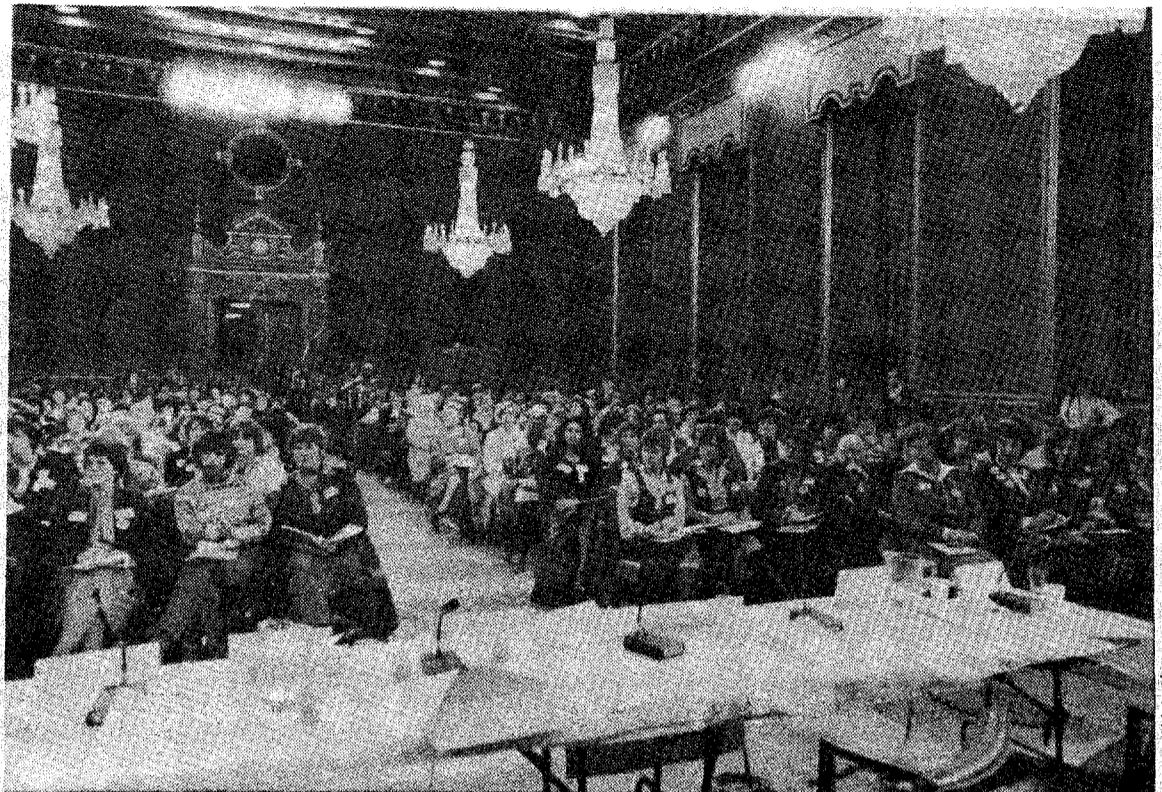
# Valentine's Day Revenge



Judith Lawrence



Pauline Jewett



Jane Hastings

by Jane Hastings and Judith Lawrence

When the Advisory Council on the Status of Women executive decided in January to postpone the women's constitutional conference scheduled for February 13-14, Doris Anderson asked how this postponement would be explained to the women of Canada. Someone suggested cynically that the women of Canada had been lied to before and could be lied to again. But telling a lie is one thing; getting it believed is another. Canadian women were not to be bamboozled nor deprived of a chance to make themselves heard en masse on the subject of their displeasure over the constitutional proposals.

1300 women from every region of Canada converged on Ottawa on February 14 to make one final attempt to be heard by the government as it moved toward the end of its discussions on patriation. The ad hoc women's conference, superbly organized by the "Cow Café Committee" in Toronto and its Ottawa counterpart (see accompanying article by Kay Macpherson) embarked at 9 am on a day of panel presentations, group discussions, and plenaries to produce recommendations to be delivered to Parliament the following week. By six pm it was apparent that too much work remained to be done to stop at the appointed time, so the assembly voted to cancel the evening's social events and return after a dinner break for more work. So intent on work were these women that at 9 pm, someone getting a drink of icewater for the translators reported only one woman to be found in the bar set up in a nearby room.

The intense commitment and dedication to hard work apparent among these women indicated the extent to which they realized the importance of the issues before them. Canadian women have had an opportunity unique in Western countries in the 20th century to participate in defining the terms under which they are to participate in their political and legal system. Although the Constitution consists of the BNA Act and various other statutes enacted over the years, it does not presently contain a bill of rights.

It has become a crucial women's issue to obtain a bill of rights acknowledging the equality of women in Canadian society. The Ad Hoc Conference debated long and hard on the issue of whether or not the Constitution should be "matriated" with just an amending formula and no bill of rights (the PC position) or with the bill of rights currently under discussion. (Liberal/NDP position) Early Saturday afternoon the Conference voted to table the matriation motion under discussion and go on to deal with specific clauses because consensus could not be reached and the discussion was taking a turn for the partisan.

Conference participants were keenly aware of the many vested interests in seeing the Ad Hoc Conference co-opted by the Tories and showed determination to keep

the proceedings non-partisan and to stick strictly to women's issues. The discussion of the clauses finished after the dinner break and resulted in a set of proposed amendments to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, all passed with the consensus of the group. (see box).

Apparently most women had discussed matriation over dinner, so that the issue was raised from the table after the amendments were passed and the following compromise on entrenchment was given unanimous endorsement: "Be it resolved that this Conference endorse in principle the concept of an entrenched Charter of Rights as per the recommendation passed February 14, 1981, and that unless the charter reflects the amendments made here today that it not be included in the submission to the British Government in order to provide time to incorporate these amendments." Put simply, we're for entrenchment only if the Charter contains our amendments — otherwise not.

Work ended around 10:30 pm with a strong feeling that "we've all won." In a press conference the following day, male reporters harassed organizer Linda Ryan Nye about whether the conference represented a victory for the Tories. She adamantly refused to be bullied into saying anything other than that the conference expressed the demands of a considerable spectrum of Canadian women concerning their constitution. Certainly, "the parties" were in evidence: both MPs Flora MacDonald and Pauline Jewett made brief welcoming speeches at the opening of the conference, and it was well-publicized that the NDP furnished coffee and that the meeting rooms in the West Block of Parliament (where the original conference was to have taken place) were obtained through the efforts of Flora MacDonald.

But significantly, the major effort to sidetrack discussion of the Charter clauses into a partisan argument on matriation was an ill-timed outburst by Maureen McTeer which was vociferously rejected by the entire three rooms full of participants. The women were determined to keep to the topic at hand and carry forward the work of debating and voting on the resolutions. MacDonald and Jewett were present off and on throughout the day and all through the evening session, both maintaining a quiet presence and blending with the group, as did MP Pat Carney.

The major thrust of the proceedings was the strong, universal concern for the women's issues at stake. The participants — not "delegates" necessarily, since many women were not representative of any group — reflected a huge variety of Canadian women. All provinces and one of the territories were represented, although Québec had only three women present; many Francophones came from the Atlantic Provinces; the age range extended from very young (including a couple of infants) to a goodly number of women with snowy hair and canes; there were women in jeans and plaid shirts, in slacks and sweaters, in elegantly tailored suits and dresses. The coat-

racks were revealing: a scattering of fur coats but no mink, a lot of quilted coats and jackets, and a lot of duffle coats. Although many women paid their own way, many others requested and received travel funds, and special trains and buses brought them at economy rates. The Ottawa committee arranged billeting and childcare and provided for inexpensive lunches. Clearly a wide range of economic positions existed among the participants. Native women constituted a strong presence, although their presentation requesting a supportive resolution was set aside because it asked for support of their plea for independent nationhood rather than for anything to do with issues of specific concern to native women themselves.

Although the Québec representation was minimal, the Francophone presence was strong. The Conference received gratifying support from the translators; in return for the postponement of the original fall conference as a move to support the translators' strike, they donated their services free even though the ad hoc planning committees had budgeted for their services. And they returned after dinner to work the extra, unscheduled session, also without charge. Many Francophone women spoke at the microphones, and a panel presentation by a Francophone lawyer received careful attention from the roomful of Anglophone women in a closed-circuit TV room where there was no translation. Hall conversations frequently occurred in assorted mixtures of French and English. So the language atmosphere was positive; the lack of Québec presence was clearly political rather than linguistic.

Marion Dewar, Mayor of Ottawa, made the City Hall and all its excellent facilities available for the Sunday session on the Status of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Another full day of hard debate produced nine resolutions pertaining to the assessment and reorganization of the CACSW with a view to making it non-partisan and truly representative of Canadian women and their concerns (see box). Shirley Carr of the Canadian Labour Congress, an organization which represents a million unionized working women, participated extensively in this debate and told of the efforts of women from the labour movement to get just one representative on this Council. Again and again, she reported, the government asked for names to be submitted as potential Council members. Labour organizations had recommended highly qualified women with excellent credentials but these candidates had been passed over for political appointees with no background or interest in women's issues. It also pointed out that not one Native or Inuit woman had ever sat on the Council — unlike in some provincial status of women advisory councils, where, as in Saskatchewan for instance, Native women have been included from the outset.

Doris Anderson's speech at the Sunday session received a standing ovation. She

made many positive comments about the Advisory Council staff, whom she praised and complimented on the excellence of their research work. She noted that these women are still at work, producing further papers on topics such as the economic and educational problems of Canadian women. As in the Saturday sessions, the debate surrounding the CACSW was constructive and non-partisan. Women from the various provinces told how their provincial status of women councils were organized, how they worked, and how they reported, and with what results. The final nine resolutions set forth a program for reform of the CACSW and the restoration of its credibility.

So where did it all go after Sunday? Oddly enough, a number of women who were active in the Ad Hoc Constitutional Conference were to see Axworthy the next day at his Monday conference with representatives of women's organizations. One was Deborah Acheson, a lawyer from Victoria, B.C., invited by Axworthy as a representative of her profession. In an interview on CBC-AM radio's morning program from Vancouver, she reported that Axworthy stated his refusal to resign and took the rest of the recommendations under advisement. According to Kay Macpherson, representing NAC at this meeting, a number of the invited representatives supported the government and backed the three vice-presidents for whose resignation the Ad Hoc Conference had called. In "The House" on TV Monday night, MPs Pauline Jewett and Flora MacDonald took the Conference's recommendations to Parliament, calling for the resignation of Axworthy and reform of the CACSW. Trudeau carefully avoided a direct response on the subject and talked generally about the constitution. As *Broadside* goes to press, the prospects of the government's taking seriously the work of the Constitutional Conference are gloomy. But the great victory for all Canadian women took place on Valentine's Day when 1300 women showed their determination to be reckoned with one way or another. The Conference was one way...



Doris Anderson

Jane Hastings

# Conference

## Women Make it Happen

by Kay Macpherson

"Hi! Would you be able to come to a meeting at lunch time tomorrow?" I was asked over the phone. "We're so mad about that women's Constitutional Conference being called off that we want to do something about it. It's at the Cow Café on John Street. Upstairs at 12:30. See you."

A noisy meeting was in progress when I arrived. "It's shocking," said Laura Sabia. "We get pushed around all the time." "Well!" said Linda, "Some of us think we should have a conference anyway. Never mind whether the government supports us. We'll organize it ourselves." "Terrific," chorused the rest of us. "D'you think Flora and Pauline would help us get the same room in the House that the Advisory Council had booked?" "Great idea. Let's ask them. Let's ask Doris what she thinks."

So telephoners were dispatched while the rest continued eating and plotting in the downtown Toronto restaurant, gloating over what the opposition had been saying in Parliament about Lloyd Axworthy and the easily swayed Executive of the Advisory Council. "Flora MacDonald thinks it's a terrific idea and she's going to talk to Pauline Jewett to see what they can do. Now let's try Doris Anderson." "Why not?" said Doris's gravelly voice over the phone. "Sounds like a great idea to me."

The media took it up in a big way. Interviews and reports were scattered through the press and on television. Linda Ryan-Nye was interviewed, Laura Sabia made pronouncements. One stalwart woman called from Ottawa: "Pat Hacker says she'll do everything she can on the spot." But then she proceeded to call together a committee for organizing accommodation, billets, translation, media, and support from everyone ranging from Mayor Marion Dewar (who provided the Ottawa City Hall for one day's meeting), to Maureen McTeer, who offered Stornaway, the Opposition residence, for a reception.

Meantime, back in Toronto, Dawn MacDonald, editor of *City Woman*, launched the Butterfly campaign. "Wear a Butterfly on Valentine's Day," "Butterflies spreading their wings, emerging, flying up." The YWCA took on the job of distributing and selling buttons. Media people across the country were alerted, interviews given, and registration started to pour in. A monster mailing was accomplished by an efficient and raucous team of stickers and lickers who kept getting more brilliant ideas as the evening wore on. In the middle of it all four of us listened to the CBC's "The Fifth Estate" over the telephone, chortling over the discomfiture of Axworthy when confronted with his talk of embarrassing the government.

Michelle Lansberg wrote columns. So did Laura Sabia. Margaret Mironowitz came to the next week's Cow Café meeting and reported progress. Doris Anderson came to town and was consulted about agenda and women for resources and speakers. NAC was having a party and so 150 women heard all about the plans and started spreading the word.

We decided that the meeting would be all day on the Saturday and spill over into Sunday, since we could use the Ottawa City Hall. At that time we would talk about the Advisory Council and make suggestions for improving it, if in fact its existence is valid. By this time Axworthy had announced that he was inviting "major women's national organizations" to meet with him to discuss how to improve the Advisory Council the day after the weekend of the conference he had called off! This ended up being helpful to us since it provided travel money for some of the women to come to our conference before going on to advise the Minister.

Saturday, it was agreed, was to be devoted to serious consideration of all aspects of the Constitution which might affect women. It was not to be "government bashing" but constructive consideration of the needs of women, what the government had proposed, what those proposals lacked and what we would recommend.

Moira Armour had an offer to make a film and started negotiations with the NFB, and women photographers offered their services. One woman offered to match individual contributions up to \$1000, and in no time had to reach for her cheque book. The Chairwomen of New Brunswick, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland Advisory Councils immediately offered to come and to help. Others followed as the news got around. Women called from Vancouver, Labrador, Northern Ontario, Halifax and Winnipeg to say they were coming. The profits of Ma Bell and the other phone companies must have soared from the urgent business transacted by long distance: there was little time for mail after the first notice had been sent.

Organizers tried to get support from all three political parties. The two opposition parties offered us coffee, reception and accommodation in the House. Only individual Liberals helped, not the official Party, which was a pity. We didn't want to be partisan. The object was to discuss Canada's Constitution — not what the different party points of view were, but what women wanted.

At the third Cow Café meeting, two men were sitting at a nearby table. It was impossible for them not to hear what was going on. They finally came over to us as they finished eating. "I heard what you were saying, especially about media coverage," one of them said. "I happen to be a TV reporter from CTV and we've got our equipment right here. Could we do an interview?" Could they! Seldom do such opportunities fall into one's lap.

Three days before the Conference press coverage was like an answer to our prayers: Canada AM on Friday, Betty Kennedy on CFRB, Morningside with Elizabeth Gray, CFTO women covering the conference from Toronto. As Doris Anderson said, "If we'd held the Conference as the Council had planned, no one would have taken any notice. Now they've got the whole press covering it." Full glare of publicity? Who's going to be embarrassed this time?

And so ends the first installment of the saga of the Do-it-Yourself Instant Constitutional Conference of Women.



Conference organizers and participants (top to bottom) Linda Ryan Nye, Shelagh Wilkinson, Pat Hacker and Hilda Thomas.

### RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE CANADIAN ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

- Recommended:
1. that there is a valid role for a publicly funded federal advisory council on the status of women,
  2. that a review to determine this role of the CACSW be conducted to report to Parliament by July 1, 1981,
  3. that the members of this review group be themselves nominated by women's groups outside government,
  4. that the review group be empowered to establish its own terms of reference and that in so doing, it should consider questions such as:
    - review methodology (i.e. acceptance of briefs, presentations, and/or research)
    - the role and responsibility of the Minister responsible for the status of women
    - the role and responsibility of the CACSW including, for example, legal status, mandate, independence, style, focus, access to information, structure, staffing, remuneration, accountability, budget, operating methods, relations with women's groups, appointment process, etc.,
  5. that the CACSW as restructured be embodied in a Statute, and not by an Order in Council,
  6. that the CACSW report to Parliament directly, and not to a Minister,
  7. that all appointees to CACSW be women of expertise and authority with a record of commitment to women's concerns and include representatives of all economic and ethnic groups, unions, professions, native and immigrant women,
  8. that in order to restore the credibility of CACSW, the three incumbent vice-presidents be required to resign,
  9. that Lloyd Axworthy be required to resign his portfolio as Minister responsible for the Status of Women

### REQUIRED AMENDMENTS TO CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

- Clause 1:* must be a statement of purpose providing that the rights and freedoms under the charter are guaranteed equally to men and women with no limitations. Any limitation to Clause 1 should follow the format and content of Article 4 of the U.N. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- Person:* The word "person" should be used throughout the Charter in lieu of any other word denoting human being.
- Clause 7:* amended to include the right to reproductive freedom and to equality of economic opportunity
- Clause 15 (1):* the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination amended to include marital status, sexual orientation, political belief. This clause must contain a two-tiered test recognizing that there shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, mental or physical disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, and political belief, and that there be a compelling reason for any distinction on the basis of sex, race, religion, colour, or national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation or political belief.
- Clause 15 (2):* affirmative action programs under this clause should apply only to disadvantaged groups as listed under 15(1) and not to individuals (explanatory note: it is our opinion that individuals who are members of disadvantaged groups benefit under the programs listed above)
- Clause 26:* on multiculturalism be dealt with in the preamble.
- Clause 29(2):* this clause, requiring a three-year moratorium for the implementation of clause 15, must be deleted from the Charter.



Ad Hoc Conference Committee meeting at the Cow Café in Toronto.

by the Toronto Abortion Committee

A woman from a small Northern Ontario community was referred by her family doctor to a gynecologist in Toronto for a therapeutic abortion. She had two children, was a single mother and was on mother's allowance. Her pregnancy was assessed when she was between eight and nine weeks. An appointment was arranged for her with a Toronto gynecologist who would see her, present her case to the therapeutic abortion committee and do the procedure, all in one week.

Her family doctor had told her that she would have to bring the sum of \$45 in cash to pay the anaesthetist's fee. She made arrangements for her children, came down to Toronto, saw the gynecologist to whom she was referred, and he agreed to do the procedure. He then told her that he would have to have \$150 delivered to his office before admission to hospital. This was the first she had heard of this, and explained her situation, offering to send him the fee once she returned home.

At that point the doctor's attitude changed and he told her to leave his office and

that he would not do the procedure unless he had the full amount paid to him prior to the procedure. She was at this point 12 weeks pregnant — the limit at which most doctors will perform a first trimester procedure. She left his office and went to four downtown hospitals seeking a therapeutic abortion. None of them were able to help her because of the stage of her pregnancy, their quota and committee systems.

The woman was finally put in touch with one of the referral clinics. The clinic got in touch with the doctor involved, with the Ontario Medical Association and the Minister of Health's office. The latter's assistant took up the case, looked into the facts as stated, and by putting pressure on the gynecologist and the OMA, was able to arrange an appointment at the public clinic of the hospital involved and the procedure was done.

This woman was resourceful and she was lucky. That's not the case for many, many women who seek therapeutic abortions in Toronto.

# Our Abortions,

## ABORTION SITUATION IN TORONTO

Although the situation in Toronto is probably better than anywhere else in Canada, there are still many difficulties and inequalities facing women seeking abortions.

Lack of access to abortions is reflected in numbers — the number of doctors opted out of the Ontario Hospital Insurance Plan (OHIP) who also ask for payment in advance; the number of gynecologists who don't do abortions; the number of family doctors who refuse to refer patients or don't know where to refer them; the number of doctors who don't do late D and C's at 13-14 weeks; and the number of gynecologists who don't do saline abortions especially for OHIP.

Many doctors take referrals only from private physicians rather than a clinic. Some charge patients referred from a clinic more. All of the clinics refer to the same small number of gynecologists.

Lack of access to abortions is also a function of ignorance and the general public's lack of knowledge and information regarding the availability, safety and legality of abortion.

Another situation women face is the "quota system." Whether hospitals admit it or not, there are quotas on abortions. Only a limited number of abortions can be done per doctor or per clinic or per hospital per week. Some hospitals call abortions low priority elective surgery for which operating room time can't be booked. This is a fancy way of saying there is a quota on abortions in that hospital. No other medical procedure has quotas.

Because of quotas and limited access, many women have to wait until later in the pregnancy for a therapeutic abortion, which increases the risks. A woman assessed at 11-12 weeks often has to wait another four weeks for a saline procedure.

Other problems experienced by women seeking abortions in Toronto include: doctors who refuse abortions unless the woman agrees to be sterilized; doctors who insert IUD's without the patient's knowledge; doctors who sexually assault, harass, demoralize or punish patients, and hospital staff who have negative attitudes towards abortion patients. There are some clinics which have stopped performing therapeutic abortions because the particular chief resident in gynecology appointed for that term is anti-abortion. Finally, some hospitals will not allow a doctor to perform more than one abortion on the same patient.

To further complicate matters, hospitals have different sets of procedures. In the public clinic at Women's College Hospital, only 2 abortions are allowed each week, and individual physicians are limited to three. At Mount Sinai's clinic, the quota is 12. A patient referred there has to keep four different appointments. Wellesley Hospital keeps patients for three days. Some gynecologists will only do first trimester abortions until the tenth week of pregnancy even though they are done safely elsewhere until fourteen weeks. They may accept referrals for first trimester abortions but will not do second trimester abortions.

Data gathered by one of the major referral clinics in the city over a three-month period in 1980 points up the situation. The number of patients referred for therapeutic abortions during this time was 199. Twenty-two doctors and four hospital clinics were referred to; 95% of the abortions were first trimester procedures. Of the 22 doctors, 11

saw only 1% of the patients while 9 of them saw 67%. All of these 9 had opted out of OHIP. Seven of the 22 doctors were covered by OHIP but were seldom used, either because it was difficult to get appointments or because there were negative reports regarding their treatment of patients. These seven doctors are the same ones used by the other referral clinics in the city as well. Trying to refer patients to hospital clinics was difficult because of the quota systems — only ten were eventually referred to hospital clinics. In addition, 5 patients were referred outside the province.

In total, 77% of the patients were referred to doctors who opted out of OHIP. All of the 15 opted-out doctors asked for up-front payment. Several of them have other difficulties associated with them such as inadequate medical treatment; unethical procedures; abuse of patients; and improper bookings.

Similar figures could be used to indicate the situation at other referral clinics in the city.

## THE FINANCES OF ABORTION

Only some gynecologists perform therapeutic abortions and of these, the majority have opted out of OHIP. Many women referred for therapeutic abortions do not have the economic resources to pay the cost charged above OHIP.

In Toronto, there are several hospital gynecology clinics where therapeutic abortions are available on OHIP. Limited quotas and high demand make appointments at these clinics difficult to obtain. Most women have to be referred to private gynecologists.

The fees charged by gynecologists opted out of OHIP vary but they can be more than double the OHIP reimbursement rate. The OHIP reimbursement rate is \$76.50 — \$48.70 for the procedure and \$27.80 for the consultation. Some gynecologists charge over \$150 for a first trimester abortion. For a second trimester abortion the OHIP reimbursement rate is the same but the opted-out fee could be up to \$300. The most openly discriminatory practice is that of up-front payment — requesting the fee be paid in full before the procedure is done. It is rarely requested for any other medical procedure. The attitude behind this practice is that an abortion patient can't be trusted to pay the doctor's fee after the procedure has been done. The doctor insists on full payment before the woman is even admitted to hospital. Many women do not have access to the \$150.

Many anaesthetists have also opted out of OHIP. In hospitals where all of the anaesthetists have opted out, patients may not know they have the right to ask that the anaesthetist's fee be covered by OHIP. She might feel too intimidated or vulnerable to ask for such an arrangement.

Many doctors whose fees are covered by OHIP have found a way of making extra money from abortion patients. They ask her to pay a \$20-\$40 "clerical fee" for writing the letter to the therapeutic abortion committee. It is usually the doctor's female secretary who writes the letter but you can be sure she does not receive the "clerical fee" for doing so. This practice is apparently quite legal since an "opted-in" doctor can charge patients extra for non-medical services.

The financial exploitation of women seeking abortions is not limited to the med-

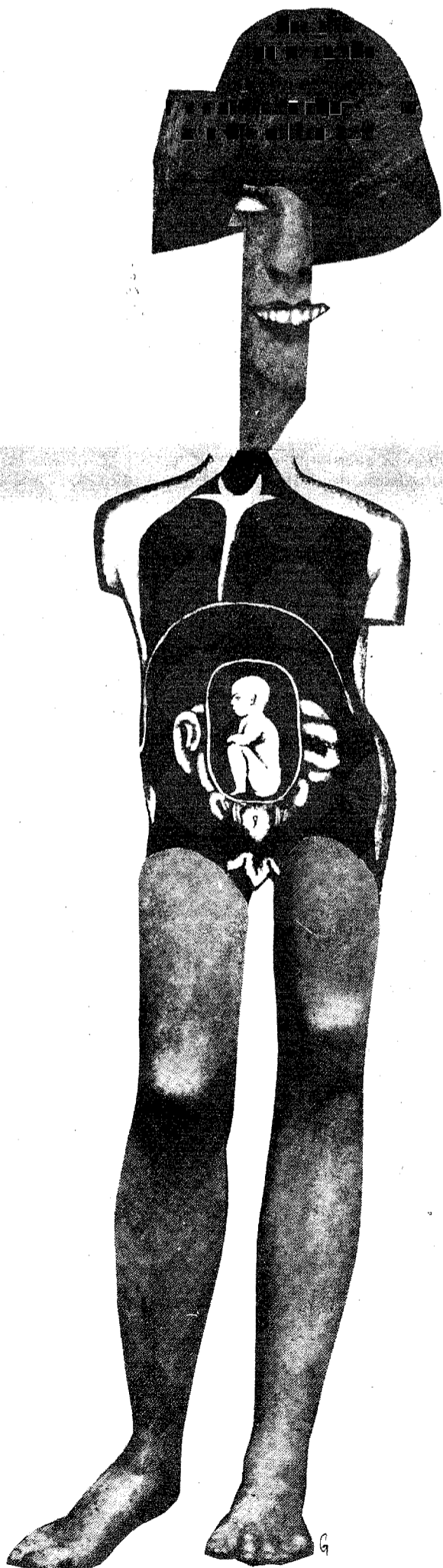


Illustration: Gail Geltner

# Our Selves

ical profession. There are in Toronto at least two pregnancy counselling agencies — one called CARES and the other Pregnancy Alternatives, which charge \$100 and \$75 respectively, to counsel and refer women seeking abortions. These same services are available free or are covered by OHIP at several clinics in the city. Many women don't know the process for obtaining an abortion or even the fact that it is legal. Such agencies exploit this lack of information.

Women who don't have OHIP are in a particularly difficult situation. Without OHIP, a first trimester therapeutic abortion would cost a total of \$250-\$300. This includes the doctor's fee (up to \$150); approximately \$80 for a day bed in the hospital; \$50 for the anaesthetist and a \$15 lab fee. A second trimester therapeutic abortion would cost close to, or over, \$1000. This includes 3-5 days in hospital where a bed is about \$200 per day; a doctor's fee of \$200-\$300 (more if a D and C is necessary); a \$15 lab fee and \$50 for an anaesthetist if a D and C is necessary.

Finally, there is the problem of reimbursement if a woman uses an OHIP number which is not in her own name. Some women seeking abortions are living with their parents and are covered by their parents, OHIP. If they obtain a procedure by an "opted-in" doctor, they can use their parents' OHIP number with complete confidentiality assured since the doctor bills OHIP directly. However, if they go to an "opted-out" doctor and do not want their parents to find out about the abortion there is a difficulty. The reimbursement cheque is sent to the person whose OHIP number is used. Because many women are concerned about confidentiality, they may choose not to use their parents OHIP and therefore must pay the full cost themselves.

Having money is no guarantee a woman will get a therapeutic abortion, but it certainly helps.

## THE NEW RIGHT and 'ANTI-CHOICE'

There are forces, other than bureaucratic, active forces which limit women's access to safe, legal abortions. It is no coincidence that anti-choice groups and other components of the New Right have consistently targeted abortion with well-organized, well-funded campaigns. The possibility that women might gain control of our own bodies is a massive threat to the status quo.

'Right-to-Life' groups (or 'anti-choice' as we prefer to call them) are well known for their blatant so-called pro-life attacks on women's right to choose whether to bear a child. They are politically aligned with other conservative forces that fight against nuclear disarmament, gun control, civil rights, homosexuality and equal rights, and they put a lot of time and money into the fight. If they win, women are the ultimate losers.

It is ironic to hear the label 'pro-life' attached to the anti-choice groups. While fighting for the instruments of death, they oppose life-giving freedoms. They don't believe in amniocentesis (a procedure whereby the physical and mental development of a fetus is determined during pregnancy), birth control, sex education in schools, women's services or publicly-funded childcare.

Anti-choice groups try to create the impression they have many supporters. But in March 1979, a poll of adult Canadians indicated that only 5% wanted stricter abortion laws and 84% either favoured the law as is or supported its liberalization.

In a social climate of change and stress, where demands are being made on individuals to make new and difficult personal choices, the anti-choice forces represent clear cultural identities, rigid sex roles, the nuclear family and heterosexuality. Free access to abortion, the anti-choice forces conjecture, would do away with motherhood, love and nurturing and all that these are dependent on. Women would become murderers not nurturers.

They see themselves as protectors of the sanctity of life. Abortion is murder because a fertilized egg is a person with a soul. By a leap of logic, abortion is then linked with promiscuity, the deterioration of the sanctity of life, euthanasia, sin and the Holocaust.

Anti-choice groups have developed tactics which they are using to promote their philosophy on abortion in the community at large. They become a dominant voting force in a hospital and then elect an anti-abortion board of governors. Subsequently the therapeutic abortion committee in that hospital is disbanded and there are no more abortions performed. Local materials containing "life-like" aborted fetuses are published in flyers and booklets for their members and the public at large. There is evidently money enough to publish a newsletter specifically geared to teenagers. Speakers often present high school audiences with their anti-choice slide shows, accompanied by discussions on how abortion threatens the species of man and causes male impotence, how one rarely if ever gets pregnant from rape and one should not go through an abortion trauma after a rape trauma, but should have the child instead.

On the political front they harass vulnerable candidates, introduce in Parliament through supporters dozens of private members' bills that are anti-abortion and lobby for the legal guardianship of the fetus. US President Ronald Reagan is pledged to implement a "human life" amendment to their constitution, which would ban all abortions in the US and confer the legal status of personhood on the fertilized egg. In Canada, anti-choice forces are lobbying to have the rights of fetuses recognized in our constitution. And everywhere it is the experience of women working in the women's health field that it is becoming increasingly difficult for women to obtain abortions. There is the fear that one day a woman may not be able to obtain an abortion in Toronto at all.

### Second of a two-part series.

*The Toronto Abortion Committee is a sub-committee of the Women's Service Network in Toronto. The committee was formed out of our realization that women's services and the public in general are not aware of the crisis situation surrounding the abortion issue in Toronto. Our objective is to research and provide educational information on the law and existing conditions locally. We hope that by providing the information in these articles we will motivate individual women to speak out, to lobby, and to become more active and less complacent on the abortion issue. The committee members are Marilyn Reinwald, Selma Savage, Shelley Glazer, Deborah Bartlett and Judy Stanleigh.*

## GETTING AN ABORTION

### What is an abortion?

An abortion is the termination of a pregnancy through the removal of the contents of the uterus (womb). The contents are removed by several methods depending on the size of the woman's uterus.

### What procedures are done?

For someone who is under 12-13 weeks pregnant (first trimester), the procedure carried out is either through gentle suction (evacuation and curettage) or gentle scraping (dilation and curettage) of the lining of the the uterus. This is an extremely safe procedure with a very low complication rate. Late D & Cs are not generally performed in Canada and therefore a woman has to wait till she is 16 weeks pregnant to obtain a *saline induction procedure*. At this stage an abortion-inducing solution (saline, or salt) is injected into the amniotic sac or "bag of waters" which surrounds the fetus. Several hours later (24-72 hours) contractions similar to labour pains cause the cervix to dilate and the fetus and placenta to be expelled. The saline procedure has a higher risk of complications than a D & C but it is still a relatively safe procedure to undergo.

### What do you do if you think you are pregnant?

Since time is of the essence in seeking an abortion, the decision has to be made quickly. Initially you may want to confide in a close friend but after that there are some practical steps that are necessary to take.

Get a *pregnancy test* done as soon as you are two weeks late with your period. For younger women with irregular periods a pregnancy test may not be accurate so it is important to get an internal examination by a doctor. It may come as a shock to learn that medical people calculate the weeks of pregnancy from the first day of your last menstrual period and not from the day you think you conceived. This can add two weeks to your calculations. Since a pregnancy test is a urine test, collect a half cup of urine first thing in the morning in a clean, soap-free jar and take it to a drugstore, birth control clinic, hospital clinic, community health centre, or a doctor's office. The most common pregnancy test is a two-minute slide test which starts to be effective 45-60 days from the first day of your last menstrual period. A "positive" test means that you are almost certainly pregnant. A "negative" test may mean that you are not pregnant, but false negatives are fairly common. If you have a negative test and your period still doesn't come have another test a week later. After two or three negative tests it may be better to get a pelvic exam to determine for certain whether or not there are any changes in the cervix or uterus.

### What are the symptoms of pregnancy?

A missed period may be the first indication of pregnancy but for women with irregular periods a missed period may not be an obvious sign of pregnancy. Other signs may be nausea and vomiting, breast tenderness, frequent urination, or tiredness. None of these signs always means pregnancy and rather than wondering or agonizing, which can also delay a period, it is better to get a pregnancy test.

### How do you get a referral for an abortion?

In large urban centres start with local birth control clinics, planned parenthood associations, community health centres, women's centres at universities and community colleges, rape crisis centres, YWCAs, women's bookstores, and as a last resort hospital gynecology clinics, or lists of gynecologists in the yellow pages. Try speaking with other women in your neighbourhood, school, office or factory.

Check out health or women's sections in local libraries, or women's directories. Also at libraries check books such as *Our Bodies Ourselves* for details on abortions.

Since it takes time to confirm that you are pregnant and get referred to a gynecologist who then refers your case to the hospital therapeutic abortion committee, you must act quickly and decisively.

Many birth control clinics which do abortion referral are government funded and therefore do not charge a referral fee. Some fee-charging referral services advertise in newspapers.

For women living in small cities or towns the process of getting a referral is more limited. Abortions are usually not available in small towns, and even finding a sympathetic pharmacist to do a pregnancy test may pose an insurmountable problem. In this situation it may be possible to try to find the family planning nurse in the closest Regional Health Unit.

### Are abortions done in hospitals?

Abortions in Canada are done in hospitals because of the law, not necessarily because they are safer or more convenient for women. In several briefs submitted to local provincial governments, it was demonstrated that enormous savings and more comprehensive counselling and after-care could be achieved if abortions were done in free-standing abortion clinics.

The policies vary from hospital to hospital as to length of stay, eg. 4-6 hours for an out-patient procedure or 1-3 days for an in-patient stay.

For the most part, abortions are still being done using a general anaesthetic. Hospitals vary as to whether they offer women sedation or anaesthetic. You have the right to request either sedation or anaesthetic, so be prepared to ask if it isn't offered.

### Who pays for the abortion?

Some provincial health insurance schemes reimburse a portion of the fee charged by doctors for abortion. Many doctors, however, require a woman to pay in cash prior to having the abortion. In the case of people who are covered under someone else's insurance plan, they may be able to use the insurance number and request a "no-verification" code from the practitioner, but arranging reimbursement may pose a problem.

### How old do you have to be to sign your own consent form?

Age of consent varies across the country. For example, in Ontario you have to be 16 to sign your own surgical consent for treatment in a hospital.

### What should I be aware of after the abortion?

1. Bleeding similar to menstruation will continue for about seven days. If bleeding is heavier or followed by severe cramps, contact the doctor or hospital.
2. Do not insert tampons until your next period, to prevent infection.
3. Do not have sex until you have stopped bleeding. If you have sex after the bleeding stops, start using a method of birth control immediately.
4. Try to arrange a follow-up appointment with a clinic or doctor, about 4-6 weeks after the abortion. This is for a routine examination or to discuss future birth control needs.

### What should I do if I receive unfair or undignified treatment during by abortion?

Try to write down what was said or done to you and also the names and positions of the individuals involved, eg. doctors, nurses, laboratory technicians, etc. You may be able to submit your written complaint to various professional associations. It is your right to be treated with dignity and respect regardless of the medical procedure you are undergoing.

# Legal Lies Legalize Rape

by Reva Landau and  
and Lois Lowenberger

Two recent articles in *Broadside* (Vol. 2, No. 3) discussed rape laws in general and the *Pappajohn* decision in particular. As two feminist law students, we think it essential that all women understand the legal implications of two recent Supreme Court of Canada decisions, *Pappajohn v. the Queen*, 14 C.R. (3d) 243 and *Forsythe v. the Queen*, 53 CCO (2d) 225. The article by the North Shore Women's Centre of North Vancouver, while rightly drawing attention to the importance of *Pappajohn*, unfortunately weakened the case by exaggeration. It is essential for feminists to understand the true legal situation, so we can try to change it.

## PAPPAJOHN

### The Facts

The alleged victim in the case was a real estate agent; the alleged rapist was the owner of the house she had been trying to sell. Both parties agreed they went back to his house after a business lunch. According to her story she strongly resisted sexual intercourse, tried to flee, and finally ran, naked and bound, to the house of the priest next door. According to his story she, after some nominal resistance, clearly consented. But in addition, at the end of the trial, Pappajohn's lawyer wished the defence of "honest though unreasonable belief" that the victim was consenting to be placed before the jury. The trial judge refused as he said there was no evidence to support such a defence. Pappajohn's own story supported actual consent; if one believed his story, the victim was willing and clearly consented. If the alleged victim's story was believed she had resisted so violently nobody (except two Supreme Court judges!) could have believed she had consented. The Supreme Court upheld the reasoning of the trial judge — Pappajohn was convicted — but also, for the first time in Canadian legal history, said "honest though unreasonable belief in consent" was a defence to rape. It is important to realize that this defence only arises when the jury believes the victim did *not* consent to intercourse: even though the woman was not consenting, the accused thought she was.

We wish to make three points about this decision. First, while the *Pappajohn* decision is not necessarily "wrong" in law, it was not the only legally correct decision the court could have made. Second, it is essential to realize that because the court could have chosen among several legally correct decisions, the basis of their choice was a policy decision. And finally, one simply cannot talk about the crime of rape as though the law exists apart from society.

### Legal Background

Until the *Morgan* decision in England in 1975, rape, along with assault and indecent assault, had always been considered a crime of "general intent". Once the act — sexual intercourse without the woman's consent — had been proved, it was not necessary to prove the assailant consciously intended to do what he did. Thus, the accused's mistaken belief that the woman had consented, or his drunkenness, were not defences.

Various areas of the criminal law have applied the idea that a mistaken perception of a situation can be a defence to a charge. This defence is called "mistake of fact". In general, there are three ways in which this possible defence has been used: (1) even honest and reasonable belief in a relevant fact is *not* a defence (e.g. s. 146 of the Criminal Code — sexual intercourse with a girl under 14); (2) honest and reasonable belief in a relevant fact *is* a defence (e.g. defence to a bigamy charge if you believe the previous spouse is dead); and (3) honest and *unreasonable* belief is a defence (e.g. to a charge of possession of drugs).

There were three alternatives open to the Supreme Court in the *Pappajohn* case, all of which could have been supported by case law and precedent, and all conforming to an accepted meaning of intention to commit a crime. These alternatives were: (1) keep the law as it had been for over sixty years; that is, once sexual intercourse against the woman's will is proved, the man's belief she was consenting is irrele-

vant; (2) decide that once forcible sexual intercourse is proved, honest and *reasonable* belief in her consent is a defence; (3) decide that once forcible sexual intercourse is proved, honest though *unreasonable* belief is a defence.

In a non-sexist society, "honest though unreasonable belief" in consent might be an acceptable option, just as it is in some other areas of the law. It is true that the more unreasonable a story is, the less likely it will be accepted by the jury as being honest. Both *Pappajohn* and *Morgan* were convicted. Unfortunately, given the prevalent attitudes about women's behaviour in our society, a decision to allow the defence of "honest though unreasonable belief" will open the door to many more acquittals of rapists.

### Honest But Unreasonable Belief

To what sort of situation does this rule apply? We are obviously not talking about the archetypal rapist who jumps out from behind a bush, knife in hand. Even an honest belief standard would not protect him. We are also not talking about the mythical situation where a woman "does not consent in her mind" though outwardly she gives no oral or physical indication of this. This man would be protected by an "honest and reasonable" standard (though we would have to discuss what was reasonable under the circumstances).

There are, however, three situations in which such a defence would be relevant: (1) an honest misperception based on inaccurate beliefs about women held by many men; (2) drunkenness; (3) a third party's misinformation.

Before going on to discuss these situations, we wish to explain that we refer to these acts of assault as unconsented to sexual intercourse. It is of course a contradiction to use the term "sexual intercourse" if there has been no consent. If the woman has not consented, it is not normal intercourse, but an assault. A better term would be nonconsensual "sexual penetration" but we are at present forced to use the Criminal Code's terminology.

#### (1) The Honest Misperception

There are many occasions where a man could claim he honestly misperceived the situation. For example: taking a woman out for a nice dinner, being invited up for a drink, picking up a woman in a bar, picking up a hitchhiker, having slept with the woman before, knowing that the woman "slept around". The assumption by the man in these situations is often that he is being given an open sexual invitation. These beliefs may be honestly held by many men, even though they are quite unreasonable and unwarranted.

Many men will argue that a man will not be acquitted in these kinds of situations if the woman has shown resistance. Yet many men can coerce a woman and still believe she is consenting. For instance, they may honestly believe women often mean yes when they say no, "depending on the circumstances"; they may feel they can "change the woman's mind" if they push it; or they may even think all women like to be slapped around and "taken" by force. These attitudes are pervasive in our society.

True, the more a woman resists, the more likely it will be believed the man knew she was not consenting. But because of the attitudes discussed above, she may have to resist a great deal before a man honestly believes she is not consenting. Yet in many rape cases, there is not violent resistance. This occurs for a variety of reasons, including fears. For example, men, including police, often tell women not to rely on self defence or resist the attacker, because they will just "anger" him. Indeed, the degree of resistance ought to be somewhat beside the point. One should not have to violently defend oneself to prove one has not consented to sexual intercourse. It is not necessary to defend oneself violently to claim one did not agree to being beaten up.

#### (2) Drunkenness

The effect of the decision on the defence of drunkenness is unclear. Up till now, rapists have often tried to argue they were so drunk they did not know the victim was not consenting. Up till now, that defence had sim-

ply not been permitted. Yet a state of drunkenness could produce an honest but unreasonable belief in consent. Logically, the *Pappajohn* decision could result in acquittals on this basis.

#### (3) The Third Party

A man may have sexual intercourse with a woman without her consent, and even if she is crying (though possibly not if she resists violently) claim he honestly believed she was consenting because someone else told him she would consent. For example, in the *Cogan* case in England, *Cogan* was told by the woman's husband that she wanted to have sexual intercourse with *Cogan*. Even though the woman cried through the whole act of intercourse, *Cogan* said he honestly believed she was consenting. The jury found his belief to be unreasonable, but honest. *Cogan* was acquitted.

In all three of the above cases, a man might honestly but unreasonably believe the woman was consenting, and the jury would have no alternative but to acquit.

We are hesitant to recommend even an honest and reasonable standard because of the attitudes towards women discussed above. However, we do agree that there would be a few isolated circumstances where not allowing this defence would be unfair to the man. If an honest and reasonable standard were to be accepted, there would still be difficulties in defining what was reasonable, but at least the courts would be doing this openly, and one hopes, rationally. Such a process would also have the side effect of helping juries to better evaluate the credibility of the man's story.

The harmful effect of allowing an "honest but unreasonable belief in consent" defence is multiplied when considered in connection with the *Forsythe* decision.

## FORSYTHE

### Background

The *Forsythe* decision is a complicated one. The original issue was whether the trial judge, at a *preliminary hearing*, had the discretion to refuse an examination of the alleged victim as to her previous sexual history if he thought a sufficient basis for the examination had not been laid. He does appear to have this discretion. However, as will be further explained below, Chief Justice Bora Laskin seems to think that "laying a sufficient basis" for the examination means only that the defence needs to have sufficient proof that sexual conduct occurred between the alleged victim and others. According to Laskin, there does not appear to be a requirement that the defence show that such evidence is relevant to the issues at trial, even though other judges have ruled that this is what is required.

In the course of his judgment, Laskin made several other important statements. The controversy centered around the proper interpretation of s. 142 of the Criminal Code. This section was originally enacted to limit the questions the alleged victim could be asked about her past sexual history.

Section 142 states that in order for the defence to ask the alleged victim any question about her past sexual history they must first give notice of their intention to ask "such question". They must also provide particulars of the evidence they wish to present through the questioning. The judge must then hold a closed hearing in which he/she decides whether the weight of evidence which the defence seeks to introduce is so great that it would be unfair to the accused not to let the evidence in.

### The Issues

#### The Collateral Issue Rule

In all areas of the criminal law, a witness's credibility has always been considered a "collateral issue"; that is, as credibility is not a central issue in the trial, once an answer to a question directed to the witness's credibility has been obtained from the witness, no other witness can be called to contradict the first witness's answer (with a few well-defined and narrow exceptions). This is law developed by judges, rather than statute law.

In rape trials, this means that while the alleged victim could be cross-examined on her past sexual history, no witness could be called to contradict her answers. Laskin's

judgment changes this rule: he says witnesses *can* be called to contradict the alleged victim if she denies previous sexual relations with others than the accused, or if she denies details of past relations. In Laskin's opinion, the victim's credibility has become a separate issue to be tried.

Section 142 is ambiguously worded; it is possible to interpret it as implying a change. But the usual practice followed by the courts is that they will not change judge-made rules unless Parliament has clearly ordered their change. Yet here, Laskin based his alteration of a long-standing judge-made rule on one possible interpretation of an ambiguous statute.

#### Past Sexual History and Credibility

Feminists will no doubt wonder why we talk about past sexual history as relevant at all to a victim's credibility. In the past judges seemed to assume, without articulating any reasons, that the alleged victim's past sexual history was relevant to the credibility of her testimony. They talk in terms of it being relevant to her credibility in general, but in fact the unspoken assumption must have been that sexual history was relevant to the credibility of her testimony that she had not consented.

Feminists thought s. 142 was a victory — they thought it would force judges to decide whether past sexual history was relevant at all to the alleged victim's credibility. Unfortunately, s. 142 states only that the judge must consider the *weight*, not the relevance, of the evidence of past sexual history. One would think, however, that it would be obvious to anyone with legal training that in order to determine the weight of any evidence, one must first consider whether it is relevant to the main issue in the trial.

Laskin's interpretation of the section, however, can only be explained if he implicitly assumed that the victim's past sexual history was not only relevant, but highly relevant, to her credibility. He never states this assumption explicitly but it is the only way to make sense of his judgement. According to his judgement, the judge need only determine at the in-camera hearing whether he believes the accused's witnesses when they say they slept with the victim, not whether it is relevant if they slept with her or not. Some key to his assumptions may be found in his constant reference to the victim's past "sexual misconduct (sic)."

#### Onus of Proof

Section 142 clearly states that the alleged victim can be asked no questions about prior sexual conduct unless certain conditions have been satisfied. Laskin, appears to reverse the onus; he says the witness *must* answer questions unless the court, in its discretion, decides otherwise.

#### Questions

Section 142(a) says no question shall be asked in the in-camera hearing unless "such question" together with particulars of the evidence sought to be adduced has been filed with the clerk of the court. Laskin interprets this section as meaning the accused need only give notice of the general nature of this evidence, and need not give the *very* questions to be asked. While the section is slightly ambiguous, it would seem that "such question" does mean the *very* question; Laskin gives no reason as to why he concluded it does not mean this.

#### Balance

Laskin feels the purpose of s. 142 was to balance the interests of the alleged victim and the alleged accused. This may come as a shock to many feminists who thought the purpose of the section was to ensure that questions on past sexual history would be asked only if they were sufficiently weighty and relevant to justify their being asked in open court.

Indeed, by the time he has finished the victim is in at least as bad, if not a worse, position than she was before s. 142 was enacted. On the one hand, unless there is no basis in fact for the questions, the victim must still answer in open court inquiries as to her past sexual history. Laskin automatically assumes that past sexual history is relevant to her credibility.

continued page 20



# MEDIA WATCH

## Bent Coverage of Gay Demo

by Jean Wilson

On Thursday, February 6, from 100 (*Toronto Star*) to 150 (*Globe and Mail*) to 215 (*Toronto Sun*) police raided four homosexual steambaths in Toronto. The coordinated raids resulted from a six-month investigation of alleged Mafia connections and male prostitution at the baths. As well as members of the intelligence squad of the Metropolitan Toronto Police, the raiding party included members of the morality squad and plainclothes and uniformed officers.

According to eyewitnesses, many police were verbally and physically abusive, and beyond doubt they were physically destructive. An estimated \$35,000 in property damage was caused by police wielding sledgehammers, clubs, and their own feet in order to break cubicle doors.

Of the men unlucky enough to be caught in the raid, 273 (or 253 or 250) were charged as found-ins in common bawdy houses, 20 (or 19) were charged with keeping common bawdy houses, 14 were charged with minor drug offences, and 2 were charged with buggery. (The latest count for found-ins is 289.)

As might be anticipated, the reaction within the homosexual community was one of shock and anger. A raid of this scale has not occurred before in Toronto. The property destruction and verbal and physical abuse seemed excessive. Concern was also expressed that the raid reflected the onset of a more visibly homophobic and authoritarian regime than Toronto has had in the last few years. Comparisons were made with the actions of the German Nazis before and during the Second World War.

In order to express the outrage felt by many homosexuals, members of other minorities and those concerned with civil liberties, as well as to protest the amount of force used and the charges laid, the Coalition of Gay Rights in Ontario organized a march and demonstration for Friday, February 7. (The Coalition is a Toronto-based group which lobbies at all levels of government for fair treatment of homosexuals.)

Notice was short but word was out. Between 11 and 12 pm Friday night a large crowd of men and women assembled at Yonge and Wellesley Streets, a major downtown intersection in Toronto. Gay men were in the majority, but there were also a number of sympathetic women and other men. The objective was to march to the main police headquarters and then to Queen's Park, the provincial legislative building. (Homosexuals and other minorities in Ontario are not yet protected by a provincial human rights code.)

So far, this description tallies with what happened. However, reading the three local newspaper accounts of what subsequently occurred during the march and demonstration compared to what did occur is startling and exasperating. The accounts range from the *Globe and Mail's* conservative and understated report to the lurid and loaded reports in the *Toronto Star* and the *Sunday Sun*.

All three papers featured photos from the incident on their front pages, although the two-column wide *Globe and Mail* photo of a woman atop a man's shoulders, both of them with mouths open and arms gesticulating, could have been of a young heterosexual couple out anywhere having a wild time. The *Globe and Mail* headline was straightforward: '1,500 Demonstrators in March to Protest Police Raids on Baths.'

The *Star* photo, on the other hand, took up two-thirds of the front page and showed a police officer wrestling with demonstrators. It was captioned: 'Confrontation.' The accompanying headline, extending across the rest of the top front page, read: 'Rally Erupts as 3,000 Go on Rampage.' (Note that the number has doubled.)

And the *Sun*, the Toronto tabloid which can be counted on to be bigoted and sensationalist (and sexist and racist and homophobic), came through as usual, although the main front page story concerned a convicted murderer and showed two photos of him. In the lower right-hand corner, however, was a red-boxed photo of yet another police officer confronting yet another demonstrator, with the caption 'Protestor at homosexual rampage screams at policeman early yesterday' and the headline: 'Gay Raids Sparked by Boys-for-Hire Ring?'

That is a bit of titillation guaranteed to lure readers to the inside stories, 'The Night Toronto Turned Ugly' and 'Whipping at Steam Baths' and their 7 photos, all but two showing further scenes of individual confrontations between demonstrators and police. The stories about the march and the raids are correspondingly dramatic, as illustrated by the opening paragraph of the story on the march:

Toronto the Good turned bad early yesterday as crusading homosexual rights supporters marched down Yonge Street, laid siege to a police station, lit fires and tried in vain to break down the doors at Queen's Park.

Pretty heady stuff. One would think from reading that paragraph and those following that a virtual riot had occurred.

The *Star* would only confirm that impression:

More than 3,000 people ... went on a rampage in downtown Toronto early today, smashing cars, fighting with police and setting fires ... This morning's massive demonstration reached fever pitch as the protestors arrived at 52 Division. About 250 police officers stood shoulder to shoulder in front of the police station with their night sticks behind their backs ... The angry demonstrators smashed cars, set fires and tried to break into the Legislature building at Queen's Park during the 2 1/2 hour rally.

The *Globe and Mail* account is more soothing but more insidious.



Skirmishes broke out around the edge (of the march) between the demonstrators and people who came to taunt them. Some of the demonstrators harassed the police, shaking and kicking police cruisers ... As the crowd neared Dundas Street, a skirmish broke out involving at least four police officers. Before it was over and the crowd continued on its way, at least 20 policemen were involved, some with their clubs out, and about a dozen squad cars had converged on the intersection of Yonge and Dundas Streets. Police managed to control the incident, however ... At Bay Street, demonstrators stopped a streetcar and smashed several windows ... A handful of police officers around the edge of the crowd were harassed, yelled at, and abused. They remained calm, however, and made no arrests.

The *Globe and Mail* account does not mention the actual conclusion of the march, instead ending its story with the observation that after demonstrating in front of 52 Division, 'some' of the demonstrators went on to Queen's Park.

None of these stories acknowledges that this march and demonstration was in fact remarkably peaceful. Most participants were vocal and angry, but not violent. There was plenty of noise and many people carried anti-police signs and others protesting lack of gay rights. Vehicles stranded on streets the march went down were banged on their hoods and some were indeed rocked, but to report, as the *Star* does, that demonstrators 'rampaged' in the streets and 'smashed' cars is gross exaggeration. In any event, eyewitnesses report that plainclothes officers were part of the crowd and that they instigated harassment of motorists. It was interesting to note, too, that any violence or provocation that occurred took place on the edge of the demonstration, not in the middle of it. The *Star* and *Sun* also report that 'fires' were set. The only fires I know of was one set in a garbage can at the beginning of the march and a rag that was set alight by a group of young toughs who were taunting and harassing demonstrators while they rallied at 52 Division. In that instance, a Metro police officer immediately dispersed the group and a group of marchers immediately put out the fire.

As for 'windows smashed' on street cars, as reported in all three papers, there was one street car slightly damaged, with only 4 windows broken. There was not general mayhem, as would be supposed from reading the papers.

The *Globe and Mail* report in particular goes out of its way to emphasize how marvellous the police were at keeping order and preventing wholesale violence. Until near the end of the march, the police were generally restrained and non-violent. What is not reported is that many demonstrators also acted as vigilantes, urging people to keep calm and not provoke either bystanders or police. But most demonstrators simply did not participate in any violent acts or provocation. There certainly were

some people in the crowd who were spoiling for a fight and later got it at Queen's Park, but the majority of demonstrators was peaceful. To say that the demonstration was a 'rampage' is revealing homophobic paranoia.

There are various accounts of what happened at Queen's Park, where the demonstration ended. There the situation did take a turn for the worse, as might have been expected by whoever among the crowd decided to hammer with their fists on the heavy wooden doors to the legislature. When a rush at the doors by a front rank of demonstrators was thrust back down the steps by some of the many police accompanying the crowd, the general reaction was one of reluctance to get involved in further physical action. Urged to do so by march organizers with a loudhailer, most demonstrators began to disperse.

What is not reported by any paper is that at this time, around 2 am, the police did get rough. Undoubtedly there was some provocation besides the hammering of the legislature doors, but it came from both sides. There are eyewitness reports of harassment and physical abuse by police, some of whom wore riot helmets and carried night sticks.

For example, a photographer from *The Body Politic*, Toronto's gay liberation newspaper, had his glasses broken and a flash smashed, and one demonstrator who also happened to have been one of the found-ins during the raids was cornered and beaten by the police near Yonge and Bloor Streets. As well, other demonstrators were harassed on their way home by police or anti-demonstrators. In one instance, a demonstrator was shoved into the path of an oncoming car by a gang of rowdies and when he asked for help from a nearby policeman was verbally abused by him as well. Not everyone is served and protected alike.

The assortment of charges laid as a result of the demonstration were 2 charges of assault, 1 of mischief to property, and 7 for breach of the peace.

So, yes, there certainly was some violence, and some property damage did occur. Nasty remarks were made about the police and the raid the previous night. Some bystanders and hapless motorists were undoubtedly taunted. But rampaging homosexuals, smashing cars, setting fires, and attempting to break down the doors at Queen's Park? Hardly!

### FLY BY NIGHT LOUNGE

Toronto's only all-women's bar, the Fly By Night, was closed down earlier this month by its new owner, Phil Stein. A series of meetings are going to be held to try to determine where we should go from here — the suggestions range all the way from a new bar to a women's building. For the time and place of the next meeting, call the 923-GAYS phone line or contact the Toronto Women's Bookstore at 922-8744. All interested women are welcome.



Photos: Anna Marie Smith

# MOVEMENT MATTERS

## GAY COMMUNITY APPEAL

Ever had a good idea for a women's project but figured you'd never get enough money to make it happen? Ever wish you could help out a feminist cause, but weren't sure who could use your money?

If you're in either position (or both), you may want to know more about the Gay Community Appeal. The Gay Appeal began so that the gay and lesbian community could give more and better financial support to community projects and services. The idea behind the Appeal was that if organizations could let people know when and why they needed money, people would be willing to give in order to support the projects. To make the crucial connection between organizations and potential supporters, the Appeal planned from the beginning to develop an audio-visual presentation which would describe projects and services requesting funding.

The Appeal began unofficially at a backyard brunch in August 1979, when a group of 12 men and women discussed how to organize a fundraising effort. A board consisting of five women and four men was formed to develop a general strategy for the Appeal and to review funding proposals. A management collective took responsibility

for publicity, producing fundraising materials (eg designing stationery), developing a bookkeeping system, and a variety of other tasks. In the fall of 1979, a letter was sent to every gay and feminist organization and individuals responded, including five women-only groups; funding requests totalled \$11,500 (round figures). An audio-visual collective then formed within the Appeal to produce a slide-tape presentation which would describe these projects to potential donors and ask for money. To cover fundraising start-up costs such as projectors, film, and office supplies, the Appeal asked people within the community for loans and received \$200 loans from each of 18 people who had great faith that this idea could work. The Appeal was also incorporated as a non-profit organization in January 1980.

Early on, women in the Appeal realized that meaningful fundraising in the lesbian community would have to involve feminist organizations. Obviously, the Appeal was interested in projects such as the answering machine for the Lesbian Organization of Toronto phone line, the lesbian fiction anthology, and the Lesbian Mothers' Defence Fund. However, Appeal members also encouraged feminist organizations to request money when the organization provided visible support for lesbians and the

projects offered something of value to the lesbian community. Accordingly, the Appeal accepted funding proposals from the feminist journal, *Fireweed*, and the International Women's Day Committee.

By May 1980, the slide-tape show was finished and fundraising began. The Appeal invited people in the community to act as fundraising hosts. Hosts asked friends over for an evening to visit together, see the show, and donate money to the projects requesting funding. One or two people working with the Appeal served as presenters for an evening. Presenters usually came early to the host's home to set up projectors, tape recorder and so on; later in the evening presenters discussed the Appeal with everyone at the gathering, then showed the slide-tape show and asked for contributions. Officially, these occasions were called SOS (Support Our Selves) evenings. However, many people noted that the evenings resembled gatherings where suburban women inspected plastic containers; lesbians and gay men had co-opted Tupperware parties.

Well, the Appeal was a tremendous success, and what better place to celebrate a success than a castle? In January 1981, at the Casa Loma Bop (an event with gay appeal) the Appeal announced the results of the 1980 fundraising campaign. Women

and men in Toronto raised \$19,000 (again, round figures) to support the lesbian and gay community. Of this amount, \$1700 went to pay for equipment, \$4300 went to cover Appeal operating costs, and \$1600 will go towards next year's fundraising campaign. And cheques totalling \$11,500 were given out at that evening to fourteen of the organizations and individuals requesting money (one project in the original group was no longer viable by this date). Incidentally, everyone at Casa Loma had a great time hearing a performance by the Gay Community Choir, viewing the Appeal slide-tape show, and dancing to the rock and roll music of Mama Quilla II.

The Gay Community Appeal is now working on next year's audio-visual presentation and fundraising campaign. Over the next few months, the Appeal will again be asking individuals and organizations to submit proposals for funding and asking people to help out with organizing for 1981. If you'd like to help out or want further information about the Appeal, write to: Gay Community Appeal, P.O. Box 2212, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5F 2T2. The present plan is to begin the 1981 campaign in September, so watch for information then about SOS evenings.

□ Rosemary Barnes

## FEMINIST STAMPS ISSUED BY CANADA POST

As part of its 1981 Stamp Program, Canada Post is issuing four stamps in honour of Canadian feminists Henrietta Edwards, Louise McKinney, Idola Saint-Jean and Dr. Emily Stowe. The 17-cent postage stamps were released at a special ceremony held in the Senate on March 4, four days before International Women's Day.



Henrietta Edwards was born in Montreal in 1849. She and her sister founded the Working Girls' Association there in 1875. It offered a boarding house, a reading room, classes and meal services. The sisters supported the association with their own money. After her marriage, Edwards lived in Alberta. There she campaigned for equal rights, mother's allowance and rights for women. Through many years of research, she became an expert on Canadian and Alberta laws affecting women and children. Even lawyers and judges consulted her on these subjects. Edwards partook in the "Five Persons Case", together with Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney, Emily Murphy and Irene Parlby. The case confirmed that women were "persons" and had the right to sit in the Canadian Senate.



Louise McKinney was born in Frankville, Ontario, in 1868. After her marriage she moved to Alberta, where she worked hard for the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and for woman suffrage, believing that once women had the vote, they could improve conditions for immigrants and women. After her defeat in the 1921 election, she continued working for the WCTU, took part in the creation of the United Church of Canada and along with four others initiated the "Five Persons Case".



Idola Saint-Jean was born in Montreal in 1880. A French-language teacher, she strove to gain the vote for women in Quebec provincial elections. She helped found the Provincial Franchise Committee in 1922. Upon splitting with it, she founded L'Alliance Canadienne pour le Vote des Femmes du Québec. She also protested women's inequality before the law. At that time, Québec women could not even control their own bank accounts. In 1930 she shattered tradition by running in a federal election. Saint-Jean took many trips to Québec City to persuade provincial legislators to grant women the vote, though she suffered much rude behaviour in the process. The right was finally granted in 1940.



Dr. Emily Stowe, the first Canadian woman doctor, was born in South Norwich, Ontario, in 1831. She began teaching at age fifteen. Later, she graduated from teachers' college with high honours and became Canada's first woman school principal. After marriage and three children, Stowe decided to study medicine. She felt women patients needed women doctors. She herself needed a higher income to support her children and ailing husband. She received her degree from a United States medical school in 1868 and, because it was difficult for a woman to get a license, practised without one in Toronto until 1880. Stowe crusaded vigorously for equal rights for women, especially voting rights. She founded Canada's first woman suffrage society.

The stamps, which are the work of artist Muriel Wood, are based on portraits of these women, with vignettes symbolic of their spheres of feminist activity. The typographic design is by Dennis Goddard.

The International Women's Day Committee is sponsoring the following films during the week of International Women's Day:

*Sunday, March 1st, 1-4 pm, at the Festival Theatre: The Wives' Tale and Up from the Bargain Basement.* (Co-sponsored with DEC)

*Sunday, March 8, 8 pm, Science Centre: Premiere of Moving Mountains,* a film about women miners in B.C. (Co-sponsored with steelworkers)

## WOMEN FOR SURVIVAL

Meetings and events:

March 23 — anti-nuke action meeting, 7:30 pm, 519 Church St., Toronto

March 21 — Women's Educational, with Rosalie Bertell, Sidney Smith Bldg., U of T, 1-5 pm.

March 30 — Women's Occupation and demonstration at Ontario Hydro Bldg., 700 University Ave., Toronto, all day.

May 10 — Women's Mother's Day March against nuclear power and weapons

For more information and financial contributions contact Women for Survival, 968-3218.

## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FORUM

RYERSON THIRD WORLD CENTRE

# WOMEN IN THE THIRD WORLD

## A CONFERENCE ON THE EXPLOITATION & OPPRESSION OF WOMEN IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

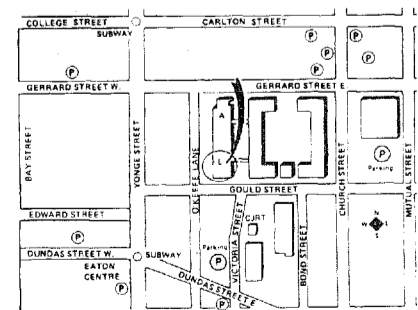
Women activists from Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and the Caribbean will be dealing with a number of key issues:

- The super-exploitation of women in developing countries.
- The role of women in national liberation struggles.
- Women's organizations in Third World countries.
- The exploitation of immigrant women in Canada.

**When**  
March 14, 1981.  
9 am - 6 pm  
Registration: 9 am - 10 am.

**Fee**  
\$10 Organizations  
\$ 3 Students

**Where**  
Ryerson Polytechnical Institute  
Room L 72  
Learning Resources Centre  
360 Victoria St., Toronto  
(See diagram)



For further information about the conference call:

Videah Persaud (416) 431-4171  
Anver Saloojee (416) 595-5212  
Phil Rawkins (416) 595-5358

This forum is presented by Ryerson's Third World Centre with the financial support of the Canadian International Development Agency

# Ikuko Atsumi: 'Flying Women' of Japan

by Elaine Johnson

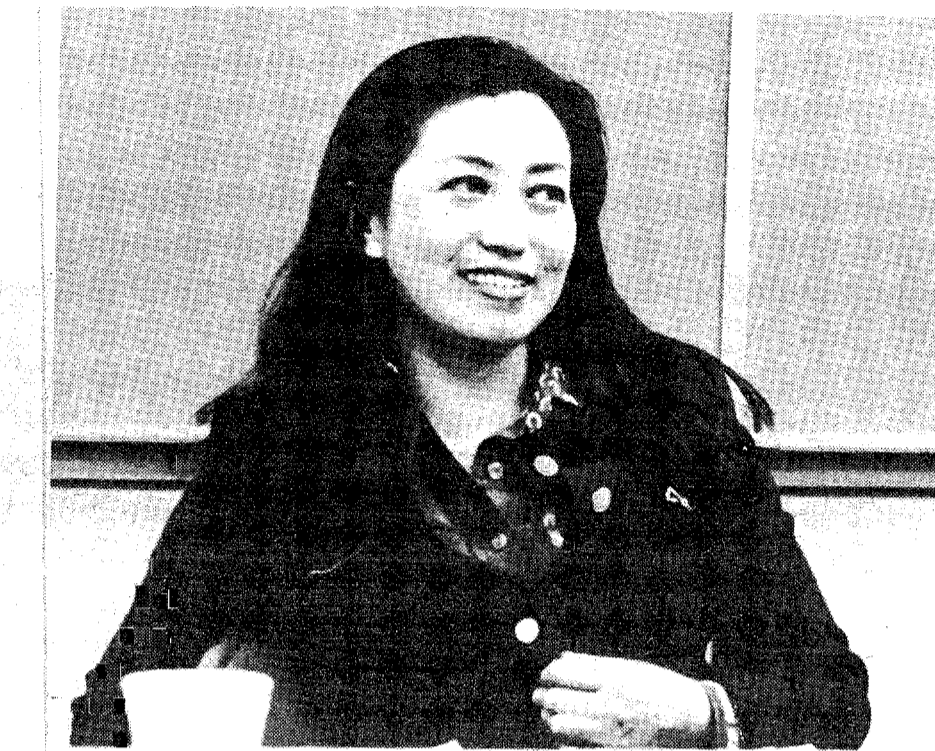
In 1975/76, I spent the better part of a year travelling through Southeast Asia, beginning in Japan. This country fascinated me enough that I recently returned, ostensibly to look at Japanese crafts, but really because I wanted to know more about Japan. As I was involved in the Women's Movement in Canada, I was interested in the role of women in Japanese society and noticed a lack of signs that an active women's community existed. I thought that perhaps my rudimentary grasp of the language had simply prevented me from seeing what was actually there, so when someone mentioned that a Japanese feminist was in Toronto to speak on "The Women's Movement in Japan" I jumped at the chance to hear her.

Ikuko Atsumi is a poet, an associate professor at Aoyama-Jakuin in Tokyo and a founder and editor of "The Feminist". Approximately 80 people showed up at OISE, to hear her describe some of the present social conditions for Japanese women and outline the history of the various groups which form or have formed the Japanese Women's Movement during this century.

There is a Women's Movement after all. Its roots stem from the early feminists and suffragettes at the turn of the century, growing to the formation in 1948 of the still flourishing housewives' consumer groups, through the 60's with student left wing activists and into the new feminism of the 70's when many new groups came into existence.

The most visible of these is the Chu-piren, led by the flamboyant, pink helmeted Enoki Misako. It was avidly courted by the mass media until Enoki's women's party, Joseito, was soundly defeated at the polls during parliamentary elections in 1977. The party had lacked understanding of its potential constituency — Japanese women were not yet prepared to accept their tactics.

Meanwhile, other groups continued working at consciousness raising and decreasing discrimination against women before the law at the workplace and in the home. One of the most active national groups, Kôdô o Okosu Onna-tachi no Kai, which began organizing during International Women's Year in 1975, has a membership of 900, divided into study



Ikuko Atsumi

Gail Geltner

groups which examine issues such as single women, education, children's literature, divorce, mass media and international feminism. There are, in addition, women's video and film groups, a centre for the non-partisan political education of women, and a lesbian-feminist centre. Women are indeed meeting, talking, studying and protesting.

I left the Toronto meeting feeling vaguely uneasy, wondering how I had managed to miss all this activity when I was in Japan: I hadn't seen it reflected among the women I had met during my visit. Talking to Ikuko later in an interview for *Broadside* helped to clarify things. I realized that I had been imposing my own expectations upon a different culture. Before I could assess the accomplishments of the Japanese feminists I had to take into account the historic background and the rigid family structure of their culture.

Ikuko described Japan as a patriarchal family state. The Emperor-centered family state, which had existed during the Meiji

period (1868-1912), had been transferred to the huge company-centered family state. In order to understand the place of women in Japanese society one must appreciate the strength of the family system. When a Japanese woman marries, as 98% of them do, she becomes part of her husband's family and her primary role is that of a vessel for the family through which the children are produced. Her wifely duties are not only to produce and nurture the children but to ensure that they are as well educated as possible to compete in a job market. One often hears of students committing suicide due to the pressures of acquiring an education.

The full burden of the household rests on the shoulders of the wife since her husband is usually forced to spend long hours at work. While the wife is married to her husband, her husband is married to his company — he often spends his whole life working for the same one. The company acts as a second paternalistic family, often providing company housing, recreational

facilities, company arranged holidays, and company slogans and songs. It demands complete loyalty of the employee.

The role of the woman as mere producer for the family is clearly shown by the statistics on child custody. In 1979, custody of the children was awarded to the woman in only 48% of the cases (an increase over 34% in 1968), since traditionally the children are considered to be part of the husband's family. A divorced woman has a very difficult time supporting herself without the additional burden of trying to support and look after her children as well. Single mothers are often refused employment simply because they are single mothers.

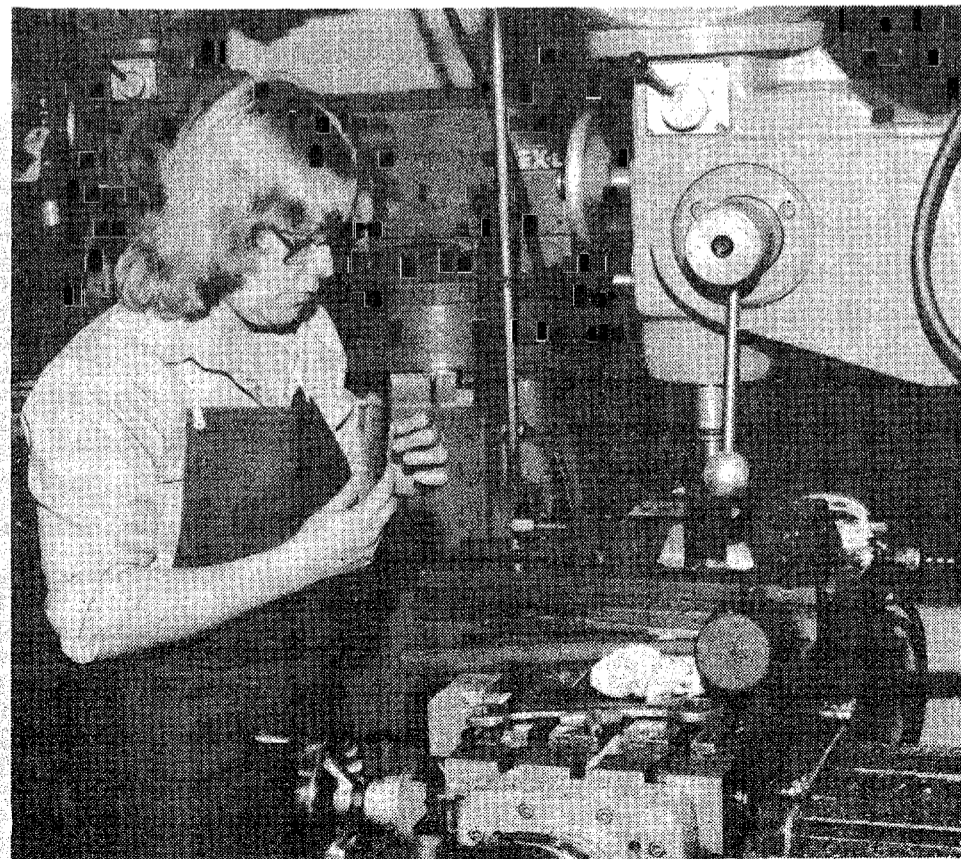
While the culture and its legal underpinnings lock women into the family, the Japanese economy locks women out of the work place. Women make up 33.7% of the work force in Japan, but they earn only half the salary of a man. And these women are the ones who are lucky enough to be employed at all, since many companies refuse to hire *any* women. For example, of the companies which hire high school graduates, 80% do not hire women. Of the remaining 20% which do, many stipulate that the woman be no older than 22 (too young to marry), or that she must still be living at home. The reasoning is that a woman who remains at home as a part of her father's family is allowed to work until she is ready to marry and become the devoted wife and mother in her husband's family.

The Japanese Labour Standards Act specifies that "the employer shall not discriminate against women concerning wages by reason of the worker being female" but does not specify for work of equal value and does not prohibit discriminatory hiring and promotion practices. Companies routinely ignore the law, offering blatant wage differentials between men and women — often "justified" by slight differences in job description — and retire women early only to rehire them as part-time workers. Recently activist lawyers have won cases against companies accused of discrimination, but each company with similar discriminatory practices must be taken to court separately, and there are just not enough activist lawyers to handle the backlog of cases.

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## Perils of a Disposable Work Force

by Gloria Geller



Chris Cabie

Slowly, almost imperceptibly, there are growing numbers of women crossing over the age-old barrier of the sexual division of labour in the work force. In the past few years, women have begun to find their way into non-traditional jobs in industry, the trades, crafts and technology. In September 1980, 200 women from every part of the country came together at a National Women in Trades Conference in Winnipeg and made the statement that the time has come for all segments of the society to not only recognize the existence of women working in non-traditional jobs but to take such women seriously. This phenomenon is no longer a matter of the reserve labour force being brought into the work force during war time, praised for their war effort and patriotism and then told to be good girls and go home and breed when the "boys" come marching home.

The efforts of women to obtain and hold non-traditional jobs in a period identified as "peace time" are more complex and problematic than when they are being wooed to do their bit for their country. Each woman must fight on her own to obtain the training necessary for the job she wants and to be taken seriously by employers she approaches when seeking work. Once, and if, she is hired she must contend with all the problems related to being the only woman on the job plus all the other problems working women face in the labour force. In spite

of all the barriers there are women in almost every conceivable job throughout the country. Such women need the support and assistance of the women's movement.

In general terms, using Ontario as an example, it is possible to identify how women are managing to enter non-traditional jobs, what types of fields they are entering and how they are faring. There are women who make the decision as to what job they want and manage both to gain the necessary skills and to obtain jobs in their chosen area or start up small businesses of their own. They are women who are interested in some of the more obvious skill areas such as wood-working of various kinds and related areas, e.g. carpentry, cabinetmaking, furniture repair and refinishing, and upholstery, also printing and drafting and various crafts.

Many women, however, are not really sure of what they would like to do. They may realize that they are mechanically inclined, they may be unhappy working in an enclosed environment, they may have vague notions of what they would like, or are interested in making more money than they can in the clerical and service areas, but want some direction as to what to choose. Since most women have had little previous contact with or knowledge of most non-traditional jobs, exposure to various jobs is very useful in helping to make a decision about which field to pursue. In Ontario, the Introduction to Non-Traditional Occupations Course (INTO) is a federally subsidiz-

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# The Rising of

The following excerpt is an earlier version of a chapter subsequently entitled "The Rising of the Women," published by Myrna Kostash in *Long Way from Home: The Story of the Sixties Generation in Canada*. This excerpt includes some material on western Canadian incidents and development that did not appear in the book.

Permission to publish the excerpt in *Broadside* was granted by Myrna Kostash. The quotations used are from a variety of individuals she interviewed while doing research for the book. (A review of Kostash's book is printed in this issue of *Broadside*.)

by Myrna Kostash

Arguing that female being has historically been defined and limited as sexual and that "woman's body is used as a commodity or medium of exchange," the women's liberation groups in 1968 determined that women's right to control over the sexual functions of their bodies was the sine qua non of their liberation — indeed it was argued by many women's liberationists that the colonialization of women proceeded from the fact of involuntary pregnancy — and so began the actions around the issues of birth control and abortion.

As early as 1962, branches of the Voice of Women had been campaigning for the legalization of information-distribution on birth control. (Since 1892 the Criminal Code of Canada had forbidden the sale and advertisement of contraceptives and the dissemination of information. The code was amended in 1969.) Deliberately disregarding the law, the new groups set up birth control information and counselling booths and centres on and off campuses, where they made available printed literature on contraception, samples of available contraceptives, and lists of sympathetic doctors who would prescribe for single women. And when the *Birth Control Handbook*, a comprehensive digest of information and argument, became available in late 1968 from the McGill Students' Society, they distributed some 50,000 copies of this too by the summer of 1969. At the University of Regina, the Women's Liberation Caucus, distributing pamphlets of birth control information, observed that, "people were unable to demonstrate a natural, healthy curiosity in the subject. Particularly the men felt it necessary to seem either amused or super-cool and casual about it. Others picked it up surreptitiously." (*Carillon*, September 19, 1969) At the University of Alberta, where since 1967 there had been agitation against Health Services' decision not to make the birth control pill available to students ("We do not think the taxpayers of Alberta should supply birth control pills to students when they are not used for treatment of a disease or disorder." *Gateway*, November 21, 1967), nor to supply any information whatsoever about contraception, the Committee for the Status of Women accused Health Services of "abdication of its responsibility" to students and disseminated the information themselves.

A number of us women were living together and we talked among ourselves about the sexual double standard, about our right to screw when we pleased, about all the women we knew who were dropping out of university because of accidental pregnancies. We were very frustrated because we couldn't get information and the University wouldn't budge: it was illegal, period. Finally, Lynn said, "well, why don't we do something about it?" At first I was appalled: to think one should do something about a grievance! And then we just up and did it.

For all the embarrassment and disconcertment aroused by the illegal actions around the birth control issue, the women's groups were in fact tolerated and allowed to operate in this regard. Their activities around the issue to abortion were, however, a different matter. Logically and politically, the two issues were inseparable, of course: as long as women were denied access to birth control they would have no choice but to seek abortion in order to terminate a pregnancy they had not chosen. Up to August 28, 1969, abortion for any reason was illegal under the Criminal Code and so, in seeking an abortion, a woman risked prosecution, not to mention disfigurement or death, as the result of putting herself in the hands of the only person who could help her: the abortionist. This peculiar vulnerability of women underscored the male supremacist values of a society in which male legislators and male law-enforcers absolved themselves of responsibility in the social question of reproduction. It provided the burgeoning women's liberation movement with an issue around which the mass of women could be mobilized. There was not a woman alive who did not fear the consequences of her sexual activity, no one who did not realize, even instinctively, that this fear was a form of social control. It was understood that, because of the possibility that she might become pregnant at any time, she was denied employment of equal pay and value to that of men, placement in professional and graduate schools at the same rate as men, and mobility and independence in carrying out life decisions as she saw fit. Clearly, women's right to abortion on demand must be secured before any of the other campaigns for the liberation of women could be undertaken. Only when freed of biological determinisms could women address themselves concretely as workers, intellectuals, artists or politicians. "Abortion counselling dominated our activity."



They set up offices and publicized their phone numbers. They answered calls from women who were hysterical and in tears, would talk them into composure and determine what their decision was, would give them the names of a handful of doctors who would abort them, would accompany them to the abortionist, or would lend them money so they could travel to the nearest "safe" doctor, would talk to them after the abortion if they were depressed or fearful. It was agonizing work.

I was sent a fifteen year old pregnant girl who had been a resident of Warrendale. (At that time, a treatment centre for children near Toronto.) I couldn't get her into the doctor in Kingston and I had never tried this guy in Brockville before but I had been told that he was okay. His front was as a chiropractor and the address in Brockville was a lean-to to a house. I went in and he was sitting in this really sordid room, that's the only word for it. And he was drinking. I looked at the girl and she looked at me and I said, "Are you sure that this is what you want?" And the guy said, "Oh, don't worry about the drinking. I've done these things when I was so pissed I couldn't walk across the room." I looked at her again and I said, "Are you sure you want to do this?" And she said, "yes." He went out to the garage and he brought in one of those boxes that carpenters keep their tools in and this is where he kept his medical tools. He told me that I had to wait in the car, that he wouldn't let me stay in the room with her. I went out and sat in the car for what seemed like hours. Then she came out and she said that the only thing that he had said to her was that she had one of the cleanest twats he'd ever seen.

It was perilous work. In Regina, the department of the Attorney-General warned the Women's Health Centre that it was under surveillance to ensure no "illegal activities" were being counselled. In Edmonton, women counsellors were harassed by obscene phone calls and the telephone in their co-op house was bugged. In Vancouver, counsellors invited to speak on an open-line radio show arrived in the studio in new sweaters and jeans because they were convinced they would be arrested there for openly and publicly stating that they were operating an abortion referral service.

## THE NEED FOR CHILDCARE

Closely related to the issue of involuntary pregnancy was that of childcare: should a woman bear a child, she was held wholly responsible for its care. Any mother who worked outside the home faced the staggering difficulty of finding some means by which her child or children could be cared for while she was at work. As more and more women were employed, this difficulty assumed the proportions of a social crisis. (According to a childcare survey made by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics in 1967, 908,000 children required care arrangements.) Given that the median weekly earnings of women in 1967 were \$50, it was obvious that the typical childcare arrangement of a babysitter ate up the mother's earnings. Where childcare could not be provided for, the woman had no choice but to stay at home, even if the family badly needed her potential earnings. Thus was women's dependency within the family and her relegation to unpaid housework perpetuated. And thus again were women penalized for their sexual function. Clearly, women required cheap and accessible daycare facilities if they were ever to function independently and remuneratively. The women's liberation groups took up this requirement and made it a demand.

During the August 1968 student occupation of the Board of Governors' meeting room at Simon Fraser University, the room was partly converted into a nursery for the children of some of the occupiers. The occupation ended but not the idea of a campus daycare centre. The Students' Council was not unsympathetic and agreed to negotiate with the administration for the building of a licensed centre. The need was immediate and urgent, however, so a group of mothers appropriated a corner of the student lounge and turned it into a co-operative daycare centre, the



SFU Co-op Family, in which, in exchange for a half day of work in the centre, a parent could leave her/his children for as long as was needed.

No one realized at first how radically different this system is from almost every other system by which people exchange labour and services in this society. One usually gets only what one pays for. The Family really does take from each according to his or her ability and give to each according to his or her needs.

In Winnipeg, women's liberationists researched the childcare situation — "at the time, 1968, about 190 children in all of Winnipeg were served with any kind of daycare" — issued position papers, and called for the provision of universally available, 24-hour daycare to be arranged by community groups and funded by government and employers. "We felt this service should be provided because of the great contribution women would be making to the economy as workers."

In Toronto, in the fall of 1969, the University of Toronto Women's Group spearheaded the occupation of an empty house near the campus as a co-operative nursery. When the city demanded the occupants undertake \$2,000 worth of renovations and the university vice-president refused to make funds available to them, the daycare people marched to the administration building and occupied the Senate Chamber. The sitters-in grew to 200, with the support of the students' council and the New Left Caucus. ("We NLC women occupied the Chamber and then convinced the men to join us.") "People are singing, smoking pot, sleeping, and sharing sandwiches with the campus police. Everywhere there are discussions and arguments. The place is alive." (Elsewhere there was still little support for the seriousness of the demands of the women's liberation movement. The Toronto *Star* editorialized: "It's as if Lenin, while storming the Czarist ramparts, had proclaimed that the purpose of the revolution was to provide all-day suckers for underprivileged kids.") The next day the university capitulated and promised the \$2,000. "Victory was ours!...we now had the base for the further actions of committing the university to the responsibility of providing daycare...Women's liberation had engineered the first occupation at the University of Toronto...All power to the people — especially women!"



At Queen's University, women militants disrupted a beauty queen contest; in Toronto they picketed Maclean-Hunter offices after *Maclean's* ran excerpts from Lionel Tiger's *Men in Groups* (a biological determinist argument for male superiority): "Put Lionel Tiger Back in the Zoo!"; in Winnipeg they produced feminist theatre — songs, dances and games, skits, readings and slide shows — "a sort of Brechtian view of the whole struggle of women since the beginning of time"; and in Vancouver, the Women's Caucus, having descended the mountain from SFU, presented briefs at hearings into human rights legislation, started publishing a newspaper, *The Pedestal*, and mounted

# f the Women



a public celebration of International Women's Day, an event that would become annual and national in scope.



Abortion Caravan photos by Mary Trew

## THE CRIMINAL CODE

In 1969, after two years of review during which Parliament's Standing Committee on Health and Welfare had received briefs on the abortion issue and had undoubtedly paid some attention to the public campaign of women's liberation groups for reform of the inflexible legislation governing abortion, a bill was passed by the House of Commons by which abortion continued to be illegal in Canada except under certain conditions. The conditions, as it turned out, added fat to the fire and brought sharply into focus what had been previously obscured by the universality of the issue: the class nature of abortion legislation.

According to the reforms, abortion must be performed by a qualified doctor in an accredited or approved hospital, the doctor must first receive a certificate in writing from the hospital's therapeutic abortion committee stating that the continuation of the woman's pregnancy "would or would not be likely to endanger her life or health," and the committee must consist of at least three doctors. No hospital is required by this legislation to have a therapeutic abortion committee.

This much at least was welcome to many women who would otherwise have been desperate (Toronto General Hospital recorded a tenfold increase in the number of abortions performed there in the first year after the new law). But it quickly became obvious to the militants of the women's movement that they had been cheated of the intent of their campaign. Subsequent to the legislation, as before it, abortion was the right of only a minority of women: those who had access to the levers of its administration and knew how to manipulate them. For all the other women, it was still a cruel choice between an enforced pregnancy and delivery, and an illegal abortionist.

Once again the women's liberation movement geared up for another assault on the law. Women pointed out, in leaflets and demonstrations and briefs and speeches all across the country, that the hospitals' decision-making structures were entirely in the hands of male professionals and of a bureaucracy that could not be expected to act expeditiously and in the best interests of the woman herself (by the time she has noted a missed period, gone to her doctor, applied to the review board, found witnesses and experts, submitted to questioning, and heard a decision, she may well be more than three months pregnant, in which case abortion becomes a risky operation). They argued that, in seeking an abortion for "health" reasons, "it will be the affluent middle class women who know about and have access to a sympathetic psychologist. What help will such a law be for the women who are intimidated or refused by doctors and psychologists because they cannot pay?" Women living in isolated areas, in Roman Catholic dioceses, and in towns where no hospital establishes an abortion committee are effectively prevented from exercising their right to a legal abortion, which remains the privilege of women with money of their own who live in large centres close to liberal hospitals, liberal doctors, and the support facilities of the women's liberation movement. The only humane, just, and liberating solution to this cruel discrimination was the provision of abortion on the simple demand of the pregnant woman herself. Repeal all abortion laws! Abortion is our right! Every child a wanted child! Control of our own bodies! By the thousands women sent postcards to Prime Minister Trudeau, Minister of Justice Turner, and Minister of Health Munro, demanding that the clauses related to abortion be removed from the Criminal Code. They marched on Mother's Day. They held educational. In Vancouver, on behalf of Dr. Robert Makaroff, who had been charged in early 1970 with conspiring to procure an illegal abortion ("we feel that charging a doctor...clearly illustrates the inadequacies of the new law...a doctor cannot obtain sufficient access to the legal channels for abortion to fill the needs of his patients"; *The Pedestal*, April 1970) the Women's Caucus demonstrated, picketed, and forced their way into the courtroom where the case was being heard, with a placard: "If Trudeau had an abortion, would HIS doctor go to jail for life?"

## ABORTION CARAVAN

In April 1970, a call came from the Vancouver Women's Caucus for women across Canada to join a caravan that would travel from Vancouver to Ottawa, there to confront the prime minister: "We consider the government of Canada is in a state of war with the women of Canada. If steps are not taken to implement our demands by Monday, May 11, 1970 at 3:00 pm, we will be forced to respond by declaring war on the Canadian government."

And so they set out from Vancouver, stopping in a dozen towns and cities en route to Ottawa, holding public meetings and swelling their ranks with supporters anxious to add their bodies to the demonstration planned for Parliament Hill. In Kamloops, Edmonton, Regina, Winnipeg, the Lakehead, Sudbury, and Toronto, activists knew they were coming, from the invitation issued in *The Pedestal*, the only sustained communications link that women's liberation groups had with each other; they greeted them, billeted them, cooked up hot suppers. (Thirty-five years earlier, another generation of women militants had done precisely the same for another on-to-Ottawa trek of insurgents, travelling the same route.) Up and down the streets of downtown, the caravan drove, blaring from a loudspeaker the Judy Collins version of "We Want Our Revolution," while women sang along and distributed literature and talked to people in the streets. They travelled with a coffin, symbolizing the women dead from illegal abortions, and filled it in one town after another with petitions signed by thousands and thousands of women demanding the repeal of the abortion laws. "We worked very hard. I'm sure we knocked on every door in the city to get these names. We felt excitement and affection and bravado, waiting for the caravan. For the first time in my life my head and my feelings came together."



They drove into Ottawa with placards pasted on their cars and vans, drove in with women hanging out the windows, shouting and singing — women drove in from the highway who had been too scared to ever drive the highway before — and in the streets women waved V's and clenched fists back at them. Billeted en masse at a church, they hunkered down for strategy sessions, trying to arrive, by consensus and collective decision-making, at a plan of action for the weekend, while the menfolk who had accompanied them cooked the meals and "did whatever we needed done to carry out our strategy." They decided that, "disguised" as respectable women and armed with forged passes to the House of Commons galleries procured by sympathetic female support staff on Parliament Hill, they would disrupt Parliament by chaining themselves to their seats. Not everyone would go in: the action could provoke arrests and prosecution. No woman should feel compelled to participate and, besides, she could be useful outside, mounting a diversionary demonstration.

This was the first time that political women admitted that they were scared — in SUPA it had been politically "incorrect" to be scared — and that they didn't want to

go on this action because they were scared of getting their wrists broken or of being in jail. That was accepted. I was scared and I remembered that I had always refused to go on big anti-war marches because I was scared. I was still scared but this time I felt it was worth it, even if I had to go to jail for two years. I wanted to do this.

And so they sent the men out to hardware stores to get chains and locks and themselves scrounged skirts and shoes and make-up from Ottawa women and then were ready.

On Saturday, May 9, over 500 women and their supporters marched to Parliament Hill and demanded unsuccessfully to meet with Trudeau, Munro, and Turner. (Trudeau was "unavailable" as he was preparing for a trip abroad, Munro was in Geneva, and Turner was playing tennis.) Instead they held a rally. Woman after woman stood up to denounce the abortion laws and the bureaucracy calcifying their implementation, to publicize statistics of death and sterility from abortion, to describe their experiences with hospital boards and doctors, to lead in songs and slogans. "Just Society Just for the Rich!" Doris Power of the Just Society Movement in Toronto stood up to speak:

As you can see, I am pregnant. Under our new "liberalized" abortion laws I applied for a therapeutic abortion at a Toronto hospital...When I was refused the abortion, the doctor asked if I would obtain an illegal abortion. I replied that many women did. He then said, "Well, take your rosary and get to Hell out of here." One of the questions low-income women are asked when applying for abortions is, "Will you agree to sterilization?"...We, the poor of Canada, are the dirt shoyed under the rug of a vicious economy...What control can we have over our lives if we have no control over our own bodies?



And then, angered and distressed, they all marched to 24 Sussex Drive, some on the first march of their lives, come all the way from Vancouver and Calgary to shout and sing along with the women who had been in the movement for years, all of them sensing they were part of the same historical motion now, class and age and race and experience subsumed within this wave of women united in sisterhood against the regime of the woman-haters and woman-murderers and woman-crushers. "Women-power to the women-people!" They marched their way past the dumbfounded RCMP guards at the prime minister's residence, sat on the lawn for an hour, and marched out, leaving behind the coffin full of petitions, coat hangers, Lysol, and knives.

Monday, May 11. They got dressed that morning in their "disguises," wearing long-sleeved blouses over the chains wrapped around their arms, and strolled over to Parliament Hill, casually going into the galleries in ones and twos, while a large contingent gathered for a demonstration at the steps of the Peace Tower. In the House of Commons, the Honourable gentlemen were discussing the condition of the carpeting in the visitors' elevators.

At a quarter past three I stood up and started making my speech, demanding free abortion. It took the security guard a fair amount of time to reach me so that I was almost finished by the time he got to me. The woman beside me who had been really nervous stood up as he came towards her — one of these great decisions that she had made — and said she wasn't going to let him touch me. She got totally into it. He grabbed me and he pulled me out and I think we reached the door before the next person started: I was shouting all the while. Outside he said, "Well, dear, you've had your little say, haven't you?" It must have taken us three or four minutes to walk down to the main office. By that time bells were ringing and people were screaming and running all over the place. Another guard came in and said, "There's thirty of them in there and they're all chained to their seats!" It dawned on him that I was not a nut; or that if I was a nut then there were a lot of nuts in there with me. He'd obviously taken nuts out of the gallery before but this was different.

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# ARTS

## A Riddle Wrapped in a Mystery inside a Cabbage Roll

by Barbara Halpern Martineau

to smash all ghettos that divide us — not to go back, not to go back — this to teach.

— "Tell Me A Riddle," Tillie Olsen, 1960.

Tillie Olsen, magical name. When she came quietly to Toronto last year the women's network flashed its signals and a church basement was filled with an attentive, even reverential audience (see *Broadside*, Vol. 1, no. 7). In the early, strife-torn days of the women's movement, when all leadership, expertise, professional qualifications were suspect, Tillie Olsen spoke with the unchallengeable voice of those who had never had power, and she spoke with a new kind of authority. She *knew*, as few have known, *what* had been suppressed when creative voices and visions were suppressed, she had read voraciously the ephemeral literature of the nineteenth century, the magazine stories, pamphlets, articles in which women's fragmented lives were given expression, she had found them yellowing in junk shops and on the backshelves of the most obscure recesses of a few libraries. She read, she thought, she pondered, all the while living the life of domestic hardship she was later to assess as the main silencer of so many women. She herself — a superwoman who was able to come back to her writing after years of enforced silence, years of crushing responsibilities to her children, to the demands of the necessary job, of the household — came back to writing, to producing work of extraordinary force and clarity. She insisted that what she had done should not be required of anyone with words to shape into visions, *and* she insisted on telling of the wrong done to others silenced by the situation of their sex, colour, class, belief.

Tillie Olsen said in *Silences*, the oracle book of all struggling writers, that her own work and the work of many others has been crippled by poverty and oppression, that these are not the necessary surroundings of art. That nurturing is required for full flowering of the creative force, that suppression stunts, withholds, limits. She said it is not good to be a victim. She said oppression has no justification. And she wrote stories of oppression, victimization, frustration, anger, rage, stories which see oppression from the inside, as very few stories have done until recently. What is rare about Tillie Olsen's work is that she shares the experience and the feelings of victims, and has the knowledge and analysis and understanding of the forces of victimization, and is able creatively to express her vision in prose like lightning, jagged, blinding in its force, revealing hidden corners of the night. She writes as a woman, which she is, as a poor person, which she has been, as a black, and she is not black, as a Jew and she is not a Jew. But she has known the ghetto intimately.

I had not read the story "Tell Me A Riddle" when I first saw the film based on it, a Hollywood film directed by Lee Grant and produced by three young women who call themselves the Godmothers. The film, as I saw it that first fresh time, evoked memories of my grandmother, feeling about old age and death and memories of childhood and family, the sense of what it is to be a woman expected to put books aside for babies, what it is to nurse private visions, to live a secret life in the midst of clamorous need, what it is to be old and sick and in touch with a lifetime of memories, so many of them terrifying.

An old woman wants to live out her life in her own house, quiet, undisturbed, free for the first time to read, think, play records she can barely hear with her hearing aid turned up full volume. She has her scrapbook to pore over, not snapshots of babies and pets, although her family boasts plenty of both, but a scrapbook of revolution, photographs, clippings quotations — Tolstoy, Chekhov, Mill, Goldman, Luxembourg.

Eva's husband, David, struggling to maintain the large clapboard house, painfully wrestling with ladders, storm windows, responsibilities, wants something different, wants



"Godmothers" (l to r) Mindy Affrime, Susan O'Connell and Rachel Lyon



Melvyn Douglas and Lila Kedrova in "Tell me a Riddle."

to sell the house, move to the Union Haven he himself helped to establish. They argue, their children come to mediate, the conflict seems irreconcilable, suddenly she is so ill nothing else matters. They don't tell her she has a year, at most, to live riddled with cancer, they take her off to visit her children and grandchildren around the country, the trip of her life, and without telling her they sell the house.

In a suburban split-level, surrounded by adoring grandchildren, her daughter hands her the youngest, the baby. She backs away, terror in her eyes. I hadn't read the story yet, but the scene in the film struck the same chord of recognition in me that I later felt reading Olsen's lines:

A new baby. How many warm, seductive babies. She holds him stiffly, *away* from her, so that he wails. And a long shudder begins, and the sweat beads on her forehead.

Her husband has no such problem — he rocks the baby happily, croons to it — his life was not devoured for years by the all-consuming needs of babies.

When they arrive in San Francisco, to stay with their granddaughter, Jeannie, Eva finds a soul-companion, a young woman of spirit, independent, like and unlike herself at the same age. For at Jeannie's age Eva had already borne children, had known the incredible poverty of the old country and the grinding, soul-destroying poverty of the Depression in the new country, more, had lived in prison, seen her best friend hanged for killing an informer, known pogroms and revolution. How can Jeannie know, as she weeps for her aborted child, what Eva knows of childbirth and child-death, of choice denied and denials imposed?

Eva, dying, bequeathes her spirit, her love of knowledge, her fierce heritage of revolt, to Jeannie. Jeannie, nursing her grandmother, trying to comfort her grandfather, dancing with him as her dying grandmother dances at the village wedding where she danced as a child, is the connecting link for the audience, the young, open, New Age child of light and liberty who embodies her grandmother's dreams. Returning for a second viewing I cried as much as I did the first time as Jeannie dances, solemnly, joyously, with her

grief-stunned grandfather. Melvyn Douglas is superb as David, Lila Kedrova's Eva glows as she dances in the waves of the Pacific Ocean. The film is compelling, evocative, conjuring memories, dreams, old fears and ideals. It is truly the emotional counterpart of the story. But it lacks the story's sinews.

Once you went for coffee I walked I saw A Balzac an  
Chekhov to write it  
Rummage Alone  
On scraps  
Better old here than in the old country!  
On scraps

Turning to Tillie Olsen's story I realized that it is steeped in Jewishness, written with the turns of phrase, pacing, eye for detail that conjures my own Litvak grandmother and Russian grandfather, all the aunts and uncles and cousins. No white clapboard seven-room house like the apple-pie American vision in the film, no round-faced granny like Kedrova, no, Tillie Olsen's old couple lived in a five-room house filled with furniture (the heavy, cluttered spaces of childhood memory), and Eva has a "gnome's face" with heavy spectacles and a magnifying glass for poring at her



Director Lee Grant

books. The dialogue in the film has been pruned of the constant richness of Jewish phrasing it has in the story, the family scenes have a distinctly WASP feel to them, and the storyline has been pruned of its more radical edges. Eva, in the story, rages against the hypocrisy and oppression of traditional Judaism — refuses to light her daughter's Sabbath candles:

Swindler! does she look back on the dark centuries? Candles bought instead of bread and stuck into a potato for a candlestick? Religion that stifled and said: in Paradise, woman, you will be the footstool of your husband, and in life — poor chosen Jew — ground under, despised, trembling in cellars. And cremated. And cremated.

As Eva nears death, Olsen's David hears without wanting to the words of her tortured consciousness:

the sounds worked themselves into his consciousness, with their punctuation of death swallows, whimpers, gurglings.

*Even in reality (swallow) life's lack of it*

*Slaveships deathtrains clubs eenough*

*The bell summon what enables*

*78,000 in one minute (whisper of a scream) 78,000 human beings we'll destroy ourselves*

David, resisting, is finally overcome, not as in the film by guilt for having sold the house (in the story he does not), but by a realization like an epiphany, impossible to show in the realist framework of a Hollywood film, neither a flashback nor a dream.

*And every life (long strangling cough) shall be a song*

The cards fell from his fingers. Without warning, the bereavement and betrayal he had sheltered — compounded through the years — hidden even from himself — revealed itself, uncoiled, released, sprung



Brooke Adams and Melvyn Douglas

and with it the monstrous shapes of what had actually happened in the century.

Thinking of his own life, so hard, like hers, of all the suffering, the hard work, the constant worrying, and of their

grandchildren, so privileged, tall, straight, like nobility in their old village, his and Eva's

And was this not the dream then, come true in ways undreamed? he asked.

*And are there no other children in the world?* he answered, as if in her harsh voice.

This, not Jeannie's heritage, is the discovery of the story — or rather, this is Jeannie's heritage, the bone, the uncompromising refusal to forget that wrong has been done, is still being done, will still be done, and must not be smoothed over, ignored, tactfully evaded, and cannot be. That wrong is specific, rooted in details of ethnicity, of daily life, that it was Jews, activists, homosexuals, lesbians, feminists, dissenting intellectuals who were gassed without distinction, precisely to obliterate what had made them distinct. That it is the daily life of women — starting fresh as Jeannie, with as much hope to create (for in the story Jeannie quits her job as a nurse to work at her art) — which has crushed them, as Eva was crushed, rendered silent, her revolutionary voice stilled, by all those years of babies.

There is a minor scene in the story, easily dramatized, but not included in the film, in which David takes Eva to visit prosperous relatives outside San Francisco

This Max and Rose, smooth and pleasant, introducing them to polite children, disinterested grandchildren ... After dinner ... the four of them alone. She sat close to him, and did not speak. Jokes, stories, people they had known, beginning of reminiscence, Russia fifty-sixty years ago. Strange words across the Duncan Phyfe table: hunger; secret meetings; human rights; spies; betrayals; prison; escape — interrupted by one of the grandchildren: "Commercial's on; any Coke left?" ... No incident — except that there had been no incident.

No incidents. So the film makers invented, instead, a breaking romance between Jeannie and a young artist. Human interest. But taking away the focus, the uncompromising specificity of Eva's passion and David's realization, the unrighted wrong of Eva's long silence. The hard edge, the gnarled, polished, diamond-hard words, evoking and then refusing sentimentality, not the soft-focussed flashback of the Hollywood film, but memory in the present, as nightmare, as vision, "as the sweat beads, and the long shudder seizes."

*Even in reality (swallow) life's lack of it.*

## SIDELINES

In light of the recent acclaim and wide publicity accompanying the commercial release of *Le Bons Debarras*, a Québec film by Francis Mankiewicz, please remember the warning note issued in *Broadside's* review of the Festival of Festivals (Vol. 2, nos. 1 & 2). Applauding the wit and vivacity of the first half of the film, the review goes on to attack the denouement: "...as the film gets going, Manon's "crush" on her mother turns her into a monster, working to isolate her not-very-bright mother from everyone else, and eventually causing her uncle's death. In one particularly offensive scene Manon's accusation that her mother's boyfriend has assaulted her sexually leads her mother to an hysterical attack on the dumbfounded man. This is the sort of scene which the filmmaker and the patriarchy at large will defend by saying, well, such things really happen. But one chooses what minute aspect of reality one shows in a

film. Given the shockingly high incidence of incest and sexual assault on young girls in our society, a scene which shows one precocious youngster crying wolf in a context which stresses her perversity is distortive and deeply sexist."

*A Wives' Tale*, reviewed in *Broadside* (Vol. 2, no. 4) recently received the Québec Critics Award, and was nominated for a Genie Award for Best Documentary.

### ANNEKE STEENBEEK

Anneke Steenbeek's show will open March 1, 1981, at the Gallery O, 589 Markham Street, Toronto. For information call 533-6137.

### JOYCE WIELAND



Debbie Shackleton

Joyce Wieland's show "Bloom of Matter" opened February 21, 1981 and will run till March 13, at the Issaacs Gallery, 832 Yonge Street, Toronto.

### Abortion Caravan, from page 13

As soon as she had been dragged out, the next woman, chained to her seat by the ankle, stood up and shouted the statement about the right to control of her body, and then another woman and another, in this gallery and that gallery, while the guards rushed frantically from one to the other, unable to drag them out until they got hacksaws and pulled them free from the chains. As they chanted, over and over, "free abortion on demand" and "every child a wanted child," the Speaker adjourned the session, the first time in the history of the Canadian House of Commons that it was closed because of a disturbance. The women were photographed by the RCMP but were not arrested. They rejoined their supporters outside and there staged a mock funeral and burned a facsimile of the Criminal Code. Removing their black headscarves, symbolic of the deaths of women by illegal abortions, they revealed red scarves underneath and with fists in the air chanted, "no more women will die." (*Carillon*, May 21, 1970)

On Monday, the same day that women were chaining themselves to their seats in the House of Commons, women in Vancouver, dressed up in bizarre costumes, "witched" the federal courthouse: they glued up onto a wall a declara-

tion that the federal government was killing the women of Canada and splashed it with red paint. A man, charged with being an accomplice to the defacement of federal property became the women's movement's first official martyr in the courts. (In the end, he got off.)

### WHAT NEXT?

Still high and buzzing with the fervour of the united actions of the Abortion Caravan, women's liberationists from across the country convened in Saskatoon in November 1970 to answer the question: what next for us? In the debates that followed, the unity of the springtime dissolved. Of course it had been their collective oppression as women that had first drawn the militants together, out of the new left formations and the high schools and the suburbs and offices, and it had been sisterhood that had congealed their commitment and passion and loyalty, but, as the movement developed in action, strategy, and theory, a diversity of political stances became inevitable. Although everyone could agree that women were oppressed the world over, there was no agreement on how their liberation was to

be achieved. And it was disputing the correct strategy of a liberation movement that the women split.

There was a contingent in Saskatoon, largely Trotskyist, which argued for a continuation and intensification of the free-abortion-on-demand campaign: it made sense, they argued, to concentrate militant energies on a single issue instead of spreading them thinly over the myriad issues of women's lives and it especially made sense given the issue's appeal and importance to every woman. There was a ready-made mass base of support for the campaign and the movement should take advantage of the interest, excitement, and consciousness aroused by the Abortion Caravan. Besides, the battle may have been fought but the war against the laws was scarcely won.

It should have been no great surprise to anyone then when no single, broad, all-encompassing union of women's liberationists emerged from Saskatoon but instead a large number of militants variously organized around this program and that, this theoretical position and that.

It may have seemed, depressingly enough, mere squabbling at the time. The disputes were, however, a sign that the women's liberation movement had engaged with the real politik of radicalism.

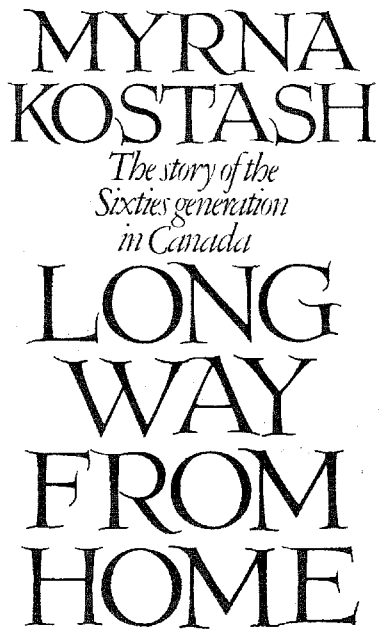
## Myrna Kostash:

# Where Have All the Flowers Gone?

by Susan G. Cole

### A Long Way from Home

By Myrna Kostash. Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, Publishers, 1980. Pp. 300



MYRNA  
KOSTASH  
*The story of the  
Sixties generation  
in Canada*  
LONG  
WAY  
FROM  
HOME

No doubt a number of readers will approach a book that celebrates the generation of the sixties with a healthy dose of skepticism. What, as we plough through this bleak decade, is there to celebrate about — a generation born into an illusion of affluence only to find recession and unemployment in the eighties and what was specifically Canadian about the baby boom's confrontation with the establishment?

Myrna Kostash, the author of *A Long Way from Home*, anticipates these inevitable questions about change in the sixties. In her introduction, she promises to show that there was something distinctive about Canadian political movements of the decade, that radicalism was not imported from the United States and that where there grew movements that mirrored those developing in America — the student and peace movements — these movements had a national identity of their own. Those of us who went through early adulthood with the sound and fury of the sixties, she concludes, are better off for the experience. We will, she insists, make a difference.

It is some fifty to one hundred pages into the book before Kostash begins to keep her promises. The first chapters outline the early influences on Canadian radicals, which came from all over the world. Some were inevitably American, particularly the activities of the Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC), formed out of the struggle of blacks in the United States and the actions of the Student Democratic Society (SDS) protesting America's military involvement in Indochina. The latter inspired Canadian peace activists to demonstrate against American consulates across the country. The Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA), the first murmur of the student movement in Canada, learned community organizing skills directly from American activists in SNCC.

It was the strength of the burgeoning anti-nuclear movement in Britain that moved outraged Canadians to protest vigorously against nuclear proliferation in the late fifties and early sixties. The Canadian movement for nuclear disarmament did become a force to be reckoned with but it had been closely linked to socialist movements for years and its adherents had been hard at it throughout the fifties. These activists can hardly be called members of the sixties generation nor, I suspect, do they wish to be.

It wasn't until the middle of the decade that people between the ages of 16 and 30 grew visibly disgruntled and restless, and it isn't until close to one-third through Kostash's book that we find out why. First there is an influx of American war resisters and the sudden appearance of a new political community; there are rumblings in Quebec; there are explosions on campuses across this country.

Kostash's chapters on the student uprisings give a historical account of the varying protests and demands that emerged from the universities from Simon Fraser to Dalhousie. It is tempting to write them all off as a collective knee-jerk reaction to similar goings-on on campuses across America, activities to which the media were giving a high profile. Kostash argues, and rightly, that Canadian students had something different at stake. Whereas American students demanded relevance, Canadian students demanded relevance combined with the socialist thought that was losing ground in higher education.

Historically, American activists have been concerned with issues surrounding individual rights assumed to be safeguarded in the American constitution. Canadian student leftists, not nearly so alienated from their socialist roots as their American counterparts, always had the kind of broader international perspective inherent in even a quasi-Marxist political analysis. The crucial distinction between the American new left and the surge of Canadian radical activity is that the socialist tradition had remained intact in Canada and was institutionalized through the CCF and the NDP political parties while America's socialist movement was fractured in the fifties by McCarthyism and Cold War politics.



This distinction applies to the Canadian and American student and peace movements and is a continuing theme of *A Long Way from Home*. Kostash carries it through to her analysis of the movement for an economically independent Canada. The economic analysis Canadian activists supplied led them to the consciousness of Canada's place in the global village and moved them to the rallying cry "Save Canada." American activists, on the other hand, when it came to sloganeering, delivered that familiar fulmination, "Fuck America."

One word about the student movement, a development Kostash describes without the same critical force she applies to other events of the sixties: at a certain point in her discussion she identifies as a healthy development the fact that students learned to organize in their own self-interests. Having realized that the university was preparing them for a future they rejected outright, students came to see the relationship between the "knowledge" of the university curriculum and the capitalist machine. Yes, it is good to make the connections and to follow the advice to "organize in your place of work study, wherever you are." But whereas Kostash dismisses Prime Minister Trudeau's response to student protestors' demands as flippant — "You're selfish" is what he said — there was a nagging element of truth, irksome as it was coming from the head of state.

It was something students could never really come to terms with: they, as students anyway, were temporarily radicals, enrolling in universities and then leaving either as graduates or drop-outs. Similarly, the student movement would come and go. And in

fact, though Trudeau could not have had precisely this in mind, and even when seen in the context Kostash takes pains to provide, demands do come across as rather trivial when compared to the subsistence demands of welfare mothers or of working class Québécois. Students may have been organizing in their own interests, but that would change the moment they left the university. Capitalism and the patriarchy are machines that keep classes in their places, whether they are classes of women, workers, blacks, or native Canadians. Nothing we do will change the fact that we are women. But we could not remain students forever and a temporary identity as a class makes for a short-lived movement. In a way, the resistance to taking the student movement dead seriously was understandable.

For the most part Kostash is totally prepared to take a critical approach to her material and has a unique facility for pointing out the blunders and naivete of movements saddled with the task of focussing and organizing energies. One could almost call *A Long Way from Home* a guide to the Canadian left and it is enormously useful. By the end of the book we are convinced that Canada's upheaval is specific to this country. There are, after all, no Québécois in the United States, the politics of Native

were being taken for a ride. Kostash understands this, too: "It was primordial feminism, I suppose, that made women self-protectively blank out the words to 'Under My Thumb,' or 'American Woman' to 'So Long Marianne,' or failing that, to pretend that we were men. Anything to keep on dancing." Here Kostash brushes the idea of nascent feminist consciousness, but the story of its full bloom, she reminds us, is a story of the seventies and a story, I hope, that Kostash will choose as the basis for her next book. She is definitely equipped to do it justice.

Kostash, though, does not grind some of her axes all that successfully. It is never clear why she gives the Company of Young Canadians such a thorough trashing. Other points could have been made more strongly. "Don't sell Canada out," was the watchword of economic nationalists in Canada and now that oil is the obsession of the eighties, the watchword seems prophetic indeed. We were right, and that is something that can never be given too much emphasis. But these are small complaints about a book that does just about what it wants to do.

But only "just about." *A Long Way from Home* is very convincing for part of its thesis — that there was a Canadian radical movement, that it had Canadian themes and gave to Canadians a national sense that did not exist in 1960. But Kostash's emotional commitment is to the notion that the sixties generation will matter in the great scheme of things. Kostash wants us to believe that there developed a political consciousness that has not dissipated with the passing of time. Given our present state, one is left wondering whether the real story of the sixties isn't simply the tale of a collection of earnest folk-singing kids who got blown away by counter-culturalists who didn't give a damn, preferring instead to give way to commercial exploitation.

The seventies provided the first testing ground. Even the application of the War Measures Act in October 1970, that tangible threat from the state with the potential to galvanize the vaguely progressive, failed to make the radical movement a mass movement in this country. A quick survey of political survivors finds them in the women's movement. A quick survey of survivors of the alternative culture finds them either in law school, at the stock exchange, or in the counter-economy — a virulently capitalist one — of Hare Krishna and other affiliates of cosmic consciousness and the meditation movements. These last are fervently apolitical. The women's movement, we hope, will make a difference. But whether the actual political activity of the sixties was more than a brief spasm of outrage remains to be seen. I for one do not share Myrna Kostash's optimism concerning our generation. But you have to love her for the fact that she still believes.

land claims and the Indian movement took a different form than its counterpart in the United States; nationalism, a tendency perceived as wholly reactionary by American leftists, became one of the hallmarks of the Canadian new left. Kostash puts all of this into perspective and the reader's initial skepticism with her thesis inevitably dissolves with each chapter.

Myrna Kostash writes some wonderful prose. One can tell, though, when her heart is in it and when she'd rather give the list of events and move on. This inclination to catalogue organizations, conferences, and street actions as well as the various acronyms for political caucuses (a reference key with abbreviations and full names would have facilitated faster reading) makes the first chapters somewhat rocky, but by the time she gets to the arrival of the draft dodgers, she is downright moving. And in her discussion of the counter-culture, she is in terrific form:

But until they (counter-culturalists) also articulated how broad masses of people were to get from the enslaving, bourgeois "here" to the liberating, post-revolutionary "there", until they articulated a strategy of change beyond the individualistic action of dropping out, the counter-culture would present nothing more than a pleasurable holding tank for social misfits in the bourgeois backyard.

I can't think of anyone who has said it better.

Not that Kostash didn't love that part of the sixties with a passion. We all did, even though as women we had the gut feeling we



Myrna Kostash



# Pam Brighton:

## The Taming of the Bard

by Patricia O'Leary

After the rough and tumble production of *The Taming of the Shrew* at Toronto's Young People's Theatre, I thought Shakespeare can actually be fun. Pratsfalls, whacks on the rear and in the face — it looked like a combination of Starsky and Hutch and Saturday Morning Cartoons — but it sure kept your interest, the kids in the audience loved it, and the cast was great.



Director Pam Brighton

I talked the next day to director Pam Brighton. In the past few years, Brighton has had some ups — among them productions of *Dusa*, *Fish*, *Stas and Vi*; *The Club*, and *Henry VI* at Stratford; and some downs — including being summarily fired by the Board of Directors last fall at The Stratford Festival along with three other directors.

Pam Brighton is a woman on a grand scale. She is tall and large and has a pleasant quality: the night after the opening she was bushed, but she was intent on being nice to me, offering me sherry in her apartment to keep out the cold winter night's chill, apologizing for not being more lively, and talking to her young son Ned, whom she hadn't seen much of for weeks.

I was interested in how she had decided to approach Shakespeare's male-supremacist play. "I must admit I did feel some pressure to do a feminist version," she says, "but in the long run I was actually more concerned with the style of it. There is not much you can actually do to change the content, but one can hope to make it more human in its interpretation."

The style concerned her because she thinks most Shakespeare is done in an effete, mannered way that didn't really reflect the times. "Shakespeare was a popular writer; he didn't even like the upper class much. Actors were a sort of rough and ready group who didn't have the bourgeois position in society that they have today". So her production is very broad, vulgar, physical, and funny, geared very much to a young audience.

Brighton wanted to do Shakespeare with Canadian actors that she had worked with, and she wanted to get away from Stratford and do it in Toronto. "Canadian actors don't get much chance to do comedy," she says. "Usually they're stuck with the sort of mannered English comedies which mean nothing to them, or with very slick North American shows." In this *The Taming of the Shrew* they have a chance to have some fun, and much of the comic effect comes from the capabilities of the cast members themselves.

The cast is uniformly good, from Susan Hogan and her husband Michael as Kate and Petruchio, Mary Ann McDonald as an unusual and particularly flaky Bianca, Maja Ardal as all the servants rolled into one funny female servant, Richard Donat (last seen as Cuirette in *Hosanna*), R.H. Thomson, and others. Brighton thinks it is good to see women being funny on stage, as they are here. "Usually they get stuck with being little goody-two-shoes."

Pam Brighton came from the Royal Court in Britain and has established herself as one of Canada's best new directors. She has worked steadily for the past few years as a director but says it is difficult for a woman to find work because most boards of directors are middle-aged businessmen who really don't believe that a woman can handle a large organization or a theatrical production. Women don't get hired as Artistic directors of theatres, and men tend to hire men. "Many men see their theatres as extensions of their characters and they aren't comfortable working with a woman," she says. "Especially if there is a chance that she might do the job better than he does."

There is, according to Brighton, a rather uneasy connection between public subsidy and private capital in the theatre; that boards made up of businessmen are in control of the artistic life of the country. "It's the only profession where people are in control who know nothing about it."

Brighton is understandably angry that the Stratford Board was able to fire her and the others so abruptly: "It is an outrageous waste of talent and money." And boards are, more and more, becoming politically involved in the plays that are being presented. "A few years ago I was about to direct a production of *Juno and the Paycock* at Theatre Plus — I think it's an absolutely wonderful play about women. Then Lord Mountbatten was killed, and the Board said, 'We mustn't do anything Irish here.' They did not want to be seen to support the cause."

But Brighton overcame difficulties. She is an innovative director who is able to make things seem believable on stage. She doesn't take the theatre world too seriously. "If you went into it with too much reverence and awe, you would be really quite screwed by it." She thinks a lot of theatre is very badly done, so there's nothing much to lose by doing something new; she doesn't hold to the sacredness of traditions.

The past few months have left Brighton tired and skeptical about her future. The Stratford battle may be having an adverse effect — some people may feel she was fired for incompetence, rather than as the result of political in-fighting in the Stratford Board of Directors. She doesn't have a lot of work lined up.

But she is putting together an evening of songs by the remarkable Australian feminist songwriter Robin Archer in March. And she has a commitment to the actors she works with, who believe in her and her work as a valuable contribution to Canadian theatre. She won't be in a slump for long.

So how about the play. Most people know the story — a troupe of actors in a tavern present a play: sweet young thing, Bianca, has lots of suitors, but her father has decreed that she may not marry until a husband is found for her older sister, Kate, who is the terror of the neighbourhood and the scourge of men everywhere. But Kate has a fortune, and Petruchio, a stranger in town, decides to try and "tame" her for the sake of it. There follows a battle royal, and Kate is finally (ugh) tamed. Bianca can get married, and all ends happily.

But how to produce the play and keep some self-respect? "I felt that keeping it as a play within a play gave the action some sort of distance," says Brighton. She was mainly concerned with showing the irony of the situation, and made a few changes to that end. "The last speech was intolerable as said by a woman", so she has Petruchio deliver the speech that says "women are bound to serve, love and obey." When he finishes, Kate hands him a drink and he splashes it in his own face, which is intended to point up the fatuousness of what he has just said. It doesn't really work, but as Brighton says, "As a woman, I was naturally trying to prove the last speech fallacious."

What did work though, was the humanizing of the characters, adding depth to what are usually stereotypical roles. Kate, Bianca and Petruchio all came across as quite natural people reacting to uncomfortable circumstances. "As women, Susan and Mary Ann and I talked quite a lot about how the characters would feel", says Brighton. Both Kate and her younger, prettier sister Bianca were in intolerable situations. And in this production, Bianca was actually supposed to be worse off, in her own way, than Kate. Because she is in a powerless position where she can do nothing but be manipulative, she resorts to pouting, she fights with her sister, she has some wonderful tantrums (McDonald is an accomplished and hilarious tantrumist). Kate is more outwardly angry and more direct. She is not going to be defeated without a fight: she yells, hits, and knees Petruchio in the groin. She and Bianca have some truly believable fights: As Petruchio, Michael Hogan sends up the male myth, much as Kate does the female one. At first Petruchio is quite nervous at meeting the infamous "Shrew", and as Brighton says, is actually less insidious than the less macho men whose frail egos can only deal with passive, fragile women. Petruchio is intrigued by Kate, and he is strong enough not to be afraid of taking on a strong woman who could well end up making a fool of him.

The production itself is, to put it politely, eclectic: costumes that looked like they came out of Diamond Lil's Saloon, a piano on stage (played to complement the action à la silent movies), the sonnet "When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes" sung by Kate, Bianca and the female servant (Maja Ardal) in a beautiful gospel/blues version that stopped the show. It all goes together though, thanks to the inventiveness of director and cast.

## Books to Note

Broner, E.M.; *A weave of women*; Holt, N.Y., 1978.

Inspiring novel about a group of women in Jerusalem who come from many traditions and opposing outlooks, and yet share their lives and create new ceremonies for birth, marriage and death.

Cook, Alice H.; *Working women in Japan; discrimination, resistance and reform*; Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., 1980.

Cornish, Mary; *Getting organized: building a union*; The Women's Press, Toronto, 1980.

Handbook and guide to assist workers, particularly women, in getting unionized and certified.

Elkins, V.H.; *The rights of the pregnant parent*; Waxwing Productions, Toronto, 1980.

Covers topics such as finding an appropriate hospital and doctor, as well as information about childbirth, nutrition and other related subjects.

Koen, Susan; *Ain't nowhere we can run; a handbook for women on the nuclear mentality*; WAND, Norwich, Vermont, 1980. Feminist analysis of nuclear power; how it affects women physically, strategies for organizing, etc.

Lewis, Sasha Gregory; *Sunday's women; a report of lesbian life today*; Beacon Press, Boston, Mass., 1979.

Description of lesbian life in the US today, which includes topics such as coming out, the effects of gay vs. women's liberation, and lesbian relationships.

Merchant, Carolyn; *The death of nature; women, ecology and the scientific revolution*; Harper and Row, San Francisco, Ca., 1980.

Critical assessment of the scientific revolution of the 16th and 17th century and an exploration of the historical connections between women's issues and ecology.

Yegierska, Anzia; *Bread givers*; Persea Books, N.Y., 1925.

Reprinted novel of a young Jewish woman's struggle to free herself from the constraints of a male-dominated immigrant society.

□ Elaine Berns, Co-ordinator  
YWCA Women's Resource Centre

These books are for sale at the Toronto Women's Bookstore, 85 Harbord St., and on loan from the YWCA Women's Resource Centre, 15 Birch Ave., Toronto.



Susan Hogan and Mary Ann McDonald in "The Taming of the Shrew."

Robert C. Ragdale

# Emperor's Virgin: Fraser's Version

by Sylvia Fraser

I am writing in response to your article 'Sizzlers from Our Sisters' (February 1981) in which Susan G. Cole discusses my novel, *The Emperor's Virgin*, along with *Fanny* by Erica Jong. I offer it in the spirit of dialogue, rather than out of any burning sense of injustice.

For the *Broadside* record: I decided to write a novel set in Imperial Rome, first century A.D., because I was attracted to the true story of the vestal virgin, Cornelia, who was buried alive for breaking her vow of chastity. Like many Canadian women who came of age in the 50's, I was so blighted by society's punitive emphasis on female 'purity', that today I consider virginity to be the vilest word I know — sexist, manipulative, tyrannical. The real fate of Cornelia, a woman of Rome, therefore, became, for me, a powerful personal symbol.

As the only woman with formal power in the patriarchic system of Rome, Vestal Cornelia was a precursor to the liberated career woman, but only at the price women have traditionally been forced to pay: She had to swear chastity, thus trading off her personal life for external power. During the middle ages, when heads of priories became powerful in Europe, the exacted price remained the same: chastity. In this century, that deal has gradually become more psychological than legal, civil or papal. The suffragettes were ridiculed as mannish, asexual battle-axes — i.e., no 'real' woman would want the things they were demanding, and no 'real' man would want them! In the fifties, a girl who yearned to be a doctor instead of a nurse, was warned she would lose her femininity, meaning her chance to marry — a personal life foresworn in favor of mucking about in the male world.

In other ways, Imperial Rome offers a fertile challenge to the modern imagination. While much like ourselves, with the same root traditions, the Romans rode their primitive instincts to unhypocritical conclusions: Instead of boxers with gloves, promoters fielded gladiators with swords. Instead of influence peddled on the sly, their politicians proudly advertised it. Instead of a pretence of equal justice for all, their lawyers based court pleadings on superior birth and rank. In many ways, to write about Rome, is to dramatize, satirize, caricature — and thus take responsibility for — ourselves.

This violence, openly espoused, is tough on squeamish modern sensibilities: How

does an author make it palatable? The usual solution is to filter the gore through the sensibilities of a character who is brighter, or wittier, or more humane than the rest, so the reader can view, even enjoy, the carnage from the vantage of borrowed intellectual/moral superiority. In my view, that's a dangerous copout. Though I *did* cut down on the violence of the historical record, I did not launder it or offer readers that cosy refuge.

Another writer's problem: Sex, leaning toward the kinky and violent, was a court preoccupation — the natural result of a system which represses the softer emotions as weakness. In the first drafts of my novel, I implied sex through the time-honoured asterisk and whitespace. Again, I decided this was a copout. In the finished version, there are quite a few sexual descriptions, but they are no more numerous or intrusive than my descriptions of buildings, food and clothes, and they are detailed in the same deadpan style. That is deliberate.

An important theme of *The Emperor's Virgin* is that of evil in power: What do decent people do when the highest authority is in itself corrupt? This, of course, is the theme of Watergate, played out in blood (as the Romans were wont to do) rather than in bribery, thievery and knavery (as modern North American politicians are wont to do).

Since Susan G. Cole poses as having read my book, one might have expected her to notice some of these things. Unfortunately, she was too intent on gleefully expounding a thesis she gleaned from *Playboy*, December 1980: That women will no longer trade off sex for power, since they now want both. Which brings us to the marvellous irony of Cole's 'review': That is exactly the theme spelled out in the tragedy of Vestal Cornelia, executed because she dared to want sexual feeling as well as public power, yet Cole, in the spirit of one who refuses the food so she can continue to complain about the service, sees the book as illustrating only that women, too, can be sexually aggressive. She thinks the author has written it to prove "she can write about brutality as well as her brothers", and she confides candidly to her audience that she suspects I am "getting off" on it.

Such wilful glibness takes my breath away. Does Cole believe I could write 366 pages of scenes ranging "from dismember-

ment to decapitation to rape to bestiality to gladiatorial orgies" without understanding that I have written a horrifying book? Does she imagine I don't know how much more marketable the book could have been if I had filtered all that unpleasantness through the consciousness of a despot rendered lovable, as Robert Graves did in *I, Claudius*? Does she think that, after twenty years as a writer, I fail to grasp that what really sells in the Canadian market is Harlequin Romance — 50's style titillation without come-across? Dismemberment, decapitation, rape, are brutal. What makes Cole think I am too stupid to notice that? What gives her the right to assume there is only one moral conscience between us, and that she possesses it?

One last problem: Cole says, "I use the word pornography in the way we're accustomed to using it, defining it as an attitude toward human sexuality wherein women are exploited and reach sexual frenzy not through communication with another human being but through the mechanistic manipulation of one or more erogenous zones." Defining the word only in terms of women, and so broadly it seems to include masturbation, is a weird one to me. Presumably, it reflects a feminist bias. My own overview of sex is Reichian. I believe Wilhelm Reich was right in his biological definition of sex as being the healthiest way humans deal with stress (though I hasten to state that is not *all* he/I think it is). I also accept his more controversial political thesis, that the most effective way for a government to control a population is through control of the sex drive, usually by manipulation of female sexuality. Therefore, I consider sex to be a vital theme of artistic, sociological, psychological, scientific in-

quiry, whether or not this intrudes upon someone else's definition of pornography. The desire of some feminists to ban sexual expression that offends their politics, or even their humanity, opens the door to a new puritanism as dangerous to women as the old stuff, since it is always women's sexual organs that are clamped, cut off, scooped out, declared sacred.

I hasten to add that Cole does not suggest, or even imply, such restrictions. My quarrel with her is in the simplistic way in which she applies labels, thus reducing the world — and especially the world of women, since that is her province — to her own perceptions. Like many otherwise intelligent writers, brought up on the heady permissions of personal journalism, Cole is in danger of considering her opinions superior to that about which she opines by virtue of her having typed them out for us. Like many well-intentioned young women, born into a time when feminism is not only possible but well-supported, she lacks a historical sense. Since the world began the day she opened her eyes, and is filtered solely through her experience of it, the sensibilities of a woman who lived 1900 years ago in Rome, or one who was born twenty years before her, are outside her easy grasp. *Playboy*, December 1980, is more likely to be where it's at.

Few novelists attempt to write about how things should be; rather they write about how they seemed to be, to certain people, at a certain time and place. I do not write unflawed books, but neither do I write stupid or amoral ones. For some readers, my intentions in *The Emperor's Virgin* have miscarried; for others, they have not. With sisters like Susan G. Cole, who needs brothers?

## SUSAN G. COLE IN RESPONSE

The first sections of Sylvia Fraser's response to my article form a cogent analysis of sexual politics of ancient Rome, and of their concomitants in the Middle Ages, the Victorian Age and the twentieth century. It is exactly the kind of prose one wishes Fraser would write for mainstream publication — if not as the main body of her text (she is, after all, a novelist) then at least as a foreword to her work. As it stands, *The Emperor's Virgin*, did not, to me anyway, convey the same clarity.

I make the assumption that the publication of a novel is perforce a public act. I *did* think Fraser's writing with such intensity about sex and violence was a statement in itself. Fraser set the record straight by explaining exactly what is the statement she wants to make: that she is not "getting off", as I put it, but feels that it is her responsibility as an artist not to "cop out" by diluting the unseemly facts of Roman life.

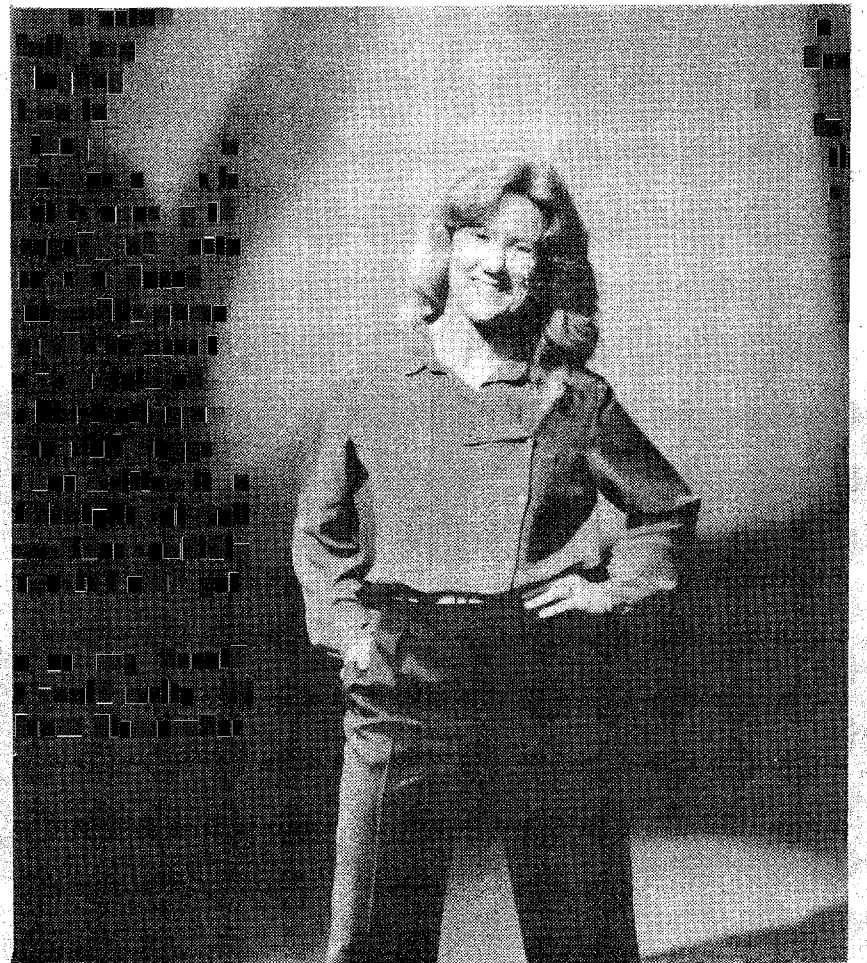
In the course of explaining her point of view, Fraser claims that the sex and violence of *The Emperor's Virgin* is no more intrusive than other descriptions in the book. This, I believe, denies the very point Fraser makes earlier: "violence openly espoused is tough on the modern reader." She also writes that the sexual descriptions (and I would add, the scenes of violent acts) are no more numerous than the descriptions of food, clothing and buildings. This is a backhanded way of saying that there are as many sexual and violent episodes as there are descriptions of the features of Rome's daily life, and surely this is to say that the

sex and violence is plentiful indeed. This fancy bit of verbal footwork, combined with her insistence that she not sell out, merely explains how and why she is writing in a way I defined as pornographic. Far from arguing with my main point, Fraser has essentially written for herself something of an apologia.

Fraser need not have protested so vociferously that her book was not marketable. I never made the claim that she was writing for profit and agree that, if anything, her choice of subject matter and its rendering limited sales. I even granted that there may be an element of healthy risk-taking in her approach and I assiduously avoided making a moral judgment about her literary endeavours. I was assessing what I perceived to be a phenomenon, and the last sentence of my piece asked a *question* about the nobility of her pursuits. In fact, the article was written in the spirit of exploration and dialogue. Happily, Fraser responds in kind and I hope the dialogue continues.

In the meantime, it is somewhat distressing to find that Fraser considers my article something of a betrayal of a sister. Really, is it more sisterly to let pass all the artistic efforts, or any actions for that matter, of women with a "Gee you're female and you've done something, that's terrific" attitude? Can we develop any framework for our values without posing a single question, raising an eyebrow now and then or delivering some kind of criticism on occasion? I think not, on both counts.

## Nearly Here



Holly Near

# Womylny Way

by Judy Liefschultz

One of the most exciting things to appear in Toronto in the last six months is Womylny Way, a women's concert production company. Run by a core group of six women, and many volunteers, they perceive women's music to be "one of the most important things happening in the women's movement." Ruth Dworin heads up the team as overall production coordinator. Through her work as sound technician at the Champagne and Michigan music festivals, she has met performers, learned about production and is now working on her third attempt to produce women's music in Toronto.

Her first try, Sappho Sound, was a sound company. But Ruth found that if she wanted to do sound for women's concerts she would also have to produce them. "We used poor judgement as to who we would draw", she recounts. "We lost money and the process burned us out." At the Champagne Festival in 1979 Holly Near asked Ruth to produce a concert for her anti-nuke tour. The concert at the Faculty of Education building on Bloor St in Toronto was a huge success, and made money. Ruth's confidence as a producer was growing but she was delayed another year by full-time work. Advising on the production of the Lesbian Conference in Toronto in 1979 also added to her experience. At the Michigan festival of 1980 more performers asked her about producing them in Toronto. Last fall Ruth decided "someone had to produce women's music in Toronto", so Womylny Way was born. Its first two productions, Wallflower Order Dance Collective and Rita MacNeil, were the talk of the town.

So far Womylny Way is just breaking even, but as of the Holly Near concert on March 20 Ruth wants that to change: "I don't believe in volunteerism, I want to pay everyone. If we pay everyone \$200-300 it



Dorothy Elias

Rita MacNeil's concert in Toronto in January was one of Womylny Way's productions.

isn't what the time is worth in the real world, but it *is* something. We're working towards paying what other women's companies are paying, and then someday men's wages for rock and roll. But that's long range planning." Some of the women involved in Womylny Way have been involved in Sappho Sound and Ruth's other ven-

tures. The group is not a collective, but "a caring group ... we work well together and want to develop our skills," says Womylny Way worker Karen Morgan.

Ruth's objective is to produce high quality, professional artists who are conscious of being women performing for other women. Although mixed concerts are an economic

necessity right now, she thinks the message is going out. She insists on no alcohol at the concerts: she wants people listening, not talking. And to make information accessible to the greatest number of people, there is signing for the hearing impaired and wheelchair accessibility at all concerts. The performers are chosen from among those who have high standards for their music, are available and on tour, and will draw an audience. By next fall Ruth would like to be able to produce one concert a year that could lose money but present music important for women to hear. Alive is such a group. While their following in the US is large, they are not well-known in Canada. There is a limited audience for women's music in Canada and Ruth is trying to increase it. She stays in touch with women producers in the US to learn about exchange information on women performers. "Cultural work is one of the least threatening ways to get a message to people", explained Ruth, "and I can't just absorb culture, I must create it."

To ensure financial stability, Womylny Way sells Supporter Tickets at \$100 each. These are life passes to all Womylny Way concerts, which would normally cost about \$30 a year to attend. This fund is used for book halls and paying travel costs for performers — the front money necessary before tickets are sold. It is a stable fund that is replenished and not drawn upon until the next show. Womylny Way is also looking for crew to help in poster and day-of-concert production. Pay is now a free pass to the concert, but wages will be available in the future. Womylny Way continues production with Holly Near March 20, Heather Bishop April 23, 24, and Wallflower Order returning in late August or early September. To get involved or become a Womylny Way Supporter contact Womylny Way, 849 College St., Toronto; (416) 532-7963.

"Holly Near is the only person I know who has successfully combined music and politics" — Bonnie Raitt.

Holly Near is a cultural phenomenon. Her skill as a performer is matched only by her dedication to her political ideals. She works incredibly hard, frequently touring 9 months out of the year. On tour she may work up to 16 hours a day. In addition to attending sound checks and performing, she is constantly at work: she's accessible to audience members (in keeping with her policy of demystifying the "star" mythology), she attends workshops, meets with groups who share her concerns, and constantly expands her political analysis.

The high quality of her performance is ample evidence of the work she puts into her art. Her voice is clear and strong, her control is excellent. She expresses the full range of emotions with her voice, and has the rare ability to make her audience *feel* her music as well as hear it. She creates an atmosphere of easy intimacy with her audience, telling funny stories between songs and laughing at her own mistakes.

Holly grew up in an atmosphere that supported her musically and politically. Her parents were labour organizers in the '40s in the northern California farming community. When Holly began performing at the age of seven she was encouraged not to be a child star but to be an active, articulate artist. Talk around the Near dinner table ranged from political debates about nuclear war, to local cultural events, to farming and irrigation.

It was in 1971 that Holly began to actively combine politics and art. She had been working for several years as a television and film actress (her most noteworthy part being that of Billy Pilgrim's daughter in *Slaughterhouse Five*) when she became involved with the Free the Army Show. She toured numerous army bases in the Philippines, Japan, and Hawaii doing an anti-war show with Jane Fonda, Donald Sutherland, and others. As her political consciousness

developed, she felt the need to share what she was learning — and she began to write songs. At first, she wrote primarily anti-war songs. Over the next five years, the content of her music expanded to include a wide variety of global concerns, such as anti-imperialism, ageism, Latin American struggles, native people's struggles and — feminism.

The women's movement was growing at the same time as Holly's consciousness was rising, and it was inevitable that the two should meet. As more and more "women's" audiences began attending Holly's concerts, she was confronted not only with feminist politics but lesbian-feminist politics. She developed a political analysis of lesbian oppression and gay oppression, and was an outspoken supporter of gay rights issues.

1976 was a momentous year for women's music and for Holly Near. She performed in the Women on Wheels Tour, along with Margie Adam, Chris Williamson, and Meg Christian. They toured six cities in California, attracting an audience of over 10,000 women. And (imagine her surprise!) Holly fell in love. She "came out" publicly as a lesbian, first at the Third National Women's Music Festival, and then in a letter to *Lesbian Tide*. Neither women's music nor Holly have been the same since.

Holly brought to the women's music movement her high standards of professionalism (allowing women's music to reach broader and broader audiences) and her perspective on the political implications of cultural work. Says Holly in a 1979 interview "I believe that anyone who has the microphone or the AM radio or whatever gives you access to a lot of people's ears has a lot of power. There are artists who say 'I'm not political'. But I think that because their music is being heard, they have a certain amount of political power. They can influence people to be passive, which is a political act, or they can influence them to be into Jesus or into rock and roll or into drugs. Or they can influence them to be against nuclear power. But you're not apolitical when you're an artist. You're an affecter."

Holly has recorded five albums on Redwood Records, which she co-owns with two other women. To date, over 200,000 copies of the first four albums have been sold. At the upcoming concert on March 20th, Holly will be performing songs from her latest album, *Fire in the Rain*. This album features the skillful blend of the political and personal that we've come to expect from Holly: the musical style ranges from soft rock to folk/country (with a bit of "new wave" thrown in), the content includes love songs/ballads, songs about the war mentality, native people, anti-nuclear struggles. The song *Golden Thread* deals in a caring and constructive way with the

"polygamy crazies" experienced so frequently in the lesbian community. *Working Woman* is a funny, incisive comment on the lives of secretaries. This concert will be Holly's second performance in Toronto; her first was in September 1979, part of her "Tour for a Nuclear-Free Future."

**Holly Near in Concert, Convocation Hall, University of Toronto, March 20, 1981, 8:00 PM sharp. Childcare will be available. The hall will be wheelchair accessible. The washrooms are not fully accessible but assistance will be available. This event will be interpreted for the hearing impaired.**

## NICOLE BROSSARD and ADRIENNE RICH TORONTO WOMEN'S BOOKSTORE WRITERS IN DIALOGUE

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Reception to follow readings & dialogue

Rape, from page 8

evant to credibility and gives no criteria to help the trial judge determine when past sexual history is or is not relevant.

Yet, on the other hand, the accused can now, after what appears to be a perfunctory hearing, not only question the victim extensively, but can also call witnesses to testify as to her previous sexual relations with them should she deny any details during questioning.

At the very least, this will serve to confuse the jurors as to the real issue in the trial — was the victim raped? It is certain to reinforce the belief that the victim's previous sexual history is relevant to her credibility and to make the trial even more a trial of the victim.

**VERY REAL DANGERS**

Letting in the victim's prior sexual history has two dangerous effects. First, given the sexism in our society, many members of the jury will already believe that the victim's past sexual history does affect the credibility of her story. The fact that the presiding Judge obviously thinks it is relevant because he let in the testimony will reinforce this assumption.

Secondly, it will have a pernicious effect when combined with Pappajohn. Many men have honest though unreasonable beliefs that once a woman has consented to sexual intercourse with one man (not her husband) she will consent to sexual intercourse with any man. Such men regard any but the most violent resistance in these circumstances as fraudulent or coy. In such a case, the accused would have to convince the jury that he holds this particular common misperception about the way women behave. It is not necessary for him to prove that his belief is reasonable. He then must show that, given his belief about women in general, he had an honest though unreasonable belief that the victim was consenting even when she was not.

How can he do this? He will first ask her questions about her previous sexual history. If she denies either having any past sexual experience in general or any past sexual experience with a particular individual, he can then call witnesses to contradict her. His defence will be as follows: "I think that if a woman consents to sexual intercourse once with any man she will always consent again. This woman had consented to previous sexual intercourse (or even if she hadn't, I thought she had). Therefore, I believed she was consenting this time, even though she put up what I regarded as nominal resistance."

Recent proposed amendments to the Criminal Code bear out our worst fears.

First, the proposed section 244(5) codifies Pappajohn — that is, it makes the Pappajohn decision into rigid statute law, which, once passed, could only be changed by the passing of a new law. Under the proposed amendments, a rapist is explicitly provided with the defence of honest though unreasonable belief the woman was consenting.

Second, the exact danger referred to above concerning the combined effect of Forsythe and Pappajohn has been codified as well. The revised section 142 (the proposed section 246.5) states that questions about the victim's prior sexual history may be asked when they "relate to evidence that tends to show that the accused believed that the complainant consented to the sexual activity that is the subject matter of the charge". Clearly, this refers exactly to the situation where a man unreasonably but honestly believes that a woman is consenting because he knew (or thought) she had consented before. Nothing in the proposed section requires the judge to consider whether the evidence of her past sexual history is weighty or relevant. As the man's belief will be a central issue in the trial, the victim's past sexual history will also be a central issue. It is therefore likely that witnesses will be called to contradict the victim's testimony under this section.

It is worth noting that the proposed amendments do not maintain the fiction that prior sexual history relates to the victim's credibility — they explicitly acknowledge that it relates to the accused man's belief that the victim was consenting, even when she was not.

There are many other problems with the proposed amendments. As a general warning, feminists must be aware of the sexist attitudes of the Supreme Court of Canada towards rape. All the proposed amendments must be evaluated and scrutinized carefully. If there are any legal issues not covered, or if the Code is at all ambiguously worded, the cases of Forsythe and Pappajohn show that the Supreme Court will interpret the law so as to protect the man accused of rape, not the victim of that rape. Rape trials will continue to be trials of the victim, and the acquittal rate will continue to be unacceptably high.

The government's intention to change the law regarding rape gives us the opportunity to ensure that the law finally becomes just and finally protects women. This will not happen if we rely on the proposed amendments and the attitudes of the Supreme Court of Canada.

Lois Lowenberger and Reva Landau are law students at the University of Toronto.

Disposable Work Force, from page 11



Chris Cable

ed program offered at many of the community colleges (the route into this program is referral through Canada Employment Centres — alias Manpower). There are not enough of such programs available and it's probably the luck of the draw whether or not a counsellor will advise a woman seeking retraining that such a program exists. There are still far more places available for training in business and commerce than for non-traditional occupations, even though it is well known that many women trained in clerical fields will soon be phased out of jobs, if they have not been already. Pressure must be brought to bear on Canada Employment (and Minister Lloyd Axworthy) to increase pre-trades and INTO programs, as well as insisting that counsellors advise women of the choices they have for subsidized training in non-traditional fields. The list of 40-week courses is quite extensive, varying from college to college. Subsidized academic upgrading is available as well. College calendars and the Ontario Government booklet "Horizons" (check libraries, Ontario Government bookstores) outline the short courses which are federally funded. Most courses are less than a year long.

An alternative to in-class training is on-the-job training (CMIPT — Canada Manpower Industrial Training Program). Employers can be subsidized for training people on their premises. In the past year, a program to encourage employers to train women in non-traditional fields has offered employers 75% of the woman's salary. Training may be obtained in almost any area and if a woman can find an employer who agrees to train her, arrangements can

be made for the subsidized program to proceed. Canada Employment offices all have counsellors who are assigned to the on-the-job training programs and know which employers are seeking trainees.

Millions of dollars are being fed to industry by the government for training programs in trades which have been identified as having critical shortages of skilled persons. The training is largely conducted in the company and seems to be largely directed to company employees. This Employer Sponsored Training has, until now, had an abysmal record for training women. At present there is a project under way through the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Manpower Training Branch, to begin to make some inroads with employers. "Critical" trades include the metal cutting trades such as machining, tool and die, welding, industrial maintenance mechanics and instrumentation mechanics. Another program, "Linkage," which is also monitored through the Manpower Training Branch, is oriented toward giving future apprenticeship credit for training acquired in high school. Many of the critical trades are represented but, needless to say, few young women have this opportunity. Thousands of young men are gaining experience and credits in these fields, but we can see the handicaps the next generation of women are being burdened with. The schools must be made to establish affirmative action programs.

Figures given in last month's *Broadside* article by Judy Liefshantz, "Tradeswomen to the Rear," showed that women are very poorly represented as registered apprentices in non-traditional areas. Women have, of

continued next page

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from preceding page

course, not been actively encouraged to consider apprenticeships. Furthermore, they must get an employer to agree to apprentice them before they can be registered. A possible reason women do not choose to follow the apprenticeship route is that it takes 3 to 5 years. For many women this is not feasible. Nevertheless, an affirmative action program is essential and a great deal of pressure is necessary for it to be launched.

It is possible to enter many industries with few or no skills, usually as labourers, at a reasonable starting rate with benefits. Many large companies which are union shops require new workers to enter at entry-level jobs. For example, the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) has an affirmative action program and entry-level jobs include work in the garages and bus driving. In the last couple of years women have been pushing to be hired within various industries throughout the province and are now employed in aircraft production, mining and, of course, in the smelters. The best and most successful campaign has been the one launched by the Women Back Into Stelco group in Hamilton, where now after a year's struggle there are 150 women employed, and most important, where women are being hired regularly as a portion of all new hirings.

The enthusiasm and promise of the National Women in Trades Conference, at which a national organization was founded, has spread across the country. Ontario now has several Women in Trades groups (Ottawa, London, Windsor, Thunder Bay, Toronto) with growth imminent in other communities; Organized Working Women (OWW) have a group and the Hamilton women have a strong, fighting organization. From April 24 to 26 tradeswomen, women interested in entering trades and supporters will meet in Hamilton (call 537-6498) if interested in the conference). If the Winnipeg conference is any example, this should be an exciting, energizing experience. The energy generated will need to see us through the next few crucial years of making sure that women do not remain the victims of the rapidly shifting panorama of industrial and technological upheaval.

*Gloria Geller is a Toronto founder of the Association for Women in Trades.*

from page 11

Given the constrictions placed upon women by Japanese society, it makes sense that women organize. Given the obstacles to liberation, the courage of the women who try to do so is to be applauded. Who are these activists and where are they coming from? They are not necessarily the few career business women who themselves are forced to conform to the rigidly formal codes of the Japanese business world. Ikuko says that "some are from political fields ... some are mere housewives ... some are feminist lawyers and many have had experience of living abroad in Sweden or the United States." It is encouraging that not only professional women are active in women's issues; other women are also looking for their history and studying their present lives in a multitude of splinter groups which have sprung up across the country and are trying to pass their information on.

Ikuko Atsumi tells of a housewife who spent five years researching and documenting the lives of the "so called geisha", women in the entertainment field, to write their story. Ikuko is also writing a book examining classical Japanese literature from a feminist perspective and another relating her experiences as a university professor and feminist writer in Japan and abroad.

The Women's Movement in Japan has been described as a cultural movement rather than a political movement. I suspect that being burned once at the polls has made some Japanese feminists leery of the political arena and reinforced the cultural rather than the political aspects of the feminist movement. Ikuko talks of aiming towards a "multi-channel society" where the value systems of both women and men exist equally. The consciousness-raising and study groups seek to transform their daily life into a new way of life, one which is more humane, one which is feminist.

At first I was dubious about the direction of the Japanese Women's Movement because of my own interest in hearing from those women in Japan who have continued along the political feminist route. It takes time to make all of the connections and to lay the groundwork, but one gets the sense that there is potential for a feminist revolution. After all, the Japanese for liberated woman is 'tobu onna' which literally translated means 'flying woman', definitely a sign that Japanese women are on the move.

• LETTERS, from page 3

**Broadside:**

I'm enclosing a letter which I sent to the El Mocambo Tavern, and is more or less self-explanatory. I was really amazed at the harassment I received trying to get into the El Mocambo to see Mama Quilla II.

In the short time I spent at the door, I saw two men and a woman accompanied by a man gain entrance to the tavern without being asked for ID. In every other case, single women were being harassed for not having ID or for not having "acceptable" ID. Another woman who entered at the same time I did looked at least as far from being 19 as I do.

The men at the door were really arrogant and impolite, so it took a while for me to calm down enough to realize that they were deliberately harassing the women coming in.

I'd appreciate it if you would publicize the incident, at least by printing these letters, so that other women can decide whether they still want to patronize the El Mocambo. Thanks.

Debra Curties  
Toronto  
*The Owner*  
El Mocambo Tavern  
Toronto

Dear Sir,  
*Although I almost never write letters of this sort, I am so surprised at the way I was treated at the El Mocambo tonight that I want to complain about it.*

*I tried to enter the building this evening to hear some friends who were playing there. I was turned away because I did not have ID with me. I agree with the laws prohibiting liquor sales to minors, but I'd like to point out three things: first, I have never been asked for ID at the El Mocambo before; second, I am 27 years old and do not have a teen-age appearance (I think it is safe to say I have not looked 19 for several years); and third, since it is Sunday I had left for your tavern assuming that alcohol would not be available.*

*It was also pretty obvious that your employees at the door did not really believe that I was under the legal drinking age. Nor was my behaviour when I entered the building at all out of line. I really have no idea what was going on, except that the liquor laws were being used to harass me. Your*

*employees were also very rude and arrogant.*

*I hate being treated rudely, but it is particularly awful when there is no understandable reason for it.*

*Perhaps you find that your clientele is so well established that you have no need to worry about how your customers are treated. But whether or not this is true, I feel that I don't want to spend my money at the El Mocambo any more, and I will try to persuade all of my friends to make the same decision.*

Yours truly,  
Debra Curties

*P.S. I would also like to mention that I was even refused permission to tell friends who were waiting for me inside what had happened.*

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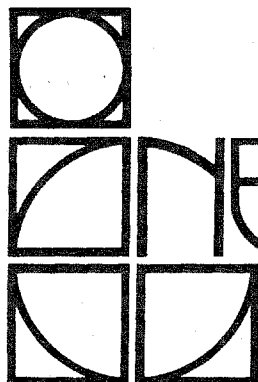
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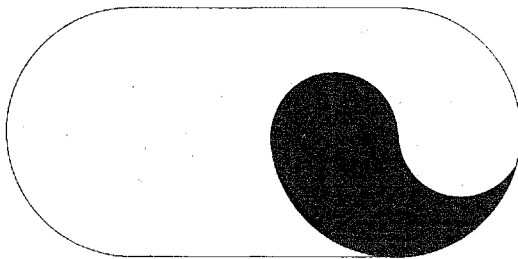
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**International Women's  
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like to thank the  
hundreds of women  
who have worked so  
hard to make  
International Women's  
Day  
a success.**

# MOVEMENT COMMENT

## ISIS/International Feminist Network

ISIS is a resource and documentation center in the international women's liberation movement. It was set up in 1974 by a collective of women to gather materials from local women's groups and the feminist movement and to make these resources available to other women.

The quarterly ISIS International Bulletin reproduces theoretical and practical information and documentation from women's groups and the women's movement around the world. It includes resource listings, reports and notices to help pass on information about what is going on in the movement in other countries and continents and to help in the exchange of ideas, contacts, experiences and resources among women and feminist groups.

If you would like to have notices, information of your activities or resources produced by your women's group included in the ISIS Bulletin, please send them to the ISIS collectives in Rome and Geneva. We would like to exchange the ISIS Bulletin on a regular basis with those who are producing newsletters, magazines and other materials.

ISIS is coordinating the International Feminist Network (IFN), a communication channel through which women can mobilize international support for each other. The IFN was proposed at the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women in Brussels in March 1976 to aid in the mobilization of support and solidarity among the

women's movement on an international scale when needed for the struggles and actions of women — as in the case of rape victims, court cases or strikes of women. The IFN can also be used for rapid spreading of information about international feminist actions and demonstrations. Women needing international support should write or telephone the ISIS collectives in Geneva or Rome giving details of the case and the ways women in other countries can help them. Requests for support will be passed on to the contact women who have volunteered to inform the women's movement in their countries.

Out of the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women held in Brussels, Belgium in 1976, where thousands of women came together to speak and share their personal experiences of oppression, came the realization of the international scope of the atrocities committed against women, of the violence perpetrated against women because they are women, and of the conspiracy of silence about these crimes.

From this realization came the awareness of two needs:

First, the need to break this silence and speak out about this daily reality of our lives as women, so that these crimes can no longer be considered as acceptable behaviour and so that we can break out of our isolation and share our knowledge of oppression and how to combat it effectively.

Second, the need to jointly raise voices to

protest and struggle against our own oppression and that of our sisters, and to give support and solidarity to women everywhere in combatting injustices against women.

The International Feminist Network (IFN) was established after the Brussels Tribunal to help break this silence and to mobilize support and solidarity for women whenever and wherever they are victims of injustice or crimes because they are women or because they are working for the rights of women. At the time of the Mid-Decade Forum, held in Copenhagen in July 1980, the IFN had been helping to promote solidarity campaigns for nearly three years. During the IFN workshops at the Forum, many women expressed the feeling that more women needed to know about the IFN and, of equal importance, that the IFN does have an effect.



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