

Broadside

A FEMINIST REVIEW

Toronto Women's
Calendar Inside.

Volume 4, number 6

April 1983

\$1



Janine Stewart

Women's Cultural Building

SEE STORY PAGE 11.

FEATURES

GLOBAL SISTERHOOD?

Does feminism transcend nationality, or do our national boundaries and cultural milieux inform our politics? Myrna Kostash explores her own position as a Canadian feminist in relation to the US movement, and as a North American feminist in relation to feminism in Greece, where she lived for a year. Page 8.

FREEDOM OF

REPRESSION: Two views on the pornography/censorship debate look at the Ontario Censor Board and the Criminal Code of Canada, at prior censorship and legal prohibition. Cyndra MacDowall questions the assumed powers of the Censor Board and its protection of the pornography industry; Lisa Freedman and Susan Ursel question the politics of 'freedom of expression' and suggest that law reform should aim at pornographic material, not that which is legally defined as 'obscene'. Page 4.

NEWS

MOSCOW OR BUST: Berit Ås, Norwegian feminist, talks to Dorothy Rosenberg about the Scandinavian Women's

March to Moscow last summer, about the minimal media coverage of the event, the difficulties and rewards of organizing the march, and about political strategies within the peace movement. Page 6.

CALL A SPADE A SPADE:

Gillean Chase argues that Bill C-127, the sexual assault law which went into effect in January and which replaces the very specific word 'rape' with the vague words 'sexual assault', may well serve to invalidate women's experience of the crime. Page 3.

COMMENT

WOMEN'S CULTURAL

BUILDING: The Building is a verb, and according to Eve Zaremba, the Women's Cultural Building collective is off to a good start: with its Five Minute Feminist Cabaret and Pork Roast cartoon show, its headquarters and hotline, its film series and exhibitions, its brunch and egg-rolling contest, all part of the Festival of Women Building Culture. Page 11.

INSIDE BROADSIDE

IWD: INTERNATIONAL WHO'S DAY?

Lois Lowenberger criticizes Toronto's International Women's Day organizers for losing sight of a feminist perspective, and giving far too much space to liberation movements and to the political concerns of male-dominated organizations. There is a time for involvement in these movements and co-operation with these groups, but IWD is not it. Movement Comment, page 14.

ARTS

FEMALE PARTS: Gay Bell talks to actress Maja Ardal about the roles she takes on in *Female Parts*, four short plays by Italian playwrights Franca Rame and Dario Fo — from working class woman to middle class housewife, from pregnant politico to latter-day Medea: "A totally revolutionary night of theatre," says Ardal. Page 10.

OUTSIDE BROADSIDE: Don't miss this month's calendar of Toronto Women's Events, for April 1983. Page 15.

A QUICK TRIP: Anne Cameron's latest novel, *The Journey*, won't lead you down paths of profundity, says reviewer Susan G. Cole, but takes you instead on a delightful feminist romp through the 'Western' genre of literature. If you were dissatisfied with the paucity of female role models in traditional Westerns, this is the book for you. Page 11.



CUTE LITTLE GOD: The film version of Mahatma Gandhi's story replaces the dedicated patriot with a one-dimensional deity, according to Anne Cameron. It also casts blame on the Muslim population for internal strife, and manages to convey that Britain chose to grant India independence. Page 12.

LETTERS

Broadside:

I was disappointed with the article "M.Q. II Leaves Us Dancing" by Deena Rasky (Dec. 82-Jan. 83).

Rasky as a member of a collective should realize that when reviewing another collective, all the collective members should be mentioned, or none at all, depending on whether the collective as an entity is being discussed or the individual members reviewed. Also, when reviewing a rock band, particularly emphasizing the rhythmic nature of the band, it seems inexcusable to omit a review of the bass playing and/or player who creates the rhythm.

Neither Jacqui Snedker (bass) nor Linda Robitaille (sax) were mentioned, although both were collective members and had been with M.Q. II for four years, and both were members of the original Mama Quilla seven years ago. It was out of Linda's desire to continue the original Mama Quilla after its leader Sara Ellen Dunlop died that M.Q. II was formed.

I too am sorry that M.Q. II has folded and unfortunately I think these omissions are indicative of the fact that dissolution was unavoidable.

Judi Hayward
Toronto

(The following letter was sent to the March 8 Coalition, International Women's Day Committee, Ctte. Concerned about the Israeli/Palestinian Question and I.W.D., and Broadside.)

Broadside:

Before launching into the substance of our letter, we would like to acknowledge the hard work that went into I.W.D. and to commend the organizers on the choice of the route for the march — (the gorgeous day also helped).

As long-time activists in the women's movement, we feel obliged to speak out against what has become a progressive erosion of feminist content in the celebration of I.W.D. While it is heartening to see a good turn-out, numbers alone do not a movement make, especially when those numbers are inflated by male dominated groups, not known for their support of women's struggles (except when those struggles coincide with their own interpretation of what is to be done).

We were particularly disheartened by the rally preceding the march: not once in the entire round of slogans and speeches was the word "feminism" mentioned nor indeed did a feminist perspective prevail. We were exhorted to take on a class perspective; but what happened to a feminist perspective? We were told that we were working women, immigrant women, lesbians, even vegetarians; were there no feminists there at an I.W.D. rally?

Not only was feminism as analysis and perspective absent (there is more to feminism than the right to a job, abortion and peace) but more alarming still was the introduction of a highly divisive and deeply controversial issue: the Middle East (reduced at the rally to a Palestinian struggle only). And the way in which the subject was inserted: to be told, like robots, to show our solidarity, by chanting in *Spanish!* (is that the universal language of struggle now?).

Is an I.W.D. rally, a day when presumably we show our sisterhood with all women, the time and the place to shout simplistic Spanish slogans which are certain to divide us? As feminists, we must *debate* these issues, however painful they may be; but these discussions must take place in a spirit and manner which coincides with our struggle as women to shape a new world and not in the worn-out and destructive language of patriarchy.

Had the rally been the only example of such unfeminist and inflammatory behaviour, we might attribute it to mere foolishness and leave it at that; but the March 3rd workshop on Women's Liberation, Disarmament and Anti-Imperialism which preceded I.W.D. makes such a dismissal impossible. The Committee Concerned about the Israeli/Palestinian Question and I.W.D. has written a detailed letter about events on that evening; others, not part of that committee, corroborate not only the content of the letter but have told of the shameful hissing and booing that were heard when a woman attempted to raise the level of discussion to include a feminist perspective.

As an endorsing project, the Women's Research and Resource Centre has to be concerned about the narrowness of the I.W.D. perspective. Our project interprets feminism in a very broad sense and provides service to women from a wide variety of educational perspectives. We are not prepared to continue endorsing I.W.D. unless it is in some sense attuned to our project objectives. We shall therefore not be endorsing next year unless I.W.D. moves its focus to represent the many vital variations within feminism.

We join our voice to that of the Committee Concerned about the Israeli/Palestinian Question and urge I.W.D.C. and the March 8th Coalition to seriously consider our strongly felt objectives and to recognize that we speak for many women.

Mary O'Brien
Frieda Forman
Women's Research-Resource Centre
Toronto

Broadside:

The enclosed statement is a summary of how some women's involvement in a study of science education by the Science Council of Canada, has been both minimized and ghettoized.

The conferences referred to in the statement will be happening this summer. The people invited are the only people to whom the five volume draft report is being made available. Perhaps the first thing to do is to

Broadside

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- Susan G. Cole
- Carroll Klein
- Catherine Maunsell
- Deena Rasky
- Judy Stanleigh
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The *Broadside* Collective does not necessarily share the views contained in any article, even if the byline belongs to a collective member. Views of the Collective are expressed **only** in editorials, and essays signed by the Collective.

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EDITORIALS

Uncensored Debates

In this month's issue of *Broadside*, Cyndra MacDowall takes a hard look at the workings of the Ontario Censor Board. Her comments are provided in the context of the ongoing dilemma of film makers and video artists who spend more time than they believe they should dealing with an arm of the government's bureaucracy. And it has been an unfortunate fact of life that film exhibitors, distributors and artists have had a more difficult time with the Censor Board than have any of the pornographers whose product feminists would like to see restrained.

A careful reading of MacDowall's contribution to the debate will reveal a stance against censorship, at least when it is defined as "prior" censorship as is the case with the Censor Board. The presence of an anti-censorship point of view in the pages of *Broadside* calls for a few comments on the uniqueness of the feminist press.

Long-time readers of *Broadside* will be aware that the newspaper has made an attempt to bring the issue of pornography out into the open. Many of our writers, including collective members, have taken a strong stand against porn. Some (though not all; being anti-porn does not necessarily mean being pro-censorship) have also begun to develop a political and philosophical defence of censorship as a means of diffusing the force of porn as a weapon against women. But this is hardly the last word; indeed, *Broadside* has never published an editorial on the subject.

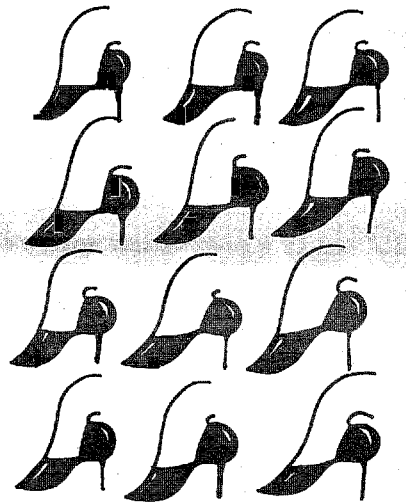
How can *Broadside*, or any other medium

that chooses to be a forum for feminist thought, already have answers to a debate that has really just begun? *Broadside* freely admits that we can't, and that confession helps to distinguish us from the left or right press. We don't have a line on every issue, a point of view that continually defines the contents of our newspaper, and we don't publish solely for the sake of persuading our readers to adopt that "line." We want to facilitate debate, and the forum is open to all those whose aim it is to improve the status of women. We are pleased that we could include MacDowall's article. It is a useful contribution to a complex discussion.

Evidence of the breadth of that discussion is given by another article this month, written by Lisa Freedman and Susan Ursel. The piece focusses on obscenity laws and their significance in the "freedoms" debate. The writers argue that instead of fearing harassment at the hands of police who enforce obscenity laws, feminists should be working to redefine pornography and to change the laws so that they can never be used against progressive forces.

The two articles are not counterposed as two sides of a debate. Their subjects differ, for one thing, and of course, the issues invite too many perspectives and levels of approach to be broken down into such a simple configuration as "for" and "against." The articles do reveal the complications and pitfalls of regulating pornography.

And they also help make for real vitality in the feminist press.



OUR MISTAKE

Last month's graphic for Sarah Sheard's article "And Now for a Really Big Shoe..." should have been credited to Jorge Zontal.

WOMEN'S INFORMATION CENTRE OF TORONTO

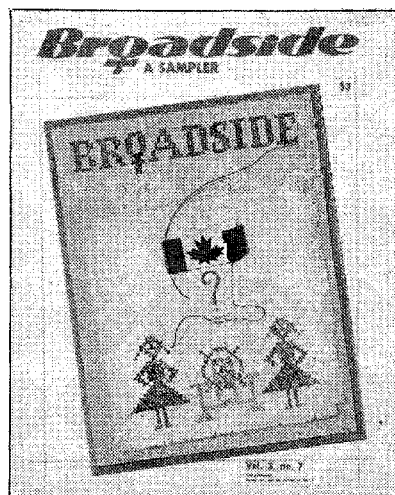
NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS:

Please renew membership. Membership fee: \$5. May be renewed at the Women's Movement Archive, 455 Spadina Avenue, Suite 205. Phone: 597-8865. Membership dues must be received by May 10, 1983.

The Annual General Meeting of the Women's Information Centre of Toronto will take place Sunday, May 20, 1983 at the Women's Movement Archive.

Moving?

Send *Broadside* your subscriber's address label with your new address. Please give us 4 to 6 weeks advance notice.



SAMPLE THE 'SAMPLER'

Broadside's 'Sampler' — a collection of articles from our first two years — is an ideal present for birthdays, Christmas, surprises. Send \$3 (plus 60¢ handling) with your name, address and postal code to: Broadside 'Sampler', PO Box 494, Station P, Toronto M5S 2T1.

explore just who in your region has been invited. If you are not on the list you may know someone who is, if not perhaps the list of local participants may be had from the Dean of Science at a near-by university or directly from the Science Council of Canada. Once you know who is invited then you can locate the draft report. You may also wish to see *Who Turns the Wheel?* which will be in the Government Documents section of the library and can be had free from the SCC.

I hope that you will become convinced that it is necessary to act at this time to ensure appropriate emphasis upon your concerns in the final report of the SCC science education study. Points you may wish to attend to may be found throughout *Who Turns the Wheel?* and usefully summarized on pp 116-117.

The Science Council of Canada has been studying science education in Canada over the last four years. This process of "deliberation" has resulted in five volumes described by the SCC as, "reports representing the output of the SCC's study on science education in Canadian schools." The reports are to be discussed at 12 conferences to be held across Canada this summer.

I was aware of this process in its early stages and was one of those who pressed for consideration of the issue of the exclusion of women from science. A workshop was held by the SCC in which many women and men participated. What emerged from this was a publication, "Who Turns the Wheel?". Also the SCC issued a "Statement of Concern" on the issue. This was reason for some satisfaction even though the publications were produced by considerable editing of the original material, and too much responsibility

for the exclusion of women was placed on the shoulders of young women in high school rather than upon those with real power in the science and education fields.

However, our values, issues and ideas, as expressed at that workshop have, during the production of the present publications, not only shrunk to a fraction of the former space but they have also been kept quite separate from all the other work, and there is no evidence that they have influenced the study in any way. So all the work that we put into the workshop produced nine pages of recommendations in "Who Turns the Wheel?" which is further summarized in the present five draft volumes on a half of one page (p. 39). Perhaps it is more troubling that these points have been ghettoized, hermetically sealed off, from the rest of the work.

For example, one of the recommendations, now called "program possibilities," which made it through to the latest publication, is the idea of "science curriculum and texts that are relevant to the experience of both boys and girls." The SCC also studied curriculum and science texts themselves and in the latest volumes 236 pages are devoted to those topics (pp. 61-297), without a sign of any reference to the distinction made between the interests of boys and girls, in our recommendation.

The publication of "Who Turns the Wheel?" and the Statement of Concern suggested that the science education of females was of importance to the SCC. However, the five draft volumes show that the issue now has an extremely low priority, which rather than increasing women's involvement in science may even actually play a part in reducing it. The Council is made up mostly of males from the privileged sectors of society

who are appointed to give the government "independent" advice on science. The interests of such a group are not likely to be entirely congruent with the interests of those now excluded from science.

The reason for putting this together at this time is that this study of science education is entering a new phase where more public involvement will be sought. The 12 conferences are, "to contribute to science education both directly — through the development of collective insights and proposals for action — and indirectly — through suggesting to the Science Council potentially useful recommendations for its final report." A clear challenge to anyone unhappy with the lack of inclusion of the values and issues and ideas that women put forward at the earlier workshop. (Copies of "Who Turns the Wheel?" are available free from the SCC at 100 Metcalfe St. Ottawa, K1P 5M1.) Each one of these conferences contains the potential for a political fight. If other women and men feel as I do, that they have seen the exclusion of women from science recreated, in fact constructed, during this process so far, then this is a good opportunity around which to organize, provincially and nationally, a science constituency devoted to wider access. It is a chance to formulate our rights and work towards guaranteeing them.

Lack of educational qualifications in science is often used to explain and justify lack of involvement with science-based political issues. Just defining an issue as scientific is enough to effectively deny democratic rights to the "unqualified."

Women are low in numbers among the ranks of the scientifically qualified and this results in a false but perceived lack of political legitimacy when the issues have been de-

finied as scientific. In spite of the fabrication of that myth, we have both rights and responsibilities to exercise in science, just as we do in the fields of women's health, the environment and "defence," which are of course all vitally connected to the work of the science establishment.

The notion that women have democratic rights relative to science issues regardless of whether or not individuals have educational qualifications in science is not explicitly discussed, while the denial of those rights is often assumed. The notion may be merely invisible, or it may be unacceptable to many. Women themselves are among those reluctant to recognize our connection to science issues regardless of education.

Some new history will emerge from these conferences. Lack of organization now will mean that we may expect our exclusion to increase. The science establishment will see this as inevitable and as no more than their duty. Along with a proliferation of anti-woman myths, sour sexist jokes and loss of democratic rights, we may expect to be left unemployed as the supposedly uncontrollable technological revolution rolls on.

If women do get involved as individuals they may find as I have, that we are only given a limited hearing, but that we are not listened to. There seems to me to be a need for some kind of collective, with wide representation, to work together to halt and turn around the growing exclusion of women from science and related areas.

These conferences will not end the process and undo the work of centuries, but if we participate, we may make history of which we are mildly proud.

Joan Scott
Toronto

Bill C-127: Is Rape Obsolete?

by Gillean Chase

Bill C-127, the new laws relating to sexual assault, went into effect on January 4, 1983. The bill does away with the terms "rape" and "indecent assault" and creates a three-tiered level of seriousness as regards sexual assault: (1) sexual assault (2) aggravated sexual assault (3) sexual assault with a weapon or threats to a third party. It is now possible for a spouse of either sex to be charged with sexual assault, whether or not the couple is living together at the time; and the spousal immunity clause, relating to giving evidence against one another, has been removed.

The terms "rape" and "indecent assault" are regarded as archaic and inflammatory by advocates of Bill C-127. According to their argument, doing away with these terms will alleviate some of the sex discrimination inherent in sexual assault laws, and that stressing the assaultive rather than the sexual nature of sex offences will remove some of the stigma attached to such charges and serve to correct public misperceptions about the nature of such acts.

There is an abiding principle of social denial that women are systematic victims of sexual violence. We are all socialized by myths that "every woman secretly wants to be dominated," that it is "natural" for men to pressure women to have sex, and that women are "notoriously seductive" in soliciting sexual attention from males. It is fashionable in our culture to associate sex with violence and to portray women as willing victims of brutality. Whereas it would be difficult not to agree that persons of either sex should be protected against non-consensual sex with males or females, it is undeniably true that certain sexual crimes are gender-specific. That is, forcible sex is perpetrated by males upon females far more frequently than the reverse. Approximately 90% of the victims of incest and sexual abuse are female.

Bill C-127 does not address the pressing issue of pornography as a form of institutionalized, acceptable violence towards women, nor was the Standing Committee on Justice able to define the characteristics and legal limits of child pornography. The absence of limits applied to "Brutality Chic" advertising and pornography is the direct re-

sult of enculturation: misogyny is a cultural institution. Indeed, the new sexual assault laws embody the concept that if the alleged victim agrees to the use of force there is no assault. Hence the apparent linking of the essential idea of pornography with "reality": that at least some women "enjoy" being brutalized.

Furthermore, under Bill C-127 it is now a defence for the accused to use the argument that a girl under sixteen appeared to be older, where previously ignorance of age was no defence. Moreover, in respect of a complainant under 14, consent is a defence only when the accused is less than three years older than the complainant. Hence, our society is "approving" of sex between peers while attempting to protect young persons from sexual abuse by authority figures/adults. It is assumed that informed consent applies between peers, that people fourteen and under are capable of responsibly agreeing to sexual acts. It is also presumed that only heterosexual peers will engage in such acts. The term "indecent" assault may have vanished from the law books, but the charge of "gross indecency" still applies. One hardly dares argue for consistency in such a homophobic society, but either we dispose of the word indecent altogether or retain categories of "decency" — in which case we are really retaining moralistic attitudes towards sexual behaviour.

Bill C-53, the predecessor of Bill C-127, attempted to win a lower age of consent for homosexual partners (18 from 21) but went the way of political "prudence" in regard to any discussion of the rights of homosexuals. Under the new law adolescents fourteen and under are presumed to be capable of informed consent; homosexual partners must defer their sexuality an additional seven years in order to be regarded as competent to make such a decision about their sexual preferences.

Just what gains have been won by the new sexual assault bill? After all, the bill is the result of briefs and summaries presented by many women's groups, rape crisis centre personnel, and legal professionals:

- The complainant is no longer required to provide more than ordinary corroboration applicable in any assault charge;



- The requirement of recent complaint has been replaced by ordinary rules of evidence;

- Consent to sexual acts cannot be inferred by the complainant's lack of resistance if there appears to have been force, threats of force, fraud or the exercise of authority over the alleged victim;

- The jury/judge must ascertain reasonable grounds for the belief of the accused that he had the consent of the complainant: honest belief, however unreasonable, is no longer sufficient (i.e., Regina vs. Pappajohn);

- There is some attempt to exclude evidence of the sexual activity of the complainant with any person other than the accused. Such evidence may still be entered where: (1) it rebuts evidence introduced by the prosecution; (2) it pertains to mistaken identity of the accused; and (3) it is evidence of sexual activity that took place on the same occasion, leading to the reasonable belief on the part of the accused that he had obtained the complainant's consent. Evidence regarding the sexual reputation of the complainant cannot be admitted to challenge or support the credibility of the witness.

- Lastly, spouses can now be charged with sexual assault against one another, and are compelled to give evidence against one another, as they have always been required to do in cases of physical assault. They are also not obligated to give evidence against one another in respect of offences against persons under fourteen. These include

charges involving death by criminal negligence, murder, manslaughter, infanticide, attempted murder, child abduction and sexual abuse of children. The "sanctity of the family" appears to be essentially modified under the guidelines of Bill C-127. Hopefully, the result will be the additional protection of dependents in the care of an abusing adult. Should the law reverse the attitude of non-interference with other people's "domestic problems," it will indeed be a strangely potent brew.

I spoke with a crown attorney in relation to some of the ramifications of this bill. It was apparent that he and many other crown attorneys are currently confused about how to apply the new sexual assault categories, lacking precedents in case law. On the surface, kissing or fondling could result in a six-month conviction if it occurs with a non-consenting partner of either sex. Aggravated sexual assault would pertain to wounding, maiming or disfiguring the alleged victim and could still result in a life sentence. Fourteen years, however, is the suggested sentence for injury or threat which endangers someone's life. Sexual assault with a weapon or threats to a third party would draw ten years, and includes multiple acts of forcible sex, popularly designated as "gang bangs." The court, it appears, would need to decide upon the degree of bodily harm of permanent damage undergone by an alleged victim. Courts have rarely known what to do about psychological, non-physical trauma which in itself changes life style and interpersonal ways of relating.

Reducing sentences for sexual assault may very well reduce the concept of the severity of the crime; it is doubtful that reducing sentences will result in more convictions, as is somehow hoped. Indeed, by removing the word "rape" from criminal law, legal experts may very well have added to the invalidation of women's experience of rape. The word is very specific, very accurate, and far less vague than the term sexual assault.

Gillean Chase was a staff member at the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre for several years, and is currently working as a free-lance writer in London, Ontario.

Extra-Censory Perception:

by Cyndra MacDowall

Pornography is a serious social problem that requires major changes to effect any solution, changes which call up the issues of censorship and freedom of expression. As a feminist I am concerned with the proliferation of pornography, its effect on society, and how it reflects our society, but as an artist I'm concerned about the process of censorship and its effect on freedom of expression and how this relates to feminist issues.

Over the past two years I have been working on the issue of censorship, first with Film and Video Against Censorship (FAVAC), and more recently with the Ontario Film and Video Appreciation Society (OFAVAS). (OFAVAS recently took the Censor Board to court and, on March 25, was successful in having the Board's criteria ruled unconstitutional. An immediate appeal by the Crown means the Board will continue to operate as it has until the decision is final.)

During this time I've become disturbed by a number of things: the Ontario Censor Board's capricious action as a government board in dealing with cultural, non-commercial producers and exhibitors of film and video; the reluctance of Canadian police to press charges under the Criminal Code against material that, when described in words, seems to more than adequately fulfill the definition of obscenity in the Criminal Code (this reluctance seems to have diminished since January 1983 when police in both BC and Ontario laid criminal charges against video distribution outlets for distributing allegedly obscene materials); and the undefined support of censorship by feminist writers, which seems to lend support to the operation of the Ontario Board of Censors as an answer to the problem of pornography.

The issue of balancing the individual's right to freedom of expression in all media and the process of censorship as a means of protecting society is an extremely complex one, touching as it does on so many basic questions of principle and political reality. Recent action throughout Canada by a broad range of groups with widely divergent viewpoints has brought this issue to the forefront.

The February 1983 issue of *Broadside* included three articles concerned with pornography: "Sparks Fly at Red Hot Video" by Susan G. Cole, "Hard Core Horror" by Anne Cameron, and "Snipping Up Snuff" in the Movement Matters section. Coincidentally, Movement Matters also included another article, "Threat to Rights", reporting on ex-Manitoba MP Joe Borowski's court challenge to the existing Canadian abortion law. The Pro-Choice Coalition contends that if he wins the case he "will have deprived the women of Canada of a fundamental civil right" to abortion. Joe Borowski is known to the Canadian art community for having launched a case, several years ago, against the Canada Council Art Bank and the Winnipeg Art Gallery for their exhibition of a work which Borowski considered to be obscene. The charges were later dropped. Any position on censorship obviously makes for some very curious allies and therein lies the danger of Susan Cole's and Anne Cameron's undefined support of censorship in response to pornography.

Both Cole and Cameron are writers, and in Ontario they have the freedom to express their views publicly without the imposition of prior censorship. They are however, subject to the Criminal Code of Canada which is also a form of censorship, one which is imposed only after the material is made publicly available. Anne Cameron's article would have been censored from the public by the Ontario Board of Censors if she had chosen to use the media of film or video to show us the images she describes. The Censor Board rarely considers the context in which images are contained in decisions to demand cuts, and only recently established a "special permit" to allow *Not A Love Story* to be seen in private screenings in Ontario. Of all media of communication, film and videotape are uniquely subject to prior censorship.

The Ontario Government established the Censor Board in 1911 with jurisdiction over

the public exhibition of film because, according to Robert G. Elgie, current Ontario Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, "films for public exhibition (is) perceived as having the greatest potential to impact directly or indirectly on the community as a whole." How do we know whether the graphic descriptions Cameron provides us with in her article are not now being circulated by, and to, those who might find them a stimulus to carry out the acts described? Writing and other media can be very influential and I have no reason to believe that they are less likely to be taken out of context than filmed descriptions would be.

The problem of context apparently, if we are to believe the interpretation of the Victoria Police Department, also extends into the Criminal Code. In the article "Snipping Up Snuff" Women Against Pornography (WAP) in Victoria state that local police declined to press charges against "Snuff" because they were unsure if it could be termed "obscene" because of the film's lack of depictions of explicit sex.

The Criminal Code of Canada defines obscenity in the following way under *Offences Tending to Corrupt Morals: 159.(8)* For the purposes of this Act, any publication a dominant characteristic of which is the undue exploitation of sex, or of sex and any one or more of the following subjects, namely, crime, horror, cruelty and violence, shall be deemed to be obscene.

Over the past several years, police throughout Canada have been reluctant to lay charges of obscenity against material in any media, claiming that they have not been successful in obtaining convictions in the courts. Consequently, censorship boards have been defended as a government process of regulating and prohibiting the public exhibition of film and video containing information that the Censor deems offensive to community standards. While the Ontario Censor Board has had jurisdiction over film for public exhibition since 1911, it was not

until 1976 that this jurisdiction was extended to include 8-millimetre film and videotape. The Board's jurisdiction was extended at that time for the express purpose of cleaning up Yonge Street in Toronto. I am unaware of any action by the Ontario Government, at that time, to propose amendments to clarify the Criminal Code in order to ensure that criminal convictions of obscenity might be more likely.

It appears that the police and all three levels of government have been indifferent to establishing effective laws to deal with the problem of pornography, instead allowing provincial censorship boards to filter from public exhibition those particular films and specific images that each of the boards deem to be offensive. It is useful to remember that when the Ontario government is concerned about the interpretation of the law they will continue to appeal decisions of the court, as has happened in the case against *The Body Politic*, and that the police were quite prepared to assemble a small army to raid the gay bath-houses and lay charges, although almost all of those charged were later acquitted.

It seems that the Vancouver firebombings of Red Hot Video outlets by the "Wimmin's Fire Brigade," and the subsequent pressure placed on the BC Ombudsman by women's groups, has finally convinced the police that this is a serious problem they must act on. Police in Ontario have followed suit and in January police in BC and Ontario announced that they had laid criminal charges against video distributors for the alleged distribution of obscene materials. These cases will come before the courts in the coming years and their decisions will set precedents for Canadian law, under the Charter of Rights, to deal with these issues.

Obviously the law leaves considerable room for interpretation and hopefully the continued expression of concern by women's groups and others will have some influence on these interpretations. Al-

though, to date, the law has seemed to be ineffectual in dealing with the problem of pornography it does hold a number of advantages, including: that the offending materials can be seized; criminal penalties of imprisonment can be applied; and that the alleged offender has the right to due process of law. Most importantly the law requires that the "crime" must be defined in a way that limits the arbitrary extension of police or government power.

It is a social reality that in a capitalist society anything that can be sold will be sold, regardless of the consequences. Within this same capitalist, patriarchal and heterosexual society we must protect the individual's fundamental freedom of expression, subject only to reasonable limits as prescribed by law. In Ontario a simple charge of a traffic violation allows the individual charged with the opportunity to contest the charge in court. Under the Ontario Theatres Act, cultural producers are not afforded the right to any legally constituted court of appeal to question the decisions of the Censor Board. The Ontario Board is empowered by the Theatres Act to censor all film and video for public exhibition in the province; the Board also operates under regulations established by the Ontario Government. Members of the Censor Board are appointed by the Ontario Government and make their decisions as to what is acceptable according to a set of "guidelines", which are in no way established in law. The Board maintains that these "guidelines" reflect "community standards" determined, in part, by an Ontario Government survey, "*A Survey of Attitudes in Ontario*" (1978), the results of which are extremely questionable because of the narrowness of the survey questions and the homogeneity of the surveyed group. The government also maintains that the Censors determine community standards through discussion with community groups.

Porn: women's
anger is justified
Video
porn: Sadism
comes
to TV
Worst police have seen
'Obscene' film
returns in new
guise and dolls
Pornography and Prohibition

Cyndra MacDowall is a Toronto artist who works with Canadian Artists' Representation Ontario (CARO).

Mary Brown, Chairwoman of the Censor Board, recently spoke to one such community group, the Willowdale-based "Canadians for Decency," and expressed her opinion that films over the past few years do not appear to support the nuclear family, parental authority and the institution of marriage. To substantiate this opinion she cited the films *Breaking Away* and *Coming Home*. In my opinion neither of these films represent a threat to Canadian society and Mary Brown's concern leads me to question what political positions are included within the pursuit of maintaining "community standards" of propriety.

In speaking to "Canadians for Decency," and at other times, Mary Brown has defended the Board's sweeping powers as those necessary to protect society from the purveyors of child pornography, bestiality, combinations of sex and violence, and the portrayal of violently mutilated women and men. If these are the *exclusive* concerns of the Censor Board it is not out of keeping with the Criminal Code and the obscenity provisions already contained within the Code. The Ontario government insists that the Censor is necessary because the Criminal Code is not specific enough to deal with these problems. One must question the government's sincerity, considering that the Board was established in 1911, that the current obscenity provisions in the Criminal Code were instituted in 1959, and that in 1976 the Censor Board's jurisdiction was extended. It would seem to me that the Ontario government has had ample opportunity over the years to establish law in Ontario to deal with these problems as well as to exert influence on the federal government for amendments to the Criminal Code that would clarify the law and provide for severe penalties under the law.

None of the three films cited in the OFAVAS case, from which cuts were demanded by the Censor Board to allow public exhibition in Ontario, contain scenes of child exploitation, bestiality or violence. In

fact one of the films, Michael Snow's *Rameau's Nephew*, had been shown publicly in Ontario for five years without any known complaint before the Censor Board demanded cuts. When the art community complained about the decision, the Board permitted the film to be shown at the Art Gallery of Ontario without cuts, but prohibited the film from being shown at the Funnel Experimental Film Theatre unless cut. Several months later the Censor Board issued a "one-time, one-location permit" to the Funnel for the public screening of *Rameau's Nephew* without cuts. The three films, excluding *Not A Love Story*, cited in the OFAVAS case do not contain obscenity. They do however contain proportionately small segments depicting sex and masturbation. In demanding cuts in these films the Censor Board demonstrated that it is not exclusively concerned with exploitation and violence.

In my view the Ontario Censor Board has contributed to ensuring that there may be inadequacies in the Criminal Code of Canada. The Board's practice of prior censorship intervenes between the alleged offending depiction and the law, thus preventing the Criminal Code from being used and, as is necessary, appropriately amended and strengthened.

The Censor Board provides a service to the commercial film industry in its mandate of prior censorship by advising the industry of precisely what sections need to be removed in order to sanction commercial distribution, thus protecting the industry from the fear of prosecution under the law and the potential of criminal charges.

The Censor Board has the power to demand cuts or ban films for public exhibition in Ontario. Cutting and banning are a severe penalty to cultural and non-commercial producers who are using the media to communicate, much like a writer, painter, photographer or sculptor, to whom the integrity of the work has great importance. Galleries, artist-run centres and other such community based, non-commercial exhibition centres often have a central mandate to expand and

develop their public audience for the development of new forms and ways of communication. Both FAVAC and OFAVAS are composed of individuals from the cultural community to whom freedom of expression without the limitations of prior restraint is an everyday necessity.

In December 1981, FAVAC proposed a number of amendments to the Ontario Theatres Act, the Act which empowers the Ontario Board of Censors, which were designed to address the issues of freedom of expression and the problems encountered by non-commercial and cultural users of film and video. These legislative proposals were developed in recognition that the Censor Board was established to regulate the film industry. These proposals were supported by cultural agencies, institutions, organizations, libraries, and concerned individuals throughout Ontario. The Ontario Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (who is also the minister responsible for the Theatres Act) and his department refused to meet with FAVAC representatives to discuss these proposals. Instead he suggested that these exhibition centres could remove themselves from the jurisdiction of the Censor Board by holding "private screenings," to which no admission could be charged at the door and no public advertising could be undertaken.

The Minister's proposed solution was unacceptable, as it counters the central public mandate of these exhibition centres. However, the Minister's proposal highlights the limitations of the Censor Board's power to deal with the problem of pornography, as those who so desire can simply set up "private screenings" on a subscription basis. Preventing the public exhibition of pornographic film and video is a minor intrusion on the pornography industry.

In the Censor's Board frustrated attempts to protect society (which it is not empowered to do), its Chairwoman is quite prepared to dispense with the fundamental freedom of expression. In the *Toronto Star*, February 19, 1983, under the headline "Video porn: It's the worst police have seen," the follow-

ing was reported: "It's gone beyond a censorship issue," Board of Censors Chairman Mary Brown says. "It's a social problem. We've got to rid ourselves of the philosophical idea of freedom of expression, really look at what's out there and decide what to do. We need legislation or some new controls, though I don't know exactly what they should be."

Pornography is too large an issue for a Censor Board; it is a serious social problem for which penalties more severe than cutting or banning voluntarily submitted films and video must be enforced. The images described by Anne Cameron and WAP with reference to "Snuff" are truly nauseating. The government, police and the judiciary must be pressured to deal with pornography as a serious problem. However, freedom of expression is *not* just a philosophical idea; it is a fundamental and necessary right. Obviously legislation is required, and the will to enforce it. Pornography, as rape, has more to do with power, control, fear and hatred than with sex. In the process of amending the Criminal Code, which is already under review, it would also seem appropriate to consider pornography in terms of the provisions for hate propaganda. In Section 281 (4) of the Criminal Code, for the purposes of legislation concerning hate propaganda, target groups presently are considered "any section of the public distinguished by colour, race, religion or ethnic origin." Sex or sexual orientation as a way of distinguishing an identifiable group is not included. Including these qualifications as an identifiable group under the law, and making this section more readily useable (presently permission of the Attorney General is required to press charges under these provisions) could provide the legal means by which this problem could be considered in an appropriate context and any obscenity legislation could be reinforced.

Pornography is a very serious social problem which we need to find a way to deal with, but if the cost is arbitrary control over freedom of expression it will be a no win situation for us all. ●

Obscenity Deleted

@!#@*?!*

@!#@*?!*

@!#@*?!*

by Lisa Freedman and Susan Ursel

Pornography is going through a revival as a central and essential issue for feminists. While *Playboy* and *Penthouse* were once points of reference for consciousness-raising groups and helped define the theory of women as sex objects, these forms of "entertainment" drew less and less of our rage through the 70's as we became concerned with the (seemingly) broader concerns of women's political and economic equality as measures of our social equality. We stopped watching what the porn-peddlers were doing to us. We thought we'd already addressed that problem. We were wrong.

The mid to late 70's saw the rise of some of the most offensive, pernicious and violent pornography man has ever devised. This new "hard-core entertainment" makes *Playboy* look like pabulum. And feminists are again awakening to porn's threat to our wellbeing, our children's wellbeing and everyone's safety.

Of course, as our discussion and debate of the problem progresses, we are moved to suggest answers to porn's proliferation. Sometimes the word "censorship" is used. Sometimes the word "regulation" is used. The meaning is the same — restrict the creation and dissemination of this material. However we decide to talk about the process of eliminating pornography from our lives, you can be sure there will be one uniform, gut reaction from almost all men and a substantial number of women. "This," they say, "is a restriction on our inviolable right to freedom of expression."

In addition, we are constantly having to address the argument that if we advocate censorship in any form, we will find ourselves the victim of the censor. The argument simply put is that any censorship law will be used against the feminist and gay communities. In support of this argument, mention is

always made to the harassment of the *Body Politic* magazine and more recently to the case of Kevin Orr and Glad Day Books. Kevin was found guilty of "possessing obscene material for the purpose of sale." Although he was subsequently given a conditional discharge by the courts, one can't help but be sceptical as to why this charge was laid in the first place. The magazines that were confiscated at Glad Day Bookstore (a specialty shop selling gay literature) could be found in 49 other stores. Yet charges weren't brought against these other store owners, nor against the distributor of the magazines (who testified at Kevin's trial under the protection of the Canada Evidence Act). It makes sense that some will feel very uneasy when words like censorship and control are bandied about. But are feminists who suggest censorship of pornography insensitive to this argument?

The American and French Revolutions were fought for *political* ideals. Freedom of expression was espoused not because the revolutionaries wanted to say just about anything, but because they wanted to say one thing in particular — that the then current constitutional monarchies were a lousy idea and that they, the developing middle class, wanted a bigger part of the action. The cry for freedom of speech was not an open invitation to say whatever popped into your head. It was a demand formulated within a still strict moral structure and sensibility. The ideas portrayed in hard core porn would then have been largely unthinkable to the rebelling populations, with the possible exception of the Marquis de Sade. However, the Marquis' indulgence in this kind of excess was not protected as freedom of expression. In fact, he was imprisoned and eventually died for it — a martyr to the cause?

To use "freedom of expression" to defend the pornographer's abusive portrayal and use of women, children and men, is a pervers-

sion of the historic meaning of this phrase, and besides, it gets us nowhere in the discussion about solutions to this problem. This may sound cavalier but let's look at the backup arguments the anti-censorship speaker uses.

Censorship is bad, he usually starts off saying, because if you censor one thing, everything will start getting censored and we won't be able to say anything anymore. In law this is called the "floodgates" theory. If you change something that has long been upheld by the law, you are opening the floodgates a tiny crack and then the accumulated pressures will act to swing the gates wide open. This argument is a popular one in most conservative judges' arsenals. It is used, for example, to justify not broadening the category of people who bring an issue such as environmental pollution to court. It has also been used to justify maintaining women in their customary socio-economic position.

We know that censorship can be used against us. We also know that the State is not going to wait for an invitation from the women's community to censor our political ideas; it doesn't need to. From the Criminal Code to the War Measures Act to the Income Tax Act, the State has already granted itself enough power to interfere on a regular basis in our lives. The issue is to regain control of the State's power by redefining and refining the definition of obscenity so that it meets our standards and needs.

The crucial point here is that we acknowledge the fact that the current obscenity section of the Criminal Code can be and is being used to harass the gay community. Yet it seems logical that the gay community would welcome a change in the law that would make it more difficult for the police and the courts to arbitrarily censor gay material.

The Criminal Code defines obscene material as material that "unduly exploits sex or

sex and any one or more of crime, horror, cruelty and violence." This section of the Criminal Code is found under the heading of "Offences Tending to Corrupt Morals." As long as the court can find that any material "unduly exploits sex," that material may be deemed obscene. And yes, we should worry that judges may deem birth control, abortion, sex education and any type of material dealing with gay issues to be obscene. And historically it seems that depictions of homosexual relationships have been more severely sanctioned than depictions of heterosexual relationships.

But in lobbying against the pornographer, feminists are quick to point out that law reform must be directed at material that is pornographic — not material that is obscene. The difference is crucial.

The current definition of obscenity and the mere notions that this word conjures up in one's mind allows judges to base judicial decisions on what they perceive as "the moral fabric of society." It is almost trite to say that the judiciary's view of the moral fabric of society is not always in accord with either a feminist or gay perspective.

Law reform must focus on deleting the word obscenity from the Criminal Code and replacing it with a definition of pornography that is aimed at prosecuting material where the theme stresses violence, degradation or sexual objectification. Any change in this mode, a change that moves away from allowing judges to make personal statements that certain material is obscene because the community won't tolerate it and because it may lead to a breakdown in the moral fabric of society, can only help the feminist and gay communities by closing the door on one more weapon that the police may use to harass either of these groups.

Lisa Freedman and Susan Ursel are Toronto lawyers.



Photos: Moira Armour

Berit Ås: "The women were saying, 'We have to do something drastic.'"

Recently, Dorothy Rosenberg of the Voice of Women spoke with Berit Ås, Norwegian feminist and peace activist, about peace activities in Scandinavia, and particularly last summer's women's peace march to Moscow. Below, Broadside prints excerpts from their conversation:

Berit Ås: To talk about the Scandinavian women's march to Moscow, to understand the whole project, I have to go back a few years.

It all began with the feelings of the Scandinavian women after two very important incidents: the Soviet Russian invasion of Afghanistan and the decision in late 1979 to deploy the cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe.

When I returned to Norway in 1979 after half a year in Halifax, there were lots of letters on my desk and people started calling from Denmark. They were depressed and exhausted after the two incidents and were saying: "What are we going to do? We can't take this any more. We have to do something."

Finnish women said to me: "Women's Day is coming up here in Scandinavia. We think we should gather signatures protesting this crazy world, and we should do it before March 8th." We hoped to get as many as 2 1/2 million signatures from women in Scandinavia, and I should tell you, Scandinavia has about 20 million people; Norway has 4 million, Denmark 5 million, Sweden 8 million, and Finland 5 million, not including the Icelandic Islands.

The women were feeling absolutely desperate. There were many plans and proposals. The women from Denmark were saying: "What are we doing to do? We have to do something drastic. We'll hire a boat...we know about a big boat. We'll take 1,000 women across the Atlantic. We can pay the fare. The Peace Movement will pay for it. Let's march to the United Nations in New York and scream aloud: "These men have to leave. We have to take over."

The Petition

The feelings were so strong that we decided to hold a meeting in Norway. And that was the beginning of the Women's Petition for Peace. At the end of January 1980, a number of journalists and politicians from various countries created the petition which was worded in such a way that women would feel it was absolutely right to sign, regardless of what party they belonged to.

So, a little country like Norway, with 4 million people, very strategically placed, and with a series of interesting NATO incidents in the last years, that little country had delivered 520,000 signatures to the United Nations. Other Scandinavian women before them had brought 500,000 and Canada's Voice of Women came with 130,000, another 60,000 came from Germany, 16,000 from Switzerland, and more from the States, Tanzania, Japan and Lebanon. You can see how things started to grow, and grow, and grow.

We didn't get any kind of visibility from this big project — what with walking around, talking with people, defending what we were doing, saying that we were not communists, that we were against nuclear weapons, the arms race, that we weren't taking the stand of one superpower over the other — nobody reported it. The women who had done it got no feedback, no reward, no visibility. So the Scandinavian women said: "We have to do something that is visible. Let's walk to Paris." And that was the idea behind the first march to Paris.

The March to Paris

In fact, it wasn't only the women in the beginning who started out with the idea. It was the gathering of peace movements all over Scandinavia. In each of the Scandinavian countries there is an umbrella peace movement, which included from ten to fifteen organizations (International League of Peace and Freedom, Teachers for Peace, etc.) and a series of those met in Oslo in the fall of 1980. The women who were there said: "We want to do something, we want to stage a march." Most of the peace movement said: "We can't, we can't. It's impossible for us. We don't have money, we don't have secretaries." And then it happened: two very young women came forward. One was living in a one-room apartment with a child, husband and a telephone and she said: "I'll be the secretary." She did a marvellous job. She also walked the whole distance.

But at that meeting it was the women who said: "We will take the responsibility." So the women did all the hard work. They gathered the people who wanted to go. They wrote all the material. They formed six practical task forces to organize transportation, child care, liaison with other peace groups, etc.

Some men were really angry because women wanted to do it alone. We heard about it often during the campaign for signatures. The cry came from lots of men: "Women, why are you doing it alone? Why can't men join in?"

"Why don't you create your own petitions," we said. "Why don't you gather your own signatures? Men for peace. It would be marvellous. You all have the biggest unions. You have people at the top of the political parties. You have all the leisure time, much more leisure time than women have. You have higher salaries all over. You don't usually spend time with your children to the extent that women are doing. You just start out." From this kind of discussion, we got a clear feeling that some of them were after some kind of control. There was one male Danish journalist who wrote some disastrous articles (unfortunately, he was part of the progressive press, too) about how undemocratic these women were, how they wouldn't let everybody who participated in the march have input at the big meetings, or decide from day to day what should happen the next day. Our experience has shown that such people are either ignorant or extremely

To Russia With Love

destructive, because such a march has to be planned very carefully. You have to decide, for example, what kind of slogans can be accepted. They have to reflect the theme and ideology of the march and the views of the people who organized it.

Finally, when we ended up in Paris, there was quite a good report on what happened. But what we heard all the time was, "Why are you marching in Western Europe? It doesn't matter a bit. You should have been marching towards Moscow."

"You should have been marching towards Moscow"

We remembered that, so when we had recovered by the fall of 1981, we said: "OK, let's follow it up. Let's march to Moscow."

I would describe the key organizers of the march to Moscow as politically trained women. One woman on the planning committee, Maria Laurson, had been in one of the Norwegian conservative parties, the Farmer's Party, for a long time. She had been the leader of the farmers' wives association, or the women farmers' association, which had about 22,000 members some years ago. She was an organizer, perhaps the most politically experienced of the three of the Oslo Planning Committee. The second was Eva Neuland, an assistant professor of education who had been with the others on the march to Paris. The third one was a young dancer, Rachel Peterson, who had also marched to Paris. Laurson and Eva Neuland went to Moscow, with other women from the Scandinavian countries and Finland. The Finnish woman was from the conservative party: it's quite important to note that women from a whole spectrum of political backgrounds joined together in their desire to march towards Moscow.



Negotiating the March to Moscow — A Series of Hassles

So women went to Moscow to plan the march. When they got there, the Peace Committee offered to show them all the beautiful tourist attractions — the Kremlin, the Bolshoi Ballet and such things. But those women said: "No, we can't do that. We have come here to work together and try to construct this march. We have to find out how many people we can take to Moscow, what kind of slogans we can use and what accommodation you can offer. We have no time for being tourists."

It took several days before the Russians really believed in these women. Our women were told quite openly that the Soviets put little trust in Western peace movements; that they felt the peace movements of the West would always take care of interests of the NATO countries and the other superpowers. It took more than three days to convince the Peace Committee that they were absolutely serious, wanted nuclear disarmament, wanted to stop the arms race both in the East and in the West, and that they felt both sides had the responsibility for taking initiatives in that direction.

Finally they came to an agreement, not a huge measure of success, but at least they were able to get a guarantee that they would be allowed to carry the slogans: (1) *Disarmament in both the East and in the West* (of course, the word East is important here, be-

cause in Russia, all the peace movements must call for disarmament in the West); (2) *Nuclear Free Zones both in the East and in the West*; (3) *Stop the Arms Race*; and (4) *Peace*.

The slogans for which they settled had to be negotiated a long time. Each side had to give and take.

Crisis

Our women returned to report on the negotiations. I think it was just after Christmas that we met. We were sitting in a meeting, planning our work, when the phone rang. It was a call from the Russian representative of the Peace Committee who said that everything was cancelled because the Chairman of the Committee had died. We were all very discouraged and it was very difficult to decide what to do. Eventually we came to the conclusion that the women would have to go back to Moscow and start negotiating all over again. Of course, this chance to re-establish contact with some of the Russian people was so important that it could not be lost. The same women who went the first time went again, and the negotiations were similar. Convincing the new leaders meant working night and day. There were incidents which kept them on the edge of giving up. At one point they withdrew and said that they would give up completely for now — that perhaps they might come back but that it was impossible to make the peace march that summer.

The politics of negotiation

I think it was poor judgement on the part of the Russians to expect us to postpone this peace march, because the march to Paris had obviously been seen on television by millions of Russian viewers. The Soviet Peace Committee leader finally decided that the Scandinavians were going to get at least what they had obtained before the relationship broke up and they came back, and the proposal was on the table again. Only now there was a difference. This time it was the Russians who proposed the criteria and the conditions, and they signed the agreement both in Russian and in Norwegian.

An episode from the signing of this agreement is very illustrative. Eva Neuland signed the Norwegian text, then signed the Russian text without having it translated, saying: "I trust you." One of the Soviet Peace Committee members took the paper and said: "We have a slogan here in the Soviet Union. It says 'trust and check.' That's a good idea, because in the Soviet text we have taken away one word." "Which word?" the women asked. "East," was the answer. Most of the women became stiff. But Eva Neuland handled the situation beautifully. She smiled and said, "Why should I mistrust you now? We have been working so hard together to achieve these goals, why should you do this? Why do you think I should believe what you are saying? My understanding is that you are joking."

The Soviet citizen smiled and said, "Of course it is a joke!"

The day after, the Chairman of the Soviet Peace Committee appeared at a big political meeting and said the contract had been signed. He got a standing ovation. A very large group of party members stood up and were obviously very happy about this initiative.

At home, Norwegian women decided that they would pick the journalists and photographers for this march; they sent the invitation to the Norwegian Press Corps. They also decided to invite the peace organizations to join in, and representatives from the unions and the churches.

It had been decided that there should be 75% women and 25% men on the march. This was established for both practical and ideological purposes. It had been women

CONTINUED PAGE 13

MOVEMENT MATTERS

International Feminist Network

GENEVA — The International Feminist Network (IFN) is an international network to mobilize support and solidarity for women. The history of people's solidarity internationally is long; there are now well established organisations to fight for workers' rights, for the release of political prisoners, and against racism. But there has been no such organisation for women. Over the past decade we have come to realise the extent of the countless injustices against women throughout the world, and if we are to gain strength and power to combat these injustices, it is imperative to create and build up international solidarity. IFN is an attempt to do this.

IFN started after the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women in Brussels, Belgium, in March 1976. The idea was that there should be continuing support and publicity for crimes against women anywhere. ISIS coordinates IFN by sending out appeals for support to national contacts then disseminate the information within their own countries, for action. Usually, the action consists of sending telegrams and letters of protest or support, of organising demonstrations, and of getting national and international publicity for the case. Any woman or group of women can send in information to ISIS for distribution through IFN.

The guidelines under which IFN operates for taking up cases are as follows:

a) priority is given to supporting feminist is-

sués and women not supported by other kinds of networks or channels; b) women should be supported even if the issue is not particularly "feminist" wherever their struggles are looked on as "secondary", (e.g. women political prisoners, women in mixed groups such as labour unions, liberation movements, etc.); c) care is taken that the IFN is not used as an instrument of male-dominated or male-oriented groups.

The tasks of the national network contact women are basically two. The first is to distribute the information and appeals for support in their country. Whenever ISIS received an appeal for support, we duplicate it and send a copy to all the IFN contact women. They in turn duplicate the same information — translating it if necessary — and distribute it to as many women's groups and individuals as possible. Some of the ways this is being done are through feminist magazines and newsletters, notices put up in women's houses, notices in the mass media or alternative press, by mail to women's groups around the country or through a telephone tree. National contact women report back to us about how the networks are working in their countries and also about what kinds of response has been generated by the appeals. We try to share this information around the network, and exchange ideas.

Most of the appeals call for telegrams and letters to be sent in support of women in another country. Sometimes publicity is asked for and sometimes it is requested that women demonstrate. It is up to the women's

movement in each country to decide if and how they will respond to the appeals for support. We know from past experience that these kind of actions do have an impact, so it is terribly important that they continue, and that more and more women from different countries become involved.

The second task of the IFN national contact women is to pass on to ISIS their own appeals for support and information, which ISIS will then distribute to the other members of the network. It is not only the national contact women who do this, however. *Any woman anywhere can send us appeals for support, or can request information about campaigns needing international support.*

Over the past three years we have sent out and responded to information on about 50 different cases. The support we have given has been for women who have defended themselves against rape; victims of rape; women workers' struggles; women who have been tried, imprisoned or persecuted for having abortions; campaigns against restrictive abortion laws; victims of sterilization abuse; women who have been persecuted for trying to create their own organisations or parties, or to demonstrate for their rights; women political prisoners; and women protesting against sexist treatment in the media. More recently, we have used the IFN for sending out information world-wide on various meetings and events such as the Alternative Women's Conference in Copenhagen, July 1980.

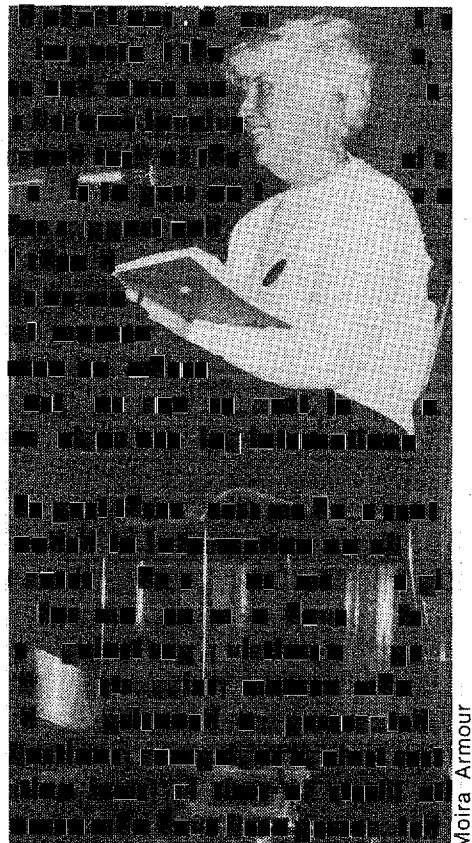
Specifically, since the last IFN report (ISIS Bulletin No. 13) the following cases have been sent out through the Network:

1. Contraceptive Action Programme, Ireland. A group struggling against repressive legislation and campaigning for the right to choose for all. They asked for international support in their campaign.
2. Eleven women in Spain who stood trial for having practised abortion or helped others to abort. Spanish authorities suspended prosecution after massive national demonstrations and international solidarity.
3. The Abortion Amendment Bill in the United Kingdom which, if passed, would have brought in very restrictive abortion possibilities. Enormous national and international pressure helped to postpone the process of this bill passing.
4. The proposed restriction of the abortion law in Israel, abolishing a woman's right to request an abortion from the health services for socio-economic reasons. In spite of pressure, the proposal was passed in this case.
5. Ida Nudel, a Jewish woman fighting to get permission to leave the USSR and later sentenced to four years exile in Siberia. She seemed to have been selected for specifically brutal treatment as a woman.
6. Danish women fighting for a women's house/refuge in Copenhagen.
7. Abortion campaign in Brazil.
8. The Feminist Party of Spain, who have been refused official recognition of their party on the grounds that membership of it is selective.
9. Prisoners from the International Women's Day March in Chile, March 1980.
10. Japanese women protesting sexism in Japanese Broadcasting Corporation's programming for foreigners.
11. A petition from Nordic women calling for disarmament.
12. The proposed tightening of an already extremely restrictive abortion law in Queensland, Australia.

It is clear from some of the feedback we get that women around the world are responding to most of these cases, and that the kinds of actions IFN people take probably do have an effect. To become really effective, though, much much more needs to be done — and this can only be done with more and more women involved in the network. With a strong international network of this kind, women could force our demands to be heard and dealt with. If you are willing to be an IFN contact person, please contact us immediately. The countries currently within the IFN are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the USA. If your country is not among these, it does not mean you cannot also become an IFN contact. It is very difficult for indiv-

iduals or groups to cover a whole country.

If you have information to be sent out internationally, please send it to us. IFN also needs financial support. Donations, information and further details to: IFN, c/o ISIS, C.P. 301, 1227 Carouge/Geneva, Switzerland. ●



Moira Armour

Mary O'Brien: In an illuminating lecture of the Politics of Reproduction, Mary O'Brien helped feminists wade through the "metaphysical ketchup" that characterizes male-stream philosophy. (See next month's *Broadside* for a review of O'Brien's book *The Politics of Reproduction*).

Racism Unresolved

by Sheila Wilder

The women's movement and feminist theory are properly criticized for weakness on the racial front (one such criticism being the letter from Phoenix, Vancouver, *Broadside*, February 1983). The incorporation into feminist analysis of an adequate understanding of racism, its links to sexism and to class, is only just beginning. Perhaps some criticism may well be "sour grapes"; nevertheless when it comes from women it must be taken seriously because it is symptomatic of very real divisions within the movement. Obviously, there are serious consequences if these are ignored.

Racism cuts deep. Despite the potential for women's gender solidarity, it is not a cushion against the whip of racial slurs. Attempts to unify around all men as the enemy, going so far as to name those men by other than gender — Jewish man, Black man, etc. — cracks the whip as sharply over the head of a female Jew, Black, etc. Such indirect slurs are as forcefully divisive as directly overt racial insults. Black theoreticians such as Angela Davis, (in *Women, Race and Class*, 1981) and Gloria Joseph (*The Incompatible Ménage à Trois: Marxism, Feminism and Racism*, 1981) clearly state that there is a closer allegiance between Black women and Black men than there is between Black women and women in general.

Women of colour fight a struggle combining gender and skin colour and historical cultural traditions. Her share of the burden may well be to get her white sister off her back. For instance, Angela Davis points to the struggle for birth control in the 70s in the US. Noting the choice of coloured women not to participate in the campaign, she undercuts the banal explanations and throws out the ensuing implications of birth control when mixed with racism, the sum of which is involuntary sterilization for non-white women.

The sword cuts both ways precisely because of the socio-political and economic structures surrounding the movement. As these haven't changed radically, the consequences of racial, ethnic and class divisions must be confronted at all times if women's gains are not to be undermined.

This shortcoming of feminism and the women's movement has a theoretical basis: "To speak of women, all women categorically, is to perpetuate white supremacy — white female supremacy ..." (Gloria Joseph). And, indeed, the issues of feminism as they speak to male supremacy are bounded by the white woman's experience of male dominance.

It is important to keep this in view for at least 2 reasons: (1) to guide feminism away

from misconstruing its universality and falling into unnecessary dogmatism and oppression of its own; and (2) precisely because Black women have offered these criticisms with as much serious consideration as white women have given to the experience of sexism. In this way feminism and feminist analysis opens out to ever larger articulations of oppression without fear of losing the centrality of oppression that is common to all women.

As it stands, feminism and the women's movement in Canada, though constrained by the fabric of the larger socio-political and economic context of sexism, racism, capitalism and every other negative "ism," gives the clarion call to all women through its profound and avant-garde radicalism and revolutionary potential. At the same time, however, it backhands some of its respondents. But to react and singularly swat at the women's movement does not begin to deal with the problem. Rather, criticism with serious intent would jostle the somewhat elite appearance and practice of a white woman's movement. There is much to be said for consciousness-raising, a process that inhibits the tendency for the political forum to close around those "in the know."

The forum, as it stands, must become larger, the spokespeople more frequent in number, the network of information more accessible and inclusive, and all this without compromising the central concerns of women.

In the capsule of oppressive, objective conditions the gains made by one social group frequently entail the suffering of yet another, be it Black women in the US or women in the Third World used as guinea pigs for our benefit.

Do we hope that the women's movement, as it stands, is the crest of that wave that pulls further and wider changes into its wake? Is this not premised on the hope that those who suffer for our gain will take up the cry of liberation for themselves? Should not feminist politics, posing itself as truly radical, not account for itself to those women who feel its sting rather than its warmth and, taking criticism as seriously as it (once) took its own experience, name the still unnamed within its discourse? The first step, then, would be to listen, to accept, and to actively engage with those who *do* feel excluded and not define the terms through ready-made analysis and politics.

Sheila Wilder is a graduate of political science at York University, studying feminism and Marxism.

Sexually Abused Patients' Defence Fund

The Sexually Abused Patients' Defence Fund is made up of six of many women who have been sexually abused by a Toronto psychiatrist (male) still practising today. In the process of contacting each other, we have become aware that this doctor has imposed this abuse on his female patients on a habitual basis for over twenty years.

Because of the humiliation and trauma this doctor has caused and is causing many women today, we feel it necessary to call to the attention of The College of Physicians and Surgeons his gross misconduct (sexual relations and patients is strictly forbidden by the medical code of ethics) and to demand the revocation of his licence. Due to the skepticism with which the medical profession views women's complaints of sexual abuse by psychiatrists, we have been strongly advised by those familiar with the College's complaints procedure to engage legal counsel.

Six women presenting similar factual evidence together with solid legal counsel stand a good chance of winning the case, and in so doing, of providing an example to women patients that such behaviour need not be tolerated and to their doctors, that indulgence in this practice is to put their livelihoods in serious jeopardy. If the case is won, the press will be notified of the doctor's name and the other particulars.

To cover all foreseeable costs as the case progresses, the Defence Fund's goal is \$1000. In the name of all women who have been and continue to be sexually abused by doctors, the Fund appeals to you for financial support of this cause. Please pass the hat at your next staff, membership, or board meeting, and make donations payable to the Sexually Abused Patients' Defence Fund, c/o Toronto Rape Crisis Centre, P.O. Box 6597, Station "A", Toronto. In the event of any money remaining after costs, the balance will be used to set up a fund for other women who have been similarly abused. If you have any questions, please call (416) 964-7477. ●

Across the

Old

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Femi

by Myrna Kostash

Like Saul on the road to Damascus, I, too, was a traveller when I was first illuminated by the feminist idea. I had been travelling for a year when, in early 1971, I visited a Canadian friend living in England. One evening, thinking I would be "interested," she handed me a packet of materials sent to her by a friend in California and suggested I read them. Except for Anne Koedt's "Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm," I no longer remember what the articles were but, when I was finished reading them, I knew without doubt or irresolution that I was a feminist. And that, once back home in Canada, I would work in the women's liberation movement.

In retrospect this moment of my illumination characterized the movement itself. I mean its internationalism, its fertile interfusion of ideas and experience and vision from the dispersed communities of feminists in the Western world, its apparently happy communication across borders. In retrospect it also contained all that is problematic in that dispersion.

Returning to Toronto, I encountered a movement in full tilt. The headiness of it! The Toronto Women's Liberation Movement, the Radical Feminists, the feminists in the Canadian Liberation Movement and in the sects of the Left. This exhilarating hodge-podge of veterans of the Committee to End the War in Vietnam and of the cane-cutting brigades to Cuba, of anti-imperialist Trotskyists and Communists, of Canadian nationalists and francophone separatists, of dissident Americans, of the acolytes of Ti-Grace Atkinson and adherents of the S.C.U.M. Manifesto. Not to mention women involved in film, literature, journalism, sculpture, theatre, publishing, academia. I remember being drunk with it, this inebriating grog of ideas and influences, everything from de Beauvoir and Greer to Bernadette Devlin, and Leila Khaled to Emma Goldman, and Evelyn Reed to Firestone and Millett to our own Margaret Atwood, Maryon Kantaroff and Joyce Wieland. Truly I thought, women have no country: we are each other's; and if I have a nationality it is my femaleness, and if I have a government it is the leadership of this movement in which I am voluntarily inscribed; and if I am a patriot (matriot?) it is of the idea of the primordial loyalty of sisters.

I travelled some more. To Boston, Berkeley. Up and down and back and forth across Canada. Back to England and Spain. Confirming each time the seeming equality of citizenship in the feminist "nation": we are women, and there is for us no higher law than that of our own revolution. I settled down in Alberta and learned that feminism had indeed emigrated from western Ukraine to western Canada along with the social democrats at the beginning of the century; that feminists are engaged in the agony of dissidence in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe; that native women are struggling against the patriarchal inheritance of the Indian Act; that ethnic women are struggling to define the border where ethnic group solidarity leaves off and the community of women outside the ghetto begins. With all these women, too, I have felt the most intense identification: where you have been, I too have been, in dream, in spirit, in desire.

And finally, I went to Greece, for six months, and, after peeling off layers of relationship with local playboys, foreign women, socialist men, I eventually found what I was looking for: Greek feminists, and felt at home.

Sort of.

And here is the nub of the matter. By the time I got to Greece, I had been exactly ten years a feminist, ten years a traveller across the borderlands that divide and quarter woman-nation (I think of the tribes of the Great Plains, their kinship arbitrarily transformed into opposing "nationalities" by the white man's 49th parallel: the conceit of the property owner!). Ten years a witness to the ambition of gender-solidarity which we had all perfervidly willed into being. Unfortunately, it has not been so simple. The will has not shown us yet the way. In spite of the indisputable invigoration of our movement by means of the cross-references and cross-fertilizations of ideas and experiences among women of disparate cultures, nationalities and allegiances, our solidarity remains tenuous. Over ten years, I have also been witness to and participant in the cleavages of our unity: that competition for feminist validity among the components of our splendid diversity, that distressingly familiar hierarchical ordering of authority according to political "authenticity."

Montreal, 1973. We are packed like sardines in the basement of a bistro to see an Angolan film. The film-maker is among us and she, and her film, tell us of the grievous brutality of the Portuguese regime in Angola and of the sorrow and

resistance of the Angolan women. We are moved, and we are angry, and we flinch as though the gloved hand of the Portuguese soldier had struck our own face. A Québécoise filmmaker starts to speak. Yes, she says, we know something of your struggle for here too, in Québec, we struggle, for independence, self-determination, cultural integrity. Ah, yes, replies the Angolan, but are your men imprisoned in work camps, are your children dying of starvation, are your women tramping barefoot to seek redress? Well, no, says the Québécoise, but our men are unemployed and our children undernourished and our women.... And so they carry on, the two of them, the Québécoise and the Angolan, women, warriors, artists, in common, competing for the authenticity of the colonized, as though deprivation were a sweepstake. And I sit, mournfully, thinking: Do I have to choose between these women?

Over ten years there has been a whole catalogue of such contradictions between women presented as political choices to be made. Between Québec separatists and Canadian nationalists; between ethnics and WASPS; between Third World women and metropolitans; between regions and centres.

Snapshots and anecdotes.

I was not there but someone who was told me of the visit to Canada in the early seventies of a delegation of women from North Vietnam. Canadian women had organized it, with the idea that American women in the anti-war movement meet with their Vietnamese counterparts (this being impossible on American soil.) The Americans arrived and closeted themselves with the Vietnamese. The Canadian women made sandwiches.

1972. I helped organize a Women's Art Festival at the University of Toronto. Casting about for a "drawing card," we decided upon the Chicago Women's Rock Band who duly arrived, along with a group of fans from Albany, Buffalo, Detroit, all of them awe-inspiring in their sheer bulk and stentorian voice. While they made themselves at home in the auditorium lounge, we Canadians hauled their considerable equipment from the van. Experiencing myself, in an instant of insight, as a "coolie" labouring on behalf of my colonial "masters," I approached the rock band, asking for some extra "manpower." "Ain't no manpower around here baby," they replied, and returned to their conversation.

1975. On my study wall: photographs of Joan Baez, Angela Davis, Janis Joplin and Jane Fonda. On my bookshelves: Morgan, Millett, Firestone, Shulman, Friedan, Rich, Piercy, Chesler. In my head: a familiarity with American feminist opinion regarding racism, socialism, rape, pornography, representation of women by the media, sexist anthropology, women in literature, suffragism, NOW, Weatherwomen, alternative presses, psychoanalysis, mothering, orgasm, lesbian separatism and Bella Abzug.

1978. In Berkeley, I noticed *en passant*, that the books I have written are not in the feminist bookstore.

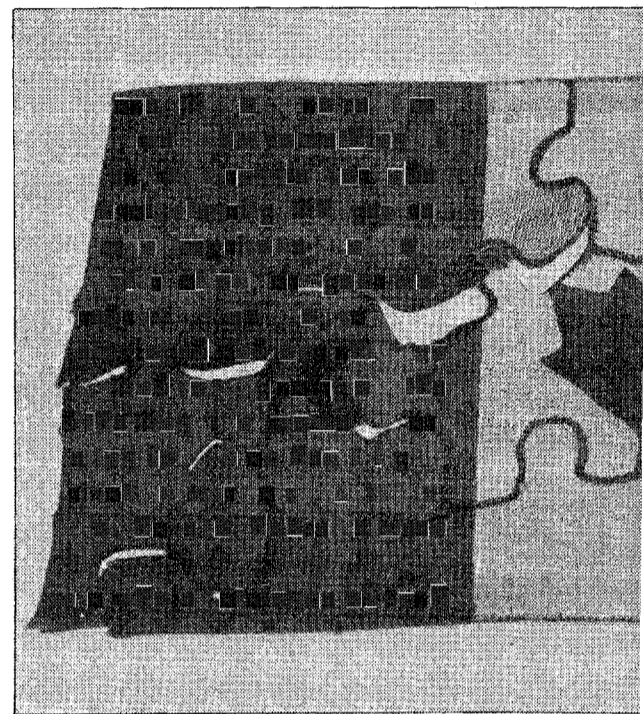
1980. A group of anti-rape activists in my city organized a weekend conference on sexual violence against women and invited a keynote speaker, Andrea Dworkin, from the United States.

1981. As book columnist for the local newspaper, I observed front publishers' catalogues and review copies that American feminists write books, Canadian feminists edit anthologies.

What is going on here? There is no doubt that, from the perspective of the Canadian* feminist, the American women's liberation movement has enormous authority; indeed it is seen as the *original* movement from which all others have taken their inspiration and justification. Never mind that feminism in Canada has historical roots in British and continental feminism as well as in indigenous movements for social reform, the point is we do not tend to perceive this as anything half so consequential as the fact of feminism among the Americans. When *Americans* demonstrate against beauty pageants, when *they* publish Redstocking manifestoes and organize rape crisis centres and make video films about female genitals and run candidates for political office, well, the whole world knows something is afoot. In the most powerful country in the world, the women are rising up angry, and the rest of us, dazzled, awed, inspired, provoked, and feeling a genuine kinship, can only follow suit: we imitate the Americans and call it "sisterhood."

This is not to call into question the very substantial achievements of American feminism and its role in evoking our own courage and imagination as Canadian feminists. But, as we do with so much else in American culture, the

* I use the term "Canadian" to denote Canadians outside Québec. I do not speak for the Québécoises whose political, cultural and intellectual perspective is their own.



authority we ascribe to American feminism has the effect of at once idealizing that movement (Americans are so gutsy, so innovative, so sophisticated) and trivializing our own (Canadians are timid, conformist, naive). By exaggerating the influence and accomplishments of American women, relative to our own, we underestimate the work of our own foremothers and sisters and consign it to relative obscurity. It is not to be wondered at, then, that to each other we become invisible, that we find form and function only in the light of the American movement. We do not see, in our own community an authority on pornography: we invite an American to speak and are flattered when she accepts. We believe our own propaganda about American *chutzpah* and Canadian defence; and so we celebrate *Gyn/Ecology* and, for ourselves (who else would be interested?) we invite submissions to modest anthology on domestic labour and circulate it among a small circle of Marxist academics.

The concomitant of this, however, is the ethnocentrism of the Americans. By my own observation, Americans, even feminists, consider themselves to live at the centre of the civilized world; the rest of us, then, live at points of the concentric circles that radiate at increasing distance from that centre. If Canadian feminists view their work as relatively inconsequential and localized, it is also the case that they see this confirmed in American women's attitudes: what Canada has not experienced the maddening and sometimes humiliating ignorance of even educated and well-travelled American women on the subject of Canada? We are painfully aware that we are of no more interest to them than is, say, Belgium while we, of course, continue to be fascinated, appalled, intrigued, excited by them. (Québec holds rather more interest for Americans because, it would seem, of the rather exotic fact that the Québécois speak French.) If this is a relationship of "sisters," it is very much like that of the nine-year-old girl who both admires her teen-age sister and is infuriated by her privileges, her status, and her patronizing indulgence of her sibling's inferiority. And competition on her part for that same privilege and status would be seen as risible.

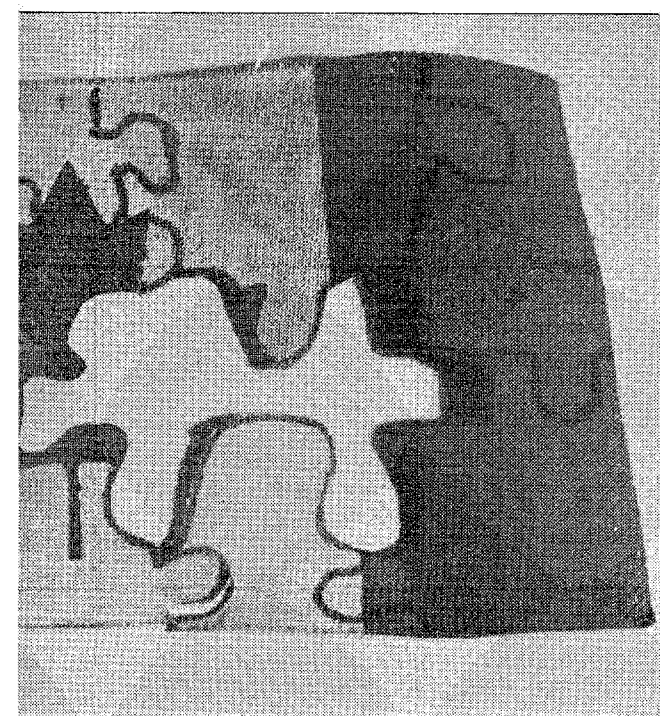
There would be no more to say about that if it were not for the historical fact of Canadian nationalism. In its most recent manifestation, it emerged, parallel with the women movement, from the declining forces of the New Left when it had been sparked by the campaign against the American imperialist incursion into Vietnam. As we studied the American ways of war and colonialist entrepreneurship, we became ever more sensitive to the hegemonic presence of American capital and culture in our own society. We began to dream, along with the Vietnamese, of a "national liberation" and chafed at the American presumption — even among radicals — that we were no more to be regarded than as some largish extension of the mid-west, Iowa, say, and more remarkable. In Canadian feminists, the two ambitions — for international sisterhood and for national solidarity —

Myrna Kostash is a well-travelled feminist and author who spent the past year in Greece and is now at home in Edmonton.

Great Divide:



World Id World isms



Beverley Allinson

from the foreign women who preceded me. But the vast mass of women in Nafplion do not speak English. Nor do they sit alone in tavernas and cafés; after dark they are not there at all. Whenever I saw them, they were either in the shops, trailing children behind them, or they were in the company of men. They did not like me.

The reason became clear as I got to know their men. Greek men "prefer" foreign women. According to them, Greek women are "bossy" and quickly run to fat. They haggle and whine and nag about money. They refuse sex until marriage and, after marriage, refuse it for money. They are ignorant and unworldly and have no opinions. And so on. In a town like Nafplion, with much tourist traffic, the security of the Greek woman is constantly threatened. The men I met made no attempt to conceal the fact they were married, nor any apology that they were spending their free time at the taverna, in the company of foreign women. Occasionally, a Greek man will marry a foreigner: each time this happens, of course, one fewer Greek girl will find a husband. The competition that Greek women feel towards foreign women is very concrete, very material. But for a foreign woman like me who has no material interest in their men, this competition is also very painful for its consequences of estrangement among women.

Eventually I did make friends with some Greek women: feminists and socialists grouped around the women's movement and the Panhellenic Socialist Party (PASOK), the governing party of Greece. And here another competition took place.

"Ah, you're from America! (sic)." Then the wistful sign, the furtive glance around the room, and the question, *sotto voce*: "Tell me, how do you do things in your women's movement?" I am, for instance, talking with Ada, a twenty-two-year-old student who works for one of the PASOK committees. I have just complained, loudly, about the PASOK May Day posters currently festooning Athens: posters of male faces, male masses, clenched male fists. "I know, I detest this too," says Ada. "But..." and her voice trails off in a whisper. I follow her glance around the room as it lights on the men at the desks and telephones. "But our men, they are not so liberated as yours."

The defensiveness! I visit the newly-opened Women's Café in the student district of Athens. A charming café. Lace curtains, potted plants, a bit of a library, a small bar, round marble-topped tables, groups of women of all ages in earnest conversation. And three men. I ask one of the women working at the bar: why are there men here? She blushes and stammers in answer: "We had a long argument about it. We decided it would be, well, fascistic, to keep them out. They mustn't feel we hate men."



I drop in on a meeting of the Multi-National Women's Liberation Group, a group of mainly American and English feminists. I learn that they have "learned their lesson": henceforth they will become publicly involved in feminist campaigns only if invited to do so by the Greek women's organizations. Their earlier initiatives in campaigns against rape and pornography, for instance, had not been appreciated: such campaigns must seem to be Greek, or not at all.

Anna D. and Anna K. both live in Nafplion. One is a socialist, the other a Communist. I have got to know them independently of each other. In spite of the fact they know each other, neither mentions the other to me.

Anna D. tells me of the main success of the local Union of Greek Women (a socialist group). Together with members of the engineers, merchants, labour, cultural and municipal government associations, the women have succeeded in halting a major hotel development on a local beach. "This was a revolutionary action for the women of Nafplion," Anna explains. "Imagine women carrying placards and shouting slogans! The men in the street called us 'whores'." I ask her if the Union plans any explicitly feminist campaigns? "Ah, well, we have to be very careful about using that word — feminist — in the provinces. After all, we're not against men. Someday, perhaps, we won't be afraid of the word, but for now..."

Anna K. takes me to the meeting room of the Social and Cultural Centre of Women (Communist). It is just before Christmas and the Centre has put up a book display. Children's books. And books by Gorky, Brecht, Neruda, Mayakovsky, Lenin, Engels, Ritsos. And Edna O'Brien. (Edna O'Brien?) "The first task," says Anna, "is to raise women's cultural level. They are not used to getting anything more for themselves than raising children and watching TV. Of course, it's not easy for working men either..."

Soula M. is very suspicious of the New Left. She's read a Soviet sociologist's critique of Daniel Cohn-Bendit but she has not read Cohn-Bendit. She is also suspicious of the Women's Café. "Why do we need such a thing?" she asks. "I can go anytime I like to an ordinary café." Soula's hus-

band, meanwhile, does not "allow" her to get a driver's licence.

I have been invited to Easter dinner at Anna K.'s house. The whole family — socialists and Communists all — have also been invited. The women serve the men, from cooking to clean-up, and then sit, wearily, patiently waiting for their drunk and guffawing mates to decide when to leave. In all the months I was to spend in Greece, I did not once see a man lift a finger in housework or childcare. Not even a socialist finger.

Catherine S. is fed up. She's a Greek-Australian and is going back to Australia. "Greeks think they are the only people ever to have suffered." She is discouraged. "I have, on my own initiative, been twice to Geneva to attend conferences on women's health. Do you think I can get the feminists here in Athens to care? No!"



I have a confession to make. After six months of this, I began to believe I really was a representative of an "advanced" form of feminism. I took a certain smug satisfaction from being able to inform Greek feminists of the debates and issues raging in my country, to enlighten them about the books that have not yet been translated into Greek, to commiserate with them about how "awful" Greek men are compared to North American men. To nod, assentingly, in apologetic discussions about how "underdeveloped" is Greek feminism. To point out that, in my country, feminists would not tolerate this and that, have gone beyond that and this. To assert that, inevitably, Greek feminists will have to separate out from the men on the Left, just as we did, in my country. In short, I was becoming, in relation to Greek feminists, an "American." In the competition for feminist authenticity, I had, this time, reversed the roles. It was a revelation.

Consequently, it has been humbling to put that into perspective. To seek behind the immediate dynamic of my political "superiority" the nature of the problem. I have had to acknowledge the privilege that attaches to my relative economic independence and social mobility and to admit that, for all the distress and anger I felt on behalf of Greek women, and the identification, the sisterhood across the borders of national and cultural difference, the fact is, in even living among Greeks, I exploit the advantage of my situation in middle-class Canada. I have my own money, I have neither husband nor children, I can travel, I can challenge *machismo*.

The fact is, I come from a society which is everywhere glamorized, including its women's movement. Which is everywhere envied, even as it is feared or deplored. America! (The distinction between the United States and Canada was meaningful only to me.) Territory of wealth, possibility, transformation. America: big cars down the highway, dishwashers in the kitchen, a woman alone in her own apartment, a profession, appointments with a psychiatrist, sex in the single bars. America: a razzle-dazzle, irreverent, brazen and noisy women's liberation movement turning men into putty.



The fact is, I was both envied and resented. Compared to Greek women, my right to bold rhetoric was easily won: *their* struggle with the Church, with patriarchs, with women's own self-abnegation, not to mention the eternal struggle with a harsh soil, had been engaged in Canada by the two generations of feminists before me. I stood on their shoulders to look Greek women in the eye. The fact is, the economic and political pre-eminence of America has relegated Greece to the periphery of capitalist and democratic projects; and well these women knew it, their defensiveness and parochialism and self-depreciation a mask for this historical inferiority.

The fact is, for women and men in Greece, the "national" question is *the* question; a question of the liberation of a whole society from its masters abroad, in order that its particular genius may be released, including the genius of its women. As a Canadian, I understood some of this, but not all. I did not understand that one's history can go back two thousand years, can include generations and generations of people hounded and despised by a Roman, Byzantine, Turkish, Italian, German, American overlord. I did not understand the *passion* fructified by the blood spilled in civil war, nor the strength of the appeal to women to hold fast to their Greekness — their mothering, nurturing Greekness — in the fact of every assault upon it. The fact is, both the Left and the Right have taken this up and women must have a very independent consciousness indeed to assert the primacy of their own gender liberation while the "nation" is imperilled. The fact is, if they are haters of men, they can be beaten, sequestered, thrown out of the house, pauperized, almost with impunity.

CONTINUED PAGE 14



Snapshots and anecdotes.

In the winter and spring of 1981-1982 I lived in Nafplion, Greece. For the first six weeks I was miserably lonely. I had no friends. More to the point, I had no women friends. Every day I visited the town's cafés, bars, parks, seaside paths, tavernas and every day I met men: the public spaces belong to them and they speak English, a language they have learned

ARTS

More Than the Sum of its Parts

by Gay Bell

Female Parts, a series of four plays by Italian playwrights Franca Rame and Dario Fo, will open with actress Maja Ardal April 8 at Toronto Workshop Productions. Recently, Gay Bell talked to Maja Ardal to discover aspects of the plays which are of particular interest to feminists and the results of the conversations are printed below.

Maja Ardal: In *Female Parts* I start on a totally bare stage and examine all my physical possibilities as to how I can create imaginary worlds. I find that the story to be told can exist in me and my equipment — my head, my emotions and my body. I reach for my best comedy technique and sense of humour and, at the opposite end of the scale, for a really deep classical profundity. In between there is naturalistic theatre.

It is an unusual script for me as a woman actor. I've played many traditional roles in theatre and on television where, usually, I'm supposed to be a character person and I have to do an accent and be humorous; humorous not so much with my own aggressive humour but as an object of humour. This play is exciting for me because it goes way past that.

The main thrust of these four seemingly separate plays, which all come together to make *Female Parts*, is the rise of awareness.

Waking Up is about a working class woman. Both she and her husband work in a factory and they have one child. Very, very low income. The first awareness that they have of something outside of their lives to be discussed from the point of view of the woman, happens when she suddenly — because of a tiny incident between her and her husband — comes out with a lot of crystal



A Woman Alone: Maja Ardal in *Female Parts*.

clear rhetoric about how the multi-national corporations have turned them both into slaves and turned him into a tyrant against her.

Maria, in *A Woman Alone*, is directly suffering from having committed infidelity. She becomes trapped, abused and squeezed into the mould of a middle-class housewife who has to accept and be subject to everything that happens to her. (I have to function a whole hour on stage as a victim of an incredible onslaught of male sexuality.) The repression makes Maria burst out and act. This woman has a very honest and very outrageous reaction to her environment. It is a play with a lot of violence in it and yet, as the actor, I'm looking for the greatest amount of humour in this piece. For me it is very interesting how we as women can look, enjoy, laugh and sensitize ourselves to things. Just because feminism is a revolutionary movement, it doesn't mean that we have divided and compartmentalized all those things you're not allowed to laugh about. We are in fact capable of looking in a wide range and from different angles at our lives and at the lives of women around us.

I presented this piece at Interval House, a hostel for battered women in Toronto. At the end, the women said that Maria should not be mad at the beginning. "She becomes

crazy half way through but we don't want to see her crazy at the beginning — it's all too true!"

The woman in *The Same Old Story* is politically aware. She dares to talk politics in the bedroom. We find her dealing with one of the most difficult unspoken problems that a lot of women have — lust. She's coping with the fact that she feels as lusty as the man does. Yet his lust is more important than hers because she's supposed to use her head and make decisions about her emotional state and about whether or not she's going to get pregnant by making love: "When you get to use your cock, I have to use my head and that's just not fair."

She does get pregnant and starts looking for an abortion. I don't think it's very different in Canada than in Italy, where a new law says that a woman can get an abortion but, as this character learned on a previous occasion, they give you such a hard time if you go for a legal abortion that you end up lying in the hospital getting so pregnant that you don't care to have an abortion. For an illegal abortion, a doctor could charge a million lire. The character says, "I suppose you're a pro-lifer because of course it's in the interests of the medical profession to be against legalized abortions and then to charge exorbitant prices for illegal ones."

Franca Rame comes from the improvisational tradition of Italian theatre. Dario Fo, her husband, who is well-known as a playwright, is the main writer of the two. I think Franca improvised as Dario wrote. As a political artist, Franca has suffered a lot of violence at the hands of the police. She and her husband are not attached to any political group per se. In fact, the communists disowned them. These plays are very principled. They don't bitch: they tell wild, funny, violent, colourful and tragic stories about the way they see the world of women.

In North America, led by our intellectual desires and by intellectual stimulus, we often find it difficult to tell a feminist story from a woman's point of view in a very concrete atmosphere, but the European aspect gives a very concrete world to deal with. The overall theme of these plays has to do with being mothers. It is a universal, but also extremely pragmatic, theme. Womanhood is even responsible for the existence or non-existence of the next generation. The plays plant each woman in an existing structure; we do not merely see these women isolated in a spotlight with a generalized feeling of society around them. In the first play, the woman says, "I wash all your socks, I recondition you, I regenerate you, I even reproduce for you and for what. So I can send you back out there to work even harder for the bosses." So, what we get is a profound acknowledgement that it's often the same cage that we're locked in: it's not always only the women who are locked in a cage.

The plays insist that women are restricted. The male character will react in a specific way from the point of view of his role as a husband or his role as a father. But the plays are realistic — the men are all very different. They're not one faceless giant. They're not one throbbing penis that's battering its way into the doors of the woman's brain.

The last play does make a recommendation towards all women which is so drastic as to be seen in a symbolic way. It says what is meant by these plays. Medea says: "It is blackmail the way you imprison us women in cages and hang children around our necks to silence us the way you would hang a wooden collar around a cow — all the better for you to milk her, all the better for you to mount her." Instead of the children becoming a blossoming of a hope, a blossoming of the future, by the male laws they have become the chains that are wrapped around our necks to strangle us. By making Medea's reaction to that trap so powerful and so destructive, Dario and Maria are saying that, in order to really give birth to a new woman, there has to be destruction, so it is finally a totally revolutionary night of theatre.

Gay Bell is a cultural worker in Toronto.



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Women's Cultural Building: Cornerstone Cabaret

by Eve Zaremba

In my calendar, spring is that indeterminate period of about two months wedged between International Women's Day and the black-fly season. Winter's work is done, but it is too nasty outside and too crazy inside for rejoicing. This year promised to be no different from others.

Characteristically, coalitions break up, collectives splinter, sectarianism surfaces, friends snarl at each other, love affairs fizzle out, writers block is rampant, it rains in Florida and California, Germany continues as the bulwark of democracy, our own dear Queen gets the only job in BC, the Progressive (sic) Conservative leadership race brings nonentities out of the woodwork, the price of gas goes down everywhere except in Canada, the virgin Pope dispenses more mixed messages...and my car insurance runs out.

It's enough to make one look forward to 1984.

But bear with it, all is not lost. Remember the women painters and sculptors who were caught being representational back in the days when it was taboo, and art for art's sake was the only art? Remember women writers and artists who insisted against all odds that it is possible to be creative and funny without being sexist and to be relevant and vital without glorifying violence? Remember feminists who claimed that *our* politics need not be dull, boring and tedious like the left's? Well, these women are at it again, a whole bunch of them, in Toronto yet, together, calling themselves Women's Cultural Building ("building" is a verb not a noun) and daring to present a two-month long festival dedicated to this building. In March and April, 1983. Sheer madness! Who but women, and feminists at that, would build anything these days, much less culture! Of course, women have no sense of occasion and feminists are notorious for a complete lack of proper negativity, of that cynicism so suitable for our nihilistic era.

The WCB enterprise was launched on Saturday, March 5 in Toronto by a colourful float at the IWD festivities, a sterling attempt to turn what can be a political duty in-



From *The Euguellonne*: Colette Gagnon (l.) and Cynthia Grant at the Five Minute Feminist Cabaret.

to a joyful occasion. The coffee which WCB dispensed throughout the day turned out to be both free and drinkable, a significant achievement. But the real beginning was on the actual International Women's Day itself, March 8. The culture-building festival was kicked-off by the Five Minute Feminist Cabaret, an evening of short skits, acts and what-have-you on darkest Queen Street West in T.O. Even Stagger Lee's decor (it's the old Horseshoe Tavern) of ersatz 1950s nostalgia crudely done on the cheap for the uncritical and ignorant young, even the hostility of some of its staff could not destroy what proved to be an evening packed with energy and entertainment presented by feminists with talent to spare.

It was a full house and standing-room-only all night, both inside the smokey tavern and outside in the street. The stunned Queen Street habituées in the audience were vastly outnumbered by assorted women: radical feminists socialists, unemployed politicians, students, dykes, musicians and bus drivers, friends, foes and lovers. The WCB performers were themselves a diverse bunch of professionals, semi-professionals and hopefuls with more or less developed political sensibilities. Neither audience nor the performers were quite sure of each other as the evening got rolling. Neither need have worried. We, an immensely receptive and warm but by no means uncritical audience, were amply repaid by being treated to three sets of high calibre, eclectic entertainment.

off much of the expensive local and imported commercial entertainment available in Toronto. This should not be a once-and-no-future occasion. We must have a follow-up soon.

After that auspicious beginning the Festival of Women Building Culture (a clumsy name, but accurate) opened its storefront Headquarters at 563 Queen Street West on March 14 with a Pork Roast of 250 feminist cartoons plus 'installations' at a number of other Queen Street locations. For the rest of the month and continuing right through April, the WCB collective promises a festival of more art, drama, film, dance, slide-shows, performances, readings, a women's brunch and egg-rolling fun and games. A treat for these hard times.

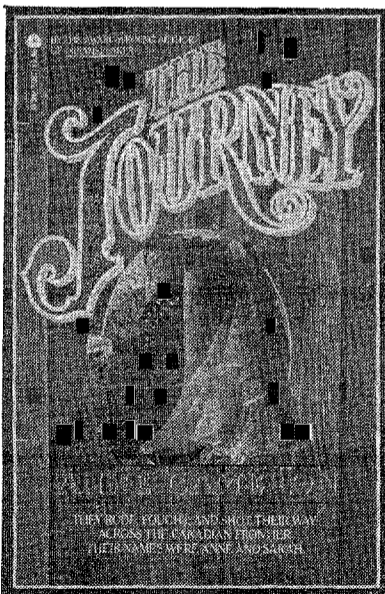


The MCs: (from left) Jane Farrow, Lauri Conger, Louise Garfield, and Lorraine Segato.

Some of the best of the five-minute acts owed a bit to Saturday Night Live, one or two were too complex for the impossibly cramped conditions. A few inevitably displayed weak political sense, lack of rehearsal time, incurably inflated egos and such familiar problems. Never mind. It was an evening to remember and cherish. With a little judicious pruning, firm direction and better location, the WCB artists could knock spots

With support from Toronto's feminists, I am sure that WCB can withstand the hassles and the inevitable pressure to compromise artistically and politically. If we are lucky and the WCB women are tough they will survive the work-load and the nervous exhaustion of the festival and continue to build, even after these two months are over, what they have so splendidly begun.

Heroines on the Horizon



The Journey, by Anne Cameron. New York: Avon Books 1982. Pp. 308.

by Susan G. Cole

If you're at all familiar with Anne Cameron's screenplays, if you've read her poetry and novels, or if you've come to know Cameron through her tough-minded and powerful testimonials in *Broadside*, then you are familiar with a versatile author who never shies away from difficult issues that call for heart-felt responses and analyses. And if you look at the title of her paper-

back novel *The Journey*, you may imagine that you'll be led once more down new and exciting paths to profundity.

Well, put your assumptions away. Even Cameron will eschew depth when she has to. She is, for example, extremely stingy when it comes to doling out dimension to her characters in her latest tale. None of them gets more than two in this not very serious cowboy — or should I say "cowperson" — romp. The breadth, as opposed to depth, of the personalities in *The Journey* is the book's main strength and Cameron knows it.

The story is about a once-orphaned 14-year-old virgin, Anne, who flees her violent and vile Uncle Andrew after feigning her own death in a fire she set to her family's farmhouse. With two horses, Dan, the glorious stud, and Bess, the loyal mare (even the horses are cardboard characters), Anne sets out she's not sure where, until she encounters the well-travelled and experienced whore, Sarah. Sarah has been tarred and feathered by Luke Wilson, a witch-hunting predecessor of Renaissance International who loathes prostitutes and who's determined to drive them and their sinning ways out of every Canadian town. Keno, Sarah's predictably opportunistic pimp, has abandoned her. Her chance meeting with Anne saves her life and begins a lasting and loving friendship.

The story reels from bar room to shoot-out, from campsite to cross-country trek—faster it's safe to say than most narratives could. En route, we meet Belle, another whore with a heart of gold, beleaguered Chinese people working on the railroad and sensitive Native Canadians who are attuned to

the women's needs and who assist as Sarah eventually gives birth. The birth, by the way, becomes just another in the many events that befall our heroines.

What sounds like something of a comic book is not without its political implications. Cameron may be cranking out a rip-roaring story but she does give the book its share of feminist content. She explores the old bordello where women lived together and served up sexual favours to the men who roomed at the hotel. According to Cameron's version of history, these cat-houses were really hotbeds of lesbianism and female support, subversive cells in the midst of apparent female exploitation.

While reminding us of the ills perpetrated against the Chinese labourers, and of the Native culture since brought almost to extinction by the exploits of MacMillan Bloedel, et al. Cameron seems to say that men are okay, provided they are men of colour. The white men, on the other hand, are for the most part thieves, rapists, pimps and wife-beaters. The sentimentalization of Third World men is meant, we must assume, as more of a history lesson for Cameron's readers, a product of her specific BC consciousness, and, not incidentally, a way of making the characters and the situations as broad as possible.

In spite of the fact that Cameron plainly wanted to write something entertaining and not too thought-provoking, there are some startlingly vivid passages in this book which make it go beyond the large portion of froth it could have been. The violence, for example, is very real, so much so that it's almost out of context with the rest of what is mostly superficial stuff. Even while writing a lark,

Cameron's visceral anger at the violence women experience in our lives bubbles to the surface when she describes degradation and humiliation, and for those moments, the jovial intent of the book is totally masked. It doesn't detract from the reading. It is simply Cameron's indelible imprint on material her own consciousness would have allowed her to deal with in no other way.

As for the sex in the book, be apprised that Sarah and Anne curse and fight with each other all the way. You won't want a relationship like it but you'll love reading about it. In any event they finally consummate this passionate friendship on page 266. If you leaf furiously to that page, you will have fallen into the old trap of believing that genital contact makes for the steamiest reading. As it happens, Cameron elsewhere in the book fashions a surprisingly erotic episode which is a simple account of how Sarah helps Anne into the bathtub. Compare the two sequences. There's a lovely lesson in the exercise.

Cameron dedicates the book to all of those women who were dissatisfied with the role models Westerns provided for women. This book is for those who despaired because Dale Evans didn't carry a gun and rode a slower horse than Roy Rogers did. It's for those who wanted to play cowboys and Indians as kids but discovered that the boys would allow them only the role of Indian — captured and tied to a tree. But even if you were never preoccupied with the myths and conventions of the western tradition, and even if it's your wish to fight that tradition tooth and nail, you probably won't be able to put *The Journey* down until you've finished the last page. ●

Gandhi: One-Dimensional God

by Anne Cameron

The pre-release publicity for the film *Gandhi* was such, and the first reviews so full of words like "stunning" and "overwhelming," that we expected to have to wait in the chill of a block-long line-up. So we went early and wound up sitting in the lobby with lots of time to kill wondering why so few people had shown up to see it. Word of mouth must be alive and well, but we didn't know that at the time.

I suppose I half-expected *Gandhi* to rival *Gone With the Wind*, after all, what about the reviews, what about the publicity. The only similarity is that they both have an intermission.

I learned nothing new about Gandhi the man, and got very tired of looking at a one-dimensional god. Surely even Gandhi must have had to wrestle with all the things all of us have to fight, he must have suffered doubt, fear, sorrow, anger, even some frustration. Ben Kingsley did a very good job portraying what there was in the script for him to portray, but I suspect even the best actor can't portray what just is not there, and the scripting of *Gandhi* was terrible. Richard Attenborough has years of experience as an actor, but that does not necessarily equip him to be a producer, or to have any qualifications to supervise scripting. The film showed definite signs of having been influenced by the Indian version of the CFDC, that peculiar Canadian institution that has lawyers, accountants and graduates of obscure universities with a BA in literature dictating to film makers and editing scripts.

The political slant of *Gandhi* is distressing and, I think, dangerous. The film was produced by, and carefully geared for, the soft liberal underbelly and the knee-jerk well-meaning reactionary. With all the good intentions in the world, the film, in an attempt to make a statement against exploitation and imperialism, falls again and again into the same weary trap. Time and time again we see imperialism committing violence and atrocity on unarmed pacifists with brave, heart-

rending faces. Time and time again the metal bars smash down on unprotected heads, faces, shoulders. Time and time again the noble pacifists are bloodied, beaten, smashed, thumped, bashed, kicked, cursed, and hit again. The violence goes on and on until, when the peaceful demonstrators are slaughtered by Ghurka soldiers with Lee Enfield .303 rifles, one is almost tired and bored with falling bodies, spurting blood, dying babies and the ever-increasing pile of spent shells.

All the violence committed by "outsiders" is in medium or full close-up. But when Moslem and Hindu begin to tear themselves apart, we get shots from the rooftops, at night, shadowy figures, faceless figures. We are distanced from the pain, separated from the agony, and when the Indian mob attacks and murders the police we see an axe descend, but we do not know if it is chopping flesh or cobblestones. The effect is to negate the internal violence and over-emphasize the violence by outsiders, as if to suggest it's all right if we chop up each other but not if we chop up "others."

The racism is unconscionable. The film was supported, subsidized and helped by the Hindu-dominated government of India, and it shows. The composition of the shots, the unspoken influences of staging and facial expression, the politics of editing and sound all suggest and re-enforce the idea that the Muslims were to blame for everything that went wrong in a period of undeniable internal strife and rioting.

Gandhi himself repeatedly advocated the ability of Hindu and Christian to live in peace and harmony; the film suggests it is impossible for the Muslims to co-exist with anybody at all. The audience got virtually no message at all about Hindu thought, philosophy, religion, or aspirations, but certainly got a gutful of redigested Christian ethic. Those who believed in Christianity were nice; those who did not were nasty, and since imperialism and militarism are anti-Christian, they were all very nasty, indeed.

We saw absolutely spectacular cinemato-

graphy, but the cameras, except for one easily missed shot, stayed away from the horror and misery of the chronically starving of Calcutta and Bombay. Shot after shot of people sleeping on the sidewalks. Bright-eyed children with beautiful smiles led goats to the river or watched wide-eyed from perches in the trees as the pilgrims walked thousands strong down country roads, but no sign of those children deliberately deformed and crippled at birth so they could earn a living as beggars. No sign of infanticide. No sign of anything nasty, no sign of the terrible lives of the Untouchables. That kind of bias is propaganda. The film was propaganda, from start to finish, propaganda for the Hindu government of India, propaganda for the well-meaning Christians, propaganda for the English actors/producers/apologists now busy trying to prove that not all British-European-White-Men are nasty. And in all the propaganda, that small, skinny, dedicated patriot got lost and we got a cute little god.

We got told by god's wife that Gandhi wanted freedom and equality for women; there was no sign of it in the script, no sign of it from Gandhi who bravely accepted the blows of the imperialists but lashed out physically at his wife because she didn't want to clean and rake the latrine. Gandhi who casually informed an English woman who had come to his ashram: "You will be my daughter." Gandhi who was fussed over adoringly by little girls, young women, middle-aged women, older women, all of whom idolized him, and either helped support him or walked willingly behind him. The Gandhi we are shown, the Gandhi who talked so much about equality and freedom, seemed to see nothing at all wrong with his children kissing his feet.

And, by the end of the film, the backside kissing gets a little bit much. With full British pomp and ceremony, in strides Mountbatten, with all the glory of England, all the regality and honour of military uniform, ruling royal blood, and brass buttons. The fact

that at this point Britain and the patriarchy had no choice in granting India's independence gets lost in the frantic insistence that royalty might be slow to move, but when it does, the British sense of "fair play" and the inherent justice of the very rightness of the House of Lords will prevail: the Christian hearts of the elite are, after all, in the right place and all the wrongs will be undone. Immediately following this bit of flatulent reassurance and Brit patriotism, of course, the Moslems we have been conditioned to distrust rip it all apart, betray everything, kick off a blood bath, because whereas Gandhi and the Hindus are open-minded people who understand Christian concepts and are co-operative, the Moslems are a bunch of fanatic bigots.

And what better time to make this film and get this anti-Moslem message across than at a time when the Ayatollah is going senile in full view of the world, OPEC is being obnoxious, the Middle East is about to explode and the yanks are quietly moving the fleet into position. Given any excuse at all, the Americans will charge in to "protect" the Moslem people from themselves, and Western free enterprise (capitalism) will replace the British Empire and whose "fault" will it be anyway, but those damned Moslems who couldn't even be trusted not to kill god, who betrayed Gandhi, the teeming millions of India, and even themselves. And, of course, the yanks control the film industry, and Richard Attenborough aspired to get eleven Academy Award nominations for a piece of Capitalist-Christian-Patriarchal-propagandist adulation? I find no difference between Imperialism and Capitalism, no difference between either and Patriarchy, and Gandhi was educated in the halls of the Old Boys Network, and so was Richard Attenborough, and the film made about one by the other shows the connection.

Anne Cameron is the author of *Dream-speaker* and *The Journey*, and co-authored the screenplay for *Ticket to Heaven*.



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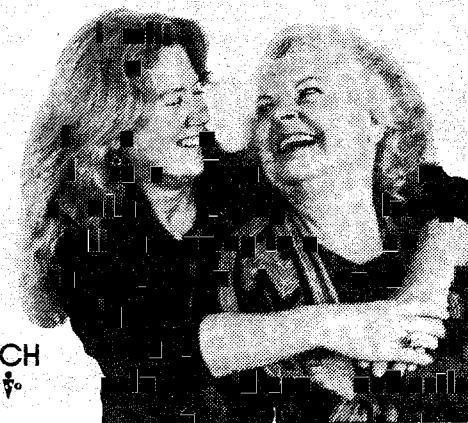


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• **MARCH TO MOSCOW**, from page 6
 who had been doing all the negotiations. These women deserved to constitute the majority of the march because they had put in tremendous amounts of hope, courage and work. Usually women do all the hard work and then some men who are leaders of some associations are rewarded because they are the heads of those organizations. So the decision was made to allow only 25% men.

The March at last

It started in Oslo, but not with a great celebration. The women had held their celebrations and farewell parties at all the small places they had started out from. It was extremely important that they came from all over Norway so that the press coverage would reflect the broad representation.

They left from the central station in Oslo as very ordinary citizens and arrived in Stockholm, where a big open meeting was planned. They were invited to lunch by the mayor of Stockholm before they went to Finland by boat where in Porvoo (which is the first Finnish town they came to) the Finnish president declared himself to be a sponsor of the march, and they were honoured with a series of big meetings and celebrations.

They went further, to Helsinki, and they went further, to Leningrad. As they were coming into Leningrad, the media reported that the march was quite controlled, but that relationships between the marchers and the people were not very good. The women were well aware of the possibility that it might not become a big success. But all the time they had said it was better to do something than to do nothing. They had agreed that the march slogans should be only the ones agreed upon. But they made it absolutely clear that when they talked with ordinary Soviet citizens, they could talk about any topic they wished. That was guaranteed them in the negotiations.

Quite early in the march, we were told that twelve Russian dissidents in Moscow were arrested. The marchers were asked what they thought about this. They were fully aware that people were not allowed to express exactly what they wanted in this country, but they couldn't say so because of conditions of the negotiations. Then the Soviet Russian people came up with banners that were very

clearly prejudiced against the West, especially Reagan, but they had to withdraw from the march because they were breaking the agreement.

So both groups had to withdraw their slogans. But apart from that, nothing dramatic happened until the march came to a little town just outside Moscow.

The Russians join

The town was Kalinin, and there the story suddenly broke through the Norwegian media. There were some people on the sidewalk and some people had taken courage and broken into the march. As a few people did that, others took courage and followed the march too. And then before long, 30,000 people who had been watching the Scandinavian women marchers were found to be marching behind them. This made Norwegian reporters now say that the march was a success. And on the front page of a big conservative daily it said UHEL which means happiness or great joy for the peace march in Kalinin. There was a one hour program on the radio which also told about this breakthrough for the peace march, and a TV program which showed the way they were marching in this little town. The march was considered a success in the Norwegian media.

When I left Norway for Canada, I looked for news about the peace march in this country, and I must say that I saw very little. There could have been much better coverage. The march was an attempt to build up trust between the East and West, especially between the women of the East and West. The marchers and negotiators felt that if they could get in contact with the Soviet Russian women, they would have more opportunity to work on building up a trusting relationship between the East and West. It was a matter of pushing through the official Peace Committee in Moscow to reach the ordinary people. The ultimate objective was to talk to people outside the party structure about peace and peace making.

The role of women

Often, when women do something, they are not visible, they are of no interest to the media. This means that for women to get more visibility it costs them dearly. It costs

them courage, money, political training and lots of practical work. But the point is that women really do go further. Yet, I should point out that *no men* wanted to take on the whole organizational work. It was women who organized both the march to Paris and the march to Moscow.

I should also mention that women of high political standing participated in the Paris march. We had one woman, Ingrid Eide, Norwegian Labour Party parliamentarian, who came with her little boy. She was the President of the International League for Peace and Freedom in Norway. She has been a peace worker and has been voting against military budgets as a member of the Social Democrats. It is because of her strong behaviour that she isn't in parliament any longer.

That is very often the case of women who work in this way. We had a Danish woman, Jytte Hilden, a member of the Danish Parliament, who walked with one of her four children. She has been very hard on the disarmament question, which means she is against raising the percentage of the budget that goes to the arms race. And she was the one who officially said she thought the time had come for the USA to withdraw from NATO. That cost her her place in parliament in Denmark.

One young, very courageous member of the Norwegian cabinet, who has one child and is only thirty years old, was the one who opened the march in Copenhagen and said everything she thought about disarmament on that occasion. She was very courageous and I think she has been in great difficulty in cabinet because of her stand.

Women are having a tremendously difficult time within the traditional parties because they are under male leadership, and these males have been able to do absolutely nothing about the arms race. The reason the world is going in the wrong direction is because of male leadership. I mention this because in the Paris march there were many eminent people marching with the women, while on the march to Moscow there was a self-selecting procedure: we had to ask the different groups early on to name their representatives and there wasn't much space open to very eminent persons to participate. That gave another profile to the march to Moscow.

I would like to stress that the march to Moscow was neither staged by the Soviet Russians themselves, nor by members of the Peace Council, which very often in Scandinavian countries is made up of Communist Party members. I think the organizers understood — as I understood (I have been a leader of the socialist left) — that the cause would be much stronger if women of the middle range of political parties were those who worked hard for it. I respect those women very much because they had a much harder fight with men in their parties than people more to the left.

These marches are very hard work. There is an enormous amount of organization and you have to have workers. People cannot just start walking. At first, the women who had to walk up front had to train, to allocate a couple of hours a day to walking. They had to find the right kind of shoes, and the right kind of outfit to do it. It cost them a lot in other ways too. In fact, I think there are some of these women whose marriages were broken up. They had taken on such a tremendous job for peace that their husbands just couldn't take it. One woman had lost her house and some women on the Moscow march wanted to gather one ruble from each family to give her an opportunity to buy a new one. These very interesting connections make the private, the public and the international issues intermingle. I think women are much more able to see these kinds of connections.



Dorothy Rosenberg is a Montreal filmmaker and peace activist. Christine Burt transcribed the interview.

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MOVEMENT COMMENT

IWD: Lip Service to Feminism

by Lois Lowenberger

I want to express my dismay at the handling of this year's International Women's Day march in Toronto. IWD is usually a high point in the year for me; this year I was left feeling frustrated and angry.

The choice and execution of this year's themes (with the exception of freedom of choice), ignored many issues of crucial importance to women. It was divisive and insensitive. In brief, it was far too oriented towards the male left, and paid only lip service to feminism.

The workshop on the theme of "woman's right to peace," held on March 3, was entitled: "Women's Liberation, Disarmament and Anti-Imperialism." On the panel was a woman from "Women for Peace," a woman from Eritrea, a woman from the League of Arab Democrats, and a woman from the Philippines, who also spoke about Nicaragua and El Salvador. These speeches were accompanied by much shouting of revolutionary slogans. The pre-march activities at Convocation Hall put much emphasis on South American and Palestinian liberation movements, again accompanied by the shouting of revolutionary slogans.

There are some movements I support as a feminist, because they have articulated feminist goals, and seem committed to attaining them, such as those in Greece and Nicaragua. There are some movements which I support as a leftist even though they have no particular focus on women, but are working towards a better society where life will perhaps be better for everyone, such as those in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, South Africa and Cuba. Finally, there are movements which are purely nationalist, and with whom I may have some sympathy but who do not have developed social goals, such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Irish Republican Army.

Movements in the first category are relevant to International Women's Day; movements in the second category are marginally relevant; and movements in the last category have no place at all in International Women's Day. I make these distinctions not because I do not support most of these movements, but because I feel that International Women's Day should focus on issues particular to women and on struggles particular to women. By supporting all national liberation movements with equal fervour, we diminish the real achievements of those few which are committed to the liberation of women.

I see no necessary relationship between feminism and anti-imperialism, anti-zionism or national liberation. The mere fact that national liberation movements allow women to fight and die in them is an insufficient reason for feminists to embrace them. The Iranian and Algerian revolutions are examples of movements where women were in the forefront and are now severely repressed.

The failure of the March 8 Coalition to make such distinctions is a crucial error. In particular, it led to the decision to express support for the Palestinian liberation movements and to castigate Israel. That this decision was made is clear from the fact that a woman from the League of Arab Democrats was asked to speak, but an Israeli woman was not. It was also made clear by the pre-

march activities where we were exhorted to support Palestinian women, but Israeli women were not mentioned. This decision was terribly wrong.

First, there is, as far as I know, nothing feminist about the goals of the Palestine Liberation Organization or the League of Arab Democrats. Second, the Middle East disputes are basically nationalist ones, with no direct relationship to the specific needs and aspirations of women, as distinct from those of men.

Third, there is not in the Middle East one side clearly in the right and one clearly in the wrong, as in Nicaragua, El Salvador or South Africa. International Women's Day should not, by giving voice to the Palestinians and ignoring Israel, take a stand on such a complex situation. Indeed, the fact that there has recently been a heated debate on the issue in *Broadside* shows that there is no one clear answer.

Fourth, the March 8 Coalition made no attempt to apply a feminist analysis to the Middle East struggle. Instead, it swallowed the rhetoric which holds that the Palestine Liberation Organization is good and Israel is bad. There are many questions which come to my mind when approaching the situation as a feminist. Is there a feminist perspective at all? How do all women in the Middle East suffer from the conflict? Do Arab and Israeli women have anything to say to each other? What is the involvement of Israeli and Arab women in government, the army and the peace movements? What do feminists have to say about patriarchy and militarism in the Middle East? What is the comparative status of Israeli and Arab women? Where do various countries and nationalities stand on issues such as polygamy, genital mutilation, unilateral divorce, abortion and birth control?

Finally, and most important, this decision alienated a great many women who support Israel, or who do not support any one position. In particular, it was a direct slap in the face to Jewish women. It is unforgivable that the March 8 Coalition thought so little of Jewish feminists that it decided to pursue this course.

At the very least, both Israeli and Palestinian perspectives should have been heard. The better approach, however, would have been to refuse to take sides in nationalist struggles, but to talk about what problems are faced by all Third and Fourth World women, and what they are doing to fight their oppression as women, whether living under right-wing or left-wing regimes, whether fighting in national movements or not.

On International Women's Day we should talk not just about women in South America, the Philippines, the Palestinian refugee camps, and a select group in Africa, but about all women — women in Israel, other Arab countries, the African continent, the Caribbean, China, India, Vietnam, Kampuchea, Laos, Thailand, Afghanistan, the Eastern Block, Iran and Pakistan. In the latter two countries, in particular, fundamentalist Islamic regimes are crushing women's freedoms. Indeed no one even mentioned the Iranian women's demonstration on March 8 to protest the government's increased repression of women, surely that is just what we should support on International Women's Day.

Perhaps all these women are ignored because they are oppressed by the wrong people.

A lack of feminist analysis led to the focus on national liberation movements preferred by the male left, rather than on women's oppression. The lack of feminist analysis also obfuscated the larger questions. Surely feminists have a unique perspective on war, peace, and disarmament, which should not be ignored in favour of approving certain nationalist struggles. This perspective sees war, oppression, expansionism, imperialism, the nuclear arms race and other evils as products of the universal patriarchal system, not of "capitalism," "imperialism," "zionism" or even "communism."

Even those national liberation movements with whom we quite rightly express solidarity on International Women's Day should not occupy such a large part of the program. This includes both movements which can be classed as pro-feminist, such as Nicaragua, and ones which should ultimately help women along with everyone else, such as El Salvador, although I would have preferred to see more about Nicaragua and less about the other movements. The question we should ask is, are these movements directly relevant to women?

The March 8 Coalition claims to be focussed on "working class women" and "oppressed women." My suspicion is that there are many such women in Canada and internationally who either find national liberation movements irrelevant, or who in fact may oppose some or all of them.

Many working class women are not very interested in South America. They are interested in issues such as equal pay for work of equal value, equal opportunities, the double burden, affirmative action, day care, technological change, decent pensions and sexual harassment. Single mothers are concerned about things like better welfare benefits, personal dignity, decent housing, nutrition and education. And many women are concerned about issues like reproductive freedom, pornography, violence against women and discrimination.

Liberation movements are not even directly relevant to the lives of all immigrant women in Canada. Many immigrant women, even from the areas of armed struggle, have not had any direct involvement with the national liberation movements. Many immigrant women are conservative, may even be right-wing, and may not agree with the liberation movements. Should we ignore them? The immediate concerns of immigrant women are matters such as English language classes, education, wife battering, immigration policy, decent jobs and freedom from harassment.

The women's movement in general, and International Women's Day in particular, should be careful not to unnecessarily alienate women who support us by focussing on issues which are, at best, peripherally relevant to feminism, to the exclusion of more universal problems. Because feminism embraces all classes and all political persuasions, it is unique. We should not assume that what is supported by the left as "progressive" is necessarily good for women. Further, we should listen to women on all points of the political spectrum, even if we ultimately disagree with them on some is-

ues. There is a time for debate on partisan and political matters which divide us, such as the Arab-Israeli dispute, a time to forge a compromise or to decide to go our separate ways. International Women's Day is not such a time; it is a time for unity.

Finally, the International Women's Day celebration largely ignored, or made only passing reference to, groups of women who are particularly oppressed within Canadian society, groups like black women, Native women, Inuit women, immigrant women in general, Jewish women, and lesbian women.

It is true that International Women's Day cannot focus on everything at once, and it is necessary to narrow down some themes. However, given the limited relevance and divisive nature of national liberation movements, they are perhaps the last issue International Women's Day should choose to highlight. Indeed, the Coordinating Committee of the March 8 Coalition wrote in a letter to *Broadside* (March 1983) that they viewed International Women's Day as: "... a day of celebration, rejuvenation and unity for all women." In view of this stated objective, the focus on a few national liberation movements is even more puzzling.

International Women's Day is increasingly becoming dominated by male-oriented leftist issues, to the exclusion of feminist issues. The handling of the national liberation movements discussed above is one example of this, as is the increasing number of men who insist on participating in the march. In addition, I was hard pressed to find exclusively women's tables at the fair.

There is a place for coalition among feminists and groups oriented towards progressive, as opposed to feminist, goals. However, I think we should be careful about coalition. It is far too easy for these other groups to persuade women that "their" concerns are primary and that, once again, we should wait for the revolution to do anything about women. Further, I do not believe that most men can fully understand feminism, or can fight with real commitment for feminist goals, even where they are supportive. As a non-Native, for example, I cannot possibly fully understand the position of Native women, as Native, even though I am supportive of their struggles: I accept this gap, and the need for Native women to work separately as well as in coalition with the broader women's movement.

Finally, I believe that feminism is the most revolutionary movement of our time, and that nothing else can be changed in a fundamental way unless feminism achieves its goals. Therefore I, and many women like me, choose to focus my energy on feminism as opposed to other worthy causes, and I think that this choice should be respected. Therefore I feel that when men and progressive movements participate in International Women's Day, they should participate only in a way that demonstrates support for our struggles as women.

International Women's Day should be, first and foremost, a celebration of women together. It is tragic that the March 8 Coalition has lost sight of this in its eagerness to submerge feminism into left politics.

Lois Lowenberger is a Toronto lawyer, involved with feminist legal issues.

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I met these women, began to understand them, and slowly realized how unequal is the competition for the feminist idea across the Great Divide that separates the capitalist, industrial heartland from its periphery. For at the periphery, the sexual double standard is only now being tentatively challenged by the greater education and workaday experience of women. The general underdevelopment of Greek society is painfully obvious to anyone who crosses over from North America. The work to be done! Educational and medical services to be extended, the economy to be repatriated, civil relations modernized, agriculture mechanized, labour laws strengthened, the bureaucracy humanized and, throughout the cells of civil society, the virus of deference to authoritarian, corrupt, even brutal administration to be expunged. Not to mention the liberation of women into full citizenship.

"In the future," Calliope B., a feminist activist, said to me, "there will be no difference between the Greek and Western women's movements. But for now there is the difference of our retardation. The Metaxas dictatorship in the thirties, the war and fascist occupation and civil war, the

post-war witch hunts, the junta from 1967 to 1973, all this has not been exactly fertile ground for feminism!"

In Europe, "we" had the Renaissance; the Greeks had the Ottoman Empire sitting on their backs. We had industrialization; they had emigration. We had the revolutionary struggle for democracy; they had a war of independence, followed by a monarchy. We colonized; they were colonized. We had suffragism; they had government by the army. We had the New Left; they had a junta, and they lived and died in prisons while we ran through the streets.

To each of these catastrophes, however, they have put up a magnificent resistance. And if Greek women cannot or will not separate their struggle for liberation from the patriarchy, from the national struggle for independence and social justice it is because of the grievous sense of urgency they share with men in the "resistance"; and because of the tremendous moral authority of the male-dominated nationalist and socialist movements in the campaign for this independence and this justice. Who was I, the representative of Coca-Colaization, to tell them they were strategically incorrect? Who was I, the "American," to lecture them on trans-national

sisterhood? Who was I, the Canadian, to pretend that all women are created equal?

In the competition for the hearts and minds of women, feminism is not necessarily a disinterested ideology, innocent of the pollutions of the society within which it was engendered. In the competition for feminist authenticity, not all women are free to associate as economic, social and moral equals. To this extent, feminism as the association of free and equal com-matriots, is a utopian idea.

But we are on our way there. In the past ten years, Canadian feminists have laboured prodigiously and with considerable success to establish our own institutions of collective female achievement, whether in the arts or in political parties of our own or in all-women trade unions or in professional associations or in militant actions. We have done these things ourselves. In the past five years, Greek women have asserted female pride and female anger, through the medium of their own experience: they have lived it, as no women could have done in their place. Canadians, Greeks, Americans: we have struggled in the crucible of our histories in which we are, after all, women among women. ●

OUTSIDE BROADSIDE

TORONTO WOMEN'S EVENTS CALENDAR April 1983

• **Friday, April 1:** Ontario College of Art presents a screening of the year's best and worst film and video by students. Funnel Theatre, 507 King Street East, 8 pm. Info: 364-7003.

• **Saturday, April 2:** Women and Architecture exhibition at A.R.C. Gallery, 789 Queen Street West. Part of Festival of Women Building Culture. To April 15.

• **Saturday, April 2:** April Fool's Dance, sponsored by Lesbians Against the Right (LAR). 519 Church Street. Info: 923-GAYS.

Week of April 3

• **Sunday, April 3:** Women's Cultural Building festival presents a brunch and egg rolling contest. 12 noon. 563 Queen St West. Info: 864-0891.

• **Monday, April 4:** The Women's Group, a support group for lesbians, meets at 519 Church Street, 8 pm. Information: Raechel, 926-0527. Also Mondays, April 11, April 18, April 25.

• **Monday, April 4:** Women's Clinic of Downtown Legal Services. 44 St. George St. Every Monday, 12 noon to 2 pm. 978-6447.

• **Monday, April 4:** Working Women's Support Network. Informal evening meetings to discuss time management, family relationships, stress prevention, etc. Information: Susie Marlowe, 489-4632.

• **Tuesday, April 5:** Legal workshop, Scarborough Women's Centre, 91 East Park Blvd., Scarborough. 9:30-11:30 am. Information: 431-1138.

• **Tuesday, April 5:** Lesbian Phone Line: open tonight for calls from women. Every Tuesday evening, 7:30 to 10:30 pm. 960-3249.

• **Wednesday, April 6:** International Women's Day Committee meeting. Information: 789-4541. Also Wednesdays, April 13, April 20, April 28.

• **Wednesday, April 6:** Toronto Addicted Women's Self-help Network (TAWSHN) meets at Central Neighbourhood House, 349 Ontario St. 7 pm. Info: 961-7319. Also Mondays, April 13, April 20, April 27.

• **Wednesday, April 6:** Gay/Lesbian Rights in Education. An NDP Gay and Lesbian Caucus meeting, 519 Church Street. 7:30 pm.

• **Wednesday, April 6:** Lesbian Phone Line meets at 348 College St, 3rd floor. 7 pm. Information: 960-3249.

• **Wednesday, April 6:** Women Out Of Doors (WOODS) general meeting. 7:30 pm. 519 Church Street. Info: Marion, 463-0924.

• **Thursday, April 7:** Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) meets at 519 Church Street, 7:30 pm. Also Thursday, April 21.

• **Thursday, April 7:** Coping with Stress workshop, Scarborough Women's Centre, 91 East Park Blvd., Scarborough. 7:30-9:30 pm. \$5. Information: 431-1138. Also Thursday, April 14.

• **Thursday, April 7:** Gay/Lesbian Action for Disarmament (GLAD) meets at 7:30 pm. Information: 923-4297.

• **Thursday, April 7:** Married Lesbians, a support discussion group, meets at 1:30 pm, 206 St Clair West. Information: 967-0597.

• **Thursday, April 7:** Angel Staccato and the White Rebels at the Cameron. \$3. 408 Queen Street West. Also Friday, April 8.

• **Thursday, April 7:** "Alternative Images '83" film series: *South Africa Belongs to Us* and *Sambizanga*. 7:30 and 8:30 pm. OISE Auditorium, 252 Bloor St. West. \$3. Information: 978-2391.

• **Friday, April 8:** Toronto Workshop Productions presents "Female Parts," four views of women from the comic to the tragic with Maja Ardal. Info: 925-8640.

• **Friday, April 8:** Women's Cultural Building festival presents "Narratives," a multi-media exhibition. 563 Queen Street West. Info: 864-0891.



• **Saturday, April 9:** Holly Near and Ronnie Gilbert in concert with Jeff Langley and Susan Freundlich. 8 pm. Convocation Hall, U of T. Tickets available through BASS and Toronto Women's Bookstore.

• **Saturday, April 9:** "Abusive Images of Women," a slide show from Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media, San Francisco. ARC Gallery, 789 Queen Street West. To April 10.

Week of April 10

• **Sunday, April 10:** Violet Butterfly, a poetry workshop series for women. Cecil Street Community Centre, 58 Cecil Street. 2 pm. Info: 368-8509. Also Sunday, April 24.

• **Sunday, April 10:** Women Out Of Doors (WOODS) map and compass clinic. Info: Gail, 267-5839.

• **Tuesday, April 12:** "Time Together" for immigrant women. Scarborough Women's Centre, 91 East Park Blvd., Scarborough. 9:30-11:30 am, 8 weekly sessions. Information: 421-1138.

• **Tuesday, April 12:** Lesbians Against the Right (LAR) reorganization meeting to discuss politics of lesbian/feminism in Toronto. Bathurst St. United Church, 736 Bathurst St. (at Bloor). 964-7477.

• **Wednesday, April 13:** Fat Albert's Café presents Anna Gutmanis, singer/songwriter, 9:30 pm. 300 Bloor Street West. \$1.50.

• **Wednesday, April 13:** Annual General Meeting of U of T Women's Newsmagazine, to discuss both the paper and the future coalition of the Newsmagazine with other feminist groups. All feminist women welcome. International Students Centre, 33 St. George St. 7:30 pm. Info: 536-3162.

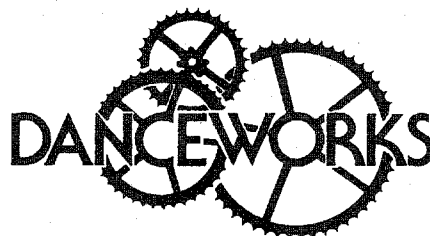
• **Thursday, April 14:** "Alternative Images '83" film series: *Donna* and *A Brief Vacation*. 7:30 and 8:30 pm. OISE Auditorium, 252 Bloor St. West. \$3. Information: 978-2391.

• **Friday, April 15:** Womanfilm, part of the Women Building Culture festival. Series of films made by women including: Barbara Hammer, Barbara Martineau, Laura Sky, Nesya Shapiro and Michelen Noel. Bloor Cinema. Passes \$10-\$12 at WCB headquarters, 563 Queen St. W. Info: 864-0891. To April 17.

Week of April 17

• **Wednesday, April 20:** Women Out Of Doors (WOODS). Cycling workshop. Information: Ellen, 964-8775 (afternoons).

• **Wednesday, April 20:** Deadline for submissions to "Women's Perspectives '83" an exhibition of women's art at Partisan Gallery in May 1983. Information: 889-2314.



• **Thursday, April 21:** Danceworks, works by Tanya Mars, Janice Hladki, Miriam Adams, Paula Ravitz. Part of Festival of Women Building Culture. Harbourfront, 8 pm. Information: 864-0891.

• **Friday, April 22:** Women's Camp at Tapawingo, Parry Sound. \$55. Information: Susan, 921-4755. To Sunday, April 24.

• **Friday, April 22:** Women's Independent Thoughtz (WITZ). A seminar/discussion group for the exchange of ideas and creative endeavours in art, literature, philosophy and political thought. 7 pm. Info: 536-3162.

• **Friday, April 22:** Factory Theatre Lab's annual workshop of new scripts presents Helen Weinzweig's play "My Mother's Luck," about a mother and daughter in crisis, and "Night Cows" by Jovette Marchessault. With Pol Pelletier. Part of Festival of Women Building Culture. Theatre Passe Muraille, 16 Ryerson Avenue. Info: 864-9971.

• **Saturday, April 23:** Cruise Missile Protest. Demonstrations across Canada to protest testing of cruise missiles. Information: 923-4297.

• **Saturday, April 23:** Non-Violent Communication Workshops, with Marshall Rosenberg. Downtown Toronto. Advance registration necessary. \$60/day. Scholarships available. Information: Arlene Anisman, 469-2725. Also Sunday, April 24.

Week of April 24

• **Sunday, April 24:** Gay Community Appeal presents "Fruit Cocktail," a musical production by and for the lesbian and gay community. Ryerson Theatre, 8 pm. Tickets: Theatre box office, Women's Bookstore, Glad Day Bookstore. Also Monday, April 25.

• **Monday, April 25:** Panel on Women in Performance. Women's Cultural Building, 563 Queen Street West. Information: 864-0891.

• **Thursday, April 28:** Festival of Women Building Culture presents a collective performance from *The Euguelionne* by Louky Bersianak. 563 Queen Street West, 8 pm. Info: 864-0891.

• **Thursday, April 28:** Commemoration of 40th Anniversary of Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Participants: Danny Grossman Dance Theatre, Toronto Jewish Folk Choir and Ensemble Singers, Fred Stone (flugelhorn), Rabbi Reuben Slonin. \$3. Lawrence Park Collegiate, Lawrence at Chatsworth. 7:30 pm. Info: 789-5502.

• **Saturday, April 30:** Women Out Of Doors (WOODS). Canoe day in Kelso Conservation Area. Information: Betty, 489-8559.

• **Saturday, April 30:** Nicaragua Can Dance. Canadian Action Nicaragua benefit dance. Live music, theatre, slide show, food and drink. Free childcare. St. Paul's Church, 83 Power St. (Queen and Parliament), 8 pm. \$4 advance, \$5 door. Information: 654-9445.

WOMENS CULTURAL BUILDING

• **Saturday, April 30:** Edible Art Show and closing party for the Women's Cultural Building Festival, 563 Queen Street West, 8 pm. Info: 864-0891.

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