

FEB 7 1985

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JANICE OARLEY

The Pillow Sisters!

Julie Massi, Lorraine Segato and Lauri Conger: star act at the *Broadside* Birthday Bash in December.

SEE STORY PAGE 2.

Broadside

A FEMINIST REVIEW

FEATURE

ABC's of IWD: Finding it hard to keep track of it all? Sandy Stienecker provides *Broadside* readers with a 'Who's Who in the Zoo' for this year's International Women's Day in Toronto. Page 8.

NEWS

PRIOR CONVICTIONS: US feminist anti-censorship advocate Carole Vance spoke against the anti-porn Minneapolis Ordinance to a Toronto audience in January. Without explaining the content or implications of the Ordinance, Vance assumed the *a priori* position of censorship-as-enemy and pornography-as-non-issue. Eve Zaremba reports. Page 4.

REPORT OFFSIDE: Volume 2 of John Sopinka's report from the Task Force on Equal Opportunity in Athletics recommends equality as a long term goal. Sopinka suggests giving school boards 10 years to comply, but that, says Helen Lenskyj, will freeze another whole generation of girls out of sports programs. Page 5.

INSIDE BROADSIDE

MOVEMENT MATTERS:

Read about a pro-choice debate in Toronto, new facts about DES, an Edmonton women's film festival, an upcoming conference on rural Saskatchewan women, a new women's movement phone line in Toronto, a Rape Crisis Centre raffle, a new housing community based on medieval women's communes, and more. Movement Matters, page 6.

COMMENT

REDEMPTIVE STRIKE:

War, like love, brings out the best in men, according to William Broyles, Jr. in a November *Esquire* article entitled "Why Men Love War." The logic Broyles uses boggles the mind, says Anne Rochon Ford. Page 5.

OUTSIDE BROADSIDE:

Don't miss this month's calendar of Toronto women's events, for February 1985. Page 15.

WHY DO IT?

In a recent Ann Landers poll, 72% of the women responding said they preferred cuddling to 'the act' of sex. And 40% of those were under 40 years old. What's going on in the bedrooms of the nation? Lisa Freedman comments. Page 4.

RUGBY & RACISM:

The ties between feminism and struggles against racism are inseparable, says Tracy Brettel Dawson, commenting on the South African rugby tour of New Zealand in 1981, and the Anti-Tour Campaign organized against it. Movement Comment, Page 6.

ARTS

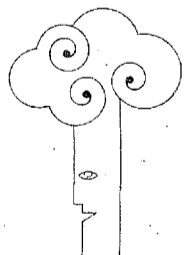
LOVE & MONEY:

You may not care, but the heroines of Harlequin Romances are changing with the times — from bland Valerie Vapid to starchy Samantha Semi-liberated — but the genre still plays on women's fantasies of Mister Millionaire wafting into their lives to upgrade their

wardrobes, says Margaret Atwood in her review of *Love's Sweet Return*. Page 10.

WINDS OF WAR:

The Big Bang means nothing to Jim and Hilda Bloggs in the theatre adaptation of Raymond Brigg's comic strip. War to them means shelters, the blackout and all-clear, the White Cliffs of Dover and Vera Lynn. When the bomb falls, they wait for milk delivery to resume, and tidy the living room in case they have visitors. Reviewed by Amanda Hale. Page 12.



MARRIAGE ANTICS:

What's in a joke? Caught in the bind of wanting children but having a wife with a Career, our comic hero (Dudley Moore) marries another woman. When both his wives get pregnant, all hell breaks loose, but the movie audience (at least some of it) keeps laughing. Donna Gollan reviews *Micki and Maude*. Page 13.

LETTERS

A What?

Broadside:

As a faithful reader and sporadic contributor, I appreciate the collective's continuing efforts to make *Broadside* a credible publication. But, alas, even the best of intentions cannot prevent the occasional error from slipping into the copy. I know it happens to every writer — their words, so carefully chosen, are misprinted in even the most expensive of publications. But in the December 1984 issue of *Broadside* ("Spooking the Snoots: Scriptures According to Mary Daly,") it happened to my favorite word!

There I referred to Alfred North Whitehead's "asymptotic descriptions" or definitional structures in language. Asymptote is a wonderful word. It means "a line which approaches nearer and nearer to a given curve, but does not meet it within a finite distance." Ah, the anticipation in the infinite approach! What appeared was, "asymptomatic," which does not appear in the OED. Poor old Alfred would roll over in his grave.

The same day, an article on slips such as this appeared in the *Globe and Mail*. And it made

me feel just a little bit better — at least I could give the demise of my favorite word a name. It read: "... linguists have been interested in slips for reasons of their own. Their main concern is to detect errors that creep into a text in the course of it being passed along from version to version; for example, by a typist or printer's mistake. One of the most common kinds of errors linguists have identified is what is called "banalization," the replacement of an intended word by an erroneous one that is more familiar or simpler."

Carlyn Moulton
Toronto

Father Tongue

Broadside:

I was intrigued and excited by the work that Betsy Warland and Daphne Marlatt are doing with language in their poetry or rather with the language of their poetry (*Broadside*, December 1984).

In the reported interview, Betsy Warland talked of discovering a 'mother tongue' and Daphne Marlatt made the connection with 'father land'. The problem, i.e. of reclaiming language, has presented itself somewhat differently for me, a New World Black poet.

Although English is my 'mother tongue', I have been aware for some time now that I do not in fact possess a mother tongue, and that English is my father tongue — the language of the male white colonizer.

The languages that my African ancestors would have brought with them to the New World were by and large destroyed along with their cultures, religions and histories. The English language, with all its references to the

non-being of the African, was then imposed on them. This linguistic rape and subsequent forced marriage has resulted in a language capable of great rhythms and musicality — a language which is and is not English — and one which is probably one of the most vital in the English speaking world today.

I approach English as we know it in Canada — standard English — as essentially a foreign language. I know no African language, one or several of which would have truly been my mother tongue.

My quest is therefore to discover what is in fact my mother tongue, given that odd and brutal coincidence of events that has placed me here in the New World. One way would be to learn an African language; the other, which has more immediate relevance to me since I continue to write in my father tongue, is to execute by some alchemical process (alchemy from al-kimiya, the art of the black and Egypt), a metamorphosis in the language, from father tongue to mother tongue, and in that process some aspects of the language will have to be destroyed; new ones created.

At this time I have many more questions than answers but it is reassuring to see others involved in a similar process of change.

Marlene Nourbese Philip
Toronto

Problems Addressed

Broadside:

I am very pleased that you publish *Broadside*. I am particularly pleased with your niche, "Movement Matters," as it enables me to

find out rather quickly about activities which are of particular interest to me. My interest stems from my job as head of the Women's Collection here at Northwestern. We document the contemporary WLM by collecting materials generated by people active in it. We welcome a wide array of materials, although we specialize in the periodical press (newsletters, newspapers, journals and magazine).

One of the reasons I am writing is that I would like to write to various groups mentioned on the Movement Matters page in order to make contact with them, ask to be added to their mailing lists, etc. It would make things much easier for me if addresses were given. I don't know if this poses problems for you. I welcome any ideas and naturally would be most pleased if full mailing addresses could be supplied.

Sarah Sherman
Head, Women's Collection
Northwestern University Library
Evanston, Illinois

(Ed. note: We have no problem with printing addresses in our 'Movement Matters' section, and try to do so whenever an address is submitted to us along with material for publication.)

Selling S/M

Broadside:

We are writing to applaud the recent decision of the Toronto Women's Bookstore not to carry lesbian sadomasochistic material. We agree with their assessment of the material in

Broadside

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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.

Broadside is published 10 times a year by the Broadside Collective, P.O. Box 494, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2T1.
(416) 598-3513. Member: Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association.
This issue: February 1985; Vol. 6, no. 4

Typesetting: Merv Walker
Alphabets
Printing: Delta Web Graphics
Second Class mail registration no: 4771
ISSN: 0225-6843

Broadside receives funding support from The Ontario Arts Council.

Next production date: February 23, 24
Copy deadline: February 4
Ad closing date: February 15

EDITORIALS

Sense and Censorship

In this month's *Broadside* we highlight a difficult situation for most feminists: the issue of pornography versus censorship (see "What's in an Ordinance?" by Eve Zaremba, page 4). To us it seems clear that both are dangerous to women and therefore both must be analysed, understood and tackled by feminist activists. As a movement we do not have the luxury of choosing one or the other. (Any individual feminist is of course free to work on whichever one she want to — or on neither — as long as she accepts others' right to do the same.)

In our movement there is no backroom leadership which decides for us what is a feminist issue to be pursued within a predetermined strategy or what is *not* an issue of concern to feminists, to be ignored. (Various sectarian political groups operate that way and we have seen many of them shrivel up and blow away.) Censorship is a danger because it can be used against us, not only in the area of art and sexuality. As a weapon in the hands of the State

and established power it can be used to threaten our very right to articulate and promote our politics and our values. So combating censorship is an arena for feminist action, in spite of the fact that it can mean playing into the hands of pornographers and other misogynist elements.

Pornography hurts, devalues and intimidates women. Women feel this passionately. Because of this, in our society pornography mobilizes many women to act, perhaps more spontaneously than almost anything else. This fact alone makes pornography an issue from which feminist activists cannot turn away merely because of the risk that any action against it can play into the hands of the decency freaks and other anti-feminist elements.

How basic is this conflict and what can be done to get around it? Those are the questions we should be asking and the problem we should be attacking. Not each other.

Perhaps the first step in coming to grips with this dilemma is to understand that most women in Canada have a more direct and personal experience of pornography than of censorship. This makes a difference in how they evaluate the two in the context of their own lives. The dangers of censorship may be underrated, but it is counterproductive to trivi-

alize real experience with pornography in order to heighten awareness of these dangers. It will not work, because it invalidates felt reality. That is no way to empower women. We must not be asked to deny our own experience or have our concerns dismissed in the name of some higher cause.

On the other hand, it is stupid to be complacent and parochial about the dangers of censorship. To date, we have been lucky in this country, few of us know what state power and established religion can do to our rights and freedoms given the weapons and the will. Let's not downplay the possibility that our luck can run out. Many other peoples and countries have lost their freedom in pursuing other worth-while goals. We must weigh the risks carefully. Under no circumstances can we allow ourselves to be gagged.

We must find a way of controlling and minimizing pornography without giving our enemies any more power against us. That will require that feminists who see pornography as the great and immediate danger to work with those who are in the forefront of the battle against censorship. Only together can we come up with a strategy which is reasonably effective and reasonably safe. Any other process will constitute a victory for anti-feminist values. ●

That's Entertainment!

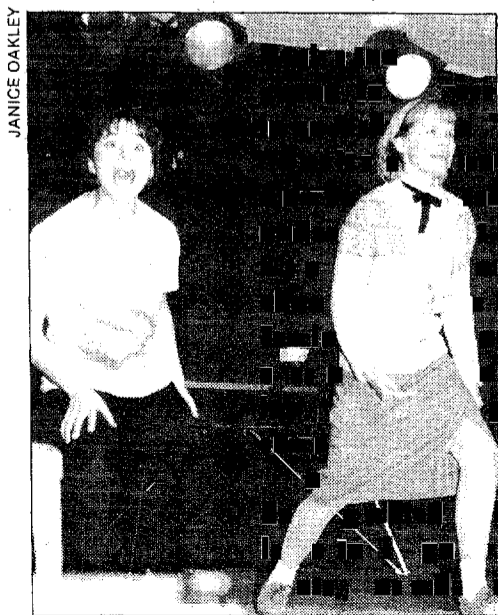
From the Smothers Sisters to the Pillow Sisters, from Nancy Drew to Eartha Kitt, from Susan Cole singing "I Am Oppressed" to Lorraine Segato doing vocal warm-up exercises: all were part of the line-up at *Broadside's* 5th Birthday Party in December at Toronto's Bam Boo Club.

For those of you who don't live in Toronto, or who had something more important to do that night — you missed a great show. If you like hot music, there was the Pillow Sisters (Lorraine Segato, Julie Massi and Lauri Conger of The Parachute Club). If you're into jazz, there was the too-seldom-heard Kye Marshall Jazz Band. For the memorabilia freaks, there was Ann Marie MacDonald and Bev Cooper's thriller Nancy Drew & The Clue in the Fast Lane, and Jane Farrow's im-

personation of Eartha Kitt. And for those who need a little feminist content in their entertainment, there was our very own activist Susan Cole's two-chord rendition of her own original song "I Am Oppressed, I Am Depressed, etc."

After the jazz and the star acts, there was dance music (taped by Deb Parent of Night Moves — a great dancing tape) that kept the die-hards going till closing time. The Bam Boo Club's owners, who are a bit skeptical about the viability of private do's, were impressed by the turnout and the high energy. And although the evening was a celebration, not primarily a fundraising event, *Broadside* did manage to make a little money to help defray our production costs.

So everyone was happy. ●



Ned and Nancy: Ann Marie MacDonald and Beverley Cooper in the Fast Lane.

question as "anti-feminist, anti-woman, anti-semitic and racist." We are aware that the issues surrounding pornography are highly sensitive, difficult ones, especially those regarding censorship. The bookstore decision is not, however, a matter of censorship, it is a decision not to carry stock that promotes violence by women against women, and the materials in question are readily available elsewhere in Toronto. The decision is, rather, a demonstration of responsibility to the feminist community and is, in fact, a difficult and highly courageous act. No bookstore carries everything — there simply isn't space — stock is always selective. That the bookstore's selection policy is consciously committed to feminist principles gives us considerable confidence in their judgments. We wholeheartedly support the decision.

We wish also to note that it is simply inaccurate to criticize the women's bookstore for having a limited selection of lesbians as the Sparkes Gallery women have done (*Broadside* 'Letters,' November 1984). The bookstore was the first in Toronto to stock lesbian materials and it still has the largest number of lesbian titles of any local bookstore — titles which include erotica. It also seems nothing short of ludicrous to accuse a staff with a sizeable lesbian contingent of being homophobic, though we don't wish to imply that everything a lesbian does or says is feminist — certainly lesbian s & m porn is evidence this isn't so.

We ask women in the community to take seriously the letter published by the women's bookstore staff on the s & m issue (see *Broadside*, November, 1984). They are not only responsible to the women's community but responsive to it. Should you have concerns about their decisions or wish to support it, send them a letter. They are committed to considering women's input and, as they have stated, "decisions made in the store are not carved in stone." For our part, we hope this particular decision stands; it is an important affirmation of feminist principles.

Helena Feinstadt, Nikki Gerrard, Lori Haskell, Maria Kelly, Lynne Martin, Patricia Myer, Diana

Postlethwaite, Margo Rivera, Frances Rooney, Anneke Steenbeck, Sidney Thomson, Valerie Thoo, Elizabeth White, Jeri Wine, Toronto

Help! Switzerland is calling. . .

Broadside:

I am one of four women responsible for messages from abroad. This is the reason why I am writing and trying to explain you our need in a few sentence. (I hope my English is not too bad to understand me well.) We are living in Basel and we want to call out a new lesbian movement here in Switzerland. We plan to expand it over our own country, then also over Europe, and the rest of the world. We want to unite because we think: "Together we are strong."

Besides our freetime action, where we try to bring the "locked door lesbians" out, we are trying to start a newspaper, where all the women can read or do what they like (something for everyone). So we have seen how women get together and how soon they part. We want to do now something that will last for a little longer. . . All we need now is women who are ready to help us, giving us information, ideas, tips, or just simply some addresses to build up friendships.

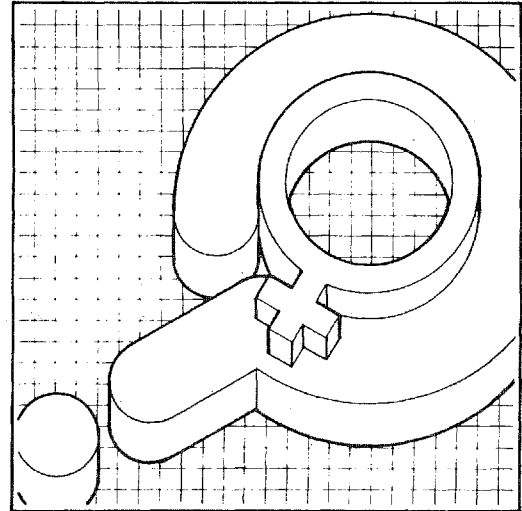
We seem to live behind a glass curtain, so every kind of help is welcomed!

My address is: A Geniale, Neuweilertstr. 29, 4054 Basel, Switzerland. I thank you in advance, and thank you also for those women here, who will be happy and pleased to read something from Canada.

Avalon Geniale
Switzerland

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Imported Porn Politics

What's In An Ordinance?

by Eve Zaremba

One wet Saturday in January in Toronto, while many of our friends went to laugh with Kate Clinton, some of us unreconstructed politicians found ourselves listening to Carole S. Vance talking about the Minneapolis Ordinance at a meeting organized by Feminists Against Censorship (FAC).

What is the Minneapolis Ordinance; who is Carole S. Vance; what is FAC and why are they doing this? You might well ask.

To the best of my knowledge this mysterious 'ordinance', authored by Catherine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin, which has been contested in both Minneapolis and Indianapolis, represents an attempt to come up with an alternative to the censorship of pornographic materials. It tries to combat the effects of pornography by (a) empowering women to act when they perceive themselves to be damaged by some specific pornographic materials; while (b) keeping the police and the "criminal justice system" out of the matter altogether.

The best analogy seems to be the libel laws: ie, someone writes something you consider damaging to you; you sue them in civil court; the court either agrees or disagrees that you have been damaged. If you win, you get a settlement and the offending item is removed from public circulation. The similarity between that and the ordinance is that (i) it's not whether you like the item or not that is at issue, but whether you can prove that it damaged you; (ii) the cops have nothing to do with it; and (iii) there is no prior censorship. Generally, it seemed a positive direction in which to go.

Still, no matter how good the analogy and how positive it may sound, the idea of the ordinance is new and untried. Would it be effective against the worst examples of pornography? Can it be used against our interests by the Right Wing, fundamentalist, 'Decency' types? No one knows for sure. The so-called Minneapolis Ordinance is not in effect in that city, or anywhere else in the USA for that matter. As for Canada, the concept has only been broached as a possibility by a few women, Susan G. Cole among them, who are working to redesign it to fit our situation and Canadian legal requirements. It is very far from entering the legislative process, much less in effect.

Given this situation, it seemed worth the effort to find out more about this ordinance from its avowed opponent — Carole S.

Vance. Vance is an anthropologist and epidemiologist at Columbia University and co-director of the Institute for the Study of Sex and Society and History. She was Academic Coordinator of the controversial Scholar and Feminist Conference at Barnard College, New York City, in April 1982. Vance edited a collection of papers from that conference in a book called *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*.

Although it was specifically *not* a debate — Vance had refused to debate — I knew that Vance would attack the ordinance in her presentation while Susan Cole would be able to present her views from the floor. Perhaps not an equal debate, but still a reasonable discussion. I went believing there would be solid information presented and that Varda Burstyn, who chaired on behalf of FAC, would make sure that we would learn enough to make up our own minds.

That is not what happened. Vance began by reading a poem by Muriel Rukeyser called (in *Pleasure and Danger*) "Despials." A strong, emotionally charged work, it set the tone for the evening, as it was obviously meant to do. From then on, it became more and more clear that we were not there to gather much concrete information about the ordinance, but to learn to react against it. Quite properly, problematic wording and its potential for misuse was highlighted in words and slides. No problem there. However, there was no real attempt to explain coherently the purpose and the conceptual basis behind the ordinance.

The central fact that the ordinance gives the cops no power, while allowing women to act on their own behalf, was as good as ignored. Yet, until all this is fully grasped, all else are technicalities: confusing legal technicalities are always in danger of misuse and misunderstanding. While these nitty-gritties must be carefully analysed, first we must have a context for them. That context was not provided. To me it was apparent that we were not to make our own determination about these matters. We were there to get the word from good old US of A.

It worked. Cole's short, much interrupted reply cut no ice. Probably only Vance understood what Cole was saying about dropping the trafficking clause or re-writing this or that section. Certainly nobody else cared. We had seen the enemy and it was the ordinance.

What followed can only be described as comic relief (if it were not so sadly

misguided). The question period produced no questions about the ordinance, and no wonder. We had not learned enough about it to know what questions to ask. So, instead, we were treated to a variety of heart-felt comments about sex: one woman told us she liked giving head; a stripper spoke up for her profession, remarking that it was dangerous but she was proud to be a sex worker; in all innocence, a young man suggested that we learn from gay men's sexual practice and cooperate with our lovers fantasies no matter what they were; an artist brought up the fact that the Bible is also sexist and dangerous; with a flip-pant comment, a lesbian academic dismissed 15 years of feminist analysis on sexual objectification of women; one lawyer called another lawyer naive and pathetic. And so on. You get the idea. All of this presumably in the name of defending sex and varieties of sexual practice from the ordinance.

Let's set the record straight. In this country, there is no immediate possibility of any such 'innovative' legislation being put into effect: none is being affected by it now, nor is likely to be for any foreseeable future. In the real world we have an abysmal obscenity clause in the Criminal Code, and (in Ontario) the stupid Censorship Board, and now Bill 82. Those are the things to fight. It is much more likely that these existing laws will be made more stringent and potentially damaging to our sexual and artistic expression than that anything remotely like the ordinance will take their place.

The audience at the FAC forum was in an uproar over a phantom, while ignoring a clear and present danger — the result of engaging people's emotions before informing their minds.

Members of the recently organized Feminists Against Censorship have been involved in the censorship issue for years. They have been active via lobbying, speeches and presentations all over Canada. A soon to be published book called *Women Against Censorship*, edited by Varda Burstyn and containing a "powerful mixture of analysis, personal insight and provocative advocacy by some of North America's most respected feminists" (from their press release) contains articles by many of the current members of FAC (and Vance). It is sure to be a valuable resource. In short, the group has considerable credibility.

Judging from what I heard that evening, FAC views any attempt to combat pornography as *de facto* censorship, which plays into

the hands of the Right. In her presentation, Vance made much of the way in which the ordinance was taken over by Moral Majority groups in Minneapolis, Indianapolis and other jurisdictions in the US. Our own home-grown 'decency' freaks are also likely to get into the act. Such cooptation is always a danger; it seems on the face of it that, due to its non criminal nature, the ordinance structure diminishes this danger. However, from their Statement of Principles and comments made at the meeting I gathered that FAC is not much interested in exploring any concrete ways to combat the spread of pornography, mainly because they do not see it as enough of a problem. Further, FAC seems to be taking the view — correct me if I am wrong, sisters — that pornography is to be considered a non-issue, a red-herring, a distraction from work on basic change. It is not central, basic and primary, and at best, it is in fact benign, something that does no harm but rather helps men and sexually liberated women to have better fantasies and hotter sex. In short, censorship is a feminist issue but pornography is not. Apparently both cannot be.

Feminists Against Censorship are to be encouraged and commended for fighting attempts to further undermine our sexual and reproductive self-determination. But the difficulty and importance of this task does not confer the right to decide for others what is and what is not a feminist issue. Feminism is a grass roots movement precisely because nobody is empowered to lay down from on high what is and what is not an issue that feminists may address. Thus pornography is a feminist issue not because Susan Cole or anyone else says it is, but because a great many women, not fundamentalist 'decency' freaks, are concerned about it and feel it is a threat to their physical and emotional well-being.

Quite properly, opinions may vary as to how such an issue should be tackled and what is the best political strategy. Specific tactics are always open for discussion, and any individual feminist may choose not to work in any given field at all.

In this specific case, the ordinance may indeed prove unworkable and dangerous. Its possible benefits may be outweighed by the risks. But that is a judgment we have still to make here in Canada, for us, and in the context of our political culture. I do not think that the meeting on January 12 did much to help us make a rational evaluation of the ordinance.

Valentine's Day Lament

by Lisa Freedman

Ann Landers, whose advice is gospel in many homes, recently revealed the results of her nationwide survey of women which attempted to determine the answer to the following question about sex: "Would you be content to be held close and treated tenderly, and forget about 'the act'?"

The results, which seem to have shaken the foundation of our supposedly sexually liberated society, showed that 72% of the 90,000 women who cast their ballots said yes, they would be content to be held close and treated tenderly and forget about the act. Of those 72% who said yes, 40% were under 40 years of age.

Do these results surprise anyone? One would tend to think so, given the amount of controversy and conversation that this poll has elicited. Society has told us for a long time that women have emerged from the Victorian era and are enjoying sex as much as men. Books and magazines have devoted themselves to telling us that we love sex, anywhere,

anytime, anyhow. How dare Ann Landers tell us any differently?

But women for the most part were not surprised. Whether they put themselves in "the other" 28%, or whether they are women who would have agreed with the poll results, the lack of surprise with which many met the results of the survey merely reinforced what many women have been saying for a long time — something is going on in the bedrooms of the nation and it is not necessarily something good.

The results of this survey have been hotly disputed by almost every person who has a stake in promoting some sexual myth about pleasure and satisfaction. *Playboy* was quick to point out the defects in the sample. *Playboy* disputed the numbers, they argued that the sample was not representative of the sexual attitude of the nation and they complained that the wording of the question was slanted. For the purpose of this argument I am willing to grant *Playboy* all of these

points, because it is not the sheer numbers that are the most telling parts of this poll.

What has garnered the most interest from this poll is the accompanying comments that Ann Landers relayed. Women were not asked to comment, but her office was flooded with letters outlining the personal testimony of these women experience.

I would love to be spoken to tenderly. It would be enough. My boyfriend never says a word. If I say anything he says, 'Be quiet. You're spoiling things.'

I am under 40 and would be delighted to settle for tender words and warm caresses. The rest of it is a bore and can be exhausting. I am sure the sex act was designed strictly for the pleasure of males.

The best part is the cuddling and caressing and the tender words that come with caring. My first husband used to rape me about five times a week. If a stranger treated me like that I would have had him arrested.

What these women are describing are conditions of inequality where they don't feel that they have any choice in the bedroom, where something is happening to them that they do not like. These women are feeling used and exploited. It is important to note that these women are not saying Sex is dirty — their testimony is not laced with morality.

And what they are describing affects us all. What does or doesn't go on in the bedrooms of the nation is not just "those women's problem." This poll directly addresses the serious question of what is happening to women in the privacy of their homes, in the fortress of their bedrooms. For too long we have considered the bedroom out of the domain of criticism or commentary. But it is this argument

that has been used to keep battered women silent for years. We know that the private domain is where women often suffer the most, and most often suffer in silence.

And why do women prefer cuddling to "the act"? Is it because it is safe, there is no fear of pregnancy, of an unwanted child? Is it because there is no guilt, blame or question of performance at stake? Is it because women are tired of all of the pressures that affect all of our sexual lives? The structure of society in the workplace leaves us little time to develop good sexual relationships. Weekends become pressure-filled. And for these women in the survey, it seems that the precious little time that couples do have to spend together is not quality time.

These women are craving affection and physicality. What they are getting is only physicality, and from the results of this poll, they are not getting that too well. But why do women allow ourselves to continue in this ongoing course of timidity and frigidity of expression? Why can't women develop a vocabulary that would allow us to tell our partners what we want. Why do we have to believe the messages that society sends us — that we have to accept and be satisfied with force.

There is something going on when, first of all, a survey question has to separate tenderness from the act, as if they have to be mutually exclusive. There is something going on when society perpetuates conditions of inequality that allow men to force their sexual will on women. And there is something going on when women endure all this in silence. Perhaps on this Valentine's Day, instead of saying it with roses, we should say it with words.

Lisa Freedman is a recent recruit to the *Broadside* collective.

Women prefer cuddling over sex, poll finds

Dear Readers: Yesterday I promised to print the results of the poll in which I asked my women readers to respond by postcard to the question: "Would you be content to be held close and treated tenderly, and forget about 'the act'?" Answer: YES or NO and please add one sentence: I am over (or under) 40 years of age.

More than 90,000 women cast their ballots. Seventy-two per cent said yes, they would be content to be held close and treated tenderly, and forget about the act. Of those 72 per cent, 40 per cent were under 40 years of age.

That was the most surprising result of the survey.

Many women who voted NO said they needed the sexual climax to relieve physical tension. Almost as many said they wanted the ultimate in gratification — that anything less would make them feel exploited and used.

A 32-year-old from Atlanta put it this way: "He insists on getting his satisfaction, so why shouldn't I have mine?"

Colleen, Ohio: "I am under 40 and would be delighted to settle for tender words and warm caresses. The rest of it is a bore and can be exhausting. I am sure the sex act was designed strictly for the pleasure of males."

Wendy, Alaska: "I am under 40 and would be delighted to settle for tender words and warm caresses. The rest of it is a bore and can be exhausting. I am sure the sex act was designed strictly for the pleasure of males."

Helen, Mont.: "I am 32. I am sure the sex act was designed strictly for the pleasure of males."

Ann Landers

husband is a diabetic and hasn't been able to perform for 10 years. I would never have married him if I knew he had his health. His illness was a blessing. I'm 36 and love YES.

My present mate is in heaven. I like the act. I'm 32 and love YES.

My husband is a diabetic and hasn't been able to perform for 10 years. I would never have married him if I knew he had his health. His illness was a blessing. I'm 36 and love YES.

My present mate is in heaven. I like the act. I'm 32 and love YES.

My husband is a diabetic and hasn't been able to perform for 10 years. I would never have married him if I knew he had his health. His illness was a blessing. I'm 36 and love YES.

My present mate is in heaven. I like the act. I'm 32 and love YES.

"I'm in the Mood for War..."

by Anne Rochon Ford

The November 1984 issue of *Esquire* magazine ("Man At His Best") jumped off the newsstands at me for over two weeks before I gave in and bought it. I had reasoned that anything that riled me as much as the sight of that cover was worth examining more closely.

In bold black letters, the cover reads: "The Secret Love of a Man's Life," and in finer print below, "Why Men Love War," by William Broyles Jr. Between those lines are a series of call-outs from Broyles's article, the first of which found me taking a deep breath in disbelief: "It is a sexual turn-on that conceals inadequacies."

But we don't need the text to tell us what the secret love of a man's life is, according to Mr. Broyles. The photo says it all. The heavily made-up face of a woman stares at the camera from beneath a camouflage bush helmet. Her glistening lips pursed seductively, she looks over her shoulder in a classic pose used by fashion photographers to help sell a product. She wears a torn, regulation Army T-shirt, the photo cut off just above the bustline. She looks serious, intent, but there is no mistaking the seductiveness of her pose.

I was stunned. How could they have gotten away with this? Now, *Esquire* has never impressed me with its progressive content. At best, it has served as a good barometer of the state of the American male mind, albeit the middle-class, upwardly mobile, American male mind. One expects to find sexist ads and not particularly feminist articles in a magazine which claims to represent man at his best, but this cover hit an all-time high on the scale of offensiveness. Worse, the content of the article has left me, and other women I've spoken with about it, feeling a tremendous sense of despair.

With credentials bound to impress the average *Esquire* reader, Broyles (a former editor of *Newsweek*) sets out in this article to try and explain war and men's relationship to it. In the process, he ends up glorifying war, raising it to heights not reached since the films of pre-Vietnam war days. What is most insidious about Broyles's tactic for achieving this effect is his smart-ass, no-nonsense style of journalism. He writes in an "aw, heck-let's-cut-the-crap-and-tell-the-truth-about-war" style that

evokes the gravelly voice of George C. Scott in *Paton*, or Robert Duvall in *Apocalypse Now*: "Damn it, war is great."

Broyles wants his readers (presumably all male) to relate to him right from the start. His opening lines might have been paraphrased to read, "You're not going to believe this, guys, but I actually liked war, and I miss it, too." He actually goes on to say, "Why do I miss it? I miss it because I loved it, loved it in strange and troubling ways." Before we've even finished the first page, Broyles generalizes for all men who have been to war. He says, "I believe that most men who have been to war would have to admit, if they are honest, that somewhere inside themselves, they loved it too, loved it as much as anything that has happened to them before or since." Broyles takes great pains to sound reasonable. He asks us to consider his own example: "I am not a violent person. I have not been in a fight since grade school."

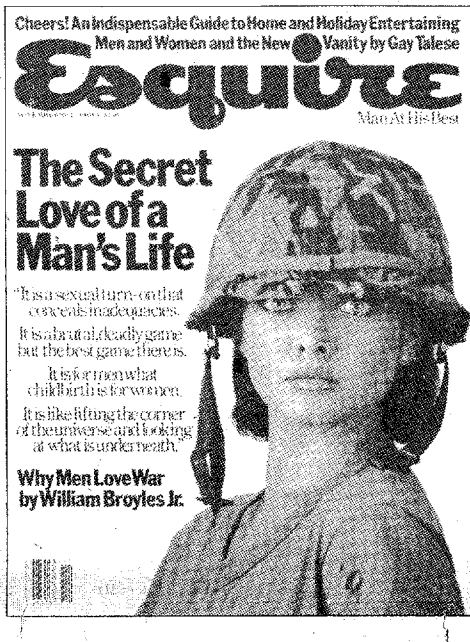
After establishing himself as a reasonable kind of fellow to his readers, he goes on to tell us that there are some respectable and some not-so-respectable reasons for men liking war. He starts with the respectable ones. These include: the passion to witness something exciting in life; that war is an escape from the humdrum ("It's Las Vegas," he says); that it is a sanction to play boys games ("What people can't understand is how much fun Vietnam was. I loved it. I loved it and I can't tell anybody."); it allows you to explore "regions in your soul that in most men will always remain uncharted"; and finally, it provides the truest experience of comradeship and brotherly love (he makes no reference to the irony of this statement).

After this build-up, Broyles decides we're ready for "the more troubling reasons why men love war." We learn that love of war "stems from the union between sex and destruction, beauty and horror, love and death. War is for men, at some terrible level, the closest thing to what childbirth is for women: the initiation into the power of life and death." But Broyles isn't content to leave it at that statement, a statement which I don't doubt a number of men would agree with. (I had visions of him maniacally hunched over his typewriter as he wrote, "I don't know if I killed anyone in Vietnam but I tried as hard as

I could.") "One of the most troubling reasons men love war," he concludes, "is the love of destruction, the thrill of killing."

Being, of course, a reasonable man, Broyles must find a philosophical explanation for such a statement. Simple brute honesty will not suffice for the readers of *Esquire*. In a tremendous leap of logic, he concludes: "The power of war, like the power of love, springs from man's heart. The one yields death, the other life. But life without death has no meaning; nor at its deepest level, does love without war. Without war, we could not know from what depths love rises, or what power it must have to overcome such evil and redeem us." And so, there we have it: love without war has no meaning. The mind boggles.

Re-reading and thinking about this article over the past few weeks has been a disturbing experience. I asked a few left-leaning pacifist male friends to read the article to see if their reaction to it was as vehement as mine. While they all concluded that they couldn't personally relate to what he was saying, they felt that he was probably representing a common American male sentiment. None of them was outraged by the article as was I, and as were the women I have spoken to.



I have since come to realize, however, that there is an obvious reason why men are not as outraged by this kind of talk as are women. They're used to hearing it. They grew up hearing it. Most males in our society (even those who grew up to be sensitive and anti-war) were fed on war games and war toys, war stories and war films. I, and my sisters, were sheltered from all that. To this day, I will immediately walk out of the room if the TV channel is changed to a war film, just as I did at home when I was growing up. "Bang-bang, you're dead" was simply not in the vocabulary of a properly socialized young girl. It is tempting to fall into the trap of thinking that women are just morally superior or even biologically inclined towards peace because we are closer to the process of creating life. But boys, like girls, can be socialized into being opposed to war and repelled by the sentiment being put forward by Broyles.

I am still left wondering why this blatantly pro-war piece appears in a magazine which in the past has been critical of that kind of glorification. You might expect to see this piece in something like *Soldier of Fortune*, but why in *Esquire*, which purports to appeal to an educated male who might even have been a draft dodger or conscientious objector during the Vietnam war? Broyles's article seems to be part of a new wave of revisionism, made popular by men like Ronald Reagan. The Vietnam war was an embarrassment to Americans raised on the notion of just wars for just causes. One study of Vietnam war veterans found that from 20 to 60 percent exhibited life-threatening behaviours and pronounced delayed and chronic responses to stress upon their return to civilian life. Broyles doesn't tell us about them in his article. He tells us, in so many words, that "war is OK, guys. It really is. It's a peak experience of the highest order."

It's no coincidence that this article appeared in the November issue, and was on the newsstands a comfortable few weeks before the US election. With friends like William Broyles, Ronald Reagan will be with us for some time still.

Anne Rochon Ford is national field director of DES Action Canada, and is currently writing a booklet on the history of women at U of T.

Recommendations On Ice

by Helen Lenskyj

From the folks who gave us Volume 1 of *Can I Play?* comes the second and final report of the Task Force on Equal Opportunity in Athletics, released in December. The first report, issued in September 1983, dealt with amateur athletics at the community level (see "No Sporting Chance," *Broadside*, February 1984). Volume 2 deals with sport in schools, colleges and universities. The area of professional athletics, originally slated for inclusion, has apparently been abandoned.

Now, almost three years since the Task Force was established — and several hundred thousand dollars later, we have a two-volume report which documents the obvious: that girls and women in schools, universities and communities throughout Ontario are systematically denied access to the same, or even equivalent, sporting programs, coaching and facilities as boys and men. And yet, it makes recommendations which are, at best, cautious and conservative, and, at worst, a tacit endorsement of discrimination against girls and women.

Chairing the Task Force was John Sopinka, QC, whose qualifications, in addition to a legal background, include playing for the Toronto Argos some thirty years ago. With a budget of \$211,000, Sopinka and his advisors took 17 months to produce Volume 1, numbering 113 pages plus appendices. Volume 2 is voluminous by comparison: 133 pages of discussion plus 146 pages of appendices.

It was fortuitous for the Task Force researchers that, in 1982-3, partly in response to the Task Force, the Ottawa Board of Education had conducted a comprehensive survey of school athletics, investigating participation rates by sex, policies and practices in coeducational and segregated programs, women in coaching, etc. Without this, Sopinka's appendices would have been markedly slimmer (by 91 pages), and his discussion not only

would have been reduced by 18 pages, but also would have been rather thin on statistical information concerning the situation in Ontario schools.

The Ottawa Board put its findings to good use: by the start of the 1983-4 school year, only seven months after the research report was released, it had taken several important initiatives in this area, as well as committing itself to the goal of equal opportunity in athletics through long-term changes in programs, staffing, facilities and funding. Sopinka, it seems, was not in such a hurry: he proposed giving school boards ten years to comply with his recommended guidelines and policies; this "gentle approach of administrative persuasion (p. 77)" may well have the effect of freezing yet another generation of girls and young women on their current rung at the bottom of the sports ladder.

At the core of the issues confronting the Task Force is Section 19 of the Ontario Human Rights Code which specifically allows discrimination against girls and women in the context of sport: since 1982, membership in an athletic organization, participation in an athletic activity and access to public recreational services and facilities have been exempt from the anti-discrimination provisions of the code. Sopinka's recommendations leave this situation almost unchanged, except in the case of community college and university athletics, which, he proposes, should no longer be covered by the exemption. Without the leverage available when programs are provincially funded, as is the case with school and community athletics, he states, this type of "governmental intrusion" in college and university athletics is, "unfortunately," unavoidable (p. 123).

Sopinka's reluctance to subject public institutions to the anti-discrimination provisions of the Human Rights Code is curious, to say the least: it is hard to believe that his faith in voluntary compliance, gentle persuasion and the like is the product of his extensive experience in the judicial system. In Volume 1,

he was given to describing anti-discrimination statutes as manifestations of "the heavy hand of the government," while in Volume 2, he refused to recommend applying the code to school athletic programs on the grounds that it was "too disruptive to our school system and not in conformity with our tradition in this area, (p. 76)." Perish the thought that our hallowed tradition of sex discrimination be disrupted by the invasion of girls and women who are so presumptuous as to expect equality in school sport programs.

It is not often that we are provided with such a clear view of the patriarchy in operation: Sopinka has an inimitable legal style, personalizing his opinions in a manner which would be laughable if it were not so offensive, or if its implications were not so serious. Speaking as if he is judge, jury and executioner, he is prone to such statements as "I am satisfied," "I am not prepared to recommend," "I became of the opinion," "I accepted this explanation," "there is evidence which I accept," etc., enough first person singular to fail any undergraduate essay.

The point is, of course, that, whereas one might have expected all the members of the Task Force jointly and cooperatively to study the issues, conduct hearings, read briefs and make appropriate recommendations, the final report reads as if this was a one-man show. Failure to convince this one man, it seems, produced a thumbs down for girls and women in sport: no, we don't want to disrupt the old boys' network and the old traditions, so let's keep the Human Rights Code out of this, let's just work on a gentleman's agreement, let's not try to push equality before the community is ready for it, let's wait ten years and then we'll take some action — what's your hurry?

In November 1983, around the same time as Sopinka and his team embarked on the research for Volume 2, a joint committee of the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport (CAAW&S) and the Department of Fitness and Amateur Sport

(FAS) Women's Program undertook to examine the issue of integrated versus separate-but-equal programs as strategies for achieving sex equality in sport. As principal researcher, I produced a hundred-page discussion paper, released last April, which reviews the situation for girls and women at all levels and in all sporting contexts across Canada, and develops a detailed analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the various models of integration, separate-but-equal and combined approaches.

Strangely, the Task Force made no attempt to obtain a copy of this paper, or to discuss our research, which coincided with its own at every point (although, of course, lacking our feminist perspective). Given Sopinka's use of the Ottawa study to boost the size of Volume 2, and his failure to depart from true blue conservatism even when faced with such clear evidence of inequality and injustice, it is perhaps fortunate that he did not subject the CAAW&S/FAS research to the same treatment.

CAAW&S has just received additional FAS funding to produce copies of the discussion paper for distribution to college and university libraries, women's groups and interested individuals across Canada. Local chapters are also organizing workshops to discuss the issues and contribute to the policy-making process in which the association is engaged.

It is clear that this is a complex issue, with no single answer or model serving the needs of all girls and women all the time. What is also clear is the absolute necessity of bringing the force of anti-discrimination statutes to bear on this area of human activity, just as it applies in virtually every other public domain. This is a minimum requirement, one that must necessarily precede other changes in policy and practice if indeed the Task Force and the Ontario government are serious about sex equality in sport.

Helen Lenskyj is currently writing a book on women and sport.

MOVEMENT MATTERS

The Béguinage Beckons

TORONTO — What is a béguinage? Is it a newly discovered dance step from South America? Is it something you'd buy in the gourmet section of your local supermarket? Is it the mispronunciation of a word meaning incipience?

None of the above.

A béguinage is a dwelling place and community for sole support women with or without children (namely, the newest women's housing co-op in downtown Toronto).

Historically, the béguinages were 13th and 14th century European women's communes designed for rural migrants to the city. Their houses accommodated about seven women each, and varied as to relative wealth, degree of religious association and type of work activities. The importance of the béguinages at that time was substantial, as they established autonomous working and living spaces for single women, many of whom would otherwise be destitute. The Béguine movement flourished, becoming involved in women's trade guilds, schools, hospitals and workshops for the poor, expanding so much as to occupy up to one quarter of a town in some cases. Their very success, the symbol of reality of women's autonomy, led to their persecution and eventual downfall, as they became a threat to business, church and state.

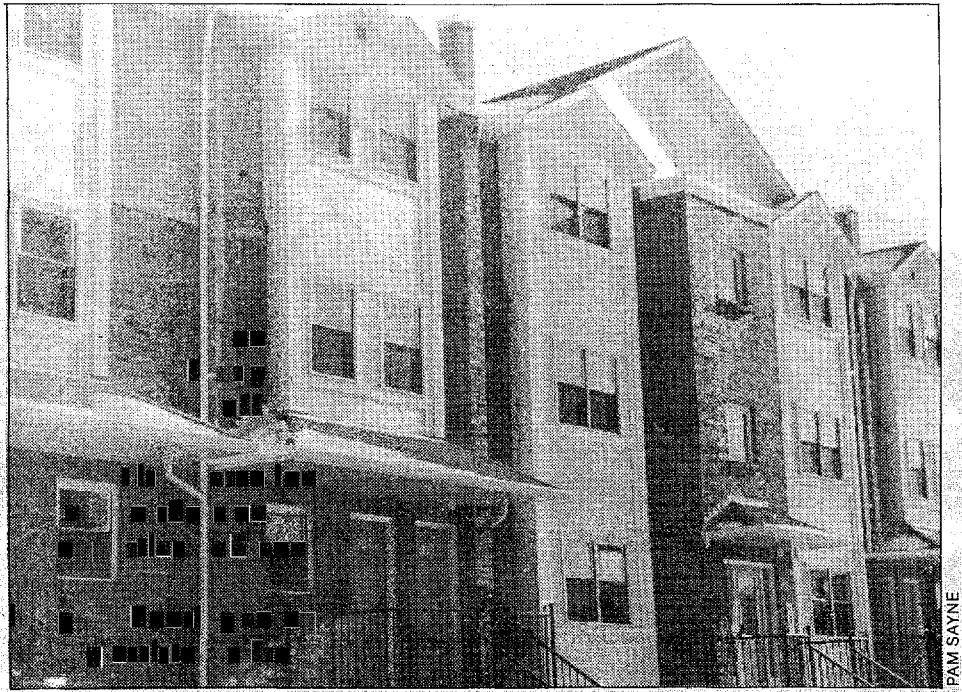
On January 1, 1985, the Toronto Women's Housing Co-operative opened its first béguinages at 333 and 415 Shuter Street. The

opening was a dream come true for a group of women which has been meeting for four years to respond to the need for decent and affordable housing for women. But the dream goes beyond just a place to live — it is the creation of a community of women who share an environment that is safe, supportive and controlled by its members.

The advantages of living in a housing co-op are numerous. With subsidy assistance from the CMHC, member-residents can in fact own their own homes, with no down payment, for as long as they choose to live in the co-op. Rents increase only as to minimal proportional increases by CMHC and maintenance costs. Members run their co-op, make their own rules and participate in all aspects of its operation. The Béguinage is unique in that great care went into its design, aesthetically, acoustically and ecologically.

There are still one and two bedroom apartments and townhouses available, but selection of units is on a first come, first served basis. Members are holding an open house on Saturday, February 9 (2 to 5 pm, 397 Shuter Street). Refreshments will be served and guided tours conducted. Information meetings, an essential part of coming to live in The Béguinage, will be held at the same address, 7:30 pm, on Thursday evenings, February 7, 14, 21 and 28.

Kye Marshall



Now Open: The Béguinage women's co-op on Shuter Street in Toronto.

Bookstore Celebrates Ten Years

VICTORIA — Everywomans Books will celebrate its tenth anniversary on Saturday, February 16. Friends of the store will gather at Open Space Gallery, 510 Fort St., Victoria for literary readings and music by P.K. Page, Betty Warland, Daphne Marlatt, Rona Murray,

Ezell, and Jan Gillanders, beginning at 7:30 pm. Suggested donation is two dollars. During the day, the anniversary will be celebrated at the store, 641 Johnson St., with coffee and cake. The celebration is open to everyone.

Throughout its first decade, Everywomans Books has been run by a volunteer collective of approximately 20 women who share in operation and staffing. As a feminist bookstore, Everywomans provides books by, for, and about women, in promotion of choices and enhanced roles in society. Best-selling categories are health, fiction, abuse of women and children, sexuality, spirituality, sociology and politics. The large bulletin board is an important community resource regarding women's events and services. The store also sells non-sexist books for children and teens, and maintains a small lending library.

MOVEMENT COMMENT

Inseparable Oppressions

by Tracey Brett Dawson

As a woman of Aotearoa (New Zealand), I was glad to see in the December/January issue of *Broadside* a review of *Patu!* This film, made by a Maori woman, describes opposition to the 1981 South African rugby tour of New Zealand. It is not primarily feminist and it certainly is not just about the relationship of sport and politics. It has recorded that the struggle over the tour was a struggle against international and domestic racism.

The continuing agony of South Africa, where the vicious and immoral policy of apartheid has been officially established since 1948, was the subject of an address in Toronto in late December 1984 by Desmond Tutu — Anglican bishop of Johannesburg, pastor to Soweto, 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner, nationality officially indeterminate. Listening to him speak and reviewing the texts of interviews and speeches he has given has made me feel again the anger and frustration that so characterized the period of institutional intransigence, escalating violence and painful consciousness-raising occasioned by the 1981 tour. It has made me begin to seek links with my feminist consciousness.

For Tutu, there is no doubt that South Africa will be free. The only questions that remain open are how and when that freedom will come. His appeal is to the international community, to investors and governments to bring pressure to bear on the white minority government of South Africa to "come to the conference table" and minimize the risk of a racial conflagration with "potentially horrendous consequences for race-relations throughout the world." His appeal is made as a voice for the voiceless: women living in frequently destroyed squatter camps; men forced to live in single sex hostels as migrant workers; students boycotting the travesty of their separate education system; those who are arbitrarily banned, exiled and detained without trial; for all the black African population constituting 73% of South Africans, who are subject to laws enforcing complete social segregation and ultimately relocation and denial of citizenship.

Tutu has a dream of a new South African society that will be "truly non-racial, truly democratic, in which all people count." He spoke of the role of the South African Council of Churches and the trade unions in the transformative process. But what of the women of South Africa? What of the seemingly innate connections between racism and the patriarchy? As he didn't raise the point, I did. He replied to the effect that women in South Africa are "a tremendous force in the struggle for freedom," that they are often more courageous than the men, "especially black women who struggle against so many other forms of oppression." He went on to comment that "women are not concerned with the present issues in the women's movement because it is so easy to divert from the struggle for liberation of all people, to take energy from the struggle for political power and thus be a major diminishment and a subject for the white rulers to latch onto."

But is that a sufficient analysis? What is a feminist issue? I am struck by the applicability of a comment made by a New Zealand reviewer of *Patu!* who said that the struggle over the tour was also a struggle against male power. Two of the Maori women who chose prominent leadership positions in the anti-tour movement did so to bring attention to their vision as Maori women and to express solidarity with black women of South Africa (Azania). Women across the range of feminist politics were abundantly present in the actions and demonstrations. Women also encountered the private face of the Anti-Tour organization "at times as sexist and oppressive to women as the society it supposedly challenged. It was a body blow to those who believed that anyone other than feminists gave any priority to fighting women's oppression (Penny Fenwick, in New Zealand's feminist magazine, *Broadsheet*, September 1982)."

Robin Morgan has referred, in a similar vein, to all revolutions to date as "*coup d'états* between men in a half-hearted attempt to prune the branches but leave the root oppression of sexism imbedded for the sake of preserving their own male privileges. (*Going Too Far*, 1977)."

Tutu has commented in the past that

"politics is the determination of how a people relate." Donna Awatere, a prominent Maori and feminist activist in New Zealand, goes further to state that for Maori women, concerns as women centre around the fact of exclusion from the process of shaping their own destiny as a people. I think this applies equally to black women of South Africa, native women of Canada and women of all colonized territories. Land, language, separate development and racial hatred are feminist issues. It seems to follow that sex oppression cannot be treated on its own. "Challenges must also be made to white supremacy and capitalism. Without these challenges, all that is sought are goals that don't change the system and which are priorities only for the elite who aren't as oppressed by these powers as others (Donna Awatere, *Broadsheet*, October 1982)."

The message is that racial oppression and sexual oppression are to be dealt with together, that women of all races share in oppression as women and that this oppression requires thoroughgoing upheaval to achieve the goal of eliminating all forms of inequity based on race, sex and class. Perhaps racism is as much an image of the patriarchy as pornography is the image of rape. To Awatere, racism is an integral part of the white, separatist state, existing because it is supposed to exist. The struggle of feminism is about women getting power over our own lives, removing our oppression of each other and challenging the male power hierarchy. It is about equality and transformation on women's terms. It seems to me that the feminist link between *Patu!* and the address given by Tutu is to reclaim the vision of the liberation movement our energy sustains and to remember the energy expended already by women such as Winnie Mandela, Helen Joseph, Ida Matwana, Charlotte Maxeke, Lilian Ngoyi, Donna Awatere, Rebecca Evans, Ngahua Te Awekotuku.

Oh yes, and no more No Name pineapple juice, Cape oranges, South African granny smith apples, or Krugerrand!

Tracey Brett Dawson is a New Zealand law student, currently studying in Toronto.

Raffle!

TORONTO — The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre is holding a Raffle. Tickets are on sale as of February 1, 1985.

1st Prize —	\$364.66	Prime Minister's Pay for a Day
2nd Prize —	\$199.45	MP's Pay for a Day
3rd Prize —	\$ 21.23	Woman on family benefits' Pay for a Day

Tickets will sell for \$1 each, or \$5 for a book of six. Draw date will be May 9, 1985. For information call: (416) 964-7477.

Health Conference 1985

TORONTO — Does Ontario's existing health care system meet the needs of women? Are alternate forms of care beneficial or detrimental? These and other issues will be examined at the Women's Health Conference Friday, March 1 and Saturday, March 2 at the Park Plaza Hotel in Toronto, sponsored by the Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues.

A diverse group of health care practitioners will address the audience on health concerns of special interest to women such as addiction, mental health, reproduction and more. The two-day conference will feature panel discussions and presentations by health care experts and will encourage audience participation. There will be opportunities to meet with resource people, council members and fledgling networkers.

General registration is free and open to the public. The conference is accessible to those in wheelchairs and the hearing impaired. Child care will be available. For further information and dinner registration, call Lydia Oleksyn or Lindsay Dubois, at the Council Office, (416) 965-1111.

CRIAW Conference on Women and Isolation

SASKATOON — Saskatchewan is a vast province with a sparse population. Women in rural areas are separated by physical distance from other women and society at large. It is also a province with a significant Native population. Many Native women are isolated by social and linguistic barriers. Native rural women, particularly in the north, thus experience a double sense of isolation.

The objective of the 1985 CRIAW conference (November 8-10) is to explore the isolation of women primarily caused by geographical or social circumstances. Although other causes of isolation are also pertinent to a comprehensive examination of the current condition of women, we encourage a focus on the experience of rural and Native women.

We invite your participation in this opportunity to present your views on the positive and negative aspects of isolation, and to exchange strategies for ameliorating the negative effects of isolation on women.

Contribution of your personal experience, research work, or artistic endeavours will ensure that the conference will be an occasion for feminist sharing and community. With your input, the conference will be the antithesis of its theme.

Your contribution may comprise a twenty minute paper followed by a general discussion, a short presentation in a round-table format permitting a discussion among a smaller number of participants, or a creative workshop employing your choice of artistic medium (plays, dance, film, prose, poetry, or other performances) lasting up to two hours.

Tentatively, the Program Committee is planning to build the conference around four major themes: the phenomenon of isolation; the experience of isolation; making the connections to end isolation (e.g., networks, skills and information sharing, doing research, data, resources); and celebrating community.

Please send a short summary of your proposed contribution by February 28, 1985 at the latest, to: CRIAW/ICRAF Program Committee Chair, Education 3088, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7N 0W0.

WIL: Women's Information Line

TORONTO — Yes, Virginia, there is a Women's Movement, and it's alive and growing here in Toronto; but, where do you find it? The Women's Information Line opened on January 23, 1985, to make it easier for all of us to find out where feminist events, groups and political actions are happening in Toronto. Call 926-8700.

It's really a very simple telephone information service provided by feminist activists with the support of an answering machine. Operating like a feminist clearing-house, it will tell newcomers "where to join the women's movement," supply up-to-date information on support groups for mothers, women coming out, women looking for jobs, or women wanting to work on specific feminist issues, and help acquaint women with the Toronto political scene... and much more.

WIL is not adding yet another service to the list of women's resources in Toronto. Rather, it hopes to provide a vehicle to make already existing service and affinity groups more visible to an ever-increasing number of women.

The Women's Information Line is a 24-hour taped message about services, events and actions; the phone line will also be staffed Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 7 to 10 pm.

Love This Planet

TORONTO — A day long workshop will be held to prepare for the international peace conference to be held in Halifax next June. The conference is being sponsored by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

The workshop, called "How to Love This Planet," will be held Sunday, March 10, 9:30 am to 3:30 pm, at Castle Frank High School in Toronto. For more information call NAC, (416) 922-3246.

Common Woman Film Festival

EDMONTON — Common Woman Books has organized a film festival called "Women: Reflections on Ourselves," running from January till April, 1985. Themes for screenings include: control of our minds and bodies, violence against women, women relating to women, and women through the arts:

- February 17 — Violence Against Women: Loved, Honoured and Bruised (Discussion by Halyna Freeland, lawyer), Hookers on Davie (Discussion by Lynn Fraser and Cheryl Kehoe, who work on Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes in Calgary), Night Without Fear (Discussion by Mair Smith, Alberta Status of Women Action Committee).

- March 10 — Women Relating to Women: Daughter Rite (Discussion leader, Ardelle Dudley, psychologist), On Guard, Lost Love, Chris and Bernie (Discussion leader, Pauline Belanger, nurse and single mom) In the Best Interests of the Children (Discussion leaders, Lynn Fraser and Cheryl Kehoe on rights for Lesbian mothers).

- April 14 — Women Through the Arts: Thriller, Gold Diggers (by Sally Potter — experimental feature), Kate and Anna McGarrigle.

Screenings will be held at the National Film Board distribution office, 10031 103 Avenue, Edmonton.

Domestics Still Exploited

TORONTO — Queen's Park has recently announced the removal of the wage differential between domestics and other workers in Ontario. As of March 1, 1985, the wage rate will rise from \$3.50 to \$4 per hour. Overtime pay has also been extended to live-out domestics who work over 44 hours per week, and to live-in domestics who work during their 48-hour per week rest period.

However, the provincial government has failed to take action on hours of work and overtime for live-in domestics, thereby undercutting its own intent of ensuring more equitable treatment for this historically unprotected group of workers. It is still legally possible in Ontario for a live-in domestic to either work or be on call to her employer for up to 120 hours per week! This reduces her real wage rate to a mere \$1.47 per hour! According to INTERCEDE Co-ordinator Judith Ramirez, "These changes simply do not get to the root of the matter. Live-in domestics are still wide open to exploitation."

Other INTERCEDE (International Coalition to End Domestics' Exploitation) recommendations which were completely ignored include: protecting babysitters, companions, and part-time domestics; lowering the room-and-board deduction for live-in domestics; and removing the bar to unionizing domestics in the Labour Relations Act. These measures have the full support of groups such as the Ontario Advisory Council on the Status of Women, the Mayor's Committee on Community and Race Relations, the YWCA, the United Church of Canada, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto, the National Congress of Black Women, etc.

INTERCEDE has announced that it will re-double its efforts to win full labour rights for domestic workers in Ontario.

DES Report

A recent US study has found evidence that breast cancer is 40 to 50% more likely to occur in women who took the drug DES (diethylstilbestrol) during pregnancy.

Most information about the drug, taken mainly to prevent miscarriage (and banned in 1971), has focussed on the daughters of women given DES, where there is a high probability of developing cervical cancer (see *Broadside*, June 1984).

The study also found that the risk of cancer increases with age: the risk is 60% greater 20 to 30 years after exposure to the drug, and 150% greater after 30 years; symptoms often do not occur until a woman enters menopause.

For more information about DES, write DES Action, PO Box 1004, Station A, Toronto to M5W 1G5; or phone (416) 968-2844.

Not an Easy Debate

by Randi Spires

Starting with the assumption that everyone in the room was pro-choice, the three panelists of the forum held December 11 in Toronto ("The Pro-Choice Movement: New Directions, New Debates") addressed a number of difficult yet often ignored issues. Among these were how individual women experience abortion physically, psychologically and socially; moral issues related to pro-choice matters; the effects of new medical technologies; how pro-choice relates to other political concerns; and the long-term strategy versus the short-term tactics of the movement.

The forum was sponsored by the Women's Press and the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics (OCAC). The panelists were Theresa Dobko, a psychologist and a member of the OCAC collective, Vicki Van Wagner, a high school health teacher and a practising midwife, and Kathleen McDonnell, author of the recently published *Not An Easy Choice: A Feminist Re-Examines Abortion* (Women's Press, 1984). Arrangements were facilitated by the Coalition for Responsible Choice, the U of T pro-choice group. The forum was moderated by Margie Wolfe of the Women's Press.

Kathleen McDonnell started the debate off by saying that, within the pro-choice movement, while a woman's right to control her own body has always been a non-negotiable demand, women's emotional experiences of abortion have not been talked about, and therefore their emotional needs were not being met. By not addressing these needs feminists were driving many women into the arms of the anti-choice movement, which has set up a system of post-abortion counselling. These women should be talking to feminists who support their choice unconditionally.

McDonnell suggested further, that we have to develop an ethic which sees the fetus as more than a clump of tissue, recognizing that fetal life is a stage of human life. This is especially important at a time when the new reproductive technologies, such as fetal transfusions and embryo transplants, lead people to treating the fetus as a patient. It is important as a strategy, that we begin to discuss the complex, disturbing issues such as that of fetal life and the violence possibly done to it, because the anti-choice forces will certainly do so. If we are not prepared to discuss these issues we may lose women to the other side.

Vicki Van Wagner agreed with the need for emotional support, citing cases where women, who had had abortions earlier in their lives, found themselves feeling ambivalent about having done so when they finally did give birth, or where women had become traumatized by anti-choice presentations. With proper support, however, these women were able to overcome their negative feelings.

Theresa Dobko warned against focusing on the negative feelings women have regarding their abortions. She said that often their feelings were quite positive and life-affirming. There is a danger in making a clinical syndrome out of a wide variety of emotions, including the so-called "post-abortion grief," and we shouldn't make clinical what is a normal process.

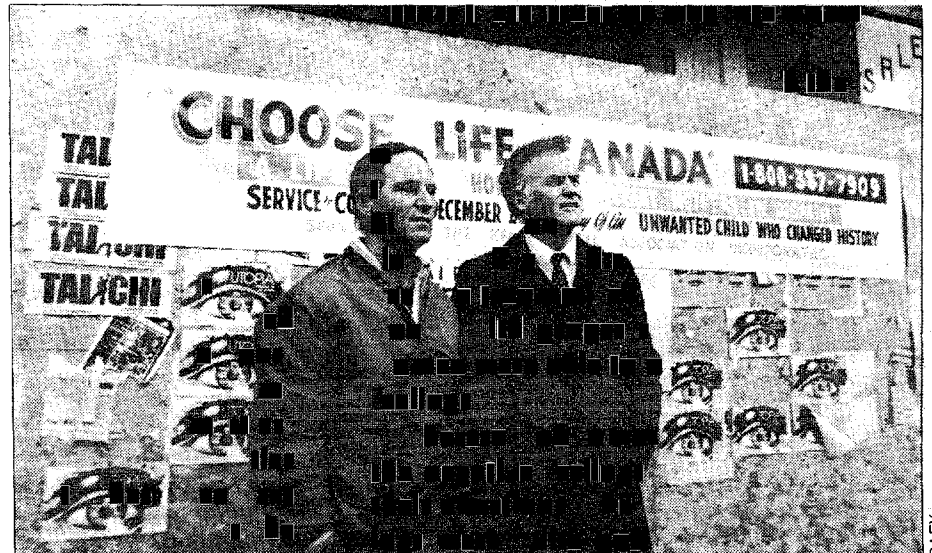
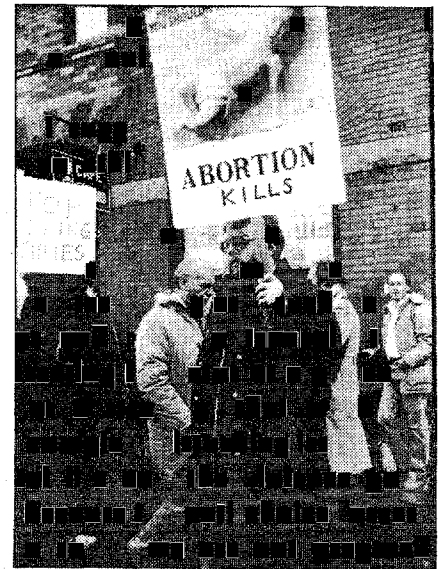
In reference to an anti-choice propaganda video which depicts in graphic detail the abortion of a ten-week old fetus, accompanied by

an excessive, emotion-laden sound track, Dobko said that while the film's portrayal of violence is disturbing we must remind people of other types of violence in our society such as rape, incest, poverty and enforced pregnancy. She added that when people talk of fetal psychology what is really meant is fetal physiology. The fetus has sensations, not feelings; it is not a tiny human being with a full emotional system.

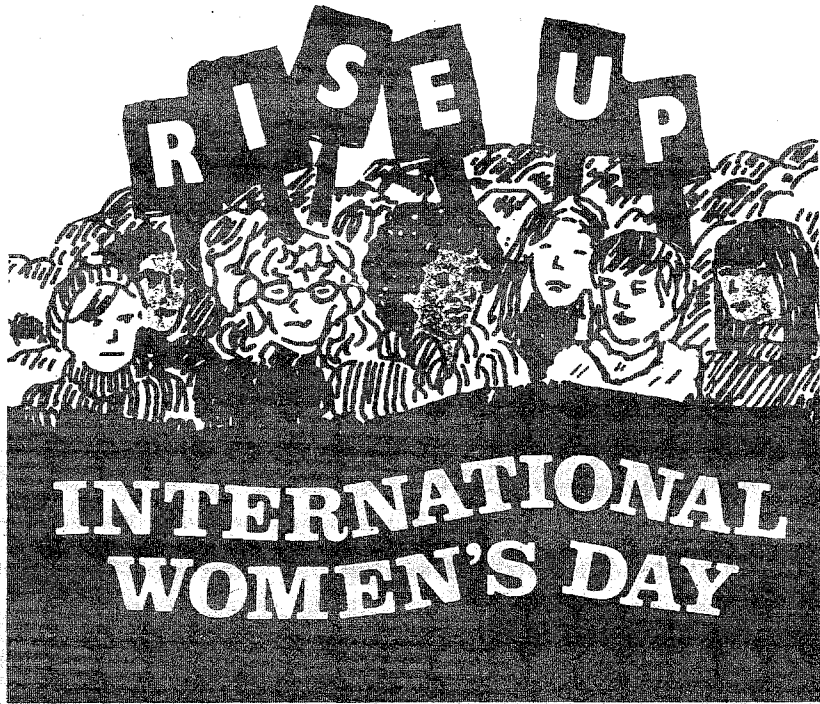
And while agreeing with McDonnell's contention that women often are forced not to have a child because they lack the necessary social and economic supports, Dobko said that by "choice" we mean something specific, the choice to have an abortion. If conditions were different, the term might also mean the choice to have a child, but now it is important for political reasons not to water down the concept of choice. In the minds of the anti-choice advocates, reproductive rights, women's sex rights and the rights of lesbians were all aligned, and we have to understand how all these issues are interrelated in order to understand what the anti-choice movement is all about.

Meanwhile, though discussing moral and philosophical implications of choice is valuable, it is important to focus our energies in order to be politically effective. There is only so much energy to go around and right now, Dobko suggested, most of that energy is needed to fight for free-standing abortion clinics. The limited amount of time and energy available was clearly expressed by several women in the audience, who worked doing abortion counselling and referrals: the need for abortions was so overwhelming they had to concentrate on arranging them for their clients and just did not have the time to do extensive counselling.

In addition a number of participants thought that there may need to be a split between the public and private faces of the pro-choice movement. It was thought that while among ourselves it may be necessary to grapple with certain complex, potentially divisive issues, perhaps our public face should be a simple and straightforward one. In general, though there seemed to be a split between focussing on theory or practice, the panelists and the audience seemed to agree that the long term goal of the pro-choice movement was not just free-standing abortion clinics, but women-controlled health care centres, where abortion would be one of many health-care services provided. ●



Forces of opposition: (below) Ken Campbell and bodyguard in front of temporary 'pro-life' headquarters, across from the abortion clinic picket (above) on Harbord Street.



IWD: Aip

by Sa

• International W

IWD is celebrated in other cities througho

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• Committee for

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Coalition, they ar Angela Davis, an Against Racial and significance of the e international wome the evening of Marc February 22, a wor defray the costs of

The "End of 1 Women" conferenc also on the Commi conference will help are addressed by g Since both governr tatives will attend, will be the scene of

For more informat Costanza, 654-3835

• International Women's Day Committee (IWDC)

This group was originally constituted in Toronto as a coalition of individuals and groups which organized the first large, local IWD march in 1978. It has evolved into a socialist-feminist organization which has included the responsibility of being the primary organizers of the March 8th Coalition in its annual activities. This year IWDC felt that it was time for a broader grouping to assume this responsibility. The enormity of these yearly responsibilities has hindered IWDC's ability to develop and implement its own strategies.

IWDC contacted groups which had been involved in the past and set up an organizing meeting to initiate this change. Unlike other years, IWDC didn't present a proposal or chair the meeting, though representatives from IWDC attended the meeting and will continue to participate in the 1985 March 8th Coalition.

For more information, call: Marianna Valverde, 532-8989.

• March 8th Coalition

Each year since 1978, a loose coalition of pro-feminist groups and individuals has come together to organize a large, local march and various public events on IWD.

This year the theme for their activities will be "Organizing for Change." A fair, including workshops and booths set up by women's groups, will be held on Saturday, March 9 at Ryerson. The march and rally will be held at Convocation Hall, U of T at 11 am, before the fair. Women from organized labour, the immigrant community, women's services, as well as interested individuals, are among the coalition members.

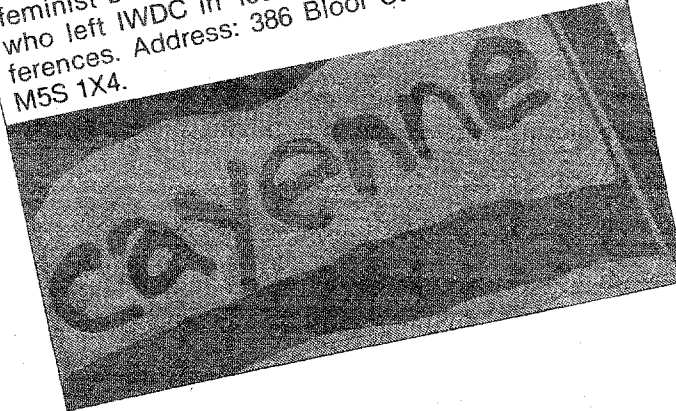
For more information, call: Lauri Bell, 863-6702 (work) or 960-3647 (home).

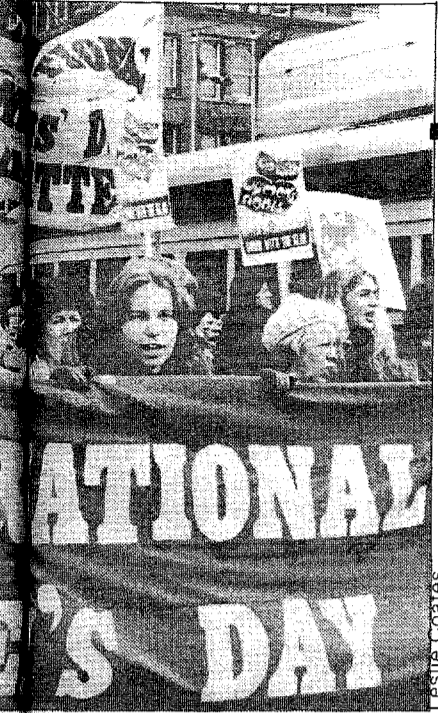
Sandy Stienecker is a Toronto feminist who has been involved in the organization of IWD and Action Daycare.

• **IWDC Newsletter:** The International Women's Day Committee publishes a regular newsletter for all those interested in IWDC and socialist feminism. Address: PO Box 70, Station F, Toronto, M4Y 2L4.



• **Cayenne:** This is a new, independent socialist feminist bulletin started by a number of women who left IWDC in 1984 because of political differences. Address: 386 Bloor St. West, Toronto, M5S 1X4.





Leslie Coates

bet Soup

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os Day (IWD)

in Toronto and in many world. initiative social democrat and movement in Germany, world to march on March 8th with striking garment IWD is now celebrated as a publically around issues movement.

women who are new to the diversity of groups in Toronto presents a confusing melange of differences. a short description of the organization of events in Toronto for women who would like to know where or how.

8th

of groups has held local meetings since the 1950s. Organized by the *Association of Canadian Women*, the efforts this year around the 75th anniversary of the United Nations Decade for Women with the *March 8th* featuring a presentation by the National Alliance for the Women's Suffrage (USA), on the Decade for Women to the United Nations. Davis will speak on the occasion at the University of Toronto. On the 8th a dance will be held to celebrate.

United Nations Decade for Women this year in Nairobi is being celebrated. This United Nations Decade for Women theme is how women's issues are being addressed throughout the world. The non-governmental representatives at this conference are expected to have a very lively and conflict.



• Women's Liberation Working Group (WLWG)

Originally called the *Follow-Up Committee*, this group of women was initiated in response to a proposal presented by *Action Daycare* to the 1984 *March 8th Coalition*. The proposal suggested that the coalition needed to use *IWD* to focus more effectively on the ongoing needs of the movement rather than on a "one-shot" activity. *WLWG* specifically identified an immediate need to develop an ongoing coalition of women's groups which could accept responsibility for organizing *IWD* each year and address some of the key problems that women's groups and the movement are experiencing. Key needs included the improvement of the media presence of feminism and the women's movement, increasing the ability of the movement to educate and integrate new women and sponsoring debates and educational on the current issues and strategies for activists.

WLWG also has plans to develop consciousness-raising groups for women new to the movement and continues to focus on the need to develop a working coalition of women's groups.

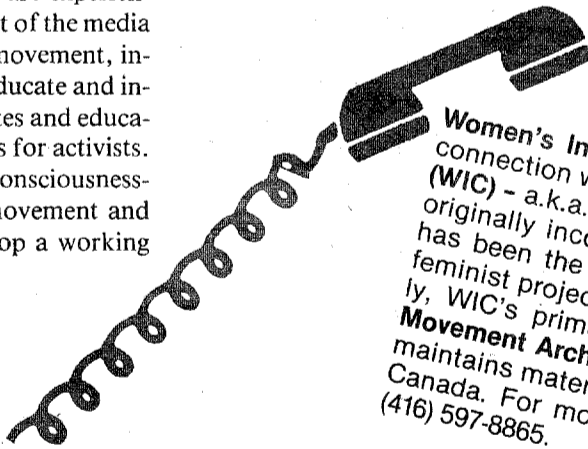
For more information, call:
Connie Guberman, 534-4919,
or Sue Prentice, 977-6698

• Women's Information Line (WIL)

Unable to turn strong verbal support from the women's community into commitment to actually work on implementation of a coalition, the *WLWG* made a second proposal for a *Women's Information Line*. This proposal received enough support to establish the service. Women who would like information about events, services, consciousness-raising or political groups will be able to obtain it from *WIL* starting January 23. A small group of volunteers are working to provide this information phone service.

It is hoped that *WIL*, once it is established as a clearinghouse, will act as a catalyst for a coalition such as that proposed by *WLWG*.

For information, call:
926-8700.



Women's Information Line (WIL) has no formal connection with the *Women's Information Centre (WIC)* - a.k.a. *Women's Place*, when it was originally incorporated in 1972. Since then, *WIC* has been the basis of support for a number of feminist projects and groups in Toronto. Currently, *WIC's* primary focus is *Canadian Women's Movement Archives (CWMA)* which collects and maintains material on the women's movement in Canada. For more information on *CWMA*, call: (416) 597-8865.



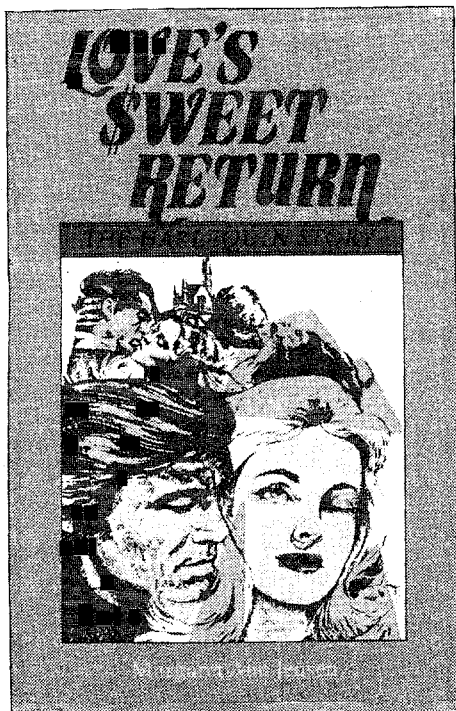
The Story of Valerie Vapid

Love's Sweet Return by Margaret Ann Jensen. The Women's Press: Toronto 1984. 188 pp. Paper.

Reviewed by Margaret Atwood

Love's Sweet Return is about everything you ever needed to know about Harlequin Romances but were too bored to ask. However, according to Margaret Ann Jensen, your dismissive lack of interest is in itself a symptom: in a society in which women's culture and writing are *per se* undervalued, Harlequins — unlike male forms of pop culture, such as Westerns — have been literally beneath notice. Jensen is not (luckily) trying to make a case for Harlequins as great literature; but she is saying, quite rightly, that a form consumed in such huge quantities, by, world-wide, such enormous numbers of women, is worthy of examination, at least from a sociological standpoint. Who reads these things, and why? Is the audience for Harlequins really composed of brainwashed subliterate frontal lobotomy cases, as we tend to believe? Do the readers end up believing that some dashing millionaire is going to waft into their lives and upgrade their wardrobes? Do they long for melted knees and a master-door-mat relationship? Are Harlequins — especially from a feminist viewpoint — *dangerous*?

The answer to all these questions are the same: in a word, No. But in order to arrive at this answer, Jensen takes us, statistic by statistic, interview by interview, over every bit of terrain Harlequins have ever set glass slipper on. I guess she figures we'll need a lot of convincing, and she's right about that, too. So we get a history of Harlequin Enterprises, its corporate structure (missionary position: men on top, women supplying the material, the editorial pool, the readers and therefore the cash flow), its marketing attitudes (book as pro-



duct, with a heavy reliance on consumer surveys; that is, what they get is what they want), its fiction formula, its black velvet painting prose style, its reader profiles, its reader motivation — they *like* predictability —, and, most interestingly, its relationship to feminism and the changes that have taken place in Harlequins since I myself last dipped into the adventures of Valerie Vapid, fifteen years ago, and found them just too tedious to go on with.

Jensen's book started life as a thesis, and a whiff of sociological academia lingers on. The prose style is a little cardboardy, the points are sometimes overly made. But on the whole this is a thoughtful and worthwhile book, and a must for anyone pondering the problems of female genre fiction, pop cult and related fields. I agree with a number of its contentions. For instance, the stand on masochism. Some say that the heroine's engagement to the older, richer, more powerful and rather domineering hero at the end of the book is symptomatic of the female will to lose and represents failure and defeat. Not so, says Jensen. The heroine — who is not rich and powerful — undergoes a hundred and eighty pages of struggle, which embody in symbolic form the

struggles encountered by the readers themselves. Life for most women is not easy; the smorgasbord still contains a somewhat limited selection of goodies, even for new-style North American women with jobs.

"Women represent fifty percent of the adult world population, one-third of all working hours, receive only one-tenth of world income and own less than one percent of world property." That's not from Jensen's book, it's from a UN statement on the status of women, but it puts things into perspective. Harlequins are about doing the best you can under the circumstances, which are not dandy. Harlequins are about Beauty and the Beast. Harlequins are about lion taming: if you can't be a lion yourself, at least you can domesticate one. If you can't get power any other way, you make the best available trade-off: your body, with melted knees, for his eternal devotion to you. Your melted knees have to be real, of course: Harlequin readers are not cynics. This is hardly total masochism. Harlequins are, among other things, how-to books on the fantasy level, for women who experience daily their own lack of power. This among other things may explain why there are no Lesbian Harlequins, although there now are some for teenagers and divorcees: if only men have external power, you can't acquire it by annexing another woman.

This point could have been made a little more clearly by contrasting Harlequins and their ilk, which derive from *Pride and Prejudice*, with other forms of female-consumed pop literature: Gothics, for instance, in which the threat is not the failure of romance but death; or Barbara Cartland-style cocktease epics, in which the threat to the heroine is rape; or True Confessions, grittier in texture, in which the driving energy is supplied by guilt; or even True Romance comics with their teardrop covers, which are a lot closer to plain old snivelling. By comparison, Harlequins come out rather practical and down-to-earth. They play Plain Jane to the more extravagant Brontë and Radcliffe progeny of the other sub-genres. What all have in common, of course, is the proposing of individual solutions to what are, in the big picture, social problems: get your heart straight, win the hero. It is your own life that must be adjusted, not the general condition of women. That there aren't enough handsome millionaires to go around is not supposed to trouble you, because Harlequins are, after all, escape fantasy. That there are no longer any stage-coaches doesn't perturb the readers of Westerns, either.

Judging from the samples provided by Jensen, Harlequins are still difficult to read; that is, the style is still as ornate, cliché-ridden and euphemistic as ever. But things are changing. In response to reader demands, more sex is creeping in, disguised in polysyllabic verbal verdure but sex nonetheless. Heroines are becoming more real: they aren't always virgins, they've sometimes had bad experiences. The women's movement has had an impact: the heroines can have erotic feelings of their own, they have better jobs, they sometimes have opinions on things other than what colour of belt goes best with their toe polish. Valerie Vapid has been replaced by Samantha Semiliberated, who demands and gets better terms. For instance, she doesn't have to give up her job at the end of the book, not always. And sometimes the hero makes concessions. The men are depicted as possessing even greater phallic energy, and sometimes engage in what in any other context would be called sexual harassment. There's even a bit of slapping around, and those versed in the lore of wife-beating would do well to suspect the extremely possessive, bossy, traditional sex-role addict hero, however mad his passion, hard his thighs and fat his pocketbook. As a corollary to the increased bargaining power and active sexuality of the women, there's an increase too in male coyness. It's the hero, not the heroine, who is inscrutable and mysterious and plays peek-a-boo and c'mere-get-away. As the women display more autonomy, the men display more hostility, in one form or another. It was hard to be hostile to poor Valerie, so delicate and innocent a touch could turn her to Cream of Wheat, but Samantha, in response to reader preferences, is made of sterner stuff.

Thank heavens, I say, and good on her. Keep going, Samantha. Hold out for your job in interior decoration, if that's what you want; it's a step up from Valerie's eternal secretarial drudgery. After three years of marriage you can send Mr. Darcy off to a self-help group so he can learn more adult ways of expressing his emotions, and in another fifteen years I'll check in on you, via the next book by Margaret Ann Jensen, to see how you're doing. As you go, so goes the inner life, and therefore a little bit of the outer life, of a great many women: if you aren't prepared to settle for rock-bottom crummy terms, maybe they won't either. And I agree with Jensen that this fact is far from negligible.

Margaret Atwood's latest book of poetry is *Interlunar*.

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Murder or Merger

Murder in the Collective by Barbara Wilson. Seattle, WA.: The Seal Press, 1984. \$10.95.

Reviewed by Carroll Klein

When I was a kid, one of the great joys of Christmas was being given books. For a while, my preference was for Nancy Drew mysteries. I knew I would be able to spend all of Christmas Day curled up with the intrepid Nancy and her friends Beth and George. No interruptions, no pressure, just the unalloyed pleasure of working through a mystery with my favourite teen detective.

This past Christmas I received a book that reminded me of the context, if not the substance, of these earlier experiences. Barbara Wilson's mystery, with the tantalizing title *Murder in the Collective*, was my compulsive Christmas Day read this year, and I recommend it to all feminists, mystery buffs, and readers who have been involved in the collective process.

Barbara Wilson, a Seattle feminist and co-founder of The Seal Press, has written a book that strikes many familiar chords. Part of the pleasure of this novel lies in this familiarity: the setting, characters, concerns, and politics are *ours*; the vision is not imposed by a dispassionate interpreter or analyzed by a cynical outsider. Wilson is one of us, and her writing made me feel as if I were reading from within a context that I understood intimately. And that adds up to a lot of fun.

The central character of *Murder in the Col-*

lective is Pam Nilsen who, with her sister Penny, owns Best Printing. The business is run as a collective. Their associates are a motley crew: Ray, Pam's ex-lover, heavily involved in progressive third-world politics; Zee, a Filipina political exile; June, a young black widow with two children; Elena, a lesbian mother with a messy legal custody battle behind her; and Jeremy, resident space cadet and sometime dope dealer.

Elena has suggested a merger between Best Printing and B. Violet Typesetting, a lesbian-owned typesetting and design business that is having financial difficulties. Fran, the moving force behind B. Violet and Elena's lover, is a hard-drinking, bad-tempered woman, "a sort of Queen Victoria of dykedom." Pam is not enamoured with Fran or with two of Fran's other collective associates, but she is curious about Hadley, a tall, slow-talking Texan who works at B. Violet.

The first merger discussion goes badly, and the scene in the bar afterwards is worse. Fran gets very drunk very quickly, and Elena isn't far behind. Pam leaves, disturbed by what she's seen, but not nearly as disturbed as she is the next morning when Elena phones to let her know that B. Violet has been completely vandalized.

Whodunnit?

Fran has disappeared. Suspect number one. But why would she trash her own business? Pam decides to do some investigating on her own and she draws Hadley into her plans. There are no simple solutions, only

additional mysteries, for when they stop in at Best Printing they find Jeremy murdered in the darkroom. Jeremy, who looks a lot like Elena in the dim light. Jeremy, who was June's lover. Jeremy, harmless and spacey. Or was he?

Whodunnit?

Pam and Hadley plunge into a complicated series of discoveries about their friends, the politics both central and peripheral to their collectives, and about themselves and their own relationship.

Barbara Wilson spins a good yarn and keeps the pace going at a fair clip. The subplots are skillfully interwoven and the fact that most of the characters are implicated sooner or later is testament to the writer's depth of characterization. In a book peopled with so many diverse individuals, Wilson manages to develop each person with considerable insight.

My only discomfort with the novel lies in the curious lack of understanding that Pam has about her growing interest in Hadley. Could a feminist who had been involved in the women's community for a long time really be so dumb about lesbianism? Could, for that matter, a feminist in a relatively small city not even know that there was a lesbian bar? Seems unlikely to me.

This minor quarrel aside, *Murder in the Collective* is a very enjoyable read. Wilson intends to write more mysteries with Pam Nilsen as a feminist detective. I look forward to her next offering.

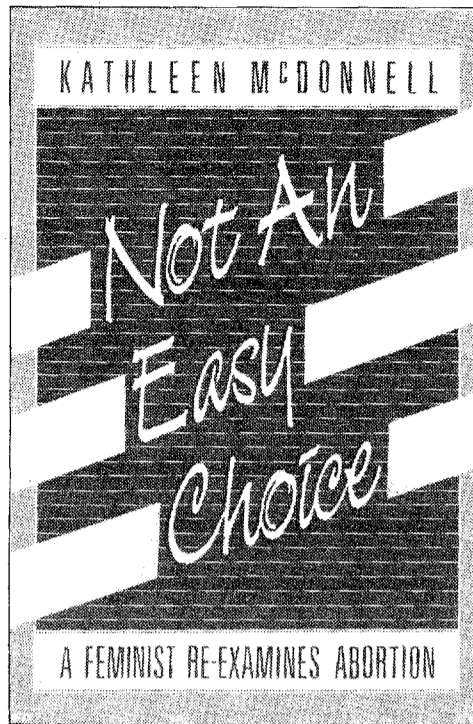
Choice Is Not Enough

Reviewed by Eve Zaremba

Not An Easy Choice, A Feminist Re-Examines Abortion, by Kathleen McDonnell. Toronto: Women's Press 1984. \$8.95

"...the feminist commitment to the absolute right of women to choose abortion is...radical, as is the notion that women should control our own bodies. There is no way to soften the impact of that radical demand without diluting our stance on what is a bedrock issue of modern feminism. But can we perhaps search out new ways of talking about the abortion issue, add new dimensions to it... (p.21)."

In the past few years, conflict over abortion rights has escalated all over this continent. In the States, abortion clinics are systematically torched while federal law officials, well aware that the Boss approves, make no move to treat this as they would other kinds of terrorism. In Canada, our man with a fetus-fetish, Joe Borowski, threatens assassination and tries to close down Manitoba's women's magazine, *HERizons*, for daring to support abortion counselling. Hysterical crowds attack Dr. Morgentaler, the man who has made a crusade of abortion clinics, who has faced four juries and will probably face a few more on this issue. His clinic in Toronto has been constantly harassed by demonstrators, some of whom at times give the appearance of having been hired by the hour for temporary help agencies. Fundamentalist Ken Campbell allies himself with the Catholic Church to confuse well-meaning humanitarians and pressure reluctant politicians. Slogans like



"Abortion will not triumph. Life will," and not-so-veiled anti-semitism like "Morgentaler, the Prophet of Profit" are examples of the depth to which the anti-choice campaign will sink.

With such a polarized situation, with all we have worked for constantly under attack and the future of women's reproductive self-determination hanging in the balance, it may seem an unlikely and inappropriate moment to re-examine the abortion issue.

In *Not an Easy Choice*, Kathleen McDonnell argues persuasively that this examination is not only timely but necessary. Without at-

tempting to summarize the arguments presented, suffice to say that McDonnell deals very adequately with the pros and cons of the notion of 'Choice,' is interesting on the real experience of abortion, and useful if brief on the anti-choice movement. In my view, the real heart of the book lies in her analysis of the problems with the current clinic-centred strategy which "does not question the medical control of abortion." Tactically, the establishment of free standing abortion clinics has to be supported by the claim that they would be, (that they are) as safe as hospitals. This implies that lay abortions are dangerous. "Is it possible that supposed 'danger' of non-medical abortions, like non-medical childbirth, could be more ideological than real?" asks McDonnell. (Here it must be stressed that there is a difference between illegal, back alley abortion and lay abortions.)

McDonnell makes the point that regardless of what happens ultimately with abortion clinics, we will sooner or later have to organize seriously to reclaim all aspects of reproduction from the medical profession "because of modern medicine's tendency to assume control of every aspect of life it touches." The same is true of the State. Its role in contraception, birth and abortion is crucial. "Be fruitful and multiply" is surely a political (rather than a religious) commandment. Interests of the State determine in which direction coercion, or more politely 'incentives' to increase or decrease the birth rate, are applied. Worries about the falling birth rate have surfaced recently in Canada (we need a bigger market; another baby boom would be good for business, etc.) while in the

Third World, population growth is seen as a problem. In either case, the drive is for population strategy decided and determined by the State. "We have to make clear that our right to control our reproduction shares nothing with a population control ideology that legitimizes control and exploitation of women's reproductive capacity in the interest of perpetuating an inequitable political and economic order."

I agree that this is a timely book. These issues will be with us after the passing of Morgentaler and Borowski, after the current battles about abortion clinics are history. The long term struggle is for women's right to the conditions for sexual and reproductive choice. And that struggle has barely begun.

Not an Easy Choice is short (139 pages), clearly written and well designed. It is intelligent in what it covers, while clearly not attempting to be exhaustive. On the subject of the moral aspects of abortion there is nothing new or profound. McDonnell is not an ethical philosopher. Anyone who wants to explore in depth contemporary ethical (Christian-based) thought about abortion might be interested in Beverly Wildung Harrison's *Our Right to Choose*. It "aims to make it harder for anyone to speak of abortion as 'a moral dilemma' without giving women's well-being central standing in the discussion." Harrison's book is rather 'technical'; not for the general reader. McDonnell, however, has produced a book which anyone can read with profit and interest. Everyone should do so if only because it is where all future feminist discussions in this country will have to begin.

Lesbian Novels: Truth or Trash?

The Raging Peace by Artemis OakGrove. Lace Publications 1984.

Triangles by Ruth Geller. Trumansburg, New York: The Crossing Press 1984. \$10.75.

Reviewed by Maureen Phillips

In the context of literary history as a whole, lesbian fiction is a relatively young genre, and as a genre it reflects a struggle for identity. It must borrow form, styles, and value systems from the culture at large, while at the same time express something which that culture traditionally suppresses or distorts. More often than not, the focus in a lesbian novel involves the construction or claiming of a very specific identity; hence the preponderance of narratives that depict the process of "coming out."

Most authors choose one of two solutions to this problem and write either in the category of trash or in the category of social-realism. Most of the trash is pre-'70s and certainly pre-dates the existence of feminist and/or lesbian/feminist publishing houses. Trash might best be read as an indulgence of melodramatic tastes and it absolutely requires a complete suspension of even the vaguest pretensions to literary values. Perhaps writers such as Ann Bannon and Valerie Taylor are useful for historical reasons; it is not unlikely that much of contemporary lesbian fiction with its emphasis on "positive images" is a direct response to the tormented excesses of the late '50s. The social-realist school, for all its apparent sensitivity to specific political values, often forgets that fiction can be complex, experimental, and imaginatively engaging. Reading, after all, is an interpretative activity and fiction need not always involve a direct and unmediated relation or representation of ordinary life.

Artemis OakGrove's *The Raging Peace* might best be described as a novel that contains something to offend all sensibilities, whether they be political, sexual, or literary. Perhaps paradoxically, this might be what makes it delightful to read. This book is highly self-conscious trash in a stylized form; there is no attempt made to depict the ordinary. The novel is shaped by seemingly unlikely combinations of conventional romantic patterns, sexual fantasies, and the occasional foray into the supernatural.

By the end of the first chapter (a mere ten pages) the frame, tone, and effusive prose style have been set. Leslie, one of the central characters, who by day is the Serle of Rhinehart, Benson, and Serle, an all lesbian legal

firm in Denver, by night is known among the bar crowd as the Ice Princess. One night in the bar, we're told, "out of the corner of her eye, she saw her. A lanky, dark-haired woman in a leather jacket. The sight made Leslie lose her balance. Her brunette partner caught her deftly and continued dancing, oblivious to the shock wave that seared through Leslie." After a brief recovery period of two paragraphs and a second look, our heroine reflects: "There, directly in her sights, was what her soul recognized as her destiny, and her heart recognized as the lost longings of her youth." To meet the soul's destiny in a bar, before so much as an introduction has taken place, is surely the first of many clues that we are entering the realm of the fantastic.

The dark stranger is Ryan O'Donnell, a hard-drinking biker and pilot, S/M top, complete with shoe fetish, and independently wealthy (thirty-two million, nine hundred and fifty thousand to be precise) as well. Rounding out Ryan's resumé and motivating most of her seemingly erratic behaviour is her involvement in a bizarre revenge scheme. Revenge is being sought by Anara, a three thousand year old goddess, murdered by the members of her all woman clan, of which Ryan, in a former life was a member.

The Raging Peace plays with types and stereotypes in so many ways that its enduring or redeeming value is somewhat dubious. In fact the Toronto Women's Bookstore does not carry the book because the portrayal of one character is deemed to be racist. However, it does succeed remarkably on the level of titillation, which surely must be worth something, and it contains the rather provocative suggestion that lesbian fiction is not always painfully earnest.

Triangles by Ruth Geller, on the other hand, is a firmly grounded exploration of themes related to the difficulties one encounters when trying to integrate various components of one's identity into diverse social and cultural contexts. Sunny Rosenthal must perpetually suppress important aspects of her character depending on her immediate environment. To a large extent, the novel is about Sunny's frustrating search for a place where she can experience even a minimum level of emotional safety and integrity. For example, her family is uncomfortable with her lesbianism, her lover is uncomfortable with and largely uninformed about the Jewish cultural traditions that are essential parts of Sunny's identity, and she is in the closet both as a lesbian and as a Jew at her place of work.

There is tension and conflict in all areas of

her life and this is further complicated by a serious emotional residue of the past that remains unresolved throughout most of the novel. As a whole, the novel fails to be engaging because no single area of conflict is presented in enough depth or detail; there is a relatively large cast of characters and their individual functions within the novel often remain obscure. Unmotivated details abound and the prose is mechanical. For example, "He meowed in response. She walked to the couch, sat down, and burst into tears. Whiskers sat there for a moment, walked to the couch, jumped up, and sniffed tentatively at the air around her face. This show of sympathy, or interest, made her cry all the more."

In striving to emphasize the significance that can be attached to simple, everyday occurrences, Geller forgets that the organization and structuring of this kind of material is essential if interest is to be sustained. When what we think of as realistic fiction works, it does so only if it offers a clarity of vision that allows for a shift from the banality of daily life to the imaginative possibilities which draw us into fictional worlds in the first place.

Maureen Phillips is an English student at U of T, works part-time in a bookstore, and is a member of the "Otherwise" collective.

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by Amanda Hale

The scene is set for a theatrical adaptation of Raymond Briggs's comic strip version (Penguin Books 1982) of *The Big Bang* as experienced by Jim and Hilda Bloggs, a typical lower middle class retired couple. Jim spends his mornings at the Public Library reading the papers.

"Oh those things! Full of rubbish," says Hilda. "I never look at them. Except The Stars."

"We must keep abreast of the International Situation, ducks," says Jim. "It could affect us all — The Ultimate Determent an' that... They say there may be a pre-emptive strike."

"Oh not another strike!" exclaims Hilda. "It's wicked. I'd have them all locked up. Blessed Communists! Sausages or beefburgers, dear?"

When the wireless announces a warning to prepare for an outbreak of "hostilities" in three days' time, Jim gets busy on construction of a Fall Out Shelter, according to specifications set out in *The Householder's Guide To Survival*, printed by the County Council. Jim is a man who lives by the book and has blind faith in "The Powers That Be."

Hilda and Jim speculate on what a nuclear war might be like. Their ignorance renders them powerless to imagine an appropriate scenario, so they end up reminiscing about the second world war. "Yes, it was nice in The War, really... The Shelters... the Blackout... the All Clear... cups of tea... Evacuees... London kids seeing cows for the first time... Old Churchill on the wireless... Vera Lynn singing away... Spitfires and Hurricanes in the blue sky over the cornfields... the White Cliffs of Dover... old Jerry coming over every night... those were the days..."

Hilda's concerns are entirely domestic. She worries about fall out dust on the cushions, and scolds Jim for getting paint on the curtains when he paints the windows white as protection against radiation heat. At least that's what Jim thinks it's for. He is just following the instructions in *The Householder's Guide*, step by step. "You get triffic heat with these bombs, you know."

Both Hilda and Jim are concerned with doing "the proper thing." Jim wants a clean white shirt for the bomb. Hilda panics be-

When the Bomb Blows Over

WHEN THE WIND BLOWS
Toronto Workshop Productions

cause they don't have any peanut butter to lay in with the food supplies and bottles of water which are to sustain them during their fourteen day period in the "Inner Core or Refuge."

"Never mind, ducks," says Jim. "I don't like peanut butter. Nor do you."

"No, but it's on the Official List!" Hilda snaps. They keep on forgetting who the enemy is and correcting each other. "Blessed Germans!" "Russkies, dear."

They try on white paper bags, recommended by *The Householder's Guide* as protection against the bomb, but when the three minute warning comes over the wireless, Hilda's first thought is to get the washing in. As Jim pulls her into the shelter she remembers that the oven is on, and frets about the cake burning. The couple's small concerns are both comic and tragically reflective of the narrow confines of the average human mentality in the face of nuclear disaster.

The theatre blacks out during the explosion and, for the first time, the audience shares rather than observes the experience of Jim and Hilda Bloggs, as waves of whirlwind sound sweep through the darkness. They are not transformed by the big blast and almost immediately resume their habitual small talk. Hilda is incensed by the sight of broken glass all over her living room, and torn curtains. She wants to tidy up in case they have visitors. They have no concept of the devastation outside their home. They anticipate the resumption of normal services such as newspaper, mail and milk delivery, radio broadcast, the reconnection of water, electricity and phone lines!

Hilda: "What about the telly?"

Jim: "Yes, of course! They may have filmed it all! We may see our Bomb on the News! (Failing to get a picture) No... all dead..."

Hilda: "Have to wait for the paper."

Again, they fall back on the memory of past experience, cursing Hitler for the bomb, and looking forward to the arrival of Emergency Services. "There'll be Mobile Canteens and

Soup Kitchens," says Jim, "teams of Doctors and Nurses, helicopters flying in blankets and Medical Supplies — it will all move smoothly into action, you bet. The Governmental Authorities have been aware of this eventuality for years, so Contingency Plans will have been formulated long ago. We won't have to worry about a thing. The Powers That Be will get to us in the end."

Their optimism is entirely disconnected from reality because they do not know what post-nuclear reality is. Even when they go out into the garden and find evaporated lettuces, melted tarmac and shrivelled grass, they continue to operate on old paradigms.

Jim: "Very quiet, isn't it?"

Hilda: "Yes, funny. No trains. No traffic."

Jim: "I expect they're all having a good lie-in after The Bomb."

Hilda: "Terrible smell of burning. It's like roast meat."

Jim: "Roast dinners. I expect people are having their Sunday dinners early this week — due to unexpected circumstances."

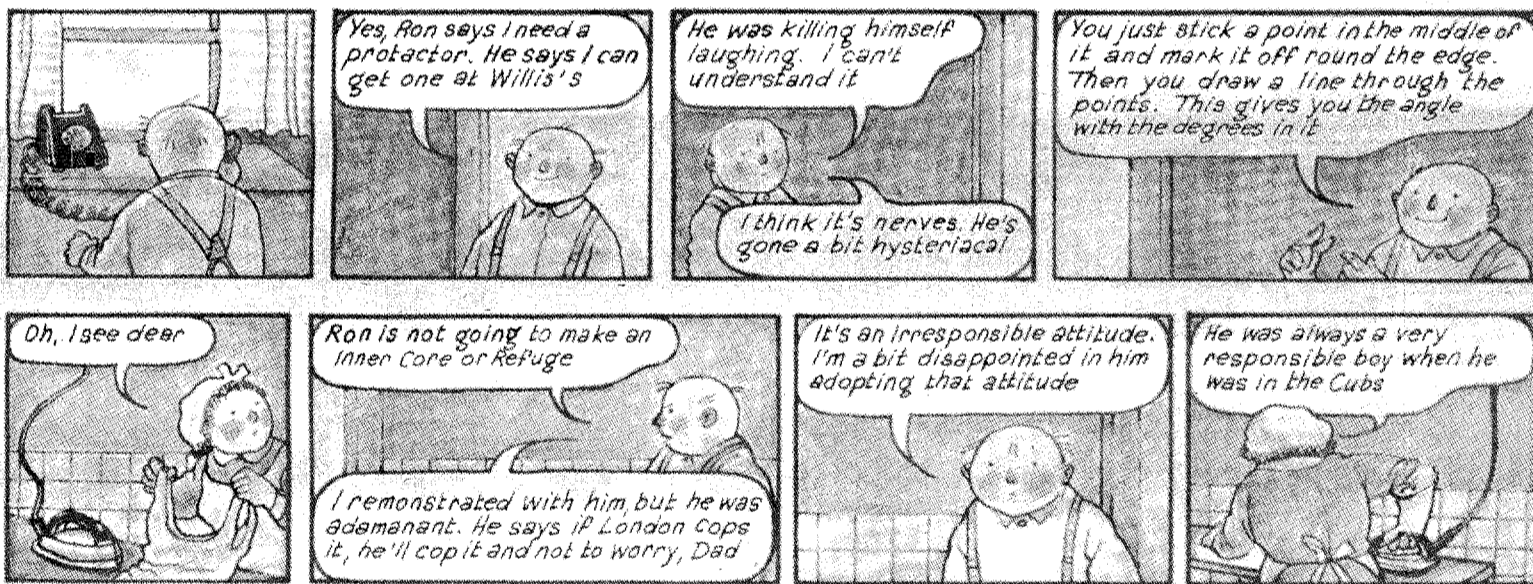
Although unchanged in their thought patterns, they are in the process of physical deterioration due to radiation. They suffer a progression of headaches, tiredness, bleeding gums, blotchy skin and falling hair. Still unaware of their fast-approaching fate, they climb into the paper bags, in case there's another bomb. The play ends with Jim praying, at Hilda's insistence. Even his unaccustomed prayer is a string of half-remembered biblical clichés, strung together in an inappropriate and nonsensical manner. He addresses god as "Dear Sir... Almighty and Most Merciful Father... Dearly Beloved... We are gathered... unto thee..."

The production is well handled, with skillful performances by Maggie Askey and Colin Miller, who each capture the essence of their characters, and humanize the stereotypes with a variety of subtle touches. Robert Rooney directs, with set and costume design by

Jules Tonus, and lighting design by Bob Greene. The script remains faithful to the comic strip dialogue, and the set and props are cleverly designed to echo the cartoonish style. All the clichés of a Bloggs-type home are evident: china ducks flying across the wallpaper, plates displayed on the wall ledge, a 'Home Sweet Home' sampler, net curtains, picket fence, and an imposing sideboard dresser. The frontal set is removed during the blackout blast to reveal an identical set, shattered and greyed by the bomb. The props consist of one-dimensional cardboard cut-outs: tea-pot, kettle, cups and saucers, vacuum cleaner, cushions and so on, down to the last detail of Hilda's knitting, a stiff, unwieldy thing, arrested in mid-row.

Slides of the actual comic strip images are projected above the set at intervals to convey events in the outside world: — "Meanwhile on a distant plain" and we see a missile poised against a dark blue sky; "Meanwhile in the distant sky" — aircraft loom out of the darkness; "Meanwhile in a distant ocean" — a submarine glides silently through the blue-green sea.

The transposition from comic strip to theatrical production renders some of the content repetitive and lacking in dramatic development. For instance, the jokes begin to wear thin after half an hour or so (the production lasts ninety minutes), and Jim's malapropisms become tedious. In fact the humour is so tragically ironic that one does not actually laugh very often. Nevertheless, with such powerful material, the production can hardly lose. And I applaud Toronto Workshop Productions for the relevance and immediacy of their choice. With *When The Wind Blows* they are entertaining in a politicizing manner. Their ad reads "Bring an MP and get in free!" The show runs till February 3 in Toronto. Whether you take your MP or not, try to catch it. Failing that, take a look at the book. This is an entertaining and communicative treatment of a subject that, like Hilda and Jim Bloggs, we have difficulty in thinking about.



Before the bomb: Jim and Hilda prepare — from Raymond Briggs.

Rainbow Culture

by Sharon Fernandez

The Festival of Rainbow Women in the Arts was held in Toronto in November, highlighting the artistry of Canadian women of different cultures. It presented a weekend of dance, music, theatre, politics and poetry that grew out of a series of monthly concerts staged at the New Trojan Horse cafe.

At the very first concert, only one out of the 14 performers was a woman of colour, so it was realized that efforts should be made to seek out and include more ethnic women.

Working with artists such as Makka Kleist (who shared not only her talent but her Greenlandic experiences as an Inuit and a woman), Audrey Rose, Susan Howlett, Kiki Misumi and others, was so exciting it inspired the idea of a festival that would promote intercultural communication by bringing women together to exchange and work collectively.

A collective called The Rainbow Women in the Arts was organized to create for themselves, through this festival, a platform that would reach all communities.

The festival was co-produced by Faith Nolan of Rainbow Women in the Arts and Womynly Way's Ruth Dworin and Joan McCole. Stephanie Martin did most of the graphics, and women like Miwako Kurosaka, Barb Taylor, Sheila James, Jayline Masuoka, Ahdri Zhina, Makka Kleist, May Ing, Marie Lorenzo, Robin Brownlee, Ivy Chaske,

Monique Mojica, Himani Bannerji, Dionne Brand and many others contributed their time, ideas and efforts towards its success.

The festival opened Friday night with a dance, followed by workshops Saturday and Sunday mornings, while the main concert took place Saturday evening.

The concert at the Danforth Music Hall featured four poets: Himani Bannerji, Dionne Brand, Joy Kogawa and Nancy Woods (who inadvertently missed her curtain call); two musical groups — The Toronto Chinese Chamber Ensemble: RING, and Faith Nolan & Friends: a 5 piece women's Band; two one-women shows by Makka Kleist and Monique Mojica of Native Earth Performing Arts; East Indian classical dance by Rina Singha; Afro-Caribbean dance of Audrey Rose and the Cheetah Dancers. Special guests were MCs Salome Bey and Ahdri Zhina, and gifted 9-year-old Melissa Mcleod with her 7 young cousins, the Cabbagetown Community Breakdancers. Thirty-one artists in all took part in making the evening one of diversity and quality.

As a setting, The Music Hall was not a first choice and technically it proved an inappropriate space. It was too big and dark — a few of the artists would have liked a visual connection with their audience; backstage access to both sides of the stage was impossible and cut off communication between either side,



Audrey Rose of the Cheetah Dancers

isolating the stage manager from one half of the performers, depending on which side she happened to be.

Divisions of responsibility between Womynly Way and Rainbow Women resulted in an unwieldy structure that required greater co-ordination and communication. This led to some problems with sound, where performers were not miked. When Faith Nolan came on stage having laryngitis and almost no voice and no initial volume on her vocal mike, a band member had to take over, and soon after, Salome Bey joined in and redeemed them with her powerful voice.

The lights too had their moments of darkness, but all the rough edges did not take away from the overall artistry: letting us share the achievements and struggles that women of colour live here and throughout the country.

Festivals like Rainbow are a step toward unity, understanding and greater interaction between women. Artists like Faith Nolan feel there is a need for racial unity within feminism. The Rainbow Women in the Arts hope to make the Festival a yearly event and to have a centre where the performers can come together. Certainly they are a welcome part of the different cultural and feminist happenings in Toronto.

Sharon Fernandez is a member of the Rainbow Women in the Arts collective.

Pop Polygamy

by Donna Gollan

Micki and Maude. Dir.: Blake Edwards. Writ.: Jonathan Reynolds. Prod.: Tony Adams. Exec. Prods.: Jonathan Krane, Lou Antonio. Music: Lee Holdridge. Cast: Amy Irving, Ann Reinking, Dudley Moore, Richard Mulligan. Columbia Pictures. 1984.

Q. How many feminists does it take to screw in a lightbulb? **A.** One. And it's not funny.

Of course the joke in this old chestnut is that feminists, apparently, have no sense of humour. Provided it's told as an inside joke, it usually gets a laugh. Obviously women have become very suspicious of humour, as it has all too often been used as an aggressive weapon against any power we may exhibit. A negative reaction to a "my wife is so ugly..." joke enables the joker to claim that we "can't take a joke." As a child, I was much plagued by my brothers' and sisters' "Dumb Donna" jokes, and have become a radical feminist merely as a matter of revenge.

Analysing humour, naturally, spoils its impact. It is important to understand how it works, though, in order to understand how it occasionally works in our favour. To paraphrase Arthur Koestler's theory of bisociation (*The Act of Creation*, 1975): laughter is the emotional product that spills out when we have been thinking smoothly along one train of thought and suddenly, another completely unexpected thought bisects that thinking and forces us along a different route. Surprise, then, plays such a large part in the humour process that we honestly don't find a joke funny, once we've heard it before.

Originality is the key to what makes humour occasionally work in our favour. A new breed of women comedians have a rich, unmined vein of jokes on the absurdity of a male-defined existence, little boys and their war toys, and such taboo subjects as childbirth, menstruation, menopause, and women's sexuality. It can safely be said that men who stray accidentally into these audiences often exhibit a diminishing sense of humour. Then, too, Hollywood has pushed humour to its outside limit of freshness and spontaneity and has often become quite subversive in the material which it has left to send up. Occasionally this is as a result of the remarkable women and men who are behind the camera, but more often it is simply pop culture's never-ending search for an original comic situation.

Micki and Maude, Blake Edwards' newest vehicle, is just such a result. It is the story of a man who marries two women, a story that wavers between a cartoon and a melodrama. The film has enough wit and compassion to keep us tolerably entertained, and enough accidentally subversive content to please the pickiest palate. The comic situation that is set up is that of sex-role reversal — a popular theme we have seen in *Victor/Victoria*, *Yentl* and so on. Rob (Dudley Moore) desperately wants children and all the nurturing which that entails, while his wife Micki (Ann Reinking), a busy lawyer, is headed instead for a

position as a judge. What is subversive about this? Well, it enables a conservative-thinking audience to laugh at a situation of which they would normally disapprove. Laughter, because it is a pleasant experience, can help to reconcile the most rigid people to outright attacks on the status quo. Rob goes on to marry Maude (Amy Irving), a cellist, and finds himself trapped between his two wives' pregnancies and unable to leave either. The result is occasionally feminist, often humorous, sometimes dramatic, and at other times simply ludicrous. The rather subversive moral to this little tale might be read as follows: women have come to expect so little from their husbands that it is comically feasible for a man to marry two women and satisfy society's expectations towards both.

Micki begins the story by asking Rob to postpone their family for a little while longer so that she can accept a judge's appointment. Rob is desperate. Micki delivers some fairly strident lines, in her squeaky, flaky way: "It's very easy for a man to want a baby, but it's the woman who has to take care of it." Rob responds: "C'mon Micki. Just one child... A small one?" Maude has a similar modern confusion on the subject: "I'm not sure I don't want to do it. I'm just not sure it's all I don't want to do." Rob is not confused at all. He wants to have kids and he's prepared to raise them himself. In order to make this kind of blatant nurturing acceptable in a man, the audience is given lots of slapstick moments to defuse their disapproval. Dudley-the-cartoon-cut-out comes through in the trickiest situations. When Maude confesses she's pregnant he weeps openly. Immediately afterwards he is taken to meet her Dad, a famous wrestler. Dad's friends tower over Rob and we are happily in a new frame of reference with stereotypic characters and visual jokes.

Some of the most enjoyable moments in this film, however, are overtly feminist: Micki's phone calls home to break dates with her husband while she wackily switches back and forth from hold to date book and, like many career women, finds she can't fit her home life in; Rob's conversation with his friend Leo while trying to break off his first marriage to marry Maude — "Tell her, 'dear...'" "I don't call her dear, she's a lawyer for Pete's sake." "Well then, say 'Micki, I've seen you blossom from a young girl into a mature woman...'" "Naw, she was a mature



Smaller than life: Dudley Moore meets with wife number 2 (Amy Irving) and her father's friends.

woman at twenty-five." There is a priceless moment when Rob, in his work capacity as a television host, smashes the camera rather than do a spot on nude male models who wear nothing but strategically slung guns. Here we are in the middle of a mainstream movie blatantly exposing (excuse the pun) little boys and their war toys. What's left to impune but God? Maude gasps in the midst of her labour: "I'm fine except for some incredibly painful spasms that make me think that there is a God...and He is a sexist pig!"

With the two rather painful births (naturally Micki and Maude go into labour at the same time), our compassion returns. The melodramatic aftermath sees the two women united in an effort to revenge themselves by refusing to let Rob see his children. Of course this is too realistic and the solidarity they show is far too threatening for a mainstream comedy. It is here that it becomes most obvious that the men and women in the audience

are laughing at different moments. When Rob climbs through the window disguised in a heavy black beard and watch cap to cuddle Micki's daughter, Micki flies, terrified, to the rescue. The deep chuckles responding to her hysteria are not shared by the women. Then, too, when Maude calls Rob back into her life right after Micki has done so, with exactly the same words: "Okay, but promise you won't tell Micki," the women in the audience are quietly disappointed and, it seems, unable to "take a joke." Rob promises his friend Leo that he will tell each wife that he is seeing the other as soon as the right moment arises. Meanwhile, the ending reverts to cartoon format: Micki is seen presiding over the Superior Court; Maude is a cellist with the Philharmonic; and Rob spends his days in the park, surrounded by children, every two the same age. The last laugh is definitely of a higher pitch.

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Brava Maestra!

by Deena Rasky

On one of the year's coldest nights, with freezing gusts off Lake Ontario, Toronto's Premier Dance Theatre at Harbourfront was nearly filled with classical music enthusiasts and a handful of curious feminists. The event, "Rediscovered Masterpieces by Outstanding Women Composers:" women composers performed by women artists in a comfortable, attractive setting. The concert's producer, Peter Simon, was once so "blown away" when hearing Rebecca Clarke's viola sonata that he spent years of research to unearth classical women composers' works. He felt strongly enough about this music to convince a high-profile theatre to put on the show. (Some women were dissatisfied that the show was organized by a man, when so many women have taken the same route only to be rejected, but I'm grateful to have the opportunity to hear this music.) The January 20 concert should encourage more women composers' works to be included in future events.

The evening's program was a well-chosen mixture of chamber/strings and vocal/piano pieces. The first composition was by Rebecca Clarke. Clarke, master of both violin and viola, was born in England in 1866 and spent most of her career in the US. She won numerous prizes for her composition and lived to the ripe old age of 93. Her cello sonata was exceptionally lyrical and demanded great technical skills of the artist, Jill Vitols, who delighted the audience, particularly with her rendition of the cheery *vivace* 2nd movement.

Germaine Tailleferre's contribution was a solo piano partita. Tailleferre belonged to the early 20th century French composers' group "Les Six." Usually her music has been overshadowed by group members Poulenc, Milhaud or Honnegger, though every now and then, her short pieces are played on the radio. The partita's style was breezy and emotionally detached in typically early French impressionist style.

Western Canada was represented by Jean Coulthard's *Four Songs for Christina* with lyrics by Christina Rossetti. The music and text didn't flow that well, but soprano Roxolana Roslak gave a spirited reading. It would have been helpful to have had the lyrics printed in the programme.

The second half of the programme was spell-binding. Larysa Kuzmenko's powerfully dramatic *Dr. Faustus* was sung by Roslak with the composer on piano. *Dr. Faustus*, with its tense emotionalism and suspenseful dissonances recalls the best of contemporary opera such as Alban Berg's *Lulu*. This young composer *must* be commissioned to write an opera. (The concert's title "Rediscovered Masterpieces" is a misnomer: Kuzmenko, at 29, is still completing her MA at U of T, so it's a bit early to be considering the premier of *Dr. Faustus* "rediscovered" work.)

The evening ended with Amy Beach's *Quintet for Piano and Strings in F minor*. This piece really is extremely demanding for piano and accompanying strings. The self-taught Amy Beach was born in the US in the late 1800s. She proved to have an amazing memory for music (she could sing over forty tunes in the original key at age one!). Her lush melodies and heavenly Romantic style of her compositions are the reasons her works have been less neglected than the other composers represented in the concert program. Wendy Rose, of the Toronto Symphony, played 1st violin; Randi Schonning, a student of Joseph Silverstein of the Boston Symphony, performed on 2nd violin; Katherine Rapaport from England was the violist; Jill Vitols and Dianne Werner returned to the stage as cellist and pianist. The piano's sound was unfortunately obscured because of its placement with the other instruments. Dianne Werner, with great technical agility and deep understanding of the piece, reached out to the audience and overcame this problem. Amy Beach would have approved!

Broadside's Top Tunes

Some of you might be thinking: "Hey, what's a party without dancing music?" Yes, *Broadside's* Women's Top Tunes has not been forgotten. The music survey was distributed separately at some dances, such as the *Broadside* Bash at the Bam Boo Club, and a few have not yet reached the *Broadside* office. Next month for sure...

D.R.



WOMEN'S STUDIES AT THORNELOE UNIVERSITY

Courses in Women's Studies are offered by correspondence in both the Winter and Spring Sessions.

- Women in Modern Society
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For more information or for registration material, contact:

Margaret Kechnie
Women's Studies
Programme Coordinator,
Laurentian University,
Sudbury, Ontario P3E 2C6

(705) 675-1151, ext. 380.

Labour of Laughs

by Randi Spires

Kate Clinton, lesbian feminist standup comedian, performed in Toronto on January 12. She was interviewed for Broadside by Randi Spires.

For Kate Clinton the comical is political. While she certainly aims to entertain, and most people spend the better part of her 90-minute shows rolling in the aisles, she also wants her audience to leave the hall thinking about what they've just heard: the experience of shared laughter is meant to be a form of communion, strengthening the bonds between women, evoking recognition of all that is common in this culture to female lives.

It used to bother Clinton when her humour was called aggressive; she'd counter that by saying no, it was merely assertive. Now she is quite happy to have it called aggressive, and considers that that's all part of changing people's minds. Women's humour, she said, is political because it gives a voice to women, who are not supposed to speak out, and because it is based on a certain enjoyment of ourselves — we're not supposed to like ourselves either.

Clinton considers humour itself to be threatening, because, like poetry, it is streamlined and economical — the target is so focused. It's especially threatening when it is both lesbian and feminist.

Women's humour is also threatening because it is so different from men's. She described men's humour as being passive, all about maintaining the status quo, while women's humour is active because it's about change.

Because there is already a community of ideas and experiences, women from all over will laugh at similar things. "What I do is reflect back to us who we are." To do so she keeps her eyes and ears open, ever alert to the latest trends in the lesbian feminist communities she visits. She also finds the festivals to be a great source of ideas and information about what's happening. And she writes routines on topics suggested by women who have spoken to her after a performance. Clinton reads voraciously, everything from *People* magazine to hordes of feminist journals; from novels of all kinds to books of criticism and theory. She has also written a number of articles on feminism and humour for such feminist magazines as *Trivia*.

Since the fall election of right wing governments in both Canada and the United States, Clinton has noticed some strong reactions among the women she has come into contact with: while some people are really depressed, despairing and burned out about it, other people have really risen to the challenge: it has mobilized them and made them realize that we have to keep speaking out, we have to keep doing what we've been doing. It would be tempting for a comedian to become intellectually lazy in our political climate, since Reagan and Mulroney are such easy targets: they really aren't doing anything new, they just have more money and more media access. What we have to do is think bigger thoughts than ever, imagine what we are going to be and then grow into that.

From the first, Clinton has billed herself as a humorist, or feminist humorist. When she first started out, nearly four years ago, she was warned that with that label she would never make a living, because it was just too

narrow a description. Yet she has kept the label: "I don't believe that I started in a narrow place and have broadened to include the mainstream. I believe that I started at the broadest point, which is lesbian feminism, and that everyone else is catching up. I really think that I started in the best place ...and if they come along, fine. And they *are* coming along, because we're such trend-setting kinds of people."



Kate Clinton

And more mainstream attention is coming her way. In October, *Ms.* magazine did an article on Joan Rivers, and mentioned Clinton. As a result she received a lot of job offers to work in places she never had before. But even before that, she noticed that over the past four years her audiences have become bigger, with different types of people coming to see her. This reflects, she thinks, the fact that feminism is a pretty inclusive concept.

Before becoming a stand-up comic Clinton taught high school English for eight years. She became dissatisfied with her life because all she was doing was teaching, marking or preparing to teach. She wanted to do something else but wasn't sure what. Eventually, she quit teaching and spent the next two years at the Women's Writer's Centre at Cazenovia, New York. There she read like crazy and wrote a lot of funny poetry: "I tortured a lot of people with it." They would read her poems and ask, "Why don't you go into comedy?"

The apprenticeship at Cazenovia turned out to be a valuable one. She learned that a well-designed one-liner has to be as compact and as full of surprises and images as a good line of poetry. "There is a certain rhythm to a good comic piece, and there are certain images that inspire me to write a piece." Also, as she pointed out, poetry was originally performed in the form of the ballad.

Nonetheless, she said, she is glad that she did spend those eight years in the classroom, that she had to get up and go to a job and come home and continue working. "It really taught me what hard work was and that it can go on all day." She brings this same attitude to the work she does now. When not touring, she is at her desk writing, from nine to five each day. She doesn't just wait for inspiration, but sets herself assignments to write on particular topics. As a result she has a relatively large body of material. She keeps records of what routines she does in each city so each time an audience hears her, they will be getting all new material.

Recently Kate Clinton bought herself a computer/word processor. Not only has this made her writing easier it will also facilitate her record-keeping. And now that she has this machine, she said she may just prepare that book of routines she has wanted to do for some time.

Randi Spires is a Toronto feminist who has written and directed dramatic poetry shows.



Swing into Spring with the NOTSO AMAZON SOFTBALL LEAGUE

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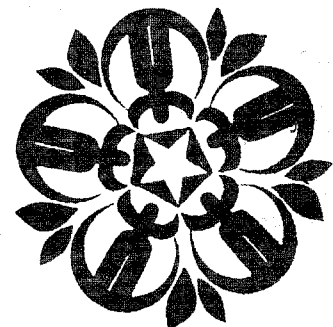
Catch the pitch at the
General Information Meeting:
Tuesday, March 19, 1985
519 Church Street (Church & Wellesley) Toronto
Auditorium, 7:30 pm

Registrations (fee \$20.00 includes baseball jersey) available at the Toronto Women's Bookstore, 73 Harbord St. as of February 1, 1985.

**Jock Around the Clock at the
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(details to be announced)

For further information:
call (416) 967-7740 or 364-1914

★
Last chance to register will be March 30, 1985



OUTSIDE BROADSIDE

TORONTO WOMEN'S EVENTS CALENDAR FEBRUARY 1985

Compiled by Catherine Maunsell

● **Friday, February 1:** The Rhubarb Festival Theatre Centre presents "That Other Animal," a performance piece by Amanda Hale, and other theatre pieces. Poor Alex Theatre, 296 Brunswick. 8 pm. Info: 961-5227. To Sunday, February 3.

● **Friday, February 1:** A Space presents the "Anti-Nuke Show," prepared and circulated by Montreal's Powerhouse Gallery, works by 24 Canadian artists in various media: painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, photomontage, film and videos. 204 Spadina Ave. Info: 364-3227. To Saturday, February 16.

● **Friday, February 1:** "The Family in the Context of Childrearing:" a photographic exhibit by Susan McEachern, Nova Scotian feminist photographer. Art Gallery of Hamilton, 123 King St. West, Hamilton. To Sunday, February 17.

● **Sunday, February 3:** Ravenwing: Ritual and introduction to wimmin's spirituality. Trinity-St. Paul's, 427 Bloor St. West. Donation requested. Info: Janice Canning, 533-2738 or 626-5465.

● **Sunday, February 3:** Lesbian Mothers' Pot Luck Brunch. Food and friendship. 1-4 pm. Info: 465-6822.

● **Sunday, February 3:** Peggy McCann and Dancers present "The Silent Language," examining the spatial aspects of communication, and "Mothers and Daughters" which looks at generational ties in families. Premiere Dance Theatre, 207 Queen's Quay West. 3 pm. Tickets: 869-8444.

Week of February 1

● **Tuesday, February 5:** Lesbian Phone Line open tonight for calls from women. 7:30 - 10:30 pm. 960-3249. Also Tuesdays, February 12, 19 and 26.

● **Tuesday, February 5:** NFB's "One of Many - Dr. Nhan" screened at York University, part of the Refugee Documentation Project. Info: 667-3639.

● **Wednesday, February 6:** The YWCA offers a Pre-Menstrual Syndrome self help group for PMS sufferers. Meets Wednesdays 7-9 pm. \$38/4 weeks. Calvin Presbyterian Church, 26 Delisle Ave. (Yonge and St. Clair). Space limited. Info and registration: 487-7151.

● **Wednesday, February 6:** Lesbians and Gays at U of T. 8 pm, International Student Centre, 33 St. George St. Check 923-GAYS for weekly topic. Every Wednesday.

● **Wednesday, February 6:** A Space screens films and videos from the "Anti-Nuke Show." 204 Spadina Ave. 8 pm. \$3. Info: 364-3227. Also Thursday, February 7.

● **Wednesday, February 6:** Lesbian Phone Line general meeting. Interested women, prospective volunteers welcome. 7:30 pm. 348 College St., 3rd floor. Info: 960-3249.

● **Wednesday, February 6:** The March 8 Coalition meets to organize for International Women's Day. Metropolitan Toronto Library, 789 Yonge St. 7:30 pm. Info: Lauri, 863-6702, 960-3647 (evenings). Also Wednesdays, February 13, 20 and 27.

● **Wednesday, February 6:** "Tales of Transformation: An Exhibition of Self-Portraiture," recent photographic work by Anna Marie Smith and Ruthann Tucker opens at the Sparkes Gallery, 1114 Queen Street West. 8 pm. Info: 531-1243. To Saturday, March 2.

● **Thursday, February 7:** Information meeting for The Béguinage, the new women's housing co-op in downtown Toronto. 397 Shuter St., 7:30 pm. Info: 925-2475, ext. 330. Also Thursdays, February 14, 21 and 28.

● **Thursday, February 7:** Lesbian Phone Line open tonight for calls from women. 7:30 - 10:30 pm. 960-3249. Also Thursdays, February 14, 21 and 28.

● **Thursday, February 7:** Visions of Black Women, an exhibition by Beatrice Bailey, Marie Booker, Grace Channer, Stephanie Martin, Novlette Dell, Marcia McCurdy, Channa Berbian, Claire Carew, Collette Fournier. Co-sponsored by Black Perspectives in celebration of Black History Month. Gallery 940, 940 Queen St. East. Opening 8 pm. Info: 466-8840. To Sunday, March 3.

● **Saturday, February 9:** Tatiana Mamonova lecture on "Peace & Women's issues in the Soviet Union." 7:30 pm. Sanford Fleming Auditorium, U of T. Gallery Opening, 2 pm, Fallout Shelter, 370 Queen St. E. Info: Kathleen, 461-3148.

● **Saturday, February 9:** Open House at the Béguinage, Toronto's new downtown women's housing co-op. Units open for viewing; refreshments. 2 - 5 pm. Béguinage party room, 397 Shuter St. (east of Parliament, south of Dundas). Info: 925-2475 ext. 330.

● **Saturday, February 9:** Bratty and the Baby Sitters perform at the Cameron House, 408 Queen St. W. Info: 364-0811. Also Thursday, February 25

● **Sunday, February 10:** Monthly discussion meeting for Jewish lesbians. Any Jewish lesbians interested contact Lois: 964-7477, or Susan: 591-1434.

Week of February 10

● **Tuesday, February 12:** The Women's Art Resource Centre holds a reading group on Feminist Art. 455 Spadina Ave. (at College), room 215. 7 pm. Info: 535-2354.

● **Wednesday, February 13:** Poetry reading by Dionne Brand, Martene Philip, Lillian Allen, Joan Stevens, Makeda Silvera and Afua Pam Cooper. Gallery 940, 940 Queen St. East. 8 pm. \$3/\$2. Info: 466-8840.

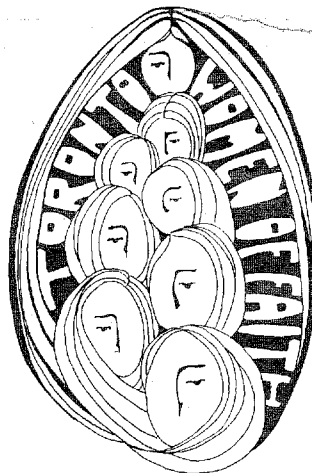
● **Thursday, February 14:** "Conversations with Marie-Claire Blais," presented by the Lesbian and Gay Academic Society at U of T. 8 pm. OISE Auditorium, 252 Bloor St. West. \$3. Info: 924-6474.

● **Saturday, February 16:** "They're Spraying Our Song," a Valentine dance with DJ Deb Parent. Sponsored by the Lesbian Speakers' Bureau. Upstairs at the Party Centre, 167 Church St. Tickets: \$6 advance, \$7 door (available from Toronto Women's Bookstore, Glad Day Books and SCM Bookroom). Not wheelchair accessible. All women welcome. Childcare: 964-7477.

● **Sunday, February 17:** Susan McEachern, Nova Scotian feminist photographer discusses her show "The Family in the Context of Childrearing." To be followed by a panel discussion on the topic "Is there Women's Art?" The Art Gallery of Hamilton, 123 King St. West. Hamilton. 1:30 pm.

Week of February 17

● **Monday, February 18:** The Women's Cultural Network holds its first meeting - a forum for exchange of information about projects and funding for women's cultural organizations and individuals working in the arts. 455 Spadina Ave. (at College), room 215. Info: 535-2354.



● **Tuesday, February 19:** "Women and Spirituality: Peace and Power," the second annual interfaith event for women, sponsored by Toronto Women of Faith and the Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto. Holy Blossom Temple, 1950 Bathurst St. 9 am - 10 pm. Full day, 2 meals, \$16. Part day, either meal, \$10. (\$8 and \$5 for students and limited income). Info: 364-3101.

● **Wednesday, February 20:** "Notes on Music," videotapes by Pauline Dean: a history of popular music, with emphasis on the influence of black music, jazz, Motown, rhythm and blues. Gallery 940, 940 Queen St. East. 8 pm. \$3/\$2. Info: 466-8840.

● **Friday, February 22:** Susan Freundlich, sign language artist, in concert: combination of theatre, dance, music and sign language. Special guest: Arlene Mantle. 8 pm. Trinity-St. Paul's, 427 Bloor St. West. \$6 advance, \$7 door. Info: 925-6568.

● **Friday, February 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. Topic: The Nursing Home Industry. 7 pm. Info: 536-3162.

● **Friday, February 22:** "Winter Fever" - Women's dance (benefit for Angela Davis's IWD appearance). 8 pm. The Buttery, Trinity College, U of T. \$5 advance, \$6 door (\$4 students/unemployed). Wheelchair accessible.

● **Saturday, February 23:** "Hot Night in February: A Midwinter Women's Dance" sponsored by Emma Productions, a feminist media collective. A Space, 204 Spadina Ave. Cash bar, feminist entertainment and tropical slide show. \$5.50 employed, \$4 unemployed. Tickets at the Toronto Women's Bookstore. Child care provided - phone 461-3488. 8 pm - 1 am. Info: 461-3488.

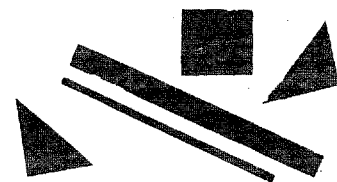
● **Saturday, February 23:** Workshop by Susan Freundlich on "Language: The Heart of a Community." 10:30 am. OISE, 252 Bloor St. West. \$7. Info: 925-6568 or (TTY) 964-2066.

● **Saturday, February 23:** "Notes on Music," videotapes by Pauline Dean on the British Invasion, Reggae and protest songs. Gallery 940, 940 Queen St. East. 8 pm. \$3/\$2. Info: 466-8840.

Week of February 24

● **Monday, February 25:** "Catch the B&D Express:" Boo Watson on piano, Deb Parent on drums, Joanne Parks on bass! Celebrate International Women's Day 1985 with your favourite music! 8 pm. The Trojan Horse, 179 Danforth Ave. \$4 (at the door only). Refreshments. All women welcome.

● **Tuesday, February 26:** The Women's Art Resource Centre holds a reading group on Feminist Art. 455 Spadina Ave. (at College), room 215. 7 pm. Info: 535-2354.



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LESBIAN, 37, visiting Toronto April/May, seeks penpals. Interested in women's music, weight lifting, books, fine wine and good dining. Pam Holland, Box 949, Milford, New Hampshire, 93055, USA.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS by the Women's Cultural Building collective, for the "Five Minute Feminist Cabaret" — an evening of performance by women. On Thursday March 7, help us to ring in International Women's Day 1985! Forward proposals or inquiries to: WCB performance committee, c/o 312 Grace Street, Toronto, M6G 3A6, or call (416) 368-6669. Deadline for proposals: February 8.

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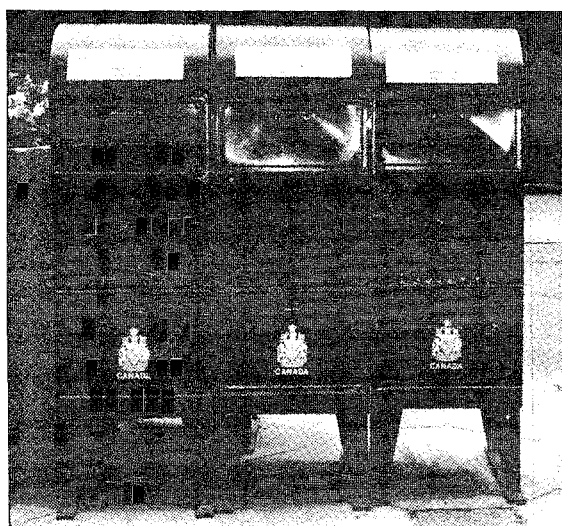
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