



Festival of Festivals: From Lori Spring's "Inside/Out." STORY PAGE 8

## FEATURE

### MOVIE MARATHON:

Broadside's coverage of the Festival of Festivals continues, with a special focus on local filmmaking. By Joyce Mason. Page 9.

INSIDE  
**BROADSIDE**

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## NEWS

### EXTRA-ORDINATION:

Throughout the debate on the ordination of lesbian and gay ministers, male opposition was registered by the press, while women's voices were silenced. Broadside turns the tables in an interview with United Church women. By Barbara Rumscheidt and Betty-Ann Lloyd. Page 3.

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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.

Manuscripts of articles should be typed on white paper, double-spaced (send us original, keep a copy) and accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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

**LETTERS****Mason Misinformed**

Ida Lupino is featured in *Calling the Shots*.

**Broadside:**

We are writing you in regards to Joyce Mason's review of *Calling the Shots* in the October issue of *Broadside*.

Film, as any other art form, is on public display, and consequently open for interpretation by the public. There is nothing wrong with having as many opinions on a film as there are viewers. However, it is completely misleading to a magazine's readership as well as to the film's makers when the reviewer of a film chooses an angle which does not in any way ring of the truth. The point of view which Joyce Mason has taken in the review of *Calling the Shots* needs to be addressed.

Mason insists that "I know about the filmmakers' motivation" for making the film. Throughout the article she repeats that the reason the film was made was so that the filmmakers could meet other filmmakers because they themselves wish to make feature films. She states, "Cole and Dale want to make dramatic films themselves and they wanted to know women who had done it." We can assure you that this was not a motivation. And we had

not, as Mason states "confessed embarrassment at the aspect of personal indulgence that this subject represented." This is not true. There is no doubting the fact that it was a wonderful experience to interview and film such a group of highly professional, intelligent and successful women, however, we do not spend over two years of our lives making a film about the accomplishments of women in the film industry to meet a few new people. Our motivation was to celebrate not only these women, but all women who have managed to fight obstacles, to push ahead and break into highly competitive, male-dominated circles.

Had Mason bothered to inspect our backgrounds before jumping to such misleading conclusions, she would have found that although we are best known for our documentaries, in the past we have worked extensively in the area of dramatic film. We have held such positions as co-producer, casting director and assistant director in numerous dramatic films. For Columbia Pictures we made *The Making of Agnes of God*, where we spent the entire shooting period of *Agnes of God* working on Norman Jewison's set. Furthermore, Holly Dale is currently attending the Canadian Centre for Advanced Film Studies which trains filmmakers in perfecting the craft of feature-length dramatic filmmaking.

Mason, in openly implying that *Calling the Shots* was made to meet other filmmakers and "demystify" the feature filmmaking process and basing her whole review around these false assumptions is completely diminishing the point of the film, unfair to the filmmakers and misleading to the readers of *Broadside*.

Janis Cole/Holly Dale  
Toronto

**Shocking Omission**

(The following letter was sent to the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women.)

To: CACSW  
RE: The "Shocking Pink Paper"

In addition to being shocked, I am absolutely livid that the so-called "Shocking Pink Paper" that you put out and of which I have read excerpts in both "Broadside" (volume 10, October 1988) and "The Womanist" (Sept./Oct. 1988) makes absolutely no mention of lesbian rights.

You cannot possibly be unaware that lesbians are discriminated against in employment, housing, education, medical care, reproductive rights (yes!), immigration, I could go on and on. Wouldn't you agree that the issues I mention are "vital issues"? And that lesbians are voters, too? And that we might like to know where candidates stand on issues that affect our lives?

This has been said so often but it seems to need repetition here. Maternity benefits, health issues, employment equity, and lesbian rights—all are women's issues affecting *all* women. Women should be able to decide with whom they want to share their lives and this decision must not be grounds for discrimination.

As I understand it, we are in a struggle to end sexist oppression, striving for a society that will respect women's decisions over their own lives.

Ina Rimpau  
Montreal

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**EDITORIALS****Broadside's Future Vision**

*Broadside* is entering a new era. The collective has decided to take this year to plan for a new *Broadside*, one that will help take feminism into the nineties and then into the twenty-first century. A number of events have taken place to galvanize the changes. First, the loss of other feminist publications like *Hysteria* and *Horizons* has made us aware that small publications have to make a special and heroic effort to survive. Second, our editor Philinda Masters, who guided *Broadside* through its birth and early growth, has taken her immense talent to Resources for Feminist Research (lucky RFR), and two other collective members have moved on, leaving us with some key questions as to how to organize our copy and production. Finally, *Broadside* is almost ten years old, and what better way to celebrate a full decade of life than with a serious campaign for improvement.

We are considering all kinds of dramatic and

exciting changes. By next September, with the publication of volume 11, No. 1, you could see a complete transformation in format, a possible switch to desk-top publishing or added colour to the magazine. We are hoping that our pool of writers will expand, and that we can get more women in the Toronto community involved in all aspects of the hands-on production.

This is where you come in. If you want to help *Broadside* through its production process give us a call. If you have any production skills of your own they will come in handy, but if you've never had any experience with lay-out or paste-up, we'll help you out. If you would like to write for *Broadside*, please let us know. Political comment is always welcome. Or, if you are interested in reviewing books, films, plays or any other cultural products, contact us. If you have done so before, do it again. This is a brand new phase and *Broadside* has a new lease on life.

Of course the new and improved *Broadside* cannot exist without financial support. Readers can help us out in any number of ways. First, subscribe now if you don't already, and renew if you are receiving notices from us that your subscription has expired. Second, buy a subscription for someone else. *Broadside* makes an excellent gift for the holiday season and we offer a special gift subscription package that helps you save money and support the feminist press at the same time. And finally, consider a donation. We could use it.

In the meantime, look for some design experimentation and some new features throughout this year as we chart our future course. Already we have in place a new column on women and the law put together by our newest collective member Brettel Dawson and we are on the lookout for any new ideas. And keep thinking of ways of supporting *Broadside*. We are as strong as you make us.

**Let's Vote on It**

On November 21, Canadians have the opportunity to vote for individual candidates for federal election; we will also be voting for the perspective and positions which express our vision and hopes for Canada. And, make no mistake, there are clear differences and important issues which will affect us over the next five years and into the future. And yes, these are women's issues. Recent opinion polls on the Free Trade Agreement indicate that women have not been seduced by cheap promises of consumerism and have deep concerns about the sovereignty and integrity of our country. We are also concerned at the massive job loss

faced by women, including immigrant women, should the Agreement be implemented by the new Government. Women in parliament approached the abortion issue differently from their male counterparts. Rather than being fuelled by abstract moralism, these women know of the experience and responsibility of women on this issue. Day care, at last, is being seriously addressed by the Liberals and Conservatives following the lead and perseverance of the New Democratic Party. The electoral question has become a choice of how that day care is to be delivered. We need to make our opinion clear. Housing issues and policies are

another clear division. Assurances that the *status quo* is adequate ring hollow. Action and support on issues facing the differently abled and battered women is needed. And which party will finally act on the recommendation to include sexual orientation in the federal human rights code? Canadian democracy offers precious few opportunities for us to make our choices on these issues and to make our voices heard. It is important to consider them and to vote. Women need to be there—at the ballot box and in parliament.

# A Church Un-United

by Barbara Rumscheidt and Betty-Ann Lloyd

For the last six months there has been off-again, on-again media coverage of a sexuality debate that is taking place within the United Church of Canada. Most interviews and stories have focussed on whether the church will consider ordaining or commissioning candidates for ministry who openly declare themselves lesbian or gay.

The media reports have emphasized the divisions within the church. Those who are threatening to break away from the church have been given the majority of the public air time and ink. The most vocal and most visible

church representatives seem to be those men with a strong vested interest in the current level of inclusiveness/exclusiveness within the church system.

It is difficult, from the outside, to discover what the women are thinking or doing. Evidently, they are very active within the church. The church moderator during much of the debate has been a woman—Anne Squire. She travelled extensively, speaking in support of the movement toward inclusiveness.

We didn't read much about her speeches, however, or about those who supported her. We read, instead, about the clergymen (sic) who keep threatening to leave the church and take their congregations with them if "perverts" and "sinners" are allowed to practise in the pulpit. We heard about the hate and fear that these men feel towards lesbians and gay men.

We know people talk like this all the time. The world is full of people who are full of fear and anger and righteousness. Why should we care, why should I care, about these people, this institution, in particular?

And I did care very much, partly because I was raised in the United Church—baptized, confirmed and married; partly because I left this church in sorrow and anger when I could no longer feel spiritually in community with those who used the language of sexism, heterosexism, race and class blindness to express their faith, their sense of justice and love.

But I also care because I am painfully aware of the women who continue to work within the United Church in the belief that they can support each other while working towards justice. I do feel a sense of community with many of these women, even if I cannot always understand their willingness to align themselves with an institution that so often refuses to recognize the strength, dignity and wholeness of women.

I know I am suffering from second-hand reports of the violence being done towards those who are lesbian or gay and towards those who support them in the name of social justice, personal respect and love. How must they feel when they witness, first-hand, their own community turning against lesbian and gay church workers, students, lay people and clergy?

Every so often, I heard a report of a region or congregation or church worker who supported the report and its social justice intentions. But this support seemed so small and disorganized that it was hard to believe the media coverage of the final decision of General Council—that the United Church should now consider lesbians and gay men equal to heterosexuals in their eligibility to be considered for ordination and commissioning. Where did this decision come from? How did it get through "the people of the church" the fear-full clergymen claim to represent? Where were the women during this process and what were they doing?

After reporting the decision, the media immediately returned to their stories of male ordained ministers threatening to break away and take their congregations with them. It is difficult to believe anything has changed.

Yet I think it is important that we try to work it out, to understand the experience of the women who continue to work within the church. We must also try to understand how they work as well as how they feel. We must look beyond the media reports and look at the actual words that are being used and the actual processes that are taking place. In this way, perhaps we can understand enough to effectively support them in their decisions to work within a system that has so much potential to both empower and disempower us as women—as sisters, daughters, mothers, lovers. In an attempt to understand the ongoing sexuality debate within the United Church, I, an ex-church member, asked an active church member—Barbara Rumscheidt—to begin to explain what is actually taking place.

**Betty-Ann Lloyd:** Who are you, Barbara, that you are engaged in this on-going discussion in the United Church?

**Barbara Rumscheidt:** To place me, personally, I am 47 years old, straight, married, a mother of two sons and one daughter. Since I was a child, growing up in Montreal, I have been a part of the United Church. Trained as a teacher, I work as a volunteer in various forms of popular education for social change, peace and justice advocacy. I work in these areas in both church and community groups.

To understand how I have been involved in this issue—the United Church report on sexu-

ality—you need to understand the way our church works. It is the peculiar fate of United Church members that in order to explain church decisions or to quote church policies, we always have to explain our church structure! The United Church is a conciliar church rather than an episcopal church. This means that authority is vested in courts (congregations, presbyteries, conferences and General Council) rather than in bishops.

The media get frustrated in gleaning authoritative information from us because the division of power and labour between these courts means that it's difficult for any one individual, group or court to speak conclusively for everyone. It's labour intensive and involves a lot of

Conferences to seek some policy guidelines from the church as a whole. The time had come to move from unspoken assumptions and "benefit-of-the-doubt" practice to a conscious, articulated policy regarding sexual orientation and fitness for ministry.

In 1984, the 30th General Council of the United Church decided to ask the entire church to participate in a study and educational program on sexual orientations, lifestyles and ministry—including the question of whether or not sexual orientation and lifestyle should be a factor in considering a person's eligibility for ministry in the United Church.

The General Council executive appointed a group of 13 people, called the National Co-



meetings, but I believe it makes for a healthy degree of participation and accountability. So here is how I participate and how I'm accountable.

First, at the congregation level, I am a member and an elected elder of St. John's United Church, Halifax. All congregations choose some of their members to represent them at local presbyteries. These lay representatives, plus all the ordained and diaconal ministers, plus some other people chosen by the presbytery, make up the presbytery membership.

I am a lay member-at-large of Halifax Presbytery, chosen by the presbytery members to join them in their work. Presbyteries also come together in larger regional groups called conferences. I am a member of the executive of the Maritime Conference of the United Church of Canada. I also represent Maritime Conference on the National Division of Mission in Canada. This is one of the divisions which was responsible for the development, interpretation and advocacy of the United Church report, "Toward a Christian understanding of sexual orientations, lifestyles and ministry."

Every two years, each Conference commissions people chosen from its membership to go to a General Council meeting where church policy is determined. This year, I was elected as one of the commissioners from Maritime Conference to the 32nd General Council of the United Church. This General Council was held in Victoria from August 17-24 and, among many other things, voting members received and dealt with the sexuality report.

**BAL:** What is this report? Why was it written?  
**BR:** In the conciliar structure I spoke of, with its different divisions of labour, the authority to accept people for ministry is given to each regional Conference. Each of the thirteen Conferences in Canada has the authority to ordain or commission their clergy.

Until recently, the ordination or commissioning of lesbians and gay men has not been an issue. Conferences have not had to deal with the sexual orientation of those who wanted to enter the ministry because they didn't ask about orientation and candidates were not offering to tell them.

However, gay men and lesbians have become more visible in society and in the church. They are seeking to be known and accepted for who they are. So the prospect of being faced with a self-declared lesbian or gay candidate seeking to be ordained or commissioned led some

ordinating Group (NCG). The members of this group included lay people, clergy, lesbian, gay, "ex-gay" (his term) and heterosexual members. They were people with medical, theological and pastoral experience. The NCG spent more than 40 working days producing study materials and writing their reports. Over 500 small groups across Canada came together to study materials produced for them by the NCG. The final report included data from these study groups. As a final step, the NCG submitted their work to the Division of Mission in Canada and the Division of Ministry, Personnel and Education. These two major divisions of the church met together and formulated their recommendations which, together with the NCG's work, constituted the document "Toward a Christian understanding of sexual orientations, lifestyles and ministry."

This report was actually published and distributed in March of this year and a record number of petitions were generated out of the discussion and ferment around it at the congregational, presbytery and conference level. These petitions were forwarded to the General Council which was to deal with the report.

**BAL:** What did the report say?

**BR:** The report was 125 pages long and contains a lot of explanatory and background material. It also includes recommendations, some of which are the following:

- the acknowledgement of a variety of sexual orientations—homosexual, bisexual and heterosexual;
- the acceptance of all human beings as persons made in the image of God regardless of sexual orientation;
- the belief that morally responsible relationships are those which are faithful to God's call to be just, loving, health-giving, healing, and sustaining of community;
- the belief that standards for discerning whether sexual behaviour is morally responsible are the same, irrespective of orientation or marital status;
- the belief that our ministry is Christ's ministry to which the whole people of God are called and that there should be a single standard for all Christians;
- the belief that questions seeking to elicit information regarding sexual orientation are inappropriate in all interview situations;
- the belief that sexual orientation in and of

• continued on page 5

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The ideal king reigns over everything as far as the eye can see. What he cannot see is not real. To be real is to be visible to the king."

Marilyn Frye



## Breakthrough Award

Broadside:

The Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport is pleased to inform your publication that it has been selected to receive the 1988 Media Breakthrough Celebration Award.

The Breakthrough Award recognises and celebrates the accomplishments of an individual or group who through their actions has challenged the perceptions of the traditional limits attributed to women and girls in sport and physical activity, and in so doing has empowered other women and girls to more fully participate in sport and physical activity.

The selection committee was extremely impressed with your achievements and we will be looking forward to honouring these at the Annual Celebration

Sincerely,  
Suzanne Nicholson  
Coordinator  
1988 Breakthrough Celebration.

The Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport is the national advocacy voice for women involved in sport or physical activity. The CAAWS Breakthrough Award Celebration recognises outstanding achievements by individuals and groups whose contributions have resulted in enhanced opportunities and quality of girls' and women's participation in sport and physical activity. The Award is presented annually in the categories of participant, media and organisation. It aims to bring public and media attention to the achievements of women.

This year's celebration was held in Ottawa on 13 October, 1988. *Broadside* was the recipient of the media category award, recognising our ten year record of working toward raising awareness of girls' and women's achievements in the area. *Broadside* was represented by Philinda Masters, who accepted the Award on our behalf. Betty Baxter, a community and national level volleyball coach and feminist activist received the Participant award; the City of Ottawa Women in Sport programme, which provides opportunities for initial participation in organised sport activities, received the Organisation award.

# Submitting to the Judge

by T. Brettel Dawson

I teach a law course on the subject of women and the legal process. A theme in the course is that the way in which judges see situations involving women often differs completely from the way the women concerned experienced it and described it. The problem is that the judge's view becomes 'truth' and the woman's experience becomes invisible. This is a fundamental issue but it can also be a little abstract. However, this semester, with the help of two women, I have been able to make this issue more concrete and I think it is important enough to write about.

The first woman, whom I'll call Beth, called me over the summer. She had laid sexual assault charges against her common-law spouse in a seemingly open and shut case, only to see him acquitted. She told me her story and showed me a copy of the court transcript in which she had told the judge of her experience. She also showed me a copy of the judge's decision. It read like a different case. The second woman was a visiting scholar from the U.K., Carol Smart. She has examined transcripts in many sexual assault cases and has several ideas about what is going on.

In 1983, the *Criminal Code* of Canada was amended to permit women to lay charges of sexual assault against their husbands. Of course, Beth could have laid charges even without the amendment as she was not married. However, it was hoped that the amendment would signal the end of the male-defined view that intimate relations implied consent to sexual contact. Even so, Beth was caught by the tentacles of life which cling to the old view.

Her story, supported by the intake records at a women's shelter, the court transcripts and photographs, was as follows. She had been living with her common-law spouse, whom I'll call Michael, for about four years. His children from an earlier relationship lived with them. The relationship had been going sour. On several occasions, they had separated for short periods, during which both saw other people. In the days leading up to the assault, they had been arguing. She described him as possessive. He threatened her, was verbally abusive to her in public, and listened at the door of a friend of Beth's, when she was discussing moving out. During periods of separation, he spied on her with binoculars. She decided to leave.

Beth went back to the common residence to tell Michael. He seemed to take it civilly and, as it was now late, they went to bed. Beth thought it would be okay. She slept without a nightgown—telling the judge that on another occasion when she had worn one after an argument, Michael had ripped it off her and throttled her saying that he "ought to kill her." Things, however, weren't okay. He forced her to have oral sex, causing her to choke and vomit. Then he demanded intercourse against her will—she described herself at this point as extremely upset—and said she saw no point in fighting with him. In the morning, instead of going to work, Michael turned off the alarm and began the process again. She was pinned down and distraught. She bit his penis. She was very clear about what happened next. Michael called his children into the room, told them to call the police over what she had done to him and, when they had left, he punched her twice in the face with a closed fist.



Take Back the Night marches convey women's truth about sexual assault.

This is how the judge saw it. He described the relationship as "stormy and tempestuous" and commented that the parties were intimate with each other and very fond of each other. He noted that they were of the same weight and age, seemingly regarding this as negating any implication of coercion or domination. He lingered over the sexual relationship, detailing his conclusion that the parties had lots of sex, including oral sex. Ultimately he referred to the situation as a "rather sordid" affair. He found that they had reconciled before going to bed and that Beth coming to bed nude was a "sign that sex was contemplated." Indeed, he commented that as she had only gone to bed with a nightgown on two or three occasions, this indicated that sex was very frequent in the relationship. He commented that Beth hadn't "made much noise" during the alleged assaults. He concluded that the sexual contact on the night was "basically voluntary" and although neither had been much interested, "they had done it anyway." One wonders what reality this judge lived in.

It gets worse. With respect to the oral sex of the morning, the judge constructed the events as follows. When Beth wasn't "all that interested," the judge found that Michael had suggested that she pretend it was one of her old boyfriends, to which she had responded by biting him. Michael, according to this judge, then instantaneously backhanded her with an open hand—for which he was now sorry. Only after this "backhand" were the children or the police called. Having viewed the situation this way, the sex was consensual and the punch was provoked. Result: Michael was acquitted of

both assault and sexual assault.

So this is the first point: the judge's 'truth' differed fundamentally from Beth's account of her experience. The judge's truth counted and Beth's truth was discounted and reinterpreted to bear witness against her. The judge, just like Michael, had the power to impose his own reality. That is enough to make me shake my head in disbelief and dismay. But another question needs to be asked: where does this male reality come from and what does it involve? This is where Carol Smart shed some light when she discussed the case in my class.

The first point she made is that the law had divided up sexual activity into consensual and

non-consensual, which is conveniently black and white. However, submission gives the judge a problem, as it doesn't seem to clearly indicate non-consent. Accordingly, submission to unwanted sexual conduct is slapped down on the side of consent. This obviously doesn't help women claiming to have been sexually violated—particularly not women in coercive intimate relations. The second point Carol made was that the law sexualized women's bodies to the extent that women can be and are reduced to body parts. In a sexual assault trial, women are forced to talk about their bodies in a context in which they can be sexualized and negated. Carol noted that the judge had done it in this case when he had lingered over how often sex took place and in his description of her sleeping nude—long a state of women undressed for physical appraisal and the object of gaze, women as embodying sex. Of even greater explanatory power was her third point: that a sexual assault trial is often reduced to a pornographic vignette in which the woman who has been assaulted and the events surrounding the assault and the relationship are constructed to follow the script of standard fare pornography. Thus, the judge may well have been approaching this case with a pornographic view of the world—and especially of women. No wonder Beth's experience was not seen in this situation. As well, it makes it enormously difficult for any woman to disassociate herself from this constructed image. It is also difficult for a judge (or for that matter a jury) not to have a reasonable doubt about whether a sexual assault took place if this is the lens through which they see the world. This reminds me of a quote from feminist philosopher Marilyn Frye:

Reality is that which is. The English word 'Real' stems from a word which meant 'regal, of or pertaining to the king.' Reality is that which pertains to the one in power, is that over which he has power, is his domain. The ideal king reigns over everything as far as the eye can see. What he cannot see is not real. To be real is to be visible to the king. (*The Politics of Reality*, 1983, p 155.)

So those are the issues. Now what is to be done about them? ●

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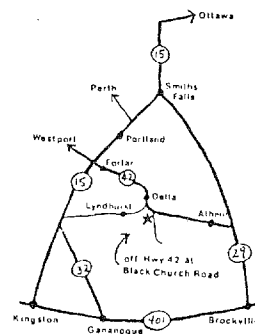
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## A CHURCH UN-UNITED, continued from page 3

itself is not a barrier to participation in all aspects of the life and ministry of the Church, including the order of ministry.

**BAL:** What did General Council do with the report?

**BR:** The 381 voting members, or commissioners, of 32nd General Council received the report. They then tabled it while a smaller, sessional committee met to discuss what to do next about both the report and the petitions related to it. This sessional committee came back to the whole Council with recommendations for a new position.

Once this new position was discussed and accepted, the sessional committee dealt with the original report by recommending

That the report "Toward a Christian understanding of sexual orientations, lifestyles and ministry" does *not* reflect this present position of the United Church, therefore this report ought to be considered an historic document and the decision of the 32nd General Council be circulated for study and reflection in our struggle to find God's direction for our church. (emphasis added)

In a way, it might be observed that the report, which had assumed a demon-like quality in the eyes of so many, was duly exorcised because it was not accepted. While it was not rejected or retracted, it was to remain "tabled" as an historical document—a moment in time.

However, in its place, General Council approved a new document which included much of what the report was trying to accomplish. In a different context, treated differently, many of the convictions and affirmations previously put forth in the sexuality report found a second expression in the new Confessional Statement and Position Paper.

Certainly, loud protest and dissent is continuing to prove that many believe this new Confessional Statement and Position Paper is still not an accurate representation of what most church people think. I believe, however, that it does represent the experience of yet another group of people who, in struggling with this issue together, come to the same conclusions.

Yet again, I get the impression that whenever heterosexual people in the United Church interact with fellow churchmembers who are openly gay and lesbian, the idea of excluding people on the basis of sexual orientation becomes untenable.

**BAL:** What does this new statement say?

**BR:** The sessional committee proposed a "Confessional Statement." This involves two different meanings of confession—one a confession of belief and the other a confession of sin. Both confessions together provide a biblical and theological rationale for the "Position Paper" the committee then proposes. These are some significant parts of the Confessional Statement:

- We confess before God that as a Christian community we have participated in a history of injustice and persecution against gay and lesbian persons in violation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- We confess our continued confusion and struggle to understand homosexuality, even as we confess our history of sinfulness.
- We confess our inability at this time, given our diversity in our understanding of the authority and interpretation of Scripture, to find consensus regarding a Christian understanding of human sexuality, including homosexuality.

The Position Paper that follows this Confessional Statement articulates hard-won common ground regarding sexual orientation, church membership and eligibility for ordered ministry:

- All persons regardless of sexual orientation, who profess faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to Him, are welcome to be or become full members of the United Church.
- All members of the United Church are eligible to be considered for Ordered Ministry.
- All Christian people are called to a lifestyle patterned on obedience to Jesus Christ.
- All congregations, presbyteries and conferences covenant to work out the implica-

tions of sexual orientation and lifestyles in light of the Holy Scriptures according to the responsibilities in The Manual [constitution].

**BAL:** What does this actually mean for lesbians and gay men in the church?

**BR:** The Confessional Statement is a breakthrough to be celebrated in terms of its clear admission of Christian complicity in the oppression of gay and lesbian persons. However, many hearts and minds will have to change before a shared experience of repentance will transform hostile, homophobic attitudes and heterosexist theology.

Conditioned as we are to a notion of sin as "the sum total of acts which we ourselves do not commit," it is not surprising that righteous indignation and vigorous denials of guilt are greeting this Confessional Statement. Indeed, the heightened anxiety and aroused homophobia surrounding the report and the aftermath of the General Council decision may well cause lesbian and gay persons in the church (such as clergy, staff associates, lay people, theological school students and faculty) to feel even more vulnerable than in the past. Before, a collective will "not to know" kept questions of sexuality and sexual orientation silenced.

**BAL:** How will congregations respond? How can they respond?

**BR:** Congregations appear to be very much influenced by the reactions of their own ministers to this matter. Ministers still seem to play a determinative, if not decisive, role in the thinking of many lay people.

We have seen that there are church people—old, middle-aged and young; in rural, urban and suburban congregations; in small-town Prairie, Maritime, Northern Ontario settings—who have been allowed and encouraged by their clergy leaders to study, think and pray together over this issue. Despite differences and disagreement, these are the people who seem to be able to cope with the prospect of the United Church of Canada becoming consciously inclusive of lesbian and gay persons.

In many other congregations, there is protest, anger, confusion or "leave the church"

threats. Here, the abdication of leadership by the clergy—including the active intervention or incitement to dissent by clergy—has been much in evidence. Threatened clergy interests—related to the legitimization of male power within heterosexual "Christian" marriage or related to the maintenance of the clerical authority inherent in the "minister as role model" image of ordained ministry—have played a noticeable and often unfortunate part in the decisions congregations are making.

**BAL:** How do you feel following the decisions of General Council?

**BR:** I am very humbled at how much I've had to learn—about men, about women, about the United Church, about the Holy Spirit.

I've learned that the power many men enjoy in the church does not deliver. In and of itself that power gives them no satisfaction, no confidence, no well-being, no peace, no joy unless it is blessed by a God made in their own image. When that blessing is withheld, or when it is seen to be bestowed upon or shared with others, they are panic-stricken, seemingly abandoned to powerlessness by a God who refuses to be "a real man."

I've learned that the instincts of women in the church are trustworthy. But, where women are alone, isolated or abused, they are unable to claim the power to speak of what they know of each other, of their partners, of their children and of their God.

I've learned that the United Church—to the distress of many of its members and to the reassurance of many others—seems to have an organizational and constitutional basis toward being inclusive. We are stuck with a system which was designed to accommodate three different founding denominations and is, therefore, very hospitable to diversity.

I've learned that the Holy Spirit is most reliable when She is called upon in the company of those who are powerless and despised. But, even in that company, She is not to be owned, confined, packaged or spoken for. She is to be shared and allowed to move on.

*Barbara Rumscheidt and Betty-Ann Lloyd are Halifax feminists.*



Ontario

Ontario Women's  
Directorate

### SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR (JUSTICE)

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# MOVEMENT MATTERS

Nov. 88

## Choice Clinic

Woman's Choice Health Clinic, a new women's health clinic where pregnancy termination is offered, opened September 27, 1988 and is now seeing patients Tuesdays through Fridays. If needed, the clinic will add hours to ensure that the waiting period is no more than a week.

This new non-profit clinic emphasizes a woman's control over her health interactions in a supportive environment. The clinic provides non-judgemental pre- and post-abortion counselling; individual and group counselling on the various forms of contraception and their risks; STD screening, treatment and preventative education; and abortion and post-abortion follow-up. The clinic plans to expand the provision of services to include other woman-centred health care and are establishing a Community Advisory Board and a Health Advisory Committee to develop future programmes.

The method used for termination of pregnancy is dilatation-aspiration followed by curettage to ensure uterine vacuity. The procedure is done under local cervical anesthesia. Patient comfort measures include pre-operative oral anxiolytic and intravenous neuroleptic, and/or the inhalation of nitrous-oxide gas. Patients can choose from these options in consultation with health-care workers.

It is hoped that in the near future the Ministry of Health will fund non-hospital abortions so that women will not have to pay for these services. Until that time, the fee for Ontario patients who are covered by OHIP is \$125.00 in cash. The fee for patients from other provinces may vary according to their province's coverage. For patients without medical coverage the fee is \$315.00. There is a contingency for patients with no health insurance and/or patients who are economically disadvantaged.

The medical centre is barrier free. The clinic is in contact with organizations that offer interpretation services. Health education and health promotion literature is available in several languages.

The staff/co-operative is composed of doctors, nurses and counsellors who have all worked at the Toronto Morgentaler Clinic, and have extensive experience in this field. All patients referred will be treated with respect and compassion. Confidentiality will be strictly maintained.

For information, call 975-9300.

## Action Against Beauty Pageant

THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO WOMEN'S CENTRE — On September 29, 1988, former model and "beauty queen" Ann Simonton spoke to a receptive audience of women and men at the University of Waterloo, on the topic of "Sex, Power and the Media: Rethinking the Myths of the American Dream Girl!" Simonton is now a feminist, social activist and co-ordinator of the Santa Cruz based organization Media Watch. Simonton's lecture and slide show focused on images from men's magazines, advertisements and fashion spreads from women's magazines, as well as beauty contest pictures—showing the implicit sexist presentation of women in the media. She explodes the myths of the "American Dream Girl!" by showing the extreme differences in sex-marking between men and women in the media, the narrowly defined and unhealthy standard of beauty for women and the portrayal of women as sex objects. Simonton connected these images with violence against women and with the continual subordination and oppression of women as a group. Simonton emphasized that resistance to sexism and direct political action (including civil disobedience) are crucial in the restructuring of a new society for women and men.

Exactly one week after Ann Simonton's lecture, the University of Waterloo's Humanities Theatre was also the site of the "Miss Oktoberfest Beauty Pageant." Students from the University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University and members of the larger community

held a powerful protest against the pageant. There were approximately 60-70 protestors outside the building chanting and carrying placards with such statements as: "We reject this image of women!", "Pageants are sexist," and "Sexist pageants off our campus!" Inside the lobby, two men carried platters of meat layered with pictures of sexist images of women, offering "hors d'oeuvres" to the audience standing in line. Another silent protest was held inside the lobby of the theatre, where three women graphically demonstrated the connection between sexist images of women and violence against women. The women were dressed as a beauty queen, an abused housewife, and a rape victim. They were chained together and gagged to show the "chain of oppression" that exists. The protest continued once the pageant began, as four women and three observers entered the theatre disguised as members of the audience. Just prior to the announcement of the five finalists, the four women stood and chanted "Sexist pageants off our campus!" It took pageant officials and police approximately 5-10 minutes to remove the women from the theatre, while the women continued to protest non-violently by chanting. This powerful and empowering protest emphasizes that there are a growing number of women and men who are strongly opposed to sexism on the university campus and in society.

## Women and Global Survival

OTTAWA — The Directory of Canadian Women Specializing in Global Survival Policy Issues was launched as a Canadian Council for International Development based project with a start up grant from the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security in Spring 1988. The directory will include women from diverse related disciplines and will illustrate their capability and potential for playing a much greater role in the formulation and conduct of these Canadian policy issues.

During and since the Decade for Women, there has been some general progress. But in the policy areas relevant to this directory, except for the occasional female presence, the impression remains that men are the experts and women have little to contribute to analysis, debate and decision-making on these matters. The directory is being produced to meet the needs of those who are attempting to achieve equality but are not aware of the women in these relevant fields.

It will be distributed through libraries, universities and community colleges, women's studies programs, the media, resource and development education centres, government and non-government organizations and networks. Ideas for project development and help with funding will be most welcome. For further information please contact Dorothy Goldin Rosenberg, Project Coordinator: Canadian Council for International Cooperation, 1 Nicholas St, 3rd floor, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B7. (613) 236-4547.

## Canadian Women's Directory

MONTREAL — A bilingual directory of women's groups across Canada has just been published: the 1988 Canadian Women's Directory. This new 350-page publication contains nearly 2,000 names, addresses and telephone numbers of women's groups and associations, subdivided by province or territory. And within each province/territory, similar groups are listed together, making the Directory easy to use.

National and provincial women's organizations, women's centres, women's shelters, cultural organizations, services for immigrant women, health care services, legal resources, women's bookstores, minority women's groups, resources for single mothers, vocational counselling and other work related services, publishers and periodicals, government agencies, feminist bookstores, and groups working against sexism, sexual harassment, incest, pornography are just a few of the sections

to be found in the 1988 Canadian Women's Directory.

The Canadian Women's Directory can be ordered from Les Éditions Communiqu'Elles, 3585 St-Urbain, Montréal, Québec, H2X 2N6, for \$9.95 plus \$1.00 postage and handling. Telephone orders are also accepted: (514) 844-1761.

## Funding for Lesbians and Gays

The Kimeta Society is a non-profit corporation which was founded in 1987. Our primary objective is the support of efforts advancing the struggle of lesbians and gays for their liberation. The Society has an international perspective, supporting organizations and/or activities around the world, in particular Third World countries. We are interested in supporting projects which have progressive political significance and which have little access to other funding sources.

In our first year of operation the Kimeta Society funded a number of political projects in North America and Third World countries including the Primer Encuentro de Lesbianas Feministas Latinoamericanas y Caribenas held near Mexico City in 1987, the Fifth International Lesbian and Gay People of Colour Conference, the Simon Nkoli Anti-Apartheid Committee, the NAMBLA Journal, an outreach and promotion campaign for *Rites* magazine, the Vancouver Lesbian Connection and the Canadian Women's Movement Archives.

For information, contact Kimeta Society of Toronto, 291 Ontario Street, #5, Toronto, Ontario, M5A 2V8.

## Womyn's Healing Village

The Waxing Moon Healing Village is a society with the purpose of creating a womyn's village with emphasis on harmonious cooperation for self healing, regeneration, personal growth, development of skills and relaxed lifestyle.

We envision an accessible home base for independent womyn of all ages, races, abilities, whether retired or working, in a peaceful rural setting.

Within the village womyn may choose a space and create their own simple dwelling in harmony with nature. In addition there will be space for older and differently abled womyn to live communally or privately.

We will be farming organically and striving for economic independence. Contact Waxing Moon Healing Village Society, 3541 W 14th Ave., Vancouver, BC, V6R 2E3; (604) 732-8927.



## Thin Oppression

Hersize: a Weight Prejudice Action Group recently founded in Toronto, is committed to increasing the public's awareness of the ways in which our culture's obsession with thinness oppresses women. The group is dedicated to helping women free themselves from over-concern with body shape and size. Activities and services include conducting a media watch, a writing campaign against oppressive media messages about women and weight, the development of educational materials and public speaking. For more information, contact: Hersize, c/o Mary Dahonick, RN, 223 Concord Ave., Toronto, Ont. M6H 2P4. (416) 769-2722 or 535-4653.

## New Publications

The Womanist, a new national feminist newspaper, began publication in Ottawa in September, 1988. The Womanist provides information on federal legislation, international news on women's issues, personal stories and critical analysis of the women's movement today. It is distributed free throughout Canada. News, articles, artwork, subscribers and advertisers are welcome. Contact: The Womanist, PO Box 76, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 6C3; (613) 230-0590.

LTC-2 is the name of the revival of Long Time Coming, the lesbian magazine published in Montreal in the 1970's. LTC-2 will report lesbian news and concerns, provide lesbian lifestyle herstories, make forays into the gay and feminist worlds, speak of the experience of lesbians of all backgrounds, and "capture the ideas, problems, visions and the glorious diversity of Canadian lesbians." LTC-2 is now accepting manuscripts from lesbians only and subscriptions. Articles of up to 5,000 words on any topic of interest to lesbians will be considered, as well as fiction, erotica, experimental work, poetry, illustrations, photographs, and comics. For information, contact LTC-2, Box 531, Place du Parc, Montreal, Que. H2W 2P1.

## Fighting Sexual Harassment

As part of a major public education initiative by the Ontario Women's Directorate, Bonnie Robichaud has written *A Guide to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace*. Through her own successful case against the Department of National Defence, Robichaud has become a symbol to all who oppose discrimination in the workplace.

Of benefit to victims and advocates, this informative booklet is available for \$3.95 (postage included) from the Bonnie Robichaud Defence Committee, P.O. Box 149, Osgoode, Ontario, K0A 2W0; (613) 826-2150. Contact the Bonnie Robichaud Defence Committee if you would like to receive their Newsletter or make a donation to this precedent setting case.

## LEAF Litigation

LEAF (Women's Legal Education and Action Fund) recently celebrated its third birthday. LEAF's primary objective is to promote equality for women by means of litigation, using the equality guarantees in the Charter. The Charter (of Rights and Freedoms) is a powerful tool for women, and LEAF is determined to see that its guarantees are neither restrictively interpreted, nor ignored by the courts. LEAF's establishment reflects the commitment of the women's community to add litigation to its traditional ways of seeking change and of realizing the objectives of the women's movement. To date LEAF has taken on 50 test cases involving the Charter, from hundreds of requests received. This year cases on three areas will be given priority: income support for low income women, employment, and sexual assault. LEAF branches across the country are now inviting supporters to become LEAF members. For membership information or to make a donation to LEAF's work, contact: LEAF, 344 Bloor St. W. Toronto M5S 1W9.

## Nurses/Advocates

Nurses for Social Responsibility is a group of nurses who are committed to advocacy, education and to the implementation of change strategies with respect to social, sexual, racial, economic, peace and justice issues. They advocate a definition of health which encompasses more than the absence of disease, believing health is a universal right and not a privilege. Health promotion includes health education, legal and environmental controls, and social and economic change. For more information contact: Nurses for Social Responsibility, 13-550 Ontario Street, Toronto, Ontario, M4X 1X3.

## LETTERS, continued from page 2

## Male Violence

The following comment was written as a letter to the Globe and Mail in response to an article concerning the Kirby Inwood trial. That article argued that "assault must become a men's issue... men have a lot to answer for and must begin to question the assumptions that allow violence against women to happen in the first place."

Such sentiments are both laudable and timely but end up leading us down a blind alley. That men must begin to question is not in any doubt—but will it really help what ails this poor old human race of ours for men to simply question their assumptions? Is it not that we all need to continue questioning, to question the way in which we interact with ourselves, rather than polarizing blame and focusing either on men's assumptions or on women's provocative behaviour? Violence is, after all, a dynamic act rather than a static one. It reflects a dynamic process. Assumptions, provocative acts, ideological concepts are static labels implying discrete events which either happen or don't. Searching for remedies to combat battering through labelling and questioning labels, and then relabelling, is like believing you are treating a disease by naming it. The diagnosis/label does not contain the remedy.

Our proclivity for killing, maiming and abusing other members of our own species dates back to the very origin of our race, appearing in our recorded literature just outside the gates of Eden when there were only four inhabitants on earth. We have always had pacifist factions which deplored violent acts and factions which promoted them. What is new is that, as a society, we are beginning to wage war

on this aspect of our being. We are beginning to attack the problem rather than each other, question it rather than either approving or condemning it. What processes occur within each of us which, as they evolve, produce the seeds of violence towards those whom we believe we love?

What can we do to stop ourselves from physically abusing each other? Will making them question their assumptions really help the Tanya's and Misha's and Kirby Inwood's change their style of interaction? In the consulting rooms, clinics, drop-in centers, social workers' offices, psychologists' offices and prisons this quandary is grappled with again and again. We have come to realize that what does help is to compassionately and patiently examine with our clients the way in which they, as individuals, carry on their internal conversations with their emerging, evolving selves. We enter into a dynamic process of discovery. The emphasis must be put on the process of questioning, rather than on men's assumptions.

My experience of the internal workings of the mind of the perpetrator of violence is that there is no dialogue on a conscious level with his or her feeling states. These people either actively deny their feelings having any voice in their personal drama, or their feeling states have not developed a voice. They are, therefore, strangers to their own inner affective worlds. The violence, on the other hand, usually possesses an extremely vocal voice which is constantly relaying to themselves and to the outside world strong but garbled and misleading information about their own and other people's affective positions.

With a moment's thought you can see that the combination of these two, living in close proximity for even a short time is a dangerous exercise. It is a long and often arduous process to help people undo the habits of a lifetime, and to help them discover that their feelings are not enemies, to teach them how to give those

feelings a healthy place in their own personal dramas. Yet we are not going to be able to do it at all if we remain content to simply label and relabel blame, if we continue to look for a static answer to an evolving and dynamic problem.

It is a necessary public and collective step to loudly and insistently cry out against physical violence with our newly discovered technological voice, "the media". Headlines such as "There is no Excuse for Physical Abuse" help everyone to understand that we, as a race, are publicly and seriously challenging ourselves to mastery over our violent behaviour. Articles encourage collective dialogue and open the door to developing new ways of talking, both publicly and privately, about our violent feelings, but we will remain stalled in a vicious circle of rhetoric if we continue to discuss these issues in static and polarized terms.

It is a necessary professional step to collect the facts, identify the processes, to cultivate supportive and therapeutic networks at the grass roots level. This has been done in London, Ontario, during the last nine years through the dedicated selfless industry of people such as Connie Backhouse, Gail Hutchinson, Diana Majury, Lorraine Greaves and Marion Boyd. The London Battered Women's Advocacy Clinic has grown up to provide, along with its 'Changing Ways' program for men, a model which the Ontario Medical Association has endorsed for use all over Ontario. The Clinic's work has slowly and tenuously gained federal and provincial government funding. This has provided a manual for setting up similar programs across the country.

Hopefully all this is bringing us closer to the most necessary step of all. It will take the continued and concerted efforts of us all to pursue and persevere in active and public dialogue, as well as our private practices, until physical abuse is perceived as everyone's problem. Until it is perceived as an Avoidable Act.

Dianne McGibbon is a Toronto Doctor.

## Housing Crisis

The following is a letter from the Toronto Black Women's Collective in response to John Sewell's firing from the position of Metro Toronto Housing Authority Chair last September.

Hon. Minister of Housing  
Ms. Chaviva Hosek  
House of Commons  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Minister Chaviva Hosek,

We wish to register our displeasure and disappointment at your decision to remove John Sewell as Chair of the Metro Toronto Housing Authority and the minimizing of the importance of the post from full time to part time status.

There is little doubt of Mr. Sewell's competence, effectiveness and genuine commitment to the job and his recognition of the dire conditions of public housing for people in Metro Toronto. Surely these were the essential qualities for the position which the Liberal Government entrusted Mr. Sewell with two years ago. The Liberal Government at the time of Mr. Sewell's appointment claimed to be committed to the cause of a progressive policy on public housing. We question whether the Liberal government's commitment has since changed.

Does the Government now think that conditions of public housing in Metro have improved so much so as to reduce the worth of the position from full time attention to part time? With the intense shortage of housing in general and the long waiting list for public housing, whose concerns are being championed here? Is this a signal from the Liberal Government that the poor and working poor are less important than the big developers in Toronto?

We are aware that the implications of this move are much deeper and far more sinister than the mere firing of Mr. Sewell. Obviously the Liberal Government has now settled into its position of majority status sufficiently as to afford it to show its callous nature to working people. Clearly the Government has proven in this instance that it has no intention of providing more or better public housing in Metro Toronto. It is also impossible to escape the fact that the needs and concerns of big developers and speculators, who increasingly squeeze the population to the margin of the city, are the government's first priority in this regard.

Furthermore, we are appalled by the blatant exploitation and cynical use of ethnic concerns to undercut the validity of the need for more and better public housing. We recognise a backhanded racism in your decision to use a member of the Black community to dissipate your political crisis. Were the Government truly interested in reflecting the multicultural nature of our society, such appointments would be made in less crisis-ridden circumstances. As it is, we are appointed to bear the brunt of the Government's errors.

John Sewell has always been supportive of Black community concerns, during his tenure as mayor and in the present, and he has carried that understanding into his position as Chair of the MTHA. We reject your attempt to divide our loyalties between a tested ally and a community activist.

We therefore demand:

- that John Sewell be reinstated to the post which he so effectively managed in the most progressive period of MTHA existence.
- that the position of MTHA Chair be returned to its full time status.
- that Mr. Sewell's policy ideas be implemented with haste.
- that new public housing be again given the priority it deserves and that renovations and improvement of the neglected existing housing be made so as to facilitate a decent existence for the tenants who live there.

Finally we suggest that the Government turn its attention to the many big developers and real estate speculators, who continue to make housing difficult for working people in Metro, instead of attacking the one person who has attempted to make the system humane.

Sincerely  
The Toronto Black Women's Collective

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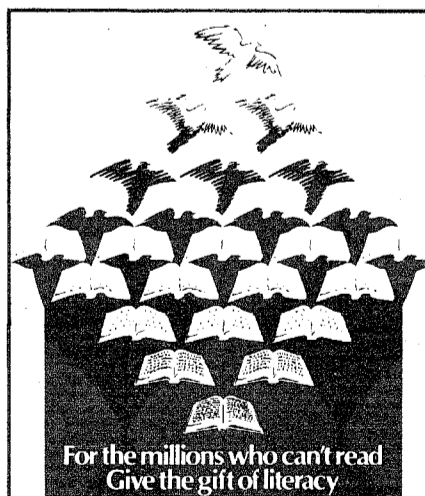
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## Festival of Festivals

## Part II

by Joyce Mason

Thursday, October 13, 1988

Written in fragments and in retrospect, what follows is a partial reconstruction of my Festival of Festivals experience. In such a hothouse atmosphere of watching, talking film, it is inevitable that one's ideas about the films shift and adjust during the course of the days. What is written here reflects not always or only my immediate response to the films. These are rather cumulative responses, formed and forged in conversations and arguments with others, as well as that unavoidable (if at times unfair) impulse to compare. (All films, like those who make them, deserve to be judged on their own terms.)

In the last issue of *Broadside*, my reconstructed diary for Wednesday, Tuesday and Monday (September 14-12) was published. Here, the rewind continues, then stops, and skips forward again to look at the final three days of this annual film glut.

Sunday, September 11, 1988

*Long Farewells* (95 min., U.S.S.R., 1971) by Kira Muratova is a strangely compelling story of a highly obsessive mother-son relationship. The son, a young man still in school, wants to go to live with his father, in another city. He decides to go, but keeps the information from his mother. The woman is portrayed with depth and complexity: strong, compulsive, competent, flirtatious, overbearing, intelligent, obsessive, afraid and lonely. The son, by contrast, is cool, restrained, unexpressive—appearing to have flattened himself out in order to withstand the emotionally overblown expressiveness of his mother's demands. The film is a sensitive portrayal of an unenviable but highly poignant relationship from which neither, finally, is capable of escape.

*Some Interviews on Personal Problems* (95 min., U.S.S.R., 1979) by Lana Gogoberildze was wonderful. Sofico—wife, mother and journalist—is the central character of this film. Her journalistic beat is the letters section of the newspaper. People with problems, both personal and social, write to the newspaper. Sofico goes with a photographer to visit them, investigate the problem and to attempt to find solutions. The section of the newspaper appears to be some kind of cross between Ann Landers and "Star Probe" or some such ombudsman column.

The film traces the quotidian life of a working mother as her marriage falls apart, through her workplace, shopping, visits to her aunts, her home with husband and children and her mother. Such moments are interwoven with memories from her youth and childhood and echoing thoughts from her job: "interviews on personal problems."

The title had initially suggested to me that this would be a documentary. And so, when the film opened with a shot of an older woman, amidst shelves of books, telling of working in a library, started by her father 60 years ago, I was not particularly unsettled by the documentary convention. She faces us directly, speaking to, looking into the camera; then, distracted, she interrupts her own story to ask something of someone behind and beside the camera: the "interviewer," Sofico. But through this beginning, this on-camera interview disrupted by turning the question to the woman-behind-the-camera, there is a confusion of forms. At first, the question appears to be the disruption of a standard documentary interview—filmic comment upon the fact that the report is about the reporter. But, in *Some Interviews*, the reporter in this scene is not a filmmaker at all, but a newspaper journalist; and this is not a documentary, but a fiction film about that journalist. As the narrative unfolds we discover that there is no *movie* camera in the story, only a still camera. And so, this stylistic anomaly from the initial sequence, by its suggestion of the woman-behind-the-camera, points us, of course, to another woman behind the camera: Lana Gogoberildze, herself. The fact that there is at least one autobiographical element in the story (Gogoberildze's mother was arrested and exiled—absent through Lana's youth) perhaps accounts for the sensitivity and complexity of this fine depiction of a woman and her world. In this film the central character's lived experiences are reflected in and are reflections of her work, memories, the people she loves and works with, the political context and her personal history.

It's 7:30 and time for another four movies: The United Statesian Shorts!

Generations connect in Tereza Trautman's beautifully wrought *Best Wishes*.

*Dim Sum Take Out* (12 min.) by Wayne Wang, is a tight and polished film featuring the cast of *Dim Sum*, a feature made by Wang in 1984. (Are these out-takes?) It is an affectionate, amusing, and sometimes ironic look at the contradictions and consistencies of a bunch of Chinese American girls fighting it out in the cross-cultural cross-fire of gender relations, changing values, personal and professional ambitions. And, getting off more than a few good shots!

*Ray's Male Heterosexual Dance Hall* (25 min.) by Bryan Gordon, was an unlikely and very funny little narrative about an unemployed junior executive looking for work who is taken along by an old school chum to the place where the powerful make their connections. The whole thing is a short filmic metaphor for the "Boy's Club" gone democratic (american style): anyone can enter, as long as they know where it's at. The film is a depiction of male power and owes its existence to feminist analysis. At this bar-cum-dance-hall, men in business suits dance together and chat, hoping to make their power connections. The film is full of great lines reflecting "pecking order" in a variety of dance metaphors, like the comment that "The powerful usually dance in their own spotlight." The hero of the film goes through a reasonable range of emotional reservations and conflicting desires about being included in the dance, while managing to remain a sympathetic character; and, in this ironic rendition of traditional American moral tales, our hero's honor and honesty are rewarded when Dick Tratten of the Tratten Group (That's the guy with his own spotlight!) offers him a job and whisks him onto the dance floor to deliver the obligatory Happy Ending, to the applause and congratulations of the other men present. It really is an amusing film!

Not so delightful, unfortunately, was *Because the Dawn* (40 min.) by Amy Goldstein, a forty minute stylishly shot film ostensibly about female desire within the consumer culture. Our heroine is a photographer who has her shot at a big time advertising contract if she can deliver something with which they can sell their new perfume: STARVATION. (Struck me as a bit extreme, even for advertisers; but this is, after all, the movies!) Anyway she falls for a Lady-vampire whom she meets at a bar on Halloween, becomes obsessed and misses her deadline; a friend finds a shot of the vampire's shadow and delivers it to the agency, the vampire sees it and is thrilled (for vampirish reasons she is not photogenic). Well, you know what's coming, right: it's a girl gets vampire movie! Well, it all sounds like great fun. A modern update of an old tale, with a nice twist of lesbian desire. I mean this is a socially responsible vampire! She only sucks the blood out of men who prey upon women on dark city streets, men whose intent to attack her is clearly indicated.

So what's wrong with this movie? It's empty. It's pretty. It's too clean. It gives us lots of candles and *longeur* when it can muster neither hot passion nor languishing longing from its actresses. Dialogue comes across as interpretation for the very thick (Someone actually says that the ad company is "trying to sell desire").

In short (and in shame), I must report that, in this series of US shorts (all of which owe a debt to feminist thought and the social, cultural and intellectual change which it has wrought over the last twenty years), this particular film (the only one actually directed by a woman) was outdone on its own terms and in all respects by the three others, which I find a little unsettling and peculiar but being a feminist was never a guarantee of either filmic talent or know-how (In this case I'm not sure which was missing).

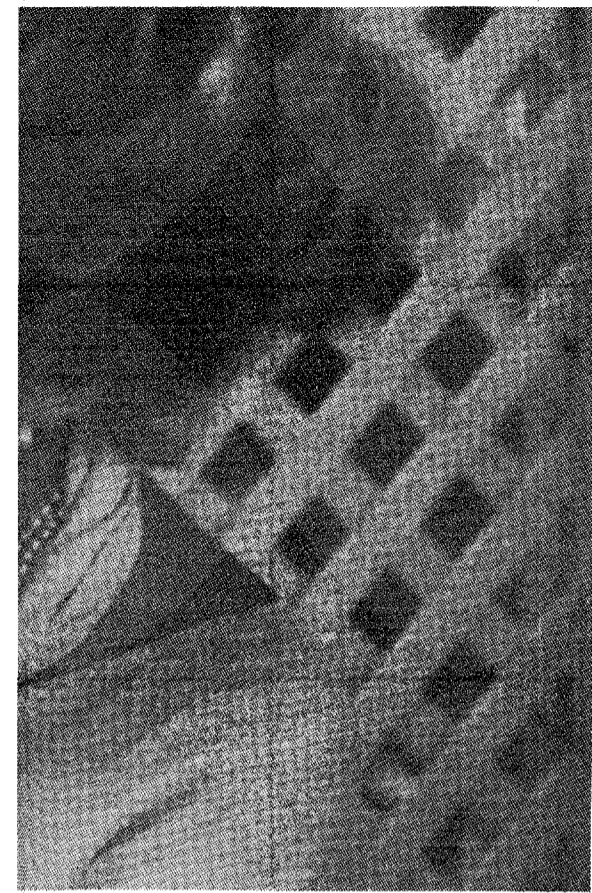
The fourth and final film in this program was *Superstar, The Karen Carpenter Story* (43 min.) directed by Todd Haynes, written and produced by Cynthia Schneider and Haynes. The film is a "docu-drama" about Karen Carpenter who died when she was 32 years old, as a result of anorexia nervosa. I was particularly disturbed by its responses from the Festival audience. The construction chosen by the filmmakers, through which to enact Karen's life, was doll houses and Barbie and Ken dolls. This device, so rich in associative possibilities, seemed to be taken by some members of the audience as a dismissive reductive view: Karen as joke. A particular and peculiar kind of laughter (one had the feeling it was a condescending laughing at Karen, rather than nervous laughter at the pain and horror of the tale unfolding) persisted throughout the film and it made the film, for me, all the more poignant, the story all the more terrifying. Teatime sets, stiff expressionless faces and bodies of top dolls, the stilted voices of the actors delivering platitudes



Rosamund Owen's *Love of Contradiction* is a love letter to the obvious dialogue, the self-generated myth of familial harmony and middle-american "values" that is reflected in that dialogue, and the chilling unfolding of symptoms and events within the "dramatized" segments wrenched together and bridged by and counterpointed with information: dense information on the disease, etc. We are never seduced by this world by the glittering glamour of show biz or by



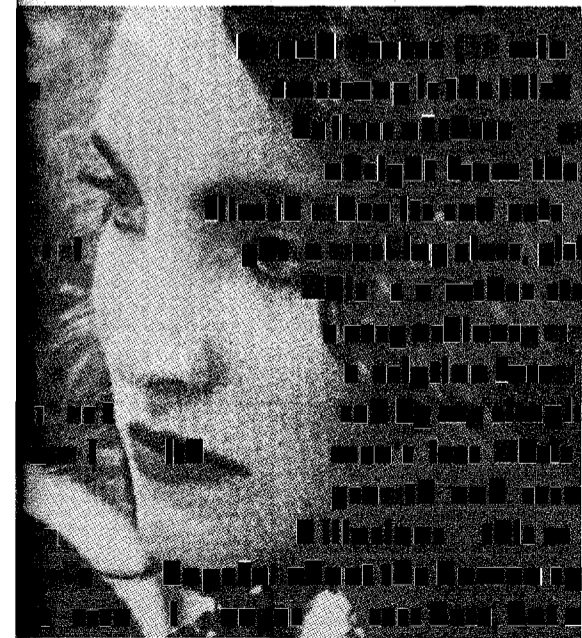
# Reverse Angle



ky charm of middle america which could have ob-  
 ured the rigidity of the world in which Karen died, and  
 igh which would certainly be present in any made-for-tv ver-  
 sion of the story. All of which made this a very powerful,  
 interesting and highly troubling film of a very tragic life  
 and culture. It is of the four films tonight, the one which  
 can say really should be seen—both because of its raw  
 inventiveness, its anger, its passionate restraint as a film,  
 and for what it tells us about anorexia and about amer-  
 ican “values” and culture.

## Monday, September 10, 1988

*Ango, Bridesmaids and Braces* (90 min. Australia) by  
 filmmaker Gillian Armstrong is the third of three docu-  
 mentaries. It looks at the lives of three 26 year old women.  
 With interjections of hindsight from the two previous  
 documentaries filmed when its subjects were 14 and 18  
 years old. That's right, a working class, girls only version  
 of *Twenty-Eight Up*. This is a rather straightforward  
 documentary about three very ordinary women; and yet,  
 the boredom that such a description forewarns was dissi-  
 pated as the film progressed by my simple and growing  
 fascination with these women's lives. Their ambitions and  
 disappointments, their growth and resolutions, their  
 self-understanding and illusions—this movie is enough  
 to make you hopeful about the human spirit! Not only  
 their personal changes impress here, but also, their rela-  
 tionships to their children: though not ideal (whose is?),  
 there are improvements in particular respects over their



childhoods (as evidenced in the 1976 footage). And  
 they are all so much better-looking in each film—from 14  
 to 26. The level of optimism engendered by this film  
 took me so far as to imagine more subtle shifts and im-  
 provements as their lives progress into middle age.  
*Best Wishes* (93 min., Brazil) by Tereza Trautman  
 aired this evening. It was a well-wrought, tightly script-

ed, extended-family portrait. The imminent sale of the  
 family home brings everyone to a beautiful house high  
 on a hill above Rio. Family members gather for a last party  
 at the estate, a love affair is rekindled, disappointments  
 are endured, there are inadvertent injuries and angry re-  
 lations, protection and celebration. Perhaps most strik-  
 ing in this film are the performances by so many talented  
 women, but there is also a lively and engaging script full  
 of personality, attention to detail and an intelligent sense  
 of context.

## Friday, September 9, 1988

Off to see *Calling the Shots* this morning (an advance  
 screening, so that I can write something about it for the  
 October issue of *Broadside*—see last month's issue for  
 details on this and other films viewed Monday September  
 12th through Wednesday September 14th). Then, a little  
 personal indulgence and escape into the past with the  
 silent Hitchcock film, *Blackmail*, from The Open Vault  
 series.

*The Jester and the Queen* (90 min., Czech.) played this  
 afternoon. Having raved about Vera Chytilova's *Prefab  
 Story* (1979) after last year's festival, I was both surprised  
 and impressed by this year's offering. From the urban,  
 “disjointed and fabricated community of apartment  
 buildings” of *Prefab Story* with its multiple and diverse  
 characters and stories, *The Jester and the Queen* moves  
 in a rural community and centres in fantasy and dream  
 worlds of one character. The same giddy, reeling camera



The Virgin Machine investigates the possible meanings of femininity and love.

movements are there; but this time marking more per-  
 sonal and idiosyncratic disorientations than the social  
 and cultural upheaval of the construction site/prefab  
 community. The central character, a country bumpkin/  
 simple-wise man, believes that he is the reincarnation of  
 a medieval jester at the court of the castle for which he is  
 now the gameskeeper. He slips in and out of memories  
 (experiences) of that earlier life and dreams of its con-  
 temporary realization.

The film is full of filmic playfulness as well as the sur-  
 realistic touches one might expect in a story full of fan-  
 tasies/memories and dreams. The opening sequence,  
 which culminates in a cinema-verité style interview with  
 a court jester as he prepares to go to entertain the Queen,  
 is pure visual, conceptual delight, setting a tone and stan-  
 dard for the film which is entirely fulfilled.

Then, at 7 pm, I saw *The Commissar* (115 min.  
 U.S.S.R., 1967), the highly praised first film of the Kino  
 Eye series. Made 21 years ago by Aleksandr Askoldov  
 and immediately suppressed, this is a film of stunning  
 brilliance and powerful imagery finally revealed. *The  
 Commissar* of the title is a woman. She is respected by  
 her men, ruthless, and sexual. She is pregnant and it is  
 too late to abort. She is billeted with a Jewish family, in  
 order to bring to term her child, who she will then, even-  
 tually, leave behind when she returns to battle. The Com-  
 missar is a magnificent character, of heroic and human  
 proportions. She seems to be Mother Russia, herself:  
 large, fierce, gentle, relentless defender of the revolution,  
 bearing her children in the midst of warmth and of tur-  
 moil, then weaning them too soon—abandoning the  
 child in its most basic needs, ironically, in order to sur-  
 vive. There is no alternative here: not to fight the Whites

would clearly mean being killed by them. That much is  
 certainly clear.

Though the two main characters, the Commissar and  
 her host, a tinker by trade, are stunning by contrasts, and  
 the tinker's wife is beautiful and warm and full of solid  
 practicality, it is the children in this film who, through  
 their play, reflect the horror of the war raging outside the  
 closed courtyard, “playing” out scenes of arbitrary vio-  
 lence against villagers. Finally, three gang up on the older  
 sister, physically and psychologically terrorizing her. Like  
 a Greek chorus they have echoed the forces which threat-  
 en to invade the boarded up bunker in which they are  
 sheltered and where their father, in horrified exaspera-  
 tion, angrily denounces them for their murderous pro-  
 gram to the accompaniment of their non-stop wails of  
 contrition. A very powerful and apparently politically  
 provocative film, one can only surmise because of its  
 overt Jewish sympathy and simultaneous reflection of a  
 history of anti-semitic persecution, its release is a re-  
 markable gift of glasnost.

## Thursday, September 8, 1988

Opening day of the Festival! Press screenings of *The  
 Thin Blue Line* (103 min.) and of *Dead Ringers* (113 min.)  
 bode well for things to come. *Thin Blue Line* is brilliant  
 and *Dead Ringers* is as compelling, fantastic and horri-  
 fying as any Cronenberg might be, but moving more in-  
 to a realm of psychological realism. We may hear some  
 criticism from what are referred to as the “cultural fem-

inist” quarters (though as a feminist who has worked  
 uniquely in the cultural sphere all my adult life I object to  
 the descriptive classification) regarding Cronenberg's  
 most recent offering. But I, for one, am quite ready to de-  
 fend it.

By contrast, *Virgin Machine* (85 min., F.D.R.) by  
 Monika Treut, proved to be a bit of a disappointment. As  
 Kay Armatage describes it, “This is a coming out story,  
 pure and simple.” Unfortunately, for me, a little too sim-  
 ple. Aside from the amusing information sessions con-  
 ducted by Suzy Sexport, who is a hawker at a San Fran-  
 cisco strip club and has a briefcase full of various dildos,  
 and a couple of other sympathetic characters, there is lit-  
 tle to engage the imagination in this film.

The central character is a journalist; the actress actual-  
 ly sits at a computer pretending to type while only reveal-  
 ing that she hasn't a clue, which I found needlessly and  
 mildly annoying. She is investigating biological or other  
 possible meanings of femininity and of love. In search of  
 the meaning of romantic love, she goes off to San Fran-  
 cisco to talk to her mother. Mom's moved and left no for-  
 warding address, so she hooks up with various women,  
 finally falling for one who promises to fulfill her dream  
 of romantic love (for a price as it turns out). Since this is  
 romantic love (and, specifically, our naive heroine's idea  
 of romantic love) that she is purchasing, don't count on  
 any hot sex. There is a sex scene; but it falls into the weak,  
 posed and awkward variety. If this were what sex between  
 women was like, no one would bother to take their clothes  
 off the next time; as it is, it just seems like another story

• continued on page 13

## Abusive Amusement



A patronizing Henry Higgins hurls verbal abuse at the much younger Eliza.

by Susan G. Cole

Sitting at the Festival Theatre in Stratford, I found myself watching *My Fair Lady* with deep ambivalence. The production values were superb, as is usually the case with Canada's most prestigious drama festival, the music familiar, the transformation of the thrust stage to a venue for musical theatre, ingenious. But the story itself is fraught with political problems. Henry Higgins bets he can pass off the flower girl Eliza as a duchess at the next Embassy ball. All he needs is six months to work on her speech problems and to clean up her manners. During the course of her tutelage he submits her to all manner of abuses including verbal assault, starvation and sleep deprivation. All of this is contextualized—and invariably interpreted by audiences—as diverting amusements followed by the happy ending in which after bolting from Higgins' household, Eliza returns, presumably to take up a romantic relationship with her tormentor.

At the same time, the Stratford Festival has mounted a wildly inventive production of Shakespeare's ode to female oppression, *The Taming of the Shrew*. Here the theme of female makeover at the hands of a tyrannical male is played to the hilt as Petruchio tames Kate with many of the same tactics as Higgins has used to cow Eliza. There are differences, of course. Petruchio triumphs over Kate, turning her into the "perfect" submissive wife—boy wins girl keeps her—whereas Higgins loses Eliza and then gets her back—boy, or rather man, wins girl, loses her and then gets her back. But either way, the plays bring up the thorny problem of whether major theatre companies ought to bother with revivals of obnoxiously unenlightened works.

*My Fair Lady* is based on George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion* and certainly the socialist and cynic cannot be blamed for the regressive romanticism of the musical comedy. Lerner and Loewe fashioned out of his play. The play's title refers to the myth in which the misogynist artist Pygmalion sculpts what he thinks is the perfect woman, only to fall in love with a creation which, voiceless and immobile, can provide him with no emotional sustenance. Interestingly enough, Shaw wrote his *Pygmalion* without the creator Higgins falling in love

with his own artwork. The play ends with Eliza leaving Higgins while the professor scoffs at the idea of Eliza marrying Freddie Eynsford-Hill, thus emphasizing that although Higgins may have wanted to continue to control Eliza, he never wanted her as a lover. This may be inconsistent with the Pygmalion myth but it is perfectly consistent with Shaw's inveterate distaste for romantic relationships whether in his own life or among his plays' characters.

Not surprisingly, audiences were not very satisfied with the ending of *Pygmalion*, but Shaw stuck to his guns, and as Stratford's excellent program notes detail, wrote at some length of why he ended his story there. The play's happy ending, he insisted, hinges on Eliza's escape from Higgins' tyranny, and if audiences wanted something else, they had missed the point. He could not imagine a worse relationship than that between a middle-aged, middle class man with a mother fixation and a nineteen year old flower girl. Better for Eliza to have found someone her own age who was crazy about her. A film version made in the thirties created a romantic link between Higgins and Eliza, but the author never approved.

Imagine how outraged he would have been at Lerner and Loewe's version of the story. Browbeaten for six months and then ignored after she triumphs at the Embassy Ball, Eliza walks out on Higgins, goes out on a date with Freddy and then goes to visit Higgins' mother. The professor finds her there but when he implores her to return she tells him to go to hell. Ah, but not for long. As he edges up the path to his house he realizes that "he's grown accustomed to her face," the audience melts and then thrills as Eliza turns off the tapes of her voice he has unearthed to announce that she's back. Higgins reverts immediately to his old ways, and the final line of the play, "Eliza, where the devil are my slippers?" does not augur well for equality.

Most everything great about *My Fair Lady*—its commentary on language, class and morals—is Shaw's (two thirds of the book come directly from the play), and what greatness is left, namely in the lyrics, is sorely wasted. The brilliance of "I'm an Ordinary Man" ("Let a Woman in Your Life") and

"Why Can't a Woman be More like a Man?," both written to categorize Higgins as a staunch woman-hater, fades with the sentimental strategy of turning Higgins into a salvageable love object. The Stratford production, a faithful and gorgeous revival of the original musical, does very little to reinterpret the work, leaving the play with its nagging problems. To be fair, it would be tough to do anything else. The play is time-specific, intended to evoke the particular class conflicts of Edwardian England. But perhaps a company at some time will find a way to present the story's happy ending without evoking a wince from any self-respecting women in the audience.

When it comes to the works of William Shakespeare, the dilemma is slightly different. Many feminists have insisted that *The Taming of the Shrew* should be shredded and never presented on our national stages. The story is viciously anti-woman and the dynamics of the play create pleasure in what amounts to violence against women. Scholars counter that Shakespeare was a product of his time and that nothing from the mind of the greatest English language poet should be tossed aside; even with its egregious celebration of woman abuse, the play has redeeming social values.

This year's Stratford production presents another argument, namely that the works of Shakespeare can be reinterpreted in the light of what we know now so that the play can convey some meaning even to twentieth century audiences. It's been done before. Zeffirelli's film version offered a conventional reading but audiences tended to be amused by what they thought was a metaphor for the passionate relationship between the two stars, Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. A version of *Shrew* presented in the mid-seventies, just as feminist awareness was increasing, was extremely self-conscious about the play's misogyny. That production, done in modern dress, presented the taming of Kate not as a comedy but as a horror show so grotesque that even Petruchio is repelled at the end by the submissive woman he has created.

The 1988 production does not tamper with the meaning of Shakespeare's text in the same way. Instead, it sets the play in the 1950's, the

same repressive decade that spawned *My Fair Lady*, so that the female oppression is given a reasonable historical context. This is an inspired strategy, for Shakespeare's male characters, with their preening and posturing and their unquestioned ownership of women, would have been right at home in the fifties. And the ingenue Bianca, presented as a blonde bimbo reminiscent of the icon (not the person) Marilyn Monroe, would have been in her prime in that decade of saddle shoes and cashmere blouses. If you hate the text and subtext of *Taming of the Shrew*, you definitely hated the fifties and director Richard Monette creates a breathtaking marriage of the two.

But many women will tell you that the technical fireworks (literally—there's even a motorcycle on the set) and other clever ploys (Shakespeare's sonnets sung to Louis Applebaum's fifties rock score) cannot salvage the actual experience of having to watch Kate being abused by Petruchio. If you have an ounce of awareness of the real horror of wife assault, it is difficult to stomach it presented as a comic diversion. Yet (and this too we have to face, according to the program), *The Taming of the Shrew* is especially popular among female viewers. Why? Is it the classic fantasy of the tall, dark, stranger subduing the feisty female that is so appealing? Or are women so well socialized that they too find women being tortured a source of entertainment. Perhaps it's both.

In the end, the Stratford production provides all of the material for a rollicking debate on whether *The Taming of the Shrew* should be tolerated on stage. It contextualizes the play in a way that can be read as wholly sympathetic to the changing status of women, it breathes new life into a work that is in desperate need of a makeover, but it still keeps the abuse intact. If you are not sure what you think about all of this, and if you are unable to get to Stratford to see this extraordinary production, watch out for it during the Christmas season when CBC will televise Stratford's 1988 version.

And keep aware of the ongoing question of what to do with Stratford's virulent sexism and



Petruchio (standing middle) tempts Kate with food he will not give her.

racism. It is bound to surface again next year, especially in the Jewish community, when the Stratford Festival presents *The Merchant of Venice*. ●

# Women Changing Women

*Feminist Organizing for Change: The Contemporary Women's Movement in Canada* by Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin and Margaret McPhail.  
Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988

Reviewed by Debi Brock and Cynthia Wright

Back in the spring of 1984, three Toronto-based socialist-feminists, Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin and Marg McPhail, joined the Women's Liberation Working Group (WLWG). This was an organization of women interested in building a permanent coalition to coordinate feminist action in the city. The Women's Liberation Working Group collapsed before it ever really got going, but as a way to sift through their experience as feminist activists and (one suspects) as an antidote to political burnout, Adamson, Briskin and McPhail began writing *Feminist Organizing for Change*.

*Feminist Organizing for Change* is one of the most ambitious books yet to come out of the Canadian women's movement. In a clear, accessible style, the writers outline the historical, theoretical and organizational aspects of contemporary Canadian feminism. Written from an explicitly socialist-feminist perspective, the book is certain to generate discussion both within the socialist-feminist current as well as among the broader feminist community.

Part One of *Feminist Organizing for Change* introduces some of the basic themes of the book by way of a brief history of the second wave of the women's movement in Canada. Part Two forms the book's theoretical core. Part Three, the lengthiest and most substantial section, looks at feminist organization, practice and strategy—all areas which have been relatively neglected in previous Canadian feminist theoretical work.

Part One is not a comprehensive history of the re-emergence of feminism in the 1960s (such a history is not likely to be attempted for some time!), but an historical overview of the origins of the three main "currents" of the women's movement: institutionalized feminism (of which the National Action Committee on the Status of Women is the leading example); and the more grassroots (and less visible) currents of radical feminism and socialist feminism. They contend that the three currents owe much to their nineteenth-century feminist counterparts. Feminist historians have made this same point about the American and English women's movements, but this is probably the first time it's been argued well for the Canadian case.

However, only one paragraph is devoted to the activities of Black women's organization in nineteenth-century Canada and an even shorter paragraph sketches in the contributions of immigrant and ethnic women. While it is certainly true that "the full extent of their (Black women's) involvement has not yet been researched," the writers have by no means exhausted the existing secondary sources in Black history. For example, there is no mention of Mary Shadd Cary, educator, newspaper publisher and lawyer, who championed abolition and the rights of women. (Her life is documented in *Shadd*, NC Press, 1977.) Native women are not mentioned at all, despite the fact that organized opposition to the clauses in the Indian Act which discriminate against women dates back to the 1870s (to name only one struggle).

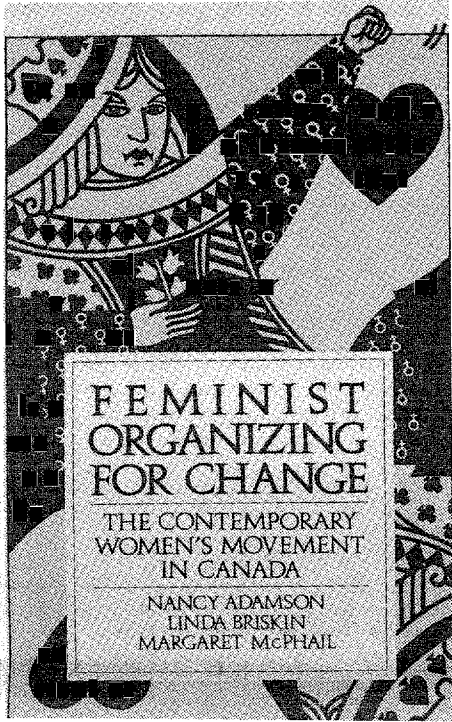
In their discussion of the women's movement since the 1960s, the writers make good use of many unpublished documents deposited in the Canadian Women's Movement Archives. They explore the history of the grassroots sectors of the Canadian women's movement which get relatively less attention in more conventional histories such as the recent *Canadian Women: A History* whose authors apparently did not use the Archives.

At the same time, the heavy reliance on archival documents to the exclusion of other sources, most notably oral history, weakens this first section of the book. Much of the flavour and the passion of these years is missing. The first-person fragments in the book from the writers' own personal/political histories are quite interesting and suggest how much richer the book would have been if they had spoken with others. They might also have avoided some historical errors. For example, the Artistic Woodworkers strike took place in Toronto, not Vancouver, and the 1972 strike at

Toronto General Hospital was led by hospital workers and not by nurses.

More importantly, there are weaknesses in the historical accounts of the three tendencies. Half of the section on the emergence of radical feminism is devoted to Ellen Willis' analysis of the changes within American radical feminism while there is no mention of *The Other Woman*, a radical feminist newspaper which existed in Toronto in the 1970s and which is amply documented in the Archives.

The overview of socialist-feminism would have benefitted from a discussion of the encounter with the Waffle of the New Democratic Party. Similarly, two of the three writers were members of revolutionary socialist organizations, and could have brought to the book a sense of the complex and often difficult relationship that socialist feminists have had with the organized left. Admittedly, as the writers argue in Chapter 3, the relative weakness of the social democratic and revolu-



tionary left in this country has meant that Canadian socialist feminists, compared to their Western European counterparts, have not been heavily pre-occupied by debates about our relationship to the left. But this is no reason to ignore it, since the collapse of much of the organized left in the first part of the eighties also set real limits on the political space of socialist feminists.

While some of the key women's strikes of the late seventies and early eighties, such as Fleck and Puretex (not Purtex as it appears in the text) are mentioned, the reader is left with little sense of the vibrancy of working-class feminism during these years and the consequent possibilities for socialist-feminist organizing.

The tremendous impact that the mobilization of women of colour is having on the contemporary women's movement is dealt with in a cursory manner (a page and a half). It is discussed, along with "The rise of the new right," under the common heading "New Challenges"—and a very unfortunate juxtaposition, to say the least. We read that the women's movement's success will depend on our "understanding and incorporating an anti-racist position into our feminist politics" but, in the end, we are left with very little sense of the issues and debates involved in this challenge.

Part Two moves from the historical to the theoretical. It offers an overview of socialist-feminist analysis and explores the obstacles to radical social change. The writers argue for an integrated vision of socialist feminism in which "neither class, gender, nor race is privileged as the primary source of oppression" but which "understands class, gender, race, and sexual orientation in a complex and contradictory relation to one another." The strength of such a theoretical approach is that it can take into account the objective differences among women while at the same time recognizing that such differences do not carry with them automatic and fixed conclusions about the possibilities for shared political work. Difference can be the focus of positive political struggle.

However, the trouble is that the authors of *Feminist Organizing for Change* write as if this unified vision of socialist feminism were virtually in place. They assert what they should problematize: the fact is that there is no satis-

factory theoretical understanding of the complex interplay among class, gender, race and sexual orientation. Contemporary socialist-feminist theory developed, in part, from a critique of the failure of traditional Marxism to account for women's oppression. Socialist-feminism does not have an adequate theory of racism other than what it has inherited through the socialist tradition. Socialist feminists are really just beginning to integrate systematically an analysis of racism into our theory and political practice. We are definitely not berating the writers for not presenting a theoretical breakthrough in this regard but rather for oversimplifying the theoretical and practical work that has yet to be done. There is a kind of backing off from struggling directly with the issues which bedevils this section of the book.

The discussion of socialist-feminist theory and the state outlines some of the complexities of women's relationship to the state. They oppose the right-wing position that the state's role should be limited, arguing that women need many of the services, such as daycare, that the state can provide. Despite the "criticisms of its functioning, socialist feminism does not argue for less state. Our concern is to get the state to work for women rather than against them."

But surely socialist feminism has more to say about the state than whether we want more or less of it. We also need to ask, as socialists, some very hard questions about what the state is fundamentally about. Can the state "work for women"? They write that "the state is not a monolith; it does respond to pressure." Fair enough; we do need an analysis of the state which is more nuanced than "Smash the state." On the other hand, we are talking about the Canadian state, not the Canadian Labour Congress. Can women's demands be met within the existing political system if we just had NDP-style social democracy or are we talking about a more revolutionary model of empowerment? These questions are not explored.

Part Three, "Analyzing the Women's Movement," is an attempt to grapple with some of the key concerns of feminist organizing for change, and to present some "conceptual tools" developed to undertake this process. This is undoubtedly the most ambitious section of the book, and it is sure to spark debate among feminist activists. While it contains quite useful discussions of feminist organizing (for example, the authors present an excellent critique of the ideology of the women's movement, focusing on the use of the concepts, "the personal is political" and "sisterhood is powerful"), we have limited ourselves here to focusing on three points of concern to us: first, the authors' use of their conceptual tools; second, the place of the book in developing feminist strategy; and finally, the issue of the book's intended audience.

The authors find that the distinctions made between feminist theoretical frameworks (radical, liberal and socialist), as well as categories of experience (i.e., whether one is working or middle class, white or woman of colour, lesbian or straight) are not in themselves sufficient to articulate the differences in feminist practice. Instead of using these classifications as starting points for analysis, they identify two approaches to feminist practice, "mainstreaming" and "disengagement", as the place to begin to look at the politics of the women's movement.

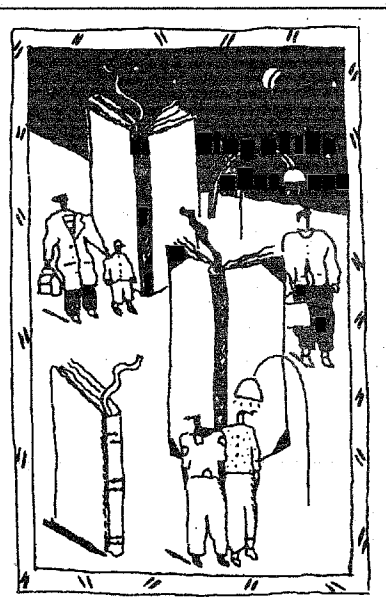
Disengagement has developed out of feminist criticism of existing social and political institutions and a desire to replace them through a view of what society could look like without women's oppression. The authors suggest that:

any critique of the system can be seen as a form of disengagement... (it) is the part of feminist practice that speaks our critique of the existing society, whatever the nature of that critique might be.

Mainstreaming, in contrast:

represents the part of feminist practice that attempts to engage with women around concrete issues arising directly out of their personal experience rather than out of an overall feminist agenda for social change... (it) focuses on what is, rather than on what should be... (and) acknowledges how important it is that women themselves set the agenda for change.

• continued on next page



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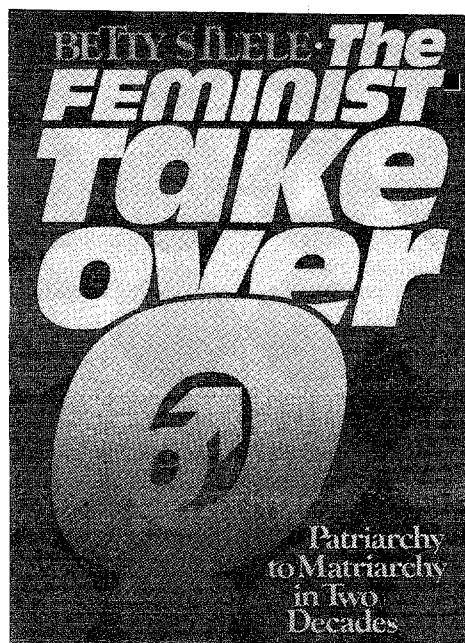
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# Riotous Rhetoric

*The Feminist Takeover: Patriarchy to Matriarchy in Two Decades* by Betty Steele. Tercet, 1987.



Reviewed by Lisa Freedman

I hated this book. Lest there be any confusion, I enjoyed hating this book. And lest there be any further confusion, I went out of my way to hate this book. What else can you say about a book entitled *The Feminist Takeover*, that professes to expose the sham of feminism, that blames feminism and feminists for every woe ever known to "mankind", and that holds up the Miss Teenage Canada Pageant contestants as the paragons of a burgeoning new era of "girls" who hold the key to society's success?

This review will not attempt to dispute what this book has to say. Instead, I'll let the author's own words speak for themselves.

There are hundreds of women's bookstores across the continent that are chock full of excellent books that brilliantly dispute every single line that author Betty Steele writes.

Steele starts off by stating that by the late Seventies, she became convinced that the quality of life in Canada was deteriorating, and she began to trace many problems in society back to the new ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement. She came to believe that she was being manipulated—as in a dictatorship. She wonders whether the movement has reached its zenith in a matriarchy, or if we are still plunging, like lemmings, into a darker sea.

Indifferent to female chauvinism, men are docilely retiring from every area of society, giving way to all feminist demands, in compulsive efforts to atone for the past. Yet this past, she argues, is not the fault of patriarchy. She states that it can be demonstrated historically that the evils of patriarchy were seldom conceived by chauvinistic design. If women studied the historical facts in the evolution of the so-called patriarchy, they might realize that men, generally, never intentionally subjugated women. (Without going into a long diatribe refuting this statement let it just suffice to say that one merely has to look at the history of laws and politics in any country to see patriarchal attitudes.)

She argues that feminists have contributed to a false belief in the bestiality of men. Among the "false" statements upon which she lays the most blame are the "false" statement that one in every ten Canadian men beats his wife, and a like number, their children. She argues that this fact has to be false because she knows too many good and kind, ordinary Canadian men and she can't believe that they would beat their wives and children. She also cites the "false" accusations of child abuse by mothers against fathers, and the lack of statistics on women who abuse their husbands.

Her discussion on women and work starts from the premise that women are taking over everything and that there are no longer any male strongholds. Furthermore she goes on to say that not only are women taking over everything, but they are being better paid than their male counterparts. She states, without documenting, blatant examples of women elbowing hundreds of dedicated, able and hardworking men aside. She goes on to argue that there is more and more biological evidence that women's mental and emotional as well as physical

constraints should limit their role in the workplace. PMS and its attendant symptoms such as tension, mood changes, crying, confusion and weight gain could last from 4 to 14 days. This, combined with menopausal problems, should be taken into account when hiring and determining pay scales. She also adds that surveys (no footnote) show that households where both spouses work are often only marginally better off than one-job households.

She sums up her analysis of women in the workplace by stating that in studying all the ramifications of the thousands of government-funded programs in Canada, steamrolling women past men at all levels, one must begin to wonder if men in the matriarchy will be allowed to have any work, any jobs except, perhaps, those considered most undesirable by the feminist dictators—such as homemaking and mining (mining?).

Government funding of women's groups (or as she states, the overly excessive funding of women's groups) has created a Women's Liberation Movement with no limits, as women

The author is unqualified and the condemnation is not combined with any cogent analysis of why feminists should be blamed. According to Steele, the world men created is the world that should be.

outstrip men in opportunities and advancement in every public area of contemporary society, as well as in dictating personal relationships. She also feels that it is highly improbable that there will ever be any men's groups demanding funding to examine or change in any way their imagined or very real disadvantaged positions in a matriarchy.

On the feminist influence on personal relationships, she argues that the "liberation" in the women's liberation movement that has endorsed promiscuity of both sexes, without any

moral restraints, has been a major factor in the multiplying of all venereal diseases, and is a cause of AIDS. The women's movement has also contributed to impotence and a lower sex drive in many men. This is attributed to the modern woman's aggressiveness in and out of bed. Because these women intimidate men, men are being driven into celibacy, creating a class of thousands of beautiful young women who are to remain the unwilling "spinsters" of feminist times.

Lesbians, of course do not fare well in this book as they are accused of driving wedge after wedge of "hate" and "vengeance" between all women and men. She accuses lesbians (correctly) of demanding freedom from discrimination and that the government include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination under both Federal Human Rights legislation and the Charter of Rights. Interestingly enough, she doesn't elaborate on why this is so horrendous, assuming that by just asking for these rights society is being ruined.

Her main complaint is that the women's movement did not remain in the hands of the moderates, "moderates who might have striven diligently, with greater justice, towards the reasonable goals of equal opportunities in education and the workplace." Instead, it fell into the hands of the militants and fanatics, who orchestrate the mass disruptions and desolation of a revolution, allowing no choices. With some irony, she goes on to say that these feminist militants can be the most outrageous liars.

I would be the last person to say that there are not legitimate criticisms to be made of the women's movement. I'm also willing to admit that there is a place for a book that articulates and explores some of the problems that the women's movement has faced and how the connection between rhetoric and action get played out. I would probably also be willing to concede that this book could probably be fairly written by a non-feminist. *The Feminist Takeover* is not that book.

This book is an angry diatribe against feminists. The author is unqualified in her condemnations, and this condemnation is not combined with any cogent analysis of why feminists are to blame. It does not even entertain a premise that there are legitimate problems in society that need to be changed. According to Steele, the world that men created is the world that should be. Anyone who tampers with this is the enemy. She suggests that we heed the advice of Roland Barthes who, in his "famous" *Mythologies*, cautioned women against backing themselves into a gynaeceum. He wrote, "Women, be therefore courageous, free; play at being men; but never get far from them; compensate for your books (works) by your children... Let us tie the adventure of art to the strong pillars of the home..."

## WOMEN CHANGING WOMEN, continued from previous page

As the authors assert, feminist mainstreaming demonstrates that we must engage with existing institutions and ideologies, since "change requires that these ideas be accepted and acted on by the majority of people."

Both approaches are necessary to feminist practice, regardless of the theoretical approach, but to be successful, feminists must maintain a balance between them. This balance must be determined by the particular issue and circumstances within which we are organizing. If we put too much emphasis on disengagement, we risk marginalization, while if we focus too much on mainstreaming, we fall prey to institutionalizations.

These definitions are therefore much broader than commonplace feminist understandings of the terms, which would have the practice of disengagement synonymous with separatism (and therefore some forms of radical feminism), and mainstreaming synonymous with adding equal rights for women to the status quo (like liberal feminism). However, when they move from discussing methodology (theory) to strategy (practice), the authors often slip back into the narrower use of these terms. While they have begun the task of clarifying the problems of marginalization and institutionalization, this slippage demonstrates the complexity of negotiating this process.

Our main concern with these terms is not their use as a methodology but as a strategy. How do we determine the appropriate balance between the two if we are already structurally marginalized, as we are when we organize around lesbian rights? What does a politics of disengagement look like in the context of liberal feminism? What if it is not only 'the public' which is marginalizing a group of feminists organizing around a particular issue, but other feminists? How does geographical context affect practice and strategy, given the tremendous differences between working in a large urban centre and a small community? An attempt to demonstrate how we can use these

tools in our future practice and thus avoid or minimize some of the pitfalls of feminist organizing would, we think, have been a really useful contribution.

Part Three would have been strengthened had the authors presented more concrete examples as illustrations of their points. Greater use of case studies of feminist organizing, with all of their contradictions, successes and failures, might have better informed the reader how feminists have grappled with the problems of organizing, including concerns which they raise around determining the kind of organizations we want to build, internal processes most appropriate to a group's goals, and how we deal with sources of tension like unacknowledged leadership. This too would help us to develop our politics. In particular, building coalitions has had enormous impact in the development of feminist politics (particularly socialist feminist) and in shaping our future strategies. The discussion of coalition politics could have been a much fuller and richer one had women who have been active in building coalitions been asked to contribute their experiences.

Finally, there is a real confusion of audience throughout the book, which is most pronounced in Part Three. *Feminist Organizing for Change* is an ambitious book not only because it tries to present some of the history of the women's movement and analyze currents of feminist theory, but because it addresses this material to two audiences. It is directed both to activists engaged in the ongoing work of organizing for change and to persons new to feminist theory and practice (for example, women's studies students).

However, at times the reader hears the voice of activist speaking to activist, while at others the impression is one of teacher to student. This can be disconcerting, but the clashing of the double audience is one which the reader must simply bear with, in recognition of the authors' goal to have the book be accessible to

as broad an audience as possible.

This is a book which will be read quite differently by women new to or unfamiliar with feminist activism and by activists themselves. The former will read it as a factual introduction to the complex history and politics of feminism. Because of its scope and accessibility, presenting as it does complex debates in a straightforward manner, we can expect to find this book on many women's studies course lists.

The latter audience, however, may be less satisfied, remembering events differently than the authors and disagreeing on points of analysis. As well, activists are bound to point to gaps in feminist history and practice, expecting more attention to issues and events which we have been immediately involved in and/or consider critical developments in feminist practice in Canada.

This book is a testament to the growth and complexity of our movement and difficulties presented in analysing it. The diversity and power of the Canadian women's movement is such that no one text is enough to encompass it all. That the authors, as feminist activists, took on writing this book is no small feat. Too often, the task of recording and analysing our practice falls to feminist academics who have not participated directly in shaping these politics, while activists, immersed in the daily activities of making change are too busy (and exhausted) to take on the task of recording our practice.

This book is an important read for anyone participating in or interested in the politics of feminist organizing in Canada.

Debi Brock and Cynthia Wright are Toronto-based socialist feminists active in the International Women's Day Committee. They want to thank IWDC members for the discussion on *Feminist Organizing for Change* which helped shape this review.

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Sans Souci,  
Dionne Brand

Thinking Through the Body,  
Jane Gallop

A Burst of Light,  
Audre Lorde

The Women's Section  
at SCM

## FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS, continued from page 9

of tourists being ripped off by the native hustlers. I kept thinking: "She paid for this?"

Ah well, at least I didn't have to pay for the vodka and tonic at the opening night party afterwards. And it was fun, and I found talking with Monika there, that she and



Midi Onodera (right) made *Displaced View* to explore her relationship to her grandmother.

her reasons for making the film the way that she did, were much more interesting than I had found the film. Lots of local filmmakers were looking immensely relieved not to be in the mixing studio or the lab (where they all swore they had been non-stop for the last three months) and were ready for a party. The tonic water shone an eerie blue white under the black lights of the RPM club. Tonic water is the only drink I know that matches the decor.

### Thursday, September 15, 1988

Last night's *Calling the Shots* party was a big hit. I merely passed through on my way home to Vitamin C capsules and bed. I am negotiating a peace plan with messengers from a cold virus who keep scratching at the back of my throat. My body's threat to succumb to illness has countered my initial resolve to be watching *Three Sisters* at 9 am. Instead I lie abed a little longer.

By noon I am sitting in the theatre of the ROM to listen to the Feminismo panel, part of the Craft Conference activities of the Festival. Cristal Buschman, Magritte Shenky, Kay Bachman, Janice Cole, Vera Chytilova, Deborah Zimmerman and Amy Goldstein talk about their choice of material, the status of women in production in the various countries, about political and economic restrictions and censorship.

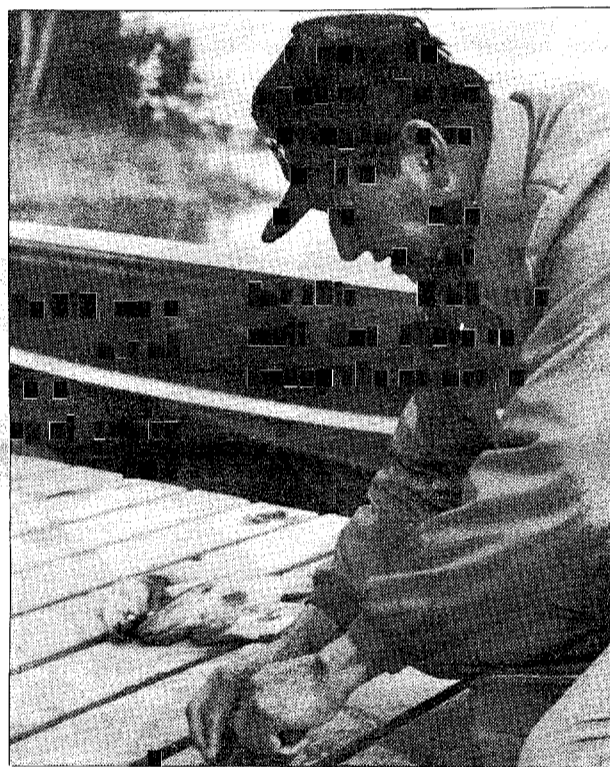
At 4, *Crossing the River* (25 min) by Camelia Frieberg, about a woman Salvadorean refugee, *Neguaquan-Lac La Croix* (57 min) by Judith Doyle, about the native community of Lac la Croix, and *The Displaced View* (51 min) by Midi Onodera, about her exploration of her relationship to her grandmother, were screened. *Crossing the River* is a solid, responsible documentary reflecting the reasons for, and the hardships of, being a Salvadorean political refugee: fear for your life, and separation from family and loved ones, cultural alienation. *Neguaquan-Lac La Croix* was a similarly solid, politically-committed documentary, this one about a Northern Ontario Ojibway community's fight to remain economically productive. Midi Onodera's personal documentary, *The Displaced View*, tries to trace a framework for meaning and identity—to identify the position of its subject/filmmaker. To do so it exposes aspects of Onodera's personal history through fragments of information gleaned from her family, through an examination of her emotional connection to her grandmother with whom she shares no spoken language, and by a gathering of evidence of her lived experience of culture—objects, images and descriptive phrases of voice over narration.

Canadian shorts tonight! I've been looking forward to these. They all sound potentially interesting—a crop of short dramas, almost exclusively by women. Anticipation is not always met by complete satisfaction and tonight was a night of mixed blessings to be sure.

Kim Derko's *Scientific Girl* (18 min.) had moments of playfulness, especially when it makes the camera "visible," and has the actor lose it, find it, confront it and move it. But the basic gist of the film is a young woman lecturing us on Jean Martin Charcot's work with and photography of "hysterics" and psychoanalysis. These she connects to footage of women and psychiatrists in bits of forties film footage. She speaks of Charcot's first photographic scientific studio and of the women's weepies produced in Hollywood 50 years later. This is the basic point of this film and the basic joke: Boy those guys—Charcot, Freud, Hollywood movie directors—sure had some silly (horrifying?) ideas about women, eh?

It struck me a little like a feminist pretensions-to-theory film version of those old movie clips of people trying to get airborne in various doomed flying machines. And, I could be wrong but I don't think that having the actor play to the camera or push it around really moves this into the realm of material using the medium. In the end it comes off like a (not particularly interesting) slide/lecture/performance piece with a set up: We see the actress come up the freight elevator and go down the hall to the studio where she will deliver her lecture to us, after "setting up" and moping about for a bit.

*Love of Contradiction* (27 min.) by Rosamund Owen was more interesting as film. It engaged the Hollywood detective film devices—voice-over hard knocks narration, seedy hotel rooms, bars, powder rooms, and rootless characters—and there were some interesting moments of "narrative honesty." The opening sequence was appropriately playful with and adoring of the genre. When her lover arrives and they embrace and then passion dissipates, I thought we might have an interesting and unexpected twist; but, finally, the fizzle seemed to be less dramatically significant than a result of the director's hesitancy. In another sequence, the voice-over monologue as she stands at the mirror in the powder room, musing to herself a dime-store romance fantasy of seduction, is a nicely written and directed moment. And the final sexual abandonment in the alley hints that Owen might have more to say next time around. She has an ear for this kind of voice-over narration and does it quite well; but, there remain moments of awkwardness between the actors, and the dialogue gets stiff a little too



Judith Doyle's *Neguaquan-Lac La Croix* fights for the survival of a native community.

often. *Love of Contradictions*'s ambitions are honest, potentially eccentric, and interesting.

*Inside/Outside* (27 minutes) is Lori Spring's first film and it is a beautifully realized work. It is so obvious that she knows what she wants the film to look like and it is carefully, meticulously structured to unfold. While the story itself and the character—a woman who has become overwhelmed by the world and has decided to stay inside—is somewhat relentless and we never get to any root cause for the withdrawal, it is not easy to connect sympathetically with her plight. She video tapes what is going on outside. She has her groceries delivered and seduces the delivery boy. She has friends in for dinner. That's the first crack in the wall. But not until the woman across the street, played by Jackie Burroughs, lies lifeless in her chair for too many hours does she finally venture out and, it is implied, decide to recommit herself to living on the outside as well.

*I Want to Be Alone* (30 minutes) by Ira Levy, Peter Williamson and Margaret Dragu was a wild and wonderful shock in the midst of these more sombre meditations. Using wildly coloured rags and flags, through urban, cultural, industrial, and natural landscapes, a visual narrative unreels almost entirely without words. The film features choreographer and performance artist Margaret Dragu as the heroic Red Greta—a cultural model: a revolutionary Greta Garbo. And once again the stature of the divine Jackie Burroughs amazes me, as she plays the mad film director/producer, taking the burlesqued caricature right over the top, fearlessly. In asking Dragu about the grand gestures of the film and its sense of mythic adventure, she responded, "It's done in a heroic way because I believe that our lives are very heroic. Real life is kind of heroic." The energy in this film is dizzying. Be prepared for movement, colour and a wild celebration of larger than life heroism.

The final film in this program of shorts was Carol Anna McBrides's *Wetworks*, a beautifully photographed series of evocative images of a beachside bath house and the two women who have come there during the course of their affair. Unfortunately, the beauty of the empty sets ended by feeling more vacuous than beautiful, because the relationship which was meant to provide the narrative thread remained completely opaque and inaccessible.

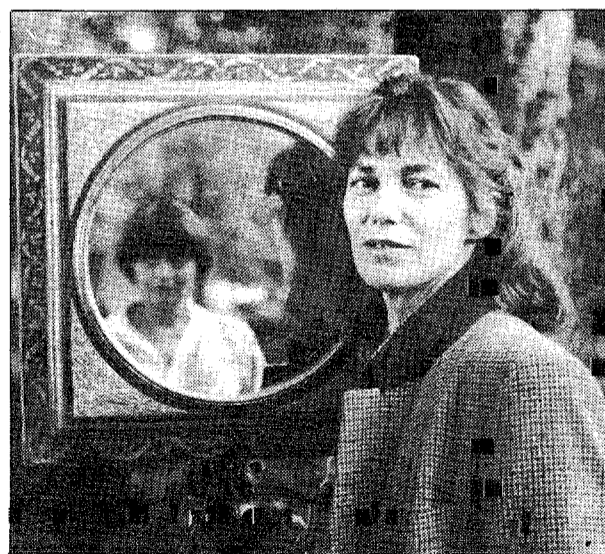
### Friday, September 16, 1988

A short day movie-wise, I polished off the first installment of these journal/reviews, between *Vasily and Vasilisa* (96 min., U.S.S.R., 1982) by Irina Poplavskaya in the morning and Lea Pool's *Straight to the Heart* (90 min.) that night. Poplavskaya's film was evidence of yet another astounding Soviet woman director. It is an historical epic tale of a married peasant couple in which the wife exiles the husband to the shed for the final 30 years of their marriage. Their youth, hopes, disappointments and their endurance through work, children, wars, deaths and his sexual infidelity to their ultimate reconciliation as the man lies dying are depicted with an intensely humane and subtle understanding of how suffering is endured.

### Saturday, September 17, 1988

*Chocolat* (105 min., France) by Claire Denis was one of those nicely photographed African landscape movies about the days of colonialism—from the white perspective, of course. This time the perspective is that of a young French woman, travelling in Cameroon. Receiving a ride from a Black man, she reminisces as they drive along about her childhood there. The main story focusses on her relationship to another black man who worked for her and her family when she was a child. The story is told in flashback. Unfortunately, there is nothing outstanding to recommend this film and there is nothing that I could discern in the film itself to explain the title, other than perhaps the filmmaker's own desire to make this man consumable or perhaps her memories of racism, palatable.

From this, I went to see *Jane B.* by Agnès V (95 min. France) by Agnès Varda. Now this I liked. Jane Birken throughout remains the opaque, unknowable "movie star," though contradictorily we learn more and more about her: her attitudes, aspirations, what she likes, how she spends her days, how she decorates her home (stuffed sewer rat on the piano), her peculiar sense of humour. We learn more about Varda as well, of course. This is a film rich in images and layered with ideas. It appears to be a respectful collaboration between two very differently talented women on the subject of Jane Birken. Birken, in turn, has two personae: one, the woman with a childhood and lovers and children and the wish to be recognized as ordinary, like anyone and the other, Jane Birken the star, who has played the role of muse to various men, who is a movie actress, who adopts various guises and costumes and scenarios to show and to counterpoint the positions she has occupied in her own imagination, in the imagination of others and, here again, in the imagination of Varda. This is a very rich and very interesting documentary about a very interesting and very opaque woman.



Agnès Varda's *Jane B.* explores the personae of actress/woman, Jane Birken.

And so the closing night of the Festival arrives. I have been invited to dinner with about ten other women—filmmakers, critics, a producer and distributor. It is a perfect close to an exhilarating week, a chance to talk and argue about what we've seen, get those addresses and telephone numbers, and say goodbyes to friends before everyone is lost in the crowd of closing night parties and the rush to catch flights home tomorrow.

Joyce Mason is a freelance editor, writer and film script consultant. She is currently coordinating a publication project for a book on Canadian women film directors.

# OUTSIDE BROADSIDE

Compiled by  
Helen Lenskyj and Jackie Edwards

## November 1988

### • Tuesday, November 1:

The Woman's Common presents a Reality Show, Cartoons by Lesley Turner. 580 Parliament Street. Refreshments served. Cash bar. Free. Info: 975-9079. To Saturday, November 26.

### • Wednesday, November 2:

Premiere screening of NFB's second film in the Feminization of Poverty series: For Richer, For Poorer. Discussion to follow, with Geraldine Waldman, Judge George Thomas and Elspeth Heyworth. 8 pm. Free. St. Lawrence Centre, 27 Front Street East. Info: Rose Mangone, NFB, 973-9094.



### • Wednesday, November 2:

Feminist Film Series presents International Sweethearts of Rhythm (USA, 1986), and The Canneries (Canada, 1987). 8 pm, OISE Auditorium, 252 Bloor Street West. \$3. Info: 923-6641 ext. 2204.

### • Wednesday, November 2:

Salome Lucas of Women Working With Immigrant Women leads a discussion on immigrant women in Canada. \$2 donation. 7:30 pm. Buck-Bethune Educational Centre, 24 Cecil Street.

### • Wednesday, November 2:

Woman's Common Annual General Meeting. 7:30 pm. 519 Church Street. Info: 975-0745

### • Wednesday, November 2:

Feminist Film Series presents International Sweethearts of Rhythm (USA 1986) and The Canneries (Canada, 1987). \$3. 8 pm. OISE auditorium, 252 Bloor Street West. Info: 923-6641 ext. 2204.

WOMEN  
IN 3-D

### • Thursday, November 3:

Aftermath presents a discussion on child sexual abuse, When and Where Can Families Get Help? 8 pm. 2nd floor auditorium, Ontario Hydro Building, 700 University Avenue. Info: 461-4709.

### • Thursday, November 3:

Book Launching: Canadian Women: A History, by Alison Prentice and others. 7:30 pm. SCM Bookroom, 333 Bloor Street West. Refreshments served. Info: 979-9624.

### • Thursday, November 3:

The YWCA offers an information session on new computer skills and on-the-job training course, Working Skills for Women Option 11. Free 2:30 pm. YWCA, 80 Woodlawn Avenue East. Info: 961-8100.

### • Thursday, November 3:

Opportunity for Advancement, a group for low income women under stress, begins a 7 week course today. Info: 787-1481.

### • Thursday, November 3:

Rexdale Women's Centre presents a free information workshop on Women and Banking. 1:30-3:30 pm at the Albion Community Centre, 1485 Albion Road. Free child care. Info: 745-0062. Also Thursday, November 10.

### • Thursday, November 3:

Women's Equality Debate with Barbara McDougall, Sheila Copps, and Marion Dewar. 7:30 pm. Free. Brigantine Room, York Quay. Info: 973-3000.

### • Friday, November 4:

The Rose Cafe presents the 4th Lesbian and Gay Production/Alice B. Theatre featuring Rick Rankin, Susan Finque, Timothy Jones. 7 pm. \$5.00. 547 Parliament St. Info: 968-7199.

### • Friday, November 4:

Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care present its 6th Annual Conference. Info: 323-0513. To Monday, November 7.

### • Saturday, November 5:

National Action Committee on the Status of Women presents Women Vote! Day. Info: Janet Maher, Southern Ontario Regional Representative, 271-1313.

### • Saturday, November 5:

The Rose Cafe presents an Arts and Craft Show, Artistic Vision. 1-8 pm. 546 Parliament St. Info: 968-7199.

### • Saturday, November 5:

Womynly Way Workshop on Managing the Stage for Theatre. Info: 925-6568. Also Sunday, November 6.

### • Saturday, November 5:

Women's Zodiac Dance at 519 Church Street. 8 pm. \$5/\$6. Info: 392-6874.

### • Saturday, November 5:

Rita McNeil in concert at Roy Thomson Hall. Info: 593-4828.

### • Saturday, November 5:

Women's College Hospital offers a Pre-Conception Workshop. 9:30 am-12:30 pm. Women's College Hospital, classroom A, Burton Hall. 76 Grenville St. Info: 323-6111.

### • Saturday, November 5:

Remembering War, Building Peace: Voice of Women breakfast seminar on alternatives to militarism. 8:30 am-1 pm. 21 Old Mill Road (near Old Mill subway). Info: VOW 537-9343.

### • Saturday, November 5:

Jam Session at the Woman's Common, 3-6 pm. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079. Also Saturday, November 12 and November 19.

## WEEK OF NOVEMBER 6

### • Thursday, November 6:

Sing along with the Music Machine at the Woman's Common. No cover. 8-12 pm. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

### • Sunday, November 6:

Sunday brunch performance by singer Janet Whiteway at the Woman's Common. 1 pm. No cover. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079. Also Sunday, November 20.

### • Monday, November 7:

Popular Feminism Speakers Series presents Randi Warne and Mary Anne MacFarlane. Topic: Women and Religion. Free. 8 pm. Room 2-211, OISE, 252 Bloor Street West. Info: 923-6641 ext. 2204.

### • Tuesday, November 8:

Workshop on Domestic Violence. 7-9 pm. Fairview Public Library, Fairview Mall. Info: Ann Sargent, 226-5505.

### • Tuesday, November 8:

Feminist Film Series presents Soldier Girls (USA 1981). \$3. 8 pm. OISE auditorium, 252 Bloor Street West. Info: 923-6641 ext. 2204.

### • Thursday, November 10:

Behind the Veil: Nuns will be aired on Vision TV. 8 pm and 11 pm. Info: NFB, 973-9094. Also Thursday, November 17.

### • Tuesday, November 10:

Panel discussion: Lesbian Mother Couples, at the Woman's Common. 8 pm. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

### • Thursday, November 10:

Country singer Joanne MacKall performs at the Woman's Common. Two shows, 8:30 and 10 pm. Members \$3, guests \$6, sliding scale. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

### • Saturday, November 12:

The Cameron House presents Good For A Girl, featuring Sandy Alexander, 408 Queen St. W. 10 pm. Cover: \$2.99. Info: 367-0338.

### • Saturday, November 12:

An Album launch concert with Arlene Mantle and In Solidarity Band sponsored by On the Line Music Collective, CKLN, Canadian Auto Workers. Trinity St. Paul's Church, 427 Bloor St. W. 7:30 pm. Info: 537-7005.

### • Saturday, November 12:

Women's College Hospital offers a Pre-Conception Workshop. 9:30 am-12:30 pm. Women's College Hospital, classroom A, Burton Hall. 76 Grenville St. Info: 323-6111.

## WEEK OF NOVEMBER 13

### • Sunday, November 13:

Solo pianist-composer Carole Anne Burris performs at the Woman's Common. 3 pm. Members \$3, guests \$6, sliding scale. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

### • Monday, November 14:

Chapters Bookstore and Cafe presents a reading with the authors of Canadian Women: A History, Alison Prentice, Paula Bourne, Gail Brandt, Beth Light, Wendy Mitchinson and Naomi Black. 8 pm. \$14.95 includes dinner. 2360 Yonge. Info: 481-9203.

### • Tuesday, November 15:

Screening of NFB film, Firewords, at the Woman's Common. 8 pm. Members \$2, guests \$3, sliding scale. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

### • Tuesday, November 15:

Feminist Film Series presents Born in Flames (USA 1981). \$3. 8 pm. OISE auditorium, 252 Bloor Street West. Info: 923-6641 ext. 2204.

### • Wednesday, November 16:

Moving Forward—Making transit safer for women. Public meeting on TTC safety audit. 7 pm. Trinity St. Paul's Centre, 427 Bloor Street West. Info: METRAC, 392-3135.

### • Thursday, November 17:

Company of Sirens presents Mother Tongues, an imagistic exploration of women's sexuality. Theatre Centre, 191 Lippincott. Info: 927-7088. To Friday, November 25.

### • Friday, November 18:

Sagewoods, a women's retreat and research centre, presents a workshop, Burned Out. Discussions, good food and new people. RR #2, Aylmer, Ontario. Info: (519) 773-3939. To Sunday, November 6.

### • Saturday, November 19:

New Women in Sobriety presents Laverda Hearts, stories and photography of Lesbian romance and erotica followed by a women's alcohol-free dance. 7:30 pm. St. Lawrence Hall. 157 King St. E. Tickets available at The Woman's Common, Toronto Women's Bookstore. Info: 653-8614.

### • Saturday, November 19:

Annual 519 Church Street Community Centre fundraiser. 12-4 pm. \$1. 519 Church Street.

### • Saturday, November 19:

Shake, Rattle and Roll: Mums and Tots Brunch at the Woman's Common. 10 am-1 pm. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

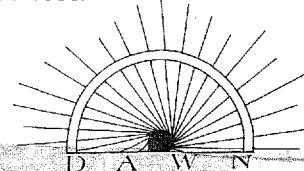
### • Saturday, November 19:

Counselling Issues and Techniques with Adult Children of Alcoholics, a Community Resources and Initiatives workshop with Connie Coniglio. Info: 658-1752.

## WEEK OF NOVEMBER 20

### • Sunday, November 20:

DisAbled Women's Network presents a discussion, The Impossible Takes Maybe Forever: Images of Disabled Women in Media. Info, voice or TDD: 755-6060.



### • Monday, November 21:

The Rose Cafe presents Lesbians Who Wear Lipstick, a comedy produced by Marci Rogers. 547 Parliament St. Info: 968-7199. To Wednesday, November 23.

### • Monday, November 21:

Rexdale Women's Centre sponsors a drop-in brown bag lunch and afternoon of conversation. 1:30 pm. 925 Albion Road, Room 305 (one block east of Islington). Info: 745-0062.

### • Tuesday, November 22:

Feminist Film Series presents On Guard (Australia, 1983). \$3. 8 pm. OISE auditorium, 252 Bloor Street West. Info: 923-6641 ext. 2204.

### • Thursday, November 24:

Ryerson Gay and Lesbian Studies series: Lesbians and Gays in Sport. Free. Refreshments. 8 pm. Ryerson Institute, Victoria and Gould Streets. Info: 979-5179.

### • Thursday, November 24:

Sherry Shute and Cathy McKay perform at the Woman's Common. 2 shows, 8:30 and 10 pm. Members \$5, guests \$8, sliding scale. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

### • Friday, November 25:

Women's Independent Thoughtz (WITZ), a feminist seminar/discussion group. Topic: Wen-do. Discussion/demonstration. Free. Location and info: 234-5981.

### • Saturday, November 26:

Womynly Way Workshop on Seeing the Light: Knowing Your Gear. Info: 925-6568. Also Sunday, November 27.

### • Saturday, November 26:

First Annual Craft Show and Sale at the Woman's Common. 11 am-7 pm. 1st floor, 580 Parliament. Info and space reservations: Maggie, 690-7082. To Sunday, November 27.

**WEEKLY**

**WEEK OF NOVEMBER 27**

• **Monday, November 28:**  
Opening of group show exhibiting all media, at the Woman's Common, 580 Parliament. Info: Maggie, 690-7082.



• **Tuesday, November 29:**  
Feminist Film Series presents Broken Mirrors (Netherlands, 1987). \$3. 8 pm. OISE auditorium, 252 Bloor Street West. Info: 923-6641 ext. 2204.

• **Wednesday, November 30:**  
Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics (OCAC), Benefit. Lee's Palace, 529 Bloor St. West. Tickets available at Toronto Women's Bookstore, DEC, OCAC. Info: 532-8193.

• **Wednesday, November 30:**  
Book Launching: In the Name of the Fathers, by Susan Crean. 7:30 pm. SCM Bookroom, 333 Bloor St. West. Info: 979-9624.

• **Sunday:**  
Sound Women on CKLN. Interviews and information on cultural events. 12 pm-1 pm.

• **Sunday:**  
New Women in Sobriety (NEWS), support group for lesbians and lesbian-positive women recovering from alcohol or drug addiction. 3:30-5:30 pm. Info: Mary, 653-8614; Shirley, 920-0582.

• **Sunday:**  
Lesbians of Colour (LOC), a social and support group for Native, Asian, South Asian, Black and Latin lesbians regardless of age meets every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month, 519 Church St. 3:45-5:30 pm. Info: Michele, 588-2930. (Out-of-town lesbians of colour can write for information: LOC, PO Box 6597, Station A, Toronto, M5W 1K4.)

• **Monday to Friday:**  
"By All Means," a noon-time women's radio magazine show. Every day at 12:15 on CIUT-FM 89.5. Interviews, reviews, commentary and chit chat. Tune in! Info: 595-0909.

• **Monday:**  
The Women's Group, an open lesbian discussion group, meets at 519 Church St. 8 pm. Info: 392-6874.

• **Monday and Wednesday:**  
The Women's Information Line is open from 7-9 pm. Messages may be left any time at 598-3714.

• **Tuesday:**  
Lesbian fuck-the-discussion group meets for informal basketball, movie nights and other events. 7 pm, U of T Women's Centre, 49 St. George. Info: 978-8201.

• **Tuesday:**  
International Women's Day Committee meets alternative Tuesdays. Info: 531-6608.

• **Tuesday:**  
Running Wilde, gay and lesbian running club meets for a run at University Settlement House, 23 Grange (off McCaul), 6 pm sharp. Facilities available.

• **Tuesday:**  
Ontario Coalition of Abortion Clinics planning meeting every second Tuesday, 7 pm at Trinity-St. Pauls, 427 Bloor Street West. Info: 532-8193.

• **Tuesday:**  
Lesbian and Gay Youth Toronto meets at 519 Church Street Community Centre, 7-10 pm.

• **Tuesday and Thursday:**  
The Lesbian Phone Line is open for calls from women. 7:30-9:30 pm. 533-6120.

• **Wednesday:**  
International Women's Day Committee (IWDC), a socialist feminist activist group, meets on alternative Wednesdays. Info: Nancy, 531-6608.

• **Thursday:**  
Gaywire, a weekly radio show on gay and lesbian issues. 6:15-7 pm, on CIUT 89.5 FM.

• **Thursday:**  
Lesbian and Gay Alliance at York. 5-7 pm. 107 Stedman. Info: 736-5324.

• **Thursday:**  
Zami, support and discussion group for Black and West Indian lesbians and gays. 8 pm. 519 Church Street.

• **Thursday:**  
Gaycare Toronto, counselling group for lesbians and gay men. 8-10 pm. 519 Church Street.

• **Thursday:**  
Bratty performs at Robert's on Church Street from 10 pm to 1 am. No cover.

• **Friday:**  
Bratty performs at the Cameron, 408 Queen St. every Friday 6-8 pm.

• **Friday:**  
Feminist bisexual women's support group meets on the second Friday of the month, 519 Church Street, room 23, 6-8 pm.

• **Saturday:**  
Running Wilde, gay and lesbian running club, meets for fitness and fun at 9 am at 519 Church Street. Come dressed to run.

• **Saturday:**  
Alternatives, drop-in for youth 26 and under, sponsored by Lesbian and Gay Youth Toronto. 1-4 pm at 519 Church Street.

• **Saturday:**  
The Native Women's Resource Centre holds a bingo night. 10:30 pm-1:30 am. 525 Wilson Avenue (near Wilson subway). Info: 963-9963.

**DISCOVER**

**The Woman's Common**

*Good friends, good times,  
now that's special...*

- restaurant dining (including weekend brunch)
- lounge and library facilities
- bar and musical evenings
- forum for special cultural events
- film and speaker series
- exhibits by women artists



*If you haven't experienced  
The Woman's Common...  
here's what you've missed,*

- June and Jean Millington
- Moms and Tots Brunch
- Itah Sadu
- Notso Amazon Virgin Cup Dance
- Jane Rule
- Donna Kwasnicki Art Show
- Film-"Beyond the Veil"

**For information on upcoming events, call 975-9079**  
Sliding scale membership available from \$15.00  
Open: Tues.-Fri. 4pm to 1am, Sat. 11am to 1am, Sun. 11am to 11pm  
580 Parliament Street, Toronto, Ontario M4X 1P8

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

*Crossing Cultures!*  
a festival of  
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dance  
theatre  
comedy

november  
18 · 19 · 20

IN CONCERT

8pm

friday  
Ebony Voices  
Suzanne Bird  
Itah Sadu  
Sherie

saturday  
Beverly Glenn-Copeland  
WITH SUSAN McNAUGHTON  
Assar Santana  
Candide Granada  
AKA PASCALE MALATERRE  
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AND TWO DAYS OF CULTURAL WORKSHOPS  
TICKETS: "I Want It All" Pass \$25 / Concerts \$8 advance • \$10 door per concert



and

with  
COMMUNITY RESOURCES  
AND INITIATIVES

AN EVENING LECTURE WITH

**JoAnn Loulan**

"What's So Funny  
About Lesbian Sex?"

Friday, December 2  
8:00 p.m.

WORKSHOPS  
TICKETS: \$10 advance / \$12 at the door

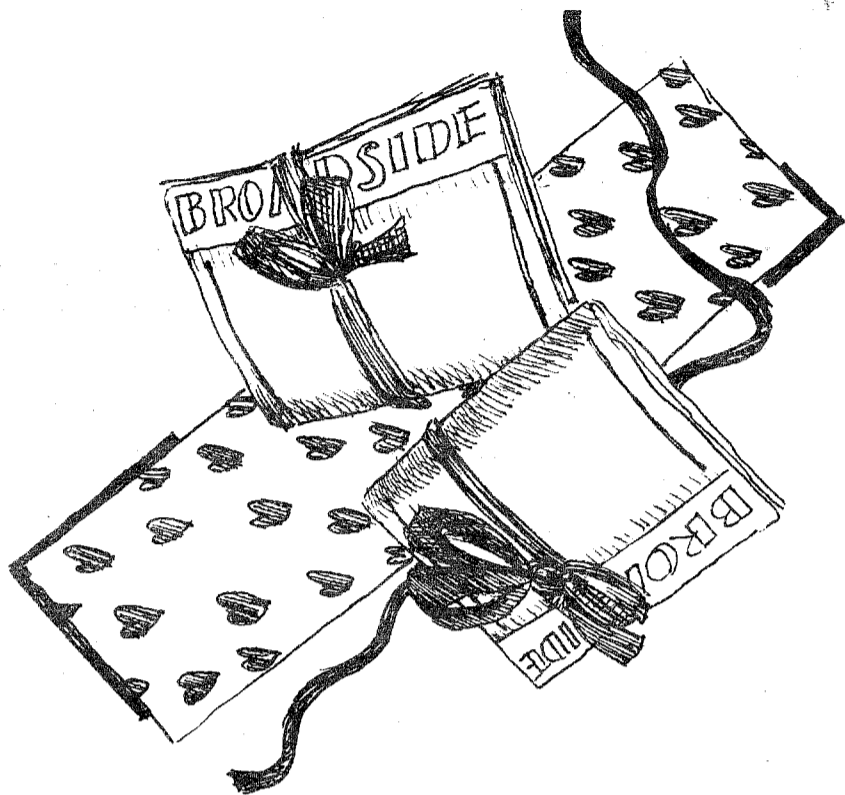


Both shows at Trinity-St. Paul's Centre  
427 Bloor St. West

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT: Womynly Way Productions, 427 Bloor Street West; Toronto Women's Bookstore, 73 Harbord Street; DEC Books, 229 College Street; SCM Book Room, 333 Bloor Street West; Glad Day Books, 598A Yonge; and at the door

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: 925-6568

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**WOMEN'S RETREAT & RESEARCH** Centre, Sagewoods, 2-1/2 hrs South West of Toronto is now open. Call or write Cat Charissage, Sagewoods, RR 2, Aylmer, Ontario, N5H 2R2; (519) 773-3939.

**BED AND BREAKFAST** for women — near downtown Montreal. Close to absolutely everything. For info. call (514) 288-9890.

**BED AND BREAKFAST** in Toronto for Women. Centrally located, 601 Crawford St., Toronto M6G 3K1; (416) 588-4240.

**BED & BREAKFAST** Stay right in the heart of the Church-Wellesley Village in a beautifully restored Edwardian House. Mastercard/VISA. 10 Cawthra Square, Toronto, Ontario, M4X 1K8; or call (416) 922-6898.

**EMPLOYMENT** Work at the Woman's Common. Accepting applications now for enthusiastic community oriented individuals for service, bar, kitchen positions. Apply weekdays 3 pm-6 pm. 580 Parliament Street. (416) 975-9079.

**GOLDEN THREADS**, a contact publication for lesbians over 50 and women who love older women. Canada and U.S. Confidential, warm, reliable. Sample copy mailed discreetly, \$5.00 (U.S.), or send a self-addressed envelope for free information. Golden Threads, P.O. Box 3177, Burlington, UT 05401.

**LESBIAN TEACHERS** discuss homophobia in the classroom last Sunday of the month at The Woman's Common. (416) 462-2939.

**ATTENDING A WORKSHOP** or Conference in Montreal? Bed & Breakfast for women—renovated Victorian townhouse in downtown Montreal—close to restaurants, boutiques, bars. Lindsey's B&B, 3974 Laval Avenue, Montreal, H2W 2J2; (514) 843-4869.

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**Deadline:** The 20th of the preceding month.

**Cost:** 30¢ per word with a \$5 minimum. All classifieds must be prepaid.

**Method:** fill out the enclosed form and send with method of payment (cheque or money order) to **Broadside, PO Box 494, Station P, Toronto, M5S 2T1**  
Include a contact name.

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