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Feminist Book Fair Followup

Dear friends,

After spending the summer cleaning up the Book Fair, paying the bills, moving out of the office and into our homes, writing government reports and so on, we are sending out a final letter to Fair participants. Although we do not have a deficit, we do not have the funds to send this to all participants—we are counting on your cooperation to make sure that those who are interested will have a chance to read it.

It seems impossible to evaluate the Book Fair in any sort of global way, for not only are there areas where we succeeded and others where we failed, there is no real consensus on what those areas are. We made a number of difficult decisions during the organization of the Fair and of course it is easy to look back now to say we should have done it differently.

We have had a lot of positive feedback from those who attended: praise for the volunteers who worked during the Fair and for the simultaneous translation, appreciation of the workshops and readings. We know that many friendships and new working relationships were formed during the week of the Fair, lesbian visibility was an important aspect of the Fair and many women of colour and women from the so-called Third World commented that they were pleased to have come to an event that was not dominated by the concerns of white Western feminists.

A major criticism that was made of the Fair was low public attendance (about 7,000 people came). We had always thought that our projected figure of 10,000 was fairly ambitious, but nevertheless we hoped to achieve it. Sometimes attendance seemed lower than it actually was because everyone was in workshops and the exhibition hall looked deserted. And that was, no doubt, partly because we placed the accent on the program as opposed to the exhibition, on authors rather than publishers. Some publishers were disappointed, feeling that they had come a long way at great expense to an event that was more a feminist conference than a book fair. Others stated they had made useful contacts, sales were satisfactory and they were pleased with the experience. We did feel that not enough emphasis was put on the book fair itself, a problem that was exacerbated by the fact that we were obliged to hold some of the workshops at the opposite end of the campus.

On the other hand, perhaps attendance was lower than hoped for because no attempt was made to hide the lesbian content of the Fair (we have since endured several homophobic attacks). Even the word "feminist" in the late 80's seems to cause disinterest! And when we did try to publicize the event through the media, we were obliged to play up authors rather than books, because one well-known name is more newsworthy than 10,000 books. When all of this is taken into account, we still think that 7,000 people is a lot for a feminist

event, and that, considering the odds, it was quite acceptable.

When evaluating the event, we must remember the odds we were up against when we began to organize it. In April 1987, we had nothing: no legal status, no infrastructure, no support, no money, no office. Our first six months were spent trying to get that support: by November we had enough support to open an office and by January 1988 to go on salary. We fought continuously against time that was running out. While we had standards and ideals we wanted to reach, lack of time and of course lack of money prevented us from attaining them. This hurt networking and publicity and meant that we could not always reach the right person until it was too late.

The most serious error in our opinion, and there were many to choose from, was the fact that women from all cultural communities were not involved by taking leadership roles from the beginning. This situation resulted in



a boycott of the event by the Congress of Black Women of Concordia which hindered the participation of some women of colour. In turn, this provoked a political crisis around the Fair, causing bitterness, division and anger. While the boycott ultimately made us, as organizers, much more sensitive to the issues of racism, we were not able to resolve matters so that all women would feel welcome at the Fair, and much less so that all women would be willing to put in the time and energy desperately needed to help make it a reality. It was an important learning experience for many of the white women involved in the Fair, learning to transform anger and pain into a more constructive political analysis where we learn to take responsibility for our actions, overcoming liberal guilt, and seeking to understand the power dynamics of a racist society, which the privileged are generally so reluctant to acknowledge (what Adrienne Rich called white solipsism in her essay "Disloyal to Civilisation").

Racism, decolonization and empowerment were key themes in many of the workshops and readings. We hope that the ways in which these issues were dealt with have generated new ways of seeing the world, and will help to build approaches that will be both creative and politically constructive. We hope that cross-cultural dialogue and confrontation has led to a better

understanding of our similarities and differences and that this will contribute to a feminism whose internationalism begins with a very real respect for those differences.

In terms of international participation, we are generally satisfied. However, some areas of the world were less well represented than others, and we did not attain the high level of participation from Francophone countries that we had hoped for. There were no women from the Middle East, few from South East Asia, few Jewish feminists speaking as Jewish feminists, and only one author from Eastern Europe. A total of fifty-five countries were represented, and the conference was not dominated by one area or region of the world (somewhat of a feat, considering that it was held in North America).

The Feminist Book Fair has always been a fragile marriage of commerce and politics. This Fair, perhaps more than the previous two, brought those contradictions clearly into focus. While some publishers and some authors are clearly unsatisfied, others have written letters raving about the wonderful time they had and what a worthwhile experience it was. We all cherish special memories, whether of the Native reading on Saturday afternoon, the Friday evening panel on power, the one on "memories of age," one of the lesbian panels, or of one of the many meetings that took place in the residences, a private home, or in the ambience of a Montreal bar.

Economically, we have done fairly well. We do not have a deficit, but nor do we have a surplus to hand over to the organizers of the Fourth Fair as we had hoped. We have written up a detailed set of recommendations, based on the mistakes that we made and that we feel should not be repeated. These recommendations include everything from fund-raising to ways to eliminate racism in the organizational stages, to increasing accessibility for all women. Kali for Women in India has decided not to hold the Fair, and so the women from the feminist publisher LaSal in Barcelona, Spain will be taking on the task. We wish them the best of luck, and we hope that this biennial event will continue to be an important means for improving the international distribution of women's books, for financially consolidating the business of feminist publishing and for networking across cultures and borders for all women involved with the written word.

The contact address for the Fourth International Feminist Book Fair is LaSal, edicions de les dones, Valencia 226, 08007 Barcelona, Spain. The phone number is (93) 323 1798.

We would like to thank you for joining us in the event and helping make it the exciting celebration that, in spite of its shortcomings, it turned out to be.

Diana Bronson, Ariane Brunet
and Suzanne Girard

EDITORIAL

Anti-Racism Initiatives

Anyone who has organized a feminist event or is involved in some kind of feminist collective process at this moment in history is aware that the issue of race has become a fundamental priority within the women's movement. Much of the content of *Broadside* this month reflects this important shift in the feminist agenda as well as the emotional foment created by an issue that challenges our assumptions and preconceived visions of how feminist transformations can take place.

Two pieces published this month are the product of an ad hoc response from feminist collectives to events within our own community. One, entitled "Take Our Word for It," represents the response of a group of women of colour to the way the International Feminist Book Fair was organized last summer in Montreal.

The questions asked in the article are ones which organizers of future conferences and gatherings must consider if anti-racism is to have any meaning within our movement.

Our movement comment comes from the University of Toronto Women's Centre in response to a controversy that was brewing at the Toronto Women's Bookstore last year. The comment concerns an exchange between a woman of colour and the bookstore regarding hiring policies and the bookstore's collective process. *Broadside* readers may recall that we published a movement comment from the bookstore last year regarding the tensions. Still, some of the references in the comment may be obscure since the controversy is a relatively old one. Nevertheless, we thought it important to print the comment in its entirety,

for it does give a good indication of the tone and content that the debates on race have adopted.

And finally, we include the new writers' guidelines from the Women's Press. The product of an intense internal struggle (evidence of which we include in "Second Story's Second Story") and rigorous self-criticism, the guidelines will doubtless spark new debates on the role of our presses and challenge the commitment of feminist writers to anti-racist work.

All of these are presented in the hopes that *Broadside* can play an important role in the struggle against racism and that the debate on race will nurture a stronger and more inclusive feminist vision.

Fetal Rights, Maternal Wrongs



by T. Brett Dawson

Readers may have noticed media coverage of pickled fetuses being taken up and down the steps to the Supreme Court of Canada earlier this month. The reason for this grotesque sideshow was, of course, the hearing within. Lawyers for Joe Borowski, a conservative religious coalition and the perennially reactionary REAL Women were set to argue that a fetus should be recognized in law as having legal personality and hence constitutional rights to life, liberty and security of the person. An integral purpose was to legally prevent and criminalize all abortions. Responding to this claim were the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) and the Attorney General for Canada: the Borowski circus had come to town.

Through all the media hoopla, little attention was given to the substantive arguments raised by the parties and by the interveners. I'm prepared to predict that the Supreme Court of Canada will avoid answering these arguments by declining the power to do so, since the abortion provisions of the *Criminal Code* were struck down in the *Morgentaler* case in January. Borowski's argument, after all, is that those sections are unconstitutional. The Supreme Court has already accepted this—in favour of the life, liberty and security of women. In the absence of legislation to review, it is difficult to see how the Supreme Court can act. The arguments made, however, are very interesting and the issues raised are of momentous importance to Canadian women and their children. Hence, this month's column focuses on them.

The Borowski brief commences with a summary of evidence led by Borowski at trial of fetal development *in utero*. The purpose of

such evidence was to establish "that the unborn child has an existence and individuality of its own and that such is a member of the human family encompassing 'everyone.'" He also places humanness at conception. This raises three immediate points.

First, language. Throughout the anti-abortion briefs, the fetus is referred to variously as "the unborn child;" the "preborn;" the "child *en ventre sa mere*;" "the baby" or even "the child." This is an emotive and ideological use of language which attempts to make us think of the fetus as the physical and moral equivalent of the two year old. Second, the evidence. As LEAF pointed out in its brief, the evidence presented by Borowski had a simplicity not reflected in the debates of scientific literature. Further, it was evidence built by one side only. Third, there is the whole issue of the place and role of women in fetal development. From Borowski's point of view, the pregnant woman and the fetus are separate entities. The problem with this is that, of course, they are not. As LEAF argued in response, such an argument "fundamentally distorts reality. It treats the woman as nothing more than a container for the fetus. . . the fetus exists within the body of the woman." The inescapable consequence of this is that "in all pregnancy-related cases, society's relationship to the fetus must be and in fact necessarily is, mediated by the woman within whose body it is."

Borowski's idea in seeking to establish *human* personhood in the fetus was to then establish *legal* personhood—a capacity in an individual to have legally recognized rights, separate from other individuals. To this end he argued his claim was not novel but that the common law has "recognized the interests of unborn children in the fields of criminal law,

torts, property and family law." In a way this is true. An injury to a pregnant woman may well result in damages being awarded to her and to her subsequently born child. However, it is not the fetus which is thus recognized but rather, the child. Live birth is the contingency for legal recognition and the commencement of legal protection. Borowski nevertheless argues that in each such case "fortified with knowledge, human compassion moved the courts to redress prenatal injuries as fully as those suffered after birth." From here it is a short step to constructing an argument that it is an inevitable step in the progress of humanity to recognize fetuses as having full human and legal personhood. REAL Women are most explicit on this point. They note that at one time or another, black people and women were denied personhood and were thus treated as if property. Similarly they argue that "either the pre-born are persons or they are property," and that "medical science today compels (the Court) to recognize the personhood of the preborn." Now, the continuum is a false image—because of the necessary interconnection and interrelationship of the pregnant woman and the fetus. LEAF responded by arguing that "legal recognition of fetal personhood would effectively grant the fetus (or its guardians) legal rights over the woman's body, when the philosophically and jurisprudentially desirable position is for the state to recognize that the woman must have legal and decision making rights over her own body and over the fetus."

Borowski further argued that "the purpose of the *Charter* is to protect life and that "in a society enriched by vast scientific knowledge and medical skills. . . its members may not go about the business of killing the unborn as a matter of convenience. For an individual or a society to embrace such a practice would be to forsake all sense of responsibility." This idea of the sanctity of fetal life was further discussed by the Interfaith Coalition on the Rights and Wellbeing of Women and Children. They argued that "respect for human life based upon religious values was at the heart of the restrictions on abortion found in section 251 of the *Criminal Code*," and that this belief is based on the supremacy of god recognized in the preamble to the *Charter*. Again the question of whose life, and whose responsibility are involved. The idea of abortion as "killing for convenience" must be one of the worst distortions in these arguments. It is fundamentally anti-woman, erroneous and abstract. As pointed out in the LEAF brief, the reasons why women choose abortion are "numerous, personal and profound. As long as contraceptive

devices fail, are risky or are unavailable there will be many women . . . who will be confronted with the intrusive and immediate reality of an unwanted pregnancy. . . . The guarantees in ss. 15 and 28 of the *Charter* must provide women with unwanted pregnancies a secure right to control the number, timing and spacing of their children." Women, quite simply, do not abort for convenience, nor lightly, nor without the dilemma of their relationship to the fetus and to their lives.

REAL Women characteristically presented a similarly anti-woman argument—more insidious for its attempt to establish that a right to abortion exploited women and diminishes "the dignity of woman herself." Significantly, the brief uses sexist or inappropriately gender neutral language throughout. For example, they added quite a twist to the old chestnut "pregnancy is an accepted risk of participation in sexual activity," when they commented that "because one's calculation of the risk proves wrong at times and an unplanned pregnancy results this does not mean a parent can ignore *his* duty to *his* child." Should one add that he has this duty when he becomes pregnant? The brief included the following assertions: "abortion is held out as the means by which women are made equal to men"; "if the decision to procreate or abort rests in the sole control of women, men's rights will be violated"; "pregnancy is safer than abortion"; "the incidence of suicide in pregnant women is approximately one-sixth that of the rate of non-pregnant women . . . implying that pregnancy has a psychologically protective role"; "the rate of child abuse parallels the rate of increase in abortions"; "the basic unit of society is the family"; that women have a duty not to abort because of Canada's declining birth rate. One hopes that they have so discredited themselves that they will never again be allowed to intervene in the Supreme Court of Canada.

LEAF, at least, was present to place the perspective and responsibility of women before the Justices. Their arguments that women's autonomy, equality and rights to life, liberty and security of the person, and the right to make fundamental personal decisions need to be heard. They concluded by commenting that the "state should fulfill its interest in fetal welfare through legislation and policies that promote maternal welfare, and guarantee women's access to adequate and supportive health, financial and social resources, while respecting their moral and physical integrity." Isn't this more meaningful and constructive? I think so.

Pioneering Lesbian Studies

by Christine Donald

The Lesbian Studies Coalition of Concordia won my heart this year by producing the button that says, "Dip Me in Maple Syrup and Throw Me to the Lesbians." They're clearly a group of women with a good sense of balance, which they demonstrated on November 10th by hosting a forum, "Lesbian Studies 1988: A Cross Canada Exchange," while not omitting to round off the evening by meeting their reputation for good baking. The evening was timed to catch women on their way to the big CRIAW conference to be held that weekend in Quebec City, Montreal being the place where they would have to change planes. Good advertising in Montreal and across Canada resulted in an attendance of about 50, including lesbian academics from British Columbia and Newfoundland as well as members of Montreal's lesbian community.

The Lesbian Studies Coalition meets with a mixed reception at the university. The administration doesn't know how to class them—they're not a club and not a discipline. The many legitimate areas of study—lesbian history, lesbian politics, lesbian literature—are not perceived as such. Homophobia is still not seen as a legitimate form of oppression. The Coalition set about documenting the status of lesbian studies in the universities of Canada. The result is a thorough document, showing the negligence of even women's studies teachers and indicating directions for change.

The panel "Lesbian Studies 1988" included Carolyn Gammon (an MA student at Concordia in Montreal and member of the Lesbian Studies Coalition of Concordia), Ann Healey (a student from Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto who attends the lesbian and gay studies course there), Christine Donald (the coordinator of York's women's studies library) and Barbara Roberts (professor at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, about to leave for an appointment at Athabasca).

Situations in the universities represented varied quite a bit, given that no one had a fully fledged, let alone an adequate lesbian studies course. At Simon Fraser, lesbian issues are slotted into one lecture in a women's studies course with poor coverage on the reading list; there are no out lesbian faculty. Queen's responded, apparently unworried, to the LSCC survey that there was "no openly lesbian content in courses." Though there is, since 1987, one openly lesbian professor there, a lesbian professor without tenure who came out in her class last year, found that her contract was not renewed.

At Ryerson, however, there are currently three gay and lesbian courses. "Lesbian and Gay Realities: Breaking the Silence," presented by one lesbian and one pro-feminist gay man, is a non-credit course taught on Sunday afternoons. Another is a fourth year credit course, "Gender Diversity," focussing on lesbian and gay issues—this course was not allowed to have lesbian or

gay in the title and had to be "broadly based" because of the limited number of fourth year courses available. The instructor for this course will be retiring next year, so there is doubt about its continuing existence. A third course, "Homosexuality and Religion," will begin in January 1989).

With the gay and lesbian studies courses, diversity among the students causes tension. For whom is the course intended—goodwilled but uninformed straights or advanced lesbian feminists? It's hard to meet the needs and expectations of all the participants. (When lesbian studies has percolated down to the school level, of course, this will cease to be a problem.) The most common situation in the universities is that lesbian studies is not officially acknowledged; some individual instructors integrate lesbian material into their courses. Though this is unsatisfactory to us, since instructors can change their minds and their courses, it is in many institutions quite an achievement. In many ways, lesbian studies are now in the position occupied by women's studies some 15 years ago.

Various strategies for getting lesbian content into course were mentioned, all dependent on the goodwill of the instructor. Since few women feel safe enough in universities to come out, who is going to teach lesbian issues? Can we rely on gay men to teach women's experience or heterosexual women to convey the lives of lesbians? One point emerged clearly, however: if courses, for instance in women's studies, deal with het-

erosexuals only, this should be specified in the course description and title.

Seeking strategies for getting lesbian studies courses and programmes is a thornier process. Where is the support to come from for taking a proposed course outline through maybe six levels of curricular approval? At Concordia, for instance, women constitute only 6% of faculty, and most are vulnerably placed in contractual or untenured positions. Even if all 6% were wholeheartedly in favour of a lesbian studies programme, what then? Women's studies courses offer the best chance for support, but many of these are new and fragile, often taught by heterosexual women who don't want to jeopardize what they have gained so far.

Marilyn Frye in *Lesbian Perspectives on Women's Studies* says that women's studies exist through the privilege of heterosexual women who have been able to convince male professors that women's studies is valid. How much fighting will we have to do to convince heterosexual academia that lesbian concerns are not peripheral?

You can contact the Lesbian Studies Coalition of Concordia at 1455 de Maisonneuve O, Montreal H3G 1M8. *Lesbian Studies Documentation* is available from them for \$4.00.

Christine Donald, poet and freelance editor, is the library coordinator of the Nellie Langford Rowell Women's Studies Library at York University in Toronto.

Raising Race Questions

Take Our Word For It

The following is a Statement read by Black women at plenary session, June 19th, Third International Feminist Bookfair, Montreal, June 14-19, 1988.

I read this on behalf of women of colour and indigenous women who have met, some of us meeting each other for the first time. Yesterday, during the readings of indigenous women Joe Harjo said that this was indeed an historic occasion for it provided the space for indigenous women to share their stories and build on their memory, that subjugated memory which we are continuously replenishing. The space for this happened because of this conference. It is in the spirit of that sharing that we invite you to listen to the message which we bring with openness and a recognition of the spirit in which it is offered. As women of colour, we are not a homogeneous group. We have different experiences of racism, colonialism, and imperialism, and of religious and caste hierarchy. We are lesbian and heterosexual and have had to struggle with difference amongst ourselves. We are not the homogeneous, exotic 'Third World' woman whom the 'West' has constructed.

We have had a great deal of discussion in the last three days about the meaning of racism in political struggle. What does racism have to do with political struggle? How in the 1980s can we understand the subtle and not so subtle working of racism so that we can be involved in the kind of coalition politics necessary to bring us into the 21st century? How can we forge political practice whose foundation is not simply assumed on the basis of gender and sexuality but which comes with active engagement in political struggle? Why is it necessary to establish a hierarchy of oppression... Your oppression is more significant than mine; your nationality or language is more important than mine; sexism is more pervasive than racism... As women of colour, we recognize that the major systems of oppression all emerge from the same source and mutually reinforce each other. For us, experiencing the ways in which racism, sexism, heterosexism and class affect us separately and together help us to understand and structure our politics. For us, race, class, sex and sexuality are intertwined.

We want to reaffirm the spirit with which the Third International Feminist Bookfair has made a solid commitment to deal with racism. Some of the major problems we have experienced over the past few days relate to racism and Eurocentric ways of thinking. But dominant history is not the only history and for an international gathering to be truly international it must bring to the centre the histories of peoples who form two-thirds of the world's peoples. These are 'Third World' peoples and indigenous peoples.

Racism and Eurocentrism helped to produce the following:

- (1) Women of colour were treated as other, not as equals. We were kept out of the decision-making for this conference.
- (2) Black women were viewed as a monolith. There were no panels for instance where Francophone Black women could talk about their experiences. These are not the same as Kenyan women. Anglophone does not neces-

sarily specify the experiences of Black women or women of colour.

(3) Differences of language were neither dealt with consistently, sensitively or politically. All translations were organized around French and English the two major colonizing languages.

(4) There were no communal spaces for women of colour and indigenous women to share our mutual concerns. Simultaneous panels were organized so that women whose central experience was colonialism could not learn from each other. For instance, we had to choose between competing panels on South Asian women and women in the African diaspora.

(5) The meaning of class was not adequately addressed either in terms of conceptual understandings, political strategy or the cost of the conference. No attention was paid to the differentially abled; sessions were not signed. What does this say about our ability to deal with difference.

(6) Cultural practices were not acknowledged. How can we be expected to do this intense level of emotional work without providing basic necessities such as food?

(7) There were also certain artificial separations which need to be addressed:

(i) academic panels were the large ones with huge lecture halls. Writers from whose work we have drawn strength and who have helped us through painful rememberings, were cramped into smaller spaces. What does this say about the kind of knowledge we think is important?

(ii) the politics of publishing, who publishes, and what gets published are all feminist concerns and ought not to have been narrowly focussed on the 'trade' days. Also publishers, particularly those from small alternative presses need not have been trapped and isolated in publishers booths.

In view of what we have expressed here, we would like for the following to be adopted by the Third International Feminist Bookfair:

(i) that the text of this document become part of the planning for the fourth bookfair.

(ii) that there be considerable input from indigenous women from the country where the next conference is held.

(iii) that working class women, indigenous women, women of colour and differentially abled women be involved in all levels of planning for the conference.

(iv) that conference planners adjust for the insidious inequities of class and provide scholarships for indigenous women, women of colour and those least able to defray the economic costs.

(v) that in thinking about the stories we construct about ourselves, the oral tradition be honoured.

In adopting these principles this conference has been able to achieve what its predecessors have not been able to do. We have underscored our commitment to develop pro-active, anti-racist, anti-imperialist, feminist strategies. This is a working document from which we can move forward and of which we can be proud.

Second Story Press

Eight longtime members of Women's Press are pleased to announce the formation of a new feminist publishing house. Second Story Press: Feminist Publishers. Second Story is a worker-owned co-op, committed to socialist feminist, anti-racist and non-heterosexist publishing. We are establishing a forum for writers and readers that will allow for a range of opinion and voices.

As many of you are already aware, we have had a longstanding commitment to feminist publishing, dating back sixteen years to the beginnings of Women's Press. When the Popular Front-of-the-bus Caucus changed the locks in their takeover of the Women's Press, they also took control of the books which we had developed over the years. All of us who were locked out maintain our commitment to feminist publishing that reflects a diversity of opinion. To this end, we have sought to have Women's Press return a portion of the backlist to us as a base from which to continue our work. The Caucus has refused, preferring to

use the income from the books they have criticized to realize their own agenda.

Without any of our backlist, we are forced to start from scratch. A new financial base must be established and developed. But the enthusiasm and support we have received for our new house have been most heartening. We have had creative discussions with writers, readers and publishers. We see exciting possibilities for a publishing programme that reflects a range of ideas and strategies for change. We invite your ideas; we would welcome your support. The time for creating a new feminist forum is now. Please help us build it.

For further information contact: Margie Wolfe, Office: (416) 362-8666, Fax: 362-2489, Second Story Press, 111 Queen Street East, Suite 370, Toronto, Ontario, M5C 1S2.

Judi Coburn, Connie Guberman,
Liz Martin, Lois Pike, Graziella Pimental,
Christa Van Daele, Margie Wolfe,
Carolyn Wood

Women's Press Anti-Racist Guidelines

Women's Press is entering a new phase of its development. We are a socialist-feminist publishing house which has been an integral part of the development of Canadian feminism since 1972. Like many Canadian feminist organizations, we have been defined and run by white, middle-class women. As a publishing house that has always been political, we have applied our understanding of sexism and class when evaluating manuscripts. We are now focussing on our responsibility to ensure that our feminism is also anti-racist. We are working to make Women's Press a racially integrated publishing house which is anti-racist in all aspects of its work.

This means that our publishing policy has changed. We are looking for manuscripts that we did not seek out before. We look forward to working with writers who, in the past, may not have experienced Women's Press as a suitable publishing house. And we are applying our anti-racism policy to all manuscripts that are submitted to us.

These guidelines are meant to assist writers in making a judgment about whether we are an appropriate publishing house for their work, and to assist us in assessing manuscript submissions. These guidelines are Women's Press now, the best contribution we can make to Canadian feminism in the 1980s.

Women's Press has published books which promote and develop feminism in Canada through social criticism, imaginative writing and children's books. This will continue.

But, we are now committed to publishing a wider range of women to reflect the diversity of all women's experience. Our expanded list of titles includes writing by and from the perspectives of Black women, Native women, Women of Colour and women whose first language is not English. We continue to welcome the writing of white women in Canada, particularly work that challenges the popular literary representation of Canada and the world as white and middle-class. We welcome writing that challenges racism. We want to be truly a women's press.

We will publish analytic feminist writing which incorporates race and class into its analysis. We will publish fiction and non-fiction work by Women of Colour on issues determined by their concerns. We want to publish manuscripts which acknowledge or highlight differences between women. We want material which contributes to understanding how anti-racist work can be done, and how racism functions within Canada and within the feminist movement. We also want to publish manuscripts with an international focus.

We are aware of indicators which signal that a manuscript is not suitable for us. We

want writers to know what our current thinking is so that they can determine whether our priorities coincide with theirs.

We will avoid publishing manuscripts which contain imagery that perpetuates the hierarchy black = bad, white = good.

We will avoid publishing manuscripts which adopt stereotypes—the use of oversimplifications and generalizations about a particular group of people.

We will avoid publishing manuscripts which use terminology that reinforces stereotypes and words which are indelibly associated with prejudiced usage.

We will avoid publishing fiction manuscripts in which the protagonist's experience in the world, by virtue of race or ethnicity, is substantially removed from that of the writer.

We will avoid tourist's or traveller's point of view writing which does not recognize the limitations of that perspective within the writing itself.

We will avoid publishing manuscripts in which a writer appropriates the form and substance of a culture which is oppressed by her own.

We will avoid publishing manuscripts in which white, middle-class women's perspective is characterised as normal, and the perspective of Women of Colour is presented as unusual or exotic.

We will avoid publishing a manuscript whose analysis includes women of colour as a supplement to a text, rather than incorporating Women of Colour into the overall content and structure.

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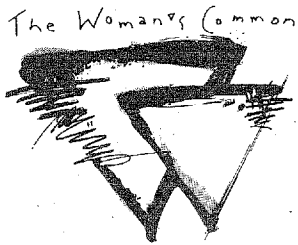
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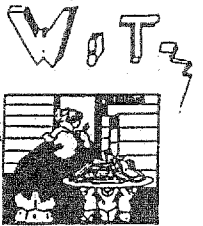
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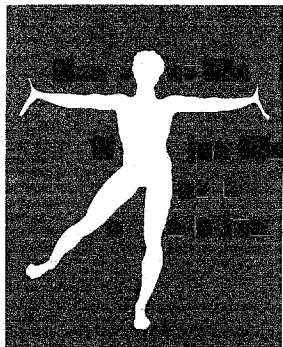
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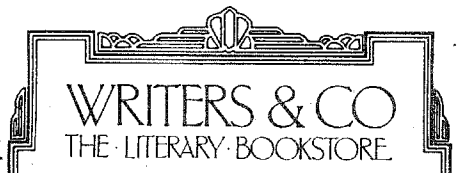


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MOVEMENT MATTERS

TTC Safety

In 1984, Metropolitan Police Commissioner Jane Pepino chaired a Task Force on Public Violence Against Women and Children. A number of issues were addressed including safety on the transit system. While the Task Force concluded that the TTC was "remarkably safe by any standards," they did point out that women in particular had safety concerns on the subway system from a perception point of view.

In April, 1988, senior TTC staff and officials met with Commissioner Jane Pepino, President, and Pat Marshall, Executive Director, Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC). Discussions between the TTC and METRAC focused on the safety concerns of women. It was agreed that the TTC would initiate a joint study of security on the subway system.

In May, 1988, a security audit team was established comprising a representative from METRAC, TTC and the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force. From May to August the audit team visited each of the 65 subway and RT stations during the hours of darkness from 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. With a specific focus on sexual assault prevention, they examined the condition of existing security features and evaluated the environment of each station to determine where improvements could be made relative to the safety of women passengers.

The audit team noted that in many stations, lighting, signage and sight lines could be improved, where there were obstructions such as pillars, additional security mirrors could be installed. A total of 55 recommendations have been made by the audit team which also covers TTC operating procedures, employee training, maintenance practices, planning and design criteria and public information.

These draft recommendations were presented to the public for discussion at a meeting on November 16, 1988. Following the public meeting, METRAC, TTC and Metropolitan Police finalized the recommendations. They were turned over to the TTC internal Task Force who have already begun studying them in terms of feasibility and time frame. A plan of action will then be developed for consideration by the TTC Commission. For further information, contact Pat Marshall at METRAC, 392-3135.

News from Women's Press

Women's Press takes pleasure in announcing the appointment of Michele Pause to the position of marketing and promotions co-ordinator, and the hiring of Angela Robertson to the position of editorial assistant. Michele has been with us since 1985 and Angela is new to Women's Press.

We are also pleased to announce the appointment of Cariad Limited as our western sales representatives, replacing Stanton & MacDougall. Cariad, our representatives since 1980, adds this new area to their ongoing work for us in Ontario and Quebec.

We are also pleased to announce a new publishing direction. In an attempt to reflect in our titles and our organization a wider diversity of women's experience, Women's Press adopted at its October 15, 1988 Annual General Meeting anti-racist guidelines for sub-

missions. These are available from Women's Press. Also available is a public statement outlining the development of these guidelines and detailing the events that have taken place over recent months.

Women in the Theatre

Playwrights' Workshop Montreal is a National Play Development Centre dedicated to writers and plays in Quebec and across the country. We are a grassroots organization, working behind the scenes as a dramaturgical resource for playwrights, helping them to prepare their plays for production at theatres across Canada.

Playwrights' Workshop attracts the work of over 200 playwrights each year. Of the 12 plays developed at Playwright's Workshop this year, which are receiving productions in theatres across the country, six are the work of women writers.

Although great strides have been made, we feel we still have a long way to go before the voice of women becomes a given in our theatrical landscape. It remains, therefore, part of our mandate to actively seek out women playwrights or women writers who may be interested in writing for the stage. To this end, we are appealing to you as an organization for women, to help Playwrights' Workshop in our search.

There are several ways you can help. You can simply inform your members or your constituency about the existence and activities of Playwrights' Workshop Montreal, you can help us actively disseminate information by including our submissions call in your own publications and press material, by posting our press releases on your bulletin boards, or by including a call for script submission from women writers on our behalf.

In her 1982 report, *The Status of Women in Canadian Theatre*, a former Artistic Director of Playwrights' Workshop, Rina Fraticelli points out that "An average of 10% of the plays produced in Canada between 1978 and 1981 were written by women." Much remains to be done to reverse the detrimental effects of sexism on the culture of our society. To achieve our goal of eliminating the sexual barriers in Canadian society as a whole, we must be continually aware of how the absence of women in our cultural framework has enduring effects on Canadian society as a whole.

In the spirit of sisterhood and a continuing need for self affirmation, we hope for a positive response to this letter and our request. Should there be anything we can do for you in return, please do not hesitate to ask. Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Contact: Svetlana Zylina, artistic director, Playwrights' Workshop Montreal, P.O. Box 604, Postal Station Place d'Armes, Montreal, H2Y 3H8. (514) 843-3685.

Sister Vision Press

TORONTO — Sister Vision is the first press for Black women and women of colour to be established in Canada. It was founded in the summer of '84 because as Black women and women of colour we feel strongly that more of our works must be published and read.

Through Sister Vision we will encourage works by women of all cultures, sexual preferences and classes.

We will focus on four areas:

- Our first area is dedicated to women's oral history. Through this medium we will present the vivid words and lives of ordinary women often omitted from traditional history and contemporary writing.
- Our second area is creative writing. We will encourage short story writers, novelists, playwrights and poets.
- Our third area will focus on books for children and young people. Publication in this important area has been negligible in Canada.
- Our fourth area is theory and research. We intend to challenge the absence of our voices in Canadian feminist theory and research. We will provide a forum for theoretical works which speak to and analyze the political and social lives of Black and Third World women from a feminist perspective.

Contact: Sister Vision, P.O. Box 217, Station E, Toronto, Ontario, M6H 4E2, Canada.

Media Awards

VANCOUVER — MediaWatch recognizes the progress made by broadcasters and advertisers to eliminate sexist content and to create more positive, realistic images of women. Media-Watch Awards were created to publicly acknowledge and reinforce portrayals that are creative, affirmative and respectful of women's changing roles.

The inaugural MediaWatch Awards Event coincided with the March 1987 National Conference on Women and Canadian Broadcasting, *Adjusting the Image*. Broadcasters responded to the call for entries; awards were given to Global-TV, CITY-TV and Radio-Québec for programming in the two Award categories of drama and public affairs.

The second MediaWatch Awards Event is scheduled for the spring of 1989 and will offer a full slate of categories:

- English TV drama, public affairs and advertising;
- French TV drama and public affairs;
- French radio public affairs.

A French advertising category is omitted, there already existing *Éméritas/Déméritas* Awards, coordinated by the Quebec Conseil du statut de la femme (CSF).

The award nomination procedure has also been revised, with entries being solicited from MediaWatch members and supporters. Only Canadian productions aired between September 15, 1988 and February 15, 1989 are eligible. Entries should be submitted by March 1, 1989. All nominations will be considered and a jury of experts will choose one winner in each category. Contact: MediaWatch, #250-1820 Fir Street, Vancouver, BC, V6J 3B1; (604) 731-0457.

Repro Tech

Women and Reproductive Technologies is a 20-minute VHS video produced by Women's Health Interaction. The video focuses on women's reproductive health issues in Canada, in the context of population control around the world. A copy can be obtained by contacting WHI, 58 Arthur Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1R 7B9; 613-563-4801.

Attention: Artists

Women's Art Resource Centre (WARC) is offering a one year free membership to artists who submit biographical information to its slide registry (5-10 slides, C.V., articles). The slide registry is an important form of self-promotion as the registry is open to the public and is used by curators, researchers, writers, and educators.

Ontario Arts Council exhibition assistance grants of up to \$1,000 per year are made available through WARC to artists residing in Toronto, Halton, Peel, Durham, York region, Simcoe, and Muskoka. WARC has established certain priorities for the allocation of these OAC grants. These are: that the work must be innovative and politically engaged; that priority be given to applications from women who are currently under-represented and/or under-funded (ie: black women, native women, south and east Asian women, "women of colour," women in rural areas). Next deadline: Dec. 19, 1988.

NFB Guide

Women Breaking Through, a guide to National Film Board AV resources for women's studies across the secondary school curriculum, was prepared in response to the 1986 NFB/Educators' Forum on Women's Studies in Secondary School, hosted by the Film Board.

Educators who participated in this event stressed their need for strong audio visual resources for the classroom that depict women in positive roles, and reflect women's concerns, actions, and perspectives on current social and world issues. They also emphasized that if attitudes towards women and equality are to change, young men must also be engaged in discussion about roles, rights and values in an evolving society.

The resources in this collection encompass a wide range of topics: women's historical struggles and victories; political feminism today; the arts; human rights; peace; the environment; science; comparative social studies; contemporary issues; health and sexuality; careers; self-image; and changing family patterns.

Women Breaking Through was designed to complement the growing initiatives on the parts of Ministries of Education and of individual school boards to integrate women's concerns and contributions into all areas of the curriculum. The guide also offers a clear thematic organization for Women's Studies courses or units.

Copies of Women Breaking Through can be obtained by contacting JoAnn Harrison, Education Coordinator, The National Film Board, D-5, P.O. Box 6100, Montreal, P.Q. H3C 3H5.

Rock Video Research

MONTREAL — 50% of rock videos are sexist. Half the rock videos broadcast in Québec contain examples of sexism, maintains a study sponsored by the Conseil du statut de la femme du Québec to a research group led by François Baby of l'Université Laval. The research covered a selection of 499 videos distributed in February and March 1988 and a statistical analysis showed that the most sexist videos were the ones most frequently broadcast.

"Women soloists or groups constitute only 11% of performers featured. 85% of female characters other than performers demonstrate attitudes or behaviour that presents them in a negative light: extreme passivity in the presence of men, crises which make them fall apart without apparent reason, aggression, anguish and sexual obsession. The study also pointed out the extreme simplification of male-female relations in rock videos, where one encounters submission (34%), violence (22%) and seduction (56%)."

In terms of production techniques women's bodies are often cut up by freeze-frames; 54% of camera pans focus on women's bodies; and the majority of costumes have sexist connotations. The use of certain procedures, such as slow motion and close-ups, are also often associated with sexuality. . . (courtesy *Communiqu'Elles*)

Picture a Woman

OTTAWA — The Women's Health Interaction Collective has produced a 1989 calendar, *Picture a Woman*. Illustrated in two colours and hand-drawn, the calendar may be ordered for \$7.95 from WHI, c/o Interpares, 58 Arthur Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7B9.

Pay Equity Conferences

The Pay Equity Commission and local planning committees are hosting four regional conferences on implementing Pay Equity. The conferences will provide a forum for sharing information and progress one year into the pay equity process. All employers, employees, and bargaining agents are welcome to attend. The conferences will be held at the following locations: Toronto: January 13, 1989 at Harbour Castle Westin; Sudbury: January 20, 1989 at Conference Centre, Cambrian College; London: January 27, 1989 at Holiday Inn; and Ottawa: February 3, 1989 at The Westin. For information, call the hotline at 1-800-387-8887 or 1-800-387-8881.

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MOVEMENT COMMENT

A Debate on Race

The following letter was set by the University of Toronto Women's Centre Collective, July 31, 1988.

Toronto Women's Bookstore Collective:

In early November, the University of Toronto Women's Centre received the letter you sent to us and to various organizations and newspapers throughout the community. Your letter was in response to the article written by Pauline Peters which appeared in the July/September 1987 issue of *Our Lives Newspaper*. As a result of many collective meetings at which the Toronto Women's Bookstore and the Pauline Peters issue was the main focus of discussion, the Women's Centre collective decided to respond to the TWB letter.

The first meeting at which the TWB letter was discussed was a disaster and uncovered a very poor level of consciousness among individual collective members. The racist responses of some were bitter recognitions of the absence of anti-racist work that women of colour expected of white women but was not being done by all collective members. After the first collective meeting at which your letter was discussed and the urgent need for anti-racist education within the collective became apparent, we put much energy into learning from our mistakes, addressing our shortcomings, and growing in the process.

While like the TWB, the Women's Centre is racially mixed, unlike the TWB, the Women's Centre collective—and the volunteer network through which the Centre operates—is large and open in structure. The collective numbers about 25 women at present and we have about 70 active volunteers. Our collective meetings are open to all women, and as the majority of our members are students, there is considerable turnover every year and even from one meeting to the next. To maintain continuity and to build on past work is difficult.

Since we received your letter, we have been discussing the issues it raises and developing a response. Through intensive discussions in our collective meetings, our women of colour caucus, our non-women of colour group as well as in the multi-racial working committee formed, by collective decision, we have drawn up proposals both for our response to you and for improving our own process. The last nine months of discussion are evidence not of delay but of the seriousness with which the collective has treated the problems and issues raised by the publication and distribution of your letter.

Although developing an anti-racist perspective, and doing anti-racist educational, cultural and political work have been important priorities at the Women's Centre since our beginnings in the Spring of 1985, the process of dealing with your letter has taken us through painful and productive self-examination.

While the TWB letter was certainly the catalyst for further action, there are white women in the Women's Centre collective who, for some time, have been consciously responding to their commitments to anti-racist work. This has been evident since the establishment of the Coalition for a Women's Centre, the members of which were determined to organize a centre which reflected the needs and concerns of all women and not only those of white women. Certainly white women were involved in the planning of the Women's Centre Women of Colour Conference in both years that it has taken place. The development and adoption of a policy of active anti-racism, and the establishment and use of employment equity policies at the Women's Centre relied on the participation and commitment of white women as well as women of colour in the collective. There had been an anti-racism working group in existence since December 1986. The first summer series of workshops at the Centre focussed on issues of race and racism, and the Centre continues to develop supportive working relationships with groups combatting racism, both on and off campus.

We cannot afford to be complacent. The result of having examined this issue is a deeper analysis of our own policies and processes. This includes the establishment of a second anti-racist working group. We have also addressed the procedure and structure of collective meetings in order to ensure an ongoing

anti-racist discussion and we must continue working to encourage the participation of women of colour and to assure all women that even in our absence, our differences will be reflected. By no means is the Women's Centre attempting to appear as if we have done all our work because of course, we have not. Making the Women's Centre a place for all women is a daily struggle and we try to learn from our mistakes.

We understand that you are an organization actively involved in anti-racist work; certainly you see the need for openness to recognizing mistakes and continuing work regardless of past accomplishments. Regardless of your level of involvement, are we to believe that some members of the collective of the TWB are incapable of racist actions? No organization, including the TWB, is above criticism and accountability for its actions.

We at the Women's Centre feel very strongly that the issues brought forward in your letter are not simply an internal matter for the TWB. By circulating your letter in the women's community and publishing it in *Broadside* and *Rebel Girls Rag*, you have brought this issue into a public forum. Furthermore, the types of issues raised in the letter have been a cause of division throughout the women's community, here at the Women's Centre and in our own women of colour caucus. Here we have different views on the nature of our response to your letter and how best to accommodate further dialogue with Pauline Peters, the TWB and other women's organizations towards the eradication of racism in the women's community. Towards this end, this letter is intended to address the issues of language, tone, commitment to equal representation and access to women of colour raised in and by your letter.

The facts which have been presented in your letter for your own defence, instead of undermining Pauline Peters' allegation in *Our Lives Newspaper*, give credence to them. Your letter is extremely defensive, and you make confusing and implausible statements. For example, considering that all but two members of your collective prior to Peters' resignation were white women, how could every collective member have a "personal experience of racism" to speak about? Also, while your letter states that you know there is much work still to be done, your tone and emphasis on accomplishments are signs of complacency.

You ask for acknowledgement of a "300% increase in book titles and stock items by Black women, Native women, South Asian women, Latin American women and Immigrant women." This brings the total titles of five separate groups of women of colour and im-

"As women we all know the degradation and indignities of exclusion and silencing from the general community. For Black women this oppression is compounded by race."

migrant women writers to "over 400." In a women's bookstore of over 7,000 titles, 400 represents only 5.7% of your total collection. This does not reflect your commitment to an equitable representation of works by women of colour and immigrant women to those of white women.

The great under-representation of women of colour as paid staff and collective members of the TWB is also of concern. Although the Women's Centre is primarily a volunteer organization, we do have some paid staff. Since discussion of your letter, we began evaluating our own hiring policies. We recognize that both our hiring policy and the enforcement of such, has been ineffective in terms of employment equity for women of colour. The TWB is also an employer who can be more accountable to the community and hire in such a way that the needs and demands of all women are given a voice within your structure. For the TWB to advertise in the Black community newspapers and "encourage non-white women to apply" for positions is not enough. Such passive recruitment of women of colour is vague and empty. The TWB must be seen to

reflect the community it serves as well as the larger community in which it operates. Therefore, we encourage more active recruitment of women of colour.

As the TWB is "in a state of transformation" it is difficult to comprehend the collective's negative reactions, criticisms and rejection of a non-white woman's proposal for further change at the bookstore. That this proposal was viewed as having "marginalized and also made invisible the previous contributions and work of the South Asian woman and the white working class staff members" instead of enhancing their work seems to be a disguised form of rejection. Such action undermines the stated commitment of the collective to show concrete anti-racist leadership.

Your letter suggests that these proceedings were not just a rejection of Peters' proposal but of Peters as well. Your whole evaluation process previous to Peters' termination of her employment at the TWB is confusing. You state that she "was due for an evaluation within a certain period of time before she became permanent staff." The absence in the letter of this set period suggests to your readers that there was no such probation period in effect. Peters' evaluation in March 1987 came after five months of employment and based on your letter, appears to have been a subjective decision made as a result of her proposal submission in February.

Also confusing was the sudden establishment of conflict resolution models between co-workers which "at the time of (Peters') hiring we were preparing to set up..." In your letter there is no mention of stated co-worker complaints about Peters' work throughout an entire six month employment period, which began in October 1986 and extended beyond the first conflict resolution meeting in March. Surprisingly, at the second conflict resolution meeting only one month later, several concerns were suddenly raised and discussed followed by Peters' termination of employment two months later.

One of the most serious causes of concern for the Centre is that the TWB has engaged in a most dangerous and grave act of censorship in its removal of the *Our Lives Newspaper* from its shelves. As women we all know the degradation and indignities of exclusion and silencing from the general community. For Black women this oppression, as you know, is compounded by race. Therefore when Black women have devised a forum and safe space for discussion and exchange it is imperative that such a medium be encouraged, nurtured and made accessible. Equally important, it should be supported by all women. Therefore, that the TWB should see fit to curtail the distribution of this exchange is disturbing and unacceptable to us. To have removed from your shelves the only Black women's newspaper in Toronto because "... it made serious and false allegations about the bookstore..." is tantamount to silencing an opposing opinion which threatens to damage the reputation of the TWB irrespective of the rights of expression which are violated in the process. Instead, points of contention raised in the July/September issue of *Our Lives Newspaper* should have been directly addressed and responded to through that same medium. The TWB had a responsibility to provide access to Peters' opinion and by this act of censorship that access was denied, especially to Black women. To act on your perception that this issue of *Our Lives Newspaper* "invalidated the life experiences, work and struggle of women of colour on the staff and board" by censoring the issue attempts to deny the right of women of colour to criticize and call to account other women of colour working in feminist organizations. It is a part of the responsibilities of those women of colour on the collective and board to respond to such criticisms of their work because they are both accountable to, and entitled to support from, the women of colour community in and for which they work.

We are aware that the article entitled "Anatomy of Working with White Feminist Collectives" and the ensuing postscript in *Our Lives Newspaper* had a major impact on the collective and board. We also agree that the reading of that same article at the meeting at which the collective, board, mediator, Peters

and her supporters were present was used to attack the TWB and make more powerful Peters' request for an apology and compensation. We acknowledge that one reason for the TWB letter's tone and defensiveness is that the women of colour staff and board members were made invisible by that presentation in person and by the printing of that article. Both Donna Barker and Pauline Peters must accept responsibility for those actions. Donna Barker's article makes erroneous generalities, is unsupported in its presentation as a 15 year study and omits

"... the decision to censor and remove from the TWB that particular issue of Our Lives Newspaper is still indefensible and reprehensible."

verifiable scientific data. It further leaves open the opportunity for division among women of colour and undermines and dismisses the work and contributions of these women. Certainly Barker is deserving of a response to that article that is not buried within the response to Peters' allegations. Despite all that was wrong with the article, "Anatomy of Working with White Feminist Collectives" and the way it was used to attack the TWB, the decision to censor and remove from the TWB that particular issue of *Our Lives Newspaper* is still indefensible and reprehensible.

Equally disturbing is the unequal use of power by the TWB to ensure access to a wider and greater audience than that reached by *Our Lives Newspaper*. In choosing to mail your letter to each of the major feminist organizations and groups in Toronto, the TWB was assured that many more women read the defence than the allegations. In fact, you took grave liberties of your community access and financial resources in an attempt to undermine those allegations. Though the TWB chose not to submit its letter to *Our Lives Newspaper* for publication, you further polarized and caused more damage to the women's community by having your letter published instead in both *Rebel Girls Rag* and *Broadside*, two highly circulated feminist newspapers in the city. An issue of questionable journalism is raised as both printed the TWB letter in their December 1987 issue as an open letter and therefore denied Peters an equal voice to that of the TWB. Furthermore, that *Broadside* should see fit to add the headline "Process and Politics" to that letter, undermining the issue of racism, is further evidence of their insensitivity with respect to issues which touch the lives of women of colour.

The TWB is an organization which benefits directly from serving the women's community. Like the Women's Centre, you must be held accountable to the concerns of this community and many concerns were raised as a result of the distribution of your letter. You are certainly accountable to those which question your failure to substantiate your commitment to equal representation and access to women of colour. To have silenced your accuser does not extinguish the allegations of racism made. We at the Women's Centre feel that your letter was meant not only to provide a defence but also to publically discredit Pauline Peters. To have abused your resources for this end is appalling and disappointing.

It is hoped that the most important result of this publicized communication is that further dialogue around the issues raised by the Pauline Peters and TWB letter is taking place within the women's groups and collectives throughout the community. The Women's Centre would like to engage in discussions with Pauline Peters and the TWB about this issue and further proposes that a committee be struck to initiate discussion on holding a forum which will focus on issues central to mixed collectives like the Women's Centre, the TWB and others. The letters and responses generated have raised specific issues of racism and anti-racist work of interest to us all. It is crucial that the opportunity for further community dialogue be made a priority.

University of Toronto
Women's Centre
Collective

ARTS

New Focus on Rape

Shame, directed by Steve Jodrell, 1987; *Barron Films* released by SKOURAS 1987; *The Accused*, directed by Jonathan Kaplan; *Paramount Films*, 1988.

by T. Brettel Dawson



Jodie Foster in *The Accused*

During October two powerful and essentially women-empowering films grappling with sexual assault, were released in Ontario. *Shame*, hailing from Australia had a relatively short run; *The Accused* was introduced with all the hoopla of Hollywood. One is "fictional"; the other is loosely based on the New Bedford bar gang rape of 1983. Both are "must-see" movies (preferably with a woman friend). The comparison between them is also thought-provoking.

In many ways, *Shame* is a feminist thriller. It has a strong woman lead, Asta Caudell (Deborah Lee Furness) who enters on a Suzuki 750, wears leather and can fix her own bike; an articulate barrister, skilled in self-defence and adept at one line replies to arrogant men. Our feminist hero is forced to cool her heels in a small rural Australian town, which she discovers to be a bastion of male power and of systematic trivialization and abuse of women. She quietly galvanizes the local women who need only her role model to nurture their own empowerment and resistance. But *Shame* is more than a thriller. It offers no simple reassurances and no comforting conclusion.

Lise (Simone Buchanan), the young woman empowered to lay charges against the local louts who raped her and various of her contemporaries, is abducted; her father (Tony Barry), who came to believe and support her is brutally beaten by the local louts charged with the rape and out on bail, and her grandmother is terrorized before a last minute rescue. In the final grief-stricken scene, the local constable, who has wavered between being one of the boys and one of the establishment outraged at the breach of the legal code, accusingly asks Asta if "she is satisfied now?" It is one of the local women who replies that "no," they are not, "not by a long way." In its way then, *Shame* is about an unrelenting reality, about ambivalences of formal legal protection, and the brutality of challenging established power. This places it within the dramatic genre of many Australian films, but this time without the male macho.

Shame reverses the pornographic script of the gang rape scenario. It depicts no overt sexual aggression, only the devastation to women of forced sex, of self-blame and no support. The silence of women and their fragmentation from one another is viewed as being not by choice, but enforced by male power. Male bravado is replaced by cheap rationalizations and lame excuses: "a few kids acting like nature intended" in relation to "sluts" and "little factory girls." Not only are the sexual assaults not shown in the film, but there is no objectification of women, and little scope for voyeuristic gratification in violence. Often through the

film, the local louts are made to look extremely foolish and truly vulnerable when their assumed power is challenged or disregarded. No gods these.

The dilemma of the film is that this power has often not been challenged, and that the abuses it produces have been regarded as normal. One of the metaphors of Asta's role is that of security, safety and autonomy. At one point, Lise asks her why she "isn't careful." Asta's reply is that she supposes that she "has never had to be." When Lise looks to Asta for strength, Asta makes a point of teaching her that no-one except yourself can be relied on for security. And even Asta's impromptu self defence lesson is given pause when Lise asks, "but what if there are six of them?"

My dread that Asta would herself end up being inevitably raped or beaten was, mercifully, unrealized. Of course, she is attacked by four youth and single-handedly consigns several of them to medical care, using Wen-Do techniques. Her subsequent confrontation with the constable in the pub, when he regards the incident as some "boys having a bit of fun," provides a platform and a forum for the truth to be spoken. From there, in a non-imperialist vision, the film refocuses on the local stories. Here it is those women, their relationships and their possibility of choice, that are the real focus. And the ultimate message is that challenging male power is fraught with double-speak, split allegiances and socialized self doubt. More even than this, it costs. The higher cost, though, is to do nothing.

Unlike the sexually assaulted young women in *Shame* who never got to the court room, much of the drama in *The Accused* revolves around the trial of three men charged with soliciting and persuading the commission of a crime—the brutal gang rape of Sarah Tobias (Jodie Foster) in the pinball room of a bar. Prosecuting the men who chanted and cat-called and taunted, was unprecedented. The rapists themselves avoided trial by plea bargaining and pleading guilty to "reckless endangerment" carrying a similar prison term, but making their crime invisible. Struggling to make it visible, to establish that a wrong had been done, and that Sarah should be believed is what the film is all about. Jodie Foster gives a flawless performance as a raw-edged woman who does not conform to sex role stereotypes of the "good woman." Kelly McGillis as Katherine Murphy, the tough and tenacious prosecutor and "good woman," is powerful. The film is well crafted and intense. In the end, justice is done.

Yet, I'm left with some nagging questions about whether the film is ultimately empowering for women and whether it really is an unalloyed breakthrough in Hollywood's women's issues bureau. First, although the impression is given that Sarah Tobias feels vindicated and hence healed of the scars of rape, you should know that the real victim of the gang rape is now dead. She was killed in an alcohol related traffic accident over a year ago. Second, again in real life, the convictions were appealed and her death was used to support an argument that she was drunk and consenting to the rape. In April 1988, the convictions were, thankfully, upheld on appeal. Third, the "good woman" prosecutor, Kelly McGillis, again in real life, was herself raped about ten years ago. That said, let's move back into the movie.

Unlike *Shame*, which was shown from the perspective of women, *The Accused* focuses on the men involved: What is it to be a man? what is it to breach the male bond? A central dream is whether the male friend of one of the rapists and who saw the rapes occur, would testify against the men accused of encouraging the rapes. To do so would keep his friend in jail longer and attach the rape to his criminal record. In the depiction of the rape, there is ambivalence—did she ask for it? Was it really a rape? Should the rapists really be held responsible for circumstances that got out of control. Thus one of the rapists is shown as being taunted with begin a faggot if he refused to "take his turn." Is that what it takes to be a man? Perhaps it is a useful social comment.

The rape scene is also problematic. Sarah verbally describes the scene but it is visually



Asta Caudell, stranded in *Shame*

evoked through the recollection of the male bystander. It is what he saw. Admittedly he was horrified, did know it was rape and Sarah is shown as resisting; and, of course, how could Sarah describe the actions on the "periphery." But this perspective of gaze slides easily into objectification. The ambivalent edges and male perspective of the film produce another

issue with the film—it seems to put its energy into getting it across to the men what they did wrong. In *Shame*, that it was a wrong was never presented as a dilemma; that women are to be believed was not a question.

Where the relationship and empowerment of women was a priority in *Shame*, this is muted in *The Accused*. Little warmth or human contact is explored. The male characters and the women characters are both drawn in simple lines. Sarah is not shown as receiving any support from other women—not from the rape crisis worker, not from her best friend and only grudgingly initially from Katherine Murphy. This lack of contact is not problematized. Finally, I found the assumptions about the role of law and the legal process in *The Accused* to be limited and perhaps offering dangerous comfort. In *Shame*, there is an ambivalence about legal intervention and the focus is on the realities in women's lives and contacts with legal authority. This is not so clear in *The Accused*. Admittedly, the film, focussing on "the accused," explores the extent to which a victim is herself put on trial. But the power of men is shown as being constrained by the formal legal process and the issues are shown as being mediated by the law. It's not that easy. Conviction doesn't resolve the effect of rape. And, of course, conviction is not the norm with a rape being reported in the United States every six minutes. Challenging male power does cost. What makes it imperative and effective to challenge it is not really (and not really surprisingly) left unformed in *The Accused*.

For all these points, though, the film is an important beginning. The message that coerced sexual aggression is not okay is finally hitting the big time.

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Runaways in the Round

by Karen Kemlo



Runaways find their street haven in Donut City.

There is a scene near the end of *Donut City* where two men slowly tear the clothes from a female mannequin in a store window. They rub themselves against the naked torso, simulating sex. They stroke the breasts and rip the blonde wig from the staring head. Then they pull the arms from their sockets. The scene only takes about 15 seconds, but several people in the audience have already walked out.

This is not another analytical news documentary or a glossy movie of the week about teenaged runaways. The language is raw street-slang and the safe distance between audience and player has broken down. We become part of the action on the street, standing in the middle of a stage set that resembles the Yonge Street strip. We are forced to watch, not just walk by. The images are familiar to most. There's a donut shop, a pinball alley, and a mall that looks like the Eaton Centre. But there is no sense of community here. This is a portrait of a toxic society where the bodies of women and children are bought and sold.

The action unfolds in a series of vivid snapshots. The actors move in and around the

crowd, pushing people out of the way. Scenes shift rapidly from one side of the narrow space to the other. There's the Gay Stroll, the Track and a network of dark alleys and street corners. A masked chorus winds its way through the action, connecting all of the inevitable events together in a series of clever rap songs. All the clichés are here too. The adolescent dreams of making it in the big city, the strutting pimps, the drugs. But most of the time the play manages to turn them inside out, and the expectations of the audience are constantly undermined.

Prostitution is not a natural choice for Chooch and Juli, the two lead characters. They are brutalized into believing it's the only way to survive. They remain on the street because there's no permanent affordable housing available to them. Many have dropped out of school and, like Chooch, can barely read and write. Hustling drugs and their bodies is the only marketable job skill that they have. They share a romantic view of the big city, and both are escaping physical and sexual abuse at home. Chooch drifts into male prostitution in order to "raise

some venture capital" before he makes it in the music business. Juli falls prey to a smooth talking pimp named Cruise who feeds and clothes her, then puts her to work. When she becomes his "beef" he will "love and protect her." At one point an electronic message flashes: "Has Juli at last found her real family?"

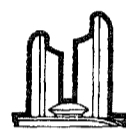
But there are no permanent relationships on the street. The women brutalize each other, their relationships based on mutual exploitation and control. There's a strict hierarchy among the hookers, a sense of territory and competition with a code of behaviour that must be followed. Juli is taught the sex trade by Charlene, the "number one wife." Charlene is later brutally murdered by a john. But the chorus has promised us a happy ending. Juli doesn't die on the streets. She finally finds her older sister who now runs her own escort service called "Sweet Young Things."

There is no sense of natural time and no

growth. The young actors rarely let us forget that the main characters are children—children who are forced to grow up too fast, who are preyed upon sexually. The pace of the play is unrelenting to the end. A bank of TV monitors parallels the action in a soap opera and in regular newscasts. Lights and sirens compete with a police radio that itemizes the latest crime statistics. The multi-media effects catalogue the sexual exploitation that permeates every aspect of our social and political structure; the images that perpetuate the consumer ideal of beauty and youth.

There is an overwhelming sense of relief when *Donut City* is over. The lights come up, the audience suddenly remembers to applaud. Then everyone gathers up their coats and slowly moves out of the theatre. But the images remain for a long time. The faces won't go away.

Karen Kemlo is a Toronto feminist.



City of Toronto Contract Compliance

Notice of Program Extension

The effective date of Toronto City Council's Contract Compliance Program has been extended to **July 3, 1989**.

By July 3, 1989, all firms which seek to obtain City business are required to file data on the characteristics of their workforces, including occupational groupings and salary, as a condition of being eligible for City business.

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Part-time Assistant Editor

XTRA!, the news and entertainment paper for Toronto's gay and lesbian communities, is growing. We want to add a **part-time assistant editor** to our paid staff to work **20 hours a week** starting **Monday, January 9**.

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The Assistant Editor will help our editor in editorial administration and planning; making assignments; overseeing writers, photographers and illustrators; and preparing text and photos for publication. While these editorial tasks will be the major responsibility of this position, the Assistant Editor will also do some writing.

Requirements

The Assistant Editor should have some previous experience in editing and writing, and should be willing to learn how to use Microsoft Word on a Macintosh SE.

This person must work reliably, alone and with others, under the pressure of inflexible deadlines and deal diplomatically with writers and other unusual people.

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Jane Rule: From the Heart

An Interview with Jane Rule
by Robyn Gerland

My acquaintance with Jane Rule dates back to 1963 when I was a student in an English class which she was teaching at the University of British Columbia. At that time, she was an unpublished author and so had no particular reason to inspire hero worship. However, even without fame and sometimes notoriety, there was an aura around Jane which caused her classes to be much more than a duty and sometime even more than a pleasure. I clearly remember the room filling with fascination as she told us many of the stories which formed the basis of *Desert of the Heart*. As young students almost all of us were self-absorbed enough to want to expound at length about our work, our potential and our futures. Jane could be counted on to cause us to expand upon these ideas, and, frequently to discover added dimensions which we had hitherto ignored in ourselves. This is not simply a case of viewing the past through rose-tinted glasses. Fellow students from that time have similar recollections of Jane and the classroom dynamics. Actually, she probably sent a whole swarm of scaled down, little Jane Rules out into the school system, determined to use her techniques and emulate her teaching style.



The following is an excerpt from a lengthy interview which I conducted at Jane's home on Galiano Island, this summer.

Robyn: *Perhaps we could begin with some sort of a brief biographical sketch, "The Early Years of Jane Rule."*

Jane: I was born in Plainfield, New Jersey on March 28, 1931 and I lived in Westfield, New Jersey until I was about 4. That was during the Depression. Father worked for his father in real estate which went belly up. Mother's people lived in California. They decided that there was probably more chance of his getting work in California, so we moved there. We went every summer, anyway, to stay with Mother's people. Father got a job as a salesman with a building supply company. Because it was a national company, he was moved around.

We went to Chicago for a year when I was 9. When I was 10, we went to St. Louis. The war broke out. Father had gone to Annapolis and was trained as an officer. He was just over the draft age and had three children but he kept getting letters in the mail, you know, "We can't win the war without you." So he went and we moved back to California to Mother's people. We moved back there when I was 12, and I went to private school for the first time. I had been used to the rough and tumble of coming into class in the middle of the year and having people chase us home and throw rocks at us and never knowing what was going on. I studied South American geography five times and never did do Europe. I started doing long division before multiplication. Academically, I was a mess, just a total mess. I had a hard time reading. I'm dyslexic, but nobody ever knew. I was always in big classes and I started in the middle of the year.

I drifted through and I would get moved before my homework was due. When I was 15, I started school in September, with everyone else, and people were nice to me. I just couldn't believe it. That year I was just totally, absolutely hyper. I was so excited that I couldn't go to sleep at night. A teacher sat me down and taught me multiplication tables and I went from the bottom of the class to the top of the class in six weeks. And she helped me with reading, and in that one year I learned basically everything I need to know to be a student. I was absolutely drunk with power and wildly in love with the woman who taught me. I just

worshipped her. And then we moved again but again I went to a private school and was there for two and a half years until I got thrown out. I got thrown out, I'm sure, because they thought I was a lesbian. I didn't know. But I was a rabble-rousing kid who was always criticizing people and writing articles in the student newspaper insulting the powers that be, so I ended up in public school for the last little bit.

Robyn: *What would make them think you were a lesbian?*

Jane: I was. I mean, there are lots of lesbians who don't wander around with the mark on them, but I am certainly not one of them. I would go into a bar with a date and go into the women's washroom and somebody would try to pick me up. There it was. You're 6 feet tall and have a bass voice and you are targeted. There are people who are 6 feet tall with bass voices and are not lesbian, but I'm not one of them. I sort of wander around as the stereotype.

And of course, I always made friends with women much older than I was, even when I was at school. I had a job when I was about 15 at a summer session teaching swimming, and there was a woman there teaching art, and I fell in love with her. I knew it and I didn't know it, but I was beginning to be aware that these were erotic feelings that I had. I wanted to be with her all the time. Also, I was beginning to get more and more impatient about people lying all the time about what was really going on. You know, in order to get along, you have to lie. You have to be polite in phoney ways. I think that was an impetus for writing, as well as to be honest with myself. On the one hand, it was the loveliest thing that had ever happened to me and on the other hand it was terrifying. I couldn't live this way.

Robyn: *What made you decide to speak out publicly as a lesbian? Was it a political as well as a personal decision?*

Jane: I certainly did a lot of political speaking and I still do. I arrived in England last May, just as the infamous Clause 28 was being made into law, which is that no local authority may promote homosexuality. I was speaking at the libraries, and there was a question about cancelling all the stuff I was going to do. I said, "Look, I am here. External Affairs sent me here to promote women's books and that's what I am here to do and that's what I am going to do. If, during a question period, somebody asks me what I think of the issue, I am going to speak to it. There's no way to hide that I'm a lesbian. That's just not possible."

And it did come up, everywhere, even on BBC's Women's Hour. And I did address it myself. I said, "Look, I'm a guest in your country. I know that you have problems and I want to be as courteous to you and as thoughtful of you as I can be, but I can't censor myself."

Robyn: *I remember that you said that you had come out publicly as a lesbian but that you had held off getting involved in the Women's Movement because you were afraid that your sexual position would shed negative light on the movement.*

Jane: Yes. That's right. I thought long and hard about that.

Robyn: *At what point, do you feel that you spoke publicly for Canadian feminism?*

Jane: I'm no good at years. I was in the first women's group at UBC (University of British Columbia).

Robyn: *Was that the Women's Caucus?*

Jane: Before that. Out of the group evolved the first non-credit women's course. I went to that group—it was a consciousness-raising group. Finally, the question of being lesbian came up, but instead of somebody raising it as they raised everything else, by saying, "I'm worried about my relationship with my husband" or whatever, somebody said, "There was this dreadful article about lesbians in this magazine. I wouldn't want my daughter to read it." And I happened to know that this woman was lesbian. It made me very angry that she would... but I thought, "I'm not going to blow her cover."

I simply said, "I think, if we are going to talk about this, we are going to have to talk about it in the way we talk about everybody else. We say 'I' or 'you,' and I think we have to talk about this the same way. And so, I will say, I am a lesbian, and when we are talking about lesbians, you will say to me, 'you.'" After the meeting,

there were half a dozen graduate students who came to the house and complained that I had put them in a terrible spot. I said, "I haven't put you in a spot at all." But they said, "We can't come out. We would be totally jeopardized." I wondered, "What about me?" They said, "Oh well, you're different." And I was teaching at UBC!

The Women's Movement seemed to me to be so important that I didn't want it jeopardized by "Oh, they're just a bunch of lesbians" because it seemed to me that that was a way that people could dismiss it. It wasn't until N.O.W. really sorted out the lesbian and feminism issue that I really felt clear in my head about it. When Kate (Millet) was shoved out, everybody consolidated behind her. They didn't fall over and play dead. Then I thought, "And this is what's going to happen. This is the kind of attitude we've got to have within this movement so that it can go forward and not feel threatened—that people must not be threatened by being called a lesbian. It was N.O.W. that really sorted that out for me.

Robyn: *So you actually decided to put your forces with the Women's Movement after 1970, when there was an attempt to sacrifice Kate for the cause, by the cause. On a Canadian level, suddenly Jane Rule was a public leader.*

Jane: Well really, the leader role was thrust upon me. I would get a call from the CBC saying that they were doing a program on gay people and would I come on it? And I would say, "I know what you are going to do. You'll start out in a mental hospital and end up on Hallowe'en with the drag queens."

And they said, "Well, if people like you won't go on these programs, what choice have we got?" I thought, "You're right." So I did it. What I have been concerned with is being a teacher and a writer. The political stuff I do because it has been thrust upon me. And I think, "yes, right. I have to stand up and do that." But I don't go out and seek it. It just happens. For years, I was the only lesbian in Canada speaking politically.

Robyn: *So, if the N.O.W. group had not sparked a show of solidarity if everyone had not donned the lavender armbands, do you think you would have?*

Jane: It certainly would have taken longer—I don't know how long—to realize that to be a public feminist and a public lesbian was possible, and politics, for me, is the art of the possible. I don't think that there is any usefulness in conceiving of a world that is not possible to create, and banging your head for something that is not going to happen. I always think in those terms. When I see a proposal for political action, I want to look at it to see if it will help to bring about a better climate.

Robyn Gerland is a feminist living in Cambridge, Ontario.



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Everywoman's Almanac 1989

The Women's Section at SCUM



NOV. 27-DEC. 3

■ **Thursday, December 1:** Nightwood Theatre presents the 4th Annual Groundswell Festival of work in progress by women writers, directors and performers. 8 pm. The Annex Theatre, 730 Bathurst St. Tickets \$8, Passes \$20.00. Info: 961-7202. To Sunday, December 11.

■ **Friday, December 2:** Womynly Way Production presents Joanne Loulan's lecture, "What's So Funny About Lesbian Sex?" 8 pm. Trinity-St. Paul's, 427 Bloor St. West. Info: 925-6568.

■ **Friday, December 2:** Euclid Theatre is holding a cabaret/dance. Performances by Sheila Gostick, Salome Bey, Tanya Mars, Clifton Joseph, Chris Dewdney, Faith Nolan, Company of Sirens, Tomson Highway and others. 1087 Queen St. W. Tickets: \$12/flush rate, \$10/broke rate, \$15/at the door. Available at Pages, The DEC Bookroom, This Ain't the Rosedale Library, SCM, LIFT, CFMDC. Info: 466-5494.

DEC. 4-DEC. 10

■ **Sunday, December 4:** Betsy Warland and Daphne Marlatt read from their new book, *Double Negative* at the Women's Common. 4 pm. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

■ **Monday, December 5:** Popular Feminism Series presents Frieda Forman, "Taking Our Time: Feminist Perspectives on Temporality." Free. 8 pm. OISE, Rm 2-211, 252 Bloor St. West. Info: 923-6641 x2204.

■ **Tuesday, December 6:** Screening of the film at the Woman's Common *Before Stonewall*. 8 pm. Members \$2, guest \$2. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

■ **Tuesday, December 6:** The National Film Board and Studio D presents the premiere of *The Legacy of Mary McEwan*. 317 Dundas St. W. 6:00 and 8:15 pm. Reception at Walker Court. Free. R.S.V.P. 973-9606.

■ **Tuesday, December 6:** Feminist Film Series presents *Calling the Shots* (Canada, 1988). \$3. 8 pm. OISE auditorium, 252 Bloor St. West. Info: 923-6641 x2732.

■ **Tuesday, December 6:** The Toronto Women's Bookstore is celebrating a newly renovated store. The evening features music by Tinku, Margaret Atwood, Delvina Bernard (of *Four the Moment*), Arlene Mantle and Marlene Nourbese Philip will be signing their new releases. 6-9 pm. 73 Harbord St. Info: 922-8744.

■ **Wednesday, December 7:** Consumer Awareness Workshop. Topics: Comparison shopping, shopping for safe toys, and reading the fine print. Free, with childcare provided. 925 Albion Rd. (east of Islington) 1:30-3:30, or 7:30-9:30 pm. Info: 745-0062.

■ **Wednesday, December 7:** I Want To Be Alone will be aired on TV Ontario. 10 pm. Toronto Festival of Festival Short. Info: 323-1500.

■ **Wednesday, December 7:** The Woman's Common is holding a Hannukkah Celebration. 7 pm. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

OUTSIDE BROADSIDE

Compiled by
Helen Lenskyj and Jackie Edwards

■ **Thursday, December 8:** Vision TV's Cutting Edge series presents the NFB film, *A House Divided* (The Elderly at Risk series). 8 pm and 11 pm. Info: 366-9221.

■ **Thursday, December 8:** Aftermath presents a public forum. A performance of *Journey From A.M.U.* (All Mixed Up), a live theatrical preventive education program on child sexual abuse. Free. Audience participation welcome. 8 pm. Jarvis Collegiate Institute, 2nd Floor, 495 Jarvis St.

■ **Thursday, December 8:** Marie-Lyn Hammond and Evelyn Datl perform at the Woman's Common, 2 shows, 8:30 pm. and 10 pm. Members \$3, guests \$6. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

■ **Friday, December 9:** Shrink Resistant, an Antipsychiatry Evening. Readings by Bonnie Burstow, Don Weitz and Margaret Gibson, and a screening of *Still Sane*. Donation: \$3. 7:30 pm. OISE auditorium, 252 Bloor St. West. Info: 461-7909 or 538-7103.

■ **Saturday, December 10:** Mother/Daughter brunch at the Woman's Common. 11-3 pm. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

DEC. 11-DEC. 17

■ **Sunday, December 11:** Tree Trimming Party at the Woman's Common. Bring a toy for our toy drive and listen to Janet Whiteway on piano. After 1 pm. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

■ **Tuesday, December 13:** The Woman's Common presents a reading with the author of *In the Name of The Fathers*, Susan Crean. 8 pm. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

■ **Thursday, December 15:** The Woman's Common presents the Fly by Night Dyke Band. 8 pm. and 10 pm. Members \$3, guests \$6. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

■ **Thursday, December 15:** Sepia Productions presents Aids Awareness Night, a benefit. Performances by Ebony Voices and music by Women of the Four Directions, Video—Aids in the Black Community. 7 pm. \$5. A Space, 183 Bathurst St. Info: 588-2934.

■ **Thursday, December 15:** Resources for Feminist Research launches its special issue on Feminist Perspectives on the Canadian State with a party and speakers Dionne Brand, Linda Carty, Becki Ross and Mariana Valverde. 7 pm. Sylvester's Cafe, 16 Bancroft St. 2nd floor. Info: 923-6641 x2278.

■ **Friday, December 16:** Womynly Way presents Jasmine in concert. \$7 advance at SCM, DEC and TWB, \$8 at door. 9 pm. The Rivoli, 334 Queen St. West. Info: 925-6568.

■ **Friday, December 16:** Women's Independent Thoughtz (WITZ), a feminist seminar/discussion group, holds an annual year end party. Location T.B.A. Info: 234-5281.

■ **Saturday, December 17:** On the Line Music Collective and the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre present Solstice Sizzle, a Women's celebration, concert and dance featuring Arlene Mantle, Lillian Allen, Boo Watson, Deb Parent, Janet Whiteway, Sarah Hamilton and many more. Wheelchair accessible. 8 pm. Bathurst United Church, 736 Bathurst St. Tickets: \$7/adv. \$8/dr. available at Toronto Women's Bookstore, sliding scale at SCM Bookroom. Info: 597-1171.

■ **Saturday, December 17:** Dulcs and Tots: a visit from Ma Santa from the South Pole at The Woman's Common. 10-2 pm. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

DEC. 25-DEC. 31

■ **Tuesday, December 27:** The Woman's Common Lesbian moms discussion group meeting. 8 pm. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

■ **Saturday, December 31:** The Woman's Common presents their 2nd Annual Black and White Ball New Year's Eve Party. 519 Church St. Members \$35, guests \$50. Includes buffet dinner, prizes and a D.J. Info: 975-9079.

JANUARY

■ **Friday, January 2:** Women's Independent Thoughtz (WITZ), a feminist seminar/discussion group. Topic: Aging in the Women's and Lesbian Movement. Free. Location and info: 234-5281.

■ **Monday, January 9:** Popular Feminism Series presents Johan Aitken, "Beyond Stereotypes: Liberating Our Images Through Literature." Free. 8 pm. OISE, Rm. 2-212/213, 252 Bloor St. West. Info: 923-6641 x2204.

■ **Sunday, January 15:** January Jam at The Rose with Janet Whiteway, Ricky Yorke, Maureen O'Brien, Maxine Walsh, B.J. Danylchuck, Joanne Parks and many more. 2-6 pm. \$2/door. The Rose Cafe, 547 Parliament. Info: 928-1495.

■ **Thursday, January 19:** Arlene Mantle performs at The Woman's Common. Tickets/Sliding Scale. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

■ **Thursday, January 19:** Women's Press is launching two new books. *Never Too Thin* by Eva Szekely, and *From Private To Public: A Feminist Exploration of Early Mothering* by Amy Rossiter. 6 pm. OISE, 252 Bloor Street West. Info: 598-0082.

■ **Thursday, January 26:** Rexdale Women's Centre presents a free information workshop on Landlord and Tenant issues. 1:30-3:30 pm at the Albion Community Centre, 1485 Albion Road. Free child care. Info: 745-0062.

■ **Sunday, January 29:** Ryerson Polytechnical Institute is hosting a Public/Media relations seminar Lesbian and Gay concerns. 10 am-4 pm. Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Rm. 1402, 350 Victoria St. Info: 929-3048.

■ **Sunday, January 29:** Lesbian Teachers discussion group meets at The Woman's Common. Every last Sunday of the month. 11 am. 580 Parliament. Info: 975-9079.

■ **Monday, January 30:** Rexdale Women's Centre presents a free course, *Assertiveness II*. 1:30-3:30 at the Rexdale United Church, 87 Elmhurst. Free child care. Info: 745-0062.

WEEKLY

■ **Sunday:** Life Rattle, stories from the people of our community, told in their voices on CKLN. 11 am. Send hand written manuscripts to CKLN, c/o Life Rattle, 380 Victoria St. Toronto, M5B 1W7. Info: 531-7441.

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

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

■ **Wednesday:** The Woman's Common Literary Club meets the first Wednesday of each month at 7:45 pm. at 580 Parliament St. Dine with members before the meeting.

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

■ **Thursday:** WITCH (Women in Toronto Creating Housing) planning meeting is held on the second Thursday of each month. Info: Wendy Shaw, 588-9751.

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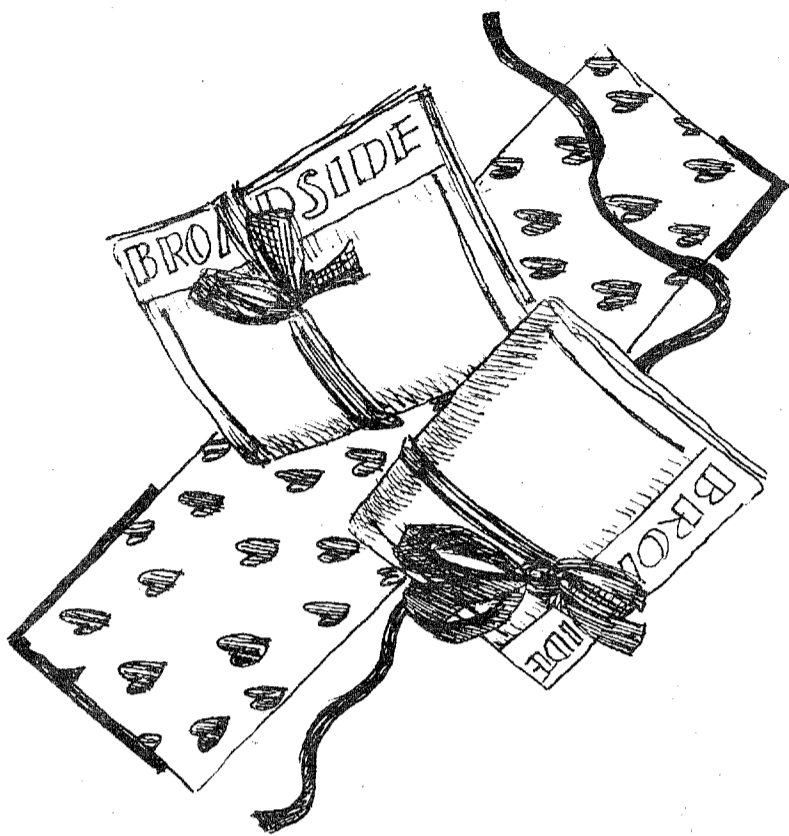
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