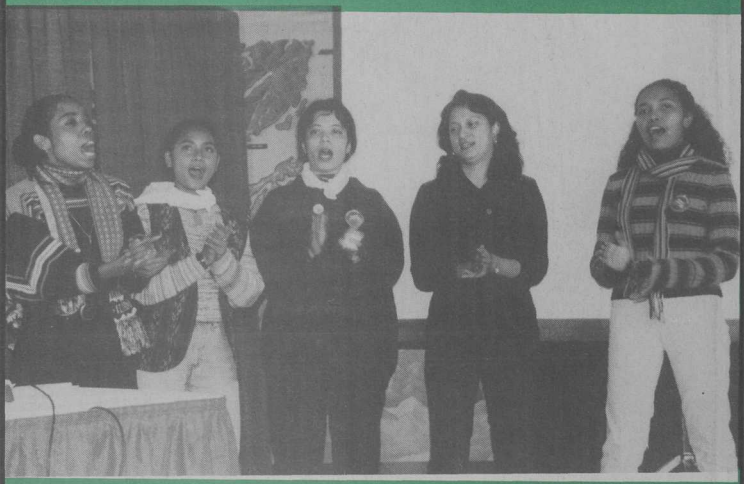
Special Collections Serial

Dec/Jan 1998 *The murder of Reena Virk...pg 3* CMPA $2.25

KINESIS

News About Women That's Not In The Dailies

Anti-APEC activism: a photo essay



Voices from East Timor

plus...

Jeanette Armstrong

Sarojeni Rengam

LIBRARY PROCESSING CTR - SERIALS
2206 EAST MALL, U.B.C.
VANCOUVER, BC V6T 1Z8

LIBIZ8 4/98

INSIDE

KINESIS

#309-877 E. Hastings St., Vancouver, BC V6A 3Y1
Tel: (604)255-5499
Fax: (604)255-5511
E-mail: kinesis@web.net

Kinesis welcomes volunteers to work on all aspects of the paper. Our next Writers' Meeting is **Tues Jan 6** and **Tues Feb 3** at our new office, 309-877 E. Hastings St. Production for the February 1998 issue is from **Jan 20-27.** All women welcome even if you don't have experience.

Kinesis is published ten times a year by the Vancouver Status of Women. Its objectives are to be a non-sectarian feminist voice for women and to work actively for social change, specifically combatting sexism, racism,classism, homophobia, ableism, and imperialism. Views expressed in Kinesis are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect VSW policy. All unsigned material is the responsibility of the Kinesis Editorial Board.

EDITORIAL BOARD
Fatima Jaffer, Lissa Geller, Agnes Huang

PRODUCTION THIS ISSUE
Kelly Haydon, Jehn Starr, Catherine Munn, Fatima Jaffer, Joan Bridget, Ali Grant, Persimmon Blackbridge, Mary Logan, Ellen Woodsworth, Agnes Huang

Advertising: Sur Mehat
Circulation: Audrey Johnson, Chrystal Fowler
Distribution: Fatima Jaffer
Production and Typesetting: Sur Mehat

FRONT COVER
Bella Galhos (left) and other East Timor women living in exile perform at the 2nd International Women's Conference Against APEC. Photo by Fatima Jaffer

PRESS DATE
December 17, 1997

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Individual: $20 per year (+$1.40 GST) or what you can afford
Institutions/Groups: $45 per year (+$3.15 GST)
VSW Membership (includes 1 year Kinesis subscription): $30 per year (+$1.40 GST)

SUBMISSIONS
Women and girls are welcome to make submissions. We reserve the right to edit and submission does not guarantee publication. If possible, submissions should be typed, double spaced and must be signed and include an address, telephone number and SASE. Kinesis does not accept poetry or fiction. Editorial guidelines are available upon request.

DEADLINES
All submissions must be received in the month preceding publication.
Note: Jul/Aug and Dec/Jan are double issues.
Features and reviews: 10th
News: 15th
Letters and Bulletin Board: 18th
Display advertising (camera ready): 18th
(design required): 16th

Printing by Horizon Publications.

Kinesis is indexed in the Canadian Women's Periodicals Index, the Alternative Press Index, and is a member of the Canadian Magazine Publishers Association.

ISSN 0317-9095
Publications mail registration #6426

KINESIS

News About Women That's Not In The Dailies

News

Analyzing the murder of Reena Virk 3
by Yasmin Jiwani
Photo art project by women in the Downtown Eastside 4
by Russel Baskin
Say goodbye to public pensions in Canada 5
by Kathleen Jamieson

Features

Ontario teachers strike out against Bill 160 8
by Sharon Bray
Report from the Women's Conference Against APEC 9
by Janet Ilin Mou and Fatima Jaffer
Indigenous peoples and the new world order 10
by Jeanette Armstrong
Women, human rights and APEC 16
address by Yayori Matsui
Violence against women in war and armed conflict 17
Environmental devastation in and corporate globalization 18
by Sarojeni Rengam
Dumping nuclear waste on indigenous territory 19
by Winona La Duke

Centrespread

ANTI-APEC ACTIONS IN VANCOUVER: A PHOTO ESSAY
The People's Summit March 11
by Fatima Jaffer
The National Women's Day of Protest Against APEC 12
by Agnes Huang, Fatima Jaffer, Kelly Haydon and Paige
NO! To APEC: Continuing the Resistance 14
by Agnes Huang and Lily Shinde
Kinesis goes to APEC Media Centre 14
by Fatima Jaffer and Agnes Huang

Commentary

Canada's not-so-innocent role in APEC 15
by N. Gitanjali Lena and Brenna Bandar

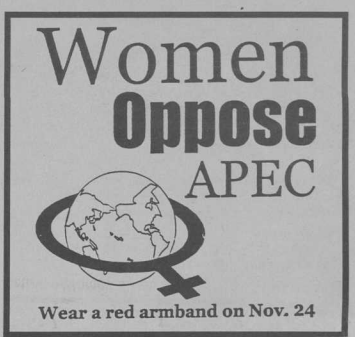
Arts

Review of *Working Together Online* 20
by Penny Goldsmith

Regulars

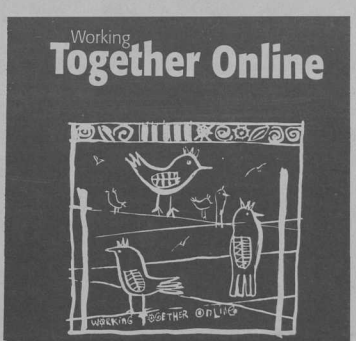
As *Kinesis* Goes to Press 2
Inside *Kinesis* 2
Movement Matters 6
compiled by Ali Grant
What's News 7
compiled by Kelly Haydon
Bulletin Board 21
compiled by Kelly Haydon

The murder of Reena Virk 3



National Women's Day of Protest 12

Yayori Matsui 16



Getting women online 20

The APEC Summit may feel like a blur, but the activism that confronted it remains strong in the minds and hearts of many feminists in Vancouver.

The most incredible thing about the anti-APEC organizing was that it kept growing and growing and the base of opposition just kept getting broader and broader.

In this issue of *Kinesis*, we highlight some of the activism that happened in Vancouver during the APEC Summit mainly because the build-up of momentum as the November days progressed was so tremendous.

Certainly in Vancouver, the National Women's Day of Protest Against APEC piqued the interest of more women than any other campaign women here have seen in a while.

Part of the success of the campaign was connected to the government's—at all levels—deliberate silencing of what was being discussed behind the closed-door meetings of bureaucrats, heads of state and big business interests. This caused women to welcome and even seek out any information that answered or validated their questions about what APEC was really about.

The mobilization of women in Vancouver, which rippled into other communities, came to life as women began to pull together all the threads of their lives and find their links back to the APEC agenda.

Legal aid cuts-APEC, national debt-APEC, increased part-time work for women-APEC, violence against women-APEC...it didn't matter what the issue was, the Lower Mainland Feminist Networking Group which initiated the Women's Day of Protest campaign, continued to send home the message that the slide further to the Right in terms of the social, political and economic vision in this country had to do with profiteering and misplaced priorities.

The well-being of women, indigenous peoples, immigrants, young people, older people...are not the priority of our governments. No, they are much more concerned with the best interests of corporations and wealthy elites.

Throughout its organizing, women involved in the FNG kept talking to each other and to women they'd meet on the bus, or on the street, or at a friend's place...wherever. The challenge was in trying out different ways to communicate clearly how APEC impacts on women's lives. With nurses, feminists talked about cuts to healthcare and privatization; with Aboriginal women, feminists talked about the BC treaty process and the pitting of off-reserve and on-reserve Aboriginal peoples against each other; with artists, feminists talked about the commodification of culture and art; and so on.

As more and more women saw the relevance of APEC to their lives, it became easier to find common bases for discussing issues that, in fact, affect us all.

It also became easier to shift the discussion away from a solely "human rights" focus to the broader issues of social, political and economic justice, and alternatives to the current tide of global economic restructuring. Rather than allow APEC to be framed as an Asian-thing, feminists reframed the debate so that the involvement and complicity of countries like Canada and the US were made clear.

One FNG spokesperson approached a journalist with the *Washington Post* and handed him materials on the National Women's Day of Protest. In the interview that ensued, he seemed genuinely surprised that she was talking about how the slashing of social programs in Canada and the proposed dumping of nuclear waste on Western Shoshone territory (in Nevada) were all a result of the APEC agenda.

One thing feminists must be more aware of is the connection between the APEC agenda are the recent currency and financial crises that hit a number of Asian nations, including Thailand, South Korea and Japan.

While right-wing commentators have remarked that economic difficulties in these countries happened *despite* APEC, we need to point out these very difficulties happened *because of* APEC.

The pro-pro-business climate being created by trade liberalization agreements only further opens up the possibilities that large investors can bring down a nation's economy by pulling out when they see fit. Essentially, investors are being told that: "If you want to make a buck, there's a buck to be made."

In a way, no one should be surprised by these recent events. Remember what happened after NAFTA was signed? The Mexican peso and economy went crashing down. This allowed multinational corporations and imperialist governments like the US to step into a stronger position from which to dictate Mexico's social and economic policies and its people.

Women active in anti-APEC organizing say they are determined to ensure that those links are not lost, now that the APEC Summit is over. The fight against corporate globalization is nowhere near an end as both the Multilateral Agreement on Investments and the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas are still very much on the table.

The MAI is being called a "Corporate Charter of Rights," which should strike fear into the hearts of all of us. The implications of the MAI for women in Canada are even worse than APEC, namely because the MAI is an actual formal agreement.

The MAI intends to do away with all tariff and trade barriers and disallow subsidy, grant and aid programs national governments provide to support the activities of their citizens. Corporations, in turn, will have the right to sue national governments if they believe they've been discriminated against.

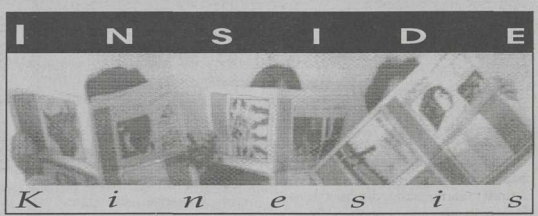
One of the scariest components of the MAI is the proposed liberalizing of financial markets. This will give investors (of the wealthier sort) and financial institutions even more leeway to jump from country to country in search of greater profits.

Given the recently announced profit levels of the five major banks in Canada, one wouldn't think they needed any extra help in increasing their cash flow.

Yes, another year, another record broken for the Royal Bank, Band of Montreal, Toronto Dominion, Scotia Bank and CIBC. What is their new collective mark: $7 billion, with each of them beating their own individual records of last year.

Before we sign off, back to APEC for one final comment: the Canadian public should demand that our governments account for the gross amount of money spent on hosting the one-week affair. Interestingly—but not surprisingly—the Reform Party remained very quiet as millions and millions flew out of the federal coffers. (This is the same party that usually screams if even $5 is spent on social programs.) Obviously, Reform is trying to give us a clear sign of whose side of the bed it sleeps on.

That's all for this month as *Kinesis* (finally) goes to press. Have a great rest of the year and an even better start to 1998.



And now for our monthly weather report inside *Kinesis*: In November, we weathered heavy APEC storms, marked by extremely sunny periods of organizing and unprecedented activism on the streets of Vancouver. Nationally, APEC also cost us recurring earthquakes, totalling $60 billion on the Richter scale, annoying Canadian taxpayers everywhere.

Another effect of APEC and the enormous amount of energy and resources that women put into educating each other about its nasty effects was to it tie up the energy of *Kinesis* volunteers and staff (APEC took place during our regular December/January 1998 production week). Due to anti-APEC organizing, we put off production by one week.

This issue of *Kinesis* was then further delayed by illness (editor Agnes Huang had the flu and desktop publisher Swee Sim Tan was hospitalized with pneumonia.)

More setbacks came in the form of vicious virus attacks on our computers, resulting in the loss of our ability to access e-mail (where some articles still languish) and the loss of several edited articles awaiting lay-out, which then had to be re-typed and re-edited.

This combination in factors is what led to our unprecedented lateness in getting this issue to you. Our apologies!

Stepping in to take over desktop publishing from a still recovering Swee Sim was Sur Mehat, *Kinesis*' typesetter and advertising coordinator. Also putting enormous energy into filling the gaps were the editorial board and Kelly Haydon, who has been a very active volunteer with *Kinesis* for the past several months. A big thank you to all!

We'd like to welcome new voices in this month's issue, a couple of whom are international activists who were in town for the 2nd International Women's Conference Against APEC: Sarojeni Rengam, Yayori Matsui, Russel Baskin, Sharon Bray and Janet Ilin Mou.

And finally, the *Kinesis* and Vancouver Status of Women offices will be closed for the month of December. We will re-open again on January 5th.

We'd like to wish our readers the an energetic, inspiring...in fact, tremendous new year! Thank you for the support in 1997 and enjoy this issue of *Kinesis*. We'll be back, refreshed and energized with our February issue next year, and hope you'll be there too!

Our appreciation to the following supporters who became members, renewed their subscriptions or donatied to Vancouver Status of Women in November.

Cenen Bagon * Mary Billy * Betty Carter * Lynda Griffiths * Vivian Guthrie * Danelle Harris * Katherine Heinrich * Heidi Henkenhaf * Olga Kempo * Alice Kendall * Barbara Kuhne * Aylene McDonald * Jan Noppe * Mary Ocol * Susan Penfold * Sarah Purdy * Catherine Revell * Esther Shannon * Susan Shaver * Janet Smylie * Ginny Stikeman * Wendy Thompson * Judith Walker * Marine Printers * Dr. Mollie Rawling * Union Workers Union

A special thanks to our donors who give every month. Monthly donations assist VSW in establishing a reliable funding base to carry out our programs, services and *Kinesis* throughout the year. Thanks to:

Jody Gordon * Erin Graham * Barbara Lebrasseur * Eha Onno * Galy Tyler *

CORRECTIONS

We made a number of boo-boos in the November issue of *Kinesis*. On page 15, the photograph of lounge singer Jimmy Sushil (aka Sheila James) was taken by Jehn Starr. Unfortunately, the photo credit fell off the edge at the printers. Our apologies to Jehn.

In the centrespread interview with Cenen Bagon on the 2nd International Women's Conference Against APEC, we incorrectly stated that the Manila People's Summit was part of the official APEC Summit, when instead it was *parallel* to it. Also in that same article, Bagon is quoted saying, "We are putting a lot of effort and resources into supporting Aboriginal women and their organizing." In fact, she did not mean to imply that support is already being done but rather that that support is in preliminary stages. Hence, the sentence should read: "We are *going to* put...."

The murder of Reena Virk:

The erasure of race

by Yasmin Jiwani

November 14th marks the day when 14-year old Reena Virk was severely beaten, brutalized, and drowned in Saanich, British Columbia just outside of Victoria. The cause, according to newspaper accounts, was that she was "an overweight teen" who didn't fit in.

In the initial reports, seven girls and one boy were allegedly responsible for her death. The unfolding coverage of the event initiated a moral panic, with public calls for a more stringent approach by the criminal justice system to dealing with youth violence. Since then, six girls and one boy have been charged with the murder of Reena Virk.

As the events leading to Virk's murder unfolded in the daily papers and television newscasts, the horror of what "girls do to other girls" was highlighted. It quickly overshadowed coverage of male violence. In contrast to the numerous deaths of women by their spouses and ex-spouses, Reena's death was held up as symbol of how girls are not immune to being violent.

Story after story in the daily media covered the issue of teen-girl violence, quoting research to support the main contention that girls are just as dangerous as boys. Even though existing research clearly links teen-girl violence to the internalization of a dominant, patriarchal culture which values sex and power, this connection was trivialized, if not side-stepped altogether. But "bad girls" have never fitted in.

Unlike stories of male violence against women which tend to be address this violence as aberrant and singular, news stories focusing on Reena Virk quickly mentioned other related cases of girl violence across the country. Statistics confirming the rising incidence of girl violence were repeatedly stressed to emphasize in effect that girls are no different from boys. The overall message was that this is an epidemic and something needs to be done about it.

And, the implicit yet compelling message was that gender-based violence no longer exists within the younger generation.

Headlines from *The Vancouver Sun* screamed: "Teenage girls and violence: The BC Reality," "Girls fighting marked by insults, rumours, gangs," "Bullies: Dealing with threats in a child's life," "Girls killing girls a sign of angry, empty lives," the last headline suggesting that had girls followed a traditional (gender-based) lifestyle, their lives would not be so empty and frustrating.

Throughout, the media dwelled with puzzlement on the increasing violence of teenage girls at a time when girls are supposedly enjoying greater access to education. Statistics indicating the growing number of girls graduating with honours (compared to boys) were used to demonstrate this perplexing contradiction.

Implicit throughout was the sense that girls can't possibly to be violent because of the privileges they are now enjoying. But at the same time, an explanation advanced suggests that girls are not used to the demands inherent in these privileges, can't cope and hence become violent.

Reena Virk was killed by those who considered her *difference* an affront to their sense of uniformity.

At no time has the media provided any in-depth analysis of the violent nature of our dominant culture, or examined ways in which violent behaviour is internalized as a function of coping within a violent society.

Feminists have long argued that violence is about power and dominance. Understood this way, male violence against women is viewed as a direct outcome of the unequal power and control that males exercise in society. In Reena Virk's case, these same notions of power and dominance are rendered invisible by the media. Instead, any reference to unequal power relations is subsumed within the frame of "the girl who tried desperately to fit in but couldn't."

Reena Virk couldn't "fit in" because she couldn't possibly have. She was brown in a predominantly white society. She was supposedly "overweight" in a society which values slimness to the point of anorexia. And she was different in a society which values 'sameness' and uniformity.

She was killed by those who considered her *difference* an affront to their sense of uniformity. Their power and dominance, legitimized by and rooted in the sexism and racism of the dominant white culture and its attendant sense of superiority, was used to force her into submission—a submission that amounted to her death and erasure from society.

In the public presentation of her murder, Reena suffered yet another erasure. While the daily papers plastered her picture on the front and back pages, no mention, save one, was made that Reena Virk died because of racism. Instead, stories repeatedly stress her lack of fit and her overweight appearance. The implicit message is that had she been white and thin, she would have fitted in and there would have been no reason for her to be killed. This combination of race and gender factors is a toxic mix and a warning to all who don't "fit" that you get what you deserve.

But the erasure of race/culture is all the more interesting in light of the media's obsession with culture in the mass killing of the Gakhal and Saran families in Vernon in 1996. There, despite repeated statements to the contrary by the Coalition of South Asian Women Against Violence, the media continued to emphasize the cultural background of the murdered victims. In Reena Virk's story however, the coverage makes no mention of her cultural background even though she is clearly South Asian. Could this absence be due to the fact that she was not killed by one of her own?

In contrast to the members of the Gakhal and Saran families, Reena's family is identified as being Jehovah's Witnesses. Interestingly, the eulogy delivered by one of the Church elders was used to emphasize Virk's supposedly deviant character.

Reena Virk didn't fit in. She had "alleged" incidents of sexual abuse from her father. The Jehovah Witness elder who delivered the eulogy carefully recounted how Reena had recanted these allegations, and had in fact made up the allegations in order to obtain personal freedom. She had subsequently been moved to a foster home.

Not once did the papers mention the pressures she faced, nor did the papers consider the research on child sexual abuse and the reasons why children recant "allegations" of sexual abuse.

In Reena Virk, the sexism and racism of the dominant society found a victim that fit all its stereotypes. Yet her erasure in the public world marks Virk as a double symbol of jeopardy to young South Asian girls — that they had better fit in or find other ways of survival, if they are to continue to live in the white, patriarchal culture of contemporary Canadian society.

Ultimately, what happened to Reena Virk could have happened to any number of us who are visibly different and doubly or triply marked in this society by virtue of race, gender, sexual orientation and disability.

Yasmin Jiwani is the coordinator of FREDA, the Feminist Research, Education, Development and Action Centre on violence against women and children in Vancouver.

Violence against women in Canada:

Photos tell the true story

by Russel Baskin

"I never used to be scared to go out on the street. I never used to be like this. It's got much worse. I usually just stay in at night. Guys get desperate for money for drugs so they rob you. If I do go out I have someone with me and I don't take my purse." *Beverley Nelson, volunteer at the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre*

December 6th is Canada's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. In June 1991, in memory of the 14 women murdered at Montreal's L'Ecole Polytechnique, Bill C-202--declaring the National Day--was passed unanimously in the House of Commons.

This "official" recognition was supposed to help further the work of ending violence against women, but still, even today, most of the public seems unaware of this day or the critical situation of violence against women. And it appears that the federal government believes that by making one day of the year "significant," they've done enough towards ending violence against women.

Three years ago, Vancouver art activist Rita Beiks went into action, taking on the mainstream medias in an attempt to get them to acknowledge December 6th. What she found in the process was a conscious decision by those with editorial control not to give it much mention. Each year, fewer acknowledgements of December 6th are made by the corporate media.

This discovery did not deter her efforts. On the contrary, she became more determined to continue. Beik's drive comes from being a witness herself to domestic violence in her family and later becoming a victim of sexual harassment. This, combined with her desire to challenge violence against women, culminated in a variety of art actions.

For one of her December 6th art actions, Beiks and several friends inserted four additional pages into *Globe and Mail* newspapers throughout the downtown Vancouver area. Beiks wrote and produced the insert, with her own funds, to look like it was part of the newspaper's business section. But on closer inspection, the pages where filled with facts and stories about violence against women.

Encouraged by the response she received from women who contacted her to show their support, Beiks began planning her 1997 project, a series of photo workshops with women to highlight the issue of violence against women. Beiks applied for government funding, and after considering her proposal for a community public art project, the City of Vancouver gave Beiks a $5000 grant.

Beiks then contacted the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre because, she says, "I wanted to work with a group of women directly affected by violence and whose voices are often hidden, ignored and forgotten."

Christine Hutchinson, who works at the centre and also participated in the project, says, "The women here are often trapped, victimized first by their partners or strangers and then re-victimized by the police and services which are meant to help them." She added,"This happens in a way which never happens to middle class women. The women here are supposed to tolerate the abuse, expect it because of who they are or what they do or how they cope. It is really sad to see."

So Beiks, with the help of her sister Alona who is a publicist, began to collaborate with the women in the Downtown Eastside community. The project was started in August with three workshops held at the Women's Centre, in which the women from the community talked about their interest in the project and exchanged stories about their lives.

Nine women took part in the art project. Through workshops, discussions and photo shoots, the project came to life. By the end of three weeks, hundreds of photos had been taken--there were pictures of friends and of strangers.

The week after the women had completed their photo shoots, the group came together and looked through all the photographs. From that, one photo was selected and enlarged into a bus shelter poster. In addition, 30 photos were chosen and arranged as a slide show with accompanying text telling the story of the project, the women's own processes, and how the photos represent their main concerns and issues.

The slide show is being shown throughout December in Vancouver at the Fifth Avenue Cinemas. Later, it will be moved to a Vancouver Art Gallery before going on tour across Canada.

The bus shelter poster displays the words "She Counts" printed on the top and a reference to December 6th on the bottom. It will appear on 25 bus shelters in Vancouver and at the Vancouver Public Library during the month of December.

Beiks says she asked for bus shelter space located all around Vancouver, and not just those concentrated in the Downtown Eastside, so that the message would reach people from other communities. The women involved in the project say they wanted to get across to more people what was happening in the Downtown Eastside.

Kinesis had the opportunity to speak to three of them--Hutchinson, Nelson and Julie Cyr--about their involvement with the project.

Cyr began by saying, "When I went to the first meeting I wondered how we were going to achieve this. Rita explained we would be given cameras to take pictures out in the community. It was scary but exciting. I love taking pictures."

Hutchinson echoed those sentiments. "I was excited to have a camera in my hand, so I could take pictures of some of the people I know around here and show them as people I really respect and value and some who I have come to love."

Each woman was given a disposable camera and asked to photograph what they saw in their community. Nelson said she was fascinated to see something else other than drugs and drunk people on the streets. She began to see some beauty in her surroundings.

Hutchinson talked about taking pictures in the Portland hotel (a rooming house), on the streets, and at Oppenheimer Park. What she saw was a community that is hurting because of businesses and gentrification moving in. "Our community needs help, consideration and compassion," says Hutchinson.

When Hutchinson saw her pictures, she said she felt empowered. She experienced magic in her artistry which she didn't know she had. At the same time, Hutchinson said she felt something really constructive was happening, something which might reach out to other people.

For Cyr, taking photos and seeing the results made her feel more confident in approaching strangers and asking to take their pictures. She says that a picture that stands out in her mind is of a woman she didn't even know. The woman told Cyr she was a survivor of a vicious attack which almost killed her. She showed Cyr the scars and asked her to take a picture.

"I thought, this is something I've captured that's good because maybe there are other people who will come out and say, 'I'm a survivor too' and not be ashamed and not be afraid," Cyr said.

When Nelson thinks about the project, she says she hopes it will begin a lot of changes. "I know it won't just happen overnight but I would like us to be able to walk on the street and not be afraid. I know that sounds like an impossible thing," she says.

Hutchinson thinks her own vision of humanity may be idealistic, but believes this is the way it is supposed to be and people have just gotten lost. She hopes the project will result in more people from outside of the Downtown Eastside community discovering things they have to offer this area. "Perhaps it will lead to one counsellor, one lawyer or one supermarket cashier coming down and devoting their time and reaching out to the people here," Hutchinson says.

The poster for the bus shelters was launched on December 4 at the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre. As well as the women who participated in the project and others from the community, guests at the launch included former MP Dawn Black, who was the instigator of Bill C-202.

Cyr says she hopes the exhibition and poster will make people in all walks of life think. "It doesn't matter where women are. The violence is everywhere. It could happen to the elite or where we are situated down here. Unfortunately that's the scary part." Like so many other women Cyr finds it unbelievable that the violence is still going on. "This is the 90s and women are sick of it."

Russel Baskin is an artist and teacher. She met and got to know Rita Beiks while they were both at Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design. Baskin has joined Beiks in her early hour actions on December 6th for the past two years.

Public pension system in Canada:

Going... going...

by Kathleen Jamieson

Currently, the two pillars of the Canada's public pension system, the Old Age Security (OAS) and the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), are undergoing fundamental changes. The Liberal government's amendments to the CPP are before the Senate, after having been pushed through the House of Commons with little debate.

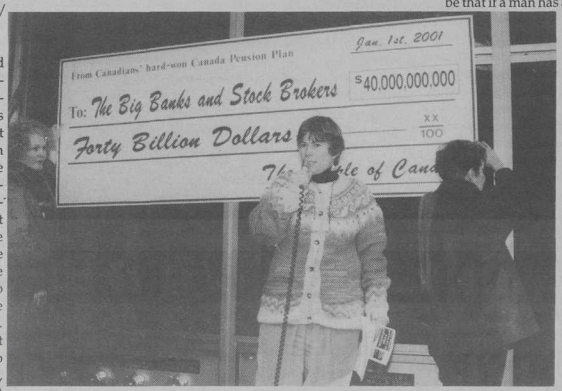
These amendments are seen by many progressive analysts as having substantial and adverse impacts on women, people with disabilities, and low income earners *[see Kinesis July/August 1997.]*

The Vancouer-based Public Pension Information Network (PPIN) has been involved at several levels in trying to influence the federal government to eliminate or at least moderate the changes to the CPP that will be most harmful to women and those with low incomes.

Like most people, until two or three years ago, PPIN thought that public pensions for seniors and people with disabilities were relatively safe from government cutbacks. In fact, Canada had made some progress (although slow) toward a pension system which was somewhat fairer to those most in need.

One important indicator of that seemed to be that the percentage of elderly women living on their own with incomes below the Statistics Canada poverty line had declined to 53 percent. This was down substantially from the early 1980s when pensions had come under a good deal of public scrutiny and the "feminization of poverty" had become the catch phrase.

Canada's public pension system now appears to be in the process of reverting to the situation of almost half a century ago when a public pension was based on a means test and a woman was considered a dependent of her husband. This meant she was not entitled to an old age pension that recognized her as an individual in her own right.



Seniors' and Downtown Eastside community activist Ellen Woodsworth speaks at the demonstration in Vancouver organized by the Council of Canadians. The demo, held on December 11, was called, "Paul Martin's got his eyes on your pension."

photo by Jehn Starr

Under the existing system, women have separate entitlement to the OAS and have come to see this as a recognition of their contribution to society through their years of unpaid work as mothers, caregivers and volunteers.

The federal government is proposing to bring in a bill in the new year that will change the old age pension into a new package called the Seniors Benefit. The current low income supplement to the OAS called the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) will be merged with the OAS under the new scheme.

The Seniors Benefit will incorporate the means-tested GIS for people with low incomes and a lower threshold for taxing back the pension benefit from others. Under this complicated regime, entitlement to old age pension benefits currently paid to all individuals over 65 and taxed back only from those in the upper income brackets will be based on "family" income and taxed back from both those in the middle and upper income levels.

A major step backward for women's rights is that the incomes of a senior man and woman assumed to be living together will be assessed together. One outcome will be that if a man has a high income, his senior spouse's (or cohabiting woman's) right to old age pension benefits will no longer exist.

Although the federal government has said that both spouses may still receive pension cheques in their own names, a woman's individual entitlement will disappear if she is living with a man. And if he has a high income, neither will receive a seniors benefit cheque. Women will be left even more dependent on their male partners.

In October, members of the federal finance committee held an invitation-only "consultation" in Vancouver on the Seniors Benefit. There, they were asked how it would be determined that a senior man and woman in the same household were cohabiting, and therefore should be assessed together. Would it be like the infamous "man-in-the-house rule" where women on social assistance have to prove they are not intimate with a man living under the same roof, who would therefore (according to the government's reasoning) be considered financially responsible for the woman? They did not answer the question.

This past summer, some members of the PPIN met with British Columbia's minister of women's equality, Sue Hammell, to ask for her assistance in conducting public education on the Liberal government's changes to the public pension system and their adverse effects on women. PPIN also asked Hammell to conduct a provincial gender analysis (as had also been requested in Saskatchewan), and to obtain a copy of the federal government's gender analysis of its CPP changes.

This analysis had been promised to PPIN by the Hedy Fry, secretary of state responsible for the status of women, at a meeting in March. However, no document was forthcoming.

Indeed, despite Fry's insistence that it existed, no one working on the pension issue, outside of government, had ever seen such a document...until two months ago.

Sue Hammell finally did receive a copy of the document from Hedy Fry, which she then passed on to members of PPIN along with a copy of her letter to Fry criticizing the analysis. PPIN then distributed the document to people back in Ottawa, including opposition members of parliament who themselves had never seen it.

It is clear why this document was suppressed by the federal government. As status of women minister, Fry must have been embarassed by it. The federal government's CPP gender analysis is superficial in its content and based on a number of false premises and platitudes about women's lives. Its whole purpose seems to be to justify the changes to the CPP that adversely impact on women. Not surprisingly, the document has no name attached to it identifying who conducted the research.

Perhaps the people most excited by the changes to the CPP and OAS/GIS are those with a vested interest in the stock market, which is going to receive a massive infusion of capital. The changes the Liberals want to bring in are moves toward privatizing the public pension system, forcing more reliance on RRSPs (which few women can buy) and private pensions, and imposing income tests.

What can women do? The proposed changes to the CPP may contravene the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and we might want to challenge it on those grounds. In the meanwhile, we also need to continue refuting the Reform Party's position that the CPP as a public, shared-risk program should be abolished.

In two years, the CPP will be up for review again. (The new legislation includes a provision that the CPP will be reviewed every three years instead of every five years). It is critical that women keep ourselves informed about its impact and be better prepared to argue more effectively for a public pension system based on equity and fairness.

Ed. note: As Kinesis *goes to press, Conservative members of the Senate agreed to allow the CPP legislation to pass, but under one condition. The Liberal government had to withdraw from the bill the portion relating to the establishment of a government-appointed investment board. The board would have the authority to invest a percentage of monies coming into the CPP fund from employer/employee contributions on the stock market.*

Kathleen Jamieson is a researcher with SPARC (Social Planning and Research Council) of BC. She is also a member of the Public Pension Information Network.

MOVEMENT MATTERS

listings information

Movement Matters is designed to be a network of news, updates and information of special interest to the women's movement.

Submissions to Movement Matters should be no more than 500 words, typed, double spaced and may be edited for length. Deadline is the 18th of the month preceding publication.

compiled by Ali Grant

Dionne Brand wins GG Award

Highly acclaimed writer, filmmaker, historian and activist Dionne Brand has won the Govenor General's Award for her latest collection of poetry, *Land to Light On*.

Born in Trinidad, Brand has lived in Toronto since 1970. She is the author of six other books of poetry, a collection of short stories *Sans Souci and Other Stories*, and a novel *In Another Place Not Here*, and has co-authored a number of non-fiction works.

A well-known filmmaker as well, Brand wrote and directed several documentaries, including: *Sisters in the Struggle* and *Long Time Comin'*, and *Listening for Something: Dionne Brand and Adrienne Rich in Conversation*.

This is not the first time Brand has been up for a Govenor General's award. She previously nominated for the poetry honours for *No Language is Neutral*.

Currently, Brand is working on a new novel.

CRIAW honours feminist researchers

At its recent conference in Fredericton, New Brunswick in November, the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW) presented its annual awards honouring women for their contributions to feminist research in Canada.

Among the recipients was Lorraine Greaves who was given the "The Laura Jamieson Prize" for her book *Smoke Screen: Women's Smoking and Social Control*, published by Halifax's Fernwood Publishing in 1996. Greaves is the former director of the Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children in London, Ontario. She recently moved to Vancouver to become the director of the BC Centre for Excellence in Women's Health.

Smoke Screen provides an important analysis of the impact of the tobacco industry on women's lives, and first-hand accounts of what smoking means to women. The prize is awarded for the best non-fiction book by a feminist author which advances knowledge and/or understanding of women's experience.

Cheryl Aucoin, chair of Nova Scotia's Women Unlimited, was awarded the "The Muriel Duckworth Award" for her contributions over many years in the areas of: women and the economy; women organizing for change; child care; violence against women; fairness in funding and community outreach. And Penni Mitchell of *Herizons*, a woman's quarterly published out of Winnipeg, was acknowledged for her regular column in the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

Founded in 1976, CRIAW is a national non-governmental organization whose purpose is to encourage, coordinate and diffuse research into women's experience.

Women's Health in Newfoundland and Labrador

Do you have any materials on women's health in Newfoundland and Labrador? if so, the Women's Health Network wants to hear from you. They are putting together a special collection of resource materials which they aim to use as a research and public education tool.

They are asking for items such as pamphlets, briefs, workshop write-ups, academic articles, grant proposals and conference proceedings. So look through those boxes and filing cabinets.

For more information or to contribute materials, contact Laura Fitzpatrick at (709) 739-4660, or by mail at Women's Health Network, Grace General Hospital, Nurses Residence, 241 LeMarchant Road, St. John's, NF, A1E 1P9.

[information from PAR-L e-list*]*

Know any heroines?

Stayed up late last night meeting deadlines for the feminist newsletter again?! Got arrested for the third time this year at that anti-APEC demo? Maybe you should nominate yourself as a modern day heroine...

The 100 Heroines Project, established by the Beijing Women of Rochester (New York), is calling for nominations to be considered for monetary awards and global recognition! So if you or anyone you know meet the following criteria—act courageously to achieve freedom and equality for women; risk their social acceptance, health, financial security, or even their lives on behalf of women's rights, and serve as a role model for women and girls—then send in a nomination letter.

Each of the heroines selected will receive some money to continue the good fight, and will be included in a book of photographic essays which will be distributed globally. In a letter (of three pages or less), provide the following information on your nominated heroine (which can also be yourself)

- biographical information: name, country/nationality, date of birth, address, phone, fax, electronic mail address
- describe the nominee's courageous activities on behalf of women and why she would be called heroic in her own country.
- what challenges are the most difficult for the nominee to overcome in her struggle toward achieving equal rights and freedom for women?
- a brief description of nominee's personal background.
- name, address, phone, fax, email information for two references for validation.
- name, organization, address, phone, fax, email info for the person nominating the heroine.

Send nominations by February 28, 1998 to: 100 Heroines, PO Box 23750, Rochester, NY , 14692, USA; fax (716) 586-7523; phone (716) 234-4292; or email Heroine100@aol.com.

[information from EGALE e-list*]*

Global action plan on breast cancer

At the World Conference on Breast Cancer, held July 13-17, 1997 in Kingston, Ontario, more than 1,000 people from 54 countries began work on a Global Action Plan to Eradicate Breast Cancer. The organizers are calling for volunteers to get involved in the Action Plan, as well as in the planning of the next conference to be held in Ottawa in July 1999.

Almost half of the delegates to the Kingston conference were women living with breast cancer. The main goal of the conference was to emphasize an activist agenda for change and organizers say that the conference was unique in its grassroots organization. This was the first time that the voices of those most affected by cancer took centre stage.

Many of those voices pointed to an environmental explanation for the 70 percent of breast cancers which are not associated with known risk factors. The environmental connection, highlighting the role of pesticides, organochlorines, estrogen-mimicking chemicals and other pollutants in the global breast cancer epidemic, was made by many speakers, including Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) president Bella Abzug: "Our bodies, our breasts should not be toxic waste dumps".

An information package on the World Conference on Breast Cancer is available from: WEDO, 355 Lexington Avenue, 3rd Floor, New York, NY, 10017-6603, USA; tel (212) 973-0325; email wedo@igc.apc.org; or drop by their web site at www.wedo.org. To get involved with the World Conference on Breast Cancer, contact them at: 841 Princess St, Kingston, ON, K7L 1G7; tel (613) 549-1146; email brcancer@kos.net; or visit them at www.brcancerconf.kos.net

[information from WEDO News and Views, *September 1997]*

Violence against women study underway

Vancouver-based FREDA, the Feminist Research, Education, Development and Action Centre on Violence Against Women and Children, has undertaken a project to review and analyze policies in British Columbia affecting women in or leaving abusive relationships.

The project called "Violence Against Women: An Analysis of Policies and Actions" will include an annotated bibliography of all research dealing with violence against women in BC over the last three years, as well as a critical analysis of all BC-based policies impacting on women living in, or fleeing abusive relationships.

FREDA is seeking comments and concerns about BC's policies, as well as information to be included in the bibliography, particularly unpublished research reports, needs assessments and curriculum materials.

Contact FREDA at SFU Harbour Centre, 515 W. Hastings St, Vancouver, BC, V6B 5K3; tel: (604) 291-5197; fax: (604) 291-5189; e-mail: mhmorrow@sfu.ca

Hooray!

The Vancouver Status of Women is pleased and excited to announce:

"We have Lower Mainland Single Mothers' Resource Guides"

The SMRG is packed with all kinds of useful resource information on a whole range of topics:

childcare
services for First Nations women
freebies and cheapies
legal assistance
welfare
employment and training
housing
support services

The SMRGs are free for single mothers

Just come by and pick one up from ...

the Vancouver Status of Women
#309 - 877 E. Hastings St, Vancouver
(between Campbell and Hawks)
Tel: 255-5511
Office hours: Mon-Thurs, 9:30am-5:00pm

Please note, VSW will be closed from December 19 to January 5.

(Organizations that can afford it are asked to contribute $2 per copy, but to hand out SMRGs at no charge to single mothers.)

WHAT'S NEWS

compiled by Kelly Haydon

Women's reproductive rights upheld

On October 31, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that courts don't have the power to force a pregnant woman to undergo treatment to prevent "harm" to her fetus.

The SCC decision, upholding women's reproductive rights, referred to a Winnipeg judge's ruling that ordered a 22-year old Aboriginal woman, known as Ms. G, into treatment for drug addiction *[see* Kinesis *October 1996.]* The Manitoba Court of Appeal subsequently overturned the order.

Not satisfied, the Winnipeg Child and Family Services appealed the case further to the highest court.

The Supreme Court's ruling reaffirms a woman's right to fundamental liberties, saying in effect, that a woman has the right to control her own body at all times, including when she is pregnant.

Jo Dufay of CARAL (Canadian Abortion Rights Action League) says, "This ruling sends a clear message. Pregnant women are free to seek medical care without fear of incarceration." She notes that the threat of incarceration would drive women-at-risk away from seeking pre-natal care, with potentially serious consequences.

Annette Garm of Sheway, a health clinic for high-risk pregnant women living in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, says it is ridiculous to believe "that forcing a woman into legislated treatment will effect positive changes. It assumes drug treatments centres and prisons are safe, free from drugs being readily available. They are not." (Ms. G had sought treatment at one point, but was turned away because of lack of space.)

Most importantly, Garm notes, legislated treatment fails to aknowledge the historical context for substance abuse." She questions: "why are poor, single mothers continuing to be held responsible for all the sins of the deteriorating social fabric."

At the Supreme Court, a number of groups made presentations on behalf of women's rights, including: the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF), CARAL, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, Women's Health Clinic, Inc. in Winnipeg, the Native Women's Transition Centre in Winnipeg, and the Metis Women of Manitoba, Inc. (Several anti-choice groups also had intervenor status.) in the case.)

The Canadian Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists made a public policy statement saying that forcing women to receive medical treatment is ethically and medically wrong, and represents a violation of their autonomy.

Legal experts say that provinces, which have jurisdiction over health, could still bring in legislation allowing the forced intervention into pregnant women's lives and decisions. However, such legislation could be challenged on grounds of unconstitutionally, and this most recent SCC ruling gives that argument even more weight.

In the same week the SCC decision came down, South Carolina's highest court upheld the criminal prosecution of pregnant women who used drugs. Cornelia Whitner was sentenced to eight years in prison after her baby was born with traces of cocaine in the baby's system.

[Information from Pro-choice Press *Autumn 1997 and other press releases and news clippings]*

Breast implant class action derailed

Only eight of 1800 breast implanted women in Louisiana who are suing Dow Chemical Co. for damages in a class action suit will be allowed to continue their case.

Although a jury previously agreed with the women that Dow Chemical had plotted to hide the health dangers of silicone from women, a state court judge ruled that the women's cases were "too dissimilar to group them all in one lawsuit."

The women had received various types of implants—although they were all silicone—at different times and were suffering from different ailments and diseases.

With the ruling, only the women who originally filed a claim against Dow will be allowed to participate in the class action

Rape law victory in Mexico

Women in Mexico have reason to celebrate in their fight against male violence against women. After heated debate, the lower house of Congress approved an amendment setting prison sentences from eight to 14 years for husbands who rape their wives.

Women who campaigned for the amendment held a banner in the parliamentary chamber that read: "Rape in marriage is not the incorrect exercising of a right. It is an attack on the individual guarantees of Mexican women."

Members of the ultra-conservative National Action Party (PAN) voiced the most mysoginist opposition. PAN's deputy, Jorge Humberto Zamarripa, commented: "What happens if a man ends up with a prostitute because he doesn't want to rape his wife, and catches a disease?"

Independent ecologist and deputy for the ruling government, Carolina O'Farrill, spoke out in support of the amendment: "There is not a single party which is in favour of violence in the family. The initiative is a conquest that women have sought for many years."

The measure still has to make its way through the Senate.

Blow to affirmative action in the US

In response to a decision by the US Supreme Court not to review Proposition 209, California's year-old ban on affirmative action programs for jobs, education and contracts *[see* Kinesis *November 1996,]* 26 states have said they too will outlaw "racial quotas."

Officials with the American Civil Liberties Union said that all 26 states are now planning to end or reduce their support for affirmative action programs. A number of states are already prepared to bring in anti-affirmative action initiatives—Texas, Colorado, Florida, Ohio, Washington, Arizona, Georgia, Missouri and Michigan.

Martha Davis of the National Organization for Women states: "It would be disastrous if Proposition 209 were exported to other states."

Affirmative action programs were originally designed to help reduce the number of Blacks and other marginalized individuals--such as, women who were excluded from schools, jobs and contracts.

Critics of affirmative action claim it has turned into a system which allows unqualified people to entitlement corrupting the country's "colour-blind Constitution."

By refusing the hear an appeal of Proposition 209, the US Supreme Court signalled that voters are free to scrap the system. However, the legal battles are not entirely over as exisiting affirmative action programs still have to be challenged, and the ACLU and others promise to fight any challenge all the way.

In January, the US government filed a legal brief supporting affirmative action, saying that Proposition 209 was a ruse to lock in white male power at the expense of Blacks, Hispanics and women.

BC introduces cell phone initiative

A number of women in Vancouver at high-risk for male violence will be given cellular phones pre-programmed to dial 911 as part of a pilot project supported by the provincial Attorney General. Under the program, women using cell phones are to be given priority over other calls to the police.

The cell phones will be provided only to women already enrolled in Vancouver's Domestic Violence Emergency Response System (DVERS) program, a community partnership between ADT Security Systems, Battered Women Support Services (BWSS) and the Vancouver Police Department. *[The initial reporting of the program in the mainstream media gave women the misleading impression that the cell phones are available to any woman who requests one. The provincial AG did nothing to correct this wrong information.]*

Under the DVERS program, women who have left abusive domestic situations and who are considered to be at high-risk have alarm systems installed in their homes, which automatically connect them to police. However, the protection alarms may offer only exists when the women are at home.

Laraine Stuart of BWSS explains that the DVERS program is directed at addressing a very small part of the male violence against women problem: those women who are threatened by ex-partners where there is evidence of stalking and harassment. She adds that it should only be seen as one of a number of strategies to combat male violence.

As to the potential success of the cell phone initiative, Stuart says they won't know until the evaluation stage is completed. If the evaluation of the pilot project, is positive the initiative will be extended to parts of the province that have victim services and can support the technology.

Stuart notes that the program may not work for rural women as the response time of police, due to distance, is lengthened. She also holds that it is important that there is an infrastructure in place to respond to women's reports of violence. "The technology alone is not enough."

Bonnie Agnew of Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter points out that the program ignores the main problem, which is the slow response and sloppy investigations of police to 911 calls made by woman reporting male violence. What is needed, she says, is a "swift, thorough and effective response from police."

Agnew says she is concerned that only a handful of women will benefit from the cell phone initiative, and that women using 911 from other phones will not get the same treatment as those in the program labelled Priority One.

Women's groups have repeatedly called for two things, says Agnew: a re-deployment of police personnel from crimes against property to violent crimes, in which the vast majority of victims are women and children; and second, that senior officials in the police force put pressure on those under their command to respond to 911 calls from women immediately and to conduct thorough investigations.

Agnew says that if these two initiatives were carried out, women would be safer, trust in police would be raised, and men would get the message loud and clear to think twice before harming a women.

Woman claims police officer raped her

Late one night in January 1997, Vancouver police responded to a domestic violence call from a women. Her husband was taken away.

The woman says that one of the officers present told her he would have to come back later to stay over as he lived in Coquitlam.

The woman, a recent immigrant to Canada who speaks little English, maintains she was afraid to say "no" to a police officer--a figure of authority. However, she was worried enough and called a friend after the police left to tell her about it.

The woman says the police officer returned to her home in the morning and then raped her.

After overcoming her initial fear of retaliation against her, she filed a sexual assault complaint. On July 30, the Crown decided, based only on the Vancouver Police Department's internal investigation, that no criminal charge should be laid against the officer. The "alleged" rapist has since only received a verbal reprimand from the VPD.

The woman was told she had 30 days to file an appeal of the Crown's decision. She says she didn't because she had lost all confidence in the police.

Lilian To of SUCCESS, the United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society, says the woman recently met with the Attorney General's staff to present her evidence in the case. The Crown still stands by its decision not to proceed.

Meanwhile, the woman has filed an appeal to the Vancouver Police Board, which deals with issues of ethical behaviour and protection of public trust.

SUCCESS' chair Mason Loh has expressed serious concerns about the police officer's upholding of the professional code of ethics and with the inability of the police system to take appropriate disciplinary action other than providing "verbal reprimands."

The outcome of the appeal should be forthcoming in January.

The woman is also talking to the Police Complaint Commission to see if the provisions in the Police Act adequately deal with the issue of ethical behaviour, and to determine if new additions to the Act are required.

FEATURE

The teachers' strike in Ontario:

Bill 160 not about education

by Sharon Bray

Wednesday, December 3 was a sad day in Ontario. It was the day on which Bill 160, a new Education Act for the province, became law. On that day, the Conservative government of Mike Harris took control of education out of the hands of locally elected school boards, teachers and parents and placed it squarely into the hands of an elected few in government.

Decisions concerning education will now be made by cabinet—not even by the full legislature. School boards, teachers and parents do not have to be included in any discussions. As well, all new teachers will have to forfeit their access to the Freedom of Information Act, which means they will have no right to see their work files unless they are willingly shown them by their employer. These are just some of the problems with Bill 160.

Below, Sharon Bray provides her comments and analysis on Bill 160 and the two-week long teachers strike in Ontario.

Bill 160 has very little to do with education, but much to do with taking money from education in the short term and long term. It will allow, almost immediately, nearly $700 million to be removed from the education system in Ontario. That's the short term.

In the long term, the cuts will be even worse. Bill 160 will allow non-qualified people to be hired to teach at lower wages, and it will eventually destroy the federations [unions] that protect teachers' working conditions—and hence, students' learning conditions—their professionalism, and, of course, their salary levels. *[In Ontario, five federations represent the various constituencies of teachers: the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario, the Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, and l'Association des Enseignantes et des Enseignants Franco-Ontariens. The Ontario Teachers' Federation acts as the umbrella group for all five teachers' unions.]*

Bill 160 can, and probably will, put an end to collective bargaining for teachers. Schools will be run as businesses—schools will have managers, not principals; students may get vouchers and be encouraged to shop around for the school of their choice (and those with money will undoubtedly supplement their vouchers). This would copy the American model, where the 'bottom line' is used to evaluate a school's success and determine the renewal or not of a principal's or teacher's contract.

In return for allowing his government to take control over the education system, what has Mike Harris promised Ontarians? A tax break, yet to be determined (although those in higher income brackets will invariably be getting the better deal.)

Last month, when Ontario teachers protested the Harris government by walking out of their classrooms for two weeks, they did so not as a spontaneous reaction to Bill 160. Their response was the culmination of protests against a right-wing government and its destruction of education and other social programs—protests that have been angry, strong and consistent since they began.

Many teachers got their first big taste of hitting the pavement, carrying placards, chanting anti-government slogans, wearing union buttons, and feeling the power that surfaces when a cause unites us, in Hamilton, during the Days of Action in February 1996. More than 100,000 people marched together—many of them teachers—to protest, among other things, the "Tool Kit" the Harris government was threatening to impose on schools and teachers. (The kit was intended to be a government package telling schools and teachers how to downsize in a climate of a budget cuts to education. It was never released, although many believe it to be a precurser to Bill 160.)

There were the usual garbage can fires to keep us warm; there was trust and unity among us; and... there were plenty of doughnuts.

Similar demonstrations were held in London, Peterborough, North Bay, Toronto and Windsor, and each time, teachers were there.

Teachers didn't only demonstrate in the streets, but also in the schools. Work-to-rule mandates were implemented throughout the province, especially at the secondary level. This meant absolutely no services by teachers other than classroom instruction; that is, no teacher involvement in sports teams, student newspapers or school bands, no marking or lesson plans in the evening, all of which were not part of teachers' contract and done on a volunteer basis.

No response came from the Harris government. Strike votes were taken. We knew we'd be hitting the bricks in the next school year.

What we didn't know at the secondary level was that the elementary school teachers would be with us on the street. Historically in Ontario, elementary teachers have not been militant. While they have also seen their working conditions eroded, they have spent their time surviving, not fighting back.

When the Harris government tried to play on this history as a tool to divide and conquer the five teachers' unions, the elementary teachers said they would take no gains on the backs of secondary school teachers, and that if we walked out, they'd be with us.

At 6:00am on Monday, October 27, 126,000 Ontario teachers did not go to school. Instead, we walked a picket line for 10 hours; we rallied at Queen's Park [the site of the provincial legislature] and at the offices of members of the provincial parliament; we held candlelight vigils; we stopped traffic; we delivered information pamphlets; we wrote letters and signed petitions; we smiled and waved at motorists; we informed the public and many of their support; and we welcomed steelworkers, autoworkers, public sector workers and parents onto our picket lines.

We were empowered despite an unresponsive government. We were united despite a media that endeavoured to divide us. We were validated by a justice system that would not issue a back-to-work-order. We were uplifted by a Catholic Bishop who said we may be illegal but certainly not immoral. We were praised by Labour leaders for our incredible organization. We were thanked by a public who was too weary to read Bill 160. We were joined by our principals and vice-principals (who will pay unduly for giving that support). We were conveniently ignored by our school boards and trustees who had every the power and the right to charge us and demand we return to work.

For two weeks on the picket line, not all of us had a full sense of what we were accomplishing. And surely not everyone would agree that we have accomplished anything at all. We started strong: 10 hours on the line the first day, in rain storms and in snow, then anywhere from three to six hour shifts for the days that followed. There were the usual garbage can fires to keep us warm; there was trust and unity among us...and there were plenty of donuts.

Picketing was most intense early in the morning when members of other unions—caretaking and secretarial staff—showed up at school. Ours was an information picket. We were not to physically prevent anyone from crossing, but we were permitted to present an argument that might encourage others to honour our picket.

It's not easy to face a secretary, a friend you've worked with for ten years, a woman who makes half your salary, and ask her to stay home from work, to forfeit her pay, to ignore her employer. But this is exactly what happened around the province. Some secretaries stayed home; others did not. Some went so far as to walk the picket line. Others reported to different schools where they were unknown.

No matter who crossed the line (and crossers were few), no matter what the anti-union media of Ontario reported, and no matter how arrogant the government became, teachers were together on that line. One young teacher said she'd be walking the pavement if it meant not losing her house. Some of the more radical teachers (and I'd never deny that most teachers are small 'c' conservatives) used the 10 days to address every picketer they met as "sister" or "brother." While that's not the language most of us use, no one complained because that's what we were, and for some, what we still are.

One teacher made her own sign: "Let King Mike collect your taxes" (under Bill 160 he can, even without approval by the legislature). A supportive motorist, and there were many, painted on her car, "The only good Tory is a suppository."

Not every person who drove by was on our side though. We got the finger a few times, mostly from 'grandpa-looking' guys who usually accompanied their hand gestures with directives for us to return to work, directives that were loaded with adjectives that they wouldn't use (I hope) in front of their grandchildren.

One woman in York Region picketed at a school in a remote area where only a dozen teachers are employed. For nine days, she was cursed at by the same man, who drove by in a truck. When he saw her, he slowed down, opened the window and yelled, "Shove it up your fucking knickers."

The woman simply took this in stride. She said nothing. She never complained. But on the 10th day, which she knew would be her final day on the line, she was ready for him. When he stopped and yelled out his usual invective, she waited for him to finish and then responded with dignity, "I'm not wearing any knickers." Later, she admitted that it was her first time talking back like that.

At the close of two weeks, the strike ended, but badly. The leaders of the five federations did not, but should have, made their announcement together. The rank and file was confused. No one was ready to give up. (It is rumoured that the split came from Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation's overly-close relationship with the Ontario Federation of Labour and the Canadian Autoworkers, which are considered more militant unions. Rumours of a general strike across the province also hovered over the whole situation.)

On the morning after the leader of the Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation announced that its membership would be returning to the classroom, many elementary school teachers were angry. They considered organizing their own protest to stay out longer, but finally gave in and did as their union advised. Ironically, the Harris government has blamed "big union bosses" for leading its membership into an illegal strike; for many of us though, the reality is that the union led us back in.

Teachers been back to work for several weeks now. What has changed? A few things. At first there was an eerie quiet. Many students could not say the word "strike." Many were eager to work—it seemed they'd gained an understanding of the privilege of education. There's been a mad rush of mid-term exams and report

See TEACHERS page 15

2nd International Women's Conference Against APEC:

Momentum carries on

by Janet Ilin Mou

On November 17 and 18, about 400 women gathered in Vancouver for the 2nd International Women's Conference Against APEC. Throughout the two days, during which participants explored issues and developed plans of action, women from around the world agreed that APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) must be stopped.

After opening prayers by Fay Edgar of the Coast Salish Nation, Joan Grant-Cummings, president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, gave a brief address in which she talked about the "anti-woman global apartheid" that is endemic not simply to APEC, but also to the larger agenda of neo-liberalism of which APEC and the MAI (the Multilateral Agreement on Investments) are a part. Following Grant-Cummings was a videotaped message of solidarity from Burmese pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

The keynote speech was delivered by Jeanette Armstrong, a writer and indigenous rights activist from the Okanagan Nation. Enthusiasm for her words was established early when participants responded with enthusiastic cries to her comment that we are not living in a democracy when multinationals based in the US and Japan have more of a right to determine our rights than we do.

Both days featured a plenary in which women from the South and North spoke on four issue areas: labour, human rights, environment, and economic and social development. On Day One, the speakers included Alicia Sepulveda of the Telecommunication Workers Union in Mexico, Yayori Matsui of the Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center, Sarojeni Rengam of the Pesticide Action Network in Malaysia, and Sunera Thobani of the Women's Studies Department at Simon Fraser University.

Day Two featured presentations by Cheung Lai-Ha of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions, Bella Galhos, an East Timorese women living in exile in Canada, Kushi Kabir, an environmental activist from Bangladesh, and Tania Suarez of the Zapatista National Liberation Front.

Women also got to attend a range of workshops, including: the rise of the Right/the disappeared, heterosexism/homophobia, Indigenous issues, poverty, health, mega-development projects/aquaculture, violence against women and globalization, consumer campaigns, social clauses, advocacy for children, and the redirection and regulation of capital.

In the last afternoon of the Conference, participants reported back recommendations and resolutions from each workshop area. Among them were calls from the Indigenous rights workshop that Indigenous rights be recognized as human rights; that corporations and governments be held accountable for the health and social problems of and violence against Indigenous people; that an Indigenous Bill of Rights which includes self-determination be created; and that the use of Indigenous women's bodies for scientific experiments comes to an end.

Participants in the workshop on organized labour talked about increasing outreach to youth, and the developing greater ties with non-traditional sectors, especially migrant and low-income workers.

The workshop addressing advocacy for children made recommendations related to government funding for children's centres, the development of alternative models for survival other than prostitution, and the prosecution of sex traffickers in their home countries.

Food and agriculture was also a major issue discussed over the course of the Women's Conference. Among the recommendations were the need to identify food security as a human right so it cannot be included in trade agreements; and a call for a moratorium on genetically engineered food products. Out of the workshop, new slogans were developed and shared, including: "Feed families first; trade the leftovers" and "Stop treating our soil like dirt."

From the Redirecting Capital workshop came the suggestion for increased development of alternative economic models such as bartering, co-ops and credit unions. The women presenting the recommendations received lots of support when they said that nothing short of a feminist revolution will bring about the full redirection and regulation of capital women demand.

Central to much of the anti-APEC organizing in Vancouver was a focus on the human rights debate. While many women attending the Women's Conference condemned leaders such as China's premier Jiang Zemin and Indonesian president General Suharto, Sunera Thobani, in her speech, challenged participants to also condemn Canadian prime minister Jean Chretien and US president Bill Clinton for their country's own human rights violations.

Thobani pointed out that the way the debate was being framed—solely targeting particular Asian countries—has been very racist. "Human rights violations are not happening just in Asia, but also in Canada, the US, Australia, and New Zealand." Thobani said.

Although this elicited much cheering and support, there was little ensuing action proposed to ensure that human rights and anti-racism activism go hand-in-hand.

Also central to a lot of debates at the Conference was the role of social clauses. Some women argued that social clauses are an effective tool to hold multinationals accountable to women, while others argued that they are a betrayal of women, particularly those in the South.

While many women debated these issues, other women formed a disability caucus to bring attention to the inaccessibility of the sites and lack of sensitivity-training among the volunteers. These women issued a challenge that women become proactive in anticipating the potential needs of women with disabilities by providing ASL (American Sign Language) translation, asking participants not to wear perfume, having a quiet space, and ensuring the venues are wheelchair and scooter accessible.

Overall, the action planning was quite successful, and many women said they were inspired to continue the struggle against APEC, the MAI, and the larger agenda of corporate globalization. Women acted to maintain their momentum by establishing an international solidarity network, which was initiated by the participants of the workshop on research.

Janet Ilin Mou is a student at SFU and a first-time writer for Kinesis.

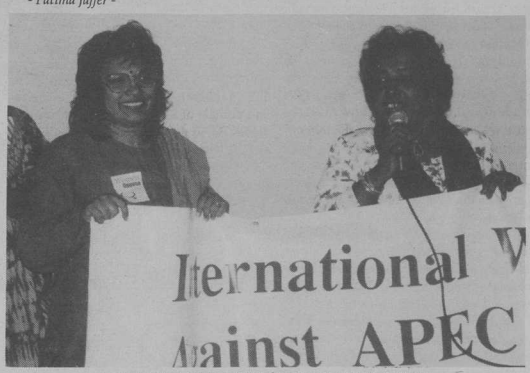
photos by Fatima Jaffer

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S SOLIDARITY DINNER

One of the highlights of the Women's Conference was an international dinner hosted by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women on closing day (November 18). About 50 international guests attended the Women's Conference, many of them sponsored by the People's Summit or by InterPares, a Canadian-based international NGO.

After a fabulous dinner, women at each of the eight tables took turns singing solidarity and liberation songs in various languages, teaching each other lyrics and tunes, and sharing stories of different liberation struggles. One song, written in celebration of Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi,and brought to us by Debbie Stothard of ALTSEAN (Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma), went: "Freedom from fear; Freedom from fear; can't have revolution without women's liberation; and a vision...a vision that's clear."

- Fatima Jaffer -



PASSING ON THE TORCH TO MALAYSIA

The 2nd International Women's Conference Against APEC closed with performances and messages by the youth caucus. To laughter, tears and standing ovations, a series of younger women reassured the "old" women that it was okay to "pass us the torch, because we have the fire!" Women at the conference then formed a circle and passed around the banner of the 2nd International Women's Conference from woman to woman. Sarojeni Rengam and Irene Fernandez from Malaysia ended up with the banner.

The Malayasian women were in the spotlight because the next APEC Summit will be held in Malaysia. Organizers of the 2nd Women's Conference repeatedly expressed hopes that Malaysian women will take on the work of hosting the 3rd International Women's Conference Against APEC. Some women also expressed hopes that next year's conference will continue to push a strong anti-APEC agenda, as set by the 1st Women's Conference held in the Philippines in November 1996.

- Fatima Jaffer -

The impact of APEC on indigenous peoples:

New world order offers nothing new

by Jeanette Armstrong

Jeanette Armstrong is from the Okanagan Nation, residing in Penticton, British Columbia. She is a well-regarded visual, musical and literary artist and is the Director of the En'owkin Centre.

Armstrong is a strong advocate of indigenous rights, and was recently appointed to the Council of Listeners in the International Testimonials on Violations to Indigenous Sovereignty. She was also invited to attend the recent peace talks in Mexico as an international advisor by the Continental Coordinating Commission of Indigenous Peoples. Armstrong says she is an advocate of a healthy environment and social change in which peace between all people is central.

Armstrong was the keynote speaker at the 2nd International Women's Conference Against APEC recently held in Vancouver. Below is a transcription of her speech.

I want to talk about the new world order and some of my thinking on it as an indigenous person. I have had the opportunity to travel to and work in areas that are critical in relation to indigenous people and their lives and rights. I've been able to witness some of the suffering that takes place as the shifting world order encompasses lands and peoples. This new world order creates conditions where those who are at the bottom of the rung in terms of the economy are usually the indigenous peoples.

I'd like to talk about globalization and its effects on indigenous people, specifically indigenous women, and on all women. I want to begin by talking about the apparatus [used] to globalize the economy. Inherent to this apparatus are some economic "truths" which allow the power-wielding and wealthy countries to thrust their development models onto poverty stricken countries. [These models are particularly being imposed] on areas where there are indigenous peoples caretaking the land and the people, and where sustainable local economies have been operating and developing for centuries.

[This "development"] is always carried out in the form of investments and in the form of aid and loans. These mechanisms are used to extract resources cheaply and to take advantage of lower costs, without any regard for labour and human rights or environmental protection. In most cases, this is done to provide lower cost goods for competitive trade in countries referred to as "developed."

It's not coincidental that indigenous peoples, women, labourers, minorities are found in the lowest income sectors of all such colonized countries. It's no coincidence that they're found living in the poorest conditions and suffering the lowest life expectancies.

In such liberalization of "developing" countries, these destitute [people] are usually used as the fodder to fuel the corporate labour machine, allowing it to grow, extract, produce and manufacture goods from the resources of lands that are seized and held through military aggression against those same peoples. Systemic violence, which results in genocide, is made possible through such policies and is condoned by the political realm of pseudo-democracy. I use the word, pseudo-democracy, because I don't believe there are true democracies in situations where voters and the consumers demand cheaper and cheaper products.

It's not coincidental that the human, political and social rights of colonized people are totally ignored in large world trade agreements, such as APEC, and at nation state political forums by the powers heading the global economic reorganization.

In developed countries, there is a growing awareness that the living standards and the privileges of the middle class are being eroded. Beyond that, there are deeper implications for everyone in terms of the new forms of oppression towards endangered indigenous peoples and endangered species of the world emerging through the increased globalization of economies.

There are a number of issues I want to refer to that arise out of the demand by globalization of increased privatization and commodification of all goods and services. Particularly, in the areas of science and health, service has becomes provisional to the profit motive.

Indigenous peoples and local communities are saying, no, we're not going to allow this kind of privatization of our lands. Chiapas [in Mexico] is a good example of that. Where there are commonly held lands or reservations or treaties that have been enacted, we're seeing that those treaties, agreements, whatever they might be called, are right now the greatest threat to the multinational corporations. So, of course, there's an increased determination by those domestic governments that are playing handmaiden to the multinational corporations to make those lands and resources accessible.

Where indigenous peoples oppose [the increased control of their land and resources by corporations,] domestic governments are responding with force or coercion to secure access for multinational corporations. Increased militarization and increased violence in terms of human rights violations committed against indigenous peoples are a reality. We're looking at genocide in cases where indigenous peoples are refusing to make way for and to give access to the privatization of lands.

In terms of our own economies, our own countries, we can see the disparity that is emerging between the various sectors. In terms of North America—and I'm talking about both Canada and the US and Mexico to some degree—we're seeing a wider gap between those that have and those that haven't. And we're at a time when homelessness, poverty and disease are being commodi-fied and services privatized. Take, for example, education: education is being privatized, and it is not [in the best interests of] human need or human caring.

photo by Fatima Jaffer

In Canada, we are seeing the services we have taken for granted for the last 15-20 years dissolving right out from under us. Our domestic governments are creating policies which would put our [publicly-supported] services in the hands of [the for-profit] sector. Our domestic governments are creating policies which will make it more feasible [for public services to be put out into the competitive market,] which only furthers the commodification of those services.

We see the effect of this on indigenous communities; we see the effect of this on minorities; we see the effect of this on people who are living close to the poverty line or in poverty. We see the immense suffering that's taking place in most countries.

I visited several countries this year, which are newly liberalized in terms of trade. ... I felt extreme fear for what may happen there in the future, and extreme grief for what I have seen taking place over the past 10 years, going back to those countries. Some of the fear is from seeing a continuance of dispassion, dehumanization and lack of caring by governments. One of the things we need to think about is the inability of governments to extricate themselves from this kind of globalization; the inability of governments themselves to find ways in which local economies, national economies can be supported adequately.

I can see a number of ways it can be avoided, but increasingly governments are at the mercy of these large agreements that are not made democratically, that are not supported democratically, and that are not thought of democratically. I am very much concerned that we are not living in a democracy; we are not practising democracy—that is a myth.

It's a myth when you know that multinational corporations situated in the US or Japan or somewhere else have more of a right to decide what happens to your world and your environment and your life and your security than you do. When we're in a state where that situation exists, then we're not living in a democracy.

I look around us at some of the real issues... I know that every one of us sitting here has someone in our family who has cancer, who has a disease that's been created from this kind of technological world, from the misuse of privatization and commodification and from consumerism. What I'm concerned about is our human rights in a real sense—our everyday right to have good food and clean water and to live healthy for seventy-some years. But this is not the case anymore. No one can guarantee us any of those things under this new world order.

The thinking behind this global economic system is that cheaper you can produce something, the more competitive it's going to be, and that's supposed to be good. But in doing so, you are also ensuring the cheapest possible goods, the poorest quality services and the poorest quality foods. That's what is being supported in this because that's what "competitiveness" creates.

There's something wrong with that thinking. There's something wrong with world leaders who think that [corporate globalization] is for the human good. It's not about humans; it's not about health; it's not about life. It's against life; it's against health.

I think we're in a crisis in terms of finding alliances and finding appropriate ways to deal with this new world order. I really believe that it must be people—and it's going to be the women of the world—who will make the changes that need to happen.

I really rely on this kind of dialogue; I really rely on this kind of alliance-making. It needs to happen at this level. I implore everyone to work hard and think about this because I don't know if there's any going back.

Sometimes I lose hope for the future; I lose my optimism that there will be a future that's worth going to for my children and my grandchildren. I hate to think about what my grandson, who was just born three months ago, is going to have when he grows up; what my granddaughter is going to have when she grows up, she's two years old. When she's my age, when she's fifty, what is it going to be like? What are we going to be facing? Some of my thoughts are extreme when I see the things that are happening in many countries as a result of this kind of large agreement.

I just want to leave it at that and thank everyone for listening to me and for the work you're going to be doing, and tell you that I love you and would like to support you in every way possible if I can.

Taking on APEC

Leading up to and throughout the week the APEC Summit was in Vancouver (November 19-25), a number of protest actions were held throughout the city. The mainstream media—locally, nationally and internationally—gave only minimal mention to the tremendous opposition to APEC and the corporate globalization agenda that just continued to build up.

On this and the three pages following, Kinesis presents some images and text giving the real story of the strength and vibrancy of three of the anti-APEC activities: the People's Summit march, the National Women's Day of Protest Against APEC, and NO! to APEC's demonstration: Continuing the Resistance.

The People's Summit March

Anywhere from 6,000 to 10,000 people came out on a wet Sunday to protest the anti-people values imbedded in the APEC agenda. The protest was organized by the People's Summit at the close of their conference. While many anti-APEC protestors in Vancouver had not seen eye-to-eye with the watered-down politics of the People's Summit, many sectors of Vancouver's progressive community put differences aside to show up. The result was what some call one of the largest demonstrations Vancouver's city streets have seen, outside of annual Peace marches.

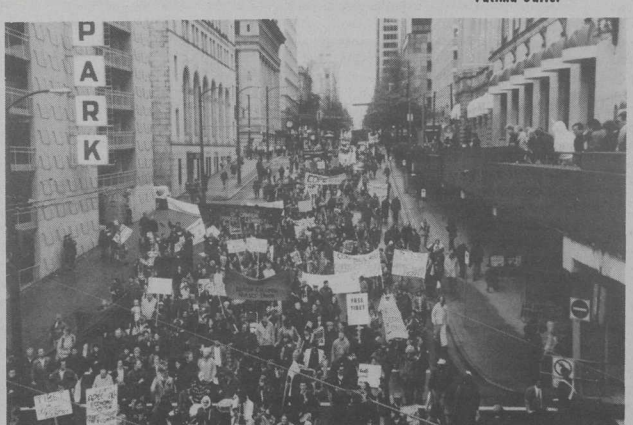
There was discrepancy in estimations of the size of the crowd—the police said 12,000, possibly overestimating size to justify the massive RCMP force that met the demonstration at various points. The media reported only about 4,000.

Whatever the size, the energy was incredible and the range of political issues, views and direction represented was unprecedented, according to some. The march was led by the Aboriginal Women's Action Network, and other members of the Aboriginal community. Thousands of students, feminists and anti-poverty activists chanted and sang. Many protestors carried "NO! to APEC" flags, the name of the coalition opposing the People's Summit's "reformist" anti-APEC stance. The International Socialists brought along placards that condemned human rights violations in China and Indonesia. There was enormous international presence, from Tibetan monks to women from Sri Lanka protesting human rights abuses to protestors condemning the abuses of Burma's military government.

The long trek through downtown streets spanned several blocks at a time. We were encouraged throughout by car honks and cheers from passers-by, as well as the occasional blank looks and sometimes irritation.

The march wrapped up at the RCMP road block cutting off the Canada Trade and Convention Centre from public access. Several speakers addressed the enormous crowd, jammed under the Cordova Street tunnel, including Nitanis Desjarlais of the Native Youth Movement (photo above right.)

- Fatima Jaffer -



photos by Fatima Jaffer

The National Women's Day of Protest Against APEC:

The National Women's Day of Protest Against APEC was an incredible show of the strength and creativity of the women's movement. Every Thursday for almost two months before the APEC Summit, the Feminist Networking Group met at the Vancouver Status of Women to strategize and organize for the big day. (The FNG is a coalition of women's groups in the Lower Mainland of BC that meets regularly to network, discuss issues and plan actions.)

The FNG took action when it became clearer that very little was being done to mobilize women in Canada against APEC. The FNG wanted to ensure that the adverse affect on women of trade liberalization agreements, such as APEC, were brought to the forefront.

As the main campaign action, the FNG called on women to wear red armbands on November 24 in solidarity with women across the country and around the globe who oppose the global corporate agenda. Red armbands were chosen as a symbol of resistance and of women's blood that will be shed as a result of APEC-influenced policies in countries of the Asia-Pacific.

To accompany the red armbands, the FNG produced brochures which spelled out the agenda behind APEC and made clear how it relates to what is happening in the lives of women in Canada today. The brochure also gave examples of how women could get involved in the campaign wherever they might be.

The campaign took off as more and more women got interested in the analysis and actions of the FNG. By the time November 24 rolled around, more than 10,000 brochures, 8,000 red armbands, and 500 copies of VSW's 56-page anti-corporate globalization document had been distributed through VSW alone.

One of the best ideas coming out the FNG was producing stickers that read: "Women Oppose APEC; wear a red armband on Nov 24." Over a three-week period, 15,000 of them were distributed around Vancouver. In fact, the stickers were so wildly popular that a third run (of 500) had to be ordered just a day after the second run had come back from the printers.

The stickers were a great way of getting a whole range of women involved in the campaign. Women who normally wouldn't "think of doing anything political" took a stack of stickers, and eagerly came back for more. And "regular" activists around town spent hours and hours plastering their neighbourhoods and the downtown core with stickers.

Women spotted wearing stickers were often approached on the street by others wanting one for themselves. And if they didn't have any more, the women would just tear the sticker off their jacket or bag and hand it over.

The ripple effect of the National Women's Day of Protest Against APEC campaign will continue for a long time. Stickers are still up on various light poles, bus shelters and newspaper boxes. And women are still asking for the FNG's and VSW's materials on APEC and other forms of corporate globalization.

They're also asking: "What s next?" Our challenge to the MAI. Stay tuned.

Copies of the Feminist Networking Group's materials produced for the National Women's Day of Protest Against APEC and the Vancouver Status of Women's anti-corporate globalization document are available through VSW, #309-877 E. Hastings St, Vancouver, BC, V6A 3Y1; tel: (604) 255-6554; fax: (604) 255-5511; e-mail: vsw@web.net.

The FNG would also appreciate any and all financial support to help it cover the costs of carrying out the campaign. If you are able to help, please send donations c/o VSW.

- Agnes Huang -

Women **Oppose** APEC

Wear a red armband on Nov. 24

photo by Fatima Jaffer

photo by Agnes Huang

November 24th: the Day arrives

The National Women's Day of Protest began early in the morning at several skytrain stations across the Lower Mainland. More than 30 women showed up at 7:00am at 16 stations to hand out red armbands and information sheets on why APEC is dangerous to women in Canada.

Most women were happy to take the red armbands and information. Some women asked for more to give to friends and co-workers, and some women were even already wearing their red armbands. In all, more than 3,200 red armbands were handed out during this one action alone.

The launch

At 8:00am, the Lower Mainland Feminist Networking Group held a press conference outside City Hall to launch the National Women's Day of Protest Against APEC. Media spokespeople included Yayori Matsui of the Asia-Japan Resource Centre in Tokyo, Irene Fernandez of Tenaganita, a migrant workers' group in Malaysia, and Fay Blaney and Rain Daniels of the Aboriginal Women's Action Network in Vancouver.

The FNG's Ellen Woodsworth also spoke about why the coaltion would be the presenting bread and roses at different stages of their life throughout the day--from flour and seeds, to dough and rosebuds, to "Bread and Roses."

She said that the FNG wanted to show symbolically that the women's movement worldwide is not just reacting to the impact of the global corporate agenda on our lives, it is also working to build alternatives to the current system of economic restructuring that benefit broader populations, and not just wealthy people.

Demo at the VSE

By noontime, about 20 women gathered in front of the Vancouver Stock Exchange downtown, the seat of investors whose interests seem to be central in the APEC's agenda. The FNG handed out red armbands and brochures to women walking by and to those coming out of the VSE. Not surprisingly, there were very few women who exited (or entered) the doors of the Stock Exchange.

Joan Grant-Cummings, president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, Maude Barlow of the Council of Canadians, and members of the FNG all challenged about the profit-making (at any cost) motive that lies behind the APEC agenda.

"82,000 corporations paid no taxes in '97," was the chant that rang out at the demonstration, referring to the number of corporations operating in Canada which got out of paying any tax on their profits. (Between 1980 to 1996, Canadian corporations made more than $167 billion in profits without paying a cent in income taxes, according to the BC Federation of Labour.)

As well, women called out the names of corporations, and the amount of deferred taxes they owed to the federal coffers. Then, Ellen Woodsworth pulled out some bread dough and explained the vision behind "Bread and Roses," as other women chanted, "Share the dough, don't horde the dough" and handed out pieces of the bread dough to women and media present. (Just a small amount of dough can be used as a starter to bake a loaf of bread.)

Taking back the VAG

At 4:00pm, women gathered on the Georgia Street side of the Vancouver Art Gallery to continue the public protest. The VAG is a traditional public protest area, but during the APEC Summit became the site for a giant globe, bearing the official APEC insignia and philosophy. (The other public protest area downtown--the Vancouver Public Library--had also been taken over by pro-APEC forces, namely General Motors.)

At the beginning, the action was dampened by the appearance of members of the Indonesian secret security force (Intel). They harassed and threatened the East Timorese activists who had been invited to perform their songs of liberation.

The energy among the women present picked up as a group led a tour around the VAG, chanting and handing out red armbands and brochures along the way. After several rounds, women returned to the APEC-propaganda structure, where the FNG invited them to write their thoughts on a banner simply titled: "Our Vision."

More and more women gathered as the evening progressed, anxious to begin weaving the Ribbon of Hope II...

- Fatima Jaffer and Agnes Huang -

Ribbon of Hope II

Later in the evening of the National Women's Day of Protest Against APEC, several Vancouver women's organizations came together to hold a Ribbon of Hope Against APEC around the Vancouver Art Gallery.

The idea of the Ribbon--a stringing together of banners, cloth and t-shirts held up by hundreds of women--originates in the Ribbon of Hope that was taken to the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. The project, initiated by rural Cambodian women, inspired women around the world to contribute to what became a 10-mile long "ribbon" intended to link the governmental world conference in Beijing with the non-governmental women's forum in Huairou.

Vancouver's Ribbon of Hope II did not stretch as long, but certainly made a statement along Hornby Street, where a long line of stretch limousines awaited APEC guests at the Hotel Vancouver on their way to the cultural dinner hosted by Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien at BC Place.

The ribbon of banners and women, about 250-strong, ended the protest with a march down to BC Place, chanting "People's needs, not corporate greed" and "Women United, Never Get Invited," as many women told curious passers-by why we wouldn't want to be invited anyway.

Ellen Woodsward of the Lower Mainland Feminist Networking Group and Fay Blaney of the Aboriginal Women's Action Network addressed the crowd as about 50 RCMP officers gathered to protect the heads of state from the random protestor who might choose to scale the 12-foot steel fence, brave the dobermans, and dash the 300-plus metres, past countless security guards, into BC Place where the dinner was being held.

- Fatima Jaffer -

photo by Paige

Women in Nelson mobilize

Within a week of hearing about the National Women's Day of Protest Against APEC, women from Nelson, BC had planned a protest march, put stickers up around town, and organized a follow-up discussion event. They had also written (and gotten published) a letter to the editor in the local newspaper on why people in their community should be concerned about APEC.

Several women from Nelson came down to Vancouver for the 2nd International Women's Conference Against APEC. There, they met and talked with members of the FNG who were busily flogging their "Women Oppose APEC" materials.

Back in Nelson, more than 50 women and children marched through the downtown business core of town on November 24. Street theatre, chanting, singing...all highlighted the action. Women small business owners came out of their shops to ask how APEC affected them.

Hannah Hadiken, the regional co-representative for NAC in BC, says, "Overall, the response was positive. During the march, a number of women even came up to us and requested red armbands, saying, 'Of course, I will support'."

- Kelly Haydon and Agnes Huang -

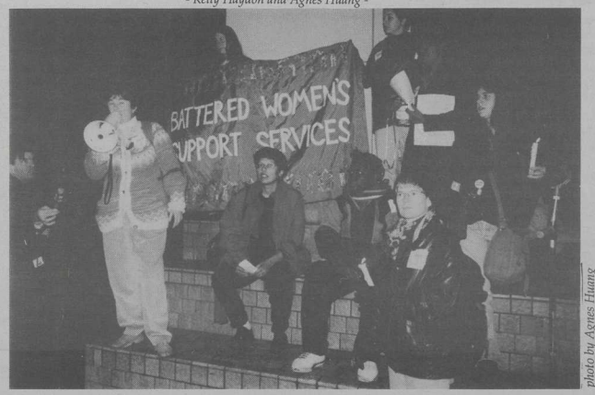


photo by Agnes Huang

FEATURES

NO! to APEC: Continuing the resistance

It was a fitting finale to all the anti-APEC actions in Vancouver. On November 25, the last day of the APEC Summit in Vancouver, more than 3,000 anti-APEC activists came together for the NO! to APEC march and rally.

Throughout the past year, NO! to APEC (the Network Opposed to Anti-People Economic Control) has taken the lead in organizing and mobilizing the opposition to APEC in Canada. Vancouver's NO! to APEC coalition is made up of some 30 women's, students' and people's groups.

The march and rally started at Oppenheimer Park in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Demonstration assembled were joined by a boisterous contingent of women, called together by the Vancouver Status of Women. The women marched behind bright and colourful banners declaring: "Lesbians Resist APEC" and "Women Unite Globally."

The march moved down Hastings Street towards the downtown core of the city. Along the way, it stopped at various sites to hear the words of various activists, including the Raging Grannies and Christine Wood from the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre.

It was a raucous affair—the chanting kept growing louder and louder and new chants were made up. There was a marching band, a devil on stilts, and a huge structure symbolizing corporate greed and exploitation created members of Art Against APEC.

The march wound up at the Robson Street-side of the Vancouver Art Gallery, where protesters were cordoned off by police to prevent them from encroaching too close to the Hotel Vancouver, where a number of APEC delegates were staying.

At the rally, community activists and international guests spoke about their opposition and resistance to the APEC agenda. Among them were Ning Alcuitas-Imperial from the Philippine Women Centre, one of the key organizing groups of the NO! to APEC coalition, and Nadine Chambers of the Vancouver Lesbian Connection.

The march and rally was also the closing event to NO! to APEC's People's Conference Against Imperialist Globalization. Bringing together more than 100 women and men, the four-day conference was a furthering of the work started the year before at the People's Conference in Manila.

- Agnes Huang -

photos by Lily Shinde

NO! to APEC organizers Monica Urrutia and Janis Kaleto emcee the march and rally.

As the world turns: the media centre at the APEC Summit

Kinesis' Fatima Jaffer plays mini golf at the official 1997 APEC Summit in Vancouver. Yes...Kinesis was spunky enough to apply for media accreditation to the official APEC Summit, if only to take advantage of the opportunity to access a site under heavy guard and pepper the media centre with women's anti-APEC materials.

Agnes Huang and Fatima Jaffer applied for media accreditation late one night in between anti-APEC demonstrations, a mere two days before heads of state from the APEC-member countries were set to descend on Vancouver. Twenty-four hours later, our bylined articles checked and copies of Kinesis—replete with anti-APEC coverage--perused, we were treated to a lengthy wait while an RCMP officer called Ottawa for security checks.

A painful hour later, we were told we had (miraculously) passed the security check. A half-an-hour later, we had our official APEC Summit media accreditation passes. We were handed our official bright red APEC umbrellas and "SunLife Insurance" media bags, with tons of reading material on how great APEC is and how rainy Vancouver can get.

And so late on Sunday night, we began our lengthy journey to the media centre, which was housed at APEC's downtown headquarters—the Canada Trade and Convention Centre. After a long walk through streets, alleys, underground mallways and past several security checks, where RCMP officers scrutinized our media badges with flashlights and electronic gadgets, we reached the final security point—a magnificent marquee tent with airport-like security, only more thorough. We had to empty every metal object from our pockets and bodies, including our metal-framed spectacles, while our SunLife bags (containing tons of Women Oppose APEC press materials) were hand-checked. Both of us were asked why we had red armbands on (a symbol of women's opposition to APEC) and whether we had "covered" the massive anti-APEC demonstration earlier that day. Both officers tried to diminish the size of the demo with comments like, "There were only about 700 people, not 12,000, as the media says!"

In the media centre, row upon row of trestle tables housed members of the media from across Asia....or, at least male journalists. Women made up less than ten percent of those present. The larger US news networks, the Canadian media and the Japanese media crews--all male-dominated—were housed in separate tent-like structures. Television screens everywhere pumped images and newsfeed of major APEC activities, including speeches at the City of Vancouver's $1,000-a-plate dinner.

photo by Agnes Huang

A cafe made of aluminium pipes and stairways towered above us, doling out free coffee and pastries. A beer garden served free "samples" of Pacific Brewing Company's beer. We paused a while in the mini-golf course, which was surprisingly unpopular.

After surreptitiously dropping off dozens of media packages on the National Women's Day Against APEC, we left the media fortress, where the real world felt like a million miles away. Nobody checked our bags. Strangely, the RCMP seemed to fear more for the safety of the APEC leaders and bureaucrats, not the general populace of the APEC nations, who stand to lose the most.

- Fatima Jaffer -

COMMENTARY

Anti-APEC organizing in Vancouver:

Canada's own history denied

by N. Gitanjali Lena and Brenna Bandar

The only thing wrong with APEC (the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) is that certain countries with atrocious human rights records—namely, China and Indonesia—are allowed to have a seat at the table. That seemed to be the sentiment most often conveyed during a lot of the anti-APEC organizing in Vancouver.

Despite efforts by women's groups, people of colour and Aboriginal people to broaden the understanding of why APEC is so dangerous, the mainstream media and much of the public were all too happy to jump onto the human rights bandwagon.

Below, N. Gitanjali Lena and Brenna Bandar provide some critical comments on the racism that belies the narrow focusing on the poor human rights records of a few countries and the setting up of an "us-versus-them" mentality. Lena is with the South Asian Women Centre's Revival Group in Vancouver and Bandar is a law student at the University of British Columbia

"Close your eyes and let's play a game; we'll describe a country and you guess the name."

Here are some clues: attempted genocide of indigenous people, colonization and continued theft of land (reflected in the British Columbia Treaty Commission process), torture, murder (Dudley George killed by RCMP at Stony Point, Ontario), relocation (Innu people moved out of their traditional homeland), environmental disasters (WAC Bennett dam in Northern BC)...

Did you guess right? We are describing Canada, from its colonial past to its not-so-post-colonial present.

Yet, during the challenge to the APEC Summit in Vancouver, there was an almost complete silencing of Canada's continued colonization of indigenous land and people by many of the anti-APEC protestors. Or were they anti-Asian protestors?

In mid-November, Vancouver was ablaze with anti-APEC fervour. The only problem was that the majority of protestors themselves were unwilling to point that critical gaze at themselves.

A number of conscious organizers involved in anti-APEC organizing at UBC tried to ensure there were panels discussions, teach-ins and other events where the colonial poverty-making occupation of our own Vancouver was openly discussed. However, despite the "protest within a protest" that many women of colour waged against the racist agenda of the Right and within the Left, some protestors chanted on and on "APEC go home," (sounding uneasily like, "Go back

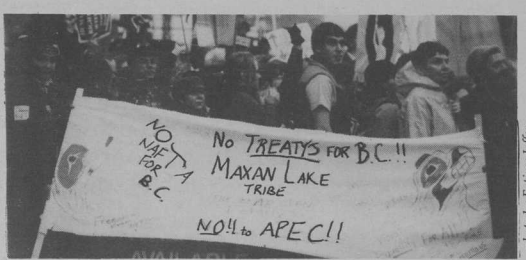


photo by Fatima Jaffer

First Nations people point out the connection between the BC Treaty Process and APEC at the People's Summit March.

First Nations people point out the connection between the BC Treaty Process and APEC at the People's Summit March.

na's premier Jiang Zemin and Indonesian president General Suharto—and human rights atrocities in "far away" places.

Meanwhile, some people of colour and First Nations protestors reminded them about the events of the past 500 years in Canada. Biological warfare in the form of settler-borne diseases such as smallpox and measles eradicated whole communities of indigenous peoples. This is just one of many examples.

We should not ignore that leaders of certain Asian nations are responsible for great atrocities, but neither should we ignore that our own governments are complicit in these atrocities and commit their own atrocities.

Canada is inextricably bound to APEC. There is no "APEC-free zone," if we agree that APEC represents an imperialist agenda. APEC's agenda *is* Canada's agenda, like it or not—a marriage of free trade, violations of human rights, of the human spirit, of our environment and all the life it contains.

It is from the white-settler colonies of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States that the idea for Asia-"despots" were invited by our lily-white but misguided leaders. The APEC Summit in Vancouver and the military/police goon squad that guarded it were no mistake.

The fact that Canadian imperialists play a large role in the violations of human rights domestically and internationally by profiting from trade policies that exploit workers, indigenous communities and people surviving poverty seems to have gotten lost in the slogan-production of the anti-APEC movement.

UBC student protestors shouldn't have been shocked by the police action they witnessed. The police have been menacing indigenous peoples, people of colour and poor people in Vancouver for eons. Rather than become aware of the prevalence of the ongoing state-sponsored violence in Canada—which tarnished UBC's hallowed gates for a short while—student activists are launching a civil suit against RCMP officers who violated their "individual" rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Some people who were pepper-sprayed and roughed up by the police garnered nationwide outrage, got front page media coverage, got letters to the editor printed in defense of them, and got support to file complaints about the violations of their individual human rights. Whose plight generated sympathy? Middle class white student protestors, for the most part.

We find it necessary to consider the optics of the protest. The nearsighted focus on individual rights and "democracy" does not allow for a critique of how global capitalism is impacting on the lives of poor people of the South and the North. In addition, the mainstream media plays into the hands of those activists who are more interested in becoming martyrs for their own status, than in actually building a radical alternative social movement.

What happened as a result of the narindividual men. Why is it necessary to elevate individuals who openly admit they orchestrated their own arrests? How does this strengthen our resistance to globaliza- opposition to APEC. Namely, in order to be able to raise their specific concerns with the APEC and the broader agenda of corporate globalization, they had to first clarify that this did not mean they supported or belittled the human right abuses by the Chinese and Indonesian governments.

An example of that tension, which heightened during the week Vancouver seiged the Summit, was expressed on one sign held by a woman at UBC that read, "I'm Asian and I'm against human rights violations."

TEACHERS from page 8

cards, and the school calendar has been adjusted slightly to address some of the time lost.

As time passes, Bill 160 is mentioned less and less, but it is not forgotten. Teachers still wear their green ribbons. (Parents in Ontario organized the green ribbon campaign to make a statement about the future of education in this province.) Some school boards have directed teachers not to wear them. One teacher was suspended for wearing a "blatantly anti-government" t-shirt in the classroom.

During the recent debate at Queen's Park over Bill 160, no green ribbons were permitted—they were too political according to the Tories. Still, every NDP and Liberal MPP wore one. After much hoopla, all but two NDPers removed their ribbons. The two NDPers were expelled from the house for the day, in spite of arguments reminding the government that white ribbons, red ribbons and poppies were also political statements that were allowed and even encouraged in the House.

But the government didn't listen to such reasoning. However, Mike Harris couldn't help but hear the woman who sat next to me in the legislature gallery, a young teacher from my school who found herself almost rubbing elbows with the premier. She approached him directly and inquired, "What private institution will you be sending your children to once you've destroyed the education system in Ontario?" He became testy and announced, "I'll be sending them to the same school as usual," as he stomped off.

We all stomped out of the legislature shortly after as a woman from the gallery, who could abide no more, stood up and called all Tories a bunch of "fascist pigs." The speaker cleared the gallery. When I saw that woman in the hall a moment later, she said, "it was the most therapeutic thing I've done in my life."

So Bill 160 is now law. The general sentiment among teachers is one of doom, of overwhelming sadness. Some teachers continue to picket, before and after school, but we all know that if the Tory plan comes true, education will suffer, we'll all suffer, in spite of having an alleged few bucks of tax breaks in our pockets.

Our only hope is at the ballot box. Both NDP and Liberal leaders have promised, if they are elected, to repeal 160, or at least the most undemocratic elements of it. And so, despite our sadness, we are solid. Teachers, and all unionized workers, parents, students, and other community-minded residents in Ontario should, and I hope, will continue working actively, with energy and money, to erase the Tories and the damage they've done.

Sharon Bray is co-editor (with Dawn Sebirer) of DIVINERS, *a Hamilton-based journal for women writers and a member of Womyn's Works, a bi-weekly gathering for women writers. And because she loves reading, writing and kids, (and because she has to put food on the table), Bray is also a secondary school teacher.*

Women's human rights and APEC:

Reframing the debate

by Yayori Matsui

Yayori Matsui was featured as a plenary speaker at the 2nd International Women's Conference Against APEC in Vancouver last November. In her talk, presented below, she addressed the framing of the human rights issues by Asian and Western leaders, and how women are reframing the debate.

Matsui is a founding member and the current director of the Asia-Japan Women's Resource Centre in Tokyo. She is a renowned journalist who wrote on issues of social welfare, the environment, development and human rights during many of her thirty-three years at Asahi Shimbun, *until her retirement in 1993. Matsui is the author of 12 books including* Women's Asia, *which examines the situation of women in different Asian countries.*

As a woman from Japan, a country which is part of the North as one of the most industrialized economic powers but not in the West as an Asian country, I want to share my experiences and views on APEC and human rights. As you may know, some Asian countries are now challenging the concept of human rights itself as a product of the West and even demanding the revision of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on the occasion of its 50th anniversary next year. Such debate on human rights in Asia has deep implications because it questions modern industrial civilization and its economic and technological development model.

Before elaborating on the human rights debate in Asia, I want to describe to you the reality of people, especially of women, in Asia, which I have seen with my own eyes.

Last August, I visited Thailand as a member of a Women's Study Tour group organized by our Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center, and last September I visited Burma as a resource person for a human rights training course. What I saw in these two neighbouring countries gave us a clear idea of the impact of the economic development promoted by APEC on women, children, indigenous people and other marginalized people.

Our group travelled to northern Thailand to see the background to the growing sex trafficking of Thai women to Japan and other countries. We were shocked to see the sheer poverty in the rural villages, especially in hilltribe areas. This is in dramatic contrast to the accumulation of wealth and prosperity in the capital, Bangkok, where there are traffic jams due to too many cars and more than one thousand high rise buildings.

The economic growth of Thailand on a macro level had been remarkable with a greater than 10 percent annual GNP growth since the late 1980s. Until the sudden currency crisis which started last summer. However, once you step in the rural areas in the north and the northeast, you see a totally different world where people suffer from economic deprivation and environmental destruction—in other words, human rights violations.

Thailand is seen as a model economy among APEC countries for following quite liberal trade and investment policies. As a matter of fact, we hardly saw any social policies implemented [for the benefit of] rural and hilltribe people. This type of economic development in Thailand has widened the gap between rich people and poor people, and urban people and rural people. The economic gap between the capital and Isaan in the northeastern region has been reported as 10 to one, and between Bangkok and the north, eight to one. Japan, among other foreign countries, has been deeply involved in such unjust economic development in Thailand, as investors and as an economic development aid donor country.

As a result, poor farmers and hilltribe people have to sell their young daughters to the sex industry. These girls are getting younger and younger because the fear of AIDS has increased the demand for younger "safer" girls—those not yet infected with HIV. However, it is reported some 70 percent of these "clean" girls get HIV within one year after they are put into brothels. The total number of people infected with HIV has reached more that one million in Thailand; in many villages we visited, we saw girls dying from AIDS every day.

More and more Thai women are sent abroad by trafficking organizations I feel ashamed to say Japan is the country receiving the largest number of trafficked women from neighbouring Asian countries because the expanding sex industry in Japan demands Thai girls. It is ironic to notice the sex industry is the most deregulated industry, with no rules, much less a code of conduct. This allows the sex industry to use anyone as commodities, especially women, just as British merchants used African people in the 18th century. It can be said that sex trafficking of women is one of the worst cases of human rights violations in the 20th century, in the sense that these women are not treated as human beings but as commodities. Thai women are traded at a price of four million yen in Japan.

At the same time, Burmese girls are also trafficked into Thailand. According to a Thai NGO working on children's rights, some 40 to 50,000 Burmese girls have been sent to Thailand, where they are even more brutally abused than Thai girls. They are at the bottom of the prostitution industry and 80 to 90 percent of them become infected with HIV, due to their extremely low status and lack of knowledge about self protection in brothels.

When I visited Burma, I heard from a researcher that many Burmese girls who get AIDS, and therefore become "useless" to brothel owners, are sent back to Thai-Burmese and Thai-Chinese border towns in garbage trucks and just dumped there to die. Even if they manage to reach their families, they are often left outside and fed like dogs until they die, because of ignorance and fear of AIDS.

This is the plight of thousands of poor young women in Burma; but it is not talked about. The military government is so oppressive that people are afraid to talk. Newspapers are government controlled. I learned about how people are suffering from forced labour, forced eviction, forced selling of rice to the government, and even forced conversion to Buddhism (because many anti-government ethnic minorities are Christian.) Universities are closed for many months. Workers are poorly paid (only four US dollars a month). Burmese people are deprived of almost all human rights.

Despite this and worldwide opposition and protest ASEAN (the Association of South East Asian Nations) agreed to accept Burma as a member country. Now the Burmese military regime is mounting a propaganda campaign around its success in joining ASEAN, claiming its policies are approved by other Southeast Asian countries.

As a matter of fact, the Burmese military regime is now entering a new stage of economic development with much foreign investment from ASEAN countries. In Rangoon, you see foreign businessmen and many new high rise buildings and luxury hotels whose room charge is US $200 in contrast to a monthly wage of US $4 for female factory workers and 10 cents a day for brick carrying day labourers. This is the type of development ASEAN is supporting. In line with the APEC policy of liberalization this type of economic system intensifies the structural violence and social injustice against people.

Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahatir, a leader of ASEAN who endorsed Burma's membership, has been challenging Western domination and advocating an "anti-Western" position. At the extended Asia-Pacific Foreign Ministers' Conference in Kuala Lumpur last July, he even demanded the revision of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Indonesian and Chinese foreign ministers agreed to his proposal. He did not elaborate how the Declaration should be changed, but what Mahatir and other Asian leaders are questioning is the universality and indivisibility of human rights.

Mahatir's views are in common with those expressed by other Asian governments at the World Human Rights Conference in Vienna in 1993. Since then, they have been advocating so-called "Asian values" against universal application of human rights which they consider products of the West. They refuse the West's imposition on non-western countries.

Their arguments on human rights can be put into the following three main points:

Firstly, state sovereignty should be respected and human rights issues should be treated within a country as domestic issues. The foreign or international community should not interfere on human rights issues. China has always emphasized this view very strongly.

Secondly, cultural relativism is advocated especially by Islamic countries which insist that the cultural traditions and customs of each country should be given priority and human rights should not be applied to deny such cultural practices.

Thirdly, under the "development first" theory, economic development is vitally important for developing countries to overcome poverty, and so human rights and democracy are luxuries for hungry people. This position criticizes the West as interested in only civil and political rights, and emphasizes that economic, social and cultural rights should be more respected. Malaysia, Indonesia and Burma have been advocating this view.

Let's look at these arguments from Asian people's perspective. Regarding the state sovereignty theory, we should totally agree to it, in the sense that super powers do use human rights for their nationalistic interests. For example, the US imposes human rights principles on certain countries which aren't friendly to it, but condones gross human rights violations by dictatorial governments which it supports, like some Latin American dictators and the former brutal dictatorships in Korea and Taiwan.

We cannot accept the double standard of Western powers in the application of human rights principles. However, I believe human rights violations should not be allowed by any country anywhere. Human rights should be protected across national borders and any violation should be solved by international actions. How can we stop acting for the freedom of [Burmese prodemocracy leader] Aung Sang Suu Kyi?

Regarding the argument on culture and human rights, we should fully respect

cultural diversity and make more efforts to preserve it. We are concerned that local cultures are being destroyed and a global homogenized consumer culture is invading the world. It is the economic globalization by TNCs (transnational corporations)—in other words, the APEC development model—which has promoted such a [monolithic] cultural phenomenon.

The human right to preserve one's own culture should be respected. However, culture is not static and unchangeable. Some cultural practices are harmful and oppressive to women. The problem is that, in most countries, it is men who decide what culture should be preserved and what culture should be abandoned. The point is that dominant culture is male culture so women should radically change such culture and create new, more feminized cultures.

In Japan, when men claim that Japanese women don't respect traditional culture, we argue that women want to change oppressive cultural traditions. The right-wing is attacking the war compensation issue claiming that Asian "comfort women"—survivors of military sexual slavery by Japanese army—volunteered to be prostitutes and were not forcibly taken. They also slander any feminist proposals including changing of the family name system to allow women to retain their maiden names.

I know many Muslim women all over the world are campaigning against discriminatory cultural practices and advocating that violence against women should not be allowed in the name of culture and tradition. At the International Conference on Violence against Women in War and Armed Conflict Situations recently held in Tokyo from October 31 to November 3 *[see sidebar]*, an Algerian woman from an organization called "Women under Muslim Law" reported on the frightening violence against Afghani women by the extremist Taliban group. Women are not allowed even to go out on the street and if they do, they are cruelly beaten.

The global women's movement vigorously campaigns against all forms of violence against women—in the family, in the community and by the state—as violations of human rights. As a result, the concept of women's human rights was accepted at the Vienna Conference by the international community. The Declaration on the Elimination of all forms of Violence Against Women was adopted in 1993 by the United Nations General Assembly which obliges signatory governments to take effective measures for prevention of such violence.

The Platform for Action adopted at the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 also included strategies to be taken by governments towards ending violence against women. We should expand the understanding of violence against women to include structural violence caused by development projects, such as ecological destruction, forced eviction, mass scale overseas migration and so on. They can be considered as economic social rights.

The third point of the human rights debate in Asia is related to development, which is most relevant to APEC. Women aren't against development itself but we do have to question "development for whom?" I have been to Malaysia many times because it is most closely connected with Japan economically. There are hundreds of Japanese multinational factories in peninsular Malaysia where young women workers are not allowed to organize labour unions. In East Malaysia on Borneo Island, which is covered by thick tropical rainforest, I was shocked to see so many precious tropical trees being logged for export to Japan. Japan is the largest importer of tropical timber in the world. In the state of Sarawak, where logging is at its height, more than twenty indigenous tribal people are suffering due to the loss of their livelihood. They resist by barricading logging roads but then they are arrested and treated cruelly.

It is Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahatir, the staunchest anti-West advocate, who is aggressively following APEC globalization policy by inviting so many TNCs in, and by exporting precious natural resource for the globalized world market. Therefore, while he is attacking the West and propagandizing Asian values, he is practising the very western model of development [he despises].

His position reminds me of the principle of "Japanese Spirit and Western technology" advocated by Japanese leaders of the Meiji modernization period [in the 20th century]. Afraid that Japanese people might be influenced by western democracy, they promoted industrialization initiated by the state and not by the people. It can be said now that the slogan of Asian leaders for economic development is "Asian Values and Western Technology" which deprives people of human and democratic rights.

Malaysia has been enjoying economic growth, but numerous people have been jailed, including indigenous people in Sarawak, human rights activists like Irene Fernandez who exposed the cruel treatment of detained migrant workers, and intellectuals who were just recently detained under the Internal Security Act. This type of economic development which sacrifices the human rights of women, children and indigenous people is common to most Asian countries.

It is important to confront global economic dominance of the powerful countries in the North, but it is also necessary to criticize the countries in the South which follow the North, and to hold their governments accountable to the people. The international economic structure promoted by APEC causes gross human rights violations and so much pain and agony unequal and unjust. Moreover, it should be pointed out that the wasteful consumption pattern of people in the North is a part of development model that APEC promotes. Therefore, if we reject APEC, we should plan our lifestyle around more sustainable models.

It is vital that women reject and resist the APEC system, but it is also important that women start working together to create an alternative development system based on gender justice, ecological sustainability and local-global democracy. Already some women begun to take action in many Asian countries, even if they are still at the small-scale grassroots level. We can learn from them and step forward to envision an alternative future for the 21st century where women's human rights are guaranteed. For that purpose, human rights should be strengthened through women's day to day struggle.

Violence Against Women in War and Armed Conflict Situations:

Voices must be heard

We welcomed more than forty overseas participants from three continents and twenty countries to the four-day International Conference on Violence Against Women in War and Armed Conflict situations held in Tokyo. We have shared the stories of women from each of these countries who have suffered sexual violence in war and conflict situations which have taken place in the past and continue until the present time. We have shared their pain and sorrow.

We have heard the reports of Japanese military sexual slavery ("comfort women systems"), the rape of Nanking, the sexual brutality against tens of thousands of women at the hand of Pakistani military forces during the Bangladesh war for independence, the victimization of women through the spraying of toxic chemicals by US military forces during the Vietnam War, and more recently, the mass rape of women in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda, the sexual violence against women under the Indonesian military occupation of East Timor, the military administration of Burma, the Islamic fundamentalists in Afghanistan and Algeria, rape occurring around US military bases, forced eviction during situations of armed conflict. Through these reports we have learned of the various forms of violence suffered by women during wars and regional conflicts regardless of time and place.

In addition, these criminal acts against women are not branded as war crimes, have not been tried in war tribunals, and the perpetrators have not been prosecuted, enjoying impunity. Meanwhile, the women victims have kept silent in fear of being humiliated; with families and communities concealing the abuse as their shame.

This "shame" extends to cases where fathers killed their own daughters who had been raped. It has been made clear that violence occurring during war and armed conflict situations represents the extension of violence against women, which occurs on a daily basis even in so-called "times of peace" in male dominated societies, in the form of domestic violence, sexual harassment and trafficking in women.

Recently with the growth of the women's movement, women survivors throughout the world have begun to raise their voices. In particular, women survivors in Korea and other countries of Asia who were forced to become sex slaves ("Comfort women") have come forward to break the silence after fifty years.

In response, women in Japan have launched a campaign to demand that the Japanese government issue an official apology and pay compensation to the survivors. We have learned how much the courage of these women has served to empower women victims during war times and armed conflict in areas throughout the world such as the former Yugoslavia.

The global women's movement clearly established the human rights of women on the occasion of the World Conference on Human Rights held in 1993 in Vienna, and at the end of the same year the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Declaration of Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women, calling on states to assume responsibility for eliminating all forms of violence against women.

The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing made clear in the platform of action that violence against women during war and armed conflict constitutes a war crime. In this situation, women have organized to provide healing and support for women survivors, have begun to address the issue of sexual violence in war tribunals, and have begun to challenge war tribunals in various parts of Asia including the Tokyo War Tribunal, from a gendered perspective.

This conference was held to ensure that the voices of women victims are reflected in the report to be submitted by the UN Special Reporter on Violence Against Women, Rhadika Coomaraswamy to the UN Human Rights Commission in 1998.

There is a growing trend which seeks to reverse the work leading up to the Beijing Conference. [This backlash is] symbolized by the attack discrediting the "comfort women" as voluntary prostitutes by the "Group to Study Liberal View of History" in Japan, and emerging fundamentalist forces which overlook violence against women. However, women will no longer be silenced.

In order to eliminate violence against women during war and armed conflicts, women at the global and national levels are seeking to build a non-militarized world by bearing the responsibility of creating a peace based on women's human rights. Furthermore, in their daily lives at home, at their work sites, and in their communities, women are seeking to make changes which combat discrimination and violence.

To achieve these long-term goals, we seek to join with women addressing the issue of violence against women in war and armed conflict throughout the world, through achieving reform in international legal systems such as international law and the United Nations, and the establishment of the International Criminal Court.

We also seek to strengthen the movement within Japan to address the "comfort women" issue and force the Japanese government to accept legal responsibility, compensate, and support the survivors. We feel that this will serve as a precedent to restore honour and justice to women survivors of wartime sexual violence.

Moreover, we join with women seeking to achieve the elimination of sexual violence resulting from the presence of foreign military bases in their communities.

Next year is the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At this conference, the proposal was made to create a women's global network to protect women's human rights and to achieve a society free of all forms of violence. Let each of us take the first step as we join together in action with women.

For more information contact: Aerie Matsui, Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center, Sakuragaoka 14-10-311, Shibuya-ku Tokyo 150 Japan. Tel: 81-3780-5245. Fax: 81-3463-9752. E-mail: ajwrc@jca.ax.apc.org

Prepared by the Japan Organizing Committee of the Conference.

Women and environmental destruction:

APEC greys the skies

by Sarojeni Rengam

Sarojeni Rengam is an environmentalist working with the Pesticide Action Network-Asia Pacific (PAN) in Malaysia. Her specific areas of interests are the effects of industrial agriculture and environmental devastation on women and their communities.

In the 1980's, PAN started documenting the impact of pesticides on women. Rengam says this work necessarily includes rural women's issues, women in agriculture, women and health, and trade liberalization and development issues.

Rengam was recently in Vancouver for the 2nd International Conference Against APEC. Below is her plenary presentation.

I come from Malaysia which is known to have a tropical climate, clear blue skies and air that is relatively clean. But over the past few months we have been facing a problem—our skies are dull and grey. We have to breathe in air that is filled with sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide and some particulate matters because of forest fires in Indonesia.

In the beginning, the slash-and-burn shifting cultivators were blamed for this situation. People in Malaysia were saying: "these are the culprits." But as it kept on going for months the government finally had to admit the real causes of the problem were transnational corporations and other companies.

I am ashamed to say that a number of Malaysian companies were very much involved in burning down thousands of hectares of tropical rainforests in Indonesia. They cleared land to plant cash crops and plantation crops.

Indonesia's "cheaper" labour force, so-called cheap land (because it belongs to the government), and a government that supports trade liberalization at any cost has allowed this to happen. Because of the greed of local and foreign companies, hectares of land are being burned and citizens of many countries, not just Indonesia, but Malaysia, Singapore and even the Philippines, are suffering.

This may have happened regardless, but I think it is this current climate of trade liberalization which gives massive power to companies willing to invest. It also creates so-called comparative advantages which pushes this kind of development on countries particularly in the South.

Under this new wave of globalization and liberalization, land is increasingly being converted from food crops to non-food commercial crops, industrial zones, urban centres, prawn farms and fancy projects such as golf resorts. (Malaysia has more than 300 golf courses for a population of 18 million, almost all of whom do not play golf.) These conversions often result in small farmers being forcibly thrown off their land, violating their very basic human rights.

Forest lands and the biodiversity that supports the indigenous population are being taken over by mining and logging operations. The Philippines is a classic case where huge tracts of indigenous peoples' lands are being used up thrown mining and logging. Imagine the entire population of Australia turned out of their homes—18 million people losing their land, evicted from their homes, deprived of their livelihood and income.

As families split up and spread out, the community bonds crumble. Cut off from their most vital resources, indigenous peoples are then robbed of their history, their culture and their traditions. They may be forced to adopt an alien diet, an alien culture and alien traditions. They have higher rates of diseases and mortality, lower earning capacity and education, and face more joblessness, discrimination and an inferior social status.

Oddly, this happens in the name of development and the victims are described as "beneficiaries." It happened in India during the period of 1951 to 1990, when more than 21.6 million people suffered precisely this fate. They were displaced by just dams and canals alone. If you add mining to that, another 2.1 million people were displaced—all totalled, that's almost the entire population of Canada being displaced.

photo by Fatima Jaffer

What I would like to focus on today is the emphasis that many of these so-called "new tigers"—the countries in Asia which have recently experienced high economic growth rates—have been placing on the export of what they call 'high value crops'. This high value cropping is being introduced on a massive scale in many countries in Southeast Asia and South Asia.

In the Philippines, the medium term development plan is to accelerate the growth and development of this horticulture industry. Good agricultural land is being replaced—from food crops to horticulture products which are basically for export.

In Malaysia, farming vegetables is being replaced by growing cut flowers. This is done so consumers in the North can have cut flowers all year round. [But for them to have "choices"] means displacing the food choices of people in the countries producing the goods.

Much of the horticulture industry is dominated by transnational corporations. Although women have traditionally been actively involved in food production, the agro-export industry is increasingly forcing women into rate-based work. The trend of increasing the feminization of the rural wage labour force has accompanied the globalization of food systems. If you look at some of the figures, such as in Ecuador in 1991, 69 percent of workers in high value crop production were women.

The production of these high value crops are also characterized by the heavy use of pesticides, fungicides, herbicides and insecticides. The amount of chemicals applied is particularly high because the crops are perishables: fresh fruits, vegetables and flowers.

A woman plantation worker in Malaysia said: "I use my bare hands to mix pesticides; I don't know if doing it is harmful to me in the long run, but I know it burns my skin." And a woman in Central America said that when you work in a plantation "a good worker is identified if their nails drop off because of the use of Paraquodine in a lot of the plantations."

The victims and survivors of such development and trade liberalization strategies are invariably small farmers, landless workers, ethnic groups and indigenous peoples. As always, women are the worst affected. It is very rare for a woman, especially in the South, to own their own land. Women have very few rights over land that is being taken away from food production.

If you look at some of the figures on poverty and rural women, you find that rural women in the South are among the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world. The incidence of poverty among them, in general, shows an upward trend. In Asia alone, the number of poor rural women living below nationally defined poverty lines is estimated at 374 million.

So what are women doing about this? They are not lying down; there is so much resistance. In India, for example, women take over some land—this was not actually very good agricultural land—but the women's group worked on it, introduced sustainable agriculture, regenerated the soil, and was able to grow food for their families. They call it Food From Stones. There are also women actively trying to save traditional seeds and to say 'no' to transnational companies who want to control their seeds.

Then there's mobilization taking place against trade liberalization and the "development" resulting from these new trade regimes. In 1996 in Thailand, leading up to the Forum of the Poor, farmers began assembling in front of the government house. There were more than 2,000 farmers who demanded the return of their land which was confiscated for state development purposes 10 years earlier.

This protest was followed by one led by people affected by the dam projects, deforestation, eucalyptus plantations and state development projects, and by labourers and slum people. The number that protested under the Forum of the Poor rose to 12,000 by the beginning of the April. At that time, the Forum's petition to the government listed their concerns in four categories: the impact of dam projects, land and forest management, state development projects affecting residents, and health security for labourers.

The Assembly of the Poor, as it became more popularly known, gathered in Bangkok again in October 1996 to hit home their concerns. Thai peasant women have been at the forefront of the activities of the Forum. Once somebody described the scene to me. "Thai people are very sensitive to tradition and culture and so they didn't go shouting slogans, they didn't go drumming their drums, they just sat there. They just sat there in front of the parliament house for days and days."

People from the rural areas would come replace those who were already there. Food was provided by grassroots organizations in Bangkok, by ordinary people. By just sitting there, they embarrassed the government. The government had to come out and talk to them. They started a dialogue with the government. Not all the issues that were presented by the people were met in any significant way, but one of the things the government has promised is support for sustainable agriculture. They are putting out big financial support to NGOs [non-governmental organizations,] to get more people, more farmers involved in sustainable agriculture.

These are some of the ways that farmers, women, people are organizing against trade liberalization. Another has been the alternative trading and alternative markets that have been set up in many countries. These are community supported agriculture. These are like the old system in Japan, the tokay system, where consumers and farmers come together in an alternative market system; where farmers are committed to providing organic products or products that do not have pesticides, and where the community supports the livelihood of farmers. This has been a very good way of exchange. There have been other movements of fair trade that have taken place elsewhere in Asia and other regions that actually bypass all these new trade regimes.

We really need to counteract some of the trade liberalization developments taking place. And so, the call is for a lot of women to resist, then mobilize, then create alternatives. And I think for us in particular, those from Malaysia, 1999 will be a critical year when the APEC leaders summit comes to Malaysia. It will be a challenge for NGOs and peoples' organizations based in Malaysia to try and organize in a situation where there are so many difficulties for NGOs even to sustain themselves. So, we'll try to face the challenge next year, but in the meantime we will continue resisting these developments.

Indigenous women and the environment:

Nuclear waste targeted for Western Shosone territory

by Winona LaDuke

The 1997 Honor the Earth Tour is over. My suitcase is finally unpacked and I sit in piles of paper, unopened mail and huge lists of things to do. Life may have returned to some normal level of hecticness, but something inside me is more inspired, has seen more terrible and more beautiful images than I have ever seen before, and in my heart, I believe and know that courageous people make a difference.

This fall's concert was the third Honor the Earth Tour headlined by the Indigo Girls and featuring Native performers such as Ulali, Keith Secola and his Wild Band of Indians, John Trudell and Bad Dog, Jim Boyd and the band Indigenous. The tour began amidst blessing and traditional Mohawk dancing on the Akwesasne Mohawk Nation in upstate New York September 7. Twenty-one shows and twenty five days later on October 2, the tour ended in Missoula, Montana.

Sponsored by the Seventh Generation Fund, the Indigenous Women's Network and the Indigenous Environmental Network, Honor the Earth is an ongoing effort to raise public awareness and financial support for grassroots Native environmental initiatives. This year's tour did that and more. "Honor the Earth was the most rigorous and demanding tour of our career," said Emily Saliers of the Indigo Girls, recalling the high-paced schedule participants kept to insure broad media coverage and public education. "It was also the most inspiring."

Two tour buses and two vans drove through the night from town to town along the East coast for close to a month. Sometimes sleepy, yet determined musicians and Native activists showed up each day after a performance for editorial meetings at daily papers, press conferences and special events. Then there was the concert itself which highlighted local and national Native speakers and included a 'call to action' by the Indigo Girls, who assisted with the distribution and collection of postcards to key decision makers on specific Native environmental issues. Much of this was broadcast on Honor the Earth's website, which received more than one million "hits" during the tour.

The primary focus of the tour was the issue of nuclear waste storage on Native lands. Every single proposal to build a radioactive waste dump in North America right now targets Native territories, from the remote Grassy Narrows and Meadow Lake Reserves in Canada to the desert lands of the Goshutes and Shoshones in the American southwest.

Because of the big push by the nuclear industry, Honor the Earth decided to centre its efforts around the critical issue of a little known piece of legislation under consideration by Congress called the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. This bill authorizes the mass transportation of high level radioactive waste from nuclear reactors, primarily located in the east, to Yucca Mountain, Nevada—a sacred place on Western Shoshone territory. If this bill passes and is not vetoed by President Bill Clinton, casks of waste, each carrying the radiological equivalent of 200 Hiroshima bombs, will be travelling by highway and railroad within a half mile of the front lawns of 50 million Americans. And the nuclear industry will turn a sacred site into a radioactive parking lot.

The Western Shoshone Nation is the most bombed nation on earth because of nuclear explosions conducted within the Nevada Test Site, on their territory. Yucca Mountain sits within the Test Site and is part of the land base guaranteed the Nation in the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley. The community is united in its opposition to any nuclear waste storage at Yucca Mountain.

Dumping nuclear waste in Indian country, letting giant utilities eliminate their liability for the waste and transporting it through America's cities and towns is a bad idea. That was the message of the Honor the Earth tour. The musicians and activists took that message to 20 communities and to Washington, DC. More than 15,000 postcards to the president were collected requesting he uphold his promise to veto the Nuclear Waste Policy Act when it comes to his desk. The political impact of the cards was buttressed by a national press conference in Washington, DC, a meeting with White House staff on the issue, a show and press conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, and a visit to Western Shoshone land.

"For the first time, we got to speak to people high up in Washington," said Virginia (Dedee) Sanchez, Director of the Citizen Alert Native American Program and a Western Shoshone representative who spoke at six concerts on the route. Sanchez felt the tour gave her community a chance to focus discussion on their issues and have it make a difference. "At first I was really nervous and didn't know what to expect. And then I figured out this would really help our community raise our issues. Sanchez said, "It encouraged and enhanced not only me personally, but our whole community: Western Shoshone Paiutes, Margene Bullcreek from Goshute—we felt inspired knowing we had backing on our issues."

Sanchez wasn't the only Native woman to have her voice heard. "We've been trying to talk to the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) for at least ten years. Letter after letter to EPA administrator Carol Browner with the message sent in many forms...this was the first time we ever went to her office," Mohawk midwife Katsi Cook explained.

Cook and the rest of the Mohawk community at Akwesasne want General Motors to clean up their mess. For 15 years, GM has tried to get out of cleaning up a Superfund Site—one with 823,000 cubic yards of highly toxic PCBs in it—adjacent to their reservation. Those PCBs are in the soil, the fish and the people.

At the meeting with Browner, Cook forwarded a request that she come to Akwesasne. Hopefully, 3,500 postcards urging the EPA to mandate the permanent clean up of the GM dump will help get Browner to make the visit and take some steps to remedy the site.

Like the Mohawks, the Penobscots of Maine have been asking the EPA for years to stop the Lincoln Pulp and Paper Mill from spewing dioxin into their waters. As in the case of Akwesasne, Browner has ignored the issue.

Dioxin, a byproduct of bleaching paper white with chlorine, is the "most potent toxin" regulated by the EPA. Penobscots and environmentalists have repeatedly asked the EPA to stop the estimated 40 million gallons of dioxin laden water dumped into Maine rivers by paper companies annually. Instead, the agency has allowed the discharge of this poison to increase.

This is about access. Although the Indigo Girls would prefer fans or decision makers act from their hearts and not because a famous artist asked them to, celebrity pull does make a difference. Companies like General Motors and the pulp and paper industry seem to have way more influence in Washington than Native Nations. For instance, while the Mohawks participated earnestly in a process of clean up negotiations between the state, federal government and GM, it was only GM's voice that was heard. John Banks of the Penobscot Nation has gone through the same grinding bureaucratic process with little result. Action by celebrities like the Indigo Girls may be a way to balance the scale.

Further down the tour route, Honor the Earth stopped for a free concert on the lands of the Eastern Band of Cherokee in North Carolina, held three shows in Florida to support the Independent Traditional Seminole Nation's right to preserve their way of life, and spent a day in a traditional Seminole village. We visited the lands of the Western Shoshone in Nevada, and ended the tour in Montana by standing with Native peoples as they strive to protect the Yellowstone buffalo herd from slaughter.

The visits to Native communities were the most moving aspect of tour, a respite from the hectic schedule of concerts and media interviews as well as a way to remember the purpose of our work. The Indigo Girls' Amy Ray reflects that "the time spent in Indian communities was exciting and humbling and gave us strength to carry through the whole tour."

Honor the Earth was mutually rejuvenating for Native activists. "I think the struggle that we work with here on a daily basis in the community can be very grinding," says Katsi Cook. She laughs, "I can get myself into a hole. This whole thing picked our energy up and made us act very quickly so that our best came out. The energy brought to us was very revitalizing."

For more information on the Honor the Earth Campaign, contact them at 1-800-Earth-07, or visit the campaign's website at www.honorearth.com.

This article has previously been published by Honor the Earth. Thanks to its campaign manager, Faye Brown , for sending Kinesis *a copy of the piece.*

Winona LaDuke is a well-known Indigenous and environmental activist and is actively involved with the Indigenous Women's Network. She and Priscilla Settee are co-chairs of the Honor the Earth campaign.

Women and the Internet:

Useful guide to getting online

WORKING TOGETHER ONLINE
By Maureen James and Liz Rykert

Web Networks, Toronto, Ontario, 1997

by Penny Goldsmith

Last October I attended the Women's Internet Conference in Ottawa and among the many and varied workshops on networking online, my interest was piqued by one offered by the Wild Web Women (WWW) of Toronto entitled "Citizens for Local Democracy." At that workshop, Liz Rykert, Sherrie Tingley, Robyn Kalda, Sally Gibson and Sonja Greckol told us the story of how they are using the Internet to organize and mobilize people in Ontario around the cuts the Conservative government of Mike Harris is inflicting on all levels of community.

I was struck in particular by the fact that these women were not computer experts; they were community organizers who were telling us how to use the technology to further the work we were already doing. Online discussions were only one forum for organizing around the megacity bill in Toronoto, for example. Weekly meetings and newspaper broadsides were also a regular part of the process.

Inspired by the workshop, I turned again to the book I had bought and read with enthusiasm only a week or so before the confernece began: Working Together Online. The book doesn't need a subtitle; its title says it all. In plain language and with clear and readble design by Anne Jacobs and illustrations by Carolyn Gavin, this working manual explains how to use the technology practically. The authors, both of whom have extensive experience facilitating online discussion groups and training community organizations on the Internet, have structured the book to take the reader from why go online, right through to how to do it.

Because Rykert and James are community organizers not computer techies, they know the barriers and conflicts community organizations face when making the decision to go online. This is a c"computer manual" that talks about who will be working in your online space and the politics of government funding versus government involvement in the space. The authors stress the importance of analyzing how your group works now, and how the technology can help that process by making communicaiton cheaper, for example, or letting people be involved in a discussion when they have time, rather than at a specific meeting.

The book then goes into a detail about what to do next. Again, the authors tell us the options available, but spend most of their time talking about the politics of communication: how to make people feel comfortable if they are not used to the medium, whether or not to have someone facilitating or moderating discussions. They warn the reader that there can be problems dealing with "techies" whose goal is to have the system running smoothly. This isn't a bad goal, but one that sometimes doesn't take into account the various issues around access. For example, you may need an older version of an internet browser because not all the participants in your group will have spiffy computers with Windows 95 installed.

The chapter called "Strategies for Working Together" will not be unfamiliar to experienced commmunity workers. The same issues are there: listening to each other, creating a safe environment, developing ground rules, sharing resources and being inclusive. Examples of online activities will give th reader ideas about how to use online space. Appendices detail the specifics of how to use Web networks' system to set up accounts.

This manual is expensive ($29.95) but its worth the cost. It is a thorough, unintimidating reflection of how we can use the tools of technology without beibng overwhelmed by them.

Web Networks is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing high quality cost effective electronic communications tools to social change communities and non-profit organizations across Canada. It has provided services to non-profit groups and individuals involved in women's issues, environment, labour, human rights, peace, social justice and international development since 1987.

To order a copy of Working Together Online,write to Web Networks, 401 Richmond St., Suite 384 Toronto, Ontario, M5V 3A8. To contact Web Networks online, go to their web page at : http://www.community.web.net. To call them toll free, call 1-800-811-7204 (the local number if you're in Toronto is 596-1373)

Penny Goldsmith is the president of the the Vancouver Community Network, and coordinator of PovNet, a projet to get anti-poverty advocates online around British Columbia.

Meeting students' needs today is an investment in the future

Support increased funding for public education.

Because we think the world of our children

The B.C. Teachers' Federation

BULLETIN BOARD

read this

Bulletin Board listings have a maximum of 50 words. Groups, organizations and individuals eligible for free space in the Bulletin Board must be, or have, non-profit objectives.

Other free notices will be items of general public interest and will appear at the discretion of *Kinesis*.

Classifieds are $8 (+$0.56 GST) for the first 50 words or portion thereof, $4 (+$0.28 GST) for each additional 25 words or portion thereof and must be prepaid.

Deadline for all submissions is the 18th of the month preceding publication. Note: *Kinesis* is published ten times a year. Jul/Aug and Dec/Jan are double issues.

All submissions should include a contact name and telephone number for any clarification that may be required.

Listings will not be accepted over the telephone.

***Kinesis* encourages readers to research the goods and services advertised in Bulletin Board. *Kinesis* cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information provided or the safety and effectiveness of the services and products listed.**

Send submissions to Bulletin Board, *Kinesis*, #309-877 E. Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC, V6A 3Y1, fax: (604) 255-5511, or e-mail: kinesis@web.net. For more information call (604) 255-5499.

INVOLVEMENT

WANNA GET INVOLVED?

With *Kinesis*? We want to get involved with you too. Help plan our next issue. All women interested in what goes into *Kinesis*—whether it's news, features or arts—are invited to one of our next Story Meetings: **Tues Jan 6** and **Tues Feb 3** at 7 pm at our office, 309-877 E. Hastings St. For more information or if you can't make the meeting, but still want to find out about contributing to *Kinesis*, give Agnes a call at (604) 255-5499. New and experienced writers welcome. Childcare and travel subsidies available.

INVOLVEMENT

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

Are you interested in finding out how *Kinesis* is put together? Well...just drop by during our next production dates and help us design and lay out Canada's national feminist newspaper. Production for the **February 1998** issue is from **Jan 20-27**. No experience is necessary. Training and support will be provided. If this notice intrigues you, call us at (604) 255-5499. Childcare and travel subsidies available.

VSW WANTS YOU!

Want to get more involved but not sure where to begin? Join us—become a volunteer at Vancouver Status of Women. VSW volunteers plan events, lead groups, raise funds, answer the phone lines, organize the library, help connect women with the community resources they need, and get involved in other exciting jobs! The next volunteer orientation will be on **Thurs Jan 15** at 7pm at VSW, 309-877 E. Hastings St. For more info, call (604) 255-6554. Please call before the orientation to confirm attendance. Childcare and travel subsidies available.

POPULAR EDUCATION PROGRAM

VSW is holding a popular education program "Gaining my voice, taking our strength" starting in **February 1998** (eight sessions). Issues include health, economics, violence, homophobia, class and racism. Among our goals: identifying skills, enhancing self-esteem, recognizing our common struggles and taking collective action. Preference to women living on a limited income and partially accessible to women with disabilities. Childcare and transportation subsidies available. Space limited. For more info call Ema at 255-6554.

EVENTS

FEMINIST DISCUSSION GROUP

The Feminist Networking Group of the Lower Mainland has started up a monthly Feminist Discussion Group. This month's topic will be "Feminist Definition of Choice" and will be facilitated by British Columbia Coalition of Abortion Clinics (BCCAC). The discussion will take place **Tues Dec 9** at 6:30pm Vancouver Status of Women (VSW) 309-877 E. Hastings St. For more info call VSW at (604) 255-6554.

DANCE-A-THON

Vancouver Women's Fund Dance-a-thon! will be held **Fri Feb 13**, 1997. Location to be announced watch Kinesis for details. The Vancouver Women's Fund is a group of 14 feminist, community based Vancouver women's organizations. Members of the VWF work collectively on joint fundraising projects. Proceeds are distributed equally among members groups. For more information or to make a donation to the VWF please write to PO Box 1098, Vancouver, BC, V6C 2T1.

PRO-CHOICE CELEBRATION

A Pro-Choice Celebration by the BC Coalition for Abortion Clinics will be held **Sat Jan 24** at 8pm at the Ukrainian Cultural Centre, 805 E. Pender St, Vancouver. The evening marking 10 years of reproductive freedom features live jazz, folk, blues and more. There will be display tables, food, a door prize and cash bar. Tickets are $5. For info call 736-2800.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Lower Mainland WITT (Women in Trades, Technologies, Operations and Blue Collar Work) Association is hosting a talk on sexual harassment by carpenter, writer and poet Kate Braid **Mon Dec 8** at 6:30pm. Braid will address sexual harassment in the workplace, as it specifically relates to workers' compensation issues. Her talk will be at Rix's Club, SE2 Building, BC Institute of Technology, 3700 Willingdon Ave, Burnaby. The event is free. For more info call the WITT phoneline at (604) 688-9499.

LESBIAN MOVIE NIGHT

The Vancouver Lesbian Connection (VLC), 876 Commercial Dr. holds movie nights every 2nd and 4th Monday of each month at 7:30pm. *All Over Me* will be shown on **Mon Dec 8** and *Keepers of the Fire* on **Mon Dec 22**. Admission by donation to the winter food and toy drive. For more info call 254-8458.

DYKEWORDS COMEDY NIGHT

Stand up comedy by local lesbian performers will be held **Thurs Dec 18** at The Lotus, 455 Abbott St. Vancouver. This features Karen Hoskins, Lindsay Hill, Marty Robataille, Sharon Novak and more. Admission is sliding scale $1-4. Everyone welcome. Call 685-7777 for more info.

WINTER CONCERT

It Came Upon A Midnight Queer the Rainbow Concert Band's winter revue will be held **Thurs Dec 11** at 7:30 pm at St. John's United Church (Comox and Broughton) in Vancouver. Also performing that evening, Go-Go the women's a cappella quartet and comedian Sandra Fellner. Tickets are $13 at Little Sisters, Harry's Off Commercial and at the door. To reserve concession tickets or for more info call 290-0556. Wheelchair accessible.

EVENTS

FOOD AND TOY DRIVE

The Vancouver Lesbian Connection (VLC), 876 Commercial Dr, presents the 2nd annual Winter Food and Toy Drive and Sunday Winter Socials through the month of December. They are asking for donations of non-perishable food, cash, toys or children's gift donations. Drop off at the Sunday Socials between 2 and 6pm or during centre regular hours: Thurs and Fri 11am - 6pm and Saturdays 12-5pm. Food bags and toys will be available for queer women who need them during the third week in December and food bags the 3rd and 4th week of January. Call 254-8458 to sign up.

FARAH M. SHROFF

Farah M. Shroff editor of the *New Midwifery: Reflections on Renaissance and Regulation* will launch the book on **Tues Jan 27**, 5:30-7:30pm at Women In Print 3566 W. 4th Ave. Midwives and social scientists from a variety of cultural identities, political perspectives, geographical locations and education and training backgrounds reflect, in clear and accessible language, on the legislative processes involved in the regulation of midwifery. Farah Shroff teaches social science and public health and as a health activist has been involved in social justice movements for over fifteen years in many parts of the world.

LAURA WEE LAY LAQ

Laura Wee Láy Láq, potter and sculptor, will be showing her work at the Gallery of Tribal Art 1509 W. 7th Ave, Vancouver, **Sat Dec 6** until **Dec 20**. For 20 years Laura has brought to her gorgeous, simple vessels a Salish and Kwakwaka'wakw artistic heritage and the culmination of knowledge and experience gained by studying the work of indigenous people's pottery around the world. Her pieces reflect the time and love she puts into them

1001 BLACK INVENTIONS

1001 Black Inventions whether will be held **Fri Feb 6** at 7pm at the Michael J. Fox Theatre, 7373 MacPherson Ave, Burnaby. *1001 Black Inventions* is a play that peeks into the amazing lives of men and women whose genius touches all of us. A world where all the inventions by Africans/Blacks appear into the realization that Black ingenuity is an integral part of our daily lives. Admission is $16 and $12 for children under 16. For reservations call 875-5779.

DYKEWORDS

Dykewords will be hosting literary cabarets on **Thurs Jan 8** at 9pm at The Lotus, 455 Abbott St, Vancouver. Readings by Joan Bridget, Charity Laboucan and Laurie Bricker. Admission is $1-4. Everyone welcome. For more info call 685-7777.

WOMEN PAINTING WOMEN

Women Painting Women, a figurative art exhibit will be held until **Jan 6** at the Whip Gallery, 209 E. 6th Ave, Vancouver. The show features works by Womens' Figurative Art Group members Kate Barry, Isobel Carter, Elizabeth Godley, Kelly Haydon, marilyn lemon, Shelly Saville, Lyla Smith and Liz Wilcox.

WOMEN'S HEALTH BOARD

The Vanouver/Richmond Health Board Women's Population Advisory Committee is holding an informal gathering to meet and talk with committee members and to hear about recent activities and plans. **Thurs Jan 22** from 6-9pm at CNIB, 100-5055 Joyce St, Burnaby, BC. To register or for more info call 873-1803.

little Sister's Book & Art Emporium

Western Canada's Lesbian & Gay Bookstore

Open Daily 10am to 11pm

Our Books/Our Issues

Gay Fiction	Queer Theory
Lesbian Fiction	Feminist Theory
Our Magazines & Journals	Biographies, Essays, Poetry
AIDS/Health	Religion & Spirituality
Humour	Art & Photography
Erotica	Community

Little Sister's Book & Art Emporium
1238 Davie Street, Vancouver, B.C., V6E 1N4
(604)669-1753 Phone Orders 1-800-567-1662
Internet Address: http://www.lsisters.com

BULLETIN BOARD

EVENTS

RENEE RODIN

Renee Rodin will be reading on **Thurs Dec 11** at 7:30pm at La Page D'Or Bookstore, 3756 Oak St. She will read from her book of prose poems *Bread and Salt*, as well as some new work. For more info call 731-3756.

JAN PEACOCK INSTALLATION

Jan Peacock is presenting a new video installation called *The Book of Chairs* until **Fri Dec 12** at the Western Front, 303 E. 8th Ave, Vancouver. Peacock's videos re-work imagery in subtle and poetic ways that decenter both the narrator and the viewer. Gallery hours Tues-Sat, 12-5pm. For more info call 876-9343.

SHE-WORDS

Telepoetics presents *She-Words* **Mon Dec 15** at 8pm at the Vancouver Press Club 2215 Granville St. An evening for an audio/visual connection to a live poecentric event in San Francisco to be followed by the live work of Abby Wener, Terrie Hamazaki, Jen Lam, Hilary Peach and Christine Taylor. For more info call 708-0580.

HIV/AIDS CONFERENCE

The *1998 Women, Children & Youth HIV/AIDS Conference* will be held in Vancouver **Mar 6-7, 1998**. This conference will address the unique needs of women, children and youth infected with and affected by HIV disease. The conference will be held at the Coast Plaza at Stanley Park, 1733 Comox St. For more info call (604) 822-2626 or toll free within BC 1-800-663-0348.

MATERNAL ART EXHIBIT

Field Notes from Maternal Territories: An Exhibition About Mothering with artists jil p. weaving and Margaret Taylor will be held until **Sun Jan 4** at the Surrey Art Gallery, 13750-88th Ave, Surrey. In her paintings, weaving proposes a science fiction future where "mothering" becomes the work of a robot. Paired with these works is a sculptural installation by Margaret Naylor challenging the stereotypes of mothering through architectural metaphors for the mother's body. For more info call 501-5580.

WOMEN IN PRINT
BOOKS & OTHER MEDIA

3566 West 4th Avenue
Vancouver BC

Voice 604 732-4128
Fax 604 732-4129

10-6 Daily • 12-5 Sunday

Discounts for book clubs
•
Special orders welcome

GROUPS

LESBIANS OVER 30 SOCIAL

The Over 30's Social Group meets every **2nd Saturday** at 5:30pm for a potluck at the Vancouver Lesbian Connection (VLC), 876 Commercial Dr. For more info call 254-8458.

LESBIAN COMING OUT GROUP

Lesbian Coming Out Group will start in the new year at the Vancouver Lesbian Connection (VLC), 876 Commercial Dr. To sign up for the 10 week facilitated group call 254-8458.

LESBIANS OF COLOUR

Hey Lesbians of Colour wanna talk of being lesbians, needing and creating community, separating from males, unlearning male opppressiveness etc. while we cook, dance, colour, act up and create other things together. Contact Dee Mehta, 7-3458 Main St. Vancouver, BC, V5V 3N2.

SHAKTI-STRENGTH

Shakti "strength" is a self-help group for South Asian Indo-Canadian Women who have experienced the psychiatric system. The group meets evry **1st and 3rd Tuesdays** of the month from 7-9pm at South Vancouver Neighbourhood House 6470 Victoria Dr. Admission is free. For more info call Helen (for English) at 733-5570 or Jito (for Punjabi) 590-8212.

LEGIT

The Lesbian and Gay Immigration Task Force (LEGIT) Vancouver is running one day information and organizing workshops on same-sex immigration. In Edmonton and Calgary a workshop will be held **Sat Jan 10** and in Regina and Winnipeg on **Sat Jan 17**. Watch for information posters in your community or call LEGIT at (604) 876-1266.

ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

A battered women's support group for Aboriginal women will be held **Tuesday evenings** from 6:30-8:30pm, beginning **Tues Jan 13**. Bus fare provided and child care to be announced. For more info or to register call Mabel Nipshank at 687-1868.

COMPULSIVE EATING SUPPORT

A drop-in support group for women struggling with compulsive eating will be held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month. Group meets from 7:30-9pm at the Eating Disorder Resource Centre of BC, St. Paul's Hospital, 2nd floor, Room 2C-213, 1081 Burrard St, Vancouver. Cost is free. Facilitators are Colleen Hyland and Cynthia Johnston. For more info call 631-5313.

IWD ORGANIZING

The next meeting of the International Women's Day Committee in Vancouver will be **Tues Jan 13** at the Britannia Public Library (upstairs), 1661 Napier St. Women are welcome to join in the planning for the March 1998 events. For further info call Claire at 708-0447.

FIREMOON

Firemoon: Asia-Pacific Wimmin's Alliance welcomes all women of mixed, partial or full Asian and/or Pacific Islander heritage in the Lower Mainland to discussion groups, potlucks, rallies and more. For more info or to suggest discussion topics call Naomi at 473-9575 or email boun@sfu.ca.

SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT

A 10 week support group will be starting in February in Surrey. The group will be a supportive, confidential place to talk about feelings and explore issues which arise from assault such as fear, anger, trust and sexuality. Group is free. Childcare and transportation subsidies are available. For more info call Surrey Women's Centre at 589-8373.

GROUPS

EXPLANTATION & RECOVERY

The Breast Implant Centre of BC is holding its Holiday Celebration on **Tues Dec 9**, 7-9:30pm, Rm D309A, BC Women's Hospital 4500 Oak St. They will also be holding an info and support session on Explantation and Recovery on **Tues Jan 20**. The next sessions will be held on **Jan 27, Feb 3, 10, 17 and Mar 3** and topics of discussion will include imaging, alternative prosthetics, signs $ symptoms, testing and strategies that seem to help. Call (604) 875-2013 for more info, time and venue.

RAPE RELIEF

Vancouver Rape Relief and Woman's Shelter needs women who are interested in volunteering for their 24-hour crisis line and transition house for women and children. Training sessions are on Tuesday evenings. For more info and for a training interview call (604) 872-8212.

SUBMISSIONS

MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS

Canadian Woman Studies is calling for papers on Mothers and Daughters.Invited are essays, research reports, true stories, brief anecdotes, poetry, cartoons, drawings and other artwork. The issue is committed to exploring the ways in which mother-daughter relationships empower both mothers and daughters, mold identities, and reflect social, historical, and cultural norms of femininity.While the issue will address the ways in which patriarchal culture divides mothers and daughters, it will focus on the strategies mothers and daughters have developed to resist this seperation and achieve a lasting politics of empowerment. For more info call (416) 736-5356; fax (416) 736-5765; email cwscf@yorku.ca. Deadline is **Dec 30**.

COMPLEXLY CARIBBEAN

Seeking short stories for an anthology on female Caribbean Identities into the 21st century - who are we now? Looking for fiction which deals with the experiences of being complexly Caribbean from Caribbean (broadly defined) women inside and outside the region. Especially interested in experimental writing and writing which breaks new ground and the mold of nostalgic first generation migrant experience fiction. Send submissions to: Complexly Caribbean, Sister Vision Press, P.O. Box 217, Stn. E, Toronto, ON, M6H 4E2. Deadline is **Sept 1998.**

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

FREDA (the Feminist Research Education Development and Action Centre) in Vancouver is analyzing policies in British Columbia affecting women in or leaving abusive relationships. The project will include an annotated bibliography of all research dealing with violence against women in BC, and a critical analysis of BC-based policies. FREDA is seeking input, particularly unpublished research reports, needs assessments and curriculum materials. Contact FREDA at SFU Harbour Centre, 515 W. Hastings St, Vancouver, BC, V6B 5K3; tel: (604) 291-5197; fax: (604) 291-5189; e-mail: mhmorrow@sfu.ca.

SUBMISSIONS

SPIRITUALITY ANTHOLOGY

Calling all writers, story-tellers & oracles. sherece taffe & Sister Vision Black Women and Women of Colour Press been waitin' to hear your views, opinions, stories, anecdotes, critiques and whatever else ya got about all Religions/spiritual/ritualistic and ceremonial denominations. All Black and Brown ("of colour") dykes, lesbians, bi/sexual, gay wimmin and queer gals, send yo stuff now to sherece taffe at *Recovering* c/o Sister Vision Black Women and Women of Colour Press, PO Box 217 Stn E, Toronto, ON, M6H 4E2. Deadline is **May 1, 1998**.

CHILDREN OF EXILE

Children of Exile will be an anthology of men and women of colour who were raised in white families or institutions: Native people who as children were in residential schools; Asian children adopted out of Bangladesh, Korea, Vietnam, etc; Black and racially mixed children who were adopted or fostered in White homes; children of colour who went through a White system of group homes or other juvvenile facilities. What was your experience like? Send essays, articles, letters, journalings, artwork, photography, interviews, etc. to Carol Camper, c/o Sister Vision Press, PO Box 217, Stn E, Toronto, ON, M6H 4E2. Include a self-adderssed stamped envelope if you want your work returned. Deadline is **Feb 15, 1998.**

BLACK LESBIAN ARTISTS AND POETS

Kuumba, a Black lesbian and gay journal based in the US, is accepting ongoing submissions of poetry and artwork. *Kuumba* is dedicated to the celebration of the lives and experiences of Black people "in the life." For more info contact Mark Haile at BLK Publishing Company, Box 83912, Los Angeles, CA, 90083-0912; or call (310) 410-0808, fax (310) 410-9250, email newsroom@blk.com.

LIVING UNDER FUNDAMENTALISM

Submissions from women are wanted for an anthology on the experience of living under religious fundamentalism. Short stories, poetry and first person experiences to a maximum of 3,000 words are requested. For more info contact Deb Ellis, PO Box 204, Dunnville, ON, N1A 2X5 or call (905) 774-8091. Deadline is **May 31, 1998.**

STRANGE FRUIT

Dark visions and distant gardens bear *Strange Fruit*, a new literary magazine giving voices to writers of colour. Now looking for submissions of poetry, short fiction, book reviews, graphics, critical essays, interviews, short plays, experimental works. Send writing to *Strange Fruit*, 1A Vermont Ave, Suite 37, Toronto, ON, M6G 1X6. Enclose SASE to receive reply. For more info call (416) 533-4761.

THE BLUE EWE
SALT SPRING ISLAND
Bed & Breakfast

A Beautiful Place

5 acres of forested foot paths with ponds, ocean and mountain views.

Healthy Breakfasts
Hot Tub & Sauna

(250) 537-9344

1207 Beddis Road, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2C8

BULLETIN BOARD

SEE HOW MUCH FUN WE HAD AT THE LAST PARTY(VSW'S OPEN HOUSE) Photos by Agnes Huang

NEW YEARS PARTY & POTLUCK

The Vancouver Status of Women is holding its annual New Year's Party on Friday, January 16 from 5:00pm onward. The festivities include a potluck (please bring something to share if you can and BYOB) and all kinds of fun, fun party games, door prizes and raffles.
Women and children are invited to come hang out and learn new and interesting things to do with balloons and bubblegum, dance to funky tunes brought to us by DJ Ebony, and enjoy/experience some really big suprises.
Bring your own decoration to spruce up VSW's office during the party, and be sure to dress up, dress down, dress all around.
The New Year's fete will be held at the Vancouver Status of Women, #309-877 E. Hastings St (between Campbell and Hawks). For more information, call 255-6554.

Dahl findlay Connors & Evans

BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS

- A full range of services to meet your business and personal legal needs
- Free initial consultation
- Lawyers experienced in protecting the interests and advancing the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered communities

Suite 620, 1033 Davie (near Burrard), Vancouver, B.C.
(604) 687-8752 • Toll Free 1 888 4 GAY LAW

(L-R) barbara findlay, Dennis Dahl, Denise Evans, Vince Connors

Making the Law Work for All of Us

CLASSIFIEDS

LAURA JAMIESON COOP

Laura Jamieson Housing Co-op is accepting applications for 1,2 and 3 bedroom units. Monthy housing charges from $559-821. No subsidy available. Active participation is enjoyable and necessary. Share purchase ($1500) required. Great eastside location and wonderful people. For an application, send SASE to: Membership Committee, 100-1349 E. 2nd Ave, Vancouver, BC, V5N 1C4.

WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENSE

Women Educating in Self-defense Training (WEST) teaches Wenlido. In Basic classes, you learn how to make the most of mental, physical and verbal skills to get away from assault situations. Continuing training builds on basic techniques to improve physical and mental strength. By women, for women. For info, call 876-6390.

FRASER RIVER PLACE COOP

Fraser River Place Co-op is accepting applications for 1-3 bedroom units. No subsidies, shares are $1600. Housing costs are $667-977. Participation required. S.A.S.E. 530 Ginger Dr, New Westminster BC, V3L 5K8.

LYDIA KWA

Lydia Kwa, Ph.D, clinical pychologist in private practice, works with clients dealing with a wide range of issues. Central downtown Vancouver location. For appointments, call (604) 682-5818.

CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

The fundamentals of writing, discovering your own style, overcoming writers block, the rough draft, the process of re-writing, how to get published. Taught by award-winning author Karen X. Tulchinsky. 8 sessions, starts **Jan 7**, 1998. Fee $175. For info or to register call 251-5085. Limited to 12 participants.

CLASSIFIEDS

APARTMENT FOR RENT

2 bedroom, basement suite available **Jan 1, 1998**. $650/month, includes heat and hydro. Near Nanaimo and 1st. Across from park. Non smoking quiet people. Children welcome. Call 255-4812.

FIERCE FERI FULL MOON RITUAL

This is a *system of magic* which focusses on the conscious awareness of personal, energetic rythms in relation to energies of the human realm and energies of the feri realm. Everyone welcome, admission free. Full moon ritual **Dec 14** and **Jan/98** TBA. introductory Fierce Feri Magic class Dec 14 (optional/not a prerequisite). Call Phoenix Baye (604) 215-0043.

ASTROLOGER

Ready to slay some dragons and steal back your own magic? Intuitive, kind, and dramatic natal chart reading by appointment only. Call Terrie Hamazaki at 254-1078.

WHOLE BODY/WHOLE SPIRIT

Women in search of a new spirituality. An eight week course exploring the links between body awareness and women's spirituality, using creative movement, dance, group reflection and ritual. We will explore body image, body myths, religious and cultural influences on our body, the social construction of the body and gender, our history from our body, the sacred of the body, and spirituality and healing. With Marie Cervino and Denise Nadeau. Cost $150. Wed evenings starting **Jan 7-Feb 25** (in Vancouver). For more info and to register call (604) 876-6744.

A woman-owned and operated business specializing in defensive driver training.

Driver Improvement and Retraining

Become a confident and safe driver with an experienced instructor.

As I have a moment to myself right now, I'm going to jot down some things that have been on my mind for a long time. These are matters of utmost importance and gravity. No small matters, these. So as I sit here in this simulation of the great outdoors and watch the...uh, "geese" fly by, I realize how imperative it is that I say...oh, is that mini golf?...well, maybe I'll just play a quick round...or two... be right back!

Subscribe today and keep abreast of the revelations (and score).

One year
☐$20 + $1.40 GST
Two years
☐$36 + $2.52 GST
Institutions/Groups
☐$45 + $3.15 GST

☐ Cheque enclosed
☐ Bill me
☐ New
☐ Renewal
☐ Gift
☐ Donation

For individuals who can't afford the full amount for *Kinesis* subscription, send what you can.
Free to women prisoners.
Orders outside Canada add $8.

Vancouver Status of Women Membership (includes *Kinesis* subscription)
☐$30 +$1.40 GST

Name _____
Address _____
Country _____ Postal code _____
Telephone _____ Fax _____

Published ten times a year by the Vancouver Status of Women
#309-877 E. Hastings St., Vancouver, BC V6A 3Y1

Publication Mail Reg. #6426

12 7 72006 11001 3
11001