May '84

KINESIS

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news about women that's not in the dailies

V.S.W. loses all sands

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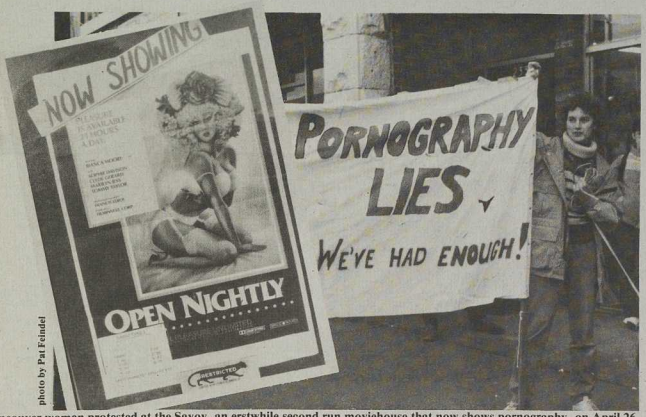

photo by Pat Feindel

Vancouver women protested at the Savoy, an erstwhile second run moviehouse that now shows pornography, on April 26. See story p. 3.

Socreds dump VSW

by Emma Kivisild

The Vancouver Status of Women has lost its core funding. A telephone announcement from the BC Attorney-General's office on April 16 informed the organization that they would not be receiving their $83,500 grant for the upcoming year.

The move came after months of hedging on the part of the province. As early as January, VSW staffers had reason to believe that a decision had already been made to cut funds completely, precipitating a flood of letters and telegrams from concerned women around BC. In February more than 50 women lobbied the Socred and NDP Caucuses. In March, the organization received interim funding until the end of May, but no word on the on going grant.

To justify the cut, Attorney-General Brian Smith cited Socred restraint, and said the group did not provide "direct justice services." Perhaps the free weekly women's legal clinics, the lawyer referral, legal research and legal resources used by women and groups throughout the Lower Mainland had slipped Mr. Smith's mind. It is more likely that the comment is an unsuccessful attempt to cover up what is clearly a political move. VSW has been vocal in its criticism of Socred attacks on social services and human rights, since women have been the group hardest hit by Socred policies. The cut to VSW is part of an overall program aimed at destroying what few rights women, minority groups, trade unions, and the poor have managed to win.

To reiterate a point made innumerable times times since the first Socred budget package last July, none of this has anything to do with 'restraint', or saving money, and everything to do with smashing progressive voices of dissent in the province. The Socreds obviously have enough money to spend on Northeast Coal, Expo '86, BC Place, ALRT, and similar pet projects of the party's cabinet members. Their slashing of funds is deliberately

NDP MLA Rosemary Brown criticized Smith's move, saying that VSW is another group "callously abandoned" by the Socreds, and that the organization is well known for its trust and efficiency.

Astrid Davidson, of the B.C. Federation of Labour, said "The decision to eliminate funding to the Status of Women was premeditated and planned on an entirely political basis. We are seeing the most vindictive side of the Social Credit government. This is punishment of the Status of Women for their willingness to speak

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Bill 27: "deplorable"

by Esther Shannon

Bill 11, British Columbia's new Human Rights Act, was tabled in April in the provincial legislature.

Bob McClelland, Minister of Labour, and the man responsible for human rights in the province, says the new bill ensures B.C. will have the best human rights protection in the country.

Gordon Fairweather, chief commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, says the new act is seriously out of step with federal legislation and that of *all* other provinces. Fairweather asserts the changes to human rights laws in British Columbia are ideological and deplorable.

The Human Rights Coalition, a grassroots coalition of groups and the main organizing force behind opposition to Bill 11, says the legislation is irrational and frightening.

Jon Gates, spokesman for the Coalition, says Bill 11 is poorer legislation than its notorious predecessor Bill 27, withdrawn after massive and continuing protest.

Bill 11 omits the reasonable cause provision in the 11 year old Human Rights Act.

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A day in the life. . .

by Jan De Grass

It's 9 am and there is a new volunteer doing phone shift at the Vancouver Status of Women today. She's still finding her way around--learning everyone's name--and there is a heap of mail on the desk in front of her. The phone has already started to ring and she's looking a little worried. Lorri has arrived to train the new volunteer, but she's immediately called to the phone. It's the Federated Anti-Poverty Group wanting to know if VSW will organize a press conference and speak publicly about the effects of the welfare cuts on women.

Cat, the office manager, arrives to sort the mail before disappearing into her office to generate a pile of correspondence and bills of her own. The mail reveals a cross section of the many groups that connect with Vancouver Status of Women. There's an article for *Kinesis* written by a woman in Terrace; a very personal letter from someone wanting to set up daycare in her community wanting advice; a request for the VSW production of a video and accompanying booklet about "Not a Love Story" - the NFB film on pornography. There is a request from a church group for a speaker about violence and pornography for one of their upcoming meetings. Along with the newspapers, flyers and *Kinesis* subscription forms, it's quite a stack.

Half an hour later Lorri is still talking on the phone and the new volunteer is smiling bravely. In the space of twenty minutes, a woman calls wondering whether assertiveness training classes will take place. (She is referred to staffer Patty Moore who is out of the office that morning leading an AT session at South Vancouver Family Place.) Another call comes in from someone wanting a lawyer to help her begin a custody case.

She is satisfied simply to receive a name and phone number, but some days women who call requesting a lawyer need to know more than just the legal steps on the path to solving their problems. They need counselling - they need validation that their problem is real and can happen to any woman.

Another caller wonders if there have been advances in the Name Change Act - she's doing Ph.D. research at Simon Fraser. And finally a *Kinesis* volunteer writer phones to ask when is absolutely the very last date that she can turn in her article...

In the *Kinesis* production room, a volunteer is scurrying to a press deadline.

Meanwhile, back at the reception desk, a succession of visitors have arrived to ask questions, peruse the bulletin board or ask for information about an event.

A woman drops in for the first time and is looking for a job, preferably in a non-traditional trade. Staff have information about work training programs. They also share the building's office space with Women in Trades, a support organization.

At noon staff worker Pat Feindel has taken her lunch into her office and closed the door. She is preparing a report based on VSW's presentation to the Fraser Commission hearings on pornography. She is also trying not to be boggled by the other mountain of work on her desk. The speaker request from the church group has been referred to her for follow-up and she's wondering how she can speak before that organization, while preparing to lead a workshop on women and nuclear disarmament, on the same day.

Between the phone calls and frequent checks on the new volunteer's progress, Lorri is reading the parliamentary task force on pension reform. She has already researched VSW's position on the issue; she's sure that the task force is not coming to grips with their major goals.

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MOVEMENT MATTERS

Nestlé boycott suspended

After five long years of Boycott activity in Canada, Nestle has finally agreed to demands to halt all its infant formula promotion in the Third World.

Boycott-endorsing groups are being encouraged to suspend the Boycott for six months while Nestle activity is monitored to ensure compliance with the agreement.

During the fall, the Steering Committee of the International Nestle Boycott Committee (INBC) did an extensive analysis of Nestle's policies and practices. The Steering Committee identified many improvements in Nestle's policies over the past years but also quite a few areas where they were still not in compliance with the WHO/UNICEF Code. Of those four major concerns were set as priorities:

- the need for adequate hazard warnings on labels;
- the requirement to include information on the risks/hazards of formula feeding in literature for mothers and health professionals as required by the WHO/UNICEF Code;
- the elimination of personal gifts for health professionals; and most importantly
- severe restrictions on the distribution of free supplies of infant formula to hospitals.

Aktionsgruppe Baby nahrung/INFACT Canada

These four priorities were announced by the INBC in mid-December, 1983. Nestle contacted the INBC after the December announcement and indicated that they were ready, for the first time, to enter into direct discussions with the INBC.

There are, however, many challenges ahead, including getting Nestle to apply the agreement universally, and having the other formula companies come up to Nestle's standards.

(Infact Canada Newsletter)

KINESIS

KINESIS is published ten times a year by Vancouver Status of Women. Its objectives are to enhance understanding about the changing position of women in society and work actively towards achieving social change. 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 group.

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MEMBERSHIP in Vancouver Status of Women is $20/year (or what you can afford). This includes a subscription to Kinesis. Individual subscriptions to Kinesis are $13/year.

SUBMISSIONS are welcome. We reserve the right to edit, and submission does not guarantee publication.

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Typesetting and camera work by Baseline Type & Graphics Cooperative.

KINESIS is a member of the Canadian Periodical Publishers Association.

Women win harassment case

by Pat Daley

"A woman's dignity is very important." It was that sentiment that led six former employees of Commodore Business Machines in Toronto through four years of negotiations and Ontario Human Rights Commission hearings on their complaints of sexual harassment.

In a recent interview with the Toronto *Clarion*, Eneida Majia and Edilma Biljak said that even though they both still receive anonymous phone calls asking if they want sex, they would do it again.

Majia, Biljak and four other women, all immigrants from South America, won a landmark cash settlement totalling $21,000 last October when law professor Peter Cumming, who heard the case, found they had been sexually harassed by foreman Raphael DeFilippis. But the women have yet to see their money.

Commodore is not only appealing the decision, but DeFilippis was promoted at another plant. In contrast, since Eneida Majia filed her complaint in 1979 she has found only sporadic employment and is currently unemployed. Biljak works part-time in a steel mill. Commodore's actions have resulted in a Toronto Board of Education decision to no longer purchase the company's computers for use in classrooms. And the six women finally received a show of solidarity from the women's movement when they were asked to lead this year's International Women's Day march.

Mejia filed her complaint on the advice of an Employment and Immigration Canada lawyer after being fired by DeFilippis in 1979. When she asked other women in the plant to act as witnesses for her, they decided to follow suit.

In 1980, a year after the complaints were filed, DeFilippis was transferred to Commodore's Pharmacy Avenue plant. Mejia said four women there have also filed a sexual harassment complaint.

Meanwhile, the Centre for Spanish Speaking People is considering making a video about their experience, said Mejia. She would like to be able to speak to groups of women who may not know about their rights in the workplace.

(Clarion)

Ontario woman released from jail

In late March, an Ontario woman heard from a provincial court judge that he would not cite her for contempt of court again for continuing to refuse to testify against her fiance.

Later Judge Leonard Montgomery dismissed two charges of assault causing bodily harm against Terry Reed, 21, saying that while he "entertains suspicions: that Mr. Reed assaulted Ms. Mitchell, there was not sufficient evidence.

In January, Judge Montgomery sentenced Karen Mitchell, 22, to three months in jail for refusing to testify. She served only one week of the sentence, after it was reduced by the Ontario Court of Appeal.

Mr. Reed's trial was adjourned and Ms. Mitchell, who is 7 1/2 months pregnant, was again called to the stand where she refused to testify.

Judge Montgomery said that while he still regarded her refusal as an attack on the administration of justice, "it would be contrary to fundamental justice" to cite her again considering her pregnancy, health problems, and the fact that she intended to marry Mr. Reed.

Assistant Crown Attorney Michael Miller noted that Mr. Reed had a criminal record which included assault and breach of recognizance.

Outside of court, Ms. Mitchell, who appeared with Mr. Own, told reporters that she had been scared but was determined not to testify even if it meant going back to jail.

Parallel cases in Canadian courts recently have also seen the sentencing of rape victims, women battered by their husbands. It is an alarming trend.

(Research from Globe & Mail)

Camp to stop ELF

An encampment by women to protest the escalating arms race and in particular, Project Elf, the Navy's controversial first strike one way transmitter for the oncoming fleet of Trident nuclear submarines, will open in Northern Wisconsin on May 28.

The encampment, known as the Women's Peace Presence to Stop Project Elf, will be maintained near the Elf site throughout the summer of 1984. The women have been organizing since last summer.

Together, Project Elf and the Trident submarine fleet would transform the U.S. submarine force from a retaliatory stance, to the primary offensive nuclear threat against the Soviet Union. Developing such offensive first strike capability greatly increases the risk of both intentional and accidental nuclear war.

The women need donations of camping equipment, rolls of netting, lumber, food and other supplies. They also need financial donations to purchase land near the Elf site. Write to Women Peace Presence to Stop Project Elf, Financial web, 731 State St., Madison, WI, USA 53703

ACROSS BC

Women picket Savoy

by Shari Dunnet

On Thursday, April 26th, 50 people turned out to protest the Savoy Cinema's change in policy. Since May 1980 the Savoy has been a second-run movie house, like the Ridge and the Van East. It changed its format to so-called "erotica" two weeks ago, cancelling the schedule which was to run until June 24.

Sean Daly, owner and manager of the Savoy, blames Pay-TV and the video craze for his failing business which he says is near bankruptcy. In an article in the *Georgia Straight*, Daly is quoted as saying he "feels that his new policy will cause some controversy" and indeed it has.

"Women's groups," he said, "do not object to erotic films, just pornography."

This leads to the question of what exactly is pornography?

After speaking with Mary Louise McCausland, the censor at the BC Film Classification Branch, (which screens all films shown in British Columbia), it is obvious that this question is not the primary concern of censorship.

The present standard for films that are OK'd are those that show no penetration, ejaculation, bestiality, child pornography, extreme violence or sexual coercion..

Under these guidelines, violent messages can still be conveyed. In one of the Savoy's films, "Open Nightly", an episode with a baby carriage and a woman pretending to be a 6 or 7 year old girl is one scenario in which both child pornography and sexual coercion are strongly suggested.

These regulations permit simply editing a few frames from existing films to have them adhere to present guidelines. Therefore, a hard-core porn film can be tailored into soft-core porn, and labelled "erotica", while still containing the messages of the original hard-core movie.

The Savoy's change in policy must be challenged. The B.C. Classification Branch's standards must also be questioned as they appear to be functioning, not in the best interest of social responsibility to the community, but primarily in the interest of the movie house owners who have chosen to show this type of film, and need the protection of an official governmental agency's classification.

photo by Pat Feindel

When Sean Daly was asked about the movies he now shows, he replied that he hasn't seen any of them. As he put it, he "hasn't any time".
We are left questioning what is eroticism, and what is pornography, and in whose terms these are defined. Who is responsible to whom?

Update on the Health Collective

by Beth Trotter

The Health Collective has been in existence for twelve years, and for many of those years it has received core funding from the provincial government. As Kinesis readers are aware, in the summer of 1983 the Collective lost all of our provincial funding. With the assistance of donations, and a small, one-time-only grant from City Hall, we have continued to operate until the present. This has been possible only because of the work of regular unpaid volunteers and previous staff who came back to volunteer their time and knowledge.

This year the VWHC has received a one year grant from the Health Promotion Directorate of the federal Ministry of Health and Welfare, to develop resource materials and present workshops on five health-related topics of concern to women. These workshops will be done in various locations throughout B.C. and Alberta. The workshop topics are Premenstrual Syndrome, Menopause, DES, Breast Health, and Cervical/Vaginal Health.

The emphasis will be on making resource materials available on these topics to women in various centres, and to encourage the development of self-help groups focussing on these issues. We will also be organizing a conference, to be held in November, to which women from the various areas in which the original workshops have been presented will be invited. The conference will focus on the concept of self-help and how we as women can use it in learning about and dealing with our health problems.

Although this grant makes it possible for a few of us to receive salaries to continue doing educational work, it is short term and does not provide core funding for the centre. So, of course, we are still seeking donations and beginning to plan, once again, how and where to seek future core funding sources for the centre.

Apart from the work going on that is associated with the grant, we wanted to make you aware of what else is continuing to happen at the Health Collective. Our resource centre is open - the hours are Tuesdays 10-1, Wednesdays 7-9:30 p.m., Thursdays 1-4, and Saturdays 1-4. Women may either phone or drop in.

The workers in the resource centre provide women with information about health and health-related issues in as clear and easily understood ways as possible. We believe that it is very important that women have the necessary information to make informed choices about their health care. We have extensive files and books on most aspects of women's health - pregnancy and childbirth, birth control methods, abnormal pap smears, menopause, premenstrual syndrome, and sexually transmitted diseases.

The files contain information on prevention, possible causes and treatments - both conventional (drugs and surgery) and non-conventional (diet, vitamins, herbs, etc.) -for many problems. As well as information on specific problems, we also have files on general preventive information - information about diet, exercise, stress reduction, vitamins and minerals. Our files also contain a lot of information about alternative approaches to healing generally - healing through nutrition, herbs, homeopathy and other holistic practices. We also have a separate set of files on occupational health issues, including information about the hazards of various workplaces - ranging from chemical contamination to radiation from video display terminals, and what you as a worker can do about it.

Many women come to the Health Collective asking us to recommend a doctor. Although we don't make specific recommendations, we do keep files in the resource centre of women's comments on their experiences with specific doctors. We also have files on naturopaths, chiropractors, dentists, massage therapists as well as counsellors, therapists and psychologists. Women are welcome to look at these files.

As well as providing access to information in our resource centre, we do pregnancy testing and provide supportive counselling and information on pregnancy and abortion. We are continuing to fit diaphragms and cervical caps, and are teaching the ovulation method, both as a form of birth control and as an aid to conception. We do workshops on various topics, although in a more limited way than before the funding cut. Recently we held a workshop on cervical self-help and one on artificial insemination for lesbians and single women.

The VWHC is located at 1501 West Broadway (at Granville). Our phone number is 736-6696. Please call us for more information.

Funding cut continued from p. 1

out in the face of the government's attack on women and women's rights."

The Status of Women is a research and service organization that offers legal assistance, assertiveness training, organizing work on issues like pornography, and monitoring of government policy. It has approximately 1100 members, and helps 175 women and groups weekly.

Staff, board and volunteers are regrouping to discuss the fate of these services now that core funding is gone. The organization has an annual grant of $22,000 form the City of Vancouver, and has applied to the Secretary of State Women's Branch. VSW will not disappear, but services will inevitably be drastically reduced.

VSW publishes *Kinesis*, providing the paper with a home, and valuable input and analysis. If at all possible, *Kinesis* will continue to be published. VSW and *Kinesis* need support in the most serious funding crisis of their 12 year history. There are many ways you can help:

1. Protest to: Attorney-General Brian Smith, Parliament Bldgs, Victoria, BC, V8V 1X4, your MLA, with copies to VSW.

2. Support letter to Secretary of State Serge Joyal, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6, for our funding application. (no stamp necessary).

3. Pledge donations for ongoing support.

4. Join VSW and subscribe to *Kinesis* ($20 per year for both) to keep posted on news about women that's not in the dailies.

5. Contact Vancouver Status of Women, 400A W. 5th Avenue, Vancouver BC, V5Y 1J8, phone 873-1427, or 876-2849.

Women need unions need. . .

by Marion Pollock

The union/non-union dispute currently being played out in British Columbia has very serious implications for women. The struggle is not limited to False Creek, the Expo site, or any forum in B.C., but is instead part and parcel of an international economic crisis - a crisis in which women bear a disproportionate economic burden.

With only a few exceptions, major corporations worldwide are experienceing a sharp decline in their rates of profit. Industrial output is down, and most plants are not producing at their full capacity. Examples of this are reported daily by the media. In France, for example, the government is closing down what they determined to be "unproductive" steel mills. Locally, companies like MacMillan Bloedel often run only one or two shifts at their sawmills instead of the normal three.

Faced with economic decline, large corporations are willing to undertake fairly aggressive 'anti-people' programs in order to increase their profits. These may include a number of tactics: the creation of widespread unemployment through layoffs, the introduction of technological changes, the depression of wages, and attacks on unions. In a similar situation, governments will cut back on social services to 'save money.'

That these things are happening and not only in B.C., is amply documented. In the U.S., numerous employers have demanded that their workers 'voluntarily' reduce their wages. Across Canada, wage increases have dropped from an average of about 11% in 1978 to less than 4% last year. Attacks on social services create a reduced standard of living that forces workers to take any job at any price. In B.C. the gutting of the Human Rights Commission is a sign to employers that they are free to discriminate.

The combination of these factors with the current financial crisis creates the perfect environment for bosses like the Kerkhoff Construction Co. which gained notoriety during the March Building Trades showdown at False Creek in Vancouver. Kerkhoff is trying a new twist on an old theme: hiring non-union workers at wages substantially lower than union rates.

Non-union companies make large profits at the expense of workers' wages. To cite one particularly blatant example, the contract to build an addition to Vancouver General Hospital was recently awarded to a non-union firm, Kirkwell Construction. Their bid was 2% lower than the next bidder, a union contractor, yet the wages offered to Kirkwell workers are 40% lower. In Kelowna, skilled tradespeople are being offered non-union jobs at $4.50/hour.

The direct impact of recent attacks on union rights has been, in B.C., centred around male dominated unions. But union members everywhere, including women, are affected by the Socred policy of 'not discriminating' between unionized and non-unionized employers at Expo '86.

These are women's issues, and are not only issues for trade-unionists. When companies like Kerkhoff are supported by government legislation, wages drop. This has a spill-over effect on the wages of women. This is especially disastrous because we make an average of 59% of men's wages as it is. Any attempts to reduce our real incomes will only increase the wage gap. Moreover, since many women are already working for poverty-level wages, moves by government and big business to lower everyone's incomes will result in women being condemned to long-term poverty. Coupled with social service cutbacks, this means that women will become increasingly subject to exploitation from individual men and unscrupulous employers. In addition, women are always the worst hit by high unemployment levels, and are traditionally the 'last hired and first fired'.

Many women have looked at the largely all-male picket lines at Kerkhoff, listened to the outcry about Expo '86, and wondered what it had to do with them. One of the major tasks of feminists should be to clarify the situation so that the outcry also includes the right of women to either have a job at decent rate of pay, or to be entitled to adequate social services. As women, we have to pressure unions to begin to organize the unorganized (who are mostly women), and to develop programs which address the needs of the unemployed.

Union at Eaton's gets certification

Unions have finally come to Eaton's Department Stores. In a precedent setting move the Retail Wholesale and Department Stores Union has been certified at Eaton's Brampton and St. Catherines, Ontario locations.

The success of this organizing drive is exciting when one realizes that it took place during a period of both high unemployment and attacks on unions nationwide.

Department stores have traditionally been low-wage ghettoes for working women who must also deal with the paternalistic attitudes of the stores' management personnel. In addition, in recent years department stores have increasingly relied on part-time help as a means to avoid paying higher full-time wages and fringe benefits.

The two union certifications make it clear that woman workers are fed up. Let's hope that this trend continues!

Human Rights continued from p. 1

The old code prohibited discrimination or denial of services "unless reasonable cause exists for such denial or discrimination." Reasonable cause allowed gays and lesbians and other groups not identified in the code to register complaints with the Human Rights Commission.

As with Bill 27, Bill 11 scraps the Human Rights Commission and Branch and replaces them with a single council. The old act provided for a commission which was responsible for education and promotion on human rights. Bill 11 means B.C. will be the only province in Canada without an education component in its human rights act. Without an education aspect, British Columbians will know much less about their rights for protection against discrimination.

The Human Rights Branch, also abolished, was the investigative and conciliation body provided by the Act. Trained investigators processed and, where possible, conciliated between parties in any given dispute. Under the new act the government has set up a council with power to investigate or dismiss complaints. Investigations will be the responsibility of Industrial Relations Officers (IRO) at the Ministry of Labour. IRO have no training or experience with the Human Rights Act. In any case, as the province does not intend to hire more IRO's for the additional work load, complaints will be impossibly delayed.

According to Jon Gates, these changes amount to "open season" on minorities in British Columbia. Gates cites the findings of April Katz, Acting Director of the soon to be defunct commission, who has presented statistics showing a 23% increase in sexual harrassment complaints since the government first began weakening the enforcement aspects of the act.

A further serious problem with the Bill, says Gates, is the absence of a conciliation process for complaints. No conciliation, according to Gates, means an approach to problem solving which is confrontational rather than educational. "Complainants," said Gates, "won't have anonymity either. People, and particularly women, will be much less likely to complain against their employer if right from the start they will have no confidentiality."

The Coalition considers Bill 11 a "massive fraud" against the people of B.C. The much heralded consultative process set up by the Socreds after they withdrew Bill 27 has been denounced by two members of the government appointed Human Rights Advisory Committee. Although the Coalition is planning protest actions against the Bill, (including a vigil in Victoria on May 1st, when the act is slated for second reading), confidence is not high that the government will amend or withdraw Bill 11.

The Canadian Charter of Rights equality provisions will come into effect on April 1 of 1985. According to Gates if Bill 11 is passed, British Columbians will find better protection for their human rights under the Charter than is provided in their Provincial Human Rights Act.

How to make offices safe

Office Work Can Be Dangerous to Your Health, a new book by Dr. Jeanne Stellman and Mary Sue Henifin, was published in January by Pantheon Books.

The book is designed as "a working guide to working people," said Dr. Stellman, "a practical guide to setting up an office for maximum health and safety." Major chapters discuss the use of video display terminals, the use and design of office furniture and equipment, office lighting, fire safety, office space and indoor air pollution.

Readers are provided with an extensive checklist to enable them to go through their own offices and critically examine the conditions described in the book.

The chapter on VDT's, for instance, is reference for survey questions such as: "Does the VDT workstation have the following features: *a.* nonglare walls, ceilings, and work surfaces? *b.* adjustable, nonglare lighting, shielded and indirect? *c.* screen at right angles to windows?

The discussion on indoor air pollution points out the possible presence in the office environment of such hazards as asbestos, formaldehyde, cigarette smoke, germs in heating and ventilation systems, radon in construction materials, and microwaves from broadcasting antennae. This chapter features a page-long table listing some of the estimated 2,000 constituents of cigarette smoke and their known health effects.

Office Work Can Be Dangerous to Your Health is available from WOHRC at $15.95 per copy hard cover and $6.95 per copy soft cover plus an additional $1 for postage and handling. WOHRC - School of Public Health, 21 Audobon Ave., 3rd Floor, NY,NY 10032

VSW rebuts NAC on pensions

by Lorri Rudland

In the February '84 issue of *Kinesis*, Louise Dulude, chairperson of the pensions committee of the National Action Committee (NAC) of the Status of Women, responded to an October '83 article which briefly outlined the Vancouver Status of Women's (VSW) position on pension reform. She brought up several issues which need further discussion.

As Dulude states, NAC, VSW, and most other women's groups agreed on the issue of raising the Canada/Quebec Pension Plan C/QPP to a 50% replacement rate of pre-retirement earnings, and on mandatory pension credit splitting between spouses. There was not intent to pose a struggle between NAC - pensions for homemakers - versus VSW - equal pension-credit splitting between spouses. On rereading the article, however, it could have been presented differently to ensure that there was no possibility for such confusion to occur. The essential philosophical and strategic differences remain as stated.

The Vancouver Status of Women is concerned that *all* women resident in Canada, including homemakers, receive an adequate pension. We disagree with Dulude's proposal that a special "pension for homemakers" is the best way to ensure that this is done.

Before some of Dulude's basic arguments can be challenged, the entire way in which Dulude defines the problem must be addressed. Dulude stated "the disagreement centres around what is to be done *after* pension credits have been split between the spouses." Because the wife could still receive an inadequate pesion income after credit splitting, Dulude proposed that there were only three solution: to do nothing, a "cruel alternative"; to endorse high widow's pensions, which are "offensive to most women" because they re-inforce the concept that wives are "dependents" rather than productive members of society, and because they don't provide coverage based on women's own work; or, to be in favour of Dulude's/NAC's proposal for "pensions for homemakers".

In fact, our "disagreement" is much broader than Dulude outlined. It does not center, as Dulude stated, upon what to do for the spouse in the home after pension credits are split. It does center on how best to design a pension system that will provide fair and adequate benefits to *all* women, including the majority of women, those working full or part time in the paid labour force, in a way that does not financially ghettoize women yet again into a traditional role. By focussing her analysis at the wrong end of the pension system, Dulude's arguments appear logical until the overall problem is examined in greater depth.

Let us begin, instead, at the beginning. In order to design a pension program that is fair and adequate, we must first examine women's real relationship to the home and to the paid labour force. The statistics are revealing:

- 66% (72% in Ontario) of all women between the ages of 25 and 34 (prime child-bearing years) are in the workforce (1983)
- 76% of all employed women work full-time, contrary to the popular myth that women work part-time for pin money, and, this percentage *increases*, rather than drops, for women in prime child-bearing years.
- 45% of all mothers with children under 3 work in the paid labour force (a 40% increase over the last 5 years).

All of this illustrates a fact of Canadian life: the two earner family is in the majority. Therefore, to design a pension system that addresses women's needs by focussing on the full-time homemaker misses the needs of the majority of Canadian women homemakers who work full or part-time in the paid labour force.

Dulude admitted that the main criticism against NAC's (and the Parliamentary Task Force's) proposal was the one I discussed, which has been oft-stated by Monica Townson, various other women's groups, the Minority report of the Parliamentary Task Force, Ted Miller M.P., N.D.P., labour unions and other groups. To recognize the privatized housework done by full-time homemakers ignores the housework done by all other women (and even men, although rarely.)

Her answer to this criticism is: "In reality, women with full-time jobs do not need pension credits for homemaking because they are already included in the C/QPP." What kind of an answer is that? If the pension is based on a recognition of women's unpaid labour in the home, why do the only people who get recognized become those women who do housework exclusively, rather than the majority of Canadian women homemakers who do housework in addition to their full or part time paid labour?

Recognizing women's work in the home in this way is in reality a kind of deferred wages for housework, subsidized by all Canadians. It is tihe wrong principle upon which to design a pension supplement. The women's movement has consistently fought for matrimonial property laws that recognize marriage as a joint economic partnership of equals. In this way, a husband's (or wife's) earnings are automatically shared between the two economic partners.

Mandatory pension credit splitting (as both NAC and VSW support) reflects this principle. To tag on a special pension for homemaking is to subsidize one group of workers at the expense of all the others, and to undermine the concept that housework (and parenting) are shared responsibilities between men and women.

In conjunction with doubling the C/QPP to 50%, the best way to ensure adequate pensions is to increase the Old Age Security benefit (VSW preference because it is a universal, non income-tested benefit), or the Guaranteed Income Supplement (which NAC recommends). In this way, the working poor - i.e. women - who still earn approximately 60% of the wages men earn, could be adequately provided for, as well as full-time homemakers.

There are many other problems with the Dulude proposal. Rather than providing the full-time homemaker with a pension in her own right, as Dulude stated, the one-earner couple is actually bonused with about 13% more income than the two-earner couple which earns the same family income.

If, for example, the total family income is $20,000 yearly, and in one case each earns $10,000, and in the other only the husband works. The full-time homemaker receives a higher pension income than the full-time woman wage earner. Dulude responds that there is a trick in that argument because it is the splitting between spouses which produces such a result. But isn't it a fundamental principle of feminism that marriage is a shared economic partnership and that she should have entitlement to her husband's pension benefits? If it works for private plans and matrimonial property, why doesn't it apply to pensions for homemakers?

Monica Townson summarized other problems with the NAC proposal when she appeared before the Task Force in June, 1983. -"If it is so demeaning for women to depend on survivor pensions, why is it recommended that these benefits should be mandatory

continued on p. 23

PORNOGRAPHY

Is a law the solution?

by Pat Feindel

April 3 of this year saw the Fraser Committee's second swing through Vancouver on its cross-Canada tour of hearings on pornography and prostitution. Set up by Justice Minister Mark MacGuigan in the summer of 1983, the Committee's task is to hear public concerns and proposals on pornography and prostitution and to make recommendations by December 31, 1984, to the federal government on how to address these issues at the legislative level.

Vancouver and Victoria had the unique distinction of being the only two centres in Canada where public interest was great enough to warrant separate hearings for each issue. In Vancouver, the Committee heard three days of presentations on prostitution, and one day on pornography, with 13 speakers presenting on pornography.

A variety of positions were heard on the pornography question, including those of Red Hot Video (presented by their lawyer Mark Dwor) and of the B.C. Civil Liberties Association. Both defended the "rights" of pornography distributors and consumers. But the majority of submissions spoke from a concern about the damage being done by the increased availability of pornographic material, particulary material dealing with overt violence against women, and demanded government action. Reasons for that concern varied, however, and recommendations for exactly how to address it though the legal system diverged considerably.

While some groups focussed on feminist concerns about pornography's promotion of hatred and sexual violence towards women (North Shore Women's Centre, Port Coquitlam's Women's Centre, Vancouver Status of Women, Working Group on Sexual Violence, and Jancis Andrews of the north shore) others concentrated more on the availability and impact of sexually explicit and violent material on children and teenagers (B.C. Teachers Federation, University Women's Club, the Anglican Church of Canada). The B.C. Teachers Federation presented an excellent slide show offering a range of images form cartoons, advertizing, "softcore", and "hardcore" pornography to demonstrate the pervasiveness of misogynist attitudes, not just in so-called "porn", but in all kinds of media imagery. They pointed particularly to material that promotes the sexual objectification of young girls.

The cumulative message conveyed to the Committee by these various approaches was one of great concern over pornography, concern that has little to do with puritanical prudery and a great deal to do with what pornography is saying about women, about sex, and about young girls as sexual objects. While the basis for these concerns ranged from feminist to strongly religious and moralisitic values, never-the-less, the clearest and strongest opposition expressed dealt with pornography's violent, misogynist messages, its massively increased availability, and its serious impact on the lives of women and girls, and on men as well.

From the opposing side of the debate, the Committee heard advocates for the rights of pornographers and their customers. The B.C. Civil Liberties Association, while agreeing with many criticisms of pornography, could not agree that pornography constituted a significant enough harm to women to warrant legal control. Control in the area of child pornography, however, was seen by this group as justified. Red Hot Video's lawyer pleaded ignorance of the limits of the law due to its lack of clarity or consistency, and concern for their customers' rights to freedom of speech. While conceding that one shouldn't advocate violence, Mr. Dwor refrained from commenting on the violent content of a

large proportion of Red Hot Video's merchandise.

In the area of recommendations, groups varied more widely. Some dealt only with recommended amendments to the current obscenity section of the Criminal Code. Others went on to develop proposals for using hate literature sections of the Criminal Code to cover pornography, and still others made a wider series of recommendations using the law in several areas - the Broadcast Act, Human Rights Codes, Charter of Rights, etc.

A few groups, particularly those who have been actively trying to get some response from the B.C. legal system, pointed out the inherently sexist bias of law enforcement agencies (no matter what law is being enforced) which results in the ultimate collusion of the legal system with the pronography industry. Some went a step further recommending a number of educational, economic, and social policies aimed at changing the basic power imbalance between men and women, and to reducing the sexist and violent attitudes towards women that allow the proliferation and acceptance of pornography.

A highlight of the afternoon's proceedings was the revelation by two different groups - the North Shore Women's Centre and the University Women's Club - that a prominent member of the business community, namely Expo '86 Chairman Jim Pattison, is the owner of Mainland Magazine Service Ltd., which distributes over 250 pornographic magazine titles to the Lower Mainland area. The North Shore Women's Centre and the Congress of Canadian Women have since arranged a meeting for May 3rd with Vancouver City's Community Services Committee and requested that the Committee call Mr. Pattison before them to discuss his connection with the pornography business.

After all the time and money spent on the Fraser Committee, one would hope that some useful action will result. But prospects for significant change coming from the federal legislative level are limited at best. Prior to the beginning of the hearings, Mark MacGuigan had already tabled in the House of Commons a proposed amendment to the obscenity section of the Criminal Code - the result of earlier research done in 1978 by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, to which feminists also made presentations. (One wonders how many committees it takes to hear what women have to say.) Meanwhile, groups presenting to this year's Fraser Committee severely criticized the proposed amendment for not addressing feminist concerns adequately.

It appears that Dr. MacGuigan hopes to push through the proposed amendment before an election. And as feminists who have worked on legislative change know, once an amendment is enacted, it will be a very long time before we ever see another one on the same issue. Furthermore, the chances of this amendment having any impact on the control of pornography are minimal, as it proposes only minor changes in the definition of "obscenity". The chances of such a change influencing the commitment of law enforcement agencies in the provinces to take the issue of pornography seriously, are next to none.

Deeper concerns must arise for feminists over the concentration of so much time and publicity on the notion that a federal law - any law - can solve the "problem" of pornography. Even a well-worded and actively enforced law will only deal with the worst of pornography, and will still be enforced by a judicial system completely dominated by male sexist bias. And what of all the rest of the media images which would inevitably escape the limited arm of the law?

In looking at the job of putting an end to pornographic imagery, it seems crucial to recognize that we must take on a large part of the battle ourselves, directly against the pornography industry and also against those aspects of the social system that accept it and legitimize it. When I compare the prospect of appealing to a paternalistic legal system for "protection", when that system has clearly indicated its commitment to protecting profits - when I compare that to taking some kind of direct action in the community, the latter feels much more empowering.

While not invalidating the hard work that has been done and continues to be done on the legal front, it is important to look at ways we can take our own actions against pornography that do not simply call for state intervention. We can speak out directly to the distributors and sellers of pornography, indicate that we will not tolerate their making profits off our pain and exploitation, we can boycott stores, picket theatres, leaflet customers, put pressure on the owners behind the scenes. It is a huge struggle, a sometimes overwhelming one, but each small victory is a step forward that can pave the way for more.

In the name of beauty . . .

by Emma Kivisild

Our bodies and how we feel about them - the ways in which we struggle to overcome the perpetual stereotypes of women's bodies - the pressures of looksism that threaten women who don't conform - these are the concepts which are the focus of this month's *Kinesis* supplement. We are featuring articles on anorexia bulimia, being tall, fat fitness, tattoos, mastectomy, and bathing suits.

When the idea for this supplement first came up, body image was only one of the proposed features. That there is enough material on this aspect alone is indicative of its continuing importance.

Historically, the results of rigidly enforced standards for women's looks are well-documented: the broken ribs from corsets, for instance, and the painful and infected feet of footbinding. Recently, this documentation has come to include the deaths of anorexia victims, and the continuing invisible abuse of our minds, the self-hate, and anxiety. It is not women who dreamed up these tortures. They were and are designed to deprive us of any sense of our potential physical power.

A walk down the street, or a look at any mainstream magazine (even *Ms.*) is enough to make it painfully clear that corsets may be gone, but the attitudes that created them are not. Fat women are subject to a range of stress-related conditions that endanger their health. New, revealing 'sports' fashions dictate the removal of body hair from almost everywhere. The prevalence of anorexia bulimia has reached unprecedented levels in college-age women, a high percentage of whom report having induced vomiting in order to stay thin. Diet sodas are overrunning the market. Spike heels are back. And, as much of the writing in this supplement indicates, many feminists still grapple with the ravages of pervasive advertising and conditioning. Old values die hard, especially when they are constantly reinforced by sophisticated imagery.

In some ways, it is frustrating to have to accord the issue so much time and energy. For so long, we have been defined by our looks, allowed anxiety about them to dictate much of our behaviour, tried to prove that there's more to being female than "tits and ass". It would be nice to let it go, to work on other things.

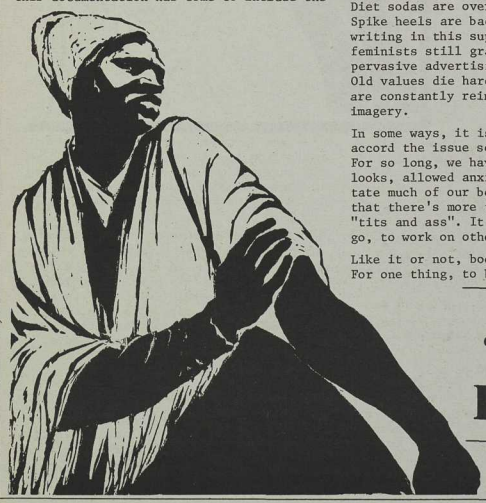
Like it or not, body image is important. For one thing, to be a woman and feel good about yourself is liberating. But 'feeling good about yourself' is also the line used to plug innumerable diet plans, makeovers, etc. It is certainly the advertising impetus behind the fitness boom that is sweeping North America. Whatever base the aerobics/body-building craze had in making it OK for women to be strong has been eroded by the overwhelming pressures it has created - to not only be emaciated, but have good muscle tone, a tan, and dress right, too. The cult of the look good/feel good maxim, is not helping most women.

For most feminists, the body image issue is about control - control of our bodies. The struggle to control our image of ourselves, to wrest it from the doctors, advertisers, and sportswear manufacturers, is part of a continuum that includes many of the key fronts on which feminism is fought. Pornography, sexual assault, choice on abortion, battering, alternative health care, lesbianism, sexual harassment - all are battles for the territory of our bodies. Again and again, we have asserted that our bodies are our own, not to be used for objectification or the promotion of violence, not to be violated, forced to bear children, beaten, or used as a sexual plaything.

Behind every victory of the women's movement, every rape crisis centre or pornography picket, are women who have been subject to societal demands to mutilate themselves in the name of beauty. By learning to like our bodies, we are asserting, too, that we will rebel against this mutilation. It is an important part of taking them back. When we say that we don't buy the myth that women *need* to clean up, shrink, distort or paint themselves to be acceptable, we define our right to determine what happens to us.

This is not easy to do, and as a movement we have a distance to go before we can say that we have managed to free ourselves from the internalization of body image stigma. We are only beginning to address fat liberation, have barely started to make connections with disabled women, formed the first feminist sports organization in the last two years, and begun only recently to look at the effects of cancer on a populus trained to think of themselves in terms of a very narrow code of appropriate looks.

Body image is one of the lynchpins of feminism. Until we win this battle, we'll be nowhere near winning the war.



from a poster by Ann Wilson

. . . no more

Learning to like food

by Judith Michaels

As a child I was "skinny." My mother used to worry because I picked at my food. "Heaven forbid you should ever get sick. You have nothing to lose from," she often lamented.

Then in my teens, I discovered boys, binging and dieting and not necessarily in that order. Most of my friends were popular and fashionably slim. Linking the two together, I started to "diet." Dieting and calisthenics weren't much fun, but I was becoming obsessed with shrinking into a perfect size 7 so I, too, could have a "perfect" life.

My love-hate relationship with food intensified. When I restricted my intake or didn't eat, I was "good" because I was "in control." And when I over-ate, I felt guilty for lacking "will power."

Then I heard about fasting. Everyone talked about the way it "cleansed" the body. I wanted to get rid of all my excess fat, so it seemed like the ultimate solution. I now alternated between binging and starvation. But the pounds didn't melt off like I had hoped.

I remember feeling very much alone. I desperately wanted to give up food to be thin, but I couldn't. Dieting which is natural and life-sustaining had become my "habit": the fig newtons during finals, the graham wafers when I was bored, and the bread because it was there. The only time I could lose weight was when I was "in love." During those times the last thing on my mind was food, so it was easy.

One of my friends during this time was Melanie. I used to envy her because she was slim; she also had a boyfriend. I never stopped to think that she, too, had problems to work out.

"I suppose it started in the summer between grades 11 and 12," says Melanie. "I ate more and my mother said I was filling out nicely. I gained about ten pounds, mostly on my shoulders and legs.

"I thought I shouldn't get any fatter, so I started eating less and running five miles a day... Sometimes I felt faint in school.

"I remember friends telling Mom that I was getting thin. And Mom would get mad at me for not eating. But I felt I was getting attention.

"I thought I looked lovely. I wore tight tops, and thought it was really neat being so thin...But still I always thought I had just one more pound to go."

"I wasn't happy in grade 12 - the pressure of performing, being a model student and a model person. I was the middle child in our family. I was always the practical one, doing things for myself while the other two got all the attention."

The summer after her high school graduation Melanie was forced to realize that her dieting was now controlling her life.

"When I got mono, it ruined my holiday in England. I was in bed for two months. My mother came over to England, and I realized I was losing control..."

Today Melanie and I can look back and talk about what we went through, but neither of us is satisfied with our bodies or our relationship with food.

At 5' 9" she is now 127 pounds. At her lowest, she was 110, but she would still like to fill out a bit more.

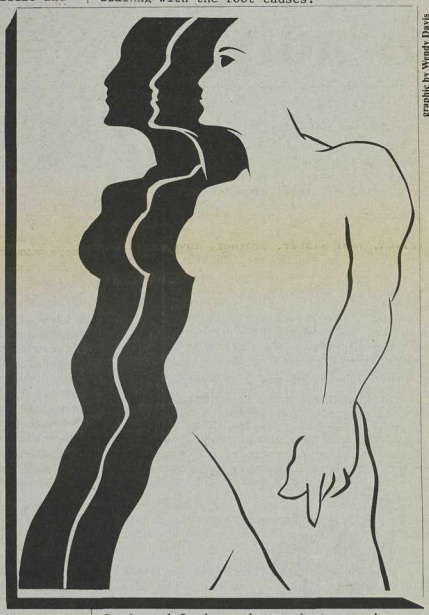
"I don't eat enough. If I'm the slightest bit upset, I can't eat," she says.

Presently, I'm 120 pounds, a vast improvement from my days of weighing in at 147. According to the weight charts, I'm about right for someone who is 5' 4", but I'm not satisfied. I want to get back down to my low of 114. Yet when I weighed 114, I used to think I should lose a few more...

Melanie and I are not alone. Says Marrianne Van Loon of the *Peak*: "Anorexia bulemia is a combination of what was formerly considered two diseases: anorexia nervosa - self-starvation - and bulemia, which is chronic binge-eating, or "Pigging out." In recent years, these two disorders have been found together with alarming frequency.

"Along with disrupted eating patterns, the disease often includes abuse of laxatives, diet pills, and/or self-induced vomiting. The victims are usually young, middle and upper-class women. Anorexic bulemics may be any weight; thin, fat or average, but are all, in some way, obsessed with food and eating."

Anorexia and bulemia are almost exclusively found among women. This isn't surprising, since we have always been bombarded with messages about how we should look. In societies like ours, looks are everything if you are born female.



graphic by Wendy Davis

Anorexia and bulemia are almost exclusively found among women. This isn't surprising since we have always been bombarded with messages about how we should look. And in patriarchal societies, such as ours, looks are everything if you are born female.

Thin hasn't always been desirable. In the middle ages and also in the late Victorian and Edwardian times, the ideal woman had large proportions.

But fashions change and so do ideal figure types. In the early 1900's, curves were out. Instead, "boyish" flat-chested flappers became the new ideal. And in the late 60's, many women literally starved themselves so they could waste away to Twiggy-like proportions.

Today, skinny just isn't good enough. In the name of health and beauty we're expected to diet and exercise (in our expensive color-coordinated aerobic outfits) because the "perfect" body is slim and muscular. We're now told that even "skinny" people can be too "fat," and we're advised to exchange our bathroom scales for calipers to gauge our worth.

As for eating disorders, they are now discussed more openly (it's not just a matter of will power anymore), and the media is cashing in. There are numerous articles, books, and even a few movies on the subject. There is also an increasing number of counsellors specializing in this area and also self-help groups for women.

Four years ago, Doris Maranda and Sandy Friedman started *"Facing your Fat"* - They describe themselves as "a self-awareness approach to fat and bulemia which focuses on breaking down the addictive and obsessional pattern of compulsive eating and of dealing with the root causes."

Doris and Sandy conduct private sessions in addition to workshops. They'll soon be starting up a new series of workshops for bulemics. For more information call Doris at 736-7180 or Sandy at 731-8752.

ANAD (anorexia nervosa and associated disorders) is a self-help group which was started in the U.S. in 1976. Vancouver's chapter, headed by Bev McIagan and Toby Silverton, has been in existence since September 1982. Meetings are held every second Friday. There are two groups: one for people with eating disorders and a separate one for their family. For more information call 875-9690.

If you have an eating disorder consider Marrianne's advice: "the most important things to remember are that it is a serious disorder, it is not your fault, and it can be overcome. There is such a thing as feeling good about yourself, no matter what you weigh or how much you eat."

Suzanne Bell

The most infuriating misconceptions about fat people are that we are lazy, stupid, underachievers, lacking in will power, and out of control, that there must be something wrong with us. Well, there has been something wrong — we have fallen victim to the vicious circle that steals our self-esteem.

Fat and fit: classes for women

by Suzanne Bell

Suzanne Bell, a large fitness instructor and topical speaker on the issues of "fat and fit" is a past president of Large as Life Association and former manager in a major corporation. She is currently owner and president of Living-Large Enterprises Ltd.

The biggest obstacle I had to overcome after accepting myself as a fat person was to get others off my back.

The others I refer to are probably like yourself! Who in your life is fat? Your friend, your sister, brother, lover, mother or a casual acquaintance? Chances are there is someone you know who has been fighting what seems a never ending battle of weight loss.

If you are a fat person or a friend of a fat person you owe it to yourself to get some of the facts straight.

Weight loss can be easy, however only 5% of the fat population can maintain a weight loss of at least 20 pounds for two years or more. (Stunkard, 1979). That leaves 95% of us who will ultimately remain fat despite repeated weight loss attempts. These statistics are continually reinforced through research and continually ignored by almost everyone.

In my work as a fitness instructor I have met hundreds of women who have dieted for years and only managed to get larger.

The most infuriating misconceptions about fat people are that we are lazy, stupid, underachievers, lacking in will power (obviously) and out of control. After all if we continue dieting and failing there must be something wrong with us! Well, there has been something wrong. We have repeatedly failed and therefore fallen victim to the vicious circle that steals our self-esteem.

It is important for fat people and friends of fat people to understand that we have rights. We are no less intelligent in a size 22 than we are in a size 10 or no less worthwhile as a person at 200 pounds or 120 pounds. Perhaps we would be less embarrassing in size 10!

My personal freedom from the stigma of living large came slowly. One of my first steps was to take the YWCA leadership Training Program, and start, in 1982, one of the first large fitness classes *for* large women, taught *by* a large woman.

I have also spent the last two years on the speaking circuit. I address graduating fitness instructors on fat issues, and do a practical program with them, as well as educating medical personnel, women's groups and television audiences about the whole issue. We, as large women, need to dispell the misconceptions and biases that others have of us. We need to create for ourselves a sense of self-acceptance, we need to feel good about ourselves, and we certainly need to feel successful.

There are many roads to success but one that has worked well for many large women is through fitness.

This may not be the road for everyone but for the women who have had the courage to venture forth, it has changed their lives. Many of the large women taking fitness arrived at class for the first time thinking this was it, they would finally find the secret key to thinness. Some came because they felt the pressure to join a fitness class. Others still aren't sure why they came.

The most important thing is that all these women have been successful. They have grown more fit, feel very good about themselves and see a brighter future about living large in a thin world. Most have not lost weight nor gained weight.

What is different about large fitness classes? One of the key factors is fear. Many of the women are afraid that if they start to exercise they will endanger their health. Much of the class is devoted to creating a safe environment for fitness - the women learn how to monitor their heart rates, and watch for danger signals. (Many of these are precautions that *should* be the norm in other fitness classes.) Large fitness classes do not involve any jumping up and down, because of the cardiovascular stress, and the stress on knees and other joints. In my classes, I try to gear the program to the participants' needs as much as possible - I want them to feel successsful.

In the last few years, fitness classes for large women have been very successful. One organization, Large as Life, now has 120 members, and conducts 10 bi-weekly classes in the Lower Mainland. Women are coming out to the classes in increasing numbers, and continuing in the program. The success of the programs has given large fitness classes credibility in a difficult market.

Recently, in an effort to provide broader services for large women I have established an organization called Living Large. My partner, psychologist Barrie Mowatt, and myself, will be offering fitness programs and are developing seminars challenging fat prejudices and self-hate. Also in the works are tapes, and a book, about fitness for large people. We want to try to draw the large woman out.

We need to change the way we feel about ourselves so we can go out and show the thin world around us that we have the right to live at any size!

If you wish more information write to us at: LIVING-LARGE ENT. LTD., 9th floor, 1281 West Georgia St., Vancouver, B.C., V6E 3J7 or call 324-7394

Large as Life is a non-profit organization, and can be reached at P.O. Box 33791, Station A, Vancouver.

Living Large is looking for large women interested in becoming fitness leaders.

Bathing 'beauty'? No thanks!

Some 1930 bathers

from Women's Bathing and Swimming Costumes in the US

by Nicky Hood

Bathing/swimming has evolved as an activity over the years and the attire worn has, quite naturally, followed suit. Swimming is healthy. And fun. And should make us feel good about ourselves. Alas, as the suits and skills have evolved, so have a host of body-image problems. The bathing cult can be disastrous, even for feminists.

Women initially took to bathing two centuries ago for its medicinal value. Being dunked beneath the waves two or three times and hastily towelled down was thought to be excellent therapy for a number of ailments.

In the mid-1800's it became more generally accepted that exercise might cure the "weaker sex" of some of her ills. At that time, the long gown that was originally sported by women who bathed gave way to a shorter mid-calf dress and bloomers which was being worn by women who had taken to more vigorous recreations on land. This alteration to the bathing garment enabled women to engage in a greater frolic in the ocean wihile continuing to protect their modesty.

However liberating this may have seemed, the concern with modesty was an overwhelming factor. "No all-white or flesh-coloured suits (were) permited or suits that exposed the chest lower than a line drawn on a level with the arm pits." This was typical of the regulations governing men's bathing attire. Women's virtue was, of course, more closely guarded.

But with the turn of the century first wave of feminism, social mores changed, as did women's roles in society. No longer passive, women needed clothing that allowed them freedom of movement in their new activities. Yards of material were discarded and the bathing suit became a suit in which one could truly swim.

from Harper's Bazaar, August, 1870

At the same time as the practical elements of design were introduced, the aesthetic appearance of the suit also became important. The modern young women of the flapper era were, supposedly, concerned with style and colour and the ability to attract the opposite sex and in the 1920's, swimsuits were featured in fashion magazines. Brighter colours were used, and satin and taffeta replaced heavy wool flannel as the popular materials.

Some of the new designs went so far as to follow the lines of the torso. Clearly, 19th century propriety, like the fabric in the swimsuits, was in scant supply.

Thus the bathing beauty was conceived. It is a legacy that is still with us.

While a Club Med vacation is beyond the pocketbook and consciousness of most women, the image of the hairless slender beauty beading water off her oiled and tanned body is certainly the ideal of our society. Even before I liked swimming or going to the beach I wanted to look good in a bathing suit.

It doesn't seem to matter that we've spent months plowing through the waters of Britannia Pool with less than perfect figures. Bring on the warm weather, the sun on the sea and a little sexist advertising, and suddenly the gap between us and those emaciated models is too enormous to bear.

Strong muscular legs that I usually consider attractive suddenly just look fat as they bulge out of the bottom of my navy blue swimsuit cum Speedo girdle.

It happens every spring. I become dissatisfied with my body.

It is hard to avoid measuring oneself up to some set standard and even harder not to feel guilty while doing so. One debilitating spring phenomenon is the desire to be thin. The urge to diet and the accompanying guilt create a split between the social and political self that needs to be reconciled.

And then there's body hair. It's hard to imagine a woman growing up who managed to miss out on the concept of the female as the hairless being. So at some point we've all had to come to grips with exposing our hairy legs in public. Armpits aren't open to such constant scrutiny and seem easier to deal with. Legs, however, are a different problem.

It's fairly easy to stop shaving one's legs in the fall. It's baring them in the spring that's difficult. In my case, the pale skin reacquired over winter makes the hairs, coarse and dark from years of shaving, look even coarser. (One year in my youth I was even convinced that my kneecaps were too hairy and shaved them meticulously.)

Initially the obsession with shaving was confined to the lower leg. It occasionally extended upward to the inner thigh, but new suits, with a higher cut to elongate the leg and make it appear more slender, pressure women to shave even more of their bodies. (The area known in beauty circles as the "bikini".)

This is dangerous - physically and psychologically. Not only is the sensitive skin of the groin prone to infection from scraping by the razor, but the removal of the pubic hair enforces the idea that female sexuality is either dirty and to be hidden away, or non-existent.

Yes - bathing suits are a problem. The conflict between the politics of body image and the societal definition of feminine beauty flares in the summer months as clothes are shed and the body is exposed. But, in my opinion, the solution is not to go back to wool flannel dresses. When one goes a step further in bathing practicality, and removes the final barrier between the skin and the sun - the suit - the problem disappears.

The notion that hair does not belong on one part of the body when it can plainly be seen to exist on all parts, becomes at once absurd. When we no longer attempt to squeeze our flesh into a spandex suit it ceases to be too ample.

Sixty years after the bathing beauty was created, you can reject the image that came with her. Both your conscious and physical selves can expand and relax to enjoy the sun and the waves free of the constraints of the bathing beauty complex - and the suit that goes with it.

WOMEN & TATTOOS

by Ivy Scott

"It's a statement of *me*."

In talking with several women, I found that getting a tattoo is often a way of expressing something about one's individuality. Tattoos can show rebellion against social rules, and also validate strongly-felt ideas and emotions.

Tattoos are, however, generally associated with masculinity and male subcultures. Sailors and members of motorcycle clubs have used tattoos as symbols of toughness, virility, and for the bikers, rejection of authority.

Women who get tattoos also reject authority, by refusing to play the role of a "good woman". In the classic patriarchal division of women into "madonnas" and "whores" (or "saints" and "sluts"), it is the whore, the disreputable woman, who gets tattoos. In urban areas where greater deviance is tolerated, tattoos on women are becoming more acceptable, though still only tattoos that are small and discretely located.

Women often do choose to get their tattoos on areas of their bodies that aren't so often seen by others. This may sometimes be a compromise with feminity or sometimes because the tattoo is not intended to convey a message to the rest of the world.

The "macho" aspect of tattoos seems less important to the women I spoke to than their rebellious aspect. Rather than imitating the aggressive symbols that men often get, they chose designs that they thought were beautiful and artistic or that had a personal significance attached to them.

Women and men in prisons often get tattoos; a phenomenon which first made me think of the way a tattoo can express one's emotions. It can bring internal pain literally to the surface, making it tangible and visible. Rage and grief are validated with a symbol inscribed on the skin. The fact that the tattoo is permanent validates the emotion in a way that no impermanent symbol can. In prison, the choice to mark one's body is one of the few left to people in a very powerless situation.

Certainly, tattoos can express positive emotions as well. Several women spoke of freedom as a feeling they closely associated with their tattoos, or with the points in their lives when they got them. For one, her heart-shaped tattoo symbolizes the importance of love in her life. My black panther for me symbolizes strength. The fact that different emotions are expressed may explain why one woman feels that tattooing is positive, a form of decoration, while another worries that it is a sort of mutilation of one's body.

Sometimes there was a carefully thought-out explanation for a woman's tattoo; sometimes she simply felt it was attractive.

One woman chose a moon and star symbol because she felt a strong connection with the moon and its cycles. The symbol kept recurring in her life as she considered getting a tattoo. Looking around in the tattoo shop, she was very drawn to an egyptian eye design which was later discovered to represent the left eye of Horus, the moon.

Another woman's tattoo reaffirms her committment to women's struggles. The three

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Women who get tattoos reject authority, by refusing to play the role of a "good woman."

photos by Helene Wiazinski

TALL

by Marrianne van Loon

Tall is beautiful in our society, as long as you're not too tall. If you're a woman too tall usually means taller than the average male.

The sixties introduced the cult of tall women; beauty was a 5'10" model who weighed less than most women of average height. This 'cult of tall' is not only concerned with height (or rather the lack thereof), but with weight. At least tall women now have role models; women who are proud of their height and even make money from it. All the same, the eternal problem remains. It is an unwritten law that the male in a heterosexual relationship must be at least as tall as the female, and preferably taller. Who hasn't heard women proclaiming "I'd never go out with him. He's too short".

For men height is advantageous. Men are supposed to have a strong physical presence and height confers status. With women this is also the case, but to a much lesser extent. It is hard not to feel subordinate to someone you must look up to. However, for women caught up in the contest to win a husband, height is a disability for this very reason. How much harder it is for a man to feel superior when he has to look up to his female mate!

Maybe as sex stereotyping becomes less rigid, height will become less of a determining factor in choosing a mate and more relevant criteria will take its place. Obviously though, on average women are not as tall as men, although it may be possible that cultural expectations play some role in physiological development.

To add height, short women can wear unhealthy and restrictive high heeled shoes. To lose height, tall women can avoid such shoes and slouch. Some parents have become so anxious about their daughter's height that they have consulted the medical establishment, writing another chapter in the horror story of women and beauty. Girls have been made shorter surgically by shortening their leg bones. Estrogen can also be used to limit height by one or two inches. This controversial treatment involves administering large daily doses of estrogen to girls to induce puberty which slows down growth by an inch or two.

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Poetry from loss: Writings on mastectomy

Falling From Grace, Elly Van de Walle, Press Gang Publishers, April/84

by Robin Barnett

Each year thousands of people are diagnosed with cancer. These people will undergo various treatments to cure or contain their cancers. Many undergo surgery. Some will have intestines excised, some women will have their uterus removed and some men will lose a testicle. All these operations are miserable experiences. There is such a stigma surrounding cancer in our society that fear and guilt ridden silences often accompany these situations. Many people blame themselves for getting cancer.

Our society does not reach out and support these people even though many estimate that cancer is 80% environmentally caused.

Breast cancer is probably the worst of these operations. Not because the surgery is that much different than the others, but because of the immense emotional/psychological burden thrust onto the women who face breast surgery. One of the horrors of our society is that women are defined by body image and bodily functions. The removal of a breast(s) strikes directly at this socialization. Even with the rise of modern feminism there are only a few voices exploring the relationship of woman as human being with the loss of breasts.

Elly Van de Walle's book of poetry, *Falling From Grace*, is one recently published response to the crisis of breast cancer and mastectomy (the surgical removal of the breast). For Elly, writing was a part of her survival (her cancer was diagnosed eight years ago). She was able to document her fears, anger and loss; learn from this process and move on with her life.

The poems in this short book (thirty pages of poems) were written over a six year period. Some began as prose and were revised into poetry form. They trace Elly's experiences and feelings from the time of her entrance into the hospital for a biopsy and mastectomy, to a later assessment in 1983.

When Elly underwent her mastectomy, the practice was more barbaric that it is today. A foreword by Dr. Paticia Rebbeck and an introduction by Elly give an overview for Elly's situation from the modern medical approach.

Today many breast cancer patients may be treated by lumpectomy (removing the lump only) accompanied by radiation. Women should seek surgeons who give them time to think about biopsy results and prospective treatment rather than having mastectomies at the same time as biopsies.

From the first poem, *Checking in*, we are shown many of the reactions people have as they enter hospital:

> I know that with my clothes will go
> the last shreds of control
> I retain over my body,
> so I remain dressed all afternoon
> and evening
> while the anesthetist and some
> bored interns drift in and out.

Elly describes her fears and portrays other people's false assurances and refusal to acknowledge the disease - cancer.

Elly's poetry is at its best when evoking all the range of emotions she has about the breast loss. One short poem, *The cut is all wrong*, is one of several dealing with the actual operation:

> They laid me down.
> They drew a line.
> They cut me open
> scooped me out
> and sewed me up again.
>
> Their stitching shows.
> My right arm seems shorter
> and definitely wrinkles at the wrist.
> That's the trouble with a bad cut:
> however hard you try
> you can't get rid of it
> unless you change your suit.

The anger and pain of losing her breast are right with us in these poems:

> I choke, gasp for air,
> try to bring up in the sink.
> Screaming would help
> but what would the neighbors say?

But there are also societal pressures. Elly brings up the taboos against speaking out. Others tell her stories of cancer patients who live normal lives and expect her to act "normal" also. There is a revealing poem about a meeting with other women who had mastectomies. The real feelings of loss and despair are pushed into the silence.

> So terribly pleased with ourselves.
> We're doing so *well*.
>
> In fact, look at me
> I'm even reproducing
> positively budding.

The last lines refer to Elly's pregnancy three months after the mastectomy despite warnings from doctors not to attempt such a thing. She traces some of her thoughts and feelings ranging from breast feeding to the daily care of her children as she had another child three years later. These passages certainly speak to young women with breast cancer who want to have children and who fear for their own and the children's future.

Elly also touches upon the issues of body image and the implications of losing a breast:

> Does he love me still? The dreadful
> shame in bed. These are harder to heal
> than loss of a breast.

Elly is a strong woman. She has been thrust into a wrenching situation and made a path for herself. But how she gets onto this path is not so clear. She mentions in her introduction that she did a lot of medical research and the information helped her "put things in perspective." This important part of self knowledge is not explored much in the poetry. Nor do we get much sense of Elly's support circle (except for mention of "family and friends").

The short biography at the end of the book tells us that Elly comes from a highly educated and almost certainly privileged background. How did this affect her ability to make changes? Yes, it's important for us to know how other women in similar situations feel, but we need tangible things to grasp onto to help us figure out how to get through or past what we are experiencing.

We are also told that Elly underwent breast reconstruction when the Provincial medical plan began paying for the procedure for mastectomy patients. I am sorry that we are not given more insight into her decision to opt for that. Breast reconstruction is currently the choice of most mastectomy patients if their type of surgery is conducive to such an operation. The medical profession encourages women to go this route, particularly younger women.

Breast cancer survival rates have been unchanged for 50 years. Modern medicine has been unable to improve these rates and does not have a clear understanding of just what breast cancer is. Surgical removal, radiation and chemotherapy are the treatments. Throughout all of these, women are encouraged to keep up their feminine image and to ignore the brutalization to their body and soul.

A prothesis is a form which fits inside a bra to give the appearance of a two breasted woman. Women are encouraged to begin wearing these while still in the hospital after mastectomy. In *The Cancer Journals* Audre Lorde was the first feminist writer to raise questions about this practise. Simply put, can women feel like they are whole human beings with only one breast? Can they meet the world as such?

Breast reconstruction and implants make permanent protheses possible. But, they can never substitute for a real breast. These reconstructions involve implanting a bag with a silicone product under the skin. The new breast will never move or look like a real one. The woman will always know that she is missing her breast.

Usually the reconstruction is done a year after mastectomy. In cases where the woman is "extremely uptight" about not having the breast, the operation may be done in two to six months. The woman may have to undergo several operations in order to reconstruct both the breast and the nipple, depending upon the kind of mastectomy and any other treatment she receives.

There are risks with the reconstructions: A small percentage of women might have a recurrance which is covered by a reconstruction, even though physicians and radiologists claim that these can be discovered by mammography. The common problem is the hardening of tissue surrounding the implant. Sometimes this will soften in time. In extreme cases, the implant must be surgically removed. Other risks include those involved with any surgery like infection or rejection of the implant.

Much more money goes into research about breast reconstruction than cancer prevention or cancer counselling for these women.

It is in light of all this that I am concerned about the title of this book of poems and the illustration on the cover. *Falling From Grace* implies a less than perfect human being. The image on the cover (drawn by Elly) shows a woman with head lowered (we don't see her face) and a large red blotch where her breast was. These images are part of what Elly has gone through, but the overall message of the book is one of strength. I would like to see an image of a pregnant mother with one breast.

Falling From Grace will be inspiration for women (especially younger women) to carry on their lives after mastectomy.

I recommend The Cancer Journals *to anyone with cancer. It touches extensively on the questions and fears a person with cancer can examine and raises many feminist questions about breast cancer.*

There was a fine red line across my chest where a knife entered, but now a branch winds about the scar and travels from arm to heart
Deena Metzger

photo by Hella Hammid, from a poster by Sheila Levrant de Bretteville

What causes breast cancer?

by Robin Barnett

Breast cancer may be different diseases. Some affect a local area of the breast and others the whole body. Difficulties in sorting out which breast cancer patients have which type, as well as uncertainties about the progression of each form, account for controversies regarding treatment and early detection. Some studies show that the incidence of breast cancer increases around age 40, levels off between 45 and 55, then rises again. Post menopausal women are at the highest risk.

There is currently a national breast cancer screening study being carried out in Canada. One of the purposes of this study is to assess the value of regular mammography for women under 50. Mammography is a sophisticated x-ray technique. There is far less radiation involved than even five years ago, but there may still be risks to symptomless women.

Microscopic abnormal cells may be seen. These are not necessarily cancer, but could involve a woman in unnecessary surgery for diagnosis. Mammography is also not as accurate for women under 50. Tests done on female survivors of the atom bomb have shown that breast tissue is sensitive to radiation.

One major problem is that early detection systems are pushed rather than real prevention. In the U.S., the American Cancer Society now lists several dietary habits as possibly carcinogenic. The Canadian Cancer Society has yet to follow this lead.

Dietary fat consumption seems to be a big factor in breast cancer. Studies compare the lower rate of breast cancer in Japanese women who have a lower fat diet, with that of North American women. The dietary fat appears to influence the production and excretion of estrogen and other hormones implicated in breast cancer.

Oral contraceptives and hormones have also been implicated. In a recent English study researchers found that early use of the Pill in teenagers affected later rates of breast cancer. Young breast tissue is extremely sensitive to hormones. Also affected are post menopausal women who undergo estrogen replacement treatment.

Caffeine consumption and cigarette smoking are also linked to breast fibrocysts. These are benign cysts in the breasts, but are still abnormalities, and opinions vary as to whether they are related to breast cancer. They certainly make detection of lumps more difficult and both coffee and cigarettes are implicated in other cancers.

There is information on these topics at the Vancouver Women's Health Collective, as well as information regarding particularly high risk groups in society and self-examination which detects most breast lumps.

PEACE

Women on the line

by Andrea Clarke

The railroad tracks that lead into the US Naval Trident Submarine Base, Bangor, Washington provide the means for the shipment of nuclear warheads and missile motors for assembly at the base for the Trident missile system. The tracks outside the gate of the Bangor base have been the site of protest against the shipment of nuclear warheads to Bangor as recently as November, 1983.

The Pantex plant in Amarillo, Texas is the assembly site for nuclear warheads for the Trident nuclear missile system that is shipped to Bangor, Washington. Missile motors are shipped in special containers or in trailer units from the Hercules Corporation in Magna, Utah to Bangor.

People involved with Ground Zero, Washington (Centre for Non-Violent Action) have been gathering information and slides of the various trains that enter Bangor and have managed to involve over 200 towns and cities throughout the U.S. in the "tracks campaign". The "tracks campaign" has been involved in making contact with people that live in the communities where trains carry nuclear war materials. One of the objectives of the campaign is to raise consciousness to the point where people will refuse to allow shipment of those materials through their communities. The establishment of nuclear weapon free zones in some parts of the U.S. has managed to force re-routing of the shipment of nuclear related materials.

Sandy, an American woman who has walked for peace throughout the U.S. and Japan, was determined to see the realization of a women's peace walk. Living on Lopez Island, in the San Juan Islands, Sandy was quite familiar with the Trident Submarine Base and the tracks campaign. With support from Ground Zero, friends and supporters, "On the Line", was on its way. Women decided to walk through all the communities through which the "White train" (so-called because it carries nuclear warheads and is painted white by U.S. law) travels, and talk to as many people as possible about its implications. Nine women of various ages, cultural and class backgrounds began their peace quest March 21, 1984, hoping to arrive in Amarillo, Texas by early October.

My friend Carole is a veteran peace walker. She walked from New Orleans to New York, to the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament in June 1982. She walked throughout Germany and has talked about wanting to walk across Canada. Her long standing dream has been a women's walk for peace. Carole had been really excited about this walk for months, but in the end we both knew that we needed to "stay at home" for awhile. So we decided to see them off and perhaps walk the first few miles.

It was raining by the time the Coho ferry had reached Port Angeles. The date was March 20th, a Tuesday evening. We arrived at a Buddhist temple on a piece of land shared by a young family and some Buddhist Monks of the Nipihozan Myhoji order. It was built in the summer of 1982 at the time of the Trident Blocade. The monks of this order have been building Peace Pagodas all over the world and are presently constructing one at Ground Zero, which is very close to the Bangor Trident Submarine Base.

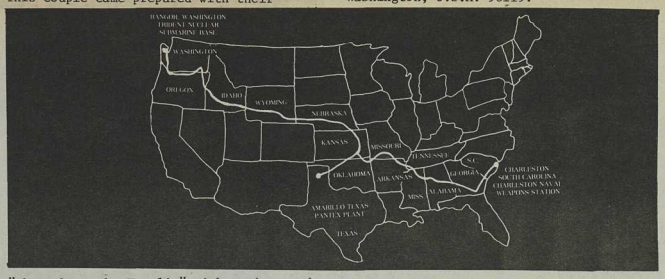
The women walkers and all their supporters were all sitting together when we arrived, preparing to organize for dinner. We were to congregate in a new addition to the temple. The room was full of women and some small children and a few men. It was very light, warm and friendly. It felt like a family reunion, though I recognized no one. We ate together and later formed a circle and shared our purpose for being there.

The support and love generated from this group of people was quite overwhelming. It was especially interesting to hear the words of a Chicana woman, the only woman of colour, to hear her experience of poverty and oppression and to see and feel her give so much strength, beauty and meaning to the walk. I attribute my inspiration from this action largely to the incredible caring expressed by so many of the friends of the walkers.

We were told that the rising hour was 5 a.m. so we all got to bed no later than midnight. Many of us slept in the temple; I didn't sleep at all. I was too enraptured by these women. I was beginning to feel the desire to be part of their walk.

At 5 a.m. the Buddhist prayer began and some of us chanted and drummed. Everyone was awake and alert, (surprisingly enough) and we had breakfast together. The two carts that the women are pulling with them, carrying their belongings, were packed and ready to go. By 8 a.m. we were all ready to meet at the site of the beginning of the walk, the Bangor gate of the US Naval Trident Submarine base.

Immediately upon my arrival at the site, I noticed an older couple that had parked about 300 feet away from our gathering. This couple came prepared with their



"what about the Kremlin" picket signs and the American flag. I delivered a leaflet to them that explained the women's walk and in return they handed me some literature about the "Soviet Threat". The woman stood silently holding the flag as I continued to discuss the implications of the arms race with the man. There was quite a bit of press and t.v. cameras and before I knew it, the cameras were filming our "debate." I left the American flag and gathered with the group of supporters.

We formed a larger circle on the tracks, and members of the circle made offerings of songs, poems, and thoughts. One of the women walkers shared some Native American sacred chants. We moved towards a send-off ceremony and various individuals from the circle presented gifts, thoughts, and support to the walkers.

It was an especially moving experience. The circle felt protected and powerful. The irony of the representation of the tracks and the destination of the materials delivered onto the base, and the beginning of this peace walk, with so much hope and love, was very striking.

After the ceremony, the women walked the few hundred yards to the Bangor gate, sang a song about women's strength, and the walk began. The head banner read, "Women are on the Line - White train threatens life on earth." There were about 10 support walkers and off we went through the rural roads of Bainbridge Island. Carole and I joined in walking the first 8-9 miles.

It was only minutes before school children began running after us to enquire about who we were, what we were doing, and where we were going. I talked to a couple of adolescent boys, dressed in their private catholic school uniforms. They were very polite and impressed with the committment of the walkers, but they believed that we needed protection from the "Russians". I could see this was going to be a very interesting experience, walking and following the route of the 'white train'. It was inspiring realizing the many people these women would reach.

If you feel low and frustrated about the political work in your community, walk for peace this summer and become re-energized. The women will walk 100-120 miles per week and arrive at the Pantex plant in early October, 1984 in Amarillo, Texas. This is the assembly site of nuclear warheads for the Trident nuclear missiles, transported by the 'white train'. They will travel through eight states to Texas and continue on to Charleston, South Carolina Naval Weapons Station, to arrive early March, 1985. This is a women's only one year walk. For more information please contact: Maura Tucker/Patti Contaxis Seattle, 206-328-2475, or write 6160 Lynwood Centre Rd., Bainbridge Island, Washington, U.S.A. 98119.

The "on the line" women walking the 'white train' route can be contacted during the walk at:

BOISE, ID. c/o Boise Women for Peace c/o Snake River Alliance, P.O. Box 1713, 83701 (until May 10th)...POCATELLO, ID. c/o Jane Vitale, 1969 Barton Rd., 83204 (until May 29th)...LARAMIE WY. c/o Mignon Hill, 264 N. 9th, 82070 (until June 25th)... SIDNEY, NEB. c/o Marion Lenzen, R.R.#1, Box 56, 69162 (until July 8th)...FAIRBURY, NEB. c/o Bessie Svajgar, 1125 C St. 68352 (until August 1st)...EMPORIA, KAN. c/o Pauline Rose Penner, 1014 Mechanic, 66801 (until August 15)...WITCHITA, KAN. c/o Mary Harren, 1407 N. Topeka, 67214 (until August 23)...WOODWARD OK. c/o Dee Duggin, 1423 4th, 73801 (until Sept. 7th) ...AMARILLO TX. c/o Habitat for Humanity, Box 775. 79105 (until Sept. 25).

Please address to: On the Line, then walker's name and c/o... also write peace walker HOLD (on envelope) or forward as the case may be.

ARTS

Filmfest Filmfest Filmfest Filmfest Filmfest Filmfest Filmfest Fil

There are many films of interest to women at the upcoming Vancouver International Film Festival (April 27 - May 24). None of these films have been previewed, so the following summaries are not necessarily a recommendation. Films are at the Ridge or the Vancouver East Cinema.

Backstage at the Kirov (USA/USSR, 1984)
Sunday April 29, 7:00 (V.E.C.)
Thursday May 2, 7:00 (Ridge)
A backstage look at the ballet company which virtually introduced classical dance to the U.S.

Puberty Blues

Born in Flames (USA, 1983)
Sunday May 18, 7:00 (Ridge)
Part radical feminist manifesto, part sci-fi fantasy set ten years after the revolution in America. The Women's Army is marching...

Charles and Lucie (France, 1980)
Thursday May 3, 7:00 (V.E.C.)
Directed by Nelly Kaplan who collaborated with Abel Gance (*Napoleon*), a comedy about an elderly couple who set off on a magical goose-chase after a fortune.

Chicken Ranch (USA, 1982)
Thursday May 17, 7:00 (Ridge)
Cinema Verite look at a Nevada brothel. Behind the scenes of exploitation and sex-business.

Dirty Dishes (France, 1982)
Wednesday May 9, 7:00 (Ridge)
Monday May 14, 7:00 (V.E.C.)
The waking nightmares of a housewife by Joyce Bunuel, daughter-in-law of Luis Bunuel, surrealist film-maker.

Die Erben (The Inheritors) (Austria, 1982)
Thursday May 24, 9:30 (Ridge)
Ultra-right youth are the contemporary inheritors of the Nazis. Not so much a documentary as a work of political horror.

Girl with Red Hair

Falasha: Exile of the Black Jews (Canada, 1983)
Monday May 21, 7:00 (V.E.C.)
The plight of Ethiopia's black Jews caught between the old land-owning aristocracy and the revolutionaries of modern Ethiopia.

The Girl with Red Hair (Netherlands, 1981)
Friday May 11, 9:30 (Ridge)
Story of a young, innocent girl caught up in WW II who, through fear, shyness, aggression, despair and resistance changes into a hard and merciless executor of Dutch and German traitors.

Hanna K (France/Israil, 1983)
Saturday May 12, 9:30 (Ridge)
Saturday May 19, 9:30 (V.E.C.)
Costa-Gavras' follow-up to *Missing* examines the Palestinian-Israel conflict.

Hookers on Davie (Canada, 1984)
Thursday May 17, 9:30 (Ridge)
By Janis Cole and Holly Dalg, makers of *P4W: Prison for Women*, the documentary about Vancouver prostitution. (Double-billed with *Chicken Ranch*...see you there.)

In Our Hands (USA, 1983)
Sunday May 20, 7:00 (Ridge)
"On June 12, 1983, nearly a million people paraded down New York's streets in an extraordinary protest against the nuclear arms race." That landmark event on film.

Kamilla (Norway, 1981)
Thursday May 3, 7:00 (Ridge)
Through the eyes of a seven-year-old girl living in 1948 Norway, we see the turmoil of her parents' marriage, the shame of the recent German occupation and an American cultural invasion. Director Vibeke Lokkeberg plays the child's mother.

Keiko (Japan, 1978)
Tuesday May 8, 9:30 (V.E.C.)
A Japanese feature written and directed by Quebecois Claude Gagnon! A young girl who develops a close relationship with another woman, despite her parents' insistence on a traditional, family-arranged marriage.

Marianne and Juliane

Love Letters (USA, 1983)
Wednesday May 2, 9:30 (Ridge)
Sunday May 13, 9:30 (V.E.C.)
Amy Jones (of *Slumber Party Massacre* fame) directs Jamie Lee Curtis in the story of a young woman who finds a bunch of love letters addressed to her mother by a man she has never heard of.

Marianne and Julianne (Germany, 1981)
Tuesday May 22, 7:00 (Ridge)
By Margarethe Von Trotta, the first woman director to win the Golden Lion award at the Venice Film Festival. Based on the life of former Bader-Meinhoff terrorist Gudrun Ensslin and her sister's quest to prove that she did not commit suicide while in prison as officially claimed.

Puberty Blues (Australia, 1981)
Saturday May 5, 9:30 (Ridge)
Saturday May 12, 7:00 (V.E.C.)
According to the blurb, a "feminist *Porky's*". The surfer cult from the point of view of the girls...

Sally and Freedom (Sweden, 1981)
Monday May 21, 7:00 (Ridge)
Directed by Gunnel Lindblom, star of several Ingmar Bergman films, this is the story of a twenty-eight-year-old social worker splitting from a ten-year marriage and trying to live life without compromise.

The White Rose (West Germany, 1982)
Sunday April 29, 9:30 (V.E.C.)
Friday May 11, 7:00 (Ridge)
A current German box-office hit, about 21-year-old Sophie Scholl, member of the White Rose group in Germany who preached passive resistance to National Socialism.

Film documents survivors' lives

by Carolynn Jones

They talk about the guilt they feel because they lived when so many died. They talk about their fear each time they are sick, their fear of early death. They talk about their fears for their children. They are victims of the atomic bomb.

Survivors, a one-hour documentary about atomic bomb survivors, is horrifying in great part because Hiroshima and Nagasaki are not part of the past for these women and men interviewed. It is about Japanese-Americans who were in Japan during the war. Some went there to avoid relocation camps in the U.S., and some were simply visiting relatives or studying in Japan and were caught by the war. The effects of the bomb are still with them, in the scars on their faces, their chronic medical problems, and in psychological damage which can never be repaired.

The interviews are thematically organized so that survivors speak first of the moment of the explosion, one after another. Then we hear stories of searching for relatives, of life in Hiroshima for the week or two right after the bombing, the return to the United States, medical work, political work.

We hear of their feelings of guilt and fear (though, surprisingly, not anger), what they remember and what they try to forget. One woman says, "I always get up in the middle of the night and start screaming."

Interviews with American doctors are cut in, so we hear the survivors talk about their medical problems and then hear the doctors list leukemia, cancer of all parts of the body, anemia, cataracts, and early menopause among women as some of the radiation effects these people are likely to suffer from. Second and third generation effects are discussed. We see a woman with her retarded boy, the grandson of a survivor.

In Our Hands

Survivors includes filming done in Hiroshima hospitals after the bombing, forcing us to look at the bodies of the dead and the suffering of the living.

The one hopeful note in the film is hearing survivors talk about their political work. Some are involved with the Committee of Atomic Bomb Survivors, which is trying to get medical benefits from the U.S. government "before we all die", as one says.

This powerful film would be a good educational tool for peace groups. We are fortunate to have a good print available in Vancouver.

Survivors, one-hour documentary, 16 mm (or video) by Steven Okazaki

Survivors is available for sale or rent in 16 mm or video through Canadian Filmmakers Distribution West, #1-525 West Pender Street, Vancouver, 684-3014. Special arrangements can be made for non-profit groups.
Available in Toronto through Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre.

ARTS

Film Review

Night Without Fear

by Brenda Ingratta

You can't wear necklaces because you might be strangled by somebody - by men from behind. You can't wear certain shoes or tight clothing because you might need to run. My mother thinks I should just stay inside after it gets dark. But I like to be able to walk at night and sort out my thoughts after the day is done and I've expended a lot of energy doing the things that are important to me.

The woman is walking down the sidewalk. It is night. We see only her feet and hear her footsteps on the pavement. As we share the images of neon-lit shops, dark bushes and deserted streets with her, we also share her perceptions of walking alone at night.

It is a scene from *Night Without Fear*, a new film by Laurie Meeker completed just in time for a premiere on International Women's Day at the Robson Square Cinema. *Night Without Fear* addresses many issues of concern to women: the stereotypical images of women shaped by the media, woman battering, sexual assault, the Vancouver bus-stop rapist, the Red Hot Video firebombing, the anti-pornography efforts of Media Watch and Take Back the Night marches. Throughout the film the audience is drawn back to the voices of women relating their anger and frustration over their constant vulnerability at night.

"You keep coming back to everyday reality, the everyday experience of walking at night," Meeker says. "All these stories flow from all women of all ages - it's the kind of issue that is so pervasive and of concern to all women and yet it's something we never talk about. It's amazing to have these things talked about in a film because they never are.

"The way the film is structured is that the walking at night is the first part. The second part interweaves images of women and the third part shows women in action. For me it's quite inspirational seeing women marching and in action together, working together. So the film is called *Night Without Fear* because that's the goal we're working towards."

Meeker believes that the night itself has become a symbol of violence for many women. Women are not afraid of the night, she says, they're afraid of what the night could hold for them: "The real cause of the fear is the possible threat of rape or being killed. The night has become on a theoretical level a symbol of oppression and violence."

Women are also oppressed by the images perpetuated by the media. *Night Without Fear* contains 1960's footage from a fashion show where men are behind the camera and women are the models and thus objects, and where a commercial of male scientists testing a car is intercut with a woman vacuuming the carpet.

"The 1960's footage is important because that's our backdrop, what we were socialized into. That juxtaposed with contemporary images makes the point that things haven't changed that much," Meeker notes. "Sexism in the media is very influential on attitudes. I think a lot of people try to claim that things have changed for women but there hasn't been that much change in terms of the male culture's attitude."

The voiceover in the film cites the influence of pornography in shaping the attitude that violence against women is acceptable behaviour, thereby condoning and even encouraging rapes and assaults like the attacks by the so-called Vancouver bus-stop rapist. Red Hot Video is condemned as a chief pornography outlet, and a clip from one of the videos entitled *Fantastex* is shown where a mild-mannered male secretary turns into a brutal knife-wielding rapist who attacks his female boss.

The scene introduces the third section of *Night Without Fear* where women are shown actively campaigning to effect change. Footage of the Red Hot Video firebombing and anti-pornography marches are included. "I realized that the firebombing was the event to document because it was obvious that that sort of action is very extreme and radical. It shows what women are driven to when nothing else works," Meeker says. "That was the first footage I shot for the film.

"My original idea was to end the film with the pickets and the Take Back the Night march because for me whenever I've participated with the pickets it's really an exciting and uplifiting experience.

Filmmaker Laurie Meeker

photo by Patrice Leung

It's wonderful to be in that environment with women and feel safe and feel powerful. I thought I'd end with that to show what women are doing. But then I realized that it wasn't a good idea to do that because after the march you still have to walk home by yourself. That experience fades away very quickly and you're back into reality in a male-dominated society where violence and fear exist."

The point is punctuated with the voice-over during the film credits where younger women express their desire for streets that they can walk safely at night and commiserate about the fact that reality doesn't allow such a luxury.

"The audience that would be interested in my films is probably a women's audience. That's who I'm most concerned with because women don't have the kind of film available to them that they need to validate or articulate their experience," Meeker points out. "I make films to communicate; I have things I want to say. A woman's point of view and a feminist perspective needs to be documented and distributed.

"Making films requires a lot of knowledge in a lot of different areas. The entire process is very engaging. You start with your subject and do the research, then you go out into the field to interview people, then you take your camera and do all the technical stuff, then there's the editing. Usually a film takes up to a year to make. *Night Without Fear* took fifteen months; that's the longest work I've ever done.

"There aren't a lot of feminist filmmakers, so when you're doing a film with feminist content, first of all you have to defend the content and the feminist perspective. So you get into theoretical arguments on that level. Also, my work experiments with form and a lot of feminist film does that. So you have to justify experimentation and explain why you're doing it. I think feminism is still fighting to be seen as a legitimate practice, not only in feminist writing but in filmmaking, the arts, in all areas. Feminism has the kind of spectre that the word 'Communism' has. Even so-called 'liberals' at the college level are still resistant to feminism and feminist theory.

"Michelle Citron has influenced me the most. I think *Daughter Rite* is a landmark film in terms of feminist filmmaking and theory. Not only is it interesting in form but it's very accessible to everyone. At the same time it's a critique of other film forms such as cinema verite and the narrative technique. By combining all that it really brings into question traditional forms of filmmaking and at the same time explores a feminist topic about mother-daughter relationships that hasn't been explored to that degree before. I'm not very interested in Hollywood cinema or mainstream film.

"In the end the fact remains that we live in this male-dominated culture and we have to intervene in any way possible. Filmmaking is one very powerful way to get our voices heard."

(Laurie Meeker's films *Night Without Fear* (1983) and *Footbinding* (1978) and Michelle Citron's *Daughter Rite* (1979) are distributed by Women in Focus, 204-456 W. Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1R3. (604)872-2250.)

from Night Without Fear

ARTS

from Mask, by Doris Chase

Doris Chase: Video and feminism

by Karen Henry

Doris Chase brought her videotapes to Vancouver to share with women interested in video. Only a small number turned out on a miserably rainy evening but Doris carried on in her characteristic professional style. She has shown her work in Vancouver previously at the Video Inn, and her latest work has been a series of theatre pieces by and for women, thus Women In Focus seemed an appropriate milieu.

The evening began with a rough cut version of a documentary which is being done about her life and her work. The tape begins and ends with a computer faceted image of her face and from this affected cover addresses her personal development through family and work as a sculptor and then in film and video. The quality and colour of the tape changes as it is a composite of stills, film and video - glossy black and whites, to warmer film images, and the electronic dazzle of computerized video work.

Unfortunately, the style is reminiscent of a '50's television documentary. The voice quality and style of delivery of the male commentator reminded me of 'Industry on Parade' - a regular filler in the early days of television in the States which glorified work in a patriotic context.

In the Doris Chase documentary the voice became patronizing - recognition by the bastions of male culture. The tape combined intimate close-ups of Doris looking sensitive and dedicated within the context of this detached, lordly editorial style. The contrast seemed contrived and all too reminiscent of outmoded dynamics. Technical difficulties with the equipment on that evening marred the presentation somewhat.

The documentation showed tantalizing clips of Doris's dance tapes, beautifully colourized and synthesized images of movement and sculpture which were her original inspiration for video. Since then her work has become more conceptual. She has taken on the issues of feminism in the Concept Series. These are professional collaborations in which the video special effects are used to enhance a dramatic script and sometimes dance.

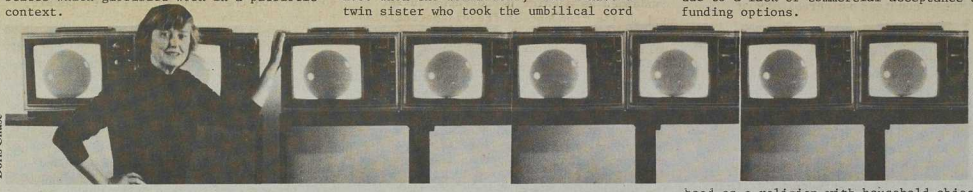
On Tuesday night two of the tapes were shown - *Mask* and *3 Storey Suite*. *Mask* is a black woman's angry memory and her connection with her African archetype which is a recurring image of her own face painted in tribal design. The movement is closely calculated within the space of the video format. Special effects are used to expound on the dialogue in a very simple straight-forward manner in this tape, i.e. when the woman asks, "Did I have a twin sister who took the umbilical cord in her baby fist rather than live in this exile?", the image splits into two dancing women.

The dialogue runs the gamut of black and feminist issues ending with religion and the search for "the mother goddess within all women." The *Mask* tape has sensitive framing and delicately if not provocatively applied effects. The drama moves slowly and steadily through a recounting of events and comes to accepted conclusions. The piece is not emotionally based but rather intellectual, like a lecture.

The special effects in *3 Storey Suite* are distracting. Storyteller Laura Simms tells three feminist folk tales. For the first while we don't see her face without colourized distortion, thus the person is kept at a distance from the audience, unknown. Computerization in this tape seems forced, having gone over into technique rather than inspiration.

The magic of the computer effects in the dance tapes is waning in the Concept Series. The later tapes operate in a very professional manner but without the same level of commitment and discovery. They tend to be didactic.

Doris Chase is writing scripts for her new productions, to be theatre pieces on older women and relationships. She is moving away from overt feminism in her work due to a lack of commercial acceptance and funding options.



Doris Chase

photo courtesy Video Inn

Aesthetic lacks analysis

by Jill Pollock

I have not yet come across a clear, concise, and suitable definition for the "feminist aesthetic", one that fits all my criteria and then goes beyond.

The reason is neither presumption nor ignorance, but rather because it is a complex and diverse (and at the same time highly personal) concept. Every time I go to an exhibition of artwork made by women, I am hopeful and anticipate seeing how the life experiences of the artist will be manifested in the work - in short, does the art hold a feminist aesthetic and if so, what elements (tangible and otherwise) constitute that aesthetic?

Alison Rossiter's photographs were installed in the Coburg Gallery in early April. Her work seems to illustrate an attempt, albeit unsuccessful, to explore a particular aspect of women's experiences.

The intention of the work was not only sound but laudable. Rossiter had produced a series of colour photographs dealing, on one level at least, with an imposed elevation of motherhood and housework.

Shiny, new baby clothes (pink of course), household cleaning objects, utensils and 'baby treasures' were positioned in the centre of various types of materials.

Each image represented one object placed on a complimentary piece of fabric, which in some works was also colour-co-ordinated.

Thus there was a pink baby frock laid on a piece of pink velour. A new white and blue plastic broom was arranged on bunched-up white satin.

Rossiter is a good technician. She did her own colour printing and the quality control was excellent. However, her point was belaboured and somewhat simplistic. Simplistic because the analysis of and the connections between backdrop and object were obvious, overt and stereotypical. Incorporating the baby-shower approach to her images, Rossiter took one concept and repeated and repeated and repeated it. Through a direct, frontal camera angle along with the newness of the objects and the lush qualities of the materials, the work became iconographic. Irons and brooms were transformed into sacred trinkets. Had she extended or elaborated her basic analysis, the work would have been far more powerful and interesting.

There was the sense that Rossiter was attempting to alter the established values - to show the absurdity of motherhood as a religion with household objects as revered idols. Unfortunately, the interpretation was over-worked and under-analyzed.

After having viewed one, possibly two, of the photographs, the trend was set and there were no more surprises. The exhibition became an exercise in colour texture.

Hopefully, this series will lead Rossiter to make more challenging and thought-provoking art - she certainly has the technical skills to do so.

Ektacolour print, 2" x 16", photo courtesy Cobourg Gallery

Pink Baby Series: Dress

ARTS

Publications in Review

In addition to providing readers with examples of poetry, fiction and personal narratives that speak out on women's lives, many women's periodicals and literary magazines help to promote and support the work of women writers by also publishing reviews and criticism of women's work. Since the amount of work written by women has grown in the past few years (despite grant cut-backs and hard financial times), there is presently a substantial body of writing by women that demands critical response.

Unfortunately, women's literary journals have only so much room for reviews and mainstream and academic review journals cannot be counted on to sufficiently review women's work. Due to this situation, the following periodicals serve a most necessary function. By concentrating their publishing efforts on reviews of literature and art by women, these journals support women's writing, not only by publicizing the work through reviews, but in a larger sense, they provide a forum for critical response to women's writing and emphasize the need for the development of a strong body of varied, creative and serious feminist criticism that will further illuminate the importance of literature that tells the truth of women's lives.

from The Woman's Almanac

Motheroot Journal. 214 Dewey Street, Pittsburg, PA U.S.A. 15218. $5(US) 4 issues.

The most radical of the three, *Motheroot Journal* is a treasure chest to readers interested in women's small press publishing, since the reviews in *Motheroot* deal only with small press literature. *Motheroot* is usually published quarterly, but last year, the journal fell on lean financial times and had to postpone a number of issues. Finally, the long awaited double issue was released in the fall of 1983, along with a catalogue of Motheroot Press books, evidence that this periodical is back on her feet. The fall '83 issue, along with reviews of books by Meriel LeSeur, Sandy Boucher and an interview with writer/publisher Barbara Wilson (Seal Press, Seattle), included a reprint of a review by the late June Arnold and a narrative by Sonia Jones which spoke lovingly and with much respect of this wonderful lesbian writer who died in March 1982. Such writings emphasize the warm and personal tone of *Motheroot*, not only as a source of news and reviews of women's writing but also as a record/forum of the greater women's literary community.

from The Woman's Almanac

The New Women's Times/Bi-monthly Feminist Review. New Women's Times Inc., 804 Meigs Street, Rochester, N.Y. U.S.A. 14620 $15(US) monthly.

An equally important review journal, *New Women's Times Feminist Review* is published as a bi-monthly art and literary supplement to the New Women's Times newsmagazine. While this journal also publishes a number of reviews on small press books, its pages are open to university press books and quality mainstream works. *Feminist Review* has to be praised for its wide range of books featured, books by lesbians and heterosexual women, women of colour, poor women and many others. Along with the reviews, each issue of this journal usually contains a longer non-academic theoretical essay, dealing with a number of works or a specific area of women's literature. For example, *Feminist Review* recently published, in segments, Jan Clausen's *Movement of Poets*, a brilliant work on the relationship between lesbian poetry and lesbian politics. The writing in *Feminist Review* is alive with a wonderful energy and clarity and completely devoid of the critical jargon that forces many interested readers to shy away from critical writings.

The Women's Review of Books. Wellesley College Centre for Research on Women, Wellesley, MA, U.S.A. 02181. $12(US)/ $15(CAN) monthly.

The newest of the three journals reviewed in this space, *The Women's Review of Books*, is a journal of critical writing by women that attempts to bridge the gap between grassroots feminists and academic women. Since its premier issue last fall, this journal has consistantly presented analytical reviews of poetry, fiction and non-fiction by women from all types of presses. Many of the books reviewed in this journal are important cultural works that risk being ignored by the more radical grassroots journals due to their academic content. *The Women's Review of Books* proves, however, that intelligent critical response to women's writing need not be elitist and stresses that thoughtful and articulate analysis of women's artistic and literary culture must be presented in a manner that is not racist, sexist, heterosexist or classist and that serious critical writing must not be directed only to women with educational privilege, but to all women, and that the literary traditions we are reclaiming must speak to and belong to us all.

Send copies of your magazine for review in this space. Readers - if you find a publication you want to share, please send it in. (If requested, it will be returned after I review it.) Writers, editors, publishing collectives - send me your back issues. All mail should be addressed to Joy Parks, 490 Wilson Avenue, Apt. 202, Downsview, Ontario, M5H 1T8.

Tall continued from p. 11

Dr. Earl Plunkett of the University of Western Ontario estimated in the *Vancouver Sun* last summer that three to four hundred Canadian girls have undergone this treatment in the last twenty years. The Canadian Medical Association keeps no records. In addition to "cosmetic" usage, his estimate includes girls with curvature of the spine which can be eased by height limitation. With documented side effects including excessive menstruation, high blood pressure and headaches, cosmetic therapy is dangerous and of limited use.

The marriage market is not the only place where tall women are discrimated against. Even when sex stereotypes are eradicated these other problems will probably remain. What value there is attributed to tallness in women is not reflected in the consumer market. Like other less common body shapes and sizes, clothing a tall body means one of four things: 1) making your own clothes to add length; 2) always having short sleeves, pants, etc.; 3) wearing men's clothes; 4) spending a lot of money in expensive specialty shops. Shoes are even more difficult, most surely will cost more and may have to be ordered specially.

In the home and even at work, counters, tables and desks are not high enough for tall people to use comfortably. Car seats, even pushed back as far as they go, may not go far enough back, and its hard to find a bike with a big enough frame. And look out for low-ceilinged basement suites, they're lethal.

There are many advantages to being tall though, especially if you are able to overcome the worst disadvantage; believing you must find a man taller than yourself. You don't get lost in crowds or stores because you are a head above everyone else. Movies aren't spent trying to see through somebody else's head. People are less likely to hassle you if you're tall - who wants to pick a fight with someone bigger than themselves. You can reach things that other people can't. And you never have to look up to anybody.

Tattoos continued from p. 11

woman symbols with a fist in the centre one validates the anger she felt and the work she was doing against illusions at that point in her life.

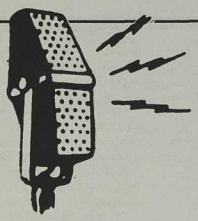
A third woman's bleeding rose represented to her the beauty that remains after hardship and loss of innocence.

Tattoos sometimes serve as a means of cultural identification. As some men use them to identify with biker or military subcultures, some women use them to identify with biker, prostitute, or lesbian subcultures.

The decision to get a tattoo is sometimes spontaneous, sometimes thought out over a number of years. Similarly, which symbol to get and which area of the body to have it done on are sometimes carefully planned decisions and sometimes based just on intuitive feeling.

What seems important is that these tattoos were something that women got for themselves, from themselves. They can express strongly one's state of mind at a particular point in one's life. Thus, even if that state of mind changes drastically, a tattoo reminds us of what has influenced our current reality.

ARTS



RUBY MUSIC

by Connie Smith

It is one of the tragedies of our culture that our heroines are often lost to us before we have a chance to learn from them. Such is the case of Ada Smith, a singer and nightclub hostess known most of her life as Bricktop.

It's not that Bricktop was obscure. She wasn't. She was legendary. But the people who knew her and loved her were part of a privileged world far removed from my own life: John Steinbeck, Evelyn Waugh, Cole Porter, The Duke of Windsor, King Farouk, F. Scott Fitzgerald, T.S. Eliot, and by the time I reached the age when I was taught about these men of history, Bricktop was retired and living alone in New York City. No one ever told me about her.

There was another side to her fame, equally inaccessible, but for more legitimate reasons. Bricktop was often featured in magazines distributed in black neighbourhoods. In the words of author and historian, James Haskins, who collaborated with Bricktop in writing her life story, "It was a fact of existence for the average American black to be on intimate terms with the stories of those few of us who managed to burrow out from under."

Bricktop's grandmother was a slave. Her mother was sired by the master of the house and born into slavery two years before the Emancipation Proclamation. Bricktop was born free in 1894 in West Virginia. She was the fifth child delivered to Hattie Smith and her husband. They named her Ada Beatrice Queen Victoria Louise Virginia Smith; but she was later called Bricktop because of her red hair.

Shortly after her birth, Bricktop's father died. Hattie was 37, alone and very poor. She moved her family to Chicago where she had relatives who were passing for white. It was her hope that they were in a better situation and could help her get settled. Unfortunately, times were difficult for them as well. But Hattie stuck it out and eventually she found a boarding house to run on the south side of town.

The south side of Chicago was like many urban black communities. It was poor in material matters but rich in culture - especially when it came to music. Bricktop grew up in this environment and became completely infatuated with the goings on in the saloons, particularly in the backrooms where the music was made.

Bricktop never considered herself a singer, yet that is how she made her living. When she was 16, she left home to travel the black vaudeville circuit. It was a very hard life for a young woman and a very dangerous profession. America did not take kindly to blacks on the road. But Bricktop survived.

After a few grueling years in barrel houses, she started singing in nightclubs in Chicago, Washington, D.C. and New York City. It was at Connie's Inn in Harlem that her reputation solidified and her talent and personality earned her an invitation to Paris.

Bricktop arrived in Paris in 1924 and the American colony loved her. Not only could she sing, but she knew all the latest American dances. Almost immediately she was invited to exclusive parties to sing and give dance lessons. In retrospect, the idea of a black woman teaching the Charleston to affluent white Americans may seem demeaning to some. But Bricktop was a working woman. She was tough, independent and extremely charming and these people were her clients. It is ironic, however, that because she never lost touch with her roots, she became a kind of reality touchstone for American millionaires, artists, writers, film stars and European royality. They followed her to every club engagement in Paris. Eventually someone suggested she manage her own club and for the next 40 years, Bricktop's was the most exclusive saloon *in the world*.

But Bricktop had other admirers as well for she was not above using her influence to help as many people as possible. In her years stateside, she discovered a young piano player and his band in Washington, D.C. She sang a few songs with him and decided to take him to New York to get work. She got him a job at The Cotton Club and Duke Ellington never looked back.

Bricktop
Queen of the Night
1894-1984

In Paris, she encouraged a young busboy to keep writing. His name was Langston Hughes and he grew up to become the poet laureate of the American blacks. She took entertainer Josephine Baker under her wing when she realized that Josephine had a penchant for destructive men. In this case, she was not wholly successful. But she gave another young singer a chance and the two women befriended for life. Unfortunately, her friend, Mabel Mercer died recently. But no one could really help her when she was forced to return to New York in 1939 to escape the Nazi invasion of Paris.

After sixteen years out of the country, Bricktop found the situation in New York quite drastic. She had become unaccustomed to segregation and overt racism. At 45, Bricktop was broke, jobless and without respect. She managed to last five years in the city before a friend financed a Bricktop's nightclub in Mexico City. Again Bricktop reigned supreme, but there were problems with the Mexican government and she longed for Paris, the place she considered home.

After six years in Mexico City, she returned to a Paris she didn't recognize. Post-war Paris had become as racist as New York, a gift from the white American G.I.'s. A year later, in 1951, she relocated in Rome where she operated Bricktop's until her retirement in 1964. She was 69 years old and she was tired of staying up all night.

Bricktop spent most of her remaining 20 years in New York City. Occasionally, she would make a public appearance or consent to sing, but she was tired and in fragile health. She preferred to stay at home.

In 1979, she hosted a "Bricktop Hour" at Club "21". It was here that she met James Haskins, the man who would later help her write her autobiography. *Bricktop* was published by Atheneum Publishers on her 89th birthday, August 14, 1983. The mayor arrived at her apartment and gave her a paperweight and a scroll.

It was this book that brought me to her and in January I produced an interview with Bricktip for a CBC radio program. What makes this interview significant, is that four days later, Bricktop passed away in her sleep.

We scheduled the interview for late afternoon because she told us that she didn't like talking to people before noon. She remained in bed during the interview; but she said she had arthritis, nothing more. She reminisced a bit about her friends, but mostly she was philosophical. She talked about the lessons her mother taught her and about her own creed. "If you're going to think; think about something." She spoke a lot about passion and about the men in her life. She admitted that she could not remember them all and in some cases, it was just as well. When asked about her health, she said, "I'll live. But if I don't, I've had one of the most beautiful, great lives in the world and I'm grateful and God knows it." She died quietly, January 31, 1984, in sharp contrast to the way she lived.

LETTERS

Kudos from former staffer

Kinesis:

Each issue of *Kinesis* these days prompts me to write and pat you all on the back for work well done. In particular, I commend you on the snazzy page design, something I always wished I had more skill with. I see a few new names on the masthead, but many old ones too - which is great to see. I miss my friends and I miss working on *Kinesis*

I've adapted nicely to the change back to small-town living (we live just out of town on an acreage) and am enjoying the chance to pick up outdoor/mechanical/gardening type skills. The pace is, if not slower, then less hectic than city life. The rat race being on a much smaller scale, I feel less the rat and more human.

Every once in a while, I hear through the grapevine that VSW's funding has had it this time. Now, I've seen it come through till now, but if it doesn't - I do not want to see *Kinesis* go under. I am prepared to commit $10-$15/month forever to support its expenses.

At expenses of $2000/month, it would take just 200 like-minded people to secure *Kinesis*. I think you could find this number of supporters, so I guess my point is not to get too jittery about funding. You've got enough on your hands producing the newspaper, and your readers *will* come through for you in turn if it becomes necessary.

I've enclosed $2.00 as I've given away my March '84 issue in an attempt to solicit a new subscription, and would like another mailed to me.

A suggestion - an old difficult refrain, I know - but could you get some articles from outlying B.C. feminists? Something as simple as what are feminists doing outside the city these days, and how it goes, would interest me.

Janet Beebe, (ex-VSW staffer)

Reader and reviewer disagree

Kinesis:

I read with interest the review of "Something About Amelia" by Kate Shire, and I felt compelled to express my opinion of this film and her review.

Like Ms. Shire, I was pleased that many of the incest stereotypes were challenged, but I disagree with her criticism of the portrayal of the mother. In my opinion and experience, the mother's reactions to her daughter's revelations are fairly typical. The film fails us in that it does not go far enough in examining mother's reaction.

The film is uncritical in its portrayal of what usually happens when incest is revealed although those of us who have worked with incest victims know that the present official procedure leaves much to be desired. This uncritical attitude particularly hurts the mother. The mother looks bad because there is no examination of the reasons for her initially negative reaction. Believing her daughter would destroy her trust and dependence upon her husband and threatens her whole way of life, a life based on her role within the family unit.

This same lack of analysis prevents us from clearly seeing the underlying base of father's incestuous behaviour. As a result, we fail to see the primary importance of mending and strengthening the mother/daughter bond. This is swept aside as attention is focussed on the husband/wife and father/daughter relationship.

I agree with Ms. Shire that this film had no intention of questioning or challenging the basic assumptions of our male dominated society. I have offered this criticism as I am concerned lest the feminist viewpoint be lost to readers seeking understanding and instead finding gross inaccuracies in our criticisms.

Jeanette Poirier, Halifax, N.S.

Solidarity Times sub to Kinesis

to the editors and financial wizards of *kinesis*,

due to the collapse of funding/support from the bc fed of labour to the solidarity times lou and myself received a refund on our subscription. the amount was not large but we felt that *kinesis* can use all the money they can get. so we are sending you this donation, curtesy of the unsolidarity like action of our favourite trade union body.

hope that others like us will do the same with their refund as there is a desperate need for alternative news out of bc.

your iwd edition was really enjoyable perhaps you could do some sort of summary of the last six months for those of us not in the province.

in solidarity, Susan Mullan & Lou Nelson
Montreal

Art vs. propaganda: artist responds

Kinesis:

K.O. Kanne wrote an article in the October '83 *Kinesis* called "When is art subversive when do politics subvert art?" I liked it a lot. Then, in the February '84 issue, Monica Thwaites' article "Art v. craft v. propaganda" expanded on the ideas in K.O. Kanne's piece. I disagreed with most of what Thwaites said, but I was excited to read it. The way we develop our ideas is by trying them out, re-thinking them, arguing, discussing, re-thinking again. So here is my thinking sparked by Monica Thwaites. My examples will be mostly taken from 'Western' visual art, because that's the tradition I work in and the area I know best.

One issue is the style the article was written in - lots of big words and complicated sentence structures. It's a style a lot of art criticism uses. For art critics, it can sometimes start to seem like the normal way to write. It just slips off the end of our pencils effortlessly. But I think it's dangerous for us as feminists, because most people will read the first paragraph, shrug, and turn the page. It's really hard to read. Sure, people could understand it if they struggled through it, but why should they? It's not more beautiful, deep, or precise than simpler language. It's just more complicated. We've learned that writing style from the mainstream art world. They write like that because they don't *want* most people to understand them. They believe art is for a highly educated elite. I don't think that's what we want.

As for the content of the article, there were two main sections, one on the differences between art and craft, and one on the difference between art and propaganda.

I found the section on craft confusing. I was never quite sure how she was defining craft. It starts out: "Regardless of the political ramifications and historical significance of the craftswoman in our society, craft itself is a discipline separate from that of art by virtue of aesthetic values and creative objectives unique to craft alone." It seems like she's defining craft as functional work, like weaving, pottery, quilting, etc. But later she says "...thus we have both a craft of writing, painting, dancing, etc.", which sounds like she's talking about craft as technique, as "craftspersonship". In either case, I don't see the value of separating art from craft.

If we take the definition of craft as functional work - quilts as opposed to paintings - the separation is hazy. There are paintings that use the same visual language that women have put into their quilts for centuries. There are quilts that were made to hang on gallery walls and have never seen a bed. So where is the sharp division? Is it art only if it won't keep you warm?

Furthermore, people's ideas about art and craft change from culture to culture and throughout history. In 'Western' society, this big separation between art and craft dates back only to the Renaissance and the roots of capitalism. Many other cultures have never had that split. Our concepts of art, craft, and the difference between them aren't based on some kind of unchanging aesthetics. They're influenced by the social, economic, and political factors of the times. If we're defining art and craft, we can't ignore those factors.

If we take the definition of craft as work that has purely technical concerns, as opposed to work with an emotional/spiritual aspect to it, I still don't see what's useful about separating them. I mean, we can talk about "the craft of writing" and "the art of writing" and perhaps understand writing better by contrasting those two elements, but out in the world, writing is a mixture of both elements. It's not like two separate things that are clearly different from each other. It's more like a continuum, with art that's purely technical and denies all content on one end, and art that's all content and no technique on the other, but most art falls somewhere in between.

But that's a minor quibble compared to how I felt about the art v. propaganda section. She says propaganda is "communicating and advocating a particular concept, dogma, or politics, concepts that are essentially foreign to the inherent concerns of art and craft." I disagree. I think concepts, dogmas, and politics are perfectly compatible with art and have been throughout history. For centuries European art was dominated by the Catholic Church. Art of that time was propaganda for the Church, and that dogma produces

LETTERS

some beautiful art. As the economic and political power of the Church lessened, art started to reflect the concerns of wealthy nobles and the rising merchant class, because they had the money to hire artists. Again, some excellent art was produced, all about what terrific guys the nobles were and how much expensive stuff they owned. Politics and economics have been interwoven with art both subtly and blatantly in all times and cultures. A portrait in oils or a totem pole, commissioned to show a family's history and status in the community, are both profoundly political, which takes nothing away from their value as art.

We can see the unconscious politics in art clearly when we look at the work of many 20th Century 'Western' male painters (Munch and Dekooning are extreme examples) who show women as grasping, devouring, cruelly sexual, and not quite human. Those men probably never thought about their portrayal of women in political terms, but it was (is) political. Their paintings reflected the backlash against feminism and the gains that union women, suffragettes, black women, *all* women were making. The politics of their times shaped those man and their paintings. The ideas and values that are dominant in a culture have an effect on art - they effect the way we see, the styles that appeal to us, in ways we hardly notice. It's like the air we breathe - we may not be aware of it, but it's everywhere. If we don't actively shape *our* politics into our art, the dominant politics of our times may be shaping it for us.

I'm not saying that all consciously political art is great art. I've made some pretty dumb stuff sometimes. A few years ago, I decided I hadn't done enough really serious, really heavy political art for a while. So I was trying to do some really serious, really heavy stuff and it all looked like crap to me. After a few weeks I was wringing my hands and saying "Oh god, maybe all political artwork *is* boring and stupid." But luckily my friend Portland took me in hand, reminded me about all the terrific political art there is in the world, and told me my problem was that I was working from this "should" in my head, instead of from an overwhelming passion in my head, heart, eyes, hands, and guts simultaneously. And I think she was right. I think that for any art to be really moving it has to be working on a lot of different levels at once. It has to appeal to our senses, our minds, our emotions, and more. And yes, some political art comes only from the head and it's pretty thin stuff. But the same can be said of some abstract art. It's a problem all art shares.

In K.O. Kanne's article she writes, "Politics subverts art whenever it is tagged on as a directive, as opposed to having already been integrated into a vision." I agree, and I've seen (heard, read) a fair amount of political artwork with that integrated vision. In Monica Thwaites' article she says, "I have purposefully avoided discussing the complex area wherein art and craft and propaganda overlap successfully as in, for example, Judy Chicago's "Dinner Party", or the writings of Virgina Woolf." That makes it sound as if only a few famous artists have every integrated art, craft, and propaganda successfully. I don't think that's true. I think that an integrated vision is characteristic of many women artists. As women, most of us have been socialized *not* to put our work, our emotions, our politics, etc. into separate little compartments. Most of us have been trained from birth to be housewives whose work isn't separated from private life, or sex, or emotions, and is never done. I hear over and over from women in art schools that they want to, *need* to do art that's about their everyday lives, often in spite of heavy opposition from their male teachers. This is one of our great strengths as artists that men could well learn from. And it shows in the art of many, many women at all levels of technical skill.

Towards the end of her article, Thwaites says, "thus, propaganda while necessary in the advocation of the feminist cause, must be clearly distinguished from the art created by feminists so as to prevent our art from being reduced to repetitions of barren and abstract ideologies...wherein all relevance to the concerns of the life of the individual woman ceases to exist." Yes, but feminism isn't a barren and abstract ideology. We struggle to keep our politics, as well as our art, close to the heart, rooted in the reality of women's lives. Then our politics and our art can sing together a deep, wild truth.

Persimmon Blackbridge
(NB. Many of the ideas in this article, as well as much needed encouragement to write it came from Elizabeth Shefrin.)

Price needs to be replaced

Open Letter to: Mayor Harcourt and Aldermen/women...

As you may know, the West End Advisory Council has been harassing both johns and prostitutes verbally and physically. These sorts of vigilante groups are not the way to deal with the prostitution issue. Their actions concern you directly. Gordon Price, who is employed by the City Social Planning Department to look at a number of West End issues, including prostitution, has taken part in the vigilante actions. What is he doing out there? Why is the city paying him $15,000.00 to do research on prostitution when he has already made up his mind about the issue?

We have not yet seen his report, but his actions cast a dubious light on all prostitution research he has done. We think that it is totally ludicrous that this man, known for his strong anti-prostitute stance, should ever have been hired to do this important work in the first place.

Price should be immediately replaced with someone with a little more objectivity and fairness, if it is not already too late. And, without serious consultation with the prostitutes themselves through their organization, Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes (ASP), we cannot understand how any real solution will ever be reached. This is not to say that the concerns of West End residents are unimportant; obviously they are. However, all of those involved deserve the right to be heard. It is time that those who have never been taken seriously, the prostitutes, are given a chance.

We look forward to receiving your reply and seeing some positive action on the issus of prostitution.

In peace, M.van Loon, Kandace Kerr, Faith Jones, Jeff S., Jeanette van Loon, Peter R.

Thanks for the coverage

Kinesis:

Good luck in your funding application; it is more vital than ever that you keep going, you are our 'flag-ship' and focus, now as ever and perhaps even more so as things go from bad to worse. Thanks above all for *Kinesis*; it keeps me sane if making me homesick. The 'solidarity' coverage was splendid, especially compared to that we got in the commercial press here.

In support, Gillain Walker, Ottawa, Ont.

Announcements behind the times

Kinesis:

I'm enclosing a cheque for renewal of my subscription. *Kinesis* is important to me. You put together a first-class magazine.

May I carp about one thing that concerns me though: often I don't get my copy until *after* several of the things in the announcements have passed. Could you perhaps a) put mailing date on the outside as some other magazines do so subscribers can keep records of how long it takes in the mail and b) get announcements in a month earlier and give some Feb. and March announcements in the Feb. issue, or at least to March 15.

Thanks and good luck with your funding.

Norma B.

Thanks for the suggestions. Readers can help keep Bulletin Board *up to date by sending in announcements early. Our postage meter puts a mailing date on the papers, and they get mailed the same day. Ed.*

VSW working day continued from p. 1

It's the kind of meaty issue that needs to be constantly developed in discussions with staff and board and she makes a note to raise it at the next meeting.

The new volunteer is settled in for the afternoon and is just starting to feel comfortable in her phone answering role, when the inevitable happens. The phone rings and she answers it jauntily with Hello, Status of Women...There is a long silence on the other end of the line, and finally, a gigantic sob. The caller is in great distress. She's worked up her courage to make that first phone call for help.

Patty, who has just walked in the door, spends nearly 45 minutes on the phone with the woman and finally refers her to transition house. The new volunteer is visibly shaken after the phone call. Although the staff don't say so, they are glad that at least the volunteer hadn't answered the phone to an abusive, anti-woman caller - an occasional harassment. If she had, she might not return to help again.

There's just time for a few more things before the end of the day: a single mother has not received her welfare cheque and she's not getting a valid reason from Human Resources. She's desperate and has heard that VSW does advocacy work. Could someone phone them and try to get the matter straightened out?

As the staff leave for the day the 'night shift' arrives - the volunteers who produce *Kinesis*; also a group of women who are using VSW space for their organization's meetings.

The new volunteer is on her way home, thinking about supper and a hot bath and also thinking that although the day had been eventful and interesting, she might not choose to work on the phone shift tomorrow morning.

Consequently, it was a staff member who picked up the phone the following day when the Attorney General's department called to announce the provincial government had cut off all funding to the Vancouver Status of Women.

BULLETIN BOARD

JOBS

PRESS GANG WILL BE HIRING one full-time staff person in May. The application deadline is May 11th, 1984. Press Gang is a worker-controlled, feminist and anti-capitalist print shop and book publisher. The new collective member will be primarily responsible for running a small offset printing press, with some responsibility for bindery and pre-press work. Applicants should have some experience in the printing trade, preferably running an A.B. Dick or similar press, although training can be provided. Equally important is an interest and experience in working collectively.

PRESS GANG IS ALSO looking for women who are interested in acquiring some skills in the printing trade to work with us on a volunteer basis. The work would be primarily in the bindery, but could also involve pre-press, bookkeeping, fundraising and other tasks. Training will be provided. For more info call Press Gang at 253-1224.

WORKSHOPS

PROCLAIMING OURSELVES: An Empowerment Workshop for Women, Sat. May 12, 10-4 at UBC. Led by Jillian Ridington and Carol Gordon. $25. Inquiries, 222-5272.

THE B.C. EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM will be the subject of all day workshops sponsored by Budget University, Sat. May 12, 9:00-4:00 at King Edward campus of VCC.

STORYTELLING AND WORKSHOP FOR WOMEN, Sunday, May 20, 2-5 pm. From 2-3 pm. we will hear 'Tales of strong women'; from 3-5 pm we will explore our own stories using words, play, movement, guided relaxation, and fantasy. The cost is $2 for the story-telling; $6 for the workshop. Call Mary Love May at 733-6402 for more info and to register.

DES WORKSHOP will be presented by the Vancouver Women's Health Collective, Tuesday, May 22 at 7:30 p.m. in the Robson Square Media Centre. DES is a synthetic estrogen frequently given to pregnant women in North America between 1941-1971 to prevent miscarriage. In 1971 the drug was banned for use in pregnancy when it was linked to many health problems in children of women who took it. In this workshop we will provide information and emotional support to women who think or know they are DES exposed. The workshop is open to all interested women. Phone the Health Collective at 736-6696 for more info, or if you need childcare for the workshop.

WOMEN EMERGING, a week-end workshop on Galiano Island, May 26-27, 1984, led by Sara Joy David, clinical psychologist and feminist therapist. Included are stress reduction exercises, breathing, bodywork, applied meditation, creative visualizations, affirmations, feminist analysis, singing and techniques developed by Chuck Spezzano for clearing out intergenerational family blocks. To register phone 385-2954 or write to 1165 Fairfield Road, Victoria, B.C. V8V 3A9. Cost for room & board (including nutritious meals) is $60; Tuition is $50-$200 on a sliding scale.

SELF-HELP AFTERNOON organized by the Vancouver Women's Health Collective, Sat. June 2 at 1p.m. We will focus on vaginal and cervical health and teach cervical self-exam. We will also discuss vaginal infections, their causes and treatment, Pap tests, etc. For more info about the content, the location of the workshop, or if you need childcare, call the Health Collective at 736-6696.

FOOTPRINTS OF THE MIND: Personal exploration through phototherapy is an experientially-based workshop led by Judy Weiser, director of the Phototherapy Centre. July 27-29 on Gabriola Island. For more info contact Judy at 689-9709. For registration info contact PD Seminars, Davis Road, Gabriola Island,B.C. VOR 1XO.

EVENTS

YET ANOTHER CAPRI HALL DANCE! Come celebrate Your Mother's Day with us. May 4 at 8p.m., Capri Hall, 3925 Fraser, All Women Welcome. Childcare/wheelchair accessible/smoking allowed. Advanced tickets at Ariel/Octopus East/Little Sisters/Womens Bookstore. Organized by the 1984 Vancouver Lesbian Connection.

CO-OP RADIO MARATHON, May 4-13 will feature special public affairs, music and restrospective programming. Tune in to CFRO, 102.7 FM. Pledge your support. Become a member. Help keep Co-op Radio on the air.

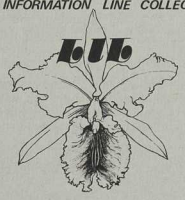
BUDGET UNIVERSITY GRADUATION Benefit Dance with *Communique*, Sat. May 12, 8:00-1:00 at the Ukranian Hall, 805 E. Pender, Vanc. $5 employed; $3 unemployed. Childcare provided.

BIM'S MOTHER'S DAY COUNTRY SPECTACULAR, with a band and special guests. Wed. May 13, 8 pm at Vanc. East Cultural Centre.

Opening of Claire Kujundzic's art show at La Quena, 1111 Commercial Dr., Vanc., May 15.

LESBIAN INFORMATION LINE COLLECTIVE

LILI



BENEFIT DANCE — women only

JUNE 22 — 8:30 p.m.

CAPRI HALL — $3-$5

3925 FRASER STREET — WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE

CALL 734-1016 TO ARRANGE FOR CHILDCARE

Tickets available at — Ariel Books, Women's Bookstore, Little Sisters, Octopus east & west

WALK AND ROLL, organized by CAAW&S (Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women & Sport) in celebration of National Physical Activity Week, will take place May 19 at the False Creek Elementary School, 11a.m.-3p.m. Rain or shine. The circular course can be completed on foot or wheels. Fitness demonstrations all day. For more info call CAAW&S at 687-3333, loc. 242.

RAPE RELIEF 4th ANNUAL WALKATHON, Sunday May 27, beginning at 11a.m., Stanley Park Seawall. We invite you to walk with us or sponsor a walker. The Walkathon helps raise funds to keep a Women's Shelter available to women and their children. Phone 872-8212 for more info.

BIKE-A-THON to raise funds for the control zones in El Salvador, June 2, beginning at Queen Elizabeth Park at 8a.m. Jointly organized by the Solidarity Committee of El Salvador (a Vancouver organization) and the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (in Bellingham, WA.) Participants from the two groups will meet at the Peace Arch Park at the border (approx. 50 km. from Vancouver). There will be speakers and music beginning at 1:00p.m. For more info on how you can participate and get your pledge sheets, please contact Andrea at 872-3415.

'SPRING HAS SPRUNG'
International Women's Day
Benefit Dinner
at
BABE'S
a place for women & friends
560 Davie St.

Weds. May 16 — $10

6-7pm cocktails — •women only

7-8^{30} buffet (vegetarian & non-veg.) — •access

8^{30}-11 entertainment T.B.A.

ADVANCE TICKETS ONLY: Women's Bookstore, Ariel, Octopus East & West

PRIVATIZATION AND THE PUBLIC TRUST, a conference sponsored by the Social Planning & Review Council of B.C. and the Canadian Council on Social Development, will take place May 31 - June 2 at U.B.C. Instructional Resources Centre. The conference will address the realities of the privatization of social services and the necessity of relating social concern to social responsibility. For more info write to 301-1107 Homer St., Vanc., V6B 2Y1, or call 685-9725.

TO INFORM US ABOUT YOU, AND YOU ABOUT US is the theme of the 1984 National Conference of the Canadian Assoc. for the Advancement of Women and Sport, taking place June 8, 9 & 10 in Ottawa. The keynote speaker is Greta Nemiroff, a well-known feminist from Montreal. For more info write to CAAWS, P.O. Box 3769, Station C, Ottawa K1Y 4J8.

CONNIE KALDOR, gifted songwriter and performer, will be in concert Friday, May 25 at the Queen Elizabeth Playhouse, 8:00 pm. Tickets $9, $10, reserved seating, available from Black Swan Records, Octopus Books East, Vanc. Folk Music Festival and at VTC/CBO outlets.

BULLETIN BOARD

COMMUNITY CALENDAR FOR THE SOUTH SURREY/ White Rock Women's Place Association, 1425 George St., White Rock, B.C. Ph. 536-9611 for more info. Ongoing programs: Mom & Tot Drop In/Everywoman's Drop In/ Women's Night - film and social/Sunday Afternoon at the Movies - 1st Sunday of the month. Special Programs: May 5th, Workshop: "Assertion for Women", 10-4. Led by Michaela Johnson. May 16 "Not a Love Story" - film and discussion. June 9, Anger Workshop, 10-4.

YOU WANT TO SUPPORT ALTERNATE WAYS OF BUYING FOOD...
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1806 Victoria Drive, IS YOURS TO SHARE.
One-stop shopping in a helpful, social atmosphere at a food store that you can own. Optional work requirement for discounts on groceries. We're open from Tuesday to Friday, 2-7:30 and Saturday and Sunday from 10:30-5:30. Phone 254-5044.

GROUPS

LESBIAN DROP-IN, Thursday evenings, 7-10p.m. at 1501 W. Broadway, Vancouver. Call 734-1016 Thurs. or Sun. 7-10p.m. for more info.

LESBIANS AGAINST THE BUDGET - Speakers Available. We are a group of lesbians that came together in October, 1983 to fight a repressive budget and legislation. We are individuals and group representatives who vary in background, political perspectives and public visibility as lesbians. We have speakers on how our issues relate to yours. Please contact us at 879-6884 (Lower Mainland Solidarity Coalition Office) or write us at P.O. Box 1559, Station A, Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2P7.

LESBIANS AGAINST THE BUDGET - meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30p.m. in suite 301, 2515 Burrard. All women welcome.

CALLING ALL KINESIS WORKERS. present and future! We are planning to meet on a day in June--to find out about the different aspects of the paper, work out our strengths and weaknesses, and meet the new staff. Call the VSW office, 873-5925, for details.

CLASSIFIED

AUTO REPAIR: Complete Car Care By Women. We specialize in tune ups and brakes. Please leave your name and number at 253-7596 for pager #9689.

SPACE AVAILABLE IN A MIXED CO-OP HOUSE in Commercial Drive area. We are looking for someone who is friendly, stable and politically aware, whose lifestyle is compatible with a small baby. Non-smoker preferred. Rent is $180 or less plus utilities. Available now or June 1. 254-2230.

HELPING OURSELVES: A Handbook for Women Starting Groups. Available for $5 from Women's Counselling Referral & Education Centre of Toronto, 348 College Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 1S4.

THE VANCOUVER WOMEN'S BOOKSTORE is seeking new members. If you like literature and have a feminist spirit, please call us or drop in to 315 Cambie Street. Ph. 684-0523.

PRESS GANG is having a fundraising raffle. To donate prizes or sell tickets, call 253-1224.

"RITES" is a new magazine for lesbian and gay liberation. It features provocative commentary, news, reviews, interviews, lifestyle and health columns, artists and their work, want ads and more. Subscribe now and get 10 issues of "Rites" for $14.50. Write to Box 65, Station F, Toronto, Ontario. M4Y 2L4.

MEDIA WATCH is expanding and needs donations of office furniture, kitchen table and chairs, and small fridge. Will pick up. Call 873-8511.

THE OPEN DOOR, a rural lesbian newsletter, invites submissions and subscriptions. We feature articles on rural issues, connections, prose and poetry, coming out. For more info, contact the Northern Lesbians Collective, RR #2, Box 50, USK Store, Terrace, B.C. V8G 3Z9.

NEW TITLES at the Vancouver Women's Bookstore. Fiction: *Light a Penny Candle*, Maeve Binchy, $4.95/*Isis*, Janine Veto, $9.05/*A Severed Wasp*, Madeline L'Engle, $9.95/*Patience & Sarah*(reprint), Isabel Miller, $3.25. Non-fiction: *Falling from Grace*, poetry, Elly Van de Walle, $5.95./*Out from Under*, ed. Jean Swallow, $11.20/*We Are All Part of One Another: A Barbara Deming Reader*, $14.25/*The Grand Domestic Revolution*, Dolores Hayden, $13.95.

DO YOU ENJOY KEEPING UP WITH THE NEWS? Do you get angry when women's issues are relegated to page 17 of the daily paper? Do you ask more insightful questions than Barbara Frum? Do you want to make use of all those endless conversations in the bar?
Have we got a job for you.
Join the *Kinesis* News Group.. We need women to cover issues and events from a feminist perspective. Call Jan, Patty or Emma at 873-5925.

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Pensions continued from p. 5

for private pension plans? If it is true that women reject survivor benefits because they imply dependency, why does it not imply dependency to have to depend on their husbands to contribute to the homemaker pension scheme?

"The idea that the NAC proposal somehow forces the husband to contribute to a pension for the wife who provides homemaking services for him is simply not so. In a one-earner couple, the husband's earnings constitute the bulk of family income. Mandatory higher contributions will therefore come out of family income and that will reduce the disposable income of the family, including that of the wife. If survivor's benefits are to be abolished, as NAC proposes, what happens to the full time homemaker whose husband dies before reaching 65 years, which means that no survivor's benefits are payable?

There are two major reasons for the Right to support the homemaker pension scheme: it is considerably cheaper (it is just a small supplement intended for a minority of women) than a real pension reform. One thing the Right can do is "add" and "subtract", especially the latter. Secondly, it is "traditional". It endorses the concept of women's place in the home, and these people have never had any doubt about where women belong.

The list of objections could continue but the major areas of disagreement have been outlined. The real problem for women and women's groups across Cananda is to oppose the Dulude/NAC proposal, now endorsed by the Parliamentary Task Force, and to support increases in the OAS/GIS and a doubling of the C/QPP instead.

VANCOUVER STATUS OF WOMEN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, June 28
N.D.P. Hall
517 East Broadway
7:30 p.m.

Nominations are now being accepted for the executive. In order to run for the executive, you must have been a member of VSW in good standing for at least six months. If interested, send your name and phone number by May 28 to Vancouver Status of Women, 400A West 5th Ave., Vancouver, V5Y 1J8, Attn: Nominations Committee.

INSIDE

We've been raided! Can you help?

Write letters, pledge, join!

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Please remember that VSW operates on inadequate funding — we need member support!

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