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JUNE 1998

Rita Coolidge and friends ...pg 17

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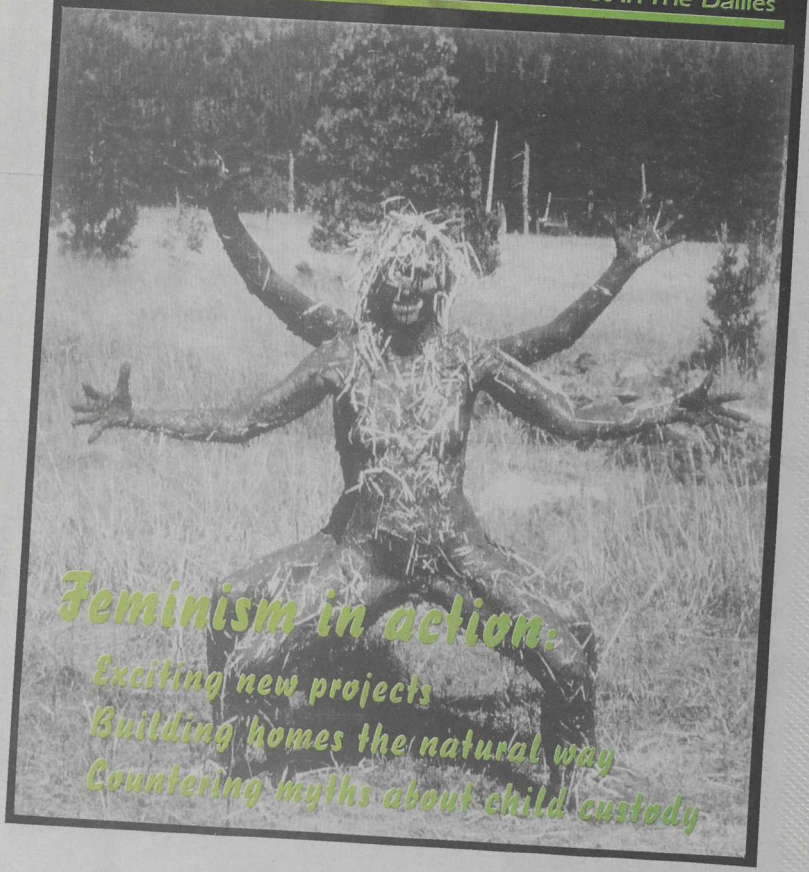
KINESIS

News About Women That's Not In The Dailies



Feminism in action:

Exciting new projects

Building homes the natural way

Countering myths about child custody

INSIDE

KINESIS

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Kinesis welcomes volunteers to work on all aspects of the paper. Our next Story Meetings are **Tues Jun 2** and **Tues Aug 4, 7 pm** at our office, 309-877 E. Hastings St. Production for the July/August issue is from **June 16-24.** All women welcome even if you don't have experience.

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

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FRONT COVER
Women "cobbing" around
[see page 11.]
photo courtesy of Groundworks.

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

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blown a fuse?
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seize the clues
meet your muse
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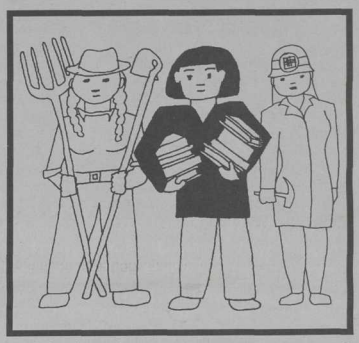
defence $9 billion

women's programs
$8.1 million

Women get short end 3



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AS KINESIS

goes to press

As *Kinesis* goes to press, fewer and fewer newspapers remain outside the right-wing hands of media magnate Conrad Black. Last month, Black increased his media concentration by buying out six more BC newspapers for his Southam Chain *[see page 7.]*

In response to his rivals, Black has retorted that they should "put up or shut up," meaning of course that if they don't like it, they should join him and buy up a whole bunch of newspapers themselves.

Meanwhile, *Kinesis* responded with...see back cover.

It's really encouraging to witness that amidst all the backlash against feminism, women across the country are still continuing do some incredible and creative things *[see page 8.]*

A wonderful example of solidarity is how women came together around presenting testimonies to the Special Joint Committee on Custody and Access over the last couple of months *[see stories, this and last issue.]*

The Committee, with key-starring roles by Liberal Senator Anne Cools—whose demands instigated the enactment of the Committee—and her partner in mean-spirited crime, co-chair Liberal MP Roger Galloway, seems to have as its mission discrediting and re-victimizing women who speak out about the realities women and children face when going through divorce and separation.

Early on, once it became clear how toxic the atmosphere at the Committee hearings would be, women in Vancouver (and indeed across the country) contacted each other by phone and e-mail to share stories, information, stats and strategies to ensure we'd get our points across, with minimal damage to our work, selves, credibility and integrity.

This show of strength and determination made it at least a bit safer for women to speak before the Committee, and it is a triumph we were able to get as many women to speak, alongside the huge showing of disgruntled fathers and fathers' rights groups.

Still, the antics of a few Committee members made this consultations with the public a less than "public" process. Many women, particularly those who had experienced violence in their own intimate relationships and then been betrayed by the justice system, did not testify their personal stories before the Committee, because of the hostility they would have faced. However, women's and children's advocates are still urging women to submit written stories and recommendations concerning custody and access issues to the Committee *[see page 10 for submission info.]*

As well, women at the receiving end of disrespectful and inappropriate behaviour by Cools and other Committee members will be writing to various authorities to ensure action against the offending Committee members, and that the Committee's final report is read with its flawed process in mind. For more info about the broader strategy, contact the National Association of Women and the Law, (613) 241-7570, or in Vancouver, VCASAA at Munroe House 734-5722.

Speaking of politics in action....almost 500 people surrounded a hotel in downtown Montreal to challenge the MAI (the multilateral agreement on investment). They managed to blocked the entrances to the hotel where the secretary-general of the OECD was to be speaking. The OECD or the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development is the body where MAI negotiations are taking place. Police eventually were called in to haul the protesters away.

In response to the protest, the secretary-general Donald Johnston vowed that ratification of the MAI would go ahead. Johnston, a former Liberal MP, claimed that those who challenge the MAI are just "misinformed" about the deal.

As feminists, it is imperative that we continue challenging the larger political agenda of corporate globalization behind the MAI and other deals being negotiated, such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) *[see page opposite.]*

The FTAA is more than an extension of NAFTA in the region. Truth is, the FTAA is not really about "trade;" it's more about "investment." (Yes, investment, as in the multilateral agreement on investment.)

For the 34 countries in the region, most of their trade is directed towards the United States. And there are relatively few trading barriers between countries in the region, as a number of bi- or multi-lateral trade agreements already exist.

So really, the FTAA's goal is about ensuring a smooth ride for multi-national corporations--mostly from the US--who want access to the natural resources and labour pools, particularly in the countries in the South.

That's all we have room for this month, as *Kinesis* goes to press. We hope you enjoy this edition of *Kinesis*, "news about women that Conrad Black doesn't give a (hoot) about." Have a great June.

INSIDE

Kinesis

Summer is here and the sun is hot. "Look out," the women are all taking off their... Oops, that's for somewhere else inside this edition of *Kinesis [see page 15.]*

This month during most of production, outside *Kinesis*, the weather was drab, dreary and drizzly. But inside *Kinesis*, the atmosphere was bright, bubbly and bodacious. Lots of women dropped by during production, and we all had hilarious times playing around with comic ideas, especially for the back cover.

Speaking out that back cover...we want to thank Colleen Sheridan for her "feminist scary tale," and for her life-like drawing of "the Creature." Thanks also to Becky Bee and *The Cob Builders Handbook* for letting us use (and modify slighty) the drawing of the women encircling a cob house.

Over the past month, we have received a lot of support in response to our difficul financial situation. Certainly, things are now picking up for *Kinesis*, and we would like to thank all the women who got new subscriptions to *Kinesis*, renewed their subs, signed up friends, family, anyone and everyone, and responded to our "If 2,000 feminists donated $20 each..." campaign. Your support is invaluable to the continued growth of paper.

A special thanks to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women who sent out a subscription support letter on behalf of *Kinesis* to its membership. And we thank Lee Lakeman and Penny Kome, who both called on women via the Internet to subscribe to *Kinesis*.

We also appreciate the women who wrote letters and notes to us this month. We received some very positive and fun responses to our "Garlic" piece in last month's issue.

Next year is *Kinesis*' 25th anniversary year, and we want to make it big! We're not sure what that means, and we're open to ideas. Our newly struck Marketing Committee met last month to strategize around all the exciting and practical ways to better promote *Kinesis*. We hope to have a plan worked out in the next few months on how to build *Kinesis*' subscription, advertising and distribution bases. We invite women interested in joining this committee.

One thing we had hoped to do was have a visioning meeting for *Kinesis*—looking at content, design, direction—in June, but this may not happen because of scheduling difficulties. Still, we are committed to having a visioning meeting, and invite women to give us your comments or participate in the process. We'll keep you posted.

Kinesis is pleased and happy to welcome another member to the Editorial Board: Laura Quilici. Laura recently started getting more and more involved with *Kinesis*; but, for some time now, she has been active with a number of feminist organizations about town--as a member of Vancouver Status of Women's Programming Committee and Battered Women's Support Services' Fundraising Committee. Welcome on board Laura.

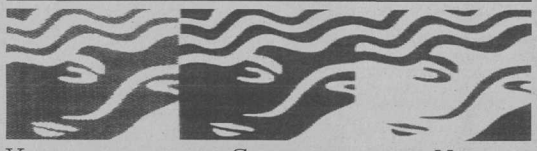
This issue we want to acknowledge women who shared their thoughts, stories and analysis with *Kinesis* for the first time. Thanks to Evelyn Drescher, Louise, Thauvette, Laura Quilici, Kate Hall, Gina Gasongi Simon, Nancy Parker, Sheila James, Melina Young and Melissa Redmond.

Thanks also to Nicole Deagan for her courage to tell her own personal story at the Joint Senate/House Committee hearings on custody and access *[see page 10.]* And thank you to all the women who spoke to *Kinesis* about the exciting activities at their women's organization: Debra Apperly, Yvonne Sinkevich and Leah White. We look forward to bringing our reader more updates from women's groups across the country and around the globe.

We also say 'hello' this issue to new production volunteers Kathe Lemon, Melissa Redmond, and Simone Jade. Thanks all.

If you're interested in volunteering for *Kinesis*, check out one of our next Story Meetings on June 2 and August 4 at 7pm, or come down during production for our July/August issue between June 16 and 24. If you are interested finding out more about getting involved with *Kinesis*, call Agnes at 255-5499.

Well, that's it for this month, inside *Kinesis*. Have a great time in the sunshine.



VANCOUVER STATUS OF WOMEN

Our appreciation to the following supporters who became members, renewed their memberships or donated to Vancouver Status of Women or who responded to our new *Kinesis* 2000 Campaign in May:

Mary Billy * Somer Brodribb * Paula Clancy * Sharon Costello * Veronica Delorme * Hugh Herbison * Fatima Jaffer *Abby Lippman * Kathleen MacRae * Jan Noppe * Kate Nonesuch * Jean Rands * Christine St, Peter * Jeanne St. Piere * Rosemary Rupps * Verna Turner * Lorrie Williams * Hospital Employees' Union * VanCity Credit Union

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

Mary Frey * Elisabeth Geller * Jody Gordon * Erin Graham * Barbara Lebrasseur * Eha Onno * Valerie Raoul

Corrections

This issue *Kinesis* would like to correct a couple of name-spelling errors in our May 1998 issue. Apologies to Michelle McGeough, who took our cover photo of the Garlic Girls, and to Sharon Batt, a breast cancer survivor and activist in Montreal who was listed as a resource in our story on tamoxifen *[page 3.]*

NEWS

Funding for women's organizations in Canada:

SWC refuses to change

by Agnes Huang

Despite widespread objections from women's groups across the country, Status of Women Canada (SWC) brought its new funding guidelines into effect April 1st.

Since they were first announced a year ago, women's groups have continually expressed their criticisms to Hedy Fry, the secretary of state for SWC. Women made clear the new funding arrangements, which move away from program funding (a form of "core" funding) towards strictly "project" funding, will jeopardize the ongoing viability of many women's organization. *[see Kinesis May 1997.]*

Elaine Condon of the Gander Women's Centre says that the seven women's centres in Newfoundland lost their program funding, which was be used for, among other things, rent, administration, and generally keeping the centre open.

"This year, we got some project funding, but we need the core funding because that's what gives us the flexibility to work on all the issues women bring to our doors, and to spend time helping women sort through their issues," says Condon.

"When you have to rely on project funding, then your whole time is taken up with the project, so you never get to do all the stuff you're called upon to do by the people in your community."

The Newfoundland government did step in with a small grant for each women's centre. However, Condon says that some groups which had previouly received program funding from SWC, such as the provincial association against family violence, were not extended a provincial grant.

"It's not okay for SWC to the province pick up the slack because the federal government has the overall responsibility for status of women in any case," says Condon.

"Responsibility" is the key word stressed by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC). The national umbrella group refused to apply under the new guidelines in protest of SWC's refusal to listen to women. As a consequence, NAC has been denied federal funding, and is in danger of shutting down.

While other women's groups did file their SWC funding applications under the new criteria, they make it clear that it is not because they support the changes, but out of necessity. Most sya they support the action taken by NAC.

NAC's decision is part of a larger campaign to hold the federal government accountably to its stated commitment to equality for women. Certainly, part of that commitment would be to support the critical work provided by grassroots women's organizations. However, since 1989, the federal Women's Program budget has been cut by $5 million, and no new women's organization has received program funding since 1990 because of "budget constraints."

In a strategy to press for increased funding for women's organizations, the Women's Fair Share Campaign, a coalition of national and Quebec women's groups, launched its "toonie" postcard earlier this year. "Aren't women worth more than a cup of coffee?!" is the Campaign's slogan in calling for an increase in the Women's Program budget to $2 for each woman and girl (equivalent to $30 million a year.)

The Campaign also compiled a list of federal spending priorities, exposing how much is spent on military in Canada, as compared to on women *[see box.]*

In late April, the members of the Women's Fair Share Campaign met with Hedy Fry, and called on her to support the campaign and rescind the guidelines for funding. As well, the groups raised the issue of funding for NAC, particularly the compromise suggested that SWC provide NAC with bridge funding until an alternative agreement can be reached.

Fry refused to accept any of the proposals put forth.

Lise Martin, the executive director of the Canadian Research Institute on the Advancement of Women (a member group of the Campaign), says Fair Share Campaign will be undertaking a big push in the Fall, and are calling on women's groups across the country to lobby their local members of parliament over the summer months.

Women are encouraged to support NAC and the Women's Fair Share Campaign in the fight to secure adequate and much-deserved funding for women's organizations across Canada. For more information about the Campaign or to send donations to ensure NAC stays alive, write to: NAC, 234 Eglinton Ave. E, Suite 203, Toronto, Ontario, M4P 1K5; tel: (416) 932-1718; toll free: 1-800-665-5124 (use sparingly, if possible); fax: (416) 932-0646; or e-mail: nac@web.net.

Federal Government Priorities	
$9 billion	Canada's 1996 Defence Budget
$159 million	Federal contributions to Ontario under Canada Infrastructure Works Agreement, 1996-97
$61.9 million	Federal contributions to private business to develop technology, 1996-97
$46.8 million	Federal grant to Pratt & Whitney under Technology Partnerships Canada, 1996-97
$11.8 million	Federal contribution to Toronto Dominion bank for liabilities under the Small Business Loans Act, 1996-97
$10.6 million	Federal contribution to the Royal Bank of Canada under the Small Business Loans Act, 1996-97
$8.1 million	Women's Program, 1996-97

The Free Trade Area of the Americas:

Stepping up the challenge

by Agnes Huang

About 2,000 people gathered in Santiago, Chile last April to challenge yet another extension of the global corporate agenda, the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

The goal of the People's Summit of the Americas was not to come up with a common statement in opposition to the FTAA. Rather, says Patty Barrera, the goal was to bring people together to work towards building a strong hemispheric social alliance to confront free trade. Barrera is with Common Frontiers, a multi-sectoral coalition in Canada of national unions, human rights organizations, and other NGOs whose focus is on trade and social and economic integration issues in the Americas.

The FTAA is a trade liberalization agreement under negotiation among the 34 countries of North, Central and South America, excluding Cuba. The heads of state of the FTAA nations first got together to discuss such an agreement in 1994 in Miami, Florida.

The driving force behind the Miami Summit was the US government's Enterprise for the Americas Initiative (EAI), which was part of the American's larger agenda of global economic restructuring. The EAI's goals were three-fold: hemispheric-wide free trade, promotion of investment, and the easing of debt burdens. However, the US made it clear that for countries to receive any funds for reducing their debt load, they must agree to IMF [International Monetary Fund] or World Bank structural adjustment programs.

The Miami Summit resulted in an action plan that set up two processes: the FTAA, which was to deal strictly with trade issues, and SIRG (the Summit Implementation Review Group), which was to deal with everything else--human rights, education, health, environment, indigenous issues, democracy...

The FTAA process is in the hands of the trade ministers of each member nation, and the SIRG process is being handled through the Organization of American States by political appointees of the member countries.

Patty Barrera says having such a parallel structure is ridiculous and unrealistic because trade issues cannot be separated from the broader social and economic issues.

"You can't talk about poverty without talking about income distribution," says Barrera. "You can't talk about sustainable development or education and literacy programs without talking about the reason these programs don't exist in most Latin American countries: their IMF debt loads.

Participants at the People's Summit shared stories about how economic restructuring impacts on their communities, linked their experiences in challenging the global corporate agenda, and discussed proposals for alternatives. A number of is-

see FTAA next page

National Abortion Federation conference:

A world vision for choice

by Joyce Arthur

The National Abortion Federation (NAF) held is 22nd annual meeting last month in Vancouver. NAF is a North American organization of abortion service providers that works to keep abortion safe, legal and accessible. This exciting conference was an opportunity for Vancouver's abortion services community to network with colleagues from all over Canada and the United States.

The theme of the conference was "A World Vision for Choice." The 700 participants—doctors, nurses, abortion clinic staff, and pro-choice activists—celebrated the liberalization of abortion laws throughout the world, and especially the 10-year anniversary of the Morgentaler decision in Canada and the 25th anniversary of Roe v. Wade in the US.

About 80 Canadians were able to attend, ensuring a strong Canadian voice at this normally American-dominated conference. We took pride in talking about our experiences here that were the envy of our America friends, including having no anti-abortion laws, the lack of controversy around late-term abortions, and the social stigma of being anti-choice.

The keynote speaker was Judy Rebick, past president of Canada's National Action Committee on the Status of Women and host of the CBC program Face Off. A long-time pro-choice activist, Rebick is a former spokesperson for the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL). Rebick stressed the successes of the abortion rights movement, pointing out, for example, that no serious Canadian politician, including Preston Manning, dares take a strong political stance against abortion. She also casually dismissed the paltry number of anti-choice protestors trudging around outside the hotel where the conference was being held. Their advertised "96-hour vigil" was a dismal failure, attracting only 40 to 50 protestors at peak times.

The conference featured 50 workshops, sessions, training opportunities, and plenary speakers on an amazing variety of topics—from medical/scientific to legal/political. In addition, there were film screenings, awards, receptions, great food, and plenty of time for networking.

The Canadian contingent organized and held our own Canadian providers Day, featuring topics like the mainstreaming of abortion services, controlling media messages about abortion in Canada, and an update on the task force investigating the shootings of three Canadian doctors who provide abortion services. Planned Parenthood and Medical Students for Choice also held separate meetings on the same day.

Dr. Henry Morgentaler was presented a special award for his many years of heroic struggle, culminating in the Supreme Court decision in 1988 which threw out Canada's abortion law. Several other Canadians were also honoured, including Morris Manning, Morgentaler's lawyer in the Supreme Court case; and Carolyn Egan, a long-time abortion rights activist and a spokesperson for the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics. Egan's inspiring and passionate acceptance speech resulted in a standing ovation.

Joyce Arthur is with the Pro-Choice Action Network (formerly the BC Coalition for Abortion Clinics.)

"...no serious Canadian politician, including Preston Manning, dares take a strong political stance against abortion."

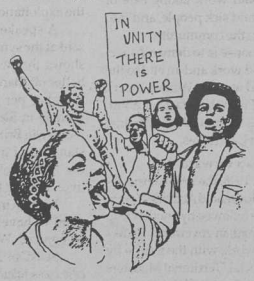
— Judy Rebick —

FTAA from previous page

sue forums were held covering: women's issues, human rights, indigenous issues, social and economic alternatives, environment, agrarian-campesinos, ethics, and trade unions.

(The People's Summit coincided with the second Leaders Summit of the FTAA member nations, also held in Santiago.)

Fay Blaney, who attended the People's Summit on behalf of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, participated in the Women's Forum and the Indigenous Forum. What amazed her most, she said, was the scope of the continental networking among the indigenous groups, particularly via the Internet.



She also noted that the indigenous women made a presentation separate from the Women's Forum statement because they wanted a stronger position taken on the issue of land. Blaney said that impetus came from the indigenous women from Bolivia, a country where women cannot own property.

The land issue is also one that greatly affects Aboriginal women in Canada, Blaney added. As an example, she pointed to the recent court case launched by the BC Native Women's Society challenging provisions in the Indian Act which deny women living on reserves access to matrimonial properties upon the breakdown of their marriages. *[see Kinesis April 1997.]*

It is a particularly important time for Canadian women's groups to get involved in mobilizing against the FTAA, as Canada has taken a lead role in promoting of the Miami Summit agenda. At the Santiago Leaders' Summit, Canada agreed to chair the FTAA for 18 months. And Canada will be hosting the next meeting of trade ministers and of the OAS representatives, as well as the third Leaders' Summit, which will likely happen four years from now.

Barrera mentions the grassroots opposition to the MAI (the multilateral agreement on investments), as inspiration for popularizing the movement against the FTAA. *[Ratification of the MAI process was delayed for six months following widespread protests in many of countries.]*

"The work we do in Canada can't just be about going from Summit to Summit," says Barrera. "It's the work we do in-between that is critical."

For more on the Santiago People's Summit, contact Common Frontiers, 15 Gervais Dr, Suite 305, Don Mills, Ontario, M3C 1Y8; tel: (416) 443-9244; fax: (416) 441-4073; e-mail: comfront@web.net.

A copy of the statements from the Women's Forum are available (in Spanish only, at this time) on the Internet at http://members.tripod.com/~redchile.

BENEFIT AUCTION!

Sunday, June 14, 1pm, Westin Bayshore
To Support Prevention Services for Women

Over 500 auction items! Luxury wilderness vacation on magnificent Stuart Island, gourmet meals, extraordinary guided fishing, Big Bay Marina; all-expense-paid vacation in spectacular alpine meadows, glaciers, Purcell Lodge, Cross Country Ski Resort of the Year; Pegasus Las Vegas vacation; 6 days at the Pinnacles, Silver Star Mountain; 2 weeks for 6 people on Christina Lake; & wilderness, luxury, skiing, golf, lakeside & oceanside vacations in Whistler, Victoria, Banff, Tofino, Jasper, Vancouver & Gulf Islands & over 100 fabulous locations throughout BC, Alberta & the US; hot air balloon rides; Persian carpets; 6-month unlimited-use movie pass; chocolates; Carousel Youth Theatre School; furniture; jewellery; restaurant meals; ballet, symphony, jazz, theatre, movie, and concert tickets; legal services; skippered sailing; gold coin; clothing; CDs; whale watching; bedding; massage; silver, brass, bronze, pewter; Folk Festival tickets; Innuit sculpture; car alarm & repairs; photography services; antiques; golfing; racing; rafting; dancing, Tai Chi, golf, scuba diving, tennis, and flying lessons; office equipment & services; housecleaning; 1 year fitness membership, Bentall Centre; futon; sports; fitness equipment & memberships; vacuums; sewing machine; books; cruises; art by Onley, Average, Smith, Chagall, Jarvis, Danby, Picasso, Point, Scherman, Klee, Xiong, Durer, Bateman, Izzard, Kandinsky, Shives, Evrard, O'Hara, Miro, Granirer, Young, Audubon, Breeze, Conder, Coop & MORE!

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Art viewing: May 22 - June 13, Hongkong Bank, Granville/12th
For information & catalogue: 684-5704

Women and unpaid work:

Making sure we *all* count

by Evelyn Drescher and Ellen Woodsworth

In May 1996, Statistics Canada gathered information on unpaid work through the Census, marking a victory for the women who had fought to have such questions included. For the first time, housework, child and elder care—work done predominantly by women—became concrete and visible. No longer hidden in the household, or in the micro-data of the general social surveys also conducted by StatsCan, this achievement has ensured that unpaid work is now concretely on the public agenda.

Now, the issue is no longer just the recognition of unpaid work through measurements, it is how the information will be used for women's equality. There is no guarantee that unpaid work will figure automatically into government decision-making. Individual women and women's organizations need to be involved directly in the analysis, development, implementation and monitoring of policies which affect the paid and unpaid work women do in our society.

The When Women Count Symposium held in Ottawa last October was intended to initiate a wider public discussion about unpaid work issues among women in Canada. It was conceived as a forum for women's organizations to discuss, analyze and develop strategies concerning unpaid work and public policy, within a progressive, equality seeking, social and economic justice framework.

It was also an opportunity to encourage national and grassroots women's groups to integrate an analysis and understanding of unpaid work as an equality issue into our own advocacy work.

The participants brought with them a wide range of experiences, ideas and concerns about unpaid work. One of the key concerns was how the unpaid work of women in the South drives the economies of the North, and that most foreign aid packages are given on the basis of paid work.

As women worked together in the table discussions and workshops, they identified common values and priorities, and formulated plans on how to increase awareness and recognition of unpaid work.

The following are highlights of the strategies and actions proposed during the discussion:

Mediation is a way of finding solutions to conflict which preserve rights, dignity and the future ability to work together.

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seeking peaceful solutions which respect difference, equality and justice

labour/employment, human rights, civil disputes and conflicts within community organizations.

Public education

Symposium participants agreed on the importance of bringing about an increased awareness of the issues surrounding unpaid work. A shift in the attitudes of Canadians towards unpaid work is crucial to ensuring that unpaid work is valued.

As Fely Velasin, representing the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, said: "If each of our organizations undertakes, within this and next year, to educate ourselves on unpaid work and women's work in general, and on economic literacy, that would be a very important first step."

...when women in Sierra Leone are compared to women in Britain [using the EGEI,] the former have a better standard of living.

One strategy suggested for changing the public's perception of "work" was to use language that speaks to our realities—language that talks about paid work and unpaid work, rather than working and non-working.

Participants also recommended more overt public education at the organizational (rather than the individual) level, such as holding workshops; using the tactics of guerilla theatre; distributing pamphlets and posters; and engaging the media wherever possible and encouraging them to use inclusive language. One thing made clear at the symposium was that it is important to take public education about unpaid work into the arena of the paid workforce.

Another, and most likely very effective, strategy would be for women to organize a nation-wide strike of unpaid workers. Look at what the women of Iceland were able to achieve when they had a general strike. Imagine the disruption we could cause!

The Census

Participants at the symposium applauded the lobbying done around inclusion of unpaid work into the 1996 Census for bringing national attention to the issue. However, while some saw the important potential policy applications of the Census data (and other data that might result from further questions on volunteer work), there were differing opinions about the value of directing the already scarce resources of grassroots women's organizations in this direction.

Delegates also identified an inherent weakness in the Census: it is based on the GDP [Gross Domestic Product,] which is a economic system that includes the assumption that unpaid work has no value. Newer methods of measuring all work, such as the GPI (the Genuine Progress Indicator) which does recognize unpaid work, were advocated by all participants.

One strategy discussed concerning the use of the 1996 Census data was going across the country talking to other women about what is all the work we actually do, who we do it for, under what conditions, how much of it is paid, how much of it is unpaid, how much of it is political organizing, how much of it is caregiving, and so on. We could document this information and use it to support our recommendations concerning social policies and resources allocation.

Working together

Throughout the symposium, participants expressed the view that the proposed strategies and actions would be more successful if we work together. A number of women suggested that the diverse groups represented at the symposium could join in solidarity around the belief that people should not have to live in poverty.

As long as the majority of women's work is unpaid, then not only will the majority of single mothers, single elderly women and increasing numbers of children live below the poverty line, but also the general status of all women will continue to be low. At present, corporate global restructuring is driving more and more women into unpaid work taking care of children, elderly and sick people, and into volunteer work in the community.

The only response is to demand a recognition of unpaid work and an end to the growth of that kind of work. Women's work must be valued. From that start-off point, organizations could pursue their differing, but complimentary, activities.

The great leap forward

On March 17, 1998, the 1996 Census results regarding "Household Activities" were released. That was followed by another leap forward by the Canadian government in recognizing unpaid work, with the release by the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women of the document *Economic Gender Equality Indicators* (EGEI). This document moves Canada to the forefront internationally, in requiring that all federal departments' policies be put through a gender lens that includes both paid and unpaid work.

The EGEI is a measurement system which can be used to provide a more accurate picture of women's economic status across Canada. Hopefully, they will be used by women's groups, unions, educators, and all levels of government to paint a clearer picture of what women's lives are really like.

This past March, Statistics Canada, Status of Women Canada and Human Resources Development Canada hosted an international symposium called "Gender Equality Indicators: Public Concerns and Public Policies," which brought together specialists from all over the world, various levels of government, academics, researchers, and NGOs to discuss the connection between economic gender equality indicators and gender-based analysis. Mothers Are Women, a national organization of mothers, was invited to facilitate the participation of 15 individuals and organizations actively involved in the issue of unpaid work.

Discussions at the symposium ranged from how these indicators must be broadly applied to all women in Canada wherever they are, rather than to just a select sample who are, for example, living in cities, or in middle-class, heterosexual, white families.

If applied properly, these indicators could show how not recognizing the unpaid work of Aboriginal women is contributing directly to their poverty and the apprehension of their children. They could be used to ensure that older women are paid a public pension that would raise, not only their sense of worth, but also their incomes above the poverty line.

They could be used to challenge the income tax schedule which falls so heavily on poor, and low and middle income people. They could completely overthrow the GDP as a model of economic development.

They could be used by municipal governments to determine the services needed by women. They could be used by unions to recognize all women's work, and ensure childcare is available for meetings and a paid work schedule that allows for unpaid work.

They could be used to call for a monetary valuing of women's unpaid work; and they should be applied to all international trade agreements like APEC, MAI, FTAA to show how they directly increase the exploitation of women internationally.

A speaker from the United Nations said at the symposium that using the EGEI shows that women in China are, in fact, better off than women in Japan, who have a higher per capita income. And when women in Sierra Leone are compared to women in Britain, the former have a better standard of living. Why is this? Because, the EGEI looks at all facets of women's lives, not just the paid ones.

Women in Canada have led the movement to have unpaid work counted and recognized. We should be proud.

StatsCan 1996 Census data and its specific cross-tabulations can be obtained through your local Statistics Canada Reference Centre, or from StatsCan's website: http://www.statcan.ca. A copy of the Economic Gender Equality Indicators *is available from Status of Women Canada or Statistics Canada.*

And the results from the EGEI Symposium will be available for distribution to women and women's groups later this summer through Mothers Are Women, PO Box 4104, Stn E, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B1; tel: (613) 722-7851; e-mail: maw@cyberus.ca; website: http://www.cyberus.ca/~maw.

Evelyn Drescher is with Mothers are Women. Ellen Woodsworth is with the When Women Count campaign.

MOVEMENT MATTERS

listings information

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

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

compiled by Rita Wong and Leanne Keltie

Head of CHRC takes on poverty

Anti-poverty activists in Canada got a boost in their campaign to get the federal and provincial governments recognize the human rights of poor people.

In her annual report released in April, the Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, Michelle Falardeau-Ramsay, chastised the federal government for failing to live up to its obligation to protect the economic rights of poor people, and to prohibit discrimination based on poverty. Falardeau-Ramsay's annual report also recognized the years of awareness-raising work that anti-poverty organizations have done.

Falardeau-Ramsay pointed out that, as a signatory of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Canada has endorsed the right of individuals to an adequate standard of living, and is under obligation to provide adequate "food, clothing, housing and medical care, and necessary social services to its citizens." The chief commissioner added that "It is now time to recognize poverty as a human rights issue here at home," and called on the Canadian government to do more to end poverty than just look good at international conferences.

If Canada is going to walk its talk, anti-poverty activists say that one of the first things the federal and provincial governments must do is restore funding to welfare programs, which have been cut over the last few years.

In British Columbia, anti-poverty activists are pressing the provincial government to support a recommendation by the BC Human Rights Commission, which would prohibit discrimination on the basis of "social condition."

Abortion illegal in Wisconsin

Women in Wisconsin have lost their legal right to access abortion services after a Court of Appeal refused to grant a temporary injunction on a state law which essentially bans all abortion procedures.

The law was signed by Wisconsin Governor Tommy Thompson on April 29. Promoted as a "partial birth abortion" ban, which focuses on the late stages of pregnancy, the Wisconsin law is actually worded so generally that it can be seen to apply to any and all abortions. The law bans the "killing of a child," and defines a child as "a human being from the time of fertilization."

On May 14, US District Court Judge John Shabaz refused to impose a temporary injunction on the state law. His verdict was upheld by the US Court of Appeal for the 7th Circuit a week later.

As a result of the courts' refusal to strike down the law, women in Wisconsin seeking even first trimester abortions are being turned away. (The legal right to a first trimester abortion was guaranteed by the Supreme Court in Roe v. Wade.) With a few exceptions in places, where local prosecutors have guaranteed they will not prosecute abortion service providers for "early" abortions, all abortion clinics in Wisconsin have ceased providing services.

"This is the first time since the Supreme Court decided Roe v. Wade in 1973 that women have been denied medical care [for abortions]," says Priscilla Wade, a lawyer with the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy. "This should be a wake up call for the country to realize that these laws are not limited to 'late term' or any specific abortion procedure. They are part of a carefully designed strategy to outlaw all abortions."

Although 27 other states have also passed abortion bans in the past three years, Wisconsin is the only state in which the courts have not subsequently limited enforcement of the ban or blocked it completely.

Conrad Black increases his control

Six more newspapers in Canada have fallen into the right-wing hands of Conrad Black. Black, whose Hollinger Inc. owns 59 percent of the Southam newspaper chain, announced last month his plans to purchase two daily newspapers in BC, and several other community newspapers on Vancouver Island.

With the acquisition of the *Victoria Times Colonist* and the *Nanaimo Daily News*, Southam Inc. will now own 14 of BC's 16 daily newspapers. The recently announced deal means that the two dailies will shift from one media mogul to another. The previous owner of the two papers was the Thomson Corporation, headed by billionaire Kenneth Thomson, who was once the dominant publisher of small-town Canadian dailies. Now, the only dailies in BC still being published by Thomson are in Penticton and Kelowna. (Though Thomson still owns the *Globe and Mail*.)

Southam Inc. currently controls 32 daily newspapers across Canada, including the *Vancouver Sun* and *The Province*. The new additions to Southam's roster mean control over the circulation of newspapers in Vancouver, Kamloops, Prince George, Victoria, Nanaimo, Campbell River, Duncan, Parksville and Cowichan.

This concentration of newspaper ownership definitely holds potential dangers for ensuring "balance" in reporting, particularly given that Southam papers pool their stories through the Southam News Service. Even Peter Bailie, the current publisher of the *Victoria Times Colonist*, says that while he is not aware of any changes that the paper's new owners might have in mind, he does expect that Lower Mainland issues written by *Vancouver Sun* journalists will see further coverage in Vancouver Island newspapers. (And we all know how representative the *Vancouver Sun's* coverage is.)

[Information garnered from newspapers owned by Conrad Black and Kenneth Thomson.]

Nike workers reinstated

Cicih Sukaesih and 23 other workers in Indonesia, who were fired by a Nike subcontractor for organizing a strike in 1993, have won a legal battle against their former employer. The Indonesian Supreme Court has ordered PT Eltri Indo Footwear to reinstate the workers and pay their lost wages.

This ruling supports a decision made by Indonesia's highest labour court five years ago. While the ruling is a step in the right direction, many people are skeptical that it will actually be enforced.

Sukaesih is familiar to many Canadian activists because of her cross-Canada solidarity tour in 1997, but there are also many others who continue to struggle for justice. In another case, Amnesty International is rallying support for another worker targeted for her labour rights activism. Dita Indah Sari was arrested two years ago for participating in a demonstration to increase the minimum wage, and for leading Reebok production workers on a march and sit in at Indonesia's National Assembly. She remains in jail.

For information about Amnesty International's campaign for Dita Indah Sari's release, visit their website at www.amnesty.ca. To find out about other solidarity campaigns, contact the Maquila Solidarity Network 606 Shaw St, Toronto, Ontario, M6G 3L6, tel: (416) 532-8584; fax: (416) 532-7688; e-mail: perg@web.net; or website: http://www.web.net/~msn.

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Population Health Advisory Committee

Invites you to attend our anniversary forum where we will present:

Our Health Plan 1998/99

As an Advisory Committee to the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board, we will be presenting our health priorities to be included in the regional Health Plan of the Board. As part of the forum, we will solicit your input on these health issues.

Thursday, June 18th
From 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.
655 West 12th Ave.
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WHAT'S NEWS

compiled by Robyn Hall and Colleen Sheridan

PovNet goes on-line

A new organizing and educational tool to confront the attack of poor people has been launched into cyberspace. PovNet, an on-line resource for advocates, people on welfare and anti-poverty activists, made its debut on the world wide web at the beginning of March.

Work began in early 1997 on the site, which provides up-to-date information on welfare and housing laws, and resources that are available in British Columbia.

PovNet has several components: a public site with information on current welfare laws and regulations, and resources and referrals for individualized help; a closed conference group where member advocates can quickly access the knowledge of other advocates and lawyers; and links to Canadian and international anti-poverty organizations and resources.

Visit PovNet at www.web.net/povnet. Or if you want more information, call PovNet (604) 601-6353.

1998 CDI comes to Vancouver

The annual Community Development Institute (CDI) is a four-day educational forum for people working for the well-being of their communities. This year's institute takes place in Vancouver from July 26 to 29 at the Britannia Community Services Centre.

CDI presents workshops and forums for people from all sectors to come together to update their knowledge on current community issues, obtain skills for taking action, and to build solidarity within their communities and beyond.

Workshops this year fall under six streams: Social Justice; Community Economic Development; Environmental Stewardship; Strengthening Our Voice: Tools for Practice; Working Together; and Governing Ourselves.

This year's program will also feature two forums for participants in the Institute: "Towards a Just and Sustainable Society: Reflections on a Decade of Activism" on Sunday July 26, and "The Death and Life of Great Vancouver Neighbourhoods: A Citizen's Forum with June Jacobs."

For more information or to find out how to receive a CDI 1998 calendar contact the CDI, 106-2182 W. 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V6K 2N4; tel: (604)718-7755; fax: (604)736-8697; or e-mail; sparc_cdi@amssa.bc.ca

Mary Billy receives international award

Longtime feminist activist Mary Billy was awarded the first International Helen Prize for Women for her ongoing contributions to the women's movement and feminist publishing in Canada.

Billy, who lives in Squamish, British Columbia, was one of the founders of the Howe Sound Women's Centre, and between 1989 and 1995, was the editor of *Herspectives Magazine*, a feminist quarterly.

Billy is also the author of "Facing the Horror: The Femicide List," a compilation of names and short synopses of the incidents of women and girls murdered by men in Canada since 1990. She begins the list with the 14 women murdered on December 6, 1989 at the École Polytechnique in Montreal.

She has applied for Ministry of Women's Equality funding to be able to put more time and effort into researching the list, which she feels is only half complete.

The Helen Prize is named after anti-nuclear activist Helen Caldicott. The prize was started this year by Iranian poet short story writer Dr. Akhtar Naraghi, who now lives in Montreal. Naraghi says she was inspired by the story of Dr. Helen Caldicott as portrayed in the film *If You Love This Planet*.

The prize is awarded to women who have made significant, and often unrecognized, contributions to the quality of life around the world. This year, 20 women were nominated. Their work will be recognized by having their stories published in the *1998 Helen Prize Book*.

A think-tank of our own

Finally, there's a think-tank on "the family" that's not right-wing. Responding to widespread misconceptions and "family values" nonsense, the Council on Contemporary Families—composed of family researchers, theorists and practitioners—was formed last Fall. The Council held its inaugural conference, "Reframing the Politics of Family Values," in Washington D.C. in November.

The impetus for the group came out of a growing belief among US scholars that several influential, right-wing family think-tanks have politicized and oversimplified the American discussion about families.

The Council wants to look realistically and accurately at the current state of the family, and counter the view that a return to the "traditional" family is the solution to the social ills in America.

For more information about the work of the Council, contact them at 1331 22nd St. NW, Suite 3, Washington DC, 20037; tel:(202)833-8863; e-mail: mwftpc@aol.com; web-site: http://www.slip.net/-ccf/.

Conference to build bridges

"Building Bridges: Spanning Our Past, Toward Our Future"—that is the theme of the 2nd Asian and Pacific Islander Lesbian and Bisexual Women's Network (APLBN) Conference. The conference will take place July 3 to 5 in Los Angeles, California on the UCLA campus.

Of special interest to APLB feminists is the all-day "Activist Institute" on Friday, July 3. As well, workshops will be held on a variety of topics, including: HIV/AIDS Awareness and Education, Women's Health Issues, International Organizing, Domestic Violence, Alternative Parenting, and APLB Adoptees.

The conference will also feature a "Cultural Extravaganza" performance night with Canyon Sam, the Purple Moon Dance Project, and Denise Uyehara, among others.

The APLBN is a coalition of individuals and groups, mostly based in the US, that serves as a network to empower and support Asian and Pacific Islander lesbian and bisexual women. The goals of the coalition are: to create visibility, build leadership, develop resources, and strengthen ties among APLB women; to build alliances with other organizations; and to reflect the diversity within the Asian and Pacific Islander communities through outreach and education.

graphic by Colleen Sheridan

"[Postering] creates a real litter problem and it's unsightly."
- Vancouver City Engineer Dave Rudberg -

...and that's why the City of Vancouver is removing posters from "public" property—such as telephone poles and light standards—despite a court ruling that defends postering as a form of free expression. The City's no postering by-law severely hinders the sharing of information of all the groups and individuals who do not have money for mainstream advertising. And it shuts off information on issues the mainstream media don't want to cover (like forcing welfare recipients to sign consent forms.) The City plans to appeal the court ruling striking down its by-law on June 18.

For more information about the campaign against the by-law, call 874-0790 or e-mail alissaw@unixg.ubc.ca.

Conference fees are on a sliding scale, and a limited number of scholarships are available. If you need financial assistance, write to APLBN, "attention scholarships."

For more information about the conference, contact the national (US) office of APLBN: PO Box 210698, San Francisco, CA, 94121; voice mail:(650)829-5454; web site: http://expage.com/page/aplbn

Residential school horrors to go to UN

A International Human Rights Tribunal in Vancouver will be held from June 12 to 14, to document the experiences of Aboriginal people forced to go to the residential schools in British Columbia.

The International Human Rights Association of American Minorities (IHRAAM), an affiliate of the UN with consultative status, is conducting the inquiry into allegations of murder and other atrocities at residential schools.

A panel of international human rights experts will receive testimony and examine evidence. The panel will assess the guilt or innocence of church, government and police officials in reported deaths and torture of Aboriginal children at the residential schools. Then, the panel will forward its findings to the Secretary-General of the UN, the Human Rights Commission, and to the international media.

Anyone having personal, family or any kind of knowledge of the abuse, torture and murder of First Nations people at residential schools and the intergenerational legacy of the residential school system, is urged to attend this tribunal so the full truth about the schools can be made known and the healing can begin. Testimonies can be made either in full confidence at the public tribunal or in private.

The Tribunal will be held at the Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph St, beginning at 9:00am each day.

For more info contact Harriett at (604) 985-5817, or IHRAAM c/o Rudy James at (425) 483-9251.

Women's Conference Against APEC

Planning is well under way for the 3rd Women's Conference Against APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), to be held November 9-10 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Planning meetings are being held periodically in different parts of Asia. The next planning meeting will be held in Aranakoman, Tamilnadu, India on June 3-4, 1998.

Organizers have agreed to continue the position taken at the 2nd Women's Conference in Vancouver last year of rejecting APEC. And once again, women will be working to ensure a strong position on gender justice and rights will be made a part of the People's Summit on APEC (November 10-15).

The Women's Conference is urgently needed to address the increasing impact of globalization and liberalization on women's lives, including the erosion of existing, hard fought rights and regulations protecting women.

Some of the topics being suggested for discussion at the conference include: health and reproductive rights; labour issues, including retrenchment and migration; food security and safety; and speaking out against globalization past and future.

As well, one potential outcome of the conference may be the production of a "Feminist Vision of Development and Trade" document.

In support of the 3rd Women's Conference Against APEC, the Vancouver organizing Committee of the 2nd Women's Conference contributed $8,000Cdn towards the organizing efforts.

For more information, contact Sarojeni V. Rengam at PAN AP in Malaysia: tel: 011-60-3-657-0271; fax: 011-60-3-657-7445; e-mail: panap@panap.po.my. Or, in Canada, contact the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, 1-800-665-5124.

Feminism in action across Canada:

Exciting projects from exciting women

Each month, Kinesis *highlights the work, projects, campaigns and internal movements of women's groups and other social justice organizations. Below, we focus on the activities of five women's organizations, each involved in different, interesting and important projects.*

On an ongoing basis, Kinesis *invites women's organizations to let us know what you're up to so we can share that information with other feminists and women's groups across the country and around the globe. Write to us: #309-877 E. Hastings St, Vancouver, British Columbia, V6A 3Y1. Fax us: (604) 255-5511. E-mail us: kinesis@web.net. Let's keep each other posted on all the great and exciting activities the women's movement is taking a lead in.* [Please see "Movement Matters" on page 6 of this issue for submission and deadline information.]

Legal rights for farm women

by Yvonne Sinkevich, women's president, National Farmers' Union

One of our current projects involves working in a coalition on the legal rights of farm women. The other coalition groups are the Canadian Farm Women's Network, the Federated Women's Institute, and two organizations in Quebec, ACPA (Association de collaboratrices et partenaires en affaires), an organization of farm women and business women, and the FAQ (Fédération des agricultrices du Québec), the women's arm of UPA, the general farmers' organization in Quebec.

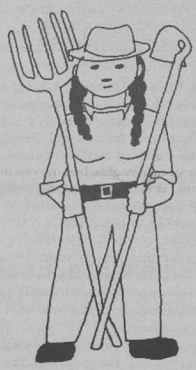
For the first phase, we did a round of workshops and focused on whether or not farm women knew what their legal rights were, and how that impacted their farms, incomes, estate planning and divorce. I did a local workshop here regarding succession planning and separating income after divorce. Farm business is really quite complicated and when there's a split up in the marriage, it does not necessarily go in favour of women (the ones who've done a large extent of the work on the farm.)

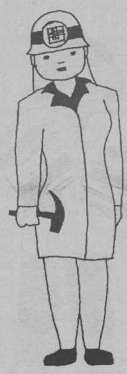
We discussed that we had to do some major educational campaigns with banking and other farm related institutions. We need to increase their understanding that women are farm operators who need access to cash and crop insurance and things of that matter. We're starting to work with NAWL (the National Association of Women and the Law) on some really upfront ad campaigns, and we'll meet with lawyers, accountants, and people with whom farm women deal on a regular basis, to sensitize them about women's rights.

Over the years, there have been some legal precedents that have helped women, but they're not consistent across the provinces. Not only are the laws different, but so is knowledge of these laws among farm women. We want [the project] to be educational for farm women on their rights to land and cash, and to debt, I suppose [*laughs*]—that's part of farming too.

Ownership of farm land is a critical issue because, at one time, it was mainly the husbands who held sole ownership over the farm. Many women did not have any rights. [When their husbands died without willing the land to their wives,] it was a big problem for the women. All of a bank accounts were frozen. Usually there's a major debt, and they have absolutely no rights to cash, and no means to pay the debt.

For more information on this project, contact Yvonne Sinkevich, RR #1, Wanham, Alberta, T0H 3P0; tel/fax: (403) 694-2415.





graphics by Sur Mehat

Surveying sexual harassment

by Leah White, coordinator, Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, Whitehorse, Yukon

Our project of surveying sexual harassment in mining camps started two years ago.

We actually started with the assumption that only a few women worked in mining camps, but that assumption proved to be wrong. There are more women than in the past, and probably there'll be more in the future. It is becoming more of a work environment that financially entices women. As a result, the project snowballed.

A lot of women come up here thinking they want to do something different, and become cooks in the camps. Other women are geologists and surveyors, and this is where they end up getting jobs.

A lot of the mining companies don't have sexual harassment policies. The unionized mining camps do, but most women work outside of an unionized setting—as part-time workers or on contract. Also, many women work for other companies—as surveyors or geologists—and are subcontracted to the mining camps.

So far, I've interviewed about 12 women, and I have another 10 to interview. However, what has been happening is that women being interviewed are saying they have five friends who want to talk to me, so there may still be more women interested in participating in the project.

Part of the interview process involves providing women with information about sexual harassment, because we found out that some women weren't aware of what behaviour was legally unacceptable. The big thing for a lot of women is not trusting how they felt. A lot of the women said they didn't know if the company they work for has a sexual harassment policy.

In terms of experiences, women reported from one extreme to the other. Some women said they've worked in camps for years, and their experiences have been amazing. Other women talked about inappropriate comments and touching, and about pornography in the camps. And others said they've been told they cannot have any type of relationship in the camp or else they'll be fired; the men aren't told that.

The one common statement made by women interviewed is that the harassment isn't coming from entire camps; it's only a few individual men. Women said they didn't want to give the impression that mining camps are places where sexual harassment and assault happen all the time.

I've contacted a number of mining companies who operate in the Yukon, and have heard back from five of them. Their response has been quite positive. The companies say they're interested in our findings, and want to know if there are any sexual harassment policies they could incorporate. I'm in the process of gathering up sexual harassment policies that would be appropriate to mining camps.

None of the mining companies I talked to said women shouldn't be working in the camps. In fact, a lot of them say the women who've come through their camps have been amazing, and that they'd support any way to ensure they get more women working for them.

We're not trying to say that Mines A, B and C are the bad ones, and D, E and F are the good ones. Most women I've talked to say they don't want us choosing for them where to work. They just want to know who has a sexual harassment policy, so they can make decisions themselves.

The Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre would appreciate receiving copies of sexual harassment policies that could be appropriate to mining camps. Send policies to: PO Box 3972, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 5M6. For more information about the project, call the centre at (867) 667-2693.

New resource guide for HIV+ women

by Janet Madsen, communications coordinator, Positive Women's Network, Vancouver, British Columbia

We made an application to Health Canada to do a resource guide for women with basic information about HIV/AIDS. We wanted to do something really simple, that didn't require a high level understanding of medical terminology.

What we had heard, time and time again from women was that some of the information they get is way too complicated. When women are first diagnosed, they're not at a place where they have an understanding of what everything means, such as CD4 counts and viral loads and the different treatment options.

from the Pocket Guide for Women Living with HIV/AIDS

Health Canada did a literature search and found there wasn't anything of this kind in Canada, and said "go for it."

We developed a folder that's small, so women can carry it with them. We also wanted it to be something that wasn't identified as "HIV" or "AIDS" on the cover, so women wouldn't be too intimidated to pick one up. It's got 14 inserts and each of them talks about a different aspect of HIV. Each sheet has three to four questions and answers, and then there's a resource sheet at the back which is regionalized for different areas in the province, such as Vancouver, Northern BC, the Caribou, the Okanagan, et cetera.

We held a focus group with some of the women from Positive Women's Network, based on the rough draft. Most women said they wished this kind of thing had been around when they were first diagnosed. They liked that it was straightforward, easy to understand and non-threatening.

When women are first diagnosed, they not only have to deal with an overwhelming sense of the change in their lives, they also have to deal with the pressure of suddenly having to be an expert on living with HIV, and on HIV itself. And as a woman discloses to family and to friends, people start asking questions. Women don't always have those answers, because it's just as new to them as it is to the people they're telling.

One of the women in the focus group pointed out that if you're living in a small community and your doctor is being a jerk, you don't necessarily have another choice. Hopefully, this pocket guide can provide some information to let women know they have a right to ask questions and that it's absolutely within their ability to do so. One of the other things we hope is that the resource sheets will give women a sense that they are not alone, and that there are ways of getting through even though they may be living in an isolated area.

The pocket guide can also be used as an education tool in a broader way. We see the pocket guide going to women living with HIV, their families and care providers, and to people who want general information about women and HIV.

Right now, we're distributing them across the province to service organizations, transition houses, shelters, women's organizations, and other organizations such as health units and needle exchanges that don't necessarily have HIV/AIDS as their mandate but do see people living with HIV.

We've just been granted funding to do a national distribution, which will happen within the next year. We'll be working in partnership with agencies across the country to regionalize the resource sheets for different areas.

The Positive Women's Network welcomes requests for copies of their Pocket Guide for Women Living with HIV/AIDS. *Contact PWN at 1107 Seymour St, Vancouver, BC, V6B 5S8; tel: (604) 893-2200; or fax: (604) 893-2256. PWN also invites women to the launch of the guide on Tuesday, June 16 from 4:00 to 6:00pm at their office.*

Legal aid a big problem

by Elaine Condon, coordinator, Gander Women's Centre, Gander, Newfoundland

There's a big problem in this province concerning women getting access to legal aid resources. Our system reeks of discrimination because the way the legal aid mandate is set up results in women receiving only five percent of the funding from legal aid and men receiving 95 percent. The emphasis in the mandate is criminal law, and because men make up the vast majority of [those charged under criminal law,] they get the vast majority of legal aid resources.

We're trying to get the [provincial] department of justice to change the mandate so that women have equal access to legal aid. Right now, we're documenting cases that were handled poorly because women couldn't access legal representation.

Legal aid will not represent women for custody issues, unless the man has first engaged a private lawyer. Then, legal aid will give the woman a lawyer only because they want the situation to be equal. If a woman is the one who wants to initiate a custody battle, she'll either have to hire a private lawyer or represent herself, which can cause all kinds of problems.

The problem with the legal aid system in Newfoundland has always been present, but until the transition house was opened up in Gander five years ago, we didn't have as much contact with women to know how bad it was. Now, because we're working closely with all the women using transition houses in the province, we're finding out that this is a very widespread problem.

When women leave abusive situations and go to a transition house, they need to get custody of their children; otherwise, they can be ordered to bring the kids back to their husbands.

If they have any property, legal aid will not even represent them in getting an interim custody order. This leaves women in a situation where they're afraid the husband will drive by and take the kids.

There's also the problem of not being able to get legal aid for property settlement cases. What invariably happens is that a woman has to hire a private lawyer who agrees to be paid when the property dispute is settled. In the end, the lawyer winds up getting her share of the family property. A criminal is not forced to sell his house to get representation in court. Legal aid should represent women in property issues, so at least when they get out of an abusive situation, they have some minimal amount with which to start over.

To find out more about the campaign to change Newfoundland's legal aid mandate, contact the Gander Women's Centre, PO Box 246, Gander, Newfoundland, A1V 1W6; tel: (709) 256-4395; fax: (709) 256-3644.

Gathering of warrior women

by Debra Apperly, Kamloops Sexual Assault Counselling Centre, Kamloops, British Columbia

One of the goals of our agency is to build a feminist community in Kamloops, so we started holding regular monthly meetings called Warrior Women Nights. There's already been a lot of excitement about our Warrior Women Nights, because one thing I've found is that there are many younger women who want to know about feminism.

It speaks to them, but of course in school, they're not getting the training and information they actually want. Younger women are so bombarded by the backlash that it's often hard for them to sort through what is true about feminists and what the media has made us out to be.

We're holding a three day workshop June 13-15 called "Self in Context: Theory and Practice with Trauma Survivors." The workshop will be facilitated by Sandra Butler, who is the author of two books, *Conspiracy of Silence* and *Cancer in Two Voices*, and is an internationally known feminist therapist, lecturer and training facilitator. There's also going to be a public presentation on June 12, called "Feminism: the Politics of Hope."

I was actually the instigator of this workshop, and it came out of having done sexual assault work for 15 years. One of the things I noticed missing from doing the work was a strong social action base, where women truly understood what feminism means and how to embed feminist philosophy into their practice and counselling.

What I'm hoping will happen is that women will take ownership of Warrior Women Nights, and it'll be like when we used to do consciousness raising back in the late 70s and early 80s. We'll begin with looking at feminist literature, feminist counselling techniques, feminists books, so we can start a dialogue among ourselves about what feminism means to us, to our daughters and friends, and to our clients.

For more information about Women Warrior Nights, contact the Kamloops Sexual Assault Counselling Centre, #204-750 Cottonwood Ave, Kamloops, British Columbia, V2B 3X2; tel: (250) 376-0179; fax: (250) 376-2127.

"Don't agonize, organize"

by Ema Oropeza, program coordinator, Vancouver Status of Women

One of our current projects is an eight-week program for women interested in feminist popular education, called "Gaining My Voice, Taking Our Strength." This program is based on using feminist analysis to understand our realities as women.

Although there are topic areas listed for each of the weekly sessions, nothing is set in stone. The program is flexible enough to address the specific concerns of the women participating in it.

In the first session, we negotiate the content of the program to see if there's something women want added. We also establish some group agreements in order to be able to work together.

Over the course of the program, we cover issues related to health; economic globalization and poverty; violence against women, heterosexism and homophobia; racism and anti-racism. And then in the final session, we look at the issues the women have in common, and decide on a collective project. We call this session: "Don't agonize, organize."

An important part of "Gaining My Voice" is for women to keep acknowledging and reminding ourselves that the solutions for our lives don't come from so-called experts. Rather, the solutions are inside each woman who lives the struggle day-to-day.

One of the goals of the program is to provide women with a system or methodology for converting that understanding of their lives into a direction for change. As well, through "Gaining My Voice," we hope to bring more women into the women's movement, and to make the women's movement more and more grassroots.

There are three stages of the program: unfolding our experiences; naming those experiences for what they are and identifying them as part of a common struggle within a patriarchal and capitalist system; and planning actions that address our needs so that we become our own agents of change.

We started the first "Gaining My Voice" program in February. We hadn't conceived of it as a program for Aboriginal women only, but a group of Aboriginal women, who already had a connection with VSW, requested such a program. One thing that came out of the sessions was that the women organized a night of films about Aboriginal women and a panel discussion.

A number of women from the program said they really connected with the way popular education looks at problems—that is, problems are not linear (with a cause and a consequence), but rather multi-dimensional. And one woman said that when she thinks about strategizing around an issue, she looks at the problem and the solutions from many different angles. Before, she didn't make all the connections—she would go from A to B. Now, she says, she looks at how A relates to B, to C, to D and to E.

For more information about this feminist popular education program, contact the Vancouver Status of Women, #309-877 E. Hastings St, Vancouver, BC, V6A 3Y1; tel: (604) 255-6554; fax: (604) 255-5511; e-mail: vsw@web.net.

Joint Committee on custody and access issues:

Using children as weapons

by Nicole Deagan

The Special Joint Senate/House of Commons Committee on Custody and Access Issues continued its cross-Canada hearings last month. On May 19, the Committee returned to Vancouver to complete the second day of the two-day hearings that had been scheduled. [The original second day was postponed because members of parliament on the Committee had to return to the House of Commons for a vote on the Hepatitis C issue.]

Nicole Deagan, a child care counsellor working in Vancouver, was one of the advocates for women and children who addressed the Committee when it came back to Vancouver. Below, Kinesis *presents her submission. But first, Deagan explains why she spoke about her own experience at the Committee hearings.*

One purpose in presenting this part of my personal history to the Special Joint Committee was to show, through the telling of intimate experience, how batterers use the courts and how this affects children.

There is a possibility that certain committee members will attempt to use it as a confirmation of "Parental Alienation Syndrome" (PAS), which is touted by Fathers' Rights groups as one of the ways that women damage their children. This is very unfortunate, as my history is one of male violence against women and children, not one that validates this fantasy of vindictive women. Hopefully, my response to the Committee's questions about PAS at the hearings let them know that I do not hold my story as support for this unfounded, questionable and misused theory.

Without wanting to pass judgement on what this Committee will conclude before they have done so, their apparent disbelief in women's reality was a bit too similar to my experience with the legal system as a child, and I fear that the bias of certain members will taint their recommendations, as it tainted their hearing process.

Here is what I presented to the Committee:

I was seven years old, and one day my father picked me and my brothers up from school. As we drove away from the town we lived in, my father told us that we would never see our mother again. We went to someone's house where my father called my mom and told her that if she didn't get out of the house by the next morning he would leave the country with us.

I didn't understand what was going on. My brothers and I were very close to our mom. She had stayed home and looked after us. Our father worked as a teacher at a local high school.

The next day, we went back home and my father called a lawyer and said that his wife had left him and us three kids for another man. This is also what he told us. Of course, at first I knew that it had happened differently, but through repeated sessions of telling us stories about our mother, we all began to believe him.

He used to take me into his bedroom. There was a big chair at one wall and I would sit on it while he told me things. He would tell me that he would kill himself if I ever left him, that he was so lonely now that my mother had abandoned him, and that he needed us kids. He told me that he was going to get back at her. I would have to practise what I would say if anyone asked me questions about my family.

We went to see a child advocate lawyer who did an interview with the three of us kids while my dad waited outside. On our way to the office, we went over and over possible questions and answers. We told the lawyer that we hated our mom and that we wanted to live with our dad. We told him that she had left us for another man.

There was another time I remember being in court, in a room with the judge, the lawyers and my mom. My dad was waiting outside. I knew what I had to say. I stood up and yelled at my mom. I was furious at her because I was so alone. My father used me in my pain, and gave me words to express his hatred. I said that she was a bad mother. That she was a "bitch." That she abandoned us. My father was awarded interim sole custody.

Once my mother was gone, my dad turned to me and my brothers for emotional support and started to completely pull us into his world. My dad had beat, humiliated, tortured and controlled my mother during their 13-year marriage.

He had never hit me or my brothers until he took us away from our mother. Once she was gone, it was up to us to receive the blows of his fists and his mind games. He told me that I was his wife now. He became emotionally and physically incestuous. We used to watch porno movies in our house. I was less than 10 years old.

He used to plan with us tactics to frighten or hurt my mother when she would have visits with us. He said that we would prove that she was unfit. We would be rewarded for running away while she had us or calling her a "bitch" and telling her to "fuck off." There were times when he would even buy us things or give us money if we threw things at her when she came to the house. I remember seeing the pain in her eyes when we did this.

It was because my father had the money to hire very expensive lawyers, and because he was driven by vengeance, that he got custody. These people didn't believe my mother when she said that he abused her, nor when she told them she was afraid that he was abusing us too. They didn't believe her when she said that he was following her and harassing her. But it was all true. We used to go for outings in the evenings to find out where she was and slash her tires, or sugar her gas tank.

These are some of the ways that he created the perception that she was an unfit mother. She looked like she was paranoid and trying to accuse him of outrageous things. But they were all true.

It was all a continuation of the abuse of her and a way for him to destroy her, with us children and the court system as the weapons. My father was awarded permanent sole custody.

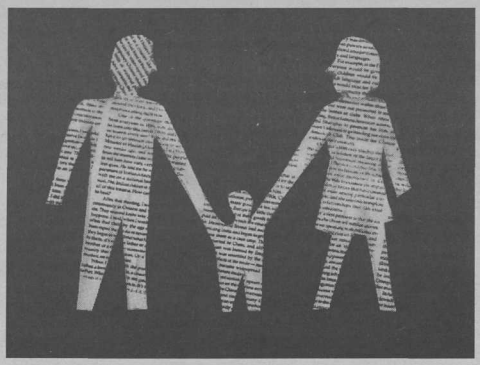
My brother certainly didn't benefit from having this good and loving father. In his teen years, he began to hit his girlfriends, abuse alcohol and drugs, perform criminal acts, and finally he put a gun in his mouth and killed himself at the age of twenty-four.

There were times when I envied him, in his ability to completely escape. I ran away at 13, and moved far away from where I grew up. I had to change my name and hide, like a battered wife.

I cannot imagine a worse result of my parents' court case than the one that happened. I would have preferred to have never seen my father for the rest of my life. I would have preferred to never watch him beat and humiliate my brother to death. I absolutely needed my mother.

For years, I thought and hoped that this was an isolated incident, that my family had slipped through the cracks. Since I began working in this field, I have been profoundly disappointed to see that this is not true.

Written briefs by individuals or groups can be submitted to the Committee up until June 30. Women are encouraged to write about their personal experiences and make their recommendations. Send submissions to Richard Rumas, Clerk, Special Joint Committee on Child Custody and Access, Parliament of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6; tel: (613) 996-1664; fax: (613) 947-9670; e-mail: sjca@parl.gc.ca. (The National Association of the Women and the Law has prepared guidelines on how to make submissions to government committees. For a copy, call NAWL at (613) 241-7570.)



My recommendations to the Committee

I have listened to a number of witnesses during the two days of hearings in Vancouver and have noticed that the reality of custody and access disputes for children is well represented in the presentations by women's groups, transition house workers, and ChildrenWhoWitness Abuse program counsellors.

I recommend that you have ongoing consultations with the experts in battering relationships, who have knowledge of how this battering is continued through the courts. These experts are the transition house workers who see every day how and where the system fails to see this abuse.

I recommend that you seriously question the unfounded theories that maximum contact and joint parenting arrangements are beneficial to children, as even in cases where there is no abuse, this can be a way of growing up that is incredibly stressful and unstable for children. In cases where there is abuse, it is tormenting, dangerous and even life-threatening.

I recommend that you seriously consider how laws based on the gender reality of violence do not jeopardize the relationship between honest, caring fathers and their children. An accurate understanding of these issues will enable the courts to properly and effectively protect the safety and well-being of children, and therefore will not be a threat to fathers who are not, in fact, abusing through the courts.

Women and natural building:

Healthy, happy cob homes

by Kelly Haydon

Spring and Elisa Shine and their three-and-a-half year old daughter Dawn Skye have been building their own cob home in Argenta (north of Nelson), British Columbia. Two-and-a-half years ago, they became part of a land share group. Then several weeks later, they saw an ad for a cob workshop. They started to build as soon as they got back from the workshop. As Shine says, "for women cob is wonderful; it is so empowering."

Cob is similar to adobe in that it uses the same materials: sand, clay, straw and water. But with adobe, bricks are made and sun dried, then built into walls with a "cob-like" mortar. Cob, on the other hand, is a wet mixture put on by hand or "massaged" onto a foundation, creating thick load-bearing walls. The walls are built round, making the walls much stronger. "It's like hand-sculpting a big pot to live in." (from *The Cob Builders Handbook*).

Earthen homes are common in Asia, India, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and South and Central America. In fact, at least one-third of the world's population live in homes of unbaked earth. For thousands of years prior to the entrenchment of patriarchy, women made their own homes. Today, this is still the case in many communities around the world.

Building with cob is not new either. In Europe, it has been around for 800 years. Many cob structures built in the 16th and 17th centuries are still standing today. In England, there are approximately 50,000 cob buildings still in use today. With the advent of brick construction, the skill of cob building almost died out. However, since the early 1980s, there has been a revival of cob building especially among women.

The materials you use for cob, except for straw, are usually culled from the land you are going to build on. Some land may not have much clay, so you may have to have it trucked in.

When most people imagine a cob home, they think "mud," but the truth is it's far more beautiful. Furniture, such as a couch or seat, can easily be moulded into the wall as you build. Fireplaces and ovens are cobbed in as well. If you want a bookshelf, you only have to sculpt it into the wall and it is lovely to put little nooks around the room to place candles in.

And with cob, it is wonderfully easy to change your mind. One woman built a window sill on the inside but a month later decided she didn't like it and moved it to the outside. After a while, she decided she really didn't like that either, so she lopped it off and re-cobbed one on the inside.

In addition to furniture, you can sculpt in relief images. A feline lover moulded a huge cat languorously hanging above her archway with its tail hanging down the side. In another home, giant women were sculpted around the room in a circle with their arms raised to the sky as if they were holding up the ceiling. Essentially, you can sculpt anything your heart desires and your creativity imagines.

Interestingly shaped windows are really easy to do too. You can literally take a jagged piece of broken glass, tape the edges so you don't cut yourself, and cob it into place. Glass bottles can be buried in the wall to let in a variety of coloured light.

Embedding loved objects also adds a beauty to your home. For example, tiles can be sunk into a cob window sill or a mosaic can be made from broken tiles. Bits of coloured glass, shells, beads and rocks can be lodged into the surface of walls, ceilings and furniture. Really, you can embed anything you want—even kitchen utensils.

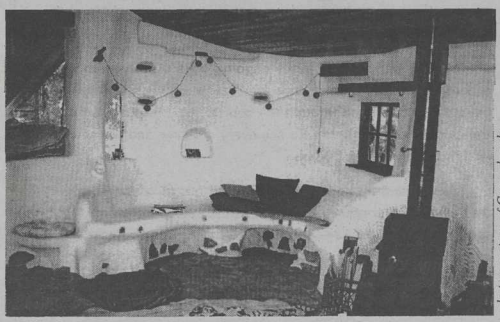


photo courtesy of Groundworks

Billie Miracle's studio in Oregon: from the outside and the inside

Reasons to cob

There are many great reasons to build your home with cob and the foremost, particularly for women, is that it is cheap. Billie Miracle's 300-square foot studio in Oregon cost just over $3,000 Cdn to build. Cob is also healthy to live in and it's great for the planet. Using cob reduces the use of wood, steel and toxic building supplies.

Further, "making homes with natural materials gathered gently from the earth improves the likelihood of survival itself," says Becky Bee, who runs workshops on cobbing for women and is the author of *The Cob Builders Handbook*. Using recycled materials also brings down the cost of building. Windows can be scavenged and you can even bury a car door in a cob wall, leaving the window and nob exposed so you can roll it down for a breath of fresh air. Tires can be used as roofing tiles or filled with earth for a foundation, and oil drums can be made into stoves.

Another good reason for cob is that "it doesn't require a lot of skill," says Bee. "It requires common sense, attention and working with nature, which women are inherently brilliant at. Learning to build with cob is as much a matter of relaxing, as it is of withdrawing from all the stuff you have learned about how hard it is to build and how technical it is and just letting yourself do it."

Elisa Shine stresses that anyone can do it. She says they have had two and three-year olds helping out on their home as well as 80-year old women.

Cob homes are safe from hazards such as fire—mud doesn't burn. A round structure is also safer from earthquakes than "progressive/civilized" buildings because the whole structure tends to move in unison. In New Zealand, an 80-year old cob home sits on a fault line and there are no cracks. Building a cob home is also safe because no machinery is involved.

The physical act of cobbing is great for the body too. The constant, slow, rhythmic movements build up your body. Shine says she finds it very healing to work with clay and mud. It is "a direct way of touching the earth." One women who had been dealing with anorexia found she had gained 30 pounds after several months of cobbing, and some participants say their arthritis was alleviated.

Probably the most compelling reason to take up cobbing is that it is fun to create your own home. Shine thinks cob is great because it brings out the creative side. You get to uncover aspects of yourself, such as inventor, artist, inspired creator, designer, organizer, homemaker. Cobbing can help you develop confidence in the many facets of your being—facets that our society leaves little room to explore.

You can also build smaller structures with cob as an introduction or if you don't have the space to build something larger. Cob outdoor ovens are popular and can take on a variety of faces. Other cobbing projects include pavilions, garden benches, outdoor baths, saunas, life-size garden sculptures, and just about anything you might dream up.

Women and cob

"Cob is a very feminine form of building," says Shine. "There are no right angles; it's completely round." She finds cobbing easy for women because "it's very flowing; it's an art form," and muses (but doesn't want to generalize) that it may be in our nature to be rounded.

Becky Bee concurs. Whenever she has a workshop, the vast majority of people who come are women. "It calls to women." Her goal is to turn as many women onto cob as possible. She is the founder of Groundworks, which builds, teaches workshops and hosts natural building symposiums in the US, Australia and New Zealand. This June Bee will host the Third Women's Natural Symposium in Washington State, a few hours north of Seattle. She will also be at the Michigan Women's Festival this August to share/demonstrate/choreograph a cob bench sculpture.

Bee teaches women to build cob because she feels that if women have their own homes they are less likely to sell their souls to patriarchy. "Too many women are dependent on men for their shelter—either to build it or pay for it—and they are also dependent on the whole patriarchal structure for housing," says Bee. "Cob is a way to make women having a home easier and you end up with something that isn't just a box full of toxins and destructive energy."

In addition to seeing cob as a means to independent living, she feels that cob building, when done collectively by groups of women, is a vehicle for social change. "It forges a link between women as they are pulling mother earth out of the ground into the walls of home," says Bee.

Women building together is a way to reweave lost connections between women, in a society that is constructed to keep us separated. It also reminds women of what it feels like to be part of a team action creating life-promoting shelter.

Bee teaches in a non-patriarchal manner. There is no expert, and co-creation is the rule (or lack thereof). Louise Thauvette, who attended Bee's last symposium in Oregon, explains: "Becky's whole teaching style was one of the most pleasant learning

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experiences I have ever had in my entire life. Although she has a vast array of knowledge, skill and experience, she doesn't portray herself as the expert—she is not 'the teacher' and we 'the student.' She has a lot of respect and value for everybody's knowledge and experience, and encourages everybody to trust their own ability and skill and to believe in themselves."

Another aspect of Bee's teaching is that she encourages women to work with nature and imitate nature in design. She points out that nature rarely uses a straight line and rounded walls are much stronger. She mentions the brilliant design of the honeycomb of wasps' nests as an example of how to maximize space and minimize indoor walls.

To learn how to cob, women can take workshops, but as they cost money they are not accessible to everyone. Bee says she wrote her book *The Cob Builders Handbook: You Can Sculpt Your Own Home* to make cob building more accessible to women. The book is generously sprinkled with beautiful and instructive illustrations, and the language is not only straight-forward and void of jargon, but is also imbued with enthusiasm. The reader constantly has the thought: "I can do this."

About the book, environmental writer Beth Bosk comments: "I'm not used to explicitness regarding construction that make so much sense to my own base experiences as a North American woman. Instructions and line drawings are so easily absorbed, that I can pass them on to someone else, like gossip."

Bee says that cob is really easy, and she wants to share that with people. "So many books you read about the techniques of building make it sound so hard and impossible and frustrating. And also, they leave out pieces of information, almost like it is a plot. So I wrote a book that is fun, simple and explains every little bit."

Another way to learn that doesn't cost money is to volunteer to help someone build their home.

Accessibility still an issue

Although building with cob itself is more cost accessible than other forms of construction, barriers do still exist. Few women can afford land to build on. One option is to build on community land or become part of a land share group. Even so, not all women, even communally, have access to land.

Louise Thauvette says of her stay on women's land in Oregon "the initial thing that really struck me was the vast majority of white women and the lack of women of colour at the symposium." Although building with cob is a solution to part of the problem, there is the wider issue of money and land. It is usually white-middle-class people who can afford land to build on. (Bee herself does not have land to build on.)

Cobbing may also not be an option for some women who are physically disabled. In terms of accessibility to her workshops, Bee says: "Who can participate depends on the building site. If the structure is to be built upon an incline, then it may be impossible to rest a wheelchair there. However, at times, it is possible to dig out a flat area beside the cob wall so a woman can work on it. As the wall gets higher, temporary ramps can be built of straw bales."

She adds that a woman with a physical disability could not build her own home alone, but there is no reason she can't with friends and to build communally in "the spirit of cob." Of course, this is all dependent on whether the land has the necessary infrastructure, such as scootable paths, wheelchair accessible washrooms *et cetera*, and unfortunately this is rare.

Rural women have more access to this form of affordable housing, as building a cob home in the city now is not very feasible. Building with cob is hindered by the male-dominated construction industry and its building codes. It is difficult to get a permit to build a cob house.

It is ironic that cob homes, which easily stand for a lifetime and are healthy to live in, are not acceptable, whereas condos

jammed to the rafters with highly toxic and flammable materials and which rot within a year are.

So far, the cob homes Bee has been involved with have not come under condemnation from building inspectors. One in New Zealand was condemned for not building to code, but was later pardoned. Bee believes in magic, and mentions a cob home that was built within a housing subdivision of a US city. To date, there has been no concern from building officials.

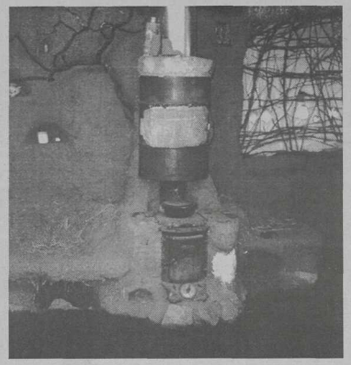
Elisa Shine says they recently had a visit from a building inspector. She says they were given two options: to have their home structurally engineered and receive a permit, or do nothing and have it written on the deed that their home does not comply with code (This means, they can't resell, or get insurance or bank financing).

Having a cob home engineered strikes Bee as needlessly expensive and socially flawed. The issue of codes "takes power away from women by involving inspectors and engineers." She likes the idea of people building their own homes without oversight. "There is nothing historically more traditional nor environmentally benign as cob or earthen homes." She adds, "if you are building your own home, you are going to build it to last." Including cob in building codes and having structures engineered defeats the whole purpose of cob: to live gently and independently upon/within this earth.

Cob home building can be a very radical movement, but like all ideas it can be co-opted. There are cob "experts" who teach in ways that result in "students" who feel they are not expert enough to talk about cob, let alone build it. There are also those who advocate the building of large 3,000-square foot homes and hiring builders. These notions defeat the vision and holistic needs of women and the earth. Cob housing can be a beautiful way for women to gain independence while living within the simplicity Mother Nature requires of us.

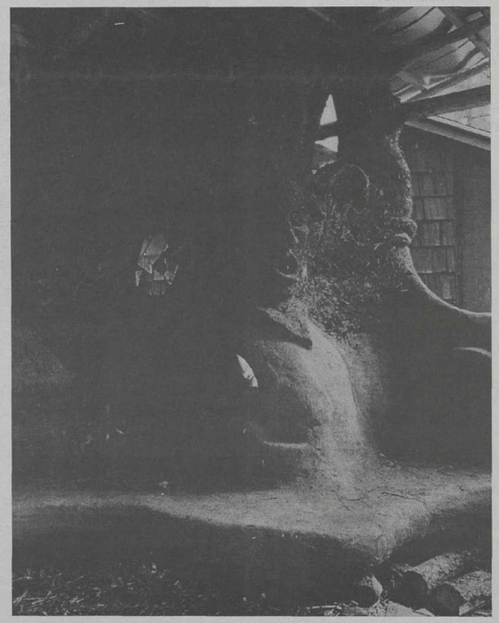
photos by Sangam Grant

Sangam Grant sculpts a pillar for the Goddess Gazebo



A recycled oil drum makes a great stove

"Walking into a cob home... is like walking into a hug."

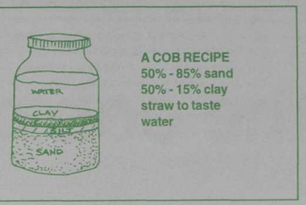


Medusa and her outdoor cob oven and matching bench

Kelly Haydon's head feels full of cob: 57 percent sand, 43 percent clay, a cup of straw, and a splash of water.

photo courtesy of Groundworks

Almost ready for the roof



A COB RECIPE
50% - 85% sand
50% - 15% clay
straw to taste
water

photo courtesy of Groundworks

Cobbing "Down Under" (Australia)

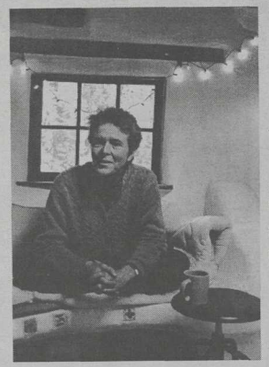
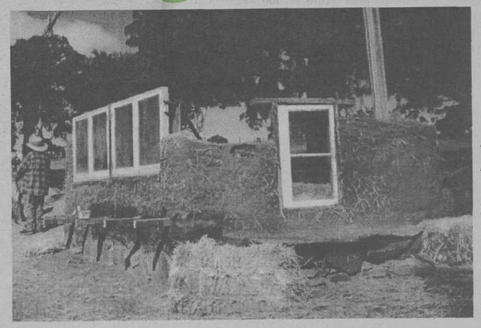


photo courtesy of The New Settler magazine

Becky Bee



photos courtesy of Groundworks

Fitting windows into the cob walls

Commonly asked questions about cob

How long does it last?

Cob homes will last at least as long as you do. Many last hundreds of years.

Won't it melt in the rain?

Many cob homes that have lasted lifetimes are built in some of the wettest climates such as Wales and England. The only time cob houses are negatively affected by rain is if the foundation has been not been properly done and water pools. A good roof is also important. But these two points are true for any type of housing.

Can I put electricity and plumbing in and can I have a flush toilet?

If you want electricity or plumbing you must lay in some pipes through the width of the wall or foundation at the beginning of the building process. Putting in plumbing is just like for any other house, only easier.

Can I build in the colder snowier regions of Canada?

As the climate gets colder and colder, cob gets less and less efficient and thus harder and harder to heat. It would be similar to living in a stone house. You need insulation. One solution proposed by cobber Mitch Spiralstone of Regina is to put in extra long eaves and in the winter surround the house with straw bales. When the temperature rises in the Spring you can simply unbale yourself.

Can I have a second story?

Of course. There are many two-story cob houses existing today. One popular design is a clerestory, which is a home with a sleeping loft.

Can I build in the city?

There is no reason you can't build in the city. However, the small size of land you are apt to have may make it necessary to truck in your supply of earth and clay. Whether the city building inspector will let you live in it is another matter.

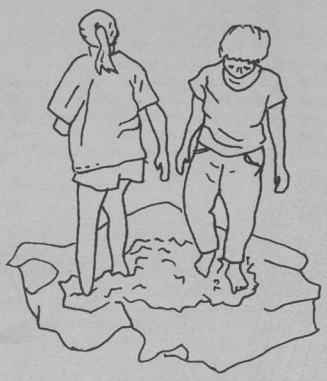
Will my feet get dirty on the mud floor?

No. You seal the floor with linseed oil or you can put in tiles, flat stones, *et cetera*.

Louise Thauvette:

Doing the cob dance

Louise Thauvette attended the Second Women's Natural Building Symposium in southern Oregon last summer. She had never heard of cobbing until she saw the event advertised.



What was your experience of being at the symposium?

One of the first things we did was to plan the week's agenda: what the women present wanted to learn, what they wanted to teach, facilitate and spend their days working on. On the second day, we started playing in mud and that was certainly a highlight. That is the heart of it for me: to rip your boots and socks off and roll up your pants and stomp in the mud and mix it all together. You do this with other women and it's called the cob dance. I love doing the cob dance.

What was it like building/working with women?

I've always imagined that any kind of building was way out of my scope of possibility. I've never built anything before, other than with fabric or food, so I was quite intimidated by the whole idea of building because it's "boy's work." It is indescribable what it's like to be with a group of women building because it's a group of women doing what is very taboo: independently building their own homes in a non-traditional and a very womanly way.

During the symposium, I always felt comfortable, I never felt stupid, I never felt like I didn't know enough to participate, and I always felt it was okay to ask questions. Part of the teaching method was that women teach women teach women. For example, I may have just learned something from a woman and then I pass that information and knowledge to you and then you pass it on to the next woman who comes along. We all become teachers and facilitators and learners at the same time. It's shared; it's communal and it's lovely! There also wasn't a set plan about what the building would look like in the end, so this gave room for women to experiment, create and develop as we went along. It changes and it moves. It's organic and it's creation.

Men don't work that way and have no knowledge of working that way. There is no way I would build cob with men, having done it with women.

Recently, I attended a cob information event in Vancouver and was struck by the difference. There were no women in positions of leadership, and that evening there were presenters, a slide show and an audience. There was a very clear delineation of where the expertise lay and where the lack of expertise lay.

It was so contrary to my experience at Groundworks last summer, where we worked cooperatively and collectively together. I spent the whole night shaking my head wondering, "what are they doing? This isn't the way it is supposed to be."

Any other experiences you would like to share?

What did happen for me throughout the week was I laughed more than I have laughed my entire life. I liked myself better that week than I have in many, many years, and I felt more connected to myself and the women around me. I had more joy and was more open than I thought possible. When I came back my partner wanted me to take her back where I had just been, because she couldn't believe the transformation I had gone through. I tend to be a little uptight; I lost that when I was there. I became really relaxed and very content. What it did for me, Louise, how it made me feel, and the confidence and joy it gave me became more important than the dream of building my house.

And the food was incredible. Sushi, Pad Thai all cooked in a makeshift outdoor kitchen!

Where are you now in terms of your dream since the symposium?

The dream for me was about rhubarb and a place where I could plant it in the ground and see it the next year. I want a place where I can do that. When you rent, you don't know whether you will still be there the next year. But how to afford land with a house? Forget it! I thought that the only thing I could maybe afford someday was a condo; a crappy little condo somewhere. Now, you couldn't put me in a condo for the world. There is no way.

Cobbing resources

The Third Women's Natural Building Symposium will be held in Arlington, Washington June 15 to 22, and a one-day fair on June 20 *[see Bulletin Board for details.]* An open symposium will also be held in Arlington, July 1 to 7. For information on both symposiums, call (360) 403-0185.

For a listing of upcoming cobbing workshops facilitated by Becky Bee, write to Groundworks, PO Box 381, Murphy, OR, 97533, or call (541) 471-3470. Week-long workshops cost US $250-350, which includes three meals a day. Some work trades are available.

***The Cob Builders Handbook* can be ordered by sending US$19.95 + 4.00 postage to Becky Bee, Groundworks, PO Box 381, Murphy, OR, 97533. If you order 10 books at a time, the cost is US$12 each book plus $8 shipping. (You can also check your local library for a copy.)**

Spring, Elisa and Dawn Shine welcome any women who want to come out to Argenta, British Columbia, and help and learn how to cob, camp out and play in the mud. The exterior walls are done and this summer they will need help doing the interior walls, a cob floor and the roof. If you are interested, call and leave a message with them at (250) 366-4283.

The Nuxalk Nation is building a cob coffee house in Bella Coola, British Columbia. They will be hosting a workshop in July. The workshop is free to any member of the Nuxalk Nation, and $500 for others. You can also volunteer to help build and learn anytime. For more information, call (250) 799-5559 or (604) 253-5281.

photo by Sangam Grant

Louise Thauvette and her one-cookie oven

Line drawings on pages 12-14 courtesy of The Cob Builders Handbook

Women and our breasts:

The dangers of 34DD

by Nancy Parker

Summer is here and the sun is hot and, "look out," the women are all flinging off their....

"Women Baring Aggressive Breasts Beware," was the front page headline in the *Victoria News*, July 9 [1997] edition. It certainly caught my eye and caused me to think about the implications and how they could affect my summer fun out riding and at the many rodeo events.

It seems that if a topless woman is in a public place, it's likely that she could be arrested, and then Crown Counsel will decide whether or not to pursue the charges. The Crown Counsel Policy Manual recommends leniency, unless the woman "demonstrates an aggressive approach to nude exhibitionism."

I find it ridiculous that the Attorney General's Office would spend tax dollars debating what makes breasts illegal. As I look down at my own bosom, they seemed pretty peaceable, even somewhat ho-hum. So I thought that maybe I needed a better understanding of the word "aggressive" and looked it up in my dictionary. Webster's describes aggressive as: assertive, hostile, pushy, energetic, determined, enterprising, warlike, contentious, forward, militant, macho, domineering, powerful and dynamic.

Armed with this new knowledge, I spent the day doing some deep thinking and even soul searching about the "sort" of breasts I've been sporting all these years. Are they aggressive?

Once, on a cold day, my left nipple did force itself through the lace of my bra. Was this a sign that my nipples have been quietly awaiting a chance for a break to freedom? Are they assertive, hostile and pushy? Have they been meeting secretly to plan their escape?

I personally think that for a mound of flesh without any visible means of mobilization, my breasts are pretty energetic and determined. I often find them bursting over the top of my bra or sneaking out between the buttons of my shirt. They seem to have no trouble being able to free themselves from the confines of a brassier, while most men with ten fingers can't get the damn thing off!

They're pretty enterprising too! Without the least bit of help from the rest of my person, they have been able to attract many unsolicited mugs of beer.

graphic by Colleen Sheridan

Is it the fact that I wear a 34DD cup bra, and could probably do some damage to a person or property if I was flung breast first from a speeding motorcycle, just cause to name my breasts warlike or contentious? (Should they wear helmets?) Wouldn't that be excusable since it was Mother Nature that provided the "weapons"? I think it is part of our human rights as Canadians to have whatever size breasts we can afford without Crown Counsel labelling them "wilfully non-compliant with the law."

And to top it off, I don't think that small breasts could ever be considered "forward" or "militant." A pair of teeny titties have a hard enough time getting attention, let alone causing trouble. I've seen plenty of them in the riding community and they've never scared me.

A pair of breasts that did scare me were on a woman at the Pig n' Fin (an annual motorcycle rodeo event held in Coombs, BC) that had a frosting of dark curly hair in her cleavage. Now, that's aggressive, macho and domineering!

Everyone who knows me is aware that, on occasion, I leave my bra at home or sometimes even tied to someone's handlebars. Is this aiding and abetting a pair of criminals? It makes sense to me--the force of gravity that pulls those heavy babies closer to my navel each year can also be used to pull all the wrinkles out of my face. I think it proves they're very powerful and dynamic!

So why all this new concern about tits? I've had mine for 40 years without much trouble. I think the law should let those that own them be responsible. Most people with "trouble-makers" could easily find help keeping them at home under house arrest.

Is the public really all that concerned that women might decide to go topless all the time? I don't think so. I just got people used to the idea that when I've got my butt out mooning a passerby, that, just like Mel Gibson in *Braveheart*, I'm showing off my Scottish side.

Nancy Parker rides a Harley and lives in Victoria, British Columbia. This article was reprinted from the August/September 1997 issue of Red Zone, *the monthly street zine published by the Victoria Street Community Association.* Kinesis *came across this article in the Spring 1998 issue of the* Rainbow Women's Newsletter, *a quarterly publication produced by women in Chilliwack, BC.*

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The stories and songs of North American Native women:

Totally Coolidge!

by Gina Gasongi Simon

SINGING OUR STORIES
directed by Annie Fraziér Henry
Full Regalia/Omni Film Productions
Vancouver, British Columbia, 1998

History books may not tell the whole truth, but as people scurried about the concrete jungle of downtown Vancouver, an array of powerful voices—North American Native women's voices—were doing just that. They could be heard resonating from deep below the hollow cement corridors of Robson Square Media Centre, where a full house was gathered for the premiere of Annie Fraziér Henry's new film, *Singing Our Stories*.

The diverse audience which came looking for truth was treated to an exhilarating visual and musical odyssey through the eyes and mouths of Native North American women.

Singing Our Stories is a ground breaking one-hour documentary, that takes viewers on a visionary journey through the landscape of North American Native song and into the personal lives of the "First Ladies" of indigenous music.

The premiere exemplified the collective teaching of true power. All women—the grandmothers, mothers, daughters, aunties, nieces and sisters—shared the gift of storytelling and teaching through song. The film features live performances and interviews with women singers, songwriters and performers, all sharing their message through the universal voice.

As rock icon and two time Grammy Award winner Rita Coolidge stated: "We are only three women, and we are doing the best we can to make a difference. I believe and know that Native people are still very much ignored—probably more than any other group in North America—for our contributions."

"We" refers to Walela, the vocal group comprised of Rita Coolidge, her sister Priscilla Coolidge, and her niece Laura Satterfield. Those who attended the premiere were treated to an incredible performance by these three women.

Together, the trio eloquently brings to life the spirit of their Cherokee heritage. Their remarkable musical delivery combines a blend of pop, gospel and Native American influences.

Singing Our Stories opens with the sound of the oldest recorded Indian song: a healing song by a Sioux medicine man by the name of Brave Buffalo. The old wax cylinders and a dramatic re-enactment of archival photos prove that Native people have not lost these traditions.

As ethnomusicologist Judith Gray of the American Centre of the Library of Congress is quoted in the film, says: "Tradition lives precisely because it can adapt."

photo courtesy Full Regalia Productions

Breana Yamutewa of the Zuñi Old Maidens

Through their language, heritage and homelands, the stories and songs of the women in *Singing Our Stories* link the past to the present as they trace the voices of their ancestors. At each stop on the journey, we meet and pay tribute to the women who preserve and carry the precious musical archive of their peoples.

The experience allows the viewer a glimpse from a bird's eye view of the Monk-Sanders Family Singers from the Tuscarora Nation celebrating on the front porch of their grandmother's house. This singing group emulates the passing of music from one generation to the next as the seven members represent four generations of singing daughters.

The a cappella trio Ulali joins this musical bluesy, rhythmic and joyful celebration. Rattles, rather than drums, are used as accompaniment.

"There is nothing more beautiful to me than being able to sing with my family," says Pura Fé. "That is really the strongest connection for me and where my songs come from."

"We are only three women, and we are doing the best we can to make a difference."
— Rita Coolidge —

In a teepee on sacred Sundance territory of the Blood Nation, we experience the powerful Headdress songs of the Buffalo Women's Society and the haunting harmony of the Women Singers of Drummers of Old Agency.

"There is nothing more beautiful to me than being able to sing with my family"
— Pura Fé —

Bringing this musical odyssey a little closer to home, we travel by water to the magnificient Northwest Coastal village of Alert Bay (British Columbia), home of the eternal strength of the 'Namgis Singers'. During the 'Namgis Singers' live performance at the premiere, the audience witnessed the passing of song, as one little boy strained his neck to get closer to the microphone, and his mother obliged him by readjusting its height. It was a real treat to hear this little boy harmonize on cue with his mother and aunties.

photo by Gina Gasongi Simon

Gina Gasongi Simon [second from left] felt great honour meeting Rita Coolidge [left], and Laura Satterfield and Priscilla Coolidge

Back to the film...arriving by air, our journey takes us to spectacular spiritual landmark where the Zuni people have celebrated for thousands of years—the magnificent mesa Dowa Yallane. The Zuñi Olla Maidens perform in an open space, using an indigenous instrument known as the frog box.

Their colours and poise are something to be seen, as they reverently walk down the mountainside with clay pottery balanced on their heads. The entire scene is of wonder and grace, as they never miss a beat.

Cornelia Bowannie, a traditional singer and celebrated jeweller, provides the vocal and rhythm on drum. Her daughter's quote epitomizes how sacred the teachings and passing of songs is to North American Native women. "I will always be grateful to my mother because she's the one who taught us our songs and taught us our dances. And through her, I think I've made a commitment to this community, because I will live and die here."

After seeing the women of Walela sitting around the kitchen table singing the songs of their Cherokee grandmother, the moment of truth came when, after the film screening, the audience had the privilege of mee ing Rita Coolidge i person.

She is a humbl woman, as anyone who had the opport nity to meet and talk with her can attes The line-up in front of her was long, bu Rita Coolidge remained until every albun every autograph was signed, and ever photo was taken.

During an earlier interview we ha scheduled, Rita shared her innermost fee ings about ground breakers and shaker "As the world changes, not much has r ally changed in terms of people and the treatment of others. I can stand in front c an audience and try to get them to unde stand, but that is just too much informa tion. I, and a lot of other people, would lov to see our contributions acknowledged a the American Music Awards or the Cana dian Music Awards. I think it is a gradu process and we all have to persevere."

Her sister Priscilla was quick to ad "The history books don't tell the truth, an until enough people come to terms with th healing and admittance of what has gon on, it will remain an unspoken truth."

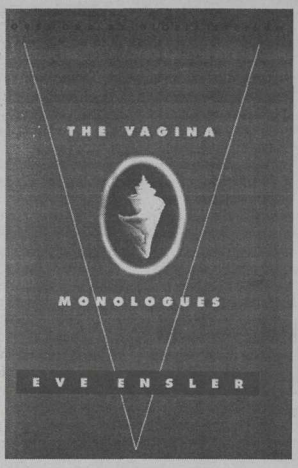
Annie Fraziér Henry has this to ad about her sixth film: "The idea of havin or finding your song has been part of Na tive spirituality for thousands of years. M goal was to invite the viewer on a visior ary journey through the first teacher c song—the landscape, with all its divers and magnificent elements."

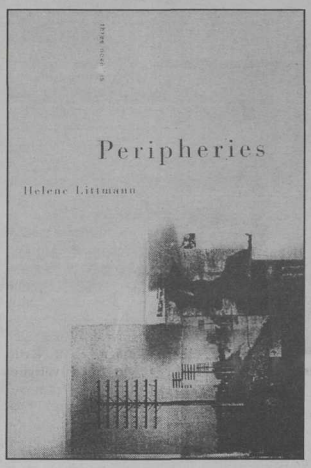
This feat is accomplished, and that thanks to all the women who so willingl shared their voices and personal lives.

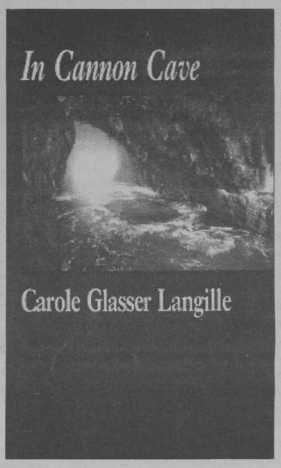
Gina Gasongi Simon is an Ojibwe Odawa fro the Wikwemikong Unceded Reserve o Manitoulin Island, and is a freelance writer.

ARTS

A number of books written by women come into our offices each week, so Kinesis *thought we'd share with you, our readers, a sampling of some of the recently-published fiction and non-fiction titles. If you are interested in reviewing any of the books listed below for* Kinesis, *or know of any other exciting titles you would like to review or that* Kinesis *should review, please give us a call (604) 255-5499 or drop us a line.*







compiled by Kate Hall, Lissa Geller and Laura Quilici

Wounds of Passion: A Writing Life, by bell hooks *is a memoir about writing, love and sexuality. With her customary boldness and insight, hooks critically reflects on the impact of birth control and the women's movement on our lives. She explores the way her sexuality is influenced by her radical political consciousness. Eloquent and powerful, this book lets us see the ways one woman writer works to find her voice while creating a love relationship based on feminist thinking.* (Henry Holt, New York, 1997.)

The Vagina Monologues, by Eve Ensler. *This groundbreaking book encompasses the voices of hundreds of women from around the world, whom Ensler asked to discuss the same forbidden subject: their vaginas.* The Vagina Monologues *transforms the question mark hovering over the female anatomy into a permanent victory sign. No one who reads this book will ever look at a woman's body the same way again.* (Villard Books, New York, 1998.)

A Slender Thread: Rediscovering Hope at the Heart of Crisis, by Diane Ackerman. *In an intimate and compassionate record of her service as a counsellor on a suicide and crisis hotline, Ackerman turns her attention to the troubled lives of those suffering from anxiety, depression and all the trials, uncertainties and conflicts of love. It is a rare book that acknowledges the truth of life's pain, but which is also filled with hope, sensitivity and a radiant generosity of spirit.* (Vintage, New York, 1997.)

Too Many Men on the Ice: Women's Hockey in North America, by Joanna Avery and Julie Stevens. *This book uncovers the rich history of women's hockey and relates it to the remarkable resurgence in women's hockey today.* Too Many Men on the Ice *is both a chronicle and a celebration. It reveals that, although women come to hockey in a variety of ways, they share a profound love for the game and an inextinguishable drive to excel.* (Polestar, Vancouver, 1997.)

My Mother's Last Dance by Honor Ford-Smith. *Honor Ford-Smith was a founding member of the Jamaican theatre company, Sistern, and is a teacher, performer and writer. While many of her poems have been published in anthologies throughout the Caribbean, in Canada, US and Europe,* My Mother's Last Dance *represents the first time they have been published together in their own right. The book is a powerful, humorous and deeply moving collection, celebrating the legacy of three generations of Caribbean women in a meditation on loss, memory and hope.* (Sister Vision Press, Toronto, 1997)

Peripheries, by Helene Littman. *With sardonic wit, humour, empathy and pernicious attention to the details of everyday life, Littman uses three novellas to explore the lives of several young women on the west coast. "Ground Zero" tells the story of Stephanie, who works at Teachpeace and watches passively as her world disintegrates around her. "Midsummer" is an ironic comedy about a woman rebuilding her life on her return from Europe. And "Pesadilla Beach" follows Amanda as she photographically records life behind a logging blockade. With mixed outcomes, the novellas represent a place where freedom can be simultaneously full of emptiness and possibility.* (Cormorant Books, Dunvegan, Ontario, 1998.)

In Cannon Cave, by Carole Glasser Langille. *As the title of this book suggests, this collection of poetry by Canadian poet Carole Glasser Langille resonates from rich acoustic chambers, as it explores moving beyond romanticism and into a new compassion. By connecting the world outside with the world inside, this collection strikes at a variety of human themes of love loss, regaining pleasure, and childhood.* (Brick Books, London, Ontario, 1997.)

Challenging the Public Private Divide: Feminism, Law and Public Policy, edited by Susan B. Boyd. *These original essays examine the impact of the legal-ideological divide between public and private spheres with respect to four themes:state intervention, the relationship between family, home and work, the legal regulation of motherhood, and the challenges of privatization, economic restructuring and globalization. The contributors, including Nitya Iyer, Katherine Teghtsoonian and Jennifer Koshan, show the impact of the divide created by these four themes along a continuum, which includes race, class, (dis)ability, and sexual identity as they intersect with gender.* (University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1997.)

Dr. Susan Love's Hormone Book, by Susan M. Love, with Karen Lindsey. *From a discussion on the medicalization of menopause to oulining alternatives to hormone replacement therapy, Susan Love presents a clear, compassionate how-to guide on coping with menopause. A welcome addition to the growing literature on menopause written from a feminist perspective.* (Random House, New York, 1998.)

Estrogen: The Natural Way, by Nina Shandler. *Loss of estrogen is one of the effects of aging and menopause. Conventional hormone replacement therapy, with its distressing side effects, is often touted by mainstream doctors as the only option for menopausal women. But Nina Shandler has learned that some foods actually contain estrogen. Part cookbook, part eating program,* Estrogen: The Natural Way *will prove an excellent resource for women looking for a gentle, yet effective alternative to drug therapy.* (Villard, New York, 1997.)

Kate Hall works at Women in Print, the feminist bookstore in Vancouver (3566 W. 4th Ave.)

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Images independent film and video festival:

360 degrees women

by Sheila James and Melina Young

Images *is an annual festival of independent film and video held in Toronto. This year's festival, held between April 23 and May 2, screened 112 works from 26 countries, many of which were premiers. The titles presented in the 17 new screen program reflected some challenging, provocative and cutting edge work.*

Images *was founded in 1988 to provide an exhibition forum for "marginalized" works—films and videos by women, people of colour, gays and lesbians.*

Below, Sheila James and Melina Young chat about a few of the films and videos made by women and screened in this year's festival as part of the "360 Degrees Women" program. James is a writer and theatre worker presently living in Vancouver. Young is an independent video artist living in Toronto.

TOP OF THE WORLD
Marjorie Kaye, USA

This 17-minute short tells the story of Shannon, the new girl in town, who fixates on winning the heart of bad girl Rannd. The film depicts the seduction of Rannd and portrays butch/femme roles with a humorous twist.

Young: It was cute and fun. It's nice to see something that was so plainly by dykes, for dykes in a dyke culture, though it was a dyke culture that was almost dated. For instance, there was a slightly grungy lesbian cafe, bookstore, bar, coffee shop...

James: Yeah...with a collective feel. I liked how conscious the film was of its own corniness. For example, the hero Shannon, shows up when Rannd is having a fight with her girlfriend. She just happens to be in the right place at the right time. Its so obviously contrived.

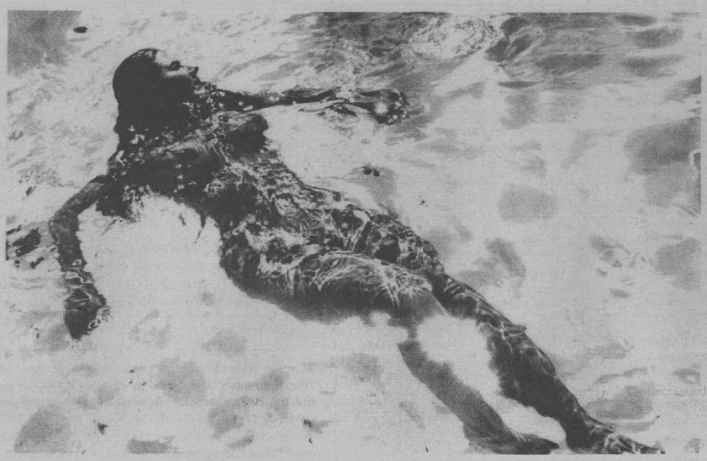
Young: Yeah, if it came out a decade ago, it would have fit right in with my experience, my own sense of lesbianism and the lesbian world. Now, I see it differently—the scenes like where the new woman (Shannon) volunteers to help clean up and then Rannd, who is supposed to clean up, just sits there and watches her for an hour I see it now as problematic. There are control issues to consider.

James: But they're conscious of that; that's the whole S&M parallel, right? That's the humour. When Rannd points out a stain that Shannon missed, the power relationship is being satirized.

SHOOT ME ANGEL
Amal Bedjaoui, France

This nine-minute short is called "an erotic urban allegory," where a white police woman pursues a Black woman down a city street, and the interaction between them moves from violence to desire.

James: This is a disturbing film. The opening images of this Black person fleeing a white person with a gun sets up the racist power dynamic that goes through the whole film. For me, it didn't work because while it's supposed to be this erotic urban allegory, there's nothing erotic about racism.



from *My Feminism*

It was hard to watch. The threat of racism and violence is in your face. The white woman shoots the Black woman in the leg. Then, it moves to inside an apartment, and the game of desire and control starts.

Young: I didn't get that they were lovers. In fact, I thought they were going to kill each other. It's interesting that it's a French production. I hate to generalize, but the way French filmmakers express racism is itself often through exoticism. I think this was an example of that. It is an opportunity for excitement, erotic tension—all very objectifying.

> **"Like rice, my son has become a staple. Sometimes he is the only one that touches me all day."**
> **from Veena Cabreros-Sud's video *Stretchmark***

James: Yes, the Black woman was stark naked in the film, and this was coupled with the violence...

Young: The gun was always a member. You might say a participant.

James: We see this dynamic too much in real life to make me want to watch it on film.

MY CUNT
Deb Strutt and Liz Baulch, Australia

Maude Davey performs a humorous/satirical monologue originally written for stage about living with a cunt. She questions the ideal of female perfection, deconstructs the beauty myth, and gives us glimpses into her grandmother's act of defiance by sewing up her cunt. Winner of the Audience Choice Award at the 1997 Melbourne Queer Film and Video Festival.

James: I loved this one I must say. They call it a "subversive black comedy," but whatever you want to call it, it's really well performed. The writing is very good, and the filmmaking and direction is engaging. It's a provocative and evocative comedy.

Young: Australian independent work often has a quirky sense of humour about it. At the same time, it's very subtle. It is possible to express subtle and complex positions without being heavy or taking yourself too seriously. It was light in its form.

James: In its delivery, too.

Young: But also able to discuss important, complex issues around sexuality and identity.

James: Such as female perfection, body type. Yeah, it's light, but the levels are deep.

Young: It's 90s in the sense that it is performative. It's feminist and queer at the same time, which don't always go hand-in-hand. It's deconstructivist, and yet it retains a feminist critique. It doesn't dissociate itself from political positioning.

James: It's very clearly a feminist piece, and I just love the moral of the story *[laughs.]* We're all expecting something really huge to come out of this and she says, "Don't shut up your cunt."

Young: The most basic feminist message.

STABAT MATER
Olga Samolevskaya, Ukraine

An experimental film depicting images of maternal women and war, evoking themes of spirituality, creation, maternal love and reincarnations of the soul. Winner of the Best Experimental Video at Film Video 1997 in Montekatini, Italy.

James: This film was one of my favourite pieces. I love the religious images and the maternal images of pregnant women and girls. Samolevskaya creates an abstract collage work. It's almost like a water colour.

Young: The singing was also powerful.

James: Yes, the sound track was good. It was an experimental work that definitely grabbed the audience into its theme of women, motherhood, war and conflict. It made me think about the whole creation of life, juxtaposed with the destruction of life.

Young: I liked it, but I also wondered how much of the context we missed. What difference would it have made if we knew the experiences she drew from? There are historical changes in the Ukraine that she's actually commenting on. Maybe Canadian audiences, not having those experiences, can't appreciate the challenges of placing women in war, women in huge social upheavals. I felt myself missing something. Other than that, I found the pace slow, but I did like the images.

James: I thought there was a lot of resonance not only with what has happened to the Ukrainian people, but also in parts of Eastern Europe over the last ten years. For me, it seems like there is a direct connection that's universal—whether it's civil war or civil strife in Sri Lanka or in Yugoslavia.

Young: But that's also why I had some questions.

James: You would have liked specificity?

Young: I feel it was a little too simplifying.

A raw and intimate look at the life of a single mother, exposing taboos of single parenthood, isolation, boredom and anger.

James: This film was first screened at Desh Pradesh [an annual festival in Toronto of South Asian politics, culture and art] in 1996. Cabreros-Sud is a Filipino-Indian writer, film maker and mother from New York. Her film made me very sad, but I also found it very honest and courageous—a single woman struggles with raising her son.

I thought the silence in the film—there's very little noise, except real raw urban noise—illustrated her isolation and boredom. The fact that her son was often the only person she communicated with all day was sad. I thought she communicated her experience very effectively, telling her stories throughout, especially the one about standing with her child on the subway train and no one offering her a seat.

Young: It's emotionally quite heavy. Maybe it's a story that doesn't get told because women in that position are isolated and don't have the access or time to do such a piece.

James: What I liked about it too was that we rarely see Asian women talking about being single mothers. I'm sure a lot of people can identify with it. The images were beautiful.

Young: There were strong, bare images, urban decay. And there weren't people in her images.

James: ...just her child, which I suppose was an accurate portrayal of her life.

Young: I felt like saying, "Get the hell out of New York."

MY FEMINISM
Laurie Colbert and Dominique Cardona, Canada

A documentary with clips of women working, marching and living. The film is based on interviews with leading feminists from Canada, the US, Ireland and India—Mary Becker, Urvashi Butalia, bell hooks, Judy Rebick, Ailbhe Smyth, Gloria Steinem and Urvashi Vaid—speaking on different issues including health care, pornography and reproductive rights.

James: The blurb in the program states that we're living in a "post-feminist" world, so the beginning of the film is about being in this supposedly post-feminist stage and asking young women how they identify as feminists, if they do. It made me really hopeful. I was thinking, "yeah, reclaim feminism, get it out there," but I was disappointed with the film. Although all the women interviewed did good work in their lives...

Young: ...and are still doing it now.

James: Yes, I feel we can access their books, articles, *et cetera*. This film is obviously for a middle-class and academic audience, and that's its pitfall. The filmmakers missed a whole range of grassroots activists, women from the South, indigenous women, young women. These women aren't famous, but could have offered a wide range of thoughts on what it is to be feminist.

> **"My grandmother has an implied cunt."**
>
> **from Deb Strutt/Liz Baulch's film *My Cunt***

Young: I could see a conscious attempt to address the problem of representation, but I don't think it really worked.

James: I also thought some of the issues discussed were important, but limited. For instance, they spoke about reproductive rights, particularly abortion. Well, abortion isn't the issue for a lot of women in the world; basic health care and control over our bodies is. To me, this has to do with the filmmakers' editorial decisions. When Urvashi Butalia, an activist from India, was speaking about how women in the South don't want to identify with white feminists, the filmmakers cut to a picture of a radical activist, probably the image of a dyke.

Young: ...a leather dyke with short hair...

James: ...yeah, which then suggests that women in the South aren't lesbians or are prejudiced against white lesbians...The filmmakers made a choice there, but I think it's problematic. Why not cut to a middle class white feminist in a power suit?

Young: The women interviewed have done amazing things, but when Gloria Steinem said she was conscious of feeling liberated from a deeply held fear of physical violence while on a visit to Tokyo because she was taller than the men, well...I'm sorry, but most of us don't get a chance to stroll through Tokyo.

James: One of the things Steinem also said was that feminism is about revolution not public relations, but I felt this film *was* about public relations. It was an introduction to strong women who have made it in the mainstream. There were great things to hear, such as Urvashi Vaid asserting that the third wave of feminism must be international...

Young: I don't think it even refreshed us. Maybe it was a matter of the questions asked. But I'm not sure why they had Judy Rebick talking about her experience teaching a course in Saskatchewan because she has done a lot of stuff more interesting. The material in the film was safe.

James: I agree, but I do have to say, in these so-called "post feminist" times, creating a film that owns and affirms feminism has to be commended.

A conversation with *Images* Executive Director Deirdre Logue

Deirdre Logue: This year, over half the works in the festival are by women. Every once in a while, it's really important to remind audiences that there is still a lot to talk about in terms of gender politics. There's a lot of work being produced by women and women of colour that's not hitting the screen whether it be in broadcast or exhibition festivals, *et cetera*.

Melina Young: Is it a way of taking into account the audiences in Toronto?

Logue: ...we don't program thematically to meet needs *per se*, but we try to determine what the needs of a very broad community are. When we make a decision to program "360 Degrees Women," it is on the strength of the works that come in from the call for submissions. It's up to us to create the right frame for this work. It's up to us to make a big fuckin' deal out of it, right?

The six works in "360 Degree Women" were chosen from more than 700 submissions. They're pretty close to the top twenty works. To seize that moment is our responsibility. To sit down and see twelve works from all over the world by women gives a really interesting sense of what's happening overall [in the world of independent film and video.]

Young: Do you think there are more women...

Logue: ...than men making film and video?

Young: Perhaps, or at least, that there's been some kind of change?

Logue: I think film and video practice is becoming more and more accessible every day, but as it becomes more accessible and as people use the mediums more, we also encounter new problems. It's sort of six of one and half a dozen of the other.

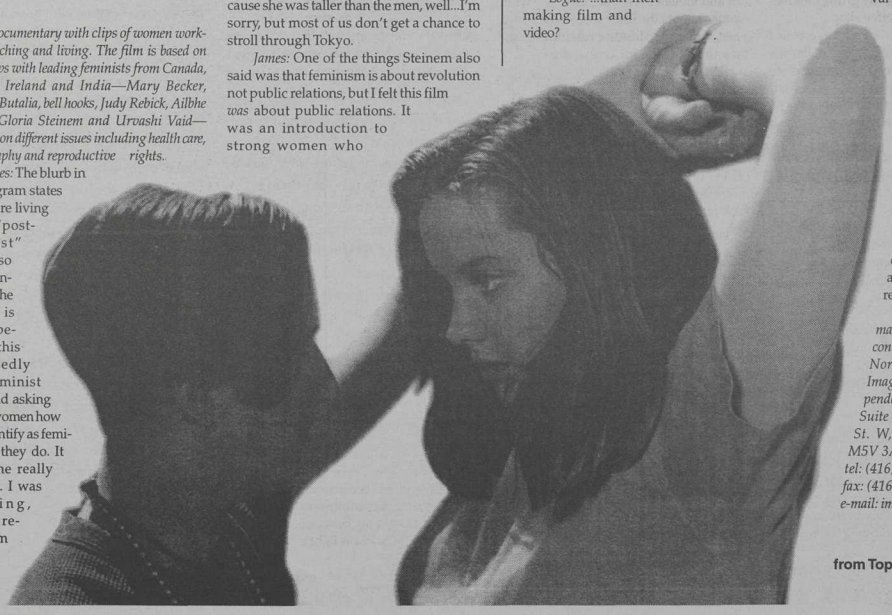
Take someone like Lynne Chan, whose piece, *Untitled (My Mama)*, was screened in the closing night program. It's a very raw work, right? She ran around with a Hi-8 camera. It's a mess technically, but the concepts that drive the work are really profound. So you get a range now in terms of practice, from total technical breakdown, really raw work, low gauge sensibilities to really high production 35 mm.

Young: Would you like to say something about the way the women's programming was put together?

Logue: The [women's program] curators, Michelle Mohabeer, Kika Thorne and Kathleen Smith, put together some really strong program, with "360 Degrees Women" and the women's animation program. Having women in curatorial positions is very important.

We took six tapes from the festival and screened them at the Women's Art Resource Centre for the duration of the festival. The women's work in this festival was most successful in that way. It was really strong work and a lot of people got to see it. Other women get inspired by a piece in the festival, then they borrow their best friend's Super 8 camera, and then it's in next year's festival—you know, there's a continuum there, and that's one of its real pluses, for sure.

For more information about Images *contact:*
Northern Visions/The Images Festival of Independent Film and Video, Suite 448, 401 Richmond St. W, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 3A8;
tel: (416) 971-8405;
fax: (416) 971-7412;
e-mail: images@interlog.com.



from Top of the World

LETTERS

dear readers

***Kinesis* loves receiving mail. Please get your letter to us by the 18th of the month.**

If you can, keep the length to about 500 words. (If you go way over, we might edit for space.)

Hope to hear from you very soon.
Love,
Kinesis

TG discussion needs compassion

Dear *Kinesis*,

[re: "The struggle for women-only space" in the March 1998 issue.]

I'm glad this issue is being raised and I'm quite disturbed by some of the comments. I have a number of points to make, although they are far from all that needs to be said.

I am concerned about how this issue is being discussed. If we do not do this well and with compassion, we will have yet another energy draining fight that will leave women with less to give and drive women away from doing political work at all.

It is dismissive to speak of a decision to take hormones as "popping hormones"—as if it were a decision people take lightly. Although I agree there need to be a lot more conversations, it is important to me that people's decisions are not analysed away as some kind of false consciousness.

As for women using legal suits to gain access to women's groups: I'm having difficulty with a whole group of people being condemned for the actions of *some* of its members. I believe the criticism ought to be levelled at the strategy, and not be used as a way to slam transgendered women in general. I'm critical of transgendered women suing women's groups, just as I'm critical of any other women using the legal system against each other in this kind of way.

Although I understand that in this climate of legal suits that it is difficult for organizations to make a public stand, I am disturbed at the implications that transgendered women have been resorting to violence against individuals who disagree with them. If that is true then those individuals ought to be exposed. If it is not, then we need to be very careful not to escalate hostility.

I do think we should welcome transgendered women and deal with the behaviour just as we deal with obnoxious behaviour from any other woman who has some relative degree of privilege. I don't believe it is the same thing as welcoming men into women's organizations...very few transgendered women have grown up fully enjoying the fruits of being male (although some have). Most have grown up targeted for being different, for not being a real male.

I'd rather see us spending our energy telling someone who is basically an ally that something is not OK, thus ending up with one more woman doing the work that needs to be done, than spending our energy fighting with each other about whether someone is a real woman and whether we're willing to deal with her, or not.

I do agree that growing up female and growing up transgendered is a different experience and some transgendered women do not acknowledge this, and that's not OK. However, some do and some do not. Just as lots of white women, middle class women, heterosexual women, able bodies women don't acknowledge their privilege.

This whole issue illustrates some of the inherent difficulties in identity politics and binary thinking about gender. Some things just don't fit. And when something doesn't fit, I think we need to stretch our analysis and if we can't get our head around it all, then we need to make decisions from a place of compassion—even if we can't make our analysis line up.

If gender were constructed solely from socialization, then my very 50s gender socialization would have resulted in a very conventional female gender identity. That's not who I am.

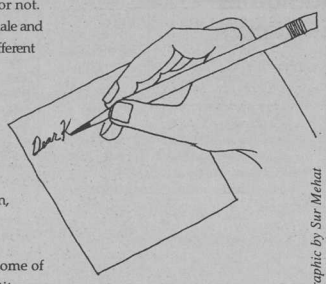
It seems utterly illogical to say that transgendered women wanting to be in women's groups is about their male socialization. All other marginalized groups of women have pushed to have voice and visibility in women's groups and have usually only gone away to make our own groups out of despair.

I agree the issue is complex. I agree it doesn't come clearly through the lens of gender analysis. I agree there will need to be some accommodations made and that we must push for help to do that...and surely there is a better response than "go away—you don't fit." Surely feminism is a big enough house to add another room and to find a way to go forward with creativity and compassion.

The bottom line reality is that there is a group of people who are not male, not living as men, who are living as women, who identify as women, who may have varying degrees of male socialization (although quite frankly, I don't see a lot of difference between the arrogance and sense of entitlement based on race or class, and that based on gender), and who get targeted because they are not men.

I don't have to believe that her experience is the same as mine to work with her—as long as what we are agreed on our focus. I think we'd have more to gain from talking about our similarities and differences than in arguing over who is or isn't real. We both are targeted and we both have an investment in changing things.

Bet Cecill
Vancouver, BC



graphic by Sur Mehat

No help resolving dilemma

Dear *Kinesis*,

As an editor myself, I hesitate to criticize another editorial decisions, but I can't get the article "The struggle for women-only space" off my mind, so I am putting my thoughts to paper.

First, the issue of transgendered lesbians: Either we include them in the definition "women," or we don't. Since we can't include them in the category of "men," then either they are women or something else all together.

I found this article to be a classic example of the sort of yellow journalism that I expect from *BC Report*, not *Kinesis*. It uses fear-mongering, demonizing the "enemy," obfuscation, and many unsupported statements attributed to the "other side."

Fear-mongering: Spreading rumours of threats of violence...has there been violence or threats of violence against women or women's groups from the transgendered community? If so, they should be exposed and the perpetrators dealt with. These are serious accusations, and we deserve to hear the particulars.

The point the article seemed to be a fear of losing money—of spreading our minimal funding too thinly. If these women are our sisters, how can we deny them a share of the money?

Demonizing: Placing the transgendered community on a list that includes father's rights groups and false-memory syndrome supporters: are there any ideological or organizational links between the TG community and the far right? I find this hard to believe, but if so, I'd like to hear about them.

Obfuscation: the argument was made that we cannot be "oppressors" because we are ourselves oppressed. There are dozens of examples that make this argument silly. Anticipating the opposition to one's argument and discounting it in such a way is a common technique of the Right (we'll be called "racist" if we oppose land claims), but it is not a technique that feminists should indulge in.

Unsupported Attributions: Throughout the article, claims were made about the statements and ideas of queer politics and the transgendered community, but not one of them was attributed to any person or publication.

I question the wisdom of using this format [of a discussion] to introduce such an emotionally-charge issue. Discussions work best for things like interviews of individual women, or for groups of women discussing their personal experiences. It is not a format that works well for political debate. Especially, if all the people in the group are saying the same thing. A discussion that included the point of view of TG women would have been more appropriate, I believe.

I am unsure, myself, about how we should align ourselves with TG women. But this article did nothing to help me resolve the dilemma. Mostly what it did was make me question my alignment with the feminist community. We are being asked to expand our definitions of ourselves to include a group of people who may well be our sisters, who have a different experience of being female than we do. Have we become so rigid that we believe we have already understood everything there is to know about the oppression of women?

I applaud *Kinesis* for at least opening the debate on this important topic. But I worry that the tone of this article will serve to close the debate before it really begins. If I was a TG woman, I'd hesitate to speak up after reading that article. It leaves no opening for anything except a defensive stance.

The *Open Door* [of which Quinlan is editor] is a newsletter for rural feminists and lesbians. It has no funding, and so we have no fear of spreading the money too thinly! If there are any TG women, particularly lesbians, out there who are interested in telling their stories, I'd be happy to print them.

Judith Quinlan
C-4, S-20, RR #2
Burns Lake, BC
V0J 1E0

BULLETIN BOARD

read this

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

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

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

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

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

Listings will not be accepted over the telephone.

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

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

INVOLVEMENT

WANNA GET INVOLVED?

With *Kinesis*? We want to get involved with you too. Help plan our next issue. All women interested in what goes into *Kinesis*—whether it's news, features or arts—are invited to one of our next Story Meetings: **Tues Jun 2** and **Tues Aug 4** at 7pm at our office, 309-877 E. Hastings St. For more information or if you can't make the meeting, but still want to find out about contributing to *Kinesis*, give Agnes a call at (604) 255-5499. New and experienced writers welcome. Childcare and travel subsidies available.

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

Are you interested in finding out how *Kinesis* is put together? Well...just drop by during our next production dates and help us design and lay out Canada's national feminist newspaper. Production for the **Jul/Aug 1998** issue is from **Jun 16-24**. No experience is necessary. Training and support will be provided. If this notice intrigues you call us at (604) 255-5499. Childcare and travel subsidies available.

VSW IS LOOKING FOR YOU!

If you are interested in learning to do referral and peer counselling work, at VSW we are offering a great opportunity to women who are interested in volunteer work during the day. Come answer the phone lines and talk to women who drop in and help connect them with the community resources they need. For more information call Ema or Agnes at 255-6554. Childcare and travel subsidies available.

INVOLVEMENT

RESOURCE LIBRARIAN NEEDED

If you have knowledge of organizing and maintaining a Resource Centre and want to hang out with a great group of women, VSW is the perfect place for you. VSW is looking for women to help make our resources more accessible and user-friendly to women. For more information call Ema or Agnes at 255-6554. Childcare and travel subsidies available.

EVENTS

PWN NEW POCKET GUIDE

The Positive Women's Network in Vancouver is launching its new *Pocket Guide for HIV+ Women* with a "High Tea" on **Tues Jun 16**, 4-6pm. The resource guide is the first of its kind in Canada. The launch will take place at PWN, 1107 Seymour St. and will be followed by the organization's annual general meeting. For more info or to RSVP, call 893-2200.

LATIN NIGHT

Merengue. Salsa. Cumbia. Bolero. Cha-cha-cha. Palo de Mayo. Rachero. *Marlin Ramazzini y Su Son* Latin Night, a benefit event for the newly formed Colectivo Latino Americano (Canadian Latin American Collective), will take place **Sat Jun 6** starting at 8pm at the Polish Community Centre, 4051 Fraser St. in Vancouver. Admission is by $10 donation. For tickets or more info call 708-0996 or 708-6550.

EVENTS

TALKING HEALTH CARE

As part of the Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives' Speakers Series, Colleen Fuller will be presenting on the subject of "Caring for Profit: How Corporations are Taking over Canada's Health Care System" on **Wed Jun 24**, 4:30pm at Simon Fraser University Harbour Centre Campus, 515 W. Hastings St., Vancouver. Co-sponsored by the BC Teachers' Federation and the Canadian Federation of Students. Admission is free. For more info call the CPPA-BC office at (604) 801-5121.

DYKE ART RETREAT

DARE (Dyke Art Retreat Encampment) is a week of camp in Southern Oregon at Rootworks for committed lesbian visual artists. This year's retreat—the 10th annual—takes place **Jun 28-Jul 5**. The retreat includes individual and group self-initiated art projects, three vegetarian meals daily, rustic cabins, daily life drawings, workshops, and hiking, nature walks, seclusions and creeks. Space limited to 15 artists. Cost is US$170-195 sliding scale. Some scholarships are available. Registration deadline is **Jun 12**. Make cheques payable to Jean Mountaingrove, 2000 King Mountain Trail, Sunny Valley, OR, 97497. For more info call Jemma Crae at (541) 679-4655.

HIV/AIDS FORUM

The Congress of Black Women is hosting an educational forum called *HIV/AIDS: It's a Family Affair* **Sun Jun 28** from 11am-4pm at 535 Hornby St, 4th Fl. Questions that will be addressed include; "What's this got to do with us?" "Who is at risk?" What puts us at risk?" Are there obstacles to education and prevention?" The event is free. For more info or to register call 895-5779.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Kinesis is hiring for three positions—Designer, Production Coordinator, and Marketing Coordinator—for start dates in mid-August.

All three positions are six issue contracts, with likely extension. (Please note that *Kinesis* does not publish an issue in December; that is, positions run to the end of February.)

Closing date: Thursday July 23, 1998, 5:00pm

Interviews will be held the week of August 10th.

Aboriginal women and women of colour are strongly encouraged to apply. Affirmative action principles will be in effect for these hirings.

Full job descriptions are available at our office. For more information call 255-5499 (or 255-6554 in July).

Send applications to:
Kinesis, 309-877 E. Hastings St, Vancouver, BC, V6A 3Y1; or fax: (604) 255-5511.

We apologize that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

DESIGNER

Responsibilities:
- designs the newspaper using PageMaker, ScanTools and PhotoShop;
- works with other staff, writers and production volunteers to decide the overall design of the paper;
- with the Production Coordinator, directs volunteers in laying out the paper;
- designs paid ads, as well as in-house ads;
- archives back issues of *Kinesis* on disk;
- performs regular backups and maintains the production room computer system.

Qualifications:
- knowledge and experience in publication production;
- good working knowledge of WordPerfect, PageMaker 6.0, ScanTools and PhotoShop for a PC;
- ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines;
- desire to work with volunteers;
- appreciation of feminist journalism and feminist issues generally.

The Designer works flexible hours mainly during production, and attends monthly Editorial Board meetings.

Pay: $16/hr to a max. of 40 hrs/issue. (Plus pro-rated MSP.)

MARKETING COORDINATOR

Responsibilities:
- implements overall marketing and promotions strategies;
- solicits new advertising and in-town distribution accounts;
- maintains current advertising and distribution contracts;
- prepares monthly advertising run sheets;
- invoices all advertising and distribution accounts;
- tracks accounts receivables and follows up on unpaid accounts;
- delivers Kinesis to the mailing house and in-town distribution outlets;
- prepares monthly reports on advertising and distribution.

Qualifications:
- knowledge and experience in marketing or sales work;
- interest in promoting a feminist publication;
- good organizational skills;
- creativity and initiative;
- ability to work collectively;
- a vehicle or access to a vehicle (for distribution).

The Marketing Coordinator works flexible hours around the production process, and attends monthly Marketing Committee meetings.

Pay: $16/hr for 30 hrs/issue. A commission schedule will also apply. (Plus pro-rated MSP.)

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

Responsibilities:
- coordinates and trains volunteers for production and pre-production tasks;
- facilitates production, including volunteer tasks;
- oversees volunteer recruitment, development and recognition;
- develops volunteer job descriptions and training materials;
- maintains volunteer database;
- keeps production room in order.

Qualifications:
- experience or interest in publication production;
- knowledge and experience recruiting, coordinating and training volunteers;
- an ability to work collectively;
- strong organizational skills;
- understanding of feminist issues and values.

The Production Coordinator works part-time each week throughout the month, with hours of work increasing around the production, and sits on the Editorial Board and VSW's Volunteer Development Committee.

Pay: $16/hour to a max. of 65 hrs/issue. (Plus pro-rated MSP.)

BULLETIN BOARD

EVENTS

EXHIBITION OF MASKS

Down from the Shimmering Sky: Masks of the Northwest Coast is an exciting opportunity to experience two centuries of masks by some of the region's finest First Nations artists. The exhibit will open **Jun 4** at the Vancouver Art Gallery, 750 Hornby St. The exhibit will run until **Oct 12**. Co-curated by Kwakwaka'wakw Chief Robert Joseph, *Down from the Shimmering Sky* features more than 175 historical and contemporary masks by some 30 artists. For gallery hours or more info call (604) 662-4700.

SENSIBLE FOOTWEAR

Sensible Footwear is having a *Mid-life Crisis*! This dynamic comedy duo, originally from England and now based in Toronto, will be poking fun at the approaching of the big 4-0 **Jun 2-13** at the Firehall Arts Centre, 280 E. Cordova St, Vancouver. *Mid-life Crisis* celebrates getting older and wiser through cheeky comedy, wicked ballads and steely sketches. Sensible Footwear sing the blues about housework, doo wop on the beauty myth, and anthem on the joys of being "an older woman." They contemplate losing their liberal ideals, their looks, their lovers, and try to answer the ultimate question: "where do feminists go after death?" For show times and tickets, call the Firehall box office at (604) 689-0926.

QUEER MOM'S POTLUCKS

The Vancouver Lesbian Connection is hosting Queer Mom's Social Potlucks every last Sunday of the month. Open to moms, kids, partners, friends, et cetera, the next event will be held on **Sun Jun 28** from 1-4pm at Eastside Family Place/Grandview Park on Commercial Dr at Napier. For more info call the VLC at 254-8458.

VLC MOVIE NIGHTS

Monday Nites at the Movies are up and screening at the Vancouver Lesbian Connection, 876 Commercial Dr starting at 7:30pm. Films in June will be *Salmonberries* (yes, starring kd lang) on **Jun 8** and *Born in Flames* on **Jun 22**. Admission is by donation. For more info call 254-8458.

WOMEN'S BUILDING SYMPOSIUM

The 3rd Women's Natural Building Symposium and Hands-On Extravaganza will be held solstice time **Jun 15-22** near Seattle, Washington. All women interested in creating healthy healing homes and sacred spaces are invited to come co-create magical natural buildings out of earth, straw and wood, make a living, fence, plasters, thatching, and passive solar design. Tuition is sliding scale US$250-350. For more info write to: Pragtree/WAIL Farm, 13401 184th St. NE, Arlington, WA, 98223; call (360) 403-0185; or check out their website at http:/ www.cpros.com/~sequoia

WOMEN'S BUILDING FAIR

As part of The 3rd Women's Natural Building Symposium and Hands-On Extravaganza in Washington state, women are invited to a special Women's Building Fair on **Sat Jun 20**, 1-4pm. The day will include a chance to experience various natural building methods; videos, slide shows, and demonstrations on cob, straw bale and natural plasters; and plenty of learning and hands-on opportunities. Admission is sliding scale US$7-$45. To register and for further info, contact Pragtree/ WAIL farm, 13401 184th St NE, Arlington, WA, 98223, or call (360) 403-0185.

EVENTS

PID BENEFIT AUCTION

500 vacations, furniture, antiques, art, balloon rides, appliances, professional services and much more will be offered at an auction to support Pelvic Inflammatory Disease prevention services for women. The event will be held **Sun Jun 14**, 1pm, at the Westin Bayshore, 1601 W. Georgia St., Vancouver. PID is one of the most serious and neglected health issues for women, affecting one in six women. Admission to the auction is free. Viewing starts at 10am. For more info please contact the PID Society at (604) 684-5704.

POETRY BASH

Women in Print feminist bookstore invites women to join Canadian poets Sophia Kaszuba (*Like a Beast of Colours, Like a Woman*), Nadine McInnis (*Hand to Hand*) and Esta Spalding (*Anchoress*) for readings from their respective works on **Tues Jun 2** at 7pm at 3566 W. Fourth Ave., Vancouver. Admission is free. For more info about this and other events, call (604) 732-4128.

BUILT TO CODE

The works of Vancouver artists Kati Campbell, Laiwan and Ruth Scheuing will be exhibited in *Built to Code*, a show at Artspeak Gallery, 233 Carrall St, Vancouver. *Built to Code* opens **Fri Jun 19** at 8pm and will continue until Jul 31. Gallery hours are Tues-Thurs noon to 5pm. For more info call (604) 688-0051; or visit Artspeak's website at http://www.webcorp.ca/artspeak.

MICHIGAN WOMYN'S FEST

The Michigan's Women Festival will be celebrating its 23rd year during the week of **Aug 11-16**. This fest attracts thousands of women for a week-long event that includes 40 performances, 200 workshops, a Film Festival, Crafts Fair and 650 secluded

appear this year include Sweet Honey in The Rock, Indigo Girls, Alice Walker, Ferron, Ubaka Hill, Kinnie Starr, Carole Pope, Rhiannon, and others. For more info write to WWTMC, PO Box 22, Walhalla, MI, 49458, or call (616) 757-4766.

GROUPS

VSW GETS TTY

The Vancouver Status of Women is pleased to announce that we now have TTY (teletypewriter) service for deaf and hearing impaired women. Staff and volunteers are able to provide TTY referrals to lawyers and feminist resources, general information, and get your feedback. Deaf and hearing impaired women can reach VSW by TTY by calling 255-5511 **Mon-Thurs**, 1-5pm.

SHAKTI STRENGTH

Shakti is a self-help group in Vancouver for South Asian Indo-Canadian women who have experienced the psychiatric system. The group meets every 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month 1-3pm at South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, 6470 Victoria Dr. For more info call Helen 733-5570 (for English) or 682-3269 box 8144 (for Punjabi & Hindi).

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter needs women who are interested in volunteering on the 24-hour crisis line or at the transition house for women and children. Training sessions are on **Tuesday** evenings. Please contact 872-8212 for more info and a training interview.

the 21st annual

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Alberta Slim a Canadian country pioneer
Coco Love Alcorn a great West Coast voice returns
Dave Alvin one of America's best songwriters
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Arrows to Freedom dances from the Plains Nations
Roy Bailey a great voice with something to sing about
Anita Best with Sandy Morris Newfoundland's finest trad singer
Tony Bird an old friend, back with new songs
Jane Bunnett, Marilyn Lerner & the Spirits of Havana Cuban rhythms with soaring jazz sax and piano
The Bumpers imagine if the Pogues came from Poland
Susan Crowe if Emily Dickinson wrote songs instead of poems...
Dahnoshay three generations, songs & dances from Oklahoma
Carmaig DeForest one man, his ukelele, and great songs
Ford Elms dances & stories from the outports
Felix & Formanger the French side of Newfoundland
Joy Harjo & Poetic Justice beauty & truth with roots rhythm
Karshlama Rom music from northern Turkey
Kila big Irish Celtodelic sound
Chester Knight & the Wind First Nations voices from Saskatchewan
Kokoro Dance new visons in the park
La Bottine Souriante the best live band in the world? Sunday only
Las Perlas del Son the sound of Santiago, Cuba
Los Canasteros passion from the roots of flamenco
Linda McRae former Spirit comes to Jericho with her own band
Susan McKeown a great Irish voice from New York
MacCrimmon's Revenge a new Celtic twist from Nova Scotia
Mad Pudding Vancouver's own Celtic adventurers
Mortal Coil Performance Society bringing more magic
Nawka & Kostorz pipes & songs from Sorbia, Germany
Herald Nix one of the West Coast's best songwriters
Jen Paches pure energy and 88 keys
Toni Price one of the sweetest voices in Texas
Marian Rose & Friends learn to dance in the park
Christina Smith & Jean Hewson the sweethearts of St. John's
Sonia of Disappear Fear love and chocolate and attitude
Rebecca Riots three women's heart-felt harmonies from Berkeley
Rhiannon & Sal Ferreras adventures in rhythm and voice
Rosanna & Zelia songs and rhythms from Brazil
Taraf des Haidouks 12 amazing players from Romania, ages 10 to 74
The Prophecies the strength and vision of Maori music
Third Eye Tribe new dancing beats on the beach
Tickle Harbour roots and rhythms from The Rock
Ulali women's voices from the Six Nations
Kathleen Yearwood songs of darkness and light

more surpirses being added all the time...stay tuned!

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BULLETIN BOARD

GROUPS

COLECTIVO LATINO AMERICANO

A new group for Latin Americans has started up in Vancouver. The Canadian Latin-American Collective is committed to the general well-being of the Latin American community in British Columbia.
For more info write to the collective, PO Box 4265, VMPO, Vancouver, BC, V6B 3Z7; or call Leticia Flores at (604) 708-0996.

COMPULSIVE EATING SUPPORT

A drop-in support group for women with issues of compulsive eating is held twice a month at the Eating Disorder Resource Centre of BC, St. Paul's Hospital, Room 2C-213, 1081 Burrard St, Vancouver. Drop-in times are 7:30pm to 9pm every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month. Facilitated by Colleen Hyland and Cynthia Johnston. For more info call (604) 631-5313.

INDIAN HOMEMAKERS

The Indian Homemakers Association of BC is looking for volunteers for various tasks such as answering phones, food bank pick-ups and fundraising. Volunteers will receive on-the-job training. For more info call 876-0944 or drop by IHA at 208-175 E. Broadway, Vancouver.

VLC DROP-IN

The Vancouver Lesbian Connection is "a womyn only space providing community information, peer support, safer sex stuff, job and housing postings, lending library, social events, and space for political action and support groups." Located at 876 Commercial Dr, the VLC is open for phone calls (254-8458) or drop-ins **Thurs-Fri**, 11am-6pm and **Sat**, noon-5pm. Memberships to the VLC are available. The VLC is also looking for volunteers to help run the centre, groups and events. For more info call Laura at the centre.

OVER 30'S GROUP

The Vancouver Lesbian Connection is holding an Over 30's Social Group and potluck **every 2nd Sat** at 5:30pm. The next meetings will be held **Jun 6** and **Jun 20** at the VLC, 876 Commercial Dr. For more info call 254-8458.

VLC YOUTH GROUP

A Young Queer Womyn's Group has recently started up at the Vancouver Lesbian Connection. The group is open to women under the age of 30, looking for a space to be themselves, express their views, and get together with other women. The next meetings are **Tues Jun 2**, **Fri Jun19** and **Tues Jun 30**. All meetings start at 6pm at the VLC, 876 Commercial Dr. For more info, call Catharine at 254-8458.

COMING OUT GROUP

The Vancouver Lesbian Connection will soon be starting a 10-week facilitated Coming Out Group. To register call 254-8458.

SUBMISSIONS

YOUNG FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP

Attention young feminists! The US feminist publishing house, Spinsters Ink, is seeking essays about feminism and what it means to you. As part of their 20th anniversary celebrations, Spinsters Ink is offering students in their last year of high school a chance at a $1,000 scholarship, essay publication in *HUES* (*Hear Us Emerging Sisters*): A Young Womans' Guide to Attitude and Power, and an opportunity to attend Norcroft, a writers' retreat for women. For applications and guidelines, please contact Spinsters Ink, 32 E. First St, #330, Duluth, Minnesota, 55802; tel: (218) 727-3222. Deadline for submission is **Jan 1, 1999**.

WOMEN'S HEALTH ANTHOLOGY

SHE Rising is interested in stories of women's experience with the health care system. Works about experiences of disease and diagnosis, the impact of gender, race or sexual orientation upon the health care received, as well as information about helpful remedies are welcomed. Submissions from women's health care professionals are encouraged. Send typed, double-spaced submissions to *SHE Rising*, PO Box 65141, 358 Danforth Ave, Toronto, ON, M4K 372. Send a SASE for submission return. Submission deadline is **Aug 1**.

TESTIMONIES OF FAITH

Women's Press in Toronto is seeking personal essays on experiences with organized religion from Canadian lesbians of colour and African-American lesbians to be published in *Testimonies of Faith, Testimonies of Difference: An Anthology of Lesbians of Color and Their Religious Experiences*. Essays should be typed, double spaced with one-inch margins, and be no more than 20 pages. American essays should be mailed to L.K. Barnett, 1 Mead Way, Bronxville, NY, 10708. Canadian essays should be mailed to Rosamund Elwin c/o Women's Press Suite 302, 517 College St, Toronto, ON, M6G 4A2. Women's Press is particularly interested in submissions from disabled women and welcomes taped interviews. Deadline is **Sep 1**.

COMPLEXLY CARIBBEAN

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

HONOURING FIRST PEOPLES

In celebration of National Aboriginal Day in Canada, the United Native Nations is hosting a festival in Vancouver featuring traditional and contemporary Aboriginal performers and guests. The event will take place on Sunday June 21 from 5:00 to 10:00pm at the Roundhouse Community Centre, 181 Mews St. Included on the bill the Cascade Drum Group, The Le La La Dancers, rap artist Jeff Pranteau, Sawagi Taiko, and many, many more. Highlighting the event will be Cree singer Fara Jaylene Katcheech Palmer *[pictured above,]* who was recently nominated for a Juno (the Canadian music awards.) Fara is currently recording her second CD, a follow-up to her acclaimed *This is My World*, which features the single "Walk Away." Admission by donation. A light lunch of traditional foods will be provided. For more information call the United Native Nations at 688-1821.

CLASSIFIEDS

SPINSTERVALE

Spinstervale in Coombs (Vancouver Island) offers rustic cabins to women. Tiny cabin sleeps one or two close friends, at $7.50/15 per night. Larger cabin sleeps four; weekend rate $40. Inquire about work exchange (three hours a day equals room/board). Call (250) 248-8809 or e-mail Sunshine@macn.bc.ca.

GAIA ADVENTURES

GAIA (Mother Earth) Adventures presents Outdoor Adventures for Women. Come hike High Falls Creek in Squamish (moderate to challenging) **Sat Jun 13**. You can also discover the adventure of rock climbing with us on **Jun 27** (no experience required) or hike the North Shore's Black Mountain on **Jun 6**. Call 875-0066 today! For more info, check out GAIA's website at http://www.vancouver.bc.com.

WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENCE

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

FRASER RIVER PLACE COOP

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

CLASSIFIEDS

CITYVIEW CO-OP

Cityview Housing Co-op has one, two and three bedroom suites for $565, $696, $795 per month and refundable share purchase. Carpets, blinds, appliances, parking and laundry room. Children and small pets welcome. Please send a business size SASE to Membership Committee, Cityview Housing Co-op, #108-1885 E. Pender St, Vancouver, BC, V5L 1W6.

BETH TROTTER COUNSELLING

Beth Trotter, MA, Registered Clinical Counsellor announces the opening of her counselling and in-depth psychotherapy practice in Vancouver. Ten years experience in private practice in Victoria, specializing in working with women. Integrating feminist, Western and Buddhist psychological approaches. Expertise in working with deep trauma and dissociation issues. EMDR trained. Fifteen years experience as a Buddhist Vipassana mediator. Call 731-1701.

DEEP COMFORTING RELAXATION

Experience massage. Warmth. Tranquillity. Warm oils. Hot towels. Luxurious. Soothing. Rejuvenating. All sizes. Take care of and rejoice in your self. Flexible hours. Healthful. Respectful. Feels Fabulous. Lonsdale, North Vancouver. For an appointment call 990-1049.

Single Mother's Day Thanks

The Vancouver Status of Women and the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre
want to acknowledge all the women who volunteered their efforts
and all those who made donations to our Single Mother's Day event.
The event was a great success—more than 100 mothers and their children
came and enjoyed poetry, drumming and singing, craft workshops, massages, mendhi,
stand-up comedy, face painting, and great food.

Thanks very much to the volunteers:
Agnes, Amanda, Andria, Audrey, Bunsy, Candice, Colleen, Doris, Edna,
Erin, Fatima, Harriet, Helen, Laura, Mary Anne, Sarah, Tannis.

Thanks also to those who donated food, facilities and their services:
Nig-hat, Jessica, Pam and Shela (massage), Veenu (mendhi), Leona (beading),
Louise (fuzzy bath balls), DERA and Solheim Place, Circling Dawn,
Uprising Breads Bakery, East End Food Co-op, Save-On-Meats,
Aroma Borealis, Essential Oils, Rocky Mountain Sound, T House,
Escents, Quest Outreach, Sunrise Soya, Purdy's, Que Pasa Mexican Foods,
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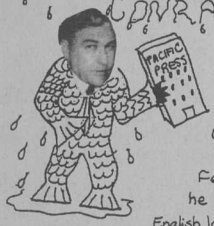
A FEMINIST SCARY TALE

There once was a scary monster known as

THE CREATURE FROM THE CONRAD BLACK LAGOON



who would travel the country gobbling up every newspaper in sight. Then, he would secretly spit them out so that they looked the same, but were actually full of his own bile.

Feminists at KINESIS knew that he had already eaten 14 out of 16 English language dailies in B.C. and were determined to keep the CREATURE FROM THE CONRAD BLACK LAGOON from continuing his rampage. And so they banded together and beckoned women from across Canada to join them in their struggle to expose the monster's evil ways and to provide a feminist voice, as they had done for the past 24 years. They called on women to subscribe to KINESIS for only 21.40 per year (or what they can afford) so that together they could keep the evil CREATURE FROM THE CONRAD BLACK LAGOON at bay!

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☐ $20 + $1.40 GST
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☐ Gift
☐ Donation

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

Vancouver Status of Women Membership (includes *Kinesis* subscription)
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