KINESIS

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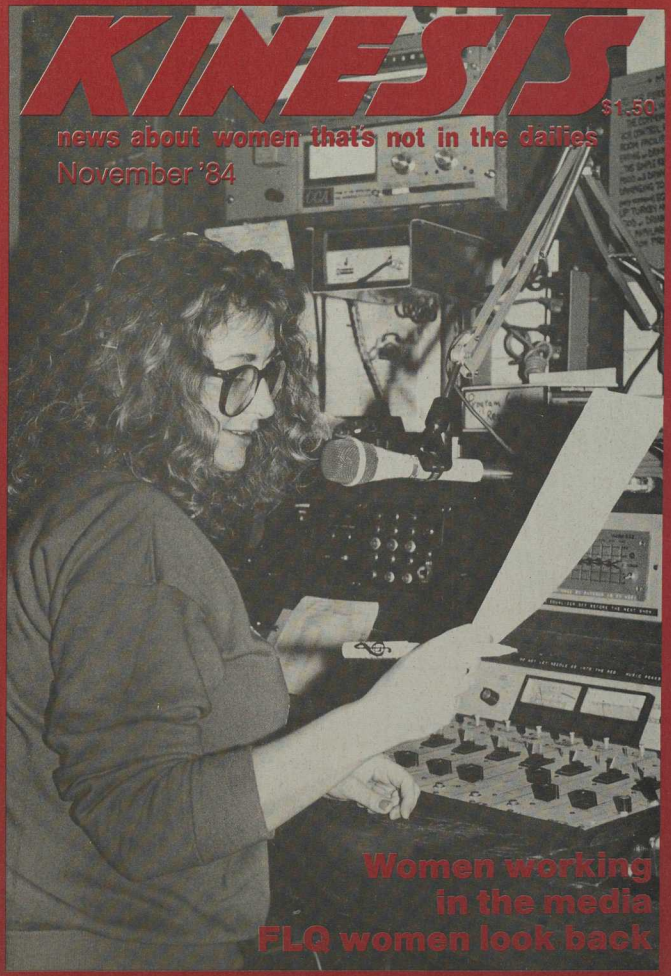
news about women that's not in the dailies

November '84



Women working in the media

FLQ women look back

KINESIS

COPE meets with women

by *Kinesis* staff writers

Vancouver voters go to the polls on November 17th to elect a new City Council, Parks Board, and School Board. Municipal elections happen every second year, but this year's race takes on added significance in light of the political climate provincially and nationally. Many see Vancouver's progressive City Council as the last oasis in a province suffering the effects of the Socreds' severe 'restraint' measures. The election of another COPE (Committee of Progressive Electors) dominated Council will be a sign to Victoria, they say, that Vancouver is in opposition to the right wing backlash that elected the Socreds in 1983, and Brian Mulroney in 1984.

COPE has included women's issues in its campaign, something which is encouraging in and of itself. They have prepared a summary of COPE policy on issues of importance to women, including porn, prostitution, jobs, and social services. They also sponsored a Women's Day Open house, which gave women an opportunity to meet and talk with COPE candidates. The meeting opened with presentations from three panelists: Libby Davies, COPE alderperson; Pauline Weinstein, member of the School Board; and Pat Wilson of the Parks Board.

Davies called COPE a "bright light" amid the Socreds, and pointed to their fiscal record - maintaining jobs and services with a reduced budget. She cited jobs and services as a top priority, and went on to stress that COPE is committed to equal employment opportunities for women, and to equal pay for work of equal value. COPE is opposed to strengthening the Criminal Code to impose more sanctions on prostitutes, and on pornography, Davies noted COPE's efforts to use the City's licensing by-laws and to pressure the provincial government to prosecute porn distributors.

Pat Wilson of the Parks Board noted the voctories she has won as the only COPE Parks Board member: free time at City Pools and facility passes for welfare recipients. Parks Board priorities for women are more women's programs, especially for immigrant women, as well as a freeze on user fees, and elimination of fees for children, seniors, and the unemployed.

Dr. Pauline Weinstein said that the primary concern for the school board is funding cuts, over which they have little control, as they are the result of provincial policies. COPE priorities in schools are reduced class size, the restoration of English as a Second Language programs, and programs for mature students, and for students with special needs.

Prostitution and childcare were the issues that concerned women attending the women's day. There was a discussion about the youth of many prostitutes - to which one solution offered was increased programs for young people in community centres. Voters also seemed dissatisfied with the answer that we have to wait for society to change before we will see the elimination of prostitution. While this is true, it is also true that training programs, and pressure on the federal and provincial governments, might speed up the change.

There is little the municipal government can do about childcare, as subsidy for it is federal and provincial, but zoning and 'bonusing' provisions can provide new facilities, something COPE supports.

On the whole, COPE has demonstrated an awareness and concern about women's issues that is very encouraging.

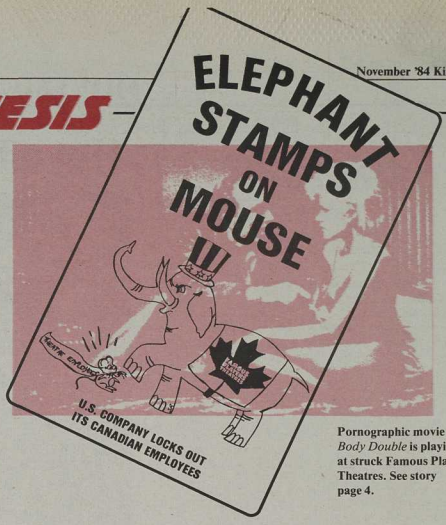
Incumbent mayor Mike Harcourt is running as a Civic Independent, with a slate of aldermanic candidates that includes present alderman Bill Yee, and candidates Reva Dexter, Ron Johnson, and Carol Walker. The Independents and COPE together comprise the Unity Slate.

The Non-Partisan Alliance (NPA) is, despite its name, the voice of the right in this election. The mayoral candidate they support, Bill Vanderzalm, has a record in Socred administrations that includes some of the most severy budgetary measures on education to date. *Kinesis* spoke with Pam Glass, NPA candidate for Council, about women's issues in the campaign.

On pornography, she feels the law is there and should be enforced. On Parks Board user fees, she assured *Kinesis* that no one is turned away from Parks Board facilities if they cannot afford them, but went on to add that "if we continue to have union agreements that continually ask for more, someone will have to pay," meaning the users.

On prostitution, Glass noted the fact that as liaison with the provincial Attorney General she was instrumental in events leading up to the injunction that barred thirty prostitutes from the West End earlier this year as public nuisances. She also had what she called the 'happy occasion' to attend the 'victory' celebration when the injunction was announced.

On November 17th, the choice is up to you.



Pornographic movie *Body Double* is playing at struck Famous Players Theatres. See story page 4.

By-law puts porn under glass

by Pam Tranfield

An acceptable definition for "sexually graphic" material has yet to be created by legal advisors at Vancouver City Hall, but porn will be under glass by by-law after January 1.

In the new year, 'adult' entertainment will have to be displayed at least 47 inches off the floor in businesses, and behind a sheet of opaque glass.

"We're just going to have to see how it works," says Alderman Libby Davies, "we have the cooperation of distributors to place material (behind barriers) and some stores have already installed these." Davies says she is not totally happy with the "barrier by-law" as the words "sexually explicit" are open to interpretation. Davies says she had been hoping to include a 'save and except' clause, which would apply to educational or artistic material.

Jancis Andrews of the North Shore Women's Centre sees problems with a bylaw in which the definitions are not clear.

"Anytime a by-law is passed, the words have to be explicit, if not, we're going to have porn pimps dumping on enforcement," says Andrews.

The by-law is subject to a six months review. Davies says the power of the city to license and regulate sale of pornography would follow a definition of "sexually graphic."

This information, she says, is held up until an appeal by Red Hot Video, which was found guilty earlier this year of distributing obscene material. Andrews says this explanation is difficult to understand, as the Red Hot Video appeal was prompted by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which contains a loosely worded clause on freedom of expression.

"Society agrees that children should not have this material but is blind to the fact that children are receiving sex education at the corner grocery, while they (parents) don't seem to want sex education in the schools; Red Hot Video has nothing to do with this," says Andrews.

According to Davies, the forthcoming definition will allow for levels of distribution to be assessed. At least 12 specifically licenced adult entertainment stores would be allowed to distribute "sexually graphic" material, as defined by the by-laws. Other outlets would fall under a license to distribute "soft porn."

"There is a gray area, and under the by-law we would deal with this," says Davies. Davies feels the success of any regulation will depend on "our (city hall's) powers to license and regulate. Andrews hopes the by-law will be made "as clear as possible" so the "porn pimps can't wriggle out." By-laws submitted by Vancouver women's groups which give a feminist definition of porn have yet to be considered.

This month's supplement: women working in the media

This month's *Kinesis* supplement is on us - feminist journalists. We work in print, radio and video, for the mainstream press, the alternative media, and sometimes both at the same time, bringing a feminist perspective to news and reviews. As many of us have remarked to each other, we don't call ourselves 'writers', though we write all the time - and our issues are rarely discussed in the very media we write for. What is a feminist perspective on news? What obstacles do we face in trying to make it as journalists and keep our integrity? How do we report responsibly on our community? As you'll find out on p. 12, media women in Vancouver will be getting together this month to discuss how they are handling these questions now, and talk about ways to improve. This issue has articles on lesbian periodicals, a new black women's paper in England, early women journalists and more.

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Cover photo of Connie Smith by Sharon Knapp.

KINESIS welcomes volunteers to work on all aspects of the paper. Call us at 873-5925. The next story meeting is on November 7th, 7:30 pm at the VSW office. All women welcome. Don't miss our open house, November 10th, 2-5 pm.

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

Views expressed in Kinesis are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect VSW policy. All unsigned material is the responsibility of the Kinesis editorial group.

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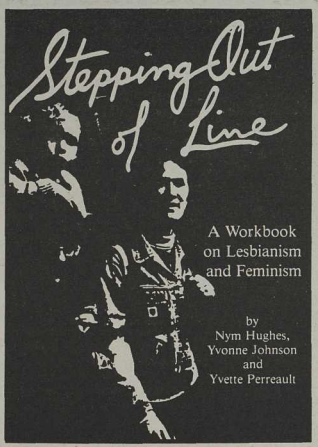
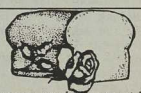
Hot off the press



In October, Press Gang, Vancouver's feminist publishers, released a new title - *Stepping Out of Line: A Workbook on Lesbianism and Feminism*. The idea for the book began 10 years ago, when the Lesbian Caucus of the B.C. Federation of Women was formed at BCFW's founding comvention in 1974. In 1975, lesbians in BCFW began to develop a workshop on lesbianism to present to women's groups around the province. *Stepping out of line* is the script to that workshop, though the book includes much more: notes for facilitators, theoretical articles on lesbianism and feminism, and first-person accounts. It is intended not only for lesbians but for any woman or activist interested in a better understanding of lesbian issues. The official book launching will be at Press Gang this month (see Bulletin Board), and watch for the review in the next issue of *Kinesis*.

Also coming up in *Kinesis* - supplement on Racism in the December/January issue, with articles on local anti-racist groups, black and white women working together, and immigration policies, an interview with Jane Sapp, and more; review and analysis of Caryl Churchill's Cloud 9; and in February, a supplement on Rural Women.

International Women's Day Committee



I.W.D. Benefit

I.W.D. Committee is once again presenting "True Confessions", an evening of songs and stories about the women's movement. The place is the VMREU Lounge at 545 West 10th (10th and Cambie). The date is Friday, November 23 at 8 pm. Tickets are $5 (employed) and $3 (unemployed), and will be available through committee members or by contacting Vancouver Status of Women at 873-1427. WARNING: The hall is small. This event was completely sold out last year, so get your tickets early!

International Women's Day Committee is continuing to meet every second Tuesday at Britannia Community Centre (1661 Napier, near Commercial Drive). At the last meeting, held October 16, we finalized the concept for this year's march and rally, although we don't yet have a catchy slogan (any ideas?). We want to emphasize women's continuing ability to resist cutbacks, and to fight back even in hard times. We realize that this is a repeat of last year and the year before, but the times are still tough and still we survive. Let's acknowledge that! All snappy slogans will be gratefully considered.

Next meeting

Next I.W.D.C. meeting will be November 13, 7:30 at Britannia. All women are welcome. For further information, contact Pat at 253-1885.

Our Apologies

The following errors appeared in the article 'BCTF Status of Women' in the October '84 issue. Marian Dodds is not the chairwoman of the BCTF Status of Women committee - it is co-chaired by Kay Howard and Margie Willers, and Dodds is the Status of Women Program Co-ordinator, assisted by Debbie Omand. The nine provincial committee members are not elected, as stated in the article, but appointed by the BCTF Executive Committee. *Kinesis* apologizes for any inconvenience these errors may have caused.

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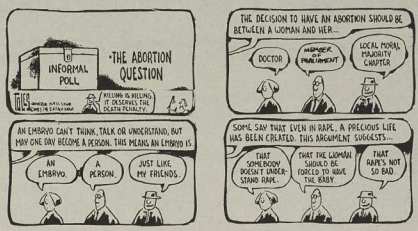
ACROSS B.C.

Northern BC women denied choice for abortion



by Karen Ochs

The town of Smithers and its outlying areas join a number of communities in BC hit by a right-wing backlash against women's access to safe therapeutic abortions.

A local hospital board decision disbanded the town's Therapeutic Abortion Committee (TAC) Oct. 3. The board's executive reinstated the TAC at a special meeting two weeks later, but two of the doctors chosen for the new TAC are staunchly anti-abortion, and the third is opposed to abortion, though he is seen by other doctors to be "more moderate." Another anti-abortion doctor will alternate for any of the three who cannot attend a committee meeting.

What this means to most women of the Bulkley Valley is no safe therapeutic abortions. Unless a woman's life is endangered, or the doctors believe her pregnancy resulted from rape or incest, her application for a therapeutic abortion will now probably be denied.

This leaves her three options: to seek a therapeutic abortion elsewhere; to seek an alternate form of abortion here; or to continue her pregnancy.

Time and money make looking for an abortion somewhere else difficult. Smithers is located roughly half-way between Prince George and Prince Rupert. The two nearest hospitals do not have Therapeutic Abortion Committees. Terrace hospital regulations require a woman to live there. Prince George and Prince Rupert hospitals are reputed to turn down a high percentage of applications.

The woman's next option is Vancouver, but a bus ticket to Vancouver costs $65 one way, and some doctors there have been known to charge a woman another $70 for a referral. Often, by the time a woman has decided to seek a therapeutic abortion, been referred to the TAC here and been refused, she has little time to decide to take the 20 hour trip to Vancouver and apply for a first trimester abortion there.

The result is that a woman will be more likely to continue a pregnancy, even though she feels she cannot raise the child. Or she will look for another way to abort.

The decision by the Bulkley Valley District Hospital Board to disband the Therapeutic Abortion Commitee is the result of an organized campaign by anti-abortionists here.

Smithers is a conservative town, heavily influenced by Duth Reform, Roman Catholic and fundamentalist churches. Much of the anti-abortion sentiment is perpetuated through them - one board member who voted to disband the TAC said it was "God's will" if a woman died because she couldn't have a therapeutic abortion at the hospital.

"Birthright" and "Pro Life" organizations are both active here. Members of the groups regularly place ads and letters in the local paper presenting fetuses as complete, unborn, white babies; calling therapeutic abortions unsafe; and trivializing women's reasons for seeking abortions (women want abortions "to afford designer jeans" several say).

The campaign against abortions has included placing two signs depicting fat pink babies as objects of abortions along the highway, pressuring the hospital administration by a letter writing campaign and blacklisting the doctor here who does perform the therapeutic abortions.

At the last annual general meeting of the hospital society the anti-abortionists on the board of directors became a majority. The motion to disband the TAC passed by a margin of 5 to 4. Four who voted against the committee did so on the basis of their personal values which they wanted to impose on the community. The chair, who broke the tie, is reputed to be seeking nomination either federally or provincially and may be using her position on the board as political leverage.

On hearing about the decision, the Bulkley Valley Pro Choice Alliance, which organized a year ago, called a public meeting. At the meeting we decided to circulate a petition demanding that the TAC be reinstated; to ask people to phone their doctors encouraging them to organize for choice; to check the legalities of the board's decision; to write the hospital board, local MLA's and the Minister of Health; and to encourage concerned people to join the hospital society.

Our campaign was public: talk to people, respond to the media, organize a video presentation - be seen and be heard. We emphasized that no Therapeutic Abortion Committee meant no abortions under any circumstance.

At the same time, doctors organized to protest the decision. They were angry the hospital board no longer allowed them the option to decide which abortions they would perform. They threatened to pull out of all committees, effectively shutting down the hospital.

Looking back a day later, it appears the white middle-class board won. They've been able to effectively stop all abortions.

The board met with their lawyer to discuss their liability for a death that could have been prevented by an abortion - something they had not considered before their decision. They met with the doctors' respresentative. Then they called the special meeting that set up the current TAC.

Looking back a day later, it appears the white middle-class board won. They've been able to effectively stop all abortions. Those board members who want to appear conciliatory can do so by pointing out that they appointed a TAC. Those board members who want to appear anti-abortion can do so by saying they were pressured by the doctors into allowing the TAC.

On the other hand, pro-choice advocates have been able to bring the issue of choice and self-determination to the front of the community - people are talking and are no longer complacent. We've also discovered new allies, and some are pleasant surprises. It seems possible we will get rid of some of the anti-abortionists on the hospital board at the annual general meeting in May 1985.

Unfortunately, one question still lurks: how long till the first woman tries to abort herself and is injured or killed as a result? How well can we organize against that?

Poor transit

by Pam Tranfield

The high cost of urban transit increases the poverty of single-support women and families on welfare by denying them access to inexpensive food outlets, recreation, and support in crisis periods. A petition calling for free bus passes for these women and children in the lower mainland is being circulated by the Organization of Unemployed Workers (OUW).

"Single moms are forced to stay at home," says Essence Padman of OUW, "Giving mobility would save these people money that, right now, is going back to the government through the busses."

Welfare rates have not kept up with inflation according to Padman. Single support mothers pay proportionally more for housing than any other group of people.

Padman says increases in welfare would "probably go to the landlord" but passes would allow mothers to take their children to libraries and other forms of "free" recreation. Families would also be able to go more places together.

At present, a return bus ride for a mother with two children over age five is $3.50. A single-support mother with children under age five pays $1.70 per return trip - the same rate as a working person.

Padman cited the cloistered family as one prone to violence, as little time can be spent in varied environments with friends or other support people. Children and parents "stuck in the house" can become bored and restless, and the stress of poverty is increased through this tedium.

Over 1500 people signed the petition in the first week of distribution at food banks, welfare offices, cultural events and the OUW office at 1645 Commercial Drive.

The provincial government has not been approached with the idea to date.

"Surely if he (Bill Bennett) can spend huge amounts of money on ALRT, then we have the right to be mobile," says Padman.

The Organization of Unemployed Workers is an independent, non-affiliated group of volunteers. They provide solidarity for workers in labor disputes, and support, counselling and advocacy for unemployed people. Social and educational evenings are also offered at the centre.

For more information on the bus passes or the OUW, call 255-7613, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Monday to Friday.

ACROSS B.C.

photo by Leaking Gas Mask

Vancouver supporters of Doug Stewart demonstrate outside Solicitor General's office.

Vancouver Five

Hunger striker wins transfer

by Marion Grove

On Oct. 31, in an unprecedented decision, hunger-striker and Vancouver Five member Doug Stewart was granted transfer back to Kent Prison in B.C. The decision, effective Nov. 29, was made on the 26th day of Doug's hunger-strike, while protest actions were in progress in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, and London, England. Agnes Stewart, Doug's mother, was in Ottawa waiting to see the Solicitor General.

Doug was sentenced last spring to six years for his part in the bombing of an environmentally damaging B.C. Hydro substation on Vancouver Island. Other Vancouver Five members received sentences ranging from 10 years to life for the arson attacks on three Vancouver porn video outlets, bombing Litton Systems, which manufactured the cruise missile guidance system, and related charges.

Doug, who speaks only English, was transferred in July from Kent to Archambeault, an all-French prison in Quebec and reputedly the worst prison in Canada. Doug's work and study programs were interrupted and limited, and he was isolated from his friends and family. There is little doubt that this was an attempt by RCMP and corrections officials to make Doug's relatively short sentence as unbearable as possible. It is also a case of corrections officials overstepping their bounds by imposing arbitrary punishment upon a prisoner beyond that already imposed by a judge.

Seven people were arrested Oct. 29 for an occupation of the Solicitor General's office in Montreal and charged with public mischief - a charge carrying a maximum five year sentence. Agnes Stewart was among those supporters on Oct. 31 who, concerned about Doug's deteriorating condition and days of stalling by the Solicitor General, were also prepared to get arrested to force a decision. She and three other close friends had visited Doug in Montreal throughout his hunger-strike, and travelled back and forth to Ottawa to talk with officials there. Hundreds of protest letters and telegrams were sent to the Solicitor General and other authorities by supporters from throughout Canada and elsewhere.

Write Doug and other members of the Five c/o Free the Five Defence Group, Box 48296, Bentall Station, Vancouver, B.C. V7X 1A1.

Famous Players strikers target scabs and porn

At press time, Famous Players theatres across B.C. continue to be picketed by striking members of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Picture Machine Operators (I.A.T.S.E.) Local B-72.

The local, which represents a workforce that is approximately 70% female - candycounter workers, cashiers, and ushers - is protesting moves made by management in the negotiation of a new contract. The company wants to stop paying time and a half on Sundays, which is a major rollback in a contract that already includes no medical, dental, sick benefits, or pensions.

They also want to add a clause to the contract that says that management can perform bargaining unit work. Inclusion of this clause would destroy job security for workers, and could lead to smashing the union altogether.

The theatres, kept open with scab labour, have been picketed for more than two months.

Women's groups were notified recently that one of the films opening at these management-run theatres is 'Body Double'. Director Brian De Palma has been called to task by feminists in the past for sexual violence in his films 'Carrie', 'Dressed to Kill', and 'Blow Out'. In 'Body Double', which focuses on voyeurism and violently expressed misogyny disguised as lust, a woman is murdered with a huge electric drill.

'Body Double' is showing at the Downtown, 965 Granville; Richmind Square, 6780 Minoru Blvd.; Lougheed Mall; and the Willowbrook Six in Langley. The Willowbrook theatre is not part of the IATSE dispute.

Other struck theatres in the Lower Mainland are: Capitol Six; Denman Place; Fine Arts; Stanley; Vancouver Center; Columbia in New Westminster; Guildford; and the Park Royal.

Three struck theatres are in Victoria, one is in Nanaimo, and one is in Prince Rupert.

Annual ESL crusade

The Canadian Farmworkers Union is seeking volunteer tutors for the third annual English As A Second Language Crusade, from November '84 until May '85. The abysmal conditions of farm labour are well-known: workers work twelve to fourteen hours a day for piece rates that are often well below minimum wage. The Crusade uses English language training to enable Punjabi farmworkers to speak up for the rights they have, and demand those they do not yet have.

The Crusade needs dedicated tutors to spend two sessions each week teaching groups of three to four workers in South Vancouver: ongoing training and support will be provided. For information please call David Jackson at 430-6055.

Film portrays Indian activist

In February 1976, the body of a woman was found on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. The official autopsy attributed her death to exposure. Both hands were severed and sent to Washington for fingerprinting, and the body was hastily buried without legal documents.

When the FBI identified the woman as Annie Mae Aquash, a Canadian Indian active in the American Indian Movement, friends demanded a second autopsy. It revealed that Annie Mae had been killed by a bullet fired execution-style into the back of her head.

'Brave Hearted Woman', a film of the life and death story of Annie Mae Aquash, is the startling story of a Canadian victim in the secret war between the FBI, the RCMP and the American Indian Movement. It will be shown free on Friday November 9th, at 7:30 pm at the Carnegie Centre, 401 Main, at Hastings. Sponsored by the Society of the People Struggling to be Free.

B.C. Women meet to act on Charter of Rights

On April 17, 1985, the last sections of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, those which guarantee the equality of women, will be proclaimed.

The Vancouver Charter of Rights Coalition feels women and women's organizations must act now on the sections of the charter which have not yet been proclaimed, as it will be much harder to achieve changes that are necessary after April 17, when all action will have to go through the courts.

Women from around B.C. met in October at the Women's Conference on the Charter of Rights, to talk about these and other issues arising from the Charter. The conference, sponsored by the Charter of Rights Coalition, was attended by representatives of more than 20 women's groups.

One motion to come out of the conference was for support of a group called LEAF (Legal, Education, and Action Fund). They hope to raise a million dollars from Canadian women and women's groups to use as a legal fund to set precedents under the charter.

Some concerns were raised with regard to this fund: that because LEAF has decided already to only take cases that are likely to succeed, that it is an elitist use of much-needed funds; and that all of its operations are located in Eastern Canada. Delegates took the motion back to their member groups for discussion.

Analysis of the Charter of Rights and how it affects women will appear in upcoming issues of *Kinesis*.

LABOUR

BCFed women's conference

by Esther Shannon

At the B.C. Federation of Labour's 1983 convention, a call was issued for a conference to educate trade unionists on pornography. This October, over 200 women from unions and community groups attended 'Women: Influencing Change,' a conference organized by the Federation's Women's Committee. Along with the pornography focus, delegates attended sessions on organizing the unorganized, pensions, technological change, changing roles and workstyle alternatives, and looked at emerging issues such as part time work, flex time and job sharing.

According to Astrid Davidson, Director of the Federation's Women's Programs, this year's conference was more exciting than those held previously. Davidson pointed out that in the past trade union women didn't always feel comfortable discussing "women's lib" issues. Today, she noted, the interest in women's issues is real and women are more politically active in unions and are more articulate about their concerns.

The conference got off to a slow start with a rambling and unoriginal keynote address by Doris Anderson, past president of the National Action Council on the Status of Women. Anderson's focus on federal politics was clearly remote from most women in the audience. Their concerns rest more with the provincial government's continuing assault on women's and trade union rights.

A panel on women influencing change was received better, as it addressed key issues for women in unions. One panelist, Anne Harvey, was recently elected president of the Office and Technical Employees Union, Local 378. She encouraged delegates with the story of the 4 1/2 year struggle to get a women in a top role at OTEU. Harvey's advice was to start with a core of committed women and emphasize rank and file concerns. It was a good primer on fighting for democratic control in unions. Many women obviously identified with the problem of gaining power from male dominated unions.(Even those whose membership consist of a majority of women are faced with this struggle).

The conference plenary heard workshop reports and recommendations. Many reports were actively critical of union internal organization and lack of committment to women's issues. Recommendations demanded more Federation action on unemployment, technological change and a shorter work week. A constant complaint was the unions' failure to educate on women's issues. One workshop even demanded a conference to educate men on the changing role of women. In the workshops on pensions, participants were critical of union pension funds being overseen by male committees unconcerned about women pensioners.

Unfortunately, the fate of these recommendations is unknown. According to conference organizers, no Federation conferences develop policy resolutions. These recommendations will pass to the Women's Committe and be presented to the Federation executive. Action on recommendations is dependent on their approval. The other alternative women have to create policy is to bring resolutions through their unions and present them at the annual Federation Convention.

Opinion on the usefulness of the executive council route was divided. Some delegates believe the conference must be able to develop policy and go direct to convention. They point to the difficulty women have in pushing policy resolutions through their unions. Women, they noted, are often isolated in unions and seldom win support for women's issues.

Other delegates thought the conference served an important educational function and a policy conference would only mean unions would select delegates who could be counted on the toe the union line. In their view both the free exchange and the networking between women would suffer.

Another problem with the current structure is the lack of independence of the women's committee. All committee members are appointed by the Federation executive. It's clear such a process lacks accountability since it means the committee owes its positions to and relies for action on the very officers who are probably most committed to preserving the status quo. There is a certain inescapable irony in promoting a conference on pornography where those attending, women, are prevented from developing any statements, positions or resolutions on pornography. Those who decide the Federation's position on pornography will most probably be the executive council, consisting of, in the majority, men.

BCFed affirmative action

by Esther Shannon

The B.C. Federation of Labour will move, at its November convention, to introduce affirmative action at its executive level.

According to Astrid Davidson, Director of the Federation's Women's Programs, the Federation's officers will table a constitutional amendment to provide slots for women on the executive body.

At present there are 12 executive officers, 3 of whom are women. This body will be increased from 12 to 16, and the additional 4 seats must be filled by women. As well, the executive council, presently made up of 20 members, 12 of whom are Federation officers, will be increased to 25, 8 of whom must be women.

The executive council and officers, barring the annual convention, is the Federation's highest body. It oversees Federation business and implements policies passed at Convention. There are 4 women presently serving on the executive council.

Davidson said it is necessary to increase the total number of executive slots, rather than simply providing for women's spaces within the current numbers, because most unions will nominate their top officers to serve on the executive. The top officers in most unions are men and unions are loath to give up these positions to women. Creating additional spaces should allow unions to nominate candidates who are just a little lower in the union hierarchy. Davidson points out there are many women in these position in unions.

Davidson is confident the amendment, since it has executive backing, will pass at the convention. Due to deadline constraints *Kinesis* is unable to get reaction on this move from women trade unionists. The Dec/Jan issue will carry a full report of the Federation convention, including reaction to this affirmative acction program from women in the union movement.

IHOP

Coffee break

by Pam Tranfield

An electrical power outage in New Westminster October 21 could have been great for business at the International House of Pancakes on 8th Avenue if not for the energy of 50 customers who dropped in for a cup of coffee - and stayed for two hours.

The customers included unemployed people, teachers, millworkers, and members of the Independent Canadian Transit Union. They came to sit and sip in order to draw a promise from IHOP management that the restaurant would no longer accept goods from Slade and Stewart food distributors.

Slade and Stewart employees were locked out May 22, and until the action, this restaurant was among businesses accepting goods from behind picket lines.

IHOP manager Ed Jeske refused to confirm reports that he would look elsewhere for supplies. At the time of the occupation, coffee drinkers filled 2/3 of the restaurant. The stand lasted two hours, with breakfast patrons turning away at the door and parking lot, according to organizer Sandra Nichol of the Organization of Unemployed Workers.

A total of 76 employees of the Retail and Wholesale Union are affected by the lockout; 30 workers at the Vancouver distribution centre and the remaining at Penticton, Kamloops and Terrace.

Slade and Stewart have continued operations with 20 scab workers, paid $8 per hour. The locked out employees made $15 per hour with company benefits, yet the price of goods has not decreased since the lockout began.

"The impact is felt when a business loses by scabbing. We all lose when people who have worked for years can suddenly be cast out," says Nichol.

The central issue in the dispute is accumulated time off provisions which have allowed employment to increase at the centres. Workers were allowed to accumulate five extra hours of work per week which was used as additional vacation time. The workers had been without a contract for 14 months prior to the lockout.

Slade and Stewart is a subsidiary of Pacific Fruit Co., the second largest food company in the world. It distributes fresh and processed fruit and vegetables to stores and restaurants throughout B.C.

The protest was organized by the Organization of Unemployed Workers, which staged similar actions earlier this month at downtown businesses which received Slade and Stewart products.

It has not been confirmed if those stores and restaurants have quit accepting from this distributor.

For more information on these businesses, call Pat at 253-3430

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FLQ women look back

"We know what it's like to live under constant scrutiny"

by Lou Nelson

The following interview is a condensation of a lengthier one done in 1980 with four Quebecoise women who were arrested and imprisoned after the War Measures Act was declared on October 16, 1970. They were charged with being members of the Front de Liberation du Quebec (Quebec Liberation Front - FLQ), or with "accessory after the fact" (knowingly aiding someone after they have committed a crime). The FLQ was a loosely knit organization made up of largely autonomous groups called cells. Members believed the time had come for violent attempts to liberate the people of Quebec. In the end, charges against the four were suspended, though they spent, individually, anywhere from six months to just under a year in prison.[1]

Ten years after their arrest they look back on their experience. They share their insights about the situations of male and female prisoners, make some surprising comparisons between their lives behind bars and life outside prison, and explore the relationship between themselves as political prisoners and the other prisoners inside.

I was moved to do this translation (from French into English) because I was struck by the timeliness of the topic. We have all been following the trials and sentencing of Ann Hansen, Brent Taylor, Julie Belmas, Gerry Hannah and Doug Stewart. The lengthy sentences they have received have appalled many of us, whether we agree with their tactics or not. They have obviously been subjected to the harsh counter-attack which the state reserves for politically motivated crimes. But even in that category their sentences are unusually severe.

It is interesting in this regard to look at some of the charges and sentences of FLQ members in the years before the 1970 October crisis. The FLQ had been active since 1963 and was credited with numerous bombings and robberies. To give just a few examples:

1) Marcel Faulkner was arrested in 1966 and convicted of two separate charges of involuntary homicide, three charges of conspiracy to plant explosives, and one charge of conspiracy to commit theft with violence. He was sentenced to six years and eight months in prison.

2) Robert Levesque, arrested in 1966 and charged with six different counts including robbery, burglary and planting bombs was sentenced to seven years in prison.

3) Claude Simard, convicted in 1967 on eight charges including involuntary homicide, armed robbery, theft with violence and possession of explosives, was sentenced to five years and ten months in prison.

In this context, a life sentence for conspiracy to rob a Brink's truck is arbitrarily excessive. But the state and the judicial system, depending on the politics of the time, engage in different degrees of reprisal. In 1969 Pierre-Paul Geoffroy was arrested and convicted of 31 charges of conspiracy to make bombs, 31 charges of making bombs, 31 charges of conspiracy to plant bombs and 31 charges of planting bombs. Though he had no previous record, no one had been killed in the bomb attacks, and he pleaded guilty to all charges, Geoffroy received 124 life sentences, one for each of the charges.

In 1970 no woman received a lengthy sentence for FLQ related charges. In 1984, with the FIVE, the women have been judged as harshly, if not more so, than the men. Women who rebel are now seen as acting in their own right, not just as adjuncts to the men in their lives. Things have changed, partly as a result of the events of 1970, but as Lise Rose points out in recent comments on the interview: "I hope that this will be useful in making links between the women prisoners of Vancouver and the women of 1970...since prisons are places that change all too slowly."

This interview offers a rare look at the prison system from the point of view of women political prisoners. Though the experience of the four women in the interview cannot be directly compared with that of Ann Hansen and Julie Belmas, who will be incarcerated for much longer periods, I think what they have to say is still relevant. The experience of these women in Quebec in 1970 is part of our history of struggle against repressive forces in our society. Too often the role that women have

played in that struggle has been minimized or completely lost. Here is a rescued fragment from the turmoil of the early seventies.

The original interview that this shortened version is taken from was moderated by Fabie Demers, who also transcribed the tapes. She has been invaluable in verifying information and in helping with the translation. Lise Rose and Lise Balcer consented to use of their full names in the transcript. The remaining two women are identified by first names only.

OCTOBER 1970 REVISITED

Lise Rose: Fighting the judicial system is one form of militancy...because you confront a system that judges you, and you have to 'face the music', as Colette says. You suffer every day and it's hard. Inside (prison) we went through some tough times because of our militancy, because we couldn't close our eyes to what was going on. There were some heart-breaking things that went on with other prisoners, and we spoke out, and came through it.

Lise Balcer: I'd like to raise one thing. What was unusual about what we went through was that it was just women together (in prison). We were not under the domination of men, the bosses, the leaders, telling us what to do. We found ourselves together, among women, and we made our own decisions about things based on our experience, our own experience, really coming from the guts.

L.R.: We discovered strength we didn't know we had.

L.B.: ...exactly...

L.R.: ...solidarity too. Often you hear that women don't support each other. Inside, we discovered that that was false. It's really a myth. It's not true that women do not support each other. Inside we discovered our strength in ourselves. The power of action, the power of making demands.[2]

L.B.: When we were inside, we did things and nothing got out. We wanted to get things publicized in the newspapers, but at first nothing happened.

L.R.: I remember, among other things, a hunger strike. It lasted 20 days...

Colette: We started the hunger strike. Then after it was taken up by Parthenais (a provincial men's prison in Montreal, for those sentenced to terms under two years. Ed.)

L.B.: We asked ourselves why the guys did not join us...

L.R.: Then it came out in the papers about Parthenais, but nothing about us. We were the ones who started it. It was 13 days old when they finally joined in. And they had only been on the hunger strike two days when it appeared in the papers...The thing is, women don't do dramatic actions. And it's not that I think that our actions aren't dramatic, but rather that they don't appear as such. When we women were on a hunger strike, it was not 'important'. But when the boys did it, it made the news.

But that's the thing, we don't control the media. That story got out because it clicked in the head of a male reporter when he found out that the men in Parthenais were on a hunger strike.

L.B.: And also because some of the guys were lawyers or businessmen. They had contacts. The media did not think the women's strike was newsworthy. Women doing

We discovered strength we didn't know we had.

a hunger strike...to begin with, a woman's body is not considered important. Whereas a man suffering - that's real pain! A woman suffering...

C.: ...can take it!

L.R.: ...is used to pain...

L.B.: And a woman's pain is often 'foolish'. A woman...often cries for no reason. A man who cries, that they respond to, but a woman who cries - it's not serious, she does it all the time.

L.R.: The slavery, the loss of liberty that they experience inside, we live with it every day outside: the fact that we can't walk alone at night, a whole bunch of things like that that they don't know about. Men are not used to always being under surveillance, to being limited in what they do.

But we know what it's like to be under constant scrutiny. You sit down at a table to eat and some guy sits nearby and bugs you. The guys don't put up with that. For example, when you have visitors in prison ...I remember that it didn't bother me to have a matron nearby, it was like a part of my life; but I felt that if I went to visit Jacques, and there was a guard nearby, that got to him. The men don't know what it's like to live like that.

L.B.: But it's also because they always have stuff to say, everything they say is important. For instance, if Jacques is speaking with his lawyer, then that's very important, you know, it's not...

C.: ...it's not chit-chat.

L.B.: A woman in the prison visiting-room talking to her lawyer is just chit-chatting. They figure she has nothing worth hiding.

C.: The subtle oppression of women that we experience every day outside prison, is also going to be found inside prison. They often treated us with kid gloves. I'm sure that the interrogations the guys went through were different than ours, probably more violent...

L.R.: I'm sure they used different tactics with us than with the men. Like using arguments with Denise about her children: a lot of things like "If you ever want to see your children again..."

Denise: It was worse than that. They brought me down to the office, with the phone right close by. It was Christmas Eve. They said to me, "If you're a good girl you'll tell us what happened and then you can phone them...perhaps even join them for Christmas."

C.: Actually it was worse for us because the interrogations were not done by women. They were done by men. That means that the humiliation that you're used to from childhood...

L.R.: ...since infancy...

C.: In each interrogation it was like a double assault.

D.: The first day I was arrested I was questioned from 8 in the morning until 9:30 at night.

C.: I think they did the same with just about everybody.

L.R.: They would come and harass us every day, any time of the day or night, without being accompanied by a matron. That was against the law.

C.: When I was too hot in the cell and was nude under the covers, it was a man who would come in and get me. Not a woman. If it had been a woman it would have seemed more equal. But when a big guy comes in to get you and you go down in the elevator alone with him, it's a double threat. You can't minimize that.

L.B.: Perhaps I'm wrong, but I find that the experience we went through inside was truly unique...because we were all together and we could really see ourselves and our values. We were closer with each other because we were isolated from society.

L.R.: We came up with things that perhaps we wouldn't have if we'd only been involved in men's groups.

L.B.: And you couldn't count on anyone else, except the lawyers (women and men), when we were in a really bad situation. Inside, whatever we could influence ourselves, by our own strength, we did, and we took it all the way. We didn't stop. There was not one day when we weren't fighting.

L.R.: I think we really had an impact. There were women there who came from different backgrounds, who were charged with different things. We were not a group that was used to working together, but even so, we all had a certain degree of consciousness. That's what scared the shit out of them. I remember that inside they were afraid of us.

There was another woman, her husband had thrown her out of the house and had beaten her, and they put her in prison. Can you imagine!

L.B.: Then there was the little one, Diane, I think she got 10 years because she killed her husband who beat her.

L.R.: A political act!

D.: At a certain point you get sick of it.

L.B.: I don't know, when you get sick of it...then it's no longer political, it's madness. Like a woman who kills her kid... there was a nurse who killed her kid, hit it with a telephone. And another one, Annette, who killed hers, they say she scalded it in the bath. She forgot to turn on the cold water. But if you knew Annette, you knew that she wasn't crazy, she wasn't hiding a sadistic side. She was very aware and very generous. She was a good woman.

L.R.: I don't know if you can make a distinction between ordinary prisoners and political prisoners, I really don't know...

L.R.: We all live in the same world. What makes us, political prisoners, different, is perhaps that we've lived through some things, or met someone at just the right moment, or the education we got triggered things off for us...because it's not just anybody that ends up in prison. I tell myself that if we'd been through what those women had been through, probably we would be where they are.

What makes us, political prisoners, different, is perhaps that we lived through some things, or met someone at just the right time, or the education we got triggered things off for us. . . because it's not just anyone that ends up in prison.

C.: It's not just misfits that go to jail!

L.B.: Far from it!

L.R.: It's marginalized people.

C.: It's women struggling...prostitutes...

L.R.: Struggling against the system.

D.: They fight in isolation, that's why it doesn't have much impact.

L.B.: Though there were disadvantages to being political prisoners, 'cause you're both recognized as such by a certain class

of people, and yet not recognized officially by the government. At the same time we were privileged because we could change things. That counts for something.

C.: We had our own resources..and that's where the difference lies.

L.R.: What I see is a subtle difference between political action and individual action. For sure there were women inside who changed things, but often it was an individual action in the sense that they tried to change something they didn't like, and indirectly they would change things for the others. But that was not the primary goal. Whereas with us, the goal was not necessarily to improve our own situation. It was political to do a hunger strike. It was not fun for us...

Because sometimes they were willing to give certain privileges only to us, and we would say - no special treatment for us unless the others are getting it too. Political action is different in that sense. I don't deny that ordinary prisoners can have a political impact. But they often want to change something for themselves. I'm not saying it's negative or bad...

C.: I don't know, it's just a slight difference. The way I look at it is that for us it was an individual decision as well, but we know how to organize around it. In the sense that when we wanted to have more rights, for instance to be able to write longer letters, that it was important for me personally. Then if everyone agreed, we would fight for it together.

D.: The idea would come from one person, and then we would push for it together.

L.R.: But it went farther than that because, like I said, we could have easily gotten those privileges for ourselves. Lots of times they were ready to make small concessions, 'cause they were afraid of us, and they wanted to keep us quiet. I remember that we wanted the rules changed for the whole prison, not just for us. That's why we fought the battles the way we did.

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1. It is interesting to note that women won the right to sit on a jury in Quebec only in 1971, shortly after seven women invaded the juror's box in a trial against Paul Rose (FLQ member). They were showing their support for Lise Balcer, who had refused to testify on the grounds that "There is no reason for the justice system to recognize women as witnesses if it doesn't recognize them as jurors." The seven women were arrested and sentenced to up to two months in prison.

*In her comments on the original transcript, Lise Rose wrote:

The solidarity among the political prisoners was spontaneous. On the other hand we had to fight the lies spread by the matrons in order to establish solidarity with the ordinary prisoners. They believed we were intellectuals, snobs, scornful. I was the first of all the women political prisoners to be sentenced. I was waiting for another trial. I could have been put with the other detainees, or with the ordinary prisoners. The higher-ups decided to put me with the ordinary prisoners, as a punishment. My first day was the only difficult one. After a week, our solidarity was such that we asked that a prisoner be sent to hospital (since she was sick), that a nurse be assigned to the night shift (as there was only one on day shift), that an undesirable matron be transferred, and that I be allowed to teach drawing, enamel on copper, and ceramics courses for which we had equipment and rooms but no teacher.

INTERNATIONAL

by Belinda Earle

Saturday, October 20, and Nancy White, Connie Kaldor and Holly Arntzen play to a packed audience in North Vancouver's Centennial Theatre. The event is a benefit for Amnesty International (A.I.) and the culmination of a week of activities organized by A.I. volunteers. The reason? To raise public awareness (and money!) of the plight of hundreds of women who are detained, imprisoned or tortured because of their political beliefs, religious beliefs, ethnic background or relationship to others who are similarly detained...Prisoners of Conscience.

For the last 23 years. A.I. members have worked to try to improve the conditions of Prisoners of Conscience (PoC) all over the world. With organizations and supporters in over 150 countries, A.I. is independent of any single government or political group and continues to maintain its apolitical status by endeavoring to assist PoCs whatever their political or religious background.

Amnesty International does not endorse the views of PoCs but believe that such views, peacefully held, have a right to be heard. As long as the individual neither advocates or uses violence, A.I. seeks their release, and challenges any government which refuses to acknowledge this principle. The organization also opposes the death penalty and torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in all cases, without reservation.

It is an immense task. All over the world, women and men are imprisoned for their beliefs. Sometimes they are held for long periods of time without a trial; sometimes they are tried but *in camera* and without legal representation. Sentences may be arbitrarily extended, prisoners moved to new, undisclosed locations, or adequate food or medical provisions denied.

In many countries torture is frequently used to extract "confessions" or to intimidate the individual or their families and friends. Nor is the execution of PoCs uncommon, either in their place of detention or by government or para-government organizations on the "outside." In the case of such executions, A.I. pressures the government of that country to instigate an independent inquiry.

Women Prisoners of Conscience are particularly vulnerable in prison. A.I. believes that female PoCs are often raped. At present A.I. is requesting that the Philippine government hold an impartial investigation into the case of Hilda Narcisco. In March 1983 Hilda was arrested without warrant by about 30 (yes, 30) military personnel. The men took her from the house of a German Lutheran pastor in Mandanao and forced her into a car. She was blindfolded and taken to an interrogation centre. She was sexually molested on the journey. The next day she was interrogated and raped. In August, after six months in detention, she appeared before a judge who ordered that the charges of subversion against her be dropped on the grounds of lack of evidence. Hilda was finally realeased on 6 September.

With astonishing courage Hilda took steps to initiate a case against the military personnel who had sexually abused and raped her. Supported by local women's groups, she hoped that her determination would help put an end to the reported widespread sexual abuse of women political detainees. Hilda's case is still open. Forced to move every month because of fear of her unknown assailants, she found it impossible to establish the identities of her attackers because of the non-cooperation of the military authorities. Her lawyers were informed by the Minister of National Defense that there was insufficient evidence to bring the case to cours.

The scale of this sexual abuse is not known by Amnesty International but is believed to be far more widespread than reports suggest. Shame, fear and a desire to forget silence many women. In some countries religious and cultural concerns play an important part. For example, in Pakistan, women political prisoners are often very reluctant to make known publicly, or even to close relatives, the details of their treatment while in detention. The rigourous interrogations, complete lack of privacy, and constant supervision, often by male guards, are severely humiliating to women of Muslim faith.

In Iran, women inmates in Evin prison are held in a special block, Zendan - Zanan. A report from a witness says: "There are around 40 children, aged from one to twelve. They are kept because they are an asset to the prison authorities for gaining confessions: when a mother is lashed, the child is made to watch. One such mother screamed that she was ready to confess when she could no longer stand the agony of her three-year-old daughter being made to watch in the grip of two guards."

Such behavior is not unique to one country. A woman who was tortured in Chile testified: "At one point, I realized that my daughter was in front of me. I even managed to touch her: I felt her hands. 'Mummy, say something, anything to make this stop,' she was saying....They took her to an adjacent room and there, there I listened in horror as they began to torture her with electricity."

The Tales go on. In South Africa, Nonzomo Winnie Mandela has been either imprisoned, or officially 'banned' from society for most of the last twenty years. In the USSR, human rights activist Tatyana Velikanova is in a strict-regime labour colony.

Does A.I. really make a difference? Yes. Although governments that suspend the human rights of their people rarely write to A.I. to thank them for pointing out an injustice, it appears that one third to one half of the people whom A.I. adopts as PoCs experience an improvement in their situation. This may be in the form of additional visits from their families, receiving medical aid, a review of or reduction of their sentence and occasionally even release.

Yulia Voznesenskaya, a former Soviet PoC, right after her release: "Sometimes in the camp, the camp authorities and wardens would start to be especially polite to me and they would avoid ill-treating other women prisoners in my presence. I guessed something had put them on their guard. Later on, quite by accident, I found out that a letter from abroad had come for me and this caused this change in their behaviour."

"I remember clearly the emotion I felt on returning to my cell after one of their fortnightly visits, the only time I talked to anyone, having learned about your letters. The solidarity that is expressed over oceans of distance gives strength and faith in one's human integrity and its essential values intact...." A letter from Lilian Celiberti, a Prisoner of Conscience from Uruguay, to the Italian group which worked for her release.

If you would like more information about Amnesty International's work, write to Amnesty International, 105 - 1955 West 4th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1M7 or call (604) 734-5150.

Belinda Earle is an Amnesty International volunteer.

Women united in the British coal strike

by Pam Tranfield

The role of women in the British Coal Mine Strike was mentioned briefly and superficially by Yorkshire miner Steve Shukla, speaking at Brittania High School on October 14.

Shukla, on a fund-raising tour for the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) called women a "major motivation" for the trade unions in Britain. He cited the wives' skill at collecting and cooking food, and collecting money as a major support effort for the strikers.

But women in parts of Britain, Wales and Scotland are also walking with men on the pickets; are marching in protest; and forming a powerful autonomous movement within the working class.

The coal strike was provoked by government plans to close 20 coal mines through the British Isles this year. This would eliminate 20,000 jobs and close entire towns which depend on mining for survival. Since March, over 183,000 miners have walked out for their jobs, homes and perhaps the future of the trade union movement in Britain.

The threat to home and families may have, in Shukla's words, provoked women who have never been involved in trade unions; but women are working within and without the unions.

In August, support groups from England, Scotland and Wales led more then 17,000 women through central London in a solidarity march for the strikers, and to protest government cutbacks. *Outwrite*, a women's newspaper from London, says the emergence of the working class movement is significant beyond strike activity.

"(The women) are acting more autonomously; they travel around the country making speeches, linking up with women in other regions, talking about national coordination and organization. There is discussion within the present women's organization against the strike."

The right-wing threat to trade unions is part of a world-wide trend which is affecting the rights of working people here in British Columbia. Solidarity is needed to resist and break the efforts of government and management to destroy people's rights. Shukla stated the NUM is gaining support from other unions, such as the steel and autoworkers and nurses. However, not all men are willing to accept the growing involvement of women in the struggle.

In Wales (*Spare Rib*, September 1984) not all NUM lodges welcome and support women's full participation, especially on the pickets. Even some food distribution has been jealously guarded by men.

"A woman from a newly established group told me how the men in her village jealously guard their kitchen and tried to stop women meeting and put pressure on individuals to stop a group from forming." (Stevie Smith).

This month, mediation talks between miners and the management failed. A threat by foremen to walk off the job was averted. People on the pickets or in their homes and workplaces are getting colder in Britain. Whatever the outcome of the strike-to strengthen or weaken the trade union movement around the world - women will come out more united through the struggle.

WORKING IN THE MEDIA

Women in activist radio

by Jan DeGrass

Vancouver Co-operative Radio, CFRO, is a listener-owned community radio station heard at 102.7 FM on the dial and on cable at 45 locations in B.C. Connie Smith, Mickey Rogers and Victoria Fenner have all worked with commercial radio yet put in long and dedicated hours at Co-op radio. Jan DeGrass spoke with them about differences between the two.

photo by Sharon Knapp

So you've all worked for the big one - our national broadcasting company, yet you all do lots of voluntary work with Co-op Radio. Why? What pulls you back here?

Mickey: Loyalty to the station and loyalty to the idea of community radio. I'm amazed how much can be done with so few paid staff and so many volunteers. I get really frustrated with Co-op Radio at times when things don't change fast enough, but then I think of the vision that people had ten years ago.

Connie: I don't see how I could ever live without Co-op Radio because it's the one consistent thing in my radio life. I have freedom here, freedom of movement, thought, programming...more than I could have on commercial radio. I can control that one hour a week (of my show). I can play music and say things that would probably have repercussions if I said them on commercial radio or CBC. I can play an album from Olivia records and talk about the commitments these women have to gay rights; I can play an album by a black woman and talk freely about her involvement in civil rights - whereas on CBC there is a way you can say these things, but so subtly that the point is often missed.

Victoria: When I came to Co-op two years ago from Ontario, I was more or less checking the market and finding out what I could do in radio. Once I got here I found out that this could be the beginning of an entirely new broadcasting system in Canada. Mickey spoke of vision - that's the vision that really excites me - it's what Co-op Radio is now.

C: In commercial radio things don't change at all. It's a tired old fact, but several years ago I took a tour of the majority of radio stations in BC and there were more women at Co-op in powerful creative positions than I found at all the commercial stations put together. It's going to be a long time before commercial radio makes those changes - a long time before archaic rules are dropped whereby we can't hear more than two female vocalists in a row. Things do change - but only as fast as a DJ or music producer wants it to change.... One person can do as much as she can, but it takes more than one person. At Co-op Radio there are hundreds of us.

Don't you find it frustrating here working without proper equipment, for no money, all the time?

V: Yes, I'm used to working with the equipment now - just as lots of actors are still actors even when they don't have a stage, I'm a broadcaster all the time and I want a place to actually do my craft. Whether I get paid or not only matters to a point. CBC is now doing some of the same work in audio art on Brave New Waves that we produced here at Co-op on New Sounds Gallery. It's campus and community radio like us who have helped pave the way and show CBC that there is another way of doing things. Of course, they're getting paid and we're not.

M: I liked what you said about craft; it is important. Here at Co-op the craft we're doing is being a community activist. I have some trouble at times differentiating between being a community activist and being a journalist.

C: Although automatically I would probably consider myself an activist I also see my role as being a historian. Co-op, as a community station, is automatically an activist medium because mainstream media reflects the status quo; they reflect the viewpoint of white middle class males... as does the whole world.

I'm not crazy about the term 'alternate' media. I also think it needs some more precise definition for this interview. You mentioned community radio - is that what alternate media is to you?

M: I think it's been a raging controversy at the station, are we a community station or are we a left wing vehicle, and as far as I know, I don't think there's been any consensus on that.

V: No, there hasn't. I find Co-op Radio to be wonderful and frustrating at the same time because all philosophies meet here. I consider Co-op Radio to be people's radio. And that's our biggest political stand that we can make, by saying to the average person in the community that we care about what you say - we're going to give you time to do what you want to do... But there's a difference between being a voice on the left and being a soapbox and once you're a soapbox that's when you lose credibility. We have some very good minds down here, but every so often you get somebody who doesn't know a lot about journalism and they go on the air sounding stupid. At CBC there are checks and balances. Here we often don't have enough.

M: I work with a producer at CBC who says: "This is good", "This is not so good". I work at Co-op Radio and it's: "I'm really glad you came down to give your time". We don't have that critical eye.

Does objective journalism exist?

V: Like poets and philosophers we're just trying to arrive at truth and you can never arrive at truth by looking at one side of the story. It's not up to us as journalists to draw conclusions; as in art, you don't present solutions as much as you present problems and have people work out solutions.

C: I think you can arrive at truth a lot faster when you're looking at it from the left. Because that means that you've done a lot of critical thinking and you're prepared to take a risk. That's closer to the truth, if indeed there is a truth.

M: I've been asked about objective journalism at the CBC. I've been told: "It's really important to be objective here at CBC! Do you really think that in doing this story you can be objective?" Fortunately, in the particular case I'm thinking of, I was able to come up with the name of somebody I was impressed with to interview who wasn't necessarily 'on the left', so it was okay.

But at times you really have to question the whole idea of what's objective. After the women's debate on CBC TV we saw Barbara Frum grill the organizer from the National Action Committe on the Status of Women regarding the reason for that kind of debate and wasn't it really a setup for the NDP? You have to question that kind of objectivity. I really found her quite offensive.

C: Often the greatest criticism I hear about Co-op Radio, about *Kinesis*, about any media which deal with human rights, is that they have a narrow focus. And that just makes me laugh, that to be concerned with human values is to be called narrow. That makes no sense. On the other hand, to project an image that reflects only the view of one little aspect of society as is quite often the case on commercial airwaves, now that's narrow.

M: Where you run into problems in public affairs shows generally is when work has already been done on a particular issue. Do we really want to say again how Northeast Coal is screwing the taxpayers? How many times can we say that in different ways? So we drop it while it's still an issue. For example, in women's issues, if women aren't trendy or in or whatever then it's tough to get air time. A reporter has to think of a 'new angle'.

V: I think there are certain subjects that are highly relevant to the social group I belong to that would also be to the rest of the world if some editor or producer would only give them a chance. But I've gone to them with stories and heard them say: "Well it's just not awfully sexy" and that's a quote.

C: I heard that term 'sexy' applied to lots of stories during my time at CBC. And although intellectually I wasn't sure what it meant, some part of me just knew what they were after.

V: I'm really at odds with the school of journalism that believes that we have to be totally impartial to everything in our lives. I don't think as journalists that anybody can ask us to do that or that that means better coverage.

C: Yeah, if you don't know what the issues are, how can you investigate them? How can a person who is not familiar with the statistics of child abuse, go out and do a story on child abuse? I see rape stories, incest stories, battering stories on TV and radio. They aren't investigative pieces. They aren't presenting both sides - the side of the woman or the child, and they aren't doing that because they don't know the issues. Basically, I'm saying that objective journalism doesn't exist.

Have you ever been asked to research or report on anything that offends you, for example that's racist or sexist?

V: The biggest thing was an offence to my artistic sensibilities. I used to work on a show with someone who would find the worst arrangement of every piece of music he could find - I suppose being a music broadcaster that's the kind of thing that offends - once he took a beautiful Brahms

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WORKING IN THE MEDIA

What's a nice girl like you doing in journalism?

by Judy Bazan

To a newspaperman (sic) a human being is an item with the skin wrapped around it.
- Fred Allen
1894 - 1956

The adjectives attributed to journalists are usually negative, somewhat stereotyped, and often definitely male-oriented: competitive, unscrupulous, tenacious, trench-coated, aggressive, chain-smoking, heartless, sensationalist, blood-sucking, etc.

In the movie 'Absence of Malice' Sally Fields played an ambitious insensitive reporter who was more interested in obtaining front page bylines than in the possible after effects on the people involved. Fortunately, not all women reporters are like her.

"The values associated with the news business - aggression, competition, and getting the news at whatever cost - are values not usually associated with women," says Elizabeth Godley, a reporter for *The Sun*.

"Women are brought up to cooperate, which is not valued in the media. It can be a real wrench for women. I think that's why more women don't rise to the top of the business. At some point, you realize you don't have the killer instinct."

Sarah Green (a Vancouver reporter who did not want her name revealed) agrees. "I don't like the macho ethic in journalism. I'm continually surprised that there are people who still believe in it. I don't think women generally have that mentality."

These sentiments should come as little surprise. Until recently, few women became reporters. Those who did were usually relegated to the "women's pages," limited to covering "unimportant soft news" (recipes, fashion, and society news) while men tackled the "hard" news.

Today more women are opting for a career in journalism. Says Gerald Porter, co-ordinator of the journalism program at Langara, "in the last four or five years, the number of women applying to the program is going up. This year is the first time since I've been here that it's just about 50-50, with maybe one or two more women than men."

Still there are few women in the upper echelons, which has its predictable effects.

"To have credibility in this profession, you have to to some extent play by men's rules, being one of the boys," says Nancy Knickerbocker, a *Sun* reporter. "Gradually a younger generation of women are approaching their work from a female consciousness, but it's a slow process. You do your bit every day, and pick your fights."

Obviously, it would help if more women held positions of power.

"The classic response is that women don't apply for higher positions," says Green. "I don't apply not because I'm not capable but because I don't want to play the games. On the other hand, someone has to be the token woman and pave the way for others."

Yet there is no reason why women can't match or surpass their male peers or why women should not compete for positions of authority.

"I find by and large, women do as well if not better than men," says Porter. "They work harder, and they are also better with details. Maybe, they still think they have to prove themselves."

Porter noticed additional contrasts between the two sexes: "I think women make better journalists in a stressful humanitarian situation. I don't know if it's cultural training or what. But women tend to be more empathetic in a stress situation, so they get more human story. I think it's a skill that's been lacking for a long time."

Porter says he finds that many of his female students are timid about asking pointed questions - in other words, being outspoken or assertive. He tries to help these women by using role-playing techniques for asking questions in a certain way.

"But give them a few years and they toughen up. Some of the best city hall reporters are women," he added.

Knickerbocker, on the other hand, perceived women's "empathetic natures" as a bit of a drawback.

"One of the worst parts of the job is talking to grieving relatives. But younger women reporters get them more often because we're more sensitive and people feel less intimidated. As a result, women tend to get the sick and grieving, and men tend to get cop shops, labor and hard politics."

The values associated with the news business—aggression, competition, and getting the news at whatever cost—are values not usually associated with women.

Also because of our gender-based upbringing, Knickerbocker says she has special problems when dealing with hierarchical institutions such as the police because girls are not brought up to know and understand the accompanying titles. (For example the difference between a sergeant and a staff-sergeant). This puts women at a definite disadvantage, making them appear and feel ignorant through no fault of their own.

Like in any other profession, reasons for becoming a news writer vary among individuals.

Shelley Fralic, assistant editor for the You section of *The Sun*, was a single parent when she applied to Langara's program. "I did not have a great desire to be a writer. I applied and got in. I was a mature student, 26 at the time, which a lot of people were. I had a kid and had worked for five years. A lot of us were at a cross roads."

Before enrolling in Langara's program, Godley was a legal secretary who wanted more out of life.

"It was a very irrational decision to go to Langara," admits Godley. "I was 34 at the time, and knew I could write, so I took the leap. My thing about being a reporter is using it as a forum to inform the public."

Knickerbocker took another route. Like Godley and Fralic she took journalism at Langara, but before that, she completed an honors degree in English at UBC and worked as an ESL instructor at King Edward Campus.

"I tried working on community papers, but all the students from Langara were getting the jobs. I was 23 when I got into the program."

Sue Balcon, 33, is currently taking the journalism certificate program at Langara. (The diploma program is two years long while the accelerated certificate program is half as long.)

"Years ago, in high school, I wanted to write. In school we had a work experience program. I worked for the *Ottawa Citizen* and loved it. Later, I worked for the *Richmond Review* as a free-lancer."

Along the way, Balcon married, had two children, and took the academic prerequisites for the course.

"As a mature student, I'm very motivated. But if I had a message for young women it would be that it's really hard to go back and pick up. The last three to four years I've been working towards this."

Carol Adams, 22, is also in the same accelerated program.

"I decided to get into journalism when I was 21. I did a BA in English at UBC and just graduated in April. It was really a case of oh my God what will I do? I wanted specific job skills, not an MA."

Despite the disadvantages mentioned and others (such as the awkward hours), none of these writers would trade jobs with anyone else.

"I get access to people I wouldn't usually meet," says Knickerbocker. "I've met some really extraordinary people."

Says Fralic, "I love it. It's a cliche to say, but I do. It's a great job and the people are great, too. One of the advantages of journalism is that there are so many tangents to try: PR or the different media (print, broadcast and radio). You can carry your experience."

WORKING IN THE MEDIA

Early feminist journalists

by Kandace Kerr

This is the first part of a two part article on early Canadian women journalists. In the second part Kandace Kerr writes about Eastern Canadian and black women in journalism.

The links between activism and writing are a main feature of women's journalistic activity at the turn of the century. Working class organizers, suffragettes and trade unionists used the power of the press to reach their audiences and alert readers to a variety of causes.

Like many other women's professions at the turn of the century, journalism became a socially acceptable way for women to speak and write their minds at a time when they were supposed to act much like children - to be seen but not heard.

Most women entered journalism through a well-travelled route. Coming mainly from the educated middle class, these women first entered the paid labour force as teachers. Some women, like Victoria's Agnes Deans Cameron, took to journalism as a second career once the illusions of teaching had faded. For others, like Mary Shadd and Toronto dressmaker Flora Macdonald Denison, writing and publishing were political actions. And still other women saw journalism as a job.

No matter what the reason for entering the profession, women were usually treated in much the same manner as women on the 'outside' were treated. Like teaching, nursing and other professions that women entered in the late 1800's, journalism became feminized.

Feminization entailed the reproduction of the social order on the job, in terms of the sex roles and values accorded to women. While women were employed as writers, it was men who continued to hold the high status positions such as editors, publishers and 'ace' reporters. Women were assigned to cover what became known as 'women's' stories, or to producing items for the women's pages. They wrote society notes, fashion pages and covered what were (and, to some extent, are still today) considered women's issues: those connected with the traditional caring and nurturing roles, such as education, child care, child labour and social issues. Liberation wasn't about to be offered at the composing end of a typewriter.

Helena Gutteridge was a British suffragette who, with a number of other suffragettes, came to British Columbia in 1911. She became actively involved in the BC suffrage movement on her arrival here, organizing the BC Suffrage League. Gutteridge was also involved in the trade union movement, helping to organize women laundry and garment workers, and working as the secretary of the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council. In 1914 she became the first woman to sit on the executive, and subsequently held the positions of recording secretary, statistician, business agent, vice-chair and trustee.

Gutteridge also realized the power of the press. She was the federal *Labour Gazette*'s BC correspondent on women's labour issues from 1913 to 1921, during which time she studied the cost of living for the federal labour department. Gutteridge was also a writer for *The Federationist*, the paper of the BC Federation of Labour. In 1913, the *Fed* endorsed women's suffrage. The next year, *The Federationist* published a weekly suffrage page edited by Helena Gutteridge. The column ran until 1915, and featured Gutteridge's views on suffrage, reports of visits and lectures of visiting suffragettes, and suffrage stories from around the world. In 1913 she wrote:

> *...the need of political power for working women is greater than that of any other class (because) only when she is able to influence industrial legislation will she cease to be exploited and forced into starvation and shame....The economic value of the ballot is one of the strongest arguments in favour of votes for women....*

The *B C Federationist* was not the only place where women's suffrage found a journalistic home. The daily press regularly carried reports of suffrage meetings and lectures by guest speakers, although the reports tended to concentrate more on the unruly aspects of the visits and meetings and less on the content of the speeches.

The Political Equality League was a province wide suffrage organization. Its publication, *The Champion*, stated the purpose of the P.E.L. in its first issue:

> *We stand to emphasize the fact that causes of individual cases of injustice can only be satisfactorily and finally dealt with by legislation in which women have a direct share.*

The Champion was an organizing tool, carrying news from regional suffrage organizers throughout the province. The paper also carried reports from suffrage movements around the world, with constant reference to Australia, England, Sweden and the United States. Articles from the British suffrage publication *Votes for Women* were regularly reprinted, giving an indication of the largely middle class nature of the BC women's movement.

Votes for Women was the publication of the mainstream British suffrage movement: *The Suffragette* was published by the militants.

The Champion was useful more than anything else as an organizing tool in a large and politically diverse province. Women could keep in touch, read about organizing in their own and other areas of BC, and keep up with the international movements. It was also made of getting information out to the non-converted. The editors of *The Champion*, Dorothy Davis and Maria Grant, persuaded Canadian Pacific Railway to take 650 copies of the magazine to sell on the train that travelled throughout the province!

While suffrage remained the rallying cry of the province's middle class, *The Champion* flourished. It provided organizing information, analysis and a political reason for living. It was, for many women, the fuel for the suffrage fires.

> *It is the intention of the women to prove to the government that the people of British Columbia are very much in earnest in their request, and it is confidently asserted by some of the leaders in this movement that the government are sufficiently broad-minded to grant the vote to women as soon as they show that a large number demand it.*

The Champion was available for 5 cents a copy. The cover advised purchasers to read, and then pass on to a friend. The paper was like a smalltown newspaper, filled with news, messages, advertisements appealing to the 'New Women' for everything from stocks and bonds to cars, and tips on how to attract new women to the suffrage cause.

In Vancouver, the mainstream press was 'taken over' by local women's groups for a special fundraising issue of the *Vancouver Sun*. Put together by over 15 local women's organizations, the two-section women's issue was to help raise funds and awareness for the then-in-the-planning stage Vancouver Women's Building (which was built at Thurlow and Robson Streets, and is now the site of a socially useful parking lot).

From *The Sun*, Wednesday, March 19, 1913:

> *To Our Public*
>
> *From the Vancouver Women's Edition, Greetings!*
>
> *Our Women's Edition marks a step forward in the great and growing part that women are playing in civic life.... Our success may not be reckoned altogether for money, for added to that is the tangible gain that comes to all who work for the common good...*

The two sections contain reports from a number of women's groups, both social and political. Everyone from the Pioneer Political Equality League, a suffrage organization, to music and dancing clubs, wrote short reports of what the organizations did and who they helped. Photographs of prominent society and political women accompanied each article.

In the second section of the issue there were a number of 'self-help' articles, including a long article on poultry farming in the Fraser Valley for women, an occupation that a number of political women took up in the 1920's, including Helena Gutteridge. Advertising was sold to pay for the costs of publication, and the final product was as woman-controlled as was possible in the constraints of male-defined journalism.

While women made short and often dead-end inroads into the world of journalism, coining stereotypes like 'girl reporter' and 'sob-sister', political activists discovered early the power of the printed word. Using papers that already existed, or setting up their own publications, activists recognized that writing and journalism could be as important a political action as organizing, demonstrating or speaking.

A bibliography will appear in the next issue.

WORKING IN THE MEDIA

Journalists from page 9

melody and did all kinds of horrible things to it. I wanted to take the record and smash it. Also, pornography in the workplace, like playboy pinups, has offended me, but nothing in programming so far.

C: One time a well-known musician was booked as a guest on the CBC show. The secret side of his life is that he'd once done a layout for *Hustler* of his secret sexual fantasies. I felt that this should be talked about in the interview. My point was not that this man is a pornographer and that therefore we should not interview him, but that yes, he is a well-known musician and pornographer and an interview cannot go by without that side of the story coming up. The interview was done but it didn't reveal that side of him. By rights it was someone else's interview. Had I got that interview to write I would have definitely found a way to ask that question. Even though that was someone else's story idea I did feel a certain obligation to make that information public. However, I did not have the power to make that interviewer write that question down.

I can give some positive examples of how someone can bring their political knowledge into a story. I had to write an interview for Kirk Douglas, an actor, but the other side of him was that he was responsible for breaking (Senator) McCarthy's blacklist in Hollywood. He's also very proud of his son's involvement in the anti-nuclear movement. That makes a good story. It involves politics and entertainment. It makes me feel like my work has integrity.

Victoria, what was it like being the only woman among 37 males?

V: I thought the other techs I worked with were great. But it was my job to dub cassettes to reel-to-reel for the newspeople. So as I'm sitting there in the control room dubbing something,in they walk. Their reaction is 'where's the tech?'. I'm sitting at the machine and they want to know 'where's the tech ?' !

I was in another situation that was also blatantly sexist, at a TV station back east. When I was hired they asked which departments I wanted to work in then put me in the one I said I didn't want to do. A man was hired at the same time with similar experience and he was put in audio which he and I were both qualified for. The way I look at it he got the job he was more likely to succeed at. They put me in the middle of a hotbed of union activity. I had a grievance filed against me the second day I was there. It was suggested that I got the job because I was a friend of the station manager's daughter, when I didn't even know he had a daughter. After a horrible few months, on the 89th day - the last day of my probation - they said: "Sorry, you're finished". They kept the other guy whom they had set up to succeed and threw me out.

Some male producers came to me afterwards and said that it wouldn't have happened if I hadn't been a woman. Someone else in the same department told me they didn't want women there because it was men's territory.

C: I have had some similar very bad encounters with two male techs - rubbing up against me, asking why my nipples were never erect, asking if we could take showers together...incredible sexual harassment, to the point that everyone around saw it. Unfortunately, it was viewed as sexual attraction toward me, not as sexual harassment. Therefore jealousies developed...and even though I explained that this was sexual harassment and we really had to find some way to fight it, I was viewed as the sexual provocateur who had brought it on myself. Standard story...

I believed that CBC was the last bastion of liberalism in Canada - a place to work and be yourself. Although I did meet a good many people who shared my view, I learned quickly that it's a matter of environment. It has very little to do with talent or your commitment to that program. If you represent something that's foreign or threatening, represent a spirit that's not going to be moulded into a corporate person - no matter how friendly you are - it's just not going to work.

Is it really vicious there at CBC? Is there a lot of jostling for career positions?

I think so. There are few positions you can move into, and a lot of people trying to move into those directions. It generates a lot of gossip. Unfortunately, gossip is power.

What kind of discrimination occure regarding who covers certain assignments? Are men assigned the hard news stories while women are sent out on what the media regards as human interest stories?

M: Sometimes I think we denigrate some of the human interest material, like a daycare story...some of those things need to be covered by someone who is as hard-nosed on the subject as anyone else. We look at those as lighter subjects when they're not. Sometimes as a journalist those are the topics that interest me...but I'm also interested in a more political arena, too.

I guess my point is that as long as the media regard certain stories that women cover as lightweight, it is difficult for a woman to develop a career in commercial journalism. Pamela Martin didn't make it covering daycare stories.

M: It's the whole thing of cutting your teeth. You have to prove you can do political analysis and reports as well as everything else. It's a myth that women can't ask tough enough questions.

C: It gets into what is feminist journalism. I think that unless you have someone with some kind of analysis covering those stories you're going to continually perpetuate the damage being done. Take a story about juvenile prostitution - a good story - that lets people know that 99% of those kids on the street have been abused, usually by a male member of the family. Until everyone is giving that message in the story, over and over, the problem is not going to change. And part of being a journalist is changing things.

So you're saying that it's not good enough for a woman journalist to cover a story that concerns us, it should be a feminist journalist?

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CFRO

Women meet

by Sharon Knapp

A typical evening at Co-op Radio, Vancouver's community owned radio station... It's your night to broadcast and it's one hour to air time and you have a tape to edit. You aren't likely to strike up a conversation with the woman at the TC 105 next to you. Chances are, she's probably busily flaying her tape with a razor blade too. Such working conditions do not encourage a great deal of self-criticism either. All too often, a programmer isn't concerned with what she's doing with the material so much as trying to meet the deadline.

Not only are women at Co-op Radio isolated from other feminists who work in print or video who are covering the same issues, they are also isolated from each other. Because shows occupy the same time slot week after week, the typical volunteer will probably never meet someone who broadcasts on a different evening, even if they do very similar types of programming.

A new Co-op Radio Women's Caucus aims to change all that, by providing women with the opportunity to discuss the practical problems of handling information in the alternative media. It gives women volunteers a chance to convince themselves that they are doing serious feminist work, and, by learning how to handle their material responsibility, to enhance their credibility and accountability to the larger women's movement. As a first step, the caucus is co-sponsoring (with *Kinesis*) an open forum for feminist journalists in radio, video and print on November 25th.

Kinesis spoke with Punam Khosla, the staff person responsible for initiating the caucus. Sharon Knapp is a Co-op Radio volunteer, as well as a *Kinesis* editorial group member.

I think a lot of women at the first meeting of the caucus were wondering: "Am I enough of a feminist to belong here? What do I have in common with all these other women?"

photo by Sharon Knapp

Punam Khosla at Co-op Radio.

Punam: I think we can have a basic common unity, but beyond that the likelihood is we don't agree. I think that will be a real asset in the caucus. I'm from an East Indian background. I'm an immigrant and I'm a woman from a middleclass background. The likelihood is I'm going to have a very different perspective from the woman sitting across from me who's from a white, working class Canadian background. That is a strength in the movement. And when we fall into the single line politic, we never see our differences as strengths.

You mean we shouldn't preach as if there was a single line of feminism.

P: Right. There is no single issue that I can think of right now that everyone can agree on the analysis, the strategy and the tactics. It's not a bad disagreement, either, its a dynamic disagreement. Those kinds of debates often have something really solid beneath them, and the only way they're going to be resolved is to keep on working it out in the open. When we just do advocacy or hypercritical journalism, we're playint to the idea that there is a single line. As a feminist journalist, it's my responsibility to look at what is being said and present it as a debate. That's the only way not to become divisive in the movement.

Let's talk about responsible criticism.

Responsible criticism is not simply a matter of having more in-depth conversations- it's also a matter of presenting the debates that do exist in the community. When we

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A WORKSHOP FOR FEMINIST JOURNALISTS

If you know that women's work in the media extends beyond literature and poetry

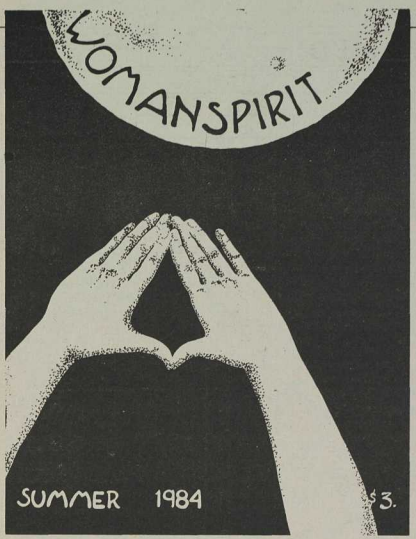
Come to Vancouver Status of Women (VSW)
400 A West 5th Ave. (at Yukon)
on SUNDAY, November 25th, 1:30 Pm

For more information call:

873-5925 and **684-8494**

Co-sponsored by **Kinesis** and **Co-op Radio Women's Caucus**

WORKING IN THE MEDIA



Farewell to *Womanspirit*

Reading **Womanspirit** *is like talking with an older sister. The articles are timeless. I read it now and I see new things.*

—Jean Mountaingrove

by Michele Wollstonecroft

WomanSpirit magazine stopped production this past summer. After 10 years and forty issues, Jean Mountaingrove, the "mother" of *WomanSpirit* and Ruth Mountaingrove (who calls herself the "midwife" of *WomanSpirit*) have chosen to follow other directions in their lives. (But good news, readers! Back issues are available.) This summer I interviewed Jean and Ruth at Rootworks, Sunny Valley, Oregon, where *WomanSpirit* has been produced for the past few years.

WomanSpirit, devoted to feminist spirituality, was produced quarterly from the fall of 1974 to the summer of 1984. The magazine began with the energy of feminism of the early 1970's.

> *We are feeling stirrings inside us that tell us that what we are making is nothing less than a new culture... As we continue to tear down the institutions and relationships that oppress us, we are also building, making, creating. Because that process of taking and leaving, making a new culture is so deep, profound, and all-inclusive we are calling it spiritual.*
> *(Volume 1, #1)*

The magazine was produced rurally and on minimal funds. "A good idea brings energy", Jean said, noting that the magazine lived and grew without advertising, "we owe our success to the Women's Movement. Women's bookstores stocked *WomanSpirit*, women learned about it by word-of-mouth and other publications began to note it in their bibliographies."

graphic courtesy of *Womanspirit*

"With the beginning of *WomanSpirit* a new form of magazine was born. It sought to be accessible to all women as writers and readers; we did not go after "big names" and sought diverse opinions about feminist spirituality. There was no one correct line. We tried to keep the cost down so that the magazine was affordable to all women."

WomanSpirit did invent a new form. Women from all over the world contributed to the pages of this magazine. The content includes articles that are historical, personal, about rituals, book reviews, short stories, music, poetry, and letters.

> *We wanted diversity: several views on a subject. No pro vs. con, not dualism but inclusiveness. We wanted to stay tuned to the cycle of changes in nature and to foster our love for our mother earth. We wanted to create a womanspace for womanexperience. Not violence and hatred. Anger, YES. Rage, even, but hope, action and support for moving on through the anger. Not sexuality, but love and sisterhood: love of women, of children, the living creatures and plants who share this earth with us. Always we tried to select what would help us think and feel and act clearly - what would empower us.*
> *(Jean Mountaingrove, Summer, 1984 #40)*

Winter Solstice, #34 includes writings by women about rape and incest. At the same time there are articles about healing, reclaiming power, exploring the darkness within oneself. I find the presence of all this content in the same issue, one page following another, to be extraordinarily well-placed. While most contemporary magazines will take incest and rape as "issues" and talk about them and then leave us with it, *WomanSpirit* is a place for disclosure, revealing, expression, and sharing, and then at the same time, for healing, taking back one's own power.

Some of the articles I have enjoyed the most are those about history, ancient places, ritual and mythology. These articles give one a sense of women's power re-emerging from the past and re-asserting itself in new ways all over the world. "Himiko" by Shrine River from Japan, is about a shamaness/oracle who ruled Japan at some time between 300 BC to 300AD. (#13, fall 1977). In the Winter Solstice issue, 1982, Grace Hardgrove writes a poem expressing her feelings about a ritual that she participated in with 30 other women at the Cave of the Seven Sleepers, a site that is believed to mark the original Amazon-founded site of Epheses, Turkey. In the Solstice, 1984 issue, Janet Bergman Christ writes about the ongoing summer rites of Demeter and Persephone that take place at Eleusis, Greece.

In the Spring 1984 issue, is an article by Luisa Francia of Munich, West Germany, who writes about spending time in a Neolithic temple on the island of Malta. This article is made up of 'NOTES' presumably taken from a journal; these notes include a description of the temple, Francia's thoughts while being in the temple and of a night she spent in the temple, feeling the energy there and moving with it.

These articles are good reading as they include historical and mythological information about their geographical sites and talk about how women are finding meaning in these sites today.

I also particularly enjoyed Issue #32 (June 1982) that focuses on art. The cover is a "quilt" made up of the covers of the previous 31 issues. The inside of the back cover is a woodcut print of "Three Spinners" by M. Loren Washburn. Also in this issue is a plan for a Ritual Herb Garden, by Jennifer Weston.

The graphics and photographs of *WomanSpirit* are remarkably original, diverse and numerous. The images are fresh and personal pictures of women, symbols, diagrams and illustrations. The graphics and photographs vary in size and style so that as one turns from page to page there is one visual treat after another.

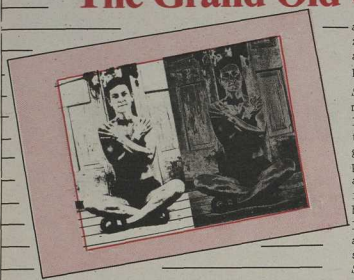
I enjoyed the inclusion of Merlin Stone's "ADA" dating system (After the Development of Agriculture) on the index page of the later issues. This system of dating, which now puts us in the year 9984, gives us a sense of continuity from times before patriarchy.

Volume #13 includes an index to the first 12 issues (3 volumes). Another index is due out soon that will give us an index to all 40 issues (10 volumes).

Readers who are interested in obtaining back issues can write to *WomanSpirit*, 2000 King Mountain Trail, Wolf Creek, Oregon, U.S.A., 97497 - 9799

LESBIAN JOURNALS

The Grand Old Crones



by Barbara Herringer

As co-founder and former editor of Vancouver's *The Radical Reviewer*, I remember the excitement of seeing our first and subsequent issues hot off the press. Somehow the long hours of soliciting and reading manuscripts, reviewing, writing and finally paste up melted away when I held the paper in my hands. I still feel that excitement when I pick up a lesbian journal from Ariel Books or the Vancouver Women's Bookstore. I may not have produced it, but there is a strong sense of community nonetheless: I am a reader and, occasionally, a contributor.

Lesbian periodicals are volatile and tempestestuous. Whether they exist for one issue or twenty they are a political mixed bag of passionate and articulate points of view described through poetry, theory, fiction, drama, narrative, journal work, dialogues, interviews, reviews, experimental language and form from a myriad of voices.

The most dynamic journals seem to be those which have shifted from the idea of "we're lesbians and we're all in this together" to the radical but obvious, "yes, we're lesbians but there are important differences among us that need addressing". During the 1980s, in journals such as *Sinister Wisdom*,*Conditions* and the newer *Common Lives/Lesbian Lives*, the issues of race, class and sexuality - to mention a few - have burst out of the closet in a furor of creative debate and artistry. Lesbians *are* everywhere.

The transition from commonality of our experience to expressions of our diversity is evident in the make-up of the collectives who work long hours for wages and then attempt to find time for families and partners while also producing the journals we love to read.

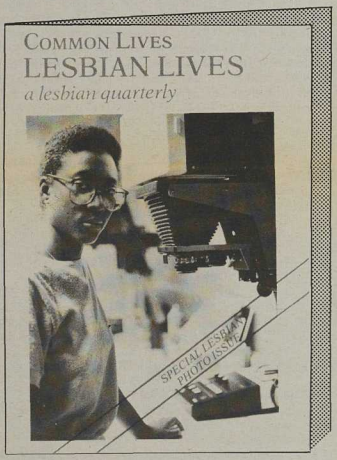
Feminary, for instance, began in 1969 as the Female Liberation Newsletter of Durham-Chapel Hill in North Carolina and was renamed *Feminary* in 1974 from a wonderful passage in Monique Wittig's *Les Guérillères*: "The women are seen to have in their hands small books which they say are féminaries... in one of them someone has written an inscription which they whisper in each other's ears and which provokes full-throated laughter."

From 1974 to 1983 the journal was a magazine emphasizing the Southern voice of lesbians, then it seemed that *Feminary* would have to fold. In the fall of 1983 proposals for transfer of the magazine were solicited by the North Carolina collective and the new San Francisco-based collective released its first issue this October. The new collective is as diverse as the contents of the journal itself: a Brazilian woman, a Chinese American woman, a Jewish woman and a woman who describes herself as a middle-class WASP. The women state that they are committed to using their diversity to strengthen the journal and describe *Feminary* as a national magazine "with an international perspective, a magazine of lesbian-feminist politics, passion and hope."

Sinister Wisdom and *Conditions* could almost be called the grand old crones of lesbian journals - both have been out since the late 1970s. There are sometimes long gaps between issues because of financial problems and personnal changes but it is always worth the wait. *Conditions* describes itself as a "feminist magazine of writing by women with an emphasis on writing by lesbians." Its collective is as diverse as *Feminary*'s and has expanded and changed since *Conditions One* emerged in 1976. *Sinister Wisdom* is edited by two women - the third set of editors since its first issue eight years ago.

As far as I know, *Sinister Wisdom* and *Conditions* are the first lesbian journals to produce special issues. *Conditions Five* was the groundbreaking Black Women's issue, while in 1983 Beth Brant, a native American, guest-edited the North American Indian Women's issue, "A Gathering of Spirit" as issue 22/23 of *Sinister Wisdom*

In a radical break in format *Sinister Wisdom*'s latest issue presents the writing of



one woman, an American trauma nurse who kept a detailed journal of the time she spent in Beirut during the Israel invasion of 1982. In each issue of both these journals, the list of contributors testifies to the commitment the collectives have in publishing the work of many lesbian voices - third world women, women of colour, women of all classes, ages, abilities and geographies.

One of the youngest and most courageous lesbian journals came out in 1981. *Common Lives/Lesbian Lives* is published in Iowa City by an ever-shifting yet dedicated collective. In its first editorial the collective made it clear what its focus would be: "Common Lives/Lesbian Lives is committed to reflecting the diversity among us by actively soliciting and printing in each issue the work and ideas of lesbians of color, fat lesbians, lesbians over fifty and under twenty years old, physically challenged lesbians, poor and working class lesbians and lesbians of varying cultural backgrounds. CL/LL feels a strong responsibility to insure access to women whose lives have traditionally been denied visibility and to encourage lesbians who have never thought before of publishing to do so." The journal has lived up to that first editorial in each of the twelve issues it has produced so far and in 1983, the Gay Press Association named it the winner of their award for Outstanding Achievement by a lesbian publication.

photo courtesy of *Common Lives Lesbian Lives* #12

Unfortunately, as Wendy Frost pointed out in her review of *Lesbiantics*, Fireweed Issue 13 (reviewed in issue 7/8 of *The Radical Reviewer*), "Within the feminist press in Canada, there has been no continuous lesbian voice. There are no Canadian counterparts to such American journals as *Sinister Wisdom* and *Conditions*...no one publication that speaks to the experience of the Canadian lesbian."

There is no room in this brief article for a discussion of the state of feminist publishing in Canada, let alone the lack of lesbian journals. Until one of us wins the lottery or funding is more readily available - which is the wildest fantasy?- our diversity as Canadian lesbians will continue to make itself known in our communities, around kitchen tables, in the pages of feminist journals such as *Fireweed* and *Room of One's Own* or in the pages of lesbian journals being produced in the United States.

Common Lives Lesbian Lives feels a strong responsibility to insure access to women whose lives have traditionally been denied visibility.

There are periodicals and newletters I haven't mentioned in detail because of lack of space. Others you may find at our local women's bookstores are: *Lesbian Connection*; *Lesbian Insighter/Insider/Inciter*; *Big Apple Dyke News*(B.A.D. News); *Ache*, a Black lesbian jornal; *Focus*; Issue 10 of *Connexions* entitled "Global Lesbianism"; *Flagrant* from Vancouver Island; and from Terrace, B.C., *The Open Door*, Rural Lesbian Newsletter. Lesbians who are aware of other journals, let the bookstores know.

Books by and about lesbians particularly those published by small presses are often reviewed in the *Women's Review of Books*, *New Women's Times Feminist Review*, *Broadside*, *Kinesis* and within the pages of most feminist and lesbian feminist journals.

Throughout the 1950s *The Ladder* was the only publication that discussed and reviewed lesbian fiction and poetry first as a mimeographed newsletter, then as a magazine. It existed for sixteen years. We have come a long way, but there's a great deal of territory left to cover and many voices yet to be heard.

WORKING IN THE MEDIA

Outwrite

30p

women's newspaper

by Punam Khosla

When Canadian feminists look for news from the English Women's movement - we most regularly reach for a copy of *Spare Rib*... a magazine that could easily be mistaken - at least on this side of the Atlantic - as the only overseas voice of English feminists.

Last year *Spare Rib* carried a debate on racism - almost implying that it's a recent development. In reality black women have been organizing autonomously in Britain for a number of years, and challenging the ethnocentrism of white feminists for just about as long, only not bothering to do so in the pages of *Spare Rib*. London has many more black women's centres than I had time to visit, and an anti-racism movement that continues to plug away in the face of Thatcherian policies.

Black English feminists look to *Outwrite* for their information - a monthly newspaper focusing on black women's concerns. It should be noted here that the term black, by common agreement, refers to all women of non-white or third world origin, the largest groupings in London being Asian and Afro-Caribbean women.

I spoke with two members of the *Outwrite* collective at their office in East London ...Shaila and Lilianne are two of the eight full-time people on the paper, courtesy of a recent grant from the Greater London Council. I started out by asking them about the history of *Outwrite*.

Lilianne: The paper started publishing three years ago, but the idea was there five years ago. Four of us, three black women and one white woman, got together to think about the possibility of having a black/third world women's paper in this country, because the news that was in the feminist media was extremely scant when it came to black women's lives and politics, both in this country and in the third world.

Was there ever any discussion about setting up a section within Spare Rib *that was already an established feminist women's paper or was that never considered?*

Shaila: Well *Spare Rib* might have had that discussion, but no, we wanted something completely separate. As Lilianne said there wasn't actually a newspaper. *Spare Rib* is doing something else, it has long feature stories and so on, and we also wanted something which, if it was going to be about third world and black women, it was also going to be produced by third world and black women. That was definitely a point of departure, because where *Spare Rib* did have the occasional story or news report, it was a white women's collective and it's been like that for about ten years. One thing we were very insistent on was that the composition of the collective was going to reflect the content and the other way around. That we were going to control our own news and spread our own news rather than someone do it on our behalf.

L: One of our policies at the very beginning, which is still a very important policy that we stand by, is that only black women write about other black women and no black women's writing should be edited by a white woman on the collective. So we write our own material and we edit our own work as well.

What was the idea of who you wanted to reach with this newspaper?

L: It was mainly black and third world women in this country that we wanted to reach, but obviously this would be a very small readership because black people are only a small percent of the population in this country...if you think about it in these terms...So these would be the women that the paper was written for and addressed to. Apart from that we were still thinking about white working class women, white women in general. The women's movement came into account but was not a priority, although right from the beginning we saw it as a feminist paper and the collective was a feminist collective. Now our interpretations of feminism may have differed but we agreed on a certain consensus; for liberation of women and for liberation of women internationally and worldwide.

S: I suppose you could say we see it as a tool whereby people can be politicized as well as take up campaigns from, from things they've seen reported in the paper. For me I think it has played a great role in politicizing sections of the white women's movement, the black liberation movement.

You see, you have a situation where the black press mostly ignores women, the white press ignores blacks, so what we were trying to do was fill in that big gap that had been caused by the invisibility on all sides. So as Lilianne said, that was our primary audience but it's wider than that, there are lots of black male activists in solidarity movements, there are working class activists etc.... and I think a lot of them will find something in the paper that is relevant to their struggles as well.

You have a situation where the black press mostly ignores women, the white press ignores blacks, so what we were trying to do was fill in that big gap.

photo courtesy of *Outwrite*

So what is the editorial policy of the paper...What's your basis of unity?

L: It's a mouthful...it defines itself as an anti-imperialist, internationalist, anti-racist, anti-zionist, anti-heterosexist - i.e. pro-lesbian - paper, and that was a conscious step on the part of the collective.

S: And also to make the links between women's situations world-wide, as well as show the differences, that was one of the important aims, because we are internationalist and we do believe that feminism has to be internationalist, therefore by definition has to be anti-racist and anti-imperialist, given all the struggles in so many other countries.

Are all the women in your collective black?

S: No, it's a collective of fifteen, five white women and ten black women, from a variety of backgrounds...some are black British, I'm from India, a member from Chile, one from Iran. Lilianne is from Lebanon.

So you said that white women don't write articles about black women and don't edit articles by black women.

S: They try...it's not that they don't... they do and they even submit them, but we reject them...

So what do the five white women on your collective do?

S: Well there are other struggles being covered in the paper as well, for example the miners' dispute...for about three issues we've been carrying reports about what women are doing in those struggles, and we've carried several articles that are important to black and white women in this country...

Do you have fairly good contact with woman's groups in third world countries?

We still have very direct and ongoing contact with women's groups from our home countries, that's quite a big source of news...but it's something we could always be developing at a much, much faster rate than movements in western countries. I think that is quite apparent, that a lot more grassroots activity is going on, much more campaigning is going on, whereas from what I can see in western countries things seem to be at a sort of lull or have gone into very particular kinds of organizing like women's refugees or pornography etc. Some of the news we get from some third world countries, they're having much more on the streets demonstrations, much more confrontationist agitations and so on, and we're seeing less of those here. So we're always trying to enlarge our contacts and develop them.

How are you distributed here?

By subscription, by direct sales, and by an alternative distributor who takes it to the various alternative bookshops. It's something we have to develop...but we've said we won't make any compromises. For example let's take *Spare Rib*. It is distributed by a commercial distributor who also distributes pornography, now we are not prepared to be handled by anybody who distributes pornography, and if we go through this in a very principled way, we find that we do not have an outlet, because either they don't want us or we don't want them.

This is part 1 of a two part interview. In the next issue, Lilianne, Shaila and Punam discuss the issues facing Black English women.

Journalists from page 12

C: Absolutely. Unfortunately a woman who considered herself a feminist journalist would be viewed as someone who had too narrow a focus.... Until a feminist perspective is seen as a human perspective it's always going to be the last story on the list.

V: There's always this idea that we have to adapt to what the structure is now. There are a lot of things I disagree with in the structure. One of our roles should be to adapt the system to the way we look at it, instead of adapting ourselves to the system. there are a lot of processes in the workplaces that don't serve humanity very well, so I try not to buckle under to those things that seem stupid. It doesn't make life easy for me.

M: Women in the media are breaking some new ground, especially in certain roles like technical and so on. I guess it's tough but it's about maintaining your own integrity and dignity, but it's also doing what you like to do and making some way for you to get around in the structure. Sometimes you have to make compromises and I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing.

C: But I think it's only feminist women who are being asked to compromise. Everyone makes compromises when they go into a career, but we're being asked to keep our mouths shut and not rock the boat.

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WORKING IN THE MEDIA

The media is manipulating art

by Jill Pollack

Selfish: the state of loving oneself and therefore committed to growth. Entails the desire to reach and then extend one's potential.

Artist: an effective communicator

Criticism: responsible, considered and honest appraisal; either positive or negative; that is backed up by reason. Inherent in this definition is the understanding that criticism is synonymous with personal opinion.

First I started to think about art critics, and then art criticism, and finally, criticism in general. But I began to realize that the origin of what I want to discuss is the treatment of the visual arts in the media. Tackling the situation from what I see as the source seemed to make more sense, especially in the light of my discussion of Georgiana Chappell's sculptural installation, in this same issue.

Both Chappell and I hold the view that creativity is political, that to express oneself through any given art form is an act of revolution. I believe this is so because of what it entails. In order to be an artist, one must feel that one has something of importance to say. It is perhaps the ultimate selfish act in a world where, I believe, we are neither encouraged nor trained to love ourselves. In my view, making art equals striving for personal power.

Following this premise, an interesting by-product of making art seems to occur. Because artists are spending their time, energy and money in the pursuit of self-expression, it follows that they are constantly defining and re-defining their view of the world. And since most art is made individually, artists tend to carry that behavior over into other areas. As a result, they may be less susceptible to society's propaganda. If someone spends most of their time thinking by and for themselves, they are less likely to adopt viewpoints, ethical standards or political perspectives just because they are the prevailing attitudes espoused by the rest of society. That is not to say that every artist (visual or otherwise) holds an alternative viewpoint or leads an alternative lifestyle. But the fact is that 95% of artists earn a living below the poverty level.

Bring in society. Art, that is the visual arts, are not generally seen as playing an important role in society. They have been relegated to a federal government ghetto and isolated in the context of galleries. Art is usually considered essential only to those involved in some way with art (ie. artists, curators, critics, gallery owners, etc.).

This is reflected very strongly in all forms of the media. In newspapers, the visual arts are rarely discussed except in terms of reviews. Art is not seen as being newsworthy. When an item about art does appear, it is primarily in conjunction with a stolen object or a 'famous' artist dying. There is neither an attempt to recognize nor an understanding that art is essential to our society.

This attitude of ignoring the visual arts (while sports coverage is prominent and indeed, has its own section of the newspaper, spots on both radio and television, etc.) is carried over into other areas. "Arts" programming on radio and television usually deals with poetry, music, dance or theatre. Those four are considered to be 'culture'. While I am not denying their importance, the idea has risen that the visual arts are difficult to translate into both the printed word and the audio.

I believe that because of the inherent power of the visuals and their ability to convince (look at any piece of advertising), art has been put in an inferior position in an attempt to dis-empower it. It is more difficult and sometimes impossible to control the way in which our minds react to visuals. They can have a subtle, far-reaching effect on us (one-picture-is-worth-a-thousand-words type of sentiment). The very nature of seeing, as has been proven by the bombardment of visual information which we experience every day, makes it something to be controlled and manipulated.

How is this done?

First and foremost, isolation and intimidation. If art is seen as something which is not essential and further, "above our heads", it has been effectively rendered powerless. If it is written about only in terms of jargon-y analysis, most people will not be interested. If it is closeted away in buildings called galleries and museums, most people feel that they do not have easy access to the work. If the image of an artist ranges from someone who is eccentic, wears a beret, makes art that any child could do, works in a manner deemed 'unreadable', sells work and therefore makes a lot of money, or doesn't sell her work, the public-at-large tends to feel justified in slotting artists as a group of people who are wasting their time and eating up precious government funds.

Creativity is political; to express oneself through any given art form is an act of revolution. . . . In order to be an artist, one must feel that one has something important to say.

Art skills are being incorporated all the time into advertising, religion, political activities (both alternative and mainstream), business, sports and even the media itself. But they are used as tools or means to an end rather than entities in themselves. It is rare to enter a house or building where art is not visible. However, it is the attitude and purpose that differs. In much the same way that the media portrays feminism (usually crazy women who are child-killers because of pro-abortion stances or who hate men because they are lesbians), so too the media has perverted the visual arts.

If we want social change and if we want personal freedom, we must be aware of the media's attempts to manipulate and negate the visual arts. If we are dissatisfied with the position of women in the media, let us be aware of the connections between the visual arts and feminism and let us work to change both.

WORKING IN THE MEDIA

The Emily

Women publish in academia

by Nora Ready and Judy Andres

"These women crying in my head
walk alone uncomforted:
the Emilys, these three
cry to be set free --
and others whom I will not name
each different, each the same.
-Dorothy Livesay

Emily Bronte, Emily Dickinson, Emily Carr, Emily Murphy, Emily Pankhurst. *The Emily* is a monthly student newspaper at the University of Victoria, going into its third year of publication. It came about as a result of a women's centre collective meeting in September 1982. It was first proposed as a newsletter, but the idea grew. It was decided that there was a large enough community interested in feminism to support a newspaper.

For the first issue, it was difficult to find writers. No one was sure what a feminist perspective on events was. Megan Davies, one of the original organizers, remembers sitting in the women's centre the night before the first deadline, waiting for promised copy, in vain. The first *Emily* did come out on October 28, 1982. Sexism and the media was the leading front page article. Other articles were about militarism, pornography, the pill, and rape.

Most of the writers hadn't written news-stories before, and in some cases it showed. There was an awkwardness to the style, and an academic rather than a journalistic approach to the writing. Perhaps this points to the amateur nature of the fledgling *Emily*. The basis for its production was not efficiency and a polished product. Essentially the collective felt the need to reach out to more women on campus. *The Emily* was the means chosen to open more lines of communication.

Since the first edition, about 100 women have been involved in *The Emily*. The first year, some men were involved in writing and production. The policy has changed since that first year: men no longer write nor participate in the production of *The Emily*. We see our focus as providing support and empowerment to women and women's creativity. *The Emily* is an educational tool providing an outlet for women's expression in an environment that is often hostile, unrepresentative and unyielding.

The Emily runs on a collective basis. Decisions as to stories, editorials, format, etc. come about from collective meetings. *The Emily* does not want to be merely a product. It aims to include the process of producing a newspaper along with the goals of the articles that are written. It attempts to make the production process a co-operative one, incorporating feminist ideals in production as much as possible. As a collective we strive to create an atmosphere that is not alien to women, encouraging input from women of diverse backgrounds, and experimentation of feminist expression.

Reactions to *The Emily* have not always been very supportive. The strongest reaction is 'why don't men write?' instead of 'what is *The Emily* saying?' For this *The Emily* has been labelled by some vocalists as man-hating, yet few issues ever mention men directly. We have had to fight for funding from the student government, which took up a lot of energy last year in collecting letters and signed petitions of support. Funding has not been secured for this year as of yet.

Although *The Emily* has a predominantly university readership, we accept articles from the community as well and encourage dialogue between the university and the community. For more information, write: The Emily, University of Victoria, P.O. Box 1799, Victoria, B.C. V8N 2Y2. Subscriptions are $5/year.

Big Mama Rag stops publishing

After 11 years of feminist journalism, *Big Mama Rag*, a newspaper from Denver, Colorado, has stopped publishing. The last issue came out in April of this year.

In a notice sent to subscribers and supporters, *BMR* cited personal and political differences within the collective as the reason they could no longer continue the project of the publication. They hope that another group of women will continue *BMR*, but say that nothing concrete has developed yet.

Women needing subscription money returned to them can write the paper at 1724 Gaylord Street, Denver, Colo., USA 80206.

HERizons goes national

A new Canadian feminist magazine hit the Vancouver newsstands this fall, when *HERizons*, a Winnipeg based magazine, went national. The publication began national distribution, and has also established regional editors for the Western region, the Eastern region, and for Francophones.

The move from regional to national distribution was made with the help of a LEAP grant from the Liberal government.

HERizons is a monthly magazine, publishing ten issues per year. Recent issues have featured articles on childbirth, punk women, housing, battering, and an extensive preview of the federal election. A portion of the articles are always in French.

Reviews and interviews are regular features, as are columns on such things as finances, and a section for news shorts. An upcoming issue will focus on younger women. Format is glossy and full colour.

In an interview with the Vancouver *Sun*, Debbie Holmberg-Schwartz, one of *HERizons'* editors, said, "It's long overdue. The U.S. has had *Ms.* and other magazines to address their concerns, and Canadian women are happy that we finally have something."

Other Canadian feminist publications, such as *Kinesis* and *Broadside*, have long had national distribution and content, but have a different format from *HERizons* and *Ms.*

Subscriptions to *HERizons* are $15/year. They can be reached at 200 - 478 River Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3L 0C8. (204) 477-1730.

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CFRO **from page 12**

ignore the debate, we're just doing what the mainstream media does: they black out the areas they don't want to talk about, and it just doesn't exist.

What do you want to see coming out at the forum?

P: What I want to know is how everyone else deals with what I consider to be the almost overwhelming responsibility to handle the information responsibly. Let's get everyone to address it from the point of view of their own work. How do you define what's important and how do you do justice to the reason why you went there in the first place ? These are things we don't often share with each other. We have to break down the competition and the old idea that you have to "make it", that you have to prove yourself as an individual. It's completely contrary to the principle of what we're trying to accomplish in the alternative media. We want to contribute to something larger, not simply do something that contributes to our personal status.

ARTS

Feminist soap opera imitates life

by Mary Schendlinger

Henna Haywood is the author of Flux, *a feminist radio soap opera released last month. Mary Schendlinger interviewed her for Kinesis.*

I'm not sure how old you are, so I'll have to ask you, what were the soap operas that influenced your writing? Are we talking 'The Young and the Restless' or are we talking 'Ma Perkins'?

It was 'General Hospital,' an American TV daytime show. When I was in high school my mum and I would watch it together. She never admitted to anyone else that she watched it, because literate suburban housewives weren't supposed to like that stuff, and we certainly made fun of it. But, boy, did we hang on the edge of our seats to see what would happen next.

Is that when you got the idea for Flux?

Nope. From there I went off and started my own family, and when I was nursing my first baby, I got into 'All My Children,' because that's what was on TV during the noon feeding. 'All My Children' was created by Agnes Nixon -

No relation to...?

Not unless she's a black sheep. 'All My Children' was designed to have all the usual elements - love, marriage, divorce, adultery, various kinds of misery and ecstasy, mostly having to do with relationships. But the show also had content about social issues. Vietnam was one of the first they tackled but they also tried teenage drug abuse and wife battering and a host of other concerns, issues that so-called sophisticated night-time TV wouldn't touch.

And?

And lo and behold, the networks had to reassess their image of the insulated, bovine housewife who only watched these things for the vicarious romance.

And is that what got you started?

I didn't consciously start thinking about *Flux* until about 1979 or 1980, some fifteen years after my first taste of the soaps. For years I'd been keeping a journal, in which all the complexities of everyone around me were recorded, and I was still watching 'All My Children' when I was sick at home, and I was still taking crap from my upwardly mobile acquaintances. Honestly, it was more scary to tell people I watched soap operas than to tell them I was sleeping with women.

But really, daytime drama isn't exactly feminist.

It is and it isn't. Daytime drama deals specifically with women's concerns: relationships, the emotional life, domestic politics. There's no other genre of TV show that takes these things seriously. But even when the premise and the context were OK, some of the other things weren't.

Such as....

The relentless hecerosexuality, the distress of any character who wasn't established in a nuclear family, the conspicuous absence of anyone other than well-dressed, well-coiffed, middle class people in nice houses. And the disturbing and subtle message that some women were good and some were bad....

Let me guess. The good ones stayed at home and the bad ones worked outside the home.

Worse! Even in the seventies! A good woman wanted children and often couldn't have

Daytime drama deals specifically with women's concerns: relationships, the emotional life, domestic politics. There's no other genre of TV show that takes these things seriously.

them; a bad one arranged Caribbean abortions. A good one cried when she was upset and a bad one threw teacups. Stuff like that.

Which brings us to Flux.

Yeah. It's irritating to turn on the TV, settle down in front of a soap - which is, as I said, essentially a women's form - and to find out that you still have to struggle to relate it to your own life. So I decided to take the form of the continuing drama, which fascinates me and lots of ther people, and make it so it was about me and my life. *Flux* is about a bunch of feminist women and kids trying to live communally and do their work and fall in and out of love and come out to their mothers and so on.

Any special reason why you chose radio instead of TV for Flux?

Sure. Video is expensive and time-consuming, and if there's anything women don't have, it's money and time.

How long did it take you to write it?

I was working full time back then, and I lived with my children half the time, but somehow I churned it out in about a year.

And then you took it to the East End Kitchen Theatre.

Not exactly. *Flux* didn't spring from my hand fully formed. In fact there were about five women around me who slaved over each episode as I wrote it. P.T. Saint, who produced it, followed me around with a red pen during the writing, saying things like, "You have a whole page here with no sound effects," and "The 5-page scene you just spent three weeks writing has to go." And then there was Nora, and Saeko....

OK, Henna, this isn't the Academy Awards.

So really, the casting and the production ideas were happening simultaneously with the writing.

It must have been quite a relief to turn it over to the cast.

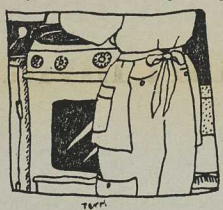
Au contraire. When the cast got hold of it I had to rewrite it again. For instance, Jennifer's take on the character Fran had so much more clarity and integrity than I'd written in, that I had to change a lot of her lines. Time and again while we were taping, one of the cast people would say, "But this character wouldn't say that." I hope I never have to work alone again, on any writing project. It's so limited. The characters I'd written gained six new dimensions in the hands of the cast members.

So you were surprised.

Sometimes unpleasantly. For example, the character Maggie, who works real hard and mothers everyone and complains a lot, and for whom I myself was the inspiration, turned out to be an incredible nuisance to everyone else in the house. This is going to sound really stupid, but I learned a lot about myself through Viki's handling of that character.

Would you say, then, that Flux *is pretty faithful autobiography?*

No way! Do I need a libel suit? My oldest daughter sends me these knowing little winks sometimes. She says, "Jana is really me, right mum?" But the only place I record nothing-but-the-truth is in my journal. It's fair to say that each character was originally based on two or three people I know, with embellishments, and that's as far as I'll go. That's as far as any serious writer ought to go.



graphic by Terri Roberton

Will you be working with the East End Kitchen Theatre again?

I doubt it. Some of the people in that group aren't speaking to each other right now.

Just like -

A soap opera. Yeah. Just think about how often you say that about life, and how disparaging you sound when you say it. The fact is, life isn't imitating art here. When I wrote *Flux* I wasn't just responding to people's enjoyment of the form. I was saying something about the way life really is. Life *is* a soap opera, and why not have a little fun with that?

The first 30 minutes of Flux *can be heard on The Lesbian Show, CFRO Radio, on Thursday nights in November.* Flux *is available in its entirety from women's bookstores, or from Flux, P.O. Box 46160, Station G, Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4G5.*

graphic by Terri Roberton

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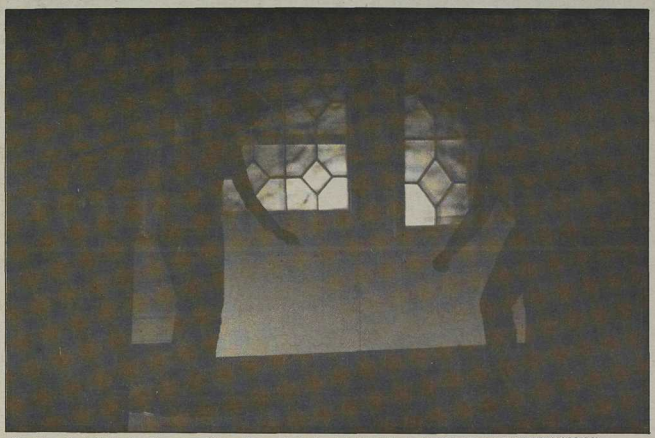


Sculptural installation by Georgiana Chappell; wood, steel, paint, incandescent bulbs, glass, 35' by 35' (1982-83).

Sculptor Georgiana Chappell

If there's no dancing at the revolution don't invite me

by Jill Pollack

In the early 1900's, Emma Goldman, defending the need for aesthetics and beauty to be included in any movement for social change, said, "If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution." In 1980, Vancouver Rape Relief quoted Goldman in a poster for a benefit dance. Countless others have incorporated the anarchist's words into their political ideology.

Vancouver artist Georgiana Chappell has taken the essence of Goldman's quote and transposed it into a work of art, *If there's no dancing at the revolution, don't invite me* (1982-3). Enclosed within a defined physical space, this is an installation comprised of steel cut-out silhouettes of people dancing bordered by four wooden 'walls'. Each of the wooden structures holds a window. Each window contains a back-lit printed scene which depicts various times of the day (a sunset, etc.). The lighting is tightly controlled and the area is dark; the only light source is the painted scenarios. The steel figures are life-size or larger and placed in a seemingly random configuration.

Reality intermingled with illusion.

Because of the dim lighting, when one enters the space, it is not readily apparent who is alive and what is a sculpture. This alteration in perception is furthered by Chappell's skillful use of the qualities of light and shadow. All of the steel pieces have floor-bound steel shadows, which double as stands. The use of 'visual trickery' is effective in augmenting the viewer's sense of disorientation and is heightened by the suspended animation of the figures. It is a silent installation, yet the 'people' are moving as if to music. Unnaturally-lit areas break up the darkness and the viewer is faced with an alternate reality in which they exist, if only temporarily.

Displacement.

As with other installations, Chappell has devised a situation where the viewer participates with the work; walks through, around and intermingles with her art - in a sense, becomes a part of the installation at the same time as observing it. This leads the viewer's mind to the point where the conscious and the subconscious merge and a dreamlike state sets in. Because this tends to be an infrequent occurrence in most people's lives, one can become vulnerable and therefore more receptive to experience Chappell's art on many levels.

Memory interplays with actuality.

The longer you spend in the installation, the more your senses fool you. The light softens, often smell and sound seem to prevail, the air thickens. One's physical body reacts with the physicalness of the work. One's non-rational mind is affected by the discrepancies one experiences. One's intellect struggles to regain dominance. It is easy to become involved with Chappell's art and easy to be entranced.

Slowly, details held within the installation begin to emerge - the steel figures are etched; the painted scenarios are caricature-like, not views from a window but part of the window themselves. In other words, one begins to consciously stock-take and analyze. There is a movement (as Cheryl Sourkes aptly describes it) from "the gazing/dreamlike to the rational mode". Our eyes become adjusted to the dim lighting and are opened to the complexities of Chappell's work.

The steel figures are shadow-portraits, life-size renderings. They are almost two-dimensional and each has a distinct 'flavour'. At the same time as expressing enjoyment, they are slightly frenetic. The silhouetted men and women have been captured in an impossible-to-hold pose which is reminiscent of the children's game, Statue (where one moves around until the 'it-person' says to stop. The object of the game is to freeze for as long as possible). Because of their stance, they have all the makings of a caricature when in fact they are archetypal.

An interesting aspect of *If there's no dancing at the revolution, don't invite me* is that the individual elements are not static. There are multiple possibilities for the installation. In Chappell's studio, it is arranged in one way; in part due to the size of the room and in part because the artist has made certain decisions as to composition and design. But the very nature of a non-site-specific installation encourages variation. To me, this is an important point to consider. Since Chappell has taken care and shown such proficiency in altering the environment (or negative space) of this sculptural installation, one tends to view it as a 'fait accompli'. The fact that this is not necessarily so augments the power of the work.

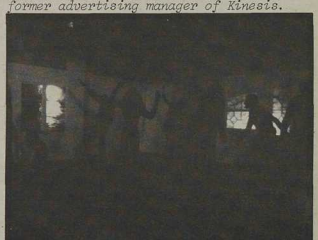
The longer you spend in the installation, the more your senses fool you.

The artist's ability to depict the thin line between illusion and reality is also evident by the way in which she produced the four wooden structures. Painted white, they offset the darkened room and shadow-figures. The back-lit, brightly painted scenes form a counterpoint to the sombre-coloured steel pieces. While they act as a reminder, they stand as a fictionalization. Coupled with the gaps of empty space, in which the walls of the room become the physical connections between the wooden structures, one feels that one is in an enclosed space, but is really in an un-enclosed-space-within-an-enclosed-space. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

When taking the title into account, it becomes evident that this installation not only holds certain political implications because of words but is portraying a powerful and poignant political philosophy. Chappell seems to be describing a complex ideology in which creativity is an integral part of any social change movement. One which contends that all is not as it appears to be. She is pointing out the need to explore, learn about and utilize all of our minds and bodies. At the same time, her installation encourages us to further our awareness of and formulate our analyses around personal interrelations versus societal expectations. And perhaps most important of all to me, I feel that Chappell is promoting the idea that we need time to celebrate.

It is a credit to Georgiana Chappell's skill as an artist that *If there's no dancing at the revolution, don't invite me* can perform all those functions so well simultaneously.

Jill Pollack is a freelance curator and the former advertising manager of Kinesis.



CFRO 102.7 F.M.

RUBYMUSIC

by Connie Smith

The road from the early women's coffee houses in Vancouver to the stage at Madison Square Garden is a long one. But that is where Ferron will be at the end of this year when New York's renowned club Folk City celebrates its 25-year reunion. Ferron will share the light with, among others, Peter, Paul and Mary, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez and Judy Collins. This event, which will be made into a feature-length film, signifies Ferron's entrance into folk music's hall of fame. If there ever was a story of small-town-girl-makes-good, this is the one.

Ferron was born in 1952 in Toronto. But she grew up in Richmond, B.C. She later described this Vancouver suburb as a place where "couples bought homes and lived within the safety of washed cars and paved driveways, made plans for the rec room, and looked forward to two weeks holiday somewhere else."

Ferron's career began early. When she was 11, she started playing her mother's guitar. Three years later, after saving money from mowing lawns, she bought her own. Inspired by the music of Kitty Wells, Hank Williams and the Carter Family, Ferron began composing. Within a year she had written over a hundred songs - a feat which can be considered even more remarkable considering Ferron was the oldest of seven children. Where she found the time and privacy is anybody's guess.

Her situation was further complicated by her family's economic situation. There was rarely enough money to go around and when Ferron was 15, she left school to go to work. But her writing continued, fueled by nothing more than her own desire. When she was 19, she returned to school to get her diploma. It was here that she was encouraged to pursue music by one of her teachers.

Ferron's first performance was a women's benefit concert in Vancouver in 1975. She was 23 years old. Although she was shy and rarely spoke between songs, her music was soul food for the women's community. She held down various jobs and became a regular at coffee houses and benefits around the city.

I remember those early days, sitting on the floor in the Full Circle's latest location, singing along to "Luckie", "Bourbon Street Vision", and letting Louise bring me to my knees. It was, I suppose, an ironic time for Ferron, for the songs which she had written in the isolation of her room - songs which were often painful and questioning - had a reverse effect on her audience. Her deeply personal musical confessions unified our lonesome souls. Ferron may have still felt misunderstood, but we in her audience felt that finally someone understood us.

In 1977 Ferron recorded her first album. It was a simple two-track acoustic record released on her own label, Lucy Records. But it was a thing of beauty. Because of financial restrictions, she was only able to press 1,000 copies. The following year, she released *Ferron Backed-up* in much the same manner. Both of these records are now out-of-print collectors' items.

Although the excitement generated by the release of her two albums guaranteed her regular performance time, as an independent Ferron was in a very vulnerable position. She was without management, so she was responsible for every aspect of her career. This was an impossible task. She was not familiar with the workings of the music business and somewhere in the hustle, she had to find the time to write songs. Rarely does a musician survive this period, expecially a female musician with very little money. Enter Gayle Scott.

photo by Gayle Scott

photo by Ferron

Ferron and Gayle Scott

Gayle Scott was born and raised in Hollywood. She had studied film and had worked for several years in advertising, film, and commercial production. She was also a freelance photographer.

In 1978 Gayle was running her own commercial production house in Vancouver. She was the first woman on the commercial scene in this city and she was making waves with her own brand of 'feminist' policies. (Some of those policies have now been unofficially incorporated into several commercial houses due to Gayle's influence.) When she first saw Ferron perform, Gayle was convinced that Ferron was a unique talent in need of some very careful management.

When the two women became friends, Gayle began making suggestions. She encouraged Ferron to talk to her audience more. She assembled a press kit. And she raised $25,000 to take Ferron into the studio and record her third album, *Testimony*.

By this time, it was clear that Gayle was indeed carrying out the job description of manager. Eventually, she gave up her production company to become Ferron's manager and business partner. It was a perfect match. And *Testimony* went over the top.

Testimony, which included such soon to be greatest hits as "Ain't Life a Brook" and the title track, sold 17,000 copies in the first year through mail order alone. In 1982 *Testimony* was licensed for distribution in the United States and it made several critics' Top Ten Lists. This album, combined with Ferron's 1981 appearance at the Michigan Women's Music Festival, made it possible for Gayle to organize several U.S. tours. And, as they say, the rest is history.

In the last two years, Ferron has performed to packed houses on the campuses of dozens of universities. She has sold out Harvard, Oberlin, Smith and UCLA. She has played every major folk club in Canada and the United States. And she is a featured performer at every prestigious folk and women's music festival on this continent. Her song *Testimony* has been covered by Sweet Honey in the Rock, and by Ginni Clemmens. Ronnie Gilbert sings Ferron songs from the stage. And two of Ferron's works are included in the soundtrack of a feature film produced in West Germany.

Testimony prompted Stephen Holden of the *New York Times* to call Ferron "the most powerful lyric voice to emerge out of the lesbian oriented post-folk genre known as women's music." Other music critics were equally impressed. Susan Wilson of the *Boston Globe* designated Ferron "a significant music voice of the 80's." Phillip Elwood of the *San Francisco Examiner* said "She is, in the vernacular, nobody's fool, and her songs hit many listeners very deep indeed."

Debbie Aqua Birkev wrote in the *Victory Music Folk and Jazz Review*, "Ferron is quite simply a phenomenon. Not only one of the most powerful performers I have ever seen on a Seattle stage, but also a completely unclassifiable musician." And Ariel Swartley in *The Boston Phoenix* said, "I have seen a woman stand alone with a guitar and a glass and a bottle of juice on the stage of Dorchester's Strand Theatre, which stretched around her like the Great Plains while she, a boisterous, indulgent pioneer, reaped us all like so much hay. I have seen, in fact, in Ferron what I would like that future of rock and roll to be."

In 1983, Gayle began raising money for a new album. This time $65,000 was collected from Ferron's concert audiences and other supporters. Over $10,000 was raised in advance sales. With Terry Garthwaite as producer, Gayle and Ferron went into the studio a second time. *Shadows on a Dime* was released on February 20, 1984. Again the press was united in its praise.

The Washington Post wrote, "Most of her songs are addressed to a friend, stumped by long distance love, failed love, aging, death, or pessimism. With a courage too rare in pop music, Ferron doesn't offer her friends easy solutions for their problems, but forces them to face up to difficult reality."

Rolling Stone crowned "this Canadian-born lesbian...a culture hero." The magazine gave *Shadows on a Dime* a four star rating. Her concert at Harvard one month after the release of *Shadows* sparked Susan Wilson to write in *The Boston Globe*, "A women's music show, by the way, which breached barriers of sex, sexual preference and musical pigeonholing in its audience, and which proved to be one of the finest acoustic music events of the year so far."

And from her home town, Tom Harrison wrote in *The Province* on the eve of Ferron's week-long performance at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre in September of this year, "Rarely has a songwriter been placed so respectfully in the role of humanist messenger."

I give you these quotes as a way of showing that Ferron is succeeding in reaching the human being inside every woman and man. Her strong poetic sense, her unique ability to look at a situation from the backdoor, and her unfaltering courage to sing about her most intimate and private thoughts, has shaken the foundation of music. There is now a small crack. But it is big enough for her to step through on to that stage at Madison Square Garden, where with her touch, women's music will become people's music, which is what she wanted anyway.

On November 18, on Rubymusic (CFRO 102.7 fm), I will be rebroadcasting an interview with Ferron and Gayle Scott which was originally recorded on Rubymusic September 21, 1984. Then on November 30, Ferron and Gayle will join me in the studio as co-hosts, bringing with them some of their personal musical favorites and albums they've collected on their cross-country tours. Rubymusic at 7:30 pm.

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photo courtesy of Vancouver Folk Festival

Learning music live from people

by Marcia Meyer

Marcia Meyer spoke with Cathy Fink at the Vancouver Folk Music Festival in July, 1984.

Cathy Fink, singer, songwriter, guitarist, banjo and fiddle player was born in Baltimore and now lives in a Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C. called Takoma Park. After living in Winnipeg, Manitoba for five years with Duck Donald, coinciding with the first Winnipeg Folk Festival ten years ago, she decided to move to Takoma Park to be closer to the kind of music she was playing. Somewhere where she could, as she puts it, "have more access to learning music live from people."

Cathy writes some of her own music but says "a lot of the music I do I didn't write. I've written some stuff but it's not my main thing. I use material that I'm attracted to and if it's my own that's fine. I use the same criteria on songs I write that I use on other peoples' songs. So I don't feel the urge that if I wrote it I have to perform it, unless I think it's really good. Since that's only a handful of songs a year my repertoire has to be made up of a lot of other stuff. A lot of this is Appalachian in nature or country music of one kind or another.

"Songwriting is usually spontaneous for me. It's not one of those skills or crafts I've really worked at. It either comes to me or it doesn't. It's important to me that my words and music really work well together. Sometimes words will inspire a tune and sometimes the opposite happens. I'm aware of what happens to a melody and whether it works or not but I don't think about things like harmonic structures. I just think about chord progressions and trying to make sure that whatever melody I use is not duplicating something note for note that I already know. That happens a lot. You sit down and play a tune and you realize - 'oh yeah, now I know what that is' - so I watch out for that."

As for being inspired by musicians in the past Cathy says, "I've been inspired by an awful lot of people. You know, I can't name one person. I can say that my attraction to country music was largely directed by my ex-partner Duck Donald who died a few months ago. My inspiration around a lot of the political and cultural work I do is really almost everyone I meet."

When asked if she ever changed her repertoire to suit an audience she replied, "Definitely, I do that all the time. In a general community concert I'll do a little bit of everything. I'll really mix it up. I'll do a few kids' songs, a few women's songs, some folk songs and some old time Appalachian fiddle and banjo tunes. For a concert that is put on for a feminist production company, I'm going to tailor my concert a lot to that audience. I'll still do bits and pieces of all those other things, cause I think everybody needs to be exposed to them, I'll do a few women's songs that people haven't heard before and I'll also do a lot of songs from women in country music, to show a little of the history behind what I do. When I do something for a Freeze Campaign obviously I'm going to do some anti-nuke songs. I tailor things pretty carefully."

Cathy mentioned that she hadn't really had any one teacher in the past. As she says, "I come to a festival like this and I hear a lot of people play and I pick up things from folks by doing a lot of listening."

Cathy teaches music informally as well as doing music programs for schools and workshops for teachers. She has a workshop on songs of working women that includes slides from the National Archives of working women in the 20's through the 50's, which she will be updating by using some of her own slides. With these she sings a cross-section of British and American music. With another workshop, called "Women in Traditional Country Music," she uses slides of "a lot of the women who really helped open the doors in country music." She performs these women's songs as well as playing some of the original 78 recordings of their music.

Cathy has done a fair amount of work helping groups hold benefit concerts. As she says, "we have developed a package and kit that shows people how they can pay for (the musicians') services and still make money in a benefit concert situation. So it's kind of a real grass-roots-organization tool."

In the next while Cathy is planning a lot of children's concerts to promote her new children's album, "Grandma Slid Down the Mountain."

Along with playing the banjo, guitar and the fiddle, Cathy Fink also flays button accordion, Appalachian dulcimer and a variety of home made instruments that she uses in her children's concerts. She currently has four albums out and her fifth is a children's album which is available on the Rounder label. You may obtain these albums through the Vancouver Folk Music Festival office or by writing to her label directly at: Community Music, P.O. Box 5778, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

Gallery celebrates tenth birthday

by Emma Kivisild

This fall, the Vancouver women's community celebrated the tenth birthday of the city's only feminist gallery with an explosion of creative activity that continues into November. Women in Focus, a film and video production and distribution centre founded a decade ago, played host to a veritable panoply of events in September and October - shows of painting and sculpture, poetry readings, and three performance variety nights that included dance, performance art, jazz, rock and roll, storytelling, folk music, comedy and radio. This month, the gallery plans a weekend feminist film festival.

It is rare, in Vancouver, to see so many different types of women's expression together in one place. While feminist artists are constantly active, and often build a following within their own artistic communities - visual arts, music, movement - we do not often stop and take stock of the sum total of this feminist expression. In this respect these events, especially the performance evenings, filled a huge cultural gap in the community.

It was particularly exciting to see new faces. Each of the three evenings featured individuals or groups who had not performed before, as well as more familiar performers doing new things. The audience - almost entirely women each evening - was enthusiastic and supportive.

What is clear to me as I contemplate a return to the regular routine of choosing between a dance performance in Kitsilano, or a singer at the Van East, or a variety of live entertainers that more often than not are sexist, is that *we need a women's performance space*. Even if it is only on a rental basis, we need it.

The energy, warmth, and general level of enthusiasm we saw at Women in Focus are part of the reason I want this. I would also like to see us respect our performers, by finding them a place to stage their work that does it justice. At Women in Focus, dancers were in danger of tripping over the front row. At any one time half the audience could not see, because of pillars in the middle of the stage, lack of raised seating, and the odd shape of the room. While we should be grateful to WiF for providing us with space, we should not stop there.

Some acts stand out. The first night, billed as an evening with pianist Carolyn Bell, took the form of a cabaret, Ruby's Hideaway, and was delightfully hosted by the character Ruby, a masked marvel of an aging belle, clowned by Jane Kalmakoff. Women Without Money, a three-piece rock band (Lisa Delvecchio on drums, Diane Levings on guitar and Roseanne Johnson on bass), surprised everyone with a premiere performance that brought women out dancing in whatever space they could find.

October 13, the evening was longer. A personal highlight was Wives' Tales Storytellers, made up of Melanie Ray and Nan Gregory, who created powerful images with only their voices and gestures. The stories were good ones, and ones we haven't heard before, from such women as Toronto lesbian feminist Suniti Namjoshi, and local writer Nora Randall. Randall's Coming Out Story, premiered at this event, was right on.

Linda Walker and Beryl Clayton performed some of Linda's songs. The two women's voices blend well, and the songs were musically appealing. The lyrics were not nearly as strong, often lapsing into predictability.

Pianist Judy Abrams and jazz vocalist Bonnie Ferguson were unfortunately the last act, coming on stage well after 10 pm, when the audience was a bit restless. Unfortunate, because they were really quite good, though Bonnie did sometimes ask her voice to do things it couldn't quite accomplish.

On October 20, we saw the three most accomplished acts of the series. Mamasaga I (Anne Beesack, Pamela Harris, Heather Wells, and Louise), a performance art/theatre group, presented a piece that explored women's lives from several points of view. It opened with an indictment of the housewife's lot, and moved from there to mother/daughter relationships, pornography and sexual violence, and culminated with a reclamation of female spirituality. Though it is clear that parts of the piece (still in progress) need work, I found it very moving. The women combined elements of ritual, theatre, and dance, and used minimal props and costumes imaginitively. Parts of the performance included a touch of black humour: a bitingly delivered "In the morning when the sun shines on the little flowers, and the little birds..." contrasted with a real woman's morning; a truly 80's rap and breakdance on porn and nuclear war. I found these the most effective sections.

That evening we were treated to the next installments of *Flux*, a feminist soap opera which began as part of the Women to Woman II show. The women's lives are recognizable, and give us a much needed opportunity to both laugh at ourselves, and take our personal lives seriously. *Flux* will be aired on Co-op radio this month (see interview with author Henna Haywood this issue).

The final performance came from Aya, a five woman a cappella group from Vancouver (Micky McCune, Uschi Schnell, Patricia Donahue, Beryl Clayton, and Norma Jean McLaren). Their voices are beautiful, and they do interesting versions of other women's songs. One can only look forward to the time when they will perform original material, and gain some more confidence on stage.

It was clear, often from disclaimers at the beginning of the piece, that much of what we saw at Women in Focus was still in the workshop stages. So, on the whole I enjoyed these evenings, but usually more in the way I would enjoy an amateur night than I would a series of professional polished performances. I found it hard to be critical of what was on stage, knowing the performers were taking personal risks performing for an audience composed of the people with whom they live and work. This is also one of the few chances these women will get to perform for an audience likely to understand their message. In most cases they are developing their work in a cultural vacuum.

For all these reasons we have an obligation to constructively criticize the work presented. It is a real disservice to accept with uniform enthusiasm everything our community creates. In doing so we perpetuate the vacuum our artists work in right now. At times, at Women in Focus, I felt we were all so glad to be there that we lost sight of this. Women in the audience who had specific criticisms to offer performers, I urge you to voice them.

Beryl Clayton, Ann Daskal, Brenda Ingratta, and Melanie Ray were responsible for organizing these variety nights, which appeared with Persimmon Blackbridge and Sheila Gilhooly's 'Still Sane'.

photo courtesy of Women in Focus

Coming soon

film and video premieres

Mark November 16,17, and 18 on your calendar - these are the dates for "A Different Face: A Multicultural Event of Films and Video by Women" at Robson Square. Women in Focus has spent nearly a year organizing the weekend program which will bring together the diverse and often unacknowledged talents of local, national and international women film and video artists. What makes this event particularly important is that the work shown will be either Vancouver or Canadian premieres of material that may not be shown here again.

If you've been waiting to see a film like Marleen Gorris' controversial *A Question of Silence*, now is your chance. This is an absorbing psychological study of three women who kill a man and are subsequently brought to trial. *A Question of Silence* has been hailed by critics as an extraordinary women's film.

The weekend program includes work by international artists Marguerite Duras and Chantal Akerman as well as local artists Sara Diamond, Patrice Leung, and Josephine Massarella.

Each evening will spotlight a feature film. Friday night will showcase SFU's Patricia Gruben with *Low Visibility* fresh from screening in Toronto and Montreal (Gruben will be in attendance). Saturday night will feature Sally Potter's *The Gold Diggers*, produced by an all-women crew and starring Julie Christie (Potter is coming from England for the Western Canadian premiere and will be doing workshops locally at SFU and Cineworks). Sunday night will feature Ulrike Ottinger's surrealistic, experimental film, *Freak Orlando*.

Workshops are also scheduled as part of the weekend to address the particular concerns of women film and video makers in Quebec; native culture and media representation; and black American women in filmmaking. Featured participants include Helen Doyle and Nicole Giguere from Video Femmes (the French-speaking counterpart to Women in Focus) and Iolande Rossignol; and Michelle Parkerson and Sharon Larkin from the U.S.

Ticket packages range from half-day to weekend passes with reasonable rates. For ticket information, or further details about the event, contact Women in Focus at 872-2250.

ARTS

by Deb Thomas

The Women Who Hate Me by Dorothy Allison, Long Haul Press, Brooklyn, N.Y., 1983, 58 pages.

Adversity, it has been said, stimulates the creative act. Perhaps this is why the American South has turned out writers like Eudora Welty, William Faulkner, Rita Mae Brown and Minnie Bruce Pratt.

The American South also produced Dorothy Allison. Born and raised in Greenville, South Carolina, Dorothy moved to Brooklyn in her adult years largely, it seems, to find support for her feminism and lesbianism. Dorothy's southern roots have remained strong, however, and weave a constant thread through the poems in this collection. Part of these roots are her stormy relationships with her mother, stepfather, and sisters.

The collection progresses from Allison's childhood to her adulthood, from the South to the North, from the hardness and hate to tenderness and love. In the majority of the poems, Allison exercises a rare restraint, portraying vividly her difficult life without being maudlin, asking for sympathy, or indulging in revenge. Her eye is sharp, her pen incisive.

She ties her relationships, her places, heterosexuality and lesbianism together in concise lines. The following are from the title work, a long poem called "The Women Who Hate Me".

My older sister tells me flatly
she don't care who I take to my bed
what I do there. Tells me finally
she sees no difference between
her husbands, my lovers. Behind it all
we are too much the same to deny.

Do I forget all that?
Deny it all?
Pretend I an not
my mama's daughter
my sister's mirror.
Pretend I have not
at least as much lust
in my life as pain?

Allison is at her best when she is doing just this, the cathartic act of bringing it all together. In this particular poem, she also lapses into revenge on the women who, she feels, hate her:

...But the women,
shallow-cheeked young girls the world
was made for
safe little girls who think nothing
of bravado
who never got over by playing it tough.

What do they know of my fear?

A second long poem, "Upcountry", chronicles Allis's ambivalent relationship with her younger sister. It, too, is uneven, ranging from insight to revenge.

Of the twenty-four poems in the collection, a little over half largely work. They are well-edited, well-thought-out poems in good rhythm and clear messages. The rest left me wishing that such a promising poet had given us a slim volume of her best work rather than a fatter book of mixed offerings.

"Liar" is an example of the latter, an angry diatribe which leaves the reader with no further illumination as to who the liar is or what he/she has lied about, therefore failing in its apparent intent to expose the liar.

Of the former category, one of the best examples is "To the Bone", a short poem packed with perfect metaphor, delicious rhythm and a clear, strong message:

That summer I talked to death
like an old friend, a husky voice
whispering up from my cunt, echoing
around my knees, laughing.
That summer I did not go crazy
but I wore
very close
very close
to the bone.

Another excellent poem is "Reason Enough to Love You", a tender tribute to real love, the kind that survives strength and weakness, outward pressures and internal sorrows.

For these and others of Allison's best work, the collection is well worth reading. Lesbians especially will find emotions expressed here that remind them of their own painful moments. I did.

Digging In by Elizabeth Brewster, Oberon Press, Canada, 1982, 97 pages.

This is one of the two volumes which reveals Brewster, says the book jacket, "at the height of her powers". It is a prodigious work, divided into three sections and packed with poems covering a wide variety of topics, both personal and political.

Brewster's common sense approach to matters personal and political is refreshing. In "It's Time I Became Political", she coolly assesses the advantages of voting for this or that party, this or that principle, and concludes that:

In the end, I suppose as usual
I'll vote for the side
I think will probably lose
(I'm rather good at guessing)

and won't tell anyone
because after all
What party wants to be supported
for reasons like mine?

In "The Advantages of Menopause," she pens a wonderfully optimistic view of life after menopause! She is responding particularly to a "gloomy poem about menopause" written by "a girl of twenty-five".

When I was thirty, a woman in her seventies
said to me once, 'You'll be surprised
how many years everything goes on as usual.'
I thank her now, and hope
for a long old age of being surprised by life.

Her plain verse, lacking in metaphor and defined cadence, works particularly well in "From the Other Shore", a moving eulogy to a person one is tempted to believe was once her mate. The visual sense of the poem is especially beautiful, painting simple, vivid pictures full of particular light and colour. The pain of remembrance and acceptance is gently rendered.

Does your spirit fly now
over the swelling
water, the green
branches swaying in the wind?
In which bird's body
do you disguise yourself
soaring into space?

In other poems, Brewster visits a "legless lady" with a friend and is surprised by this lady's extraordinary spirit; compares the writing of a poem to the making of a pot of stew (quite deliciously, I might add); and depicts the world after a neutron bomb.

In other poems, Brewster visits a "legless lady" with a friend and is surprised by this lady's extraordinary spirit; compares the writing of a poem to the making of a pot of stew (quite deliciously, I might add), and depicts the world after a neutron bomb. The latter ends with a strangely gentle and chilling verse:

Winter and summer come
snow and hail and rain,
but there is no seed time

the harvest is already in.

Elizabeth Brewster's interests are wide ranging and her analysis generally astute. This volume is wise, salty, and well worth reading.

After all
do I not bitch too much
about life, which has offered in its time
Strawberries in woods,
and marigolds in the back garden
with the spicy smell
of their broken stems
and even some love?

Deb Thomas lives in the Kootenays, works in a film library, and writes poetry and reviews in her spare time. Review copies of small press poetry can be sent to her at R.R.#2, Bedford Road, Nelson, B.C., V1L 5P5. This column appears quarterly in Kinesis.

LETTERS

Press Gang backs SORWUC

Kinesis:

Press Gang Printers has decided to refuse work from the Kwantlen College Student Association and the Canadian Federation of Students until such time as the labour dispute between the Student Association and the Service, Office, and Retail Workers of Canada (SORWUC) Local 1 is settled to the satisfaction of the union. (See *Kinesis* October '84)

As a feminist, worker-controlled collective, we at Press Gang fully support the right of workers to unionize, to negotiate a contract, and to be treated fairly by management in such regard. The employees of the Kwantlen College Student Association have attempted to exercise these rights and have found themselves being harrassed by management, with the added anti-union interference of the executive of the Canadian Federation of Students. The situation is particularly distressing to us as these student bodies profess to have progressive policies and politics. We feel that, at this time, to accept printing work from either organization would be the equivalent of accepting "hot" work.

When and if the labour dispute is settled in a just manner, we would once again be proud to print for, and politically support, the Canadian Federation of Students and the Kwantlen College Student Association.

The Press Gang Collective

Calgary women support us

The following is one of the many supportive letters VSW and Kinesis received during our funding crisis in the spring of this year. As we look back on that struggle from our present position of diminished resources, --but feeling more secure than we did last spring--, it is clear that we could not have survived without the emotional and financial support of the numerous groups like the Calgary Health Collective, and many individual women who volunteered both their time and money. There is not room here to print all these letters, or name each supporter, but we would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped us keep going through very tough times.

Dear Sisters:

Pursuant to your recent appeal, we are sending you a small contribution as an expression of our support for the work of VSW as well as an expression of our outrage at the efforts of your government to shrug its obligation to appropriate a share of tax dollars towards work that assists in improving the condition of women in B.C.

The work of VSW has surely come to serve as a model for other women's groups in this country. Perhaps precisely because the Alberta government has never allotted even a small part of our tax dollars towards independent social action activities amongst women, we feel the graveness of the recent B.C. government actions.

The money we are sending comprises the profits made on the sale of lunch at one of our events last fall. It was a windfall for us, which we would like to share with you to help in ensuring the continued existence of VSW and Kinesis.

We urge you to continue your efforts to be able to continue to be an effective voice for women in B.C. and in Canada, and trust that with concerted effort on the part of many women, there will soon be a time where justice will prevail once again.

Yours in sisterhood and solidarity,

Members of the Calgary Women's Health Collective

Anti-nuke conference misses point

Kinesis:

The following letter was sent to the organizers of the Canadian Conference on Nuclear War: The Search for Solutions, held at the University of British Columbia, October 19-21, 1984.

Dear Conference Planners,

We are writing in response to the brochure for the "Canadian Conference on Nuclear War: The Search for Solutions". We are glad that a conference is taking place and we appreciate the amount of time and work that went into its planning. However, we have several criticisms both about the pamphlet and about the conference itself. These criticisms are not meant to demean the work you have done and are doing, but are meant constructively and we hope that you will be open to taking them as such.

First, we were angry and disappointed by the pamphlet itself which appears to be a flashy tourist brochure. The format appeals primarily to those people who can afford expensive vacations. The photos make the conference seem less serious--more like a weekend tourist trip than a serious event and something that should be incorporated into our daily lives.

In order to clarify more easily the rest of our criticisms, we would like to explain our analysis of nuclear weapons more thoroughly.

We do not believe that we will rid ourselves of nuclear weapons without changing a lot of the world, our thinking and values. We must first or simultaneously rid ourselves of the mentality that creates the need for any weapons. The "nuclear mentality" is the same as the mindset that perpetuates racism, sexism, agism, religionism, heterosexism, speciesism, etc. We need to be aware of speaking and thinking patterns that are oppressive to or exclude one or more groups of people --women, native people, gays, people of color, etc. Nuclear weapons are the ultimate expression of the oppressor/oppressed mentality. They are also an integral part of the US and USSR's "national security" --that is, the protection by any means deemed necessary of "their" third world "cheap labor" countries; and by extension, nuclear weapons are an integral part of the "developed" countries' "way of life".

Given this analysis, we become extremely frustrated when issues other than nuclear weapons are not addressed. We have heard in the past that by focussing only on nuclear weapons we will reach the widest number of people. That may or may not be true, but once people are reached they need to be educated and radicalized to make the necessary changes in their lives. Every man who lets a sexist joke go by unchallenged is a protector of rapists; every white person who lets a racist comment go unchallenged helps perpetuate racial divisions; every person who lets the corporations go unchallenged contributes to institutionalized violence and nuclear war.

We question the conference taking place at U.B.C., the home of TRIUMF, a nuclear physics experimental station. The entire nuclear industry is inter-related and we do not believe that it is possible to separate so-called positive uses of the technology from the so-called negative ones.

continued next page

CAFÉ BABE
presents...
A CASUAL CLASSY JOINT
THAT BARS NONE
Dinner
Thur, Fri, Sat
6-11:30 pm
Lunch
Mon-Fri
11:30 am-2:30 pm
10% off any food purchase when this coupon is presented. Offer valid until November 30, 1984.
560 Davie St.
between Seymour & Richards
685-1808
The cafe is available for private functions.

BENEFIT FOR ABORTION RIGHTS
See the new NFB film
Abortion
STORIES FROM NORTH AND SOUTH
New trials have begun for
Dr. Henry Morgentaler, Dr. Robert Scott,
Dr. Lesley Smoling, Nurse Lynn Crocker,
staff of the now-closed abortion clinics
in Winnipeg and Toronto.
Sunday, November 18 at 1:30 pm
Ridge Theatre
$5 donation ($3 unemployed)
sponsored by
Concerned Citizens for Choice on Abortion
For more information: **876-9920**

FREE CHOCOLATE FONDUE
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Pots cafe gallery
1221 Thurlow (at Davie)
FONDUES & RAGOUTS
open: Mon-Thurs noon-11pm
Fri Sat noon-2am
Sun 5pm-11pm
Bring this ad in. If you don't want to damage your copy of Kinesis, bring it along. Enjoy an afternoon.
SEE YOU

LETTERS

continued from previous page

In the same vein, we question the integrity of asking Mike Harcourt to open the conference with an address entitled "Welcome to Vancouver, a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone". Not only is U.B.C. not part of Vancouver, but several times nuclear weapons-related material has travelled through Vancouver. Vancouver is not, in all honesty, a nuclear weapons free zone.

We find the proposal for the entire conference sexist and elitist. The pictures in the brochure itself are sexist--the action photos are of men doing manly things while the only visible women (except for the token native woman) are all with men and relatively passive. Within the context of the conference itself, there is a preponderance of male speakers. During the planning stages of this conference several women speakers were suggested during meetings (Ursula Franklin, Rosalie Bertell, Mary Kalder, Joanna Macy, Kay McPherson, etc.) If you can't think of very many renowned women speakers, have you ever wondered why not?

We also find this conference dangerously elitist. Not only is the brochure designed for the middle and upper class, white person (we are tempted to say 'man'), but the cost of the conference itself excludes much of the "general public". We know of very few people who could afford to pay $60 for a weekend and we know of no unemployed or students or seniors who could afford $30. We recognize that some bursaries are available, but how many? A more equal fee schedule would have been "_____ hours pay" for the employed and free to unemployed (ie. a sliding scale).

The buffet dinner is supposedly a time for "participants to meet informally". This would include only the participants who could afford $18 for one meal. Most of the people we know have difficulty finding $18 for a week's food! They will obviously not be at this exclusive dinner.

We further challenge some of the points that you make in the introduction of the brochure.

We do not believe that "the nuclear arms race is the most pressing issue of our time". It is a pressing issue, but it will not be solved without eradicating the underlying issues that cause it to exist. Nuclear war is a white, middle class fear --the rest of the world lives in daily terror of the roots of the nuclear arms race--starvation and injustice caused by oppression in every form.

"The risk of nuclear war grows" not simply because of "rising international tensions" but because of the corporate and private greed that causes increased international tension--let's get back to the roots of the problem! If it were not for the massive exploitation by corporations seeking to make more money and keeping the wealthy wealthy, international tensions would not be great.

We quiver at the thought of "experts... present(ing) a detailed analysis of the problems and a creative search for solutions". Giving our power over to experts has brought us to where we are! We are all "experts" and we need to learn to take that responsibility rather than to hand our authority over to others.

The workshops on Sunday afternoon are all directed at so-called professional groups. There are no workshops for the "general public" that are supposedly invited according to the fee schedule (unless by "general public" you mean "other professional groups"). The workshop for educators focusses on presenting the "issue" of nuclear war in the classroom. Nuclear war should not be presented as an "issue" to students; the focus should be on helping them to examine their values and change their way of thinking.

We deplore your use of C.P. Air as the "'Official Air Carrier' to this Conference". C.P. Air is connected, through board of director interlocks, to IBM Canada, Ford Motors (both defense contractors) and to Kerr Addison Mines, which owns the Agnew Lake uranium mine in Ontario. C.P. Air is owned by C.P. Ltd. which has board interlocks with Westinghouse Canada, General Motors, IBM Canada and Philips Canada (all defense contractors) as well as to Inco which explores for uranium. C.P. Ltd. also owns C.P. Enterprises which is a partial owner of Cominco (involved in uranium exploration) and AMCA International which owns a company that produces pressed steel tanks for the US military. C.P. Ltd. is 11% owned by the Power Corporation of Canada which is connected (again through board interlocks) to Inco, Fraser Inc. (a shareholder in Kerr Addison), DeHavilland Aircraft (a defense contractor), and Suncor which explores for uranium.

We find it appalling that you are supporting such a corporation and suggesting that others support it. By using C.P. Air you are condoning institutionalized violence, the mining of the uranium necessary for nuclear weapons, and, in fact, nuclear war.

It is often very hard to look at how we perpetuate the nuclear arms race in our daily lives, but we need to educate and radicalize ourselves and others to see this connection. To create a world where nothing is faced with extinction, we need to build a world where no group exploits or dominates another. If this is our end, it must also be our means. We can stop the nuclear arms race only by challenging the oppressor/oppressed mentality and by withdrawing our support from the institutions that perpetuate it--from sexist or racist jokes to corporate genocide.

We are glad that you have been open to these criticisms and hope that you find them useful in the planning of your next conference.

Sincerely,
Marrianne Van Loon
Beryl Clayton
Carolynn Jones
Marion Grove
Ann Travers
Fatima Correia
Jeanette Van Loon
Patricia Donahue
Emma Kivisild
Jeanne Shaw
Linda Walker
Renee Friedman

BULLETIN BOARD

EVENTS

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FIREHALL THEATRE's production of "Extremities" - a play about Rape (running at the treatre throughout November) the Firehall theatre presents a series of Forums on sexual assault: Sun, Nov 4 at 2:30 pm, "Who's to Blame?". Members of the municipal government discuss civic responsibility and safety on the streets, safety in our homes; Sun Nov 11 at 2:30 pm, "Why Men Rape". Screening of the controversial NFB film and discussion with a local resource person; Sun Nov 18 at 2:30 pm, "Justice for Whom?". A glimpse at the legal and social ramifications. Guest panelists: a constable from the Van. Police Dept., a defense lawyer, a prosecuting lawyer (Crown Counsel) and a representative from Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW). For further information call 255-2834 evenings.

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VANCOUVER LESBIAN CONNECTION DANCE, Nov.30, 8 p.m. - 1 a.m. Theme: 10th anniversary of BCFW; Heidi Archibald will perform at 8:30; wheelchair access, childcare offsite; tickets $4 - $6 at Women's Bookstore/Octopus East/ Little Sister's. Capri Hall, 3925 Fraser.

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JUDY CHICAGO'S THE BIRTH PROJECT. Since 1982, Vancouver artist Ann Gibson has been working as a volunteer and stitcher with Judy Chicago's new body of work which images that most central of female experience, birth. The work is comprised of 80 separate pieces of needle-work, ranging in size from 5" x 91/2" to 20' x 8'. Judy Chicago chose stitchery as an appropriate medium for these art-works because, like birth, it has been traditionally woman's domain, and thus has won little attention in the world of western art. Ann Gibson has prepared a slide presentation, called "The Birth Project: a stitcher's perspective," illustrating why and how the project was conceived, nurtured and finally delivered. To inquire about sponsoring a presentation, please call (606)687-8471.

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KINESIS INVITES YOU to our annual open house, Nov 10 from 2 - 5 at VSW, 400A W 5th. Call 873-5925 for more info. Be there or be square.

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THE LITTLE MOUNTAIN NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE SOCIETY presents a Community Youth Panel on Teen Prostitution at 3981 Main Street on Monday, Nov 15 from 7 - 9 pm. The panel is youth oriented with an educational focus, sponsored by Little Mountain Neighbourhood House. For more information call Carol or Lynn at 879-7104.

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WOMEN AND WORDS: THE ANTHOLOGY
LES FEMMES ET LES MOTS: UNE ANTHOLOGIE

All of it is 'real life', all of it is from the heart, all of it is accessible. . . . Reading it, I thought, well we're still singing the blues all right, but there's so much less explaining now and so much more telling. There is some very inspired writing in this collection.
Mary Schendlinger, Room of One's Own

Available at your local bookstore or order direct from:
Harbour Publishing
Box 219,
Madeira Park, B.C.
V0N 2H0

$10.95

BULLETIN BOARD

THE NEXT *KINESIS* STORY MEETING is Nov. 7 at 7:30 at 400A W 5th (873-5925). Drop by if you're interested in writing for the paper.

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SHIRLEY KIEL, SASKATCHEWAN PAINTER, will be at Cafe Babe for booksigning and conversation on Saturday, November 10, at 9 pm. Her work is on exhibit at the cafe this month. Kiel won first prize in a major competition this spring at the North American Bell Association. She combines her writing and painting talents in her book *Affaire de Coeur*, which has a limited edition cover print. The book is also on sale at Cafe Babe, 560 Davie Street, 685-1808.

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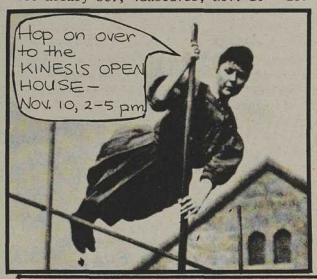
WOMEN IN FOCUS presents "A Different Face" a multicultural event of films & video by women at Robson Square Media Centre, 800 Hornby St., Vancouver, Nov. 16 - 18.



Weekend pass, $25; day pass, $15; 1/2 day pass, $8. Phone: (604)872-2250 or 872-4332 for more information.

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PHOTOPERSPECTIVES 84, a national, juried photography exhibition. Focusing on new approaches in contemporary photography and selected by guest jurors Jim Breukelman, Martha Langford, and Robert Minden, the exhibition consists of over 100 works by 22 photographers from across the country, including local women Michele Wollstonecroft, Kiku Hawkes and Paula Levine. Opening reception November 9, 7:30 - 10 pm. No-host bar. Continues to December 2.

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ROBIN FLOWER, November 11, 8pm at the Vancouver East Cultural Center. $8. CONNIE KALDOR is celebrating the fall release of *Moonlight Grocery*, with a series of performances at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre, December 5 - 8, 8:30 pm. Wed & Thurs, $8/Fri & Sat, $9.

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STEPPING OUT OF LINE: A Workbook on Lesbianism and Feminism is now available. Join the authors and the publishers at a celebration party. Saturday, Nov. 10, 7:30 - 10:30 pm at Press Gang, 603 Powell St., Vancouver. All Women and Children are welcome. Call 253-2537 for more information.

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THE WESTERN FRONT's contribution to Art City 84, November's month-long , city-wide celebration of Vancouver's artistic production is threefold: music - the organization of musicicity, Nov 22 - Dec 1, a festival presenting concerts by Vancouver's most distinct composers and musicians; exhibition - In the gallery, opening Oct 30, "Rattles" by Carole Itter, a series of eight-foot assemblages, some of which function as musical instruments; film - On Nov 9 at 8 pm there will be a screening of recent experimental films by Vancouver artists/film makers. Organized by Maria Insell. For more information, contact Western Front, 303 E 8th Ave., Vancouver, B.C., V5T 1S1. Phone (604)876-9343.

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THE WAREHOUSE SHOW. On November 3, 1984 from 7 - 11 pm, the Warehouse Show will open its doors to the public and inside will be work by more than 200 local visual artists as well as specially-scheduled concerts, performance art extravaganzas, video tapes and films as well as panel discussions and lectures. Film nights will be made up of new work submitted to the Warehouse Show as well as some new films from Canadian Film-makers Distribution West. Opening Nov 3, 7 - 11 pm. Hours: 12 - 8pm/Wed - Sun Nov 3 - 30, 522 Beatty St., 732-6783.

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BENEFIT FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 1985 True Confessions II, Exposé by Women from Vancouver Women's Community. Friday Nov. 23, 8pm - 12 pm, VMREU Lounge, 545 W 10th Ave. $5.00 employed, $3.00 unemployed, childcare arrangements available - Onni, 324-5458.

Women and Trade Unions

More and more women are trade union members now, and the focus of trade union activities is reflecting women's participation. V.M.R.E.U. is responding to this new emphasis. V.M.R.E.U.'s Women's Forum is a women-only group meeting to address issues of particular concern to women: equal pay; sexual harassment; parental & family leave.

Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees Union

TRADE UNIONS & FEMINISM HAVE A LOT TO OFFER EACH OTHER

WORKSHOPS AND COURSES

THE OVULATION METHOD of birth control is being taught by the Vancouver Women's Health Collective. All classes include materials and unlimited individual follow-up. Fee is $22 per woman or couple. Classes can be woman-only on request. To pre-register, phone Barbara at 253-6725 (after 5 pm) or Carol-Anne at 254-9759.

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UBC CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION presents a seminar on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms: Impact on Public Administration, November 23 and 24, 1984 at the Hotel Georgia. For further information contact: Phil Moir or Susan Tejada, Conference, Meeting and Project Services, Centre for Continuing Education, UBC, 5997 Iona Drive, The UBC Campus, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 2A4. Phone: 222-5225, 5221, 2181.

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WOMEN IN KARATE. Fitness plus self-confidence, stress release, self defence, skill development. Where & when: Vancouver General Hospital Residence Ballroom, 2851 Heather St. (off West 12th between Cambie & Oak) Mondays & Wednesdays, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Fee: $30/month (+nominal annual dues). Instructor: Dulce T. Oikawa, 2nd degree (ho) black belt Shotokan-ryu style karate. For further information (after 6:00 pm and weekends) telephone 874-1595.

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ART FOR CHILDREN, an opportunity for children aged 4 to 12 to explore the visual arts through a variety of media. Zoe Lambert and Rae Gabriel are women artists who have experience working with children in the arts. Saturdays from 1-5 pm, November 24 to December 22. For more information, call 254-8863.

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SOUTH SURREY/WHITE ROCK WOMEN'S PLACE is offering the following courses: Exploring Women's Dependency: A Discussion, Nov. 7, 7:00 - 9:00 pm, $10. Separation and

BULLETIN BOARD

Divorce, Part 1, Legal. Family law discussion, Nov. 13, 7:30 - 9:30 pm, $5. Separation and Divorce, Part 2, Talking to our Children. Nov. 20, 7:30 - 9:30, $5. Separation and Divorce, Part 3, Emotional Adjustments, Nov. 27, 7:30 pm, $5. For more information on these workshops, please call 536-9611.

GROUPS

VSW NEEDS YOU ! The Vancouver Status of Women needs women to help organize our annual December Party! This year's extravaganza is on a Solstice theme. Some work has been done, but we still need help doing decorations, food, and publicity. Call now and sign up for the committee of your choice! VSW 873-1427

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WORKING CLASS WOMEN interested in meeting to talk about living in a middle class society (from a feminist viewpoint). All ages welcome, Victoria, Tuesday Nov 13, 7:30 pm. Call Emma Joy at 478-8709 for details.

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TEEN MOTHERS can join a group every Monday from noon to 1:30 pm to discuss parenting, childcare, and meet other moms their age. Little Mountain Neighbourhood House 3891 Main Street offers this program which includes lunch, childcare, outings, speakers and information on low-cost resources in Vancouver. For more information call Sheena at 879-7104.

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MOMS AND TOTS is a program held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 am - noon at Little Mountain Neighborhood House, 3981 Main Street. Childcare provided includes arts, crafts and singalongs. Outings and guest speakers for the parents.

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PACIFIC POSTPARTUM SUPPORT SOCIETY (formerly Post Partum Counselling) comes to Family Place. We offer a service to women who are experiencing post partum depression. The program involves telephone counselling and a once a week support group. Contact Penny Handford, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at Family Place, 731-2719 or after hours at 736-5714(Answering Service).

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BATTERED WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP. A weekly confidential support group for women who are presently in or have been in abusive or violent relationships. Child care and transportation costs paid if needed. For further information call Battered Women's Support Service in Vancouver at 736-1574 or call locally 536-9611. Date: Ongoing session. No fee. This group is sponsored by the Surrey/White Rock Women's Place.

SUBMISSIONS

PHOTOGRAPHERS take note! *Kinesis* needs you. We can pay for film and developing. Please contact Emma for more information at 873-5925.

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CALL FOR ENTRIES - WOMEN ARTISTS. Battered Women's Support Services is planning their second annual exhibit of visual arts by women. This year's show will be 2 consecutive 2-week shows, at (n)on Commercial Gallery, and at a restaurant, location to be announced later. Part of the proceeds of sales goes to B.W.S.S. Women wishing to participate, contact: Rae Gabriel, 734-1574 (B.W.S.S. office) or Kati Campbell, 251-6007 ((n) on Commercial Gallery). After 6 pm, leave message 879-3668, or call home 874-9895. Or, write 3532 Commercial St., Vancouver, B.C. Work should deal with the conditional realities of women's lives and be reasonably priced. Deadline: Nov. 10th, '84, but the organizers would appreciate being contacted as soon as possible. Work and/or documentation to be viewed at 3532 Commercial Street (phone 879-3668) Sat., Nov 19th, noon to 8 pm. Part of Art-City '84.

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I AM COLLECTING SLIDES of the art and altars of contemporary women who are working in Goddess-ralated and other enabling/empowering imagery for possible inclusion in an upcoming Studio D, National Film Board film on the roots of religion. Please send no more than 20 slides, including descriptions, media, motivation and anything else you want to say about your work. I am interested in all media, including women's traditional arts. Deadline - December 31st, 1984. Sasha McInnes, 237A Dundas St., London, Ontario, N6A 1H1, tel (519) 438-5307, 672-2832.

MISCELLANEOUS

NEW TITLES THIS MONTH at the Women's Bookstore: *The Godmothers*, by Sandi Hall, a sci-fi tale of lesbian feminist pacifism, $10.50; *Stepping Out of Line: A Workbook on Lesbianism and Feminism*, by Nym Hughes, Yvonne Johnson, and Yvette Perrault, $12.95; *Small Expectations: Society's Betrayal of Older Women*, by Leah Coehn $19.95; *Stormy Weather: The Music and lives of a century of Jazz Women*, by Linda Dahl, $17.95. Women's Bookstore, 315 Cambie St, Vancouver, 684-0523.

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FINAL REPORT OF THE WOMEN'S SELF-HELP AND ADVOCACY NETWORK. This publication summarizes a three-year demonstration project sponsored by the North Island Women's Services Society of Courtenay, BC. Final Report (no charge), Women's Self-Help Kit ($25.00). Order from: North Island Women's Services Society, Box 3292, Courtenay, BC, V9N 5N4.

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FOOD BY ARTISTS ! Your chance to eat a piece of art, look at a piece of food, or both. And support VSW at the same time ! Buy your raffle tickets now. Draw December 7, at the VSW Benefit.

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Not Just Pin Money: Selected Essays on the History of Women's Work in British Columbia is available now for $12.00 from Camosun College. Send $13 (to cover postage) to: Not Just Pin Money, Camosun College, 3100 Foul Bay Rd., Victoria, B.C., V8P 4X8.

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THE LATEST VERSION of the B.C. Guide to the Women's Movement is available from Vancouver Status of Women. If you are listed in the Guide and have not received a copy, please contact VSW at 873-1427. Copies are available to any group or individual at a cost of $3.00. New listings or corrections for the next up-date can be sent to: Vancouver Status of Women, 400A W. 5th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1J8.

CLASSIFIED

TWO FEMINISTS looking for a third to share an east end villa, now. 251-7950, Renée.

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CAR REPAIR: All makes, low rates. Winterize now. Adrienne 873-5016.

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LESBIAN FEMINIST looking for same to share a house near Charles & Victoria. Back yard with fruit trees, spare rooms. Rent $287.50 includes utilities. Available now. Call Marilyn at 253-1224.

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CHILDCARE: 13 year old girl will babysit. Van East preferably. Took teen childcare course. Some experience. Lucy. 876-8446.

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I AM INTERESTED IN CO-OP RENTAL of a cabin or retreat (women only) within reasonable access to Vancouver. If anyone has information on a place or is interested in being involved when I locate one, contact Jackie at 873-8511.

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CAFE BABE. In honor of the 2nd anniversary, 'Babe' sweatshirts will be 25% off regular price. Any entertainers wishing to participate in our celebration, or for information on specific events, call 685-1808.

GROUP SHOW:

WOMEN ARTISTS

FOR BATTERED WOMEN

SUPPORT SERVICES

NOVEMBER 20 - DECEMBER 1

OPENING: NOVEMBER 20, 8 P.M.

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1146 COMMERCIAL 253-0913

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is accepting applications for new membership. Bachelor and a half and one-bedroom suites now available. Please apply in writing to the Membership Committee.

12 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver B.C. V5Y 1R6

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