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Special Collections Serial

KINESIS

News About Women That's Not In The Dailies

Transformative Quilting:

Connecting the Threads of Resistance

Nancy Drew takes on Freud

Remembering Poonam Randhawa

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INSIDE

KINESIS

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Kinesis welcomes volunteers to work on all aspects of the paper. Our next Story Meetings are on **Tues Mar 2** and **Tues April 6** at our new office, 309-877 E. Hastings St. Production for our April 1999 issue is from **Mar 17-24.** All women welcome even if you don't have experience.

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

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PRESS DATE
February 23, 1999

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

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

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

Printing by Horizon Publications.

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

ISSN 0317-9095
Publications mail registration #6426

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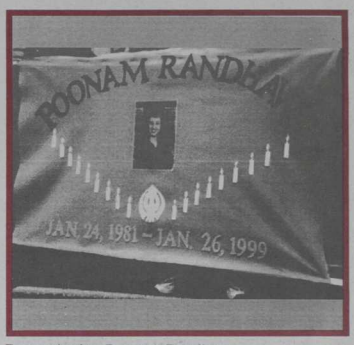

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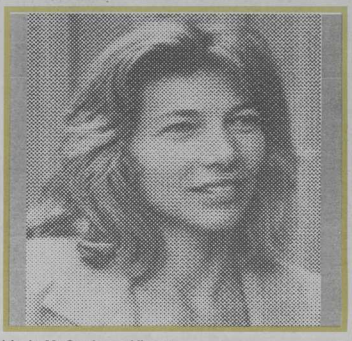

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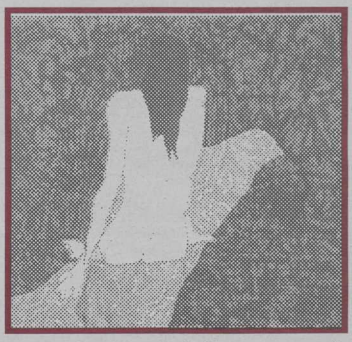

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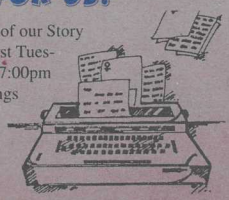
HEY - YOU'VE GOT SOME NEWS FOR US?

Then, drop into one of our Story Meetings... every first Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm at 309-877 E. Hastings St.

Next Meetings:
March 2 &
April 6



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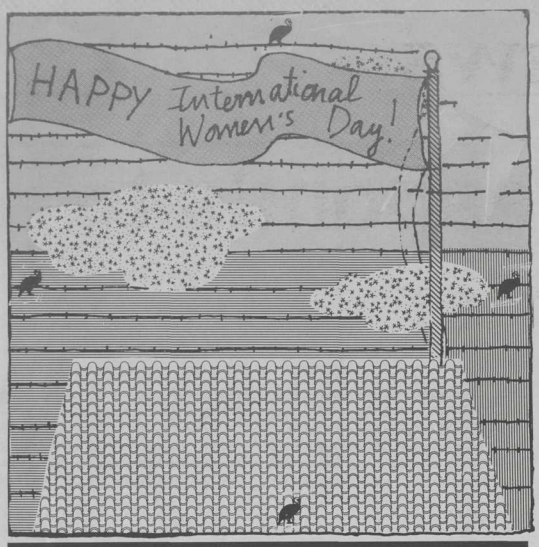

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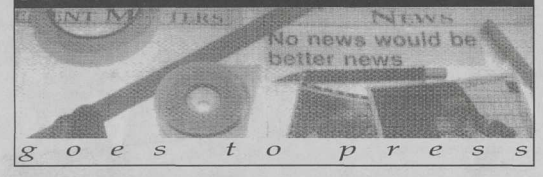

goes to press

Some very exciting news as *Kinesis* goes to press... The Aboriginal Peoples Television Network has just won its landmark bid to be carried as part of basic cable packages. This means APTV will hit small screens across Canada in the Fall.

The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission gave APTV its stamp of approval despite strong opposition from cable companies and the CBC. As with other specialty channels, the cable cable companies will charge subscribers an additional 15 cents for APTV.

APTV, the first national TV station controlled by Aboriginal people, has been several years in the making. One of the reasons for setting up APTV was to ensure avenues for airing shows produced in different Aboriginal languages.

Over the past few years, funding support for Aboriginal broadcast ventures has been cut back. For example, when the Northern Native Broadcasting Access Program was established in 1983 to increase access to Aboriginal programming in northern communities, its budget was $13.3 million; now its budget is just $7.9 million. *[Hmmm, sounds suspicously similar to the funding herstory of women's groups.]*

APTV will broadcast programs in English and in 15 Aboriginal languages. The station has also agreed to air 18-hours of French-language programming each week. On the line-up so far are: "First Perspectives," a talk show based in Vancouver featuring discussions with Aboriginal people from all walks of life; "Native Feasts," featuring traditional Aboriginal foods from Canada and the US; and "Theatre of the First Peoples," a six-part series featuring works written by Aboriginal playwrights in the past two decades.

The Canadian Cable Television Association hasn't issued its response yet to the CRTC ruling; the CCTA says it is waiting to hear from its lawyers. We shouldn't wait to respond. Write to the CRTC and the CCTA and show your support for APTV.

There's no clearer example of why Aboriginal peoples need to be in control of the systems affecting their lives than the recent ruling from the Supreme Court of Canada.

In an usually quick decision, Canada's highest court ruled that a child's Aboriginal heritage should not be considered as the overriding important factor in determining adoption rights. The court was responding to the custody battle for Baby Ishmael between his biological grandfather, who is Aboriginal, and his adoptive grandparents, who are white.

In most situations, the Supreme Court reserves its decision for at least two or three months. But in the Baby Ishmael case, the court pronounced its unanimous judgement within 10-minutes of hearing the final arguments.

The Supreme Court reversed a BC Court of Appeal decision that had awarded custody of Ishmael to his biological grandfather, Hubert Morriseau. Since then, Morriseau moved his family back to his home on the Sagkeeng First Nation reserve in Manitoba to be closer to his extended family system of support.

This didn't seem to matter to the Supreme Court; what did seem to be an important deciding factor was economics—and the fact is Duncan and Nancy Haimerl, Ishmael's adoptive grandparents, are higher up the economics ladder than Hubert Morrisseau.

The Haimerls, who live in Connecticut, adopted Ishmael's mother Melissa and her sister when they were young. Despite admitting they had a difficult time raising Melissa and her sister, the Supreme Court believed the Haimerls when told they would be able to ensure Ishmael grew up connected to his Aboriginal roots.

Ishmael is supposed to be returned to the Haimerls by June. Given the Supreme Court is the final arbiter of the land, what recourse do the Morriseaus have now? Justice for Aboriginal people denied again.

INSIDE

Kinesis

Raging storms and wild winds do an unpredictable February make. While the rest of the world was waiting (and waiting) in vain for the weather to make up its mind, those of us at *Kinesis* warmed up with huge cups of tea, popcorn and a great mix of new ideas and even newer faces.

Some of the new faces you may catch a glimpse of at *Kinesis* this month include production volunteers Tracy Palmer, Lin Khng and Sally Stevenson. We would like to extend a warm welcome, and some popcorn of course, to these three amazing women as well as to our fabulous new writers: Meena Dhillon, Linda McQuaig, Sima Elizebeth Shefrin, Denise Tang and Beatrice Fankhauser.

We would also like to thank Rubina Saini and Peggy Larivière for their beautiful illustrations in honour of International Women's Day *[see page 8 and centrespread.]*

With IWD fast approaching, we can't help but get excited. However, the end of February also brings with it the departure of Beatrice Fankhauser, who has just completed her seven-week internship at *Kinesis*. In her [very] short time with us, Beatrice has managed to wear just about every hat possible for a volunteer. Proofreading, designing, paste-up... no task was too daunting for her. We will greatly miss her infectious laugh and her creative, party decorating skills. We wish her the best of luck on her trip back to Switzerland and wait anxiously for the day when she may send some of those famous chocolates our way!

Oops! Last month, we debuted our new "Write Out" campaigns/petitions section but forgot to mention it! The section will be running regularly in *Kinesis [but not this month]* so if you have any relevant campaigns or petitions, please fax or email them to us.

IWD and the crazy weather are not the only things that have us excited this month. We're also looking forward to hiring a subscription drive coordinator for *Kinesis [see Bulletin Board, page 22.]* We'll keep you posted on how well we do following the instructions for our new marketing plan.

And of course, last but never least, for all you aspiring and/or established writers... Our next story meetings are taking place on March 2 and April 6 at 7pm.

Oh wait, another last but never least... don't forget we'll be back in production for our April issue between March 17 and 24. Drop by and see us, or try your hand at pasting up. Who knows, you might even catch a glimpse of Bernadette doing her letraset-thing.

In the meantime, we wish you a fabulous IWD and a warm, storm free spring (we hope...)

VANCOUVER STATUS OF WOMEN

Our appreciation to the following supporters who became members of VSW, renewed their memberships or subscriptions to *Kinesis*, or who made donations during the month February.

Teresa Gibson * Shelagh Wilson

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

Helen Babalos * Wendy Baker * Lissa Geller * Jody Gordon * Erin Graham * Nola Johnston * Tamara Knox * Barbara Lebrasseur * Valerie Raoul * Linda Shuto * Sheilah Thompson

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In memory of Poonam Randhawa:

Community responds to stalking, murder

photo by Agnes Huang

Harry Randhawa, Anita Sidhu, Jeevan Atwal, Gavin Sarai, Meena Dhillon, Shiv Sarai

by Agnes Huang

Strong gusting winds and the threat of a storm couldn't keep more than 150 people from attending a candlelight vigil at the Vancouver Art Gallery on February 21 to remember Poonam Randhawa.

Randhawa, who had recently turned 18, was a student at Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School in Vancouver. On January 26, her body was found in an alleyway; she had been shot in the head.

The man accused of killing her, Ninderjit Singh (aka Ninderjit Soos), still has not been apprehended. It is believed that he is in Mexico. Before Randhawa's murder, Singh had booked a flight from Seattle to Los Angeles. By the time she was found, he was already across the border.

Singh had been stalking Randhawa for more than two years. To escape his harassment, she changed schools and her family unlisted their phone number.

In response to the murder, the Coalition of South Asian Women Against Violence and the family and friends of Poonam Randhawa organized the candlelight vigil at the art gallery. The Coalition took care of logistics; Randhawa's friends created the flyer and a banner commemorating her.

Most of those gathered at the vigil were members of the South Asian community, and many of them knew Poonam Randhawa and her family in some way. Notably missing from the crowd were individual women and women's groups whose faces and banners are often seen at other events held to challenge the prevalence of male violence against women in our society—events like Take Back the Night and the December 6th Candlelight Vigil. The scene was reminiscent of the annual vigil organized by the Coalition in memory of Rajwar Ghakal and her family who were murdered in April 1996 by Ghakal's estranged husband.

Those who did attend the vigil could feel the pain and the strength in the voices of those who paid tribute to Poonam, and of those who actively work to end violence against women.

Her close friends Anita Sidhu and Jeevan Atwal and her aunt Nima Sidhu all spoke about Poonam's character, reading pieces she had written about herself for her graduation year. They wanted to share with others attending the vigil a glimpse of who Poonam was and what she meant to them, and their families and friends.

Poonam's cousin Harry Randhawa expressed his anger towards the Attorney General [Ujjal Dosanjh, who was present at the vigil] and the police for the system's failure to prevent such tragedies from happening. Her 11-year old cousin Ishay Randhawa read a poem he wrote for her, with great courage and love.

The front-line activists who spoke at the vigil placed the stalking and murder of Poonam Randhawa clearly into a context of violence against women: Meena Dhillon and Zara Suleman of the Coalition, Raminder Dosanjh of the India Mahila Association, Suzanne Jay from Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter, and Ajax Quinby from the Vancouver Custody and Access Support and Advocacy Association. *[Below,* Kinesis *presents the words Dhillon spoke at the vigil.]*

To keep the memory of Poonam Randhawa alive, her family and high school have established a Scholarship Trust Fund. Awards will be presented annually to an outstanding student at Churchill who not only excels academically but is also involved in many of the school's activities. To contribute to the fund, send cheques payable to Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School, re: Poonam Randhawa Memorial Scholarship, 7055 Heather St, Vancouver, BC, V6P 3P7. (Charitable tax receipts will be issued.) For more information, call (604) 261-6334.

photo by Agnes Huang

Family and friends remember Poonam Randhawa

One look into their eyes...

photo by Agnes Huang

Ishay Randhawa: a poem for Poonam

by Meena Dhillon

On January 27, I was volunteering at a transition house for battered women. In the afternoon, I was sitting and chatting with three women about their stories and the measures they had taken to escape their abusive husbands.

As we were chatting, a fourth women entered the room. She seemed shocked. She informed us in a state of panic that the body of a young woman was found in the alley of a Vancouver neighbourhood. I got the newspaper and, in Section B on the second page, there was a small article about the victim. There was no identification of who she was.

As I sat there with these women, I could see that they were affected by this because the newspaper report mentioned that this young women had been stalked. The women with whom I work are in similar circumstances; in fact, not only are they in hiding for their safety, but so are their children.

In my work, I have met women who are afraid to open their curtains, to walk to the grocery store, or to take their children to school because they are afraid of being hunted down by their abusive partners. As I continued to listen to the fear and panic in these women's voices as they told me their stories, I managed to sneak away and watch the five o'clock news.

During the broadcast, the young woman was identified as 18-year old Poonam Randhawa. I sat there alone in silence for about five minutes. I can still remember the horrifying glimpses of the news, which showed this young woman lying on the ground, helpless.

After watching the news, I returned to the room where the women were still sharing their stories. I was not able to tell them many details except that the news we had heard earlier was true. I told them the name of the woman, and confirmed that yes, she had been stalked.

I can still remember the chilled faces of the women. I wanted to believe the police had made a mistake and identified the wrong person. How could this happen to such a young woman? Why did it happen? I watched the 11 o'clock news and this time no names were mentioned. For some reason I hoped they had identified the wrong person, but even then, it was still a young woman.

In the days to follow, the story unfolded. As I heard more details about what had happened and the loss the Randhawa family had already experienced, I was able to understand the causes of this tragedy. *[Poonam's brother, and only sibling, had died three years earlier.]* At the same time, knowing that I too could be stalked and killed, I asked myself how could our justice system let this happen and what would I do?

see POONAM next page

The 1999 federal budget:

Women ignored, again

by Agnes Huang

So... how did women fare in the Liberal government's 1999 federal budget? Given that concerns expressed by women didn't even get a mention when federal Finance Minister Paul Martin tallied up the numbers... not well at all.

Despite facing a forecasted $17 billion surplus in the coming year, the feds had little to offer women on February 16, when Martin read out his budget speech in the House of Commons.

Despite making promises in pre-budget meetings with national women's groups, Martin did not include any additional funding to support women's advocacy and service organizations across the country. "Paul Martin broke his commitment to Canadian women," says Joan Grant-Cummings, president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. "Less than a year ago, he agreed to incremental increases to the Women's Program funds." (In this year's budget, the Women's Program didn't even rate a line item.)

Despite a court ruling in favour of federal public employees who are now in the 14th year of their pay equity complaint against the government, the federal finance minister did not include any monies to ensure the dispute will be settled fairly.

"The government does not seriously consult with women in formulating its budget, and this budget amply demonstrates that it does not understand the reality for many women in Canada," says Kim Brooks, a spokesperson for the National Association of Women and the Law.

Women weren't the only sector shut out by the Liberal government. Kathryn Robertson of the Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice (ECEJ) says her organization had been lobbying the finance minister for the past year to support the Jubilee 2000 Campaign, which asks Canada to cancel debts owed to it by some of the economically poorer countries in the world. Under the criteria proposed for debt forgiveness—which includes that a country have a per capita income under $2,000 and a debt load accounting for greater than 50 percent of its Gross National Product—ECEJ says more than 50 countries would qualify.

In his budget speech, Paul Martin announced Canada would take a leadership role in this area. However, when it came down to the actual figures, no cash had been set aside to reach this goal. This, and the fact that the feds have decreased monies geared towards international development assistance over the past few years shows they are not committed to supporting poorer countries, Robertson says.

Even though the Liberals have "balanced" the budget, the finance minister announced that his government would continue to cut program spending, from 12.6 percent this year to 12 percent by the Year 2000/2001.

"Balance" was a big word in Paul Martin's speech. He stressed that it is necessary to have balance, which he translates as meaning governments should not have "too many priorities."

What were the Liberal's priority picks? Three things: health care, knowledge and information. These areas will constitute three-quarters of $7.1 billion in program spending this year. This includes $2 billion for improving "productivity measures," which will go mostly to research and development projects, and $750 million to address youth employment, which is at a critically low state.

According to the finance minister, the main focus on the federal government's spending will be on health care. Martin announced an increase in transfer payments to the provinces to bolster their sagging health care systems to the tune of $2 billion in 1999/2000 and $2.5 billion in each of the years following (up to 2004).

Kathleen Connors, chair of the Canadian Health Coalition (CHC), says the increased health care funding was the fruit of hard work by thousands of Canadians who persuaded the federal government that Medicare is in serious trouble. While she acknowledges the additional monies are a positive first step, she cautions that they represent only a "short-term injection into an ailing health care system."

BC's largest health care union, the Hospital Employees Union, points out that the federal government has cut transfer payments to the province by $600 million since 1995—about half of which is designated to health care. Even at the end of the increased funding transfer plan unveiled by Martin, health spending will still have only returned to 1995 levels.

The well-being of Aboriginal peoples in Canada was also given just a marginal

see BUDGET next page

see POONAM previous page

I have a criminology and women's studies degree from Simon Fraser University, so clearly I should know what to do. The reality is, although I know stalking or criminal harassment is against the law, I also know it is hard to get the police to do anything about it. If I want them to take action against someone who is harassing me, I must have proof. At this point, I am still unclear how to get the police to believe me, or how to gather the required proof.

How do you know when someone is crossing the line? For example, does he just happen to be at the same place at the same time, or is he there to watch my every move because in his mind we are in a relationship? I ask myself these questions because I know my family and friends would also be asking them.

Over the past few weeks, I have seen members of the Randhawa family—one look into their eyes is enough to feel the emptiness, loss and sorrow they are having to deal with. An innocent young woman was murdered and I could not just sit there and let nothing happen. What happened to Poonam could very easily happen to me, my mother, my sister, my cousin, my friend, or to anyone of you women here today. I did not want this murder to be forgotten without any action being taken to prevent such tragedies from happening in the future.

Poonam, like many young women, felt she was taking the right steps in dealing with her stalker; however, her stalker, like many stalkers, followed through with his final act of control by taking her life. I wanted to do something and was waiting for something to be announced by the various women's groups. But nothing happened.

It was at this point that I was contacted by Poonam's friends and family. We all shared our feelings of anger, sadness, sorrow, frustration and the need to do something so this tragedy is not forgotten. I took it upon myself to help the family and friends organize this event. I called various people I knew and arranged a meeting with the Coalition of South Asian Women Against Violence.

Today, we are here to remember all women who are victims of violence. Poonam, Reena Virk, and Rajwar Ghakal and her family hold a special place in my heart. These are some of my sisters I've lost to violence against women.

photo by Agnes Huang

Prabhjot Parmar, Meena Dhillon, Zara Suleman of the Coalition of South Asian Women Against Violence

At the same time, we must remember the women who are still living in fear, the women who are still suffering from abuse and violence, the women who are to afraid to attend this vigil because there is someone waiting to hunt them down.

My fight and the Coalition of South Asian Women Against Violence's fight will not stop until there is *zero* tolerance towards violence against women. Everyone who has been touched by the tragic death of Poonam must stick together, fight, and demand changes in the laws to better protect women. Everyone must believe women when they say they are being stalked.

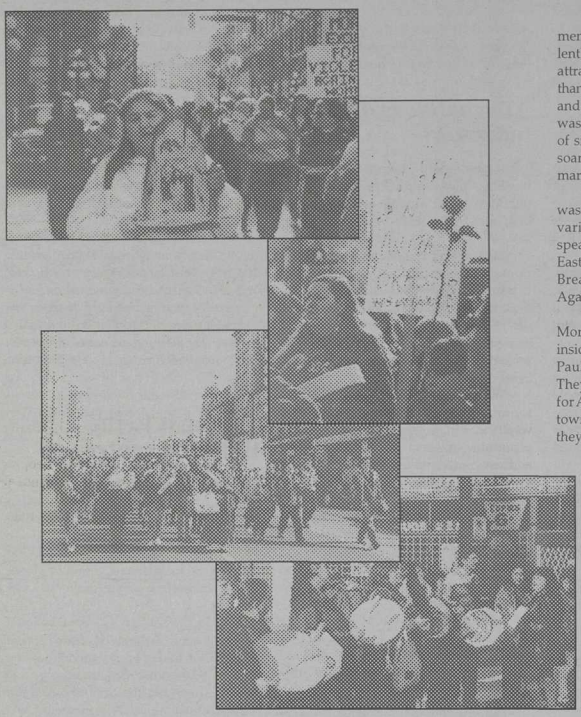
In the next few weeks, you will stop hearing about Poonam Randhawa, just as you have stopped hearing about Reena Virk and the Vernon massacre. But all of us must take it upon ourselves to remember these women and the many other women and children who live in fear everyday. We need to stick together and challenge the policies and norms which allow violence against women to exist. Until our society is free from violence, our fight must not stop.

The next time you see something where a woman is being abused, think about what type of message it is sending to our young people. In order to help eliminate violence against women, we must educate and create awareness about violence among people in every age group, and among all men and all women.

I strongly believe that Poonam is in a safe place with her brother. I know there is nothing I can do to bring her back, but what I can do is work towards making changes that will prevent this tragedy from occurring to any other family. I urge everyone here to join in the Coalition's fight for zero tolerance of violence.

Valentine's march against violence in the Downtown Eastside:

Their spirits live with us



This year's Valentine's March, held in memory of the women who have died violently in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, attracted the largest crowd in history. More than 400 people came out to share their grief and support. The significance of the march was bolstered by the magnificent presence of six eagles— the greatest number ever—soaring overhead throughout most of the march and the rally at Oppenheimer Park.

The eighth annual commemoration was organized by women involved with various groups in the community, and spearheaded mainly by the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre (DEWC) and the Breaking the Silence Against Violence Against Women project.

The day began at the Carnegie Centre. More than 150 people packed themselves inside the auditorium to hear remarks from Pauline Johnson and Edna Brass of DEWC. They addressed the inadequate supports for Aboriginal women living in the Downtown Eastside, mostly due to the racism they encounter while attempting to seek services at community agencies.

The experience of racism was brought home by the Aboriginal Women's Action Network's Fay Blaney who spoke with great courage about her time working at Carnegie. Blaney was hired on contract by Capilano College and the Carnegie Centre to do a literacy needs assessment. She was fired from her job after being asked to separate the issue of being Aboriginal from the issue of literacy. Blaney says she was also told there was too much "Indian-ness" going on around Carnegie. Those listening to Blaney's words gave her a rousing round of applause.

The crowd then poured out into the street, first circling the intersection at Main and Hastings. Along the route through the Downtown Eastside, the march stopped at locations identified as places where women had died. At each site, Elder Alene LaFlamme said a prayer in the woman's honour and left tobacco and a rose.

In front of the Main Street Station of the Vancouver Police Department, Mabel Nipshank of the Battered Women's Support Services and Viola Thomas, president of the United Native Nations, talked about how the criminal justice system continues to fail women, especially Aboriginal women. Val Phillips with PACE (Prostitution Alternatives Counselling and Education) echoed that reality, noting that many women working in the sex trade encounter numerous violent incidents, not only at the hands of customers but also at the hands of police officers.

The march then moved on to Oppenheimer Park, where a circle was formed. Those who had lost family members or friends to violence were asked to form an inner circle. Pauline Johnson offered them prayers. After, everyone was invited to call out the names of women they knew who had died violently in the Downtown Eastside.

The event wound up at the Japanese Language School, where participants were treated to drumming, more words, and some delicious chili and bannock. Sadly though, it didn't take long for the bannock to all disappear. Maybe next year...

photos by Fatima Jaffer

from BUDGET previous page

boost. The Liberals committed $150 million to Aboriginal health programs, which is far less than Aboriginal leaders say is necessary to result in any significant impact on members of their communities.

The Liberals again did nothing in this budget to ensure the universality and accessibility of Canada's medical system, which they placed in jeopardy when they brought in the Canada Health and Social Transfer in 1996 [which cut social program transfer payments to the provinces.] Connors says the CHC will continue to press the federal government to negotiate a national Home and Community Care Act to establish national standards for comprehensive care and ensure public dollars go to patient care and not corporate profits.

"Very flowery," is how Robertson characterizes Martin's budget speech. "It sounded good in some places—it's obvious Martin has learned to adopt the 'right' language—but there's nothing to back it up."

As an example, Robertson notes the finance minister made it a point in his speech to distinguish between what the market can do and what governments should do. He pointed to the "common good" things—such as, homelessness or violence against women or children living in poverty—and said that the market cannot solve these problems; government must play that role.

However, Martin's mouth and his calculator didn't dance well together. "It's a bit disgusting that he mentioned some things in his speech when he's done nothing to support them in his budget," says Robertson.

It's clear that eradicating poverty is not a priority area for the federal government. Health care was the only social program offered any real funding increase in this budget, even though it has been poor people on social assistance who have paid the highest price for the Liberals' deficit reduction crusade.

It's also clear that the Liberal government has no intention of honouring its previously stated commitment to eliminate child poverty by the Year 2000. In response to the dire need of families with children in Canada, all the Liberal government offered was $300 million in additional funds for the National Child Benefit. Again, there was no mention of funding a national childcare strategy, which many feminists say would be the best measure to alleviate poverty among women and children.

Brooks says that even for "working" low-income families who would be eligible for the National Child Benefit, "the modest increases are too low [to make any meaningful difference.]"

Pam Coates, president of the National Anti-Poverty Organization, adds that the finance minister failed to address the most glaring deficiency with the program: "Not one penny of the benefit will increase financial support for families with children who are receiving social assistance." Even the United Nations has concluded that the National Child Benefit discriminates against families on welfare.

There's nothing in the Liberal government's budget that will help poorer people. Paul Martin himself admits that the announced $1.5 billion cuts in taxes will benefit mostly middle and upper income Canadians. The major winner will be those earning more than $50,000 a year. And despite the fact that a number of major cities in Canada have declared homelessness a national disaster, the Liberal government put nothing towards social housing projects.

"What we needed to see in this budget was a commitment to a new national program of income support that guarantees adequate financial assistance to every Canadian in need, with no strings attached," says Coates. "I am definitely disappointed."

The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ECOSOC) obviously was disappointed with the federal government as well. In its review last January of Canada's record in improving the well-being of its citizens, the Committee severely chastized the Liberal government for balancing the federal budget at the expense of poor Canadians, especially Aboriginal people and women.

"The Liberal's budget is empty and neglectful," says Grant-Cummings. "The ECOSOC Committee was right on the button when it called Canada's record on reducing poverty shameful."

MOVEMENT MATTERS

listings information

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

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

by Robyn Hall and Wei Yuen Fong

Birth control handbook updated

The Montreal Health Press is celebrating the 30th anniversary of the *Birth Control Handbook* with the launch of a revised edition. The handbook is still the most comprehensive and popular publication dealing with both the technical and social aspects of contraceptive decision-making available today.

The *Birth Control Handbook* was first published in 1968 when it was still illegal to disseminate information about contraception. It contains basic information on anatomy, sexuality and reproduction, as well as information on all forms of birth control.

The new edition includes up-to-date information on the female condom, Depo Provera and the new brands of pills. There's also a redesigned layout, lots of photos, and references to relevant websites.

The Montreal Health Press is a non-profit women's publishing house, dedicated to providing information to the public on health and sexuality. All of its publications are available in English or in French. Other titles by the Press include: *Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Sexual Assault,* and *Menopause.* An updated STD handbook will be out in March.

To order a copy of the Birth Control Handbook or other handbooks, send a cheque or money order to: Montreal Health Press, PO Box 1000, Station Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, H2W 2N1. Single copies are $5. (As a bonus, if you mention this article in your order, the Press will give you a 10 percent discount.) Bulk orders are also available for as low as $1 per copy. For more information, visit the Press' website at http://www.worldsfinest.com/mhp, or call (514) 282-1171.

Conference on women filmmakers

This March, the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University will be co-hosting the first major women's film conference and festival held in Canada in many years. The event, *Women Filmmakers: Refocussing*, will take place over two weekends and feature workshops, interviews, screenings and discussions by many well-known international and local women filmmakers.

Aimed at film enthusiasts, academics, established or aspiring filmmakers and those interested in women's issues, the festival and conference features an impressive roster of talented filmmakers, directors, theorists and critics.

The inspiration for the series came out of the 1970s feminist tradition of film festivals held throughout North America and Europe which celebrated the accomplishments of women filmmakers. Next month's event is being organized with the intention of reviving or "refocussing" on the concept of promoting and supporting women in the film industry through public forums.

The workshops and presentations comprising *Women Filmmakers: Refocussing* are divided into two themes. The first weekend (March 19-21) focuses on "Europe and the History of Filmmaking," and the second weekend (March 26-28) concentrates on "Post-Colonial Contexts and Documentary Filmmaking." In addition, films by festival guests will be shown at the Pacific Cinemathèque preceding each weekend session.

The first weekend of *Women Filmmakers: Refocussing* will take place at SFU Harbour Centre, and the second weekend at UBC's Chan Centre.

The international filmmakers who will be featured on the first weekend are: Agnieska Holland (*The Secret Garden, Europa Europa, Bitter Harvest*), Helma Sanders Brahms (*Germany Pale Mother*), and Swiss filmmaker Patricia Plattner. The second weekend will feature Deepa Mehta (*Sam and Me, Fire*) and Indian-English documentary filmmaker Pratibha Parmar (*Khush, Warrior Marks, The Righteous Babes*).

Local filmmakers Christine Welsh, Loretta Todd and Nettie Wild (*Chiapas*) will also take part in the conference, as will Nicole Giguère from Quebec.

Ann Kaplan, a film studies expert and author of *Women and Film: Both Sides of the Camera*, will present the conference keynote address on "Multicultural Women's Films: Resisting Current Stereotypes," March 27 at UBC starting at 8:15pm. Admission is free.

The cost for both weekends is $75; the cost for one weekend is $40. (Discounts available for low income earners). For more information, call (604) 822-9171 or visit the conference website at www.wmst.ubc.ca/conference.html.

Securing security deposits

The Tenants Rights Action Coalition (TRAC) is leading a new campaign to create a Security Deposit Trust Fund in British Columbia. The advocacy organization, based in Vancouver, says that BC landlords are holding $170 million worth of security deposits—money that belongs to tenants.

Even though the Residential Tenancy Act was changed to make it easier for tenants to have their deposits returned, many are finding this not to be the case. Instead of going through the legal hassles necessary to regain their money, many tenants often just walk away from their security deposits.

TRAC says disputes related to security deposit returns account for more than one-third of the almost 10,000 calls a year to the organization's Tenant Hotline, and one-third of the 25,000 yearly arbitrations through the Residential Tenancy Office.

Under the proposed system, all deposits would be held in a trust fund that would be administered by a third party. Tenants would automatically receive their money back quickly after they move out unless the landlord makes a claim against it (such as for damages or unpaid rent.) Interest earned from the fund would be used to cover administrative costs.

TRAC says a BC fund would have earned $8 million in interest in 1996. It also would have saved the provincial government money by reducing the number of arbitration hearings and ensuring the return of deposits paid by the Ministry of Human Resources.

A security deposit trust fund is in place in all states in Australia and in New Brunswick. In some places, it has worked for over 20 years.

TRAC is calling on individuals and groups to join them in advocating for this new, and fairer, system. So far, their campaign has been endorsed by many groups, including the BC Federation of Labour, the NDP Women's Rights Committee, and various women's centres.

For more information about the Security Deposit Trust Fund or to receive postcards in support of the proposal which can be sent to BC Premier Glen Clark, contact TRAC at: (604)255-3099 or by fax: (604) 255-0772.

Alternative economic indicators

A new report, published by the Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice (ECEJ), says that Canada shouldn't rely on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as its sole measure of the state of our economy.

In the October 1998 issue of its Economic Justice Reports series called "Through a Different Lens: Alternative Indicators and Our Work for Economic Justice," ECEJ makes a case for developing and using economic measures which are more accurate evaluators of the health and well-being of people and societies.

What is wrong with the GDP? Well... according to the GDP, cranking up the air conditioner, increasing the number of people needing medical treatment for cancer, and environmental disasters all are good things because they stimulate economic activity.

Anything that involves a financial transaction—whether it's beneficial or destructive to society—is counted. If there's lots of activity, then the GDP is large, and that's supposed to mean Canada's economy is healthy.

Alternative indicators, says the report's writer Kathryn Robertson, measure "outcomes as opposed to inputs." She explains and examines a number of alternative measures, such as the United Nations' human poverty and quality of life indices, the Genuine Progress Indicator, and the Economic Gender Equality Indicators developed through Status of Women Canada and Statistics Canada.

Robertson says alternative indicators have come back into vogue as more and more people become aware that traditional indicators do not adequately describe what is taking place in the economy. As well, with the increasing cuts to social programs, more and more people are demanding that the impact of these backslides be documented.

ECEJ acknowledges there are flaws with existing alternative indicators, and that they need polishing or reworking, or that new ones need to be created. For example, Robertson says, measures designed to look at the well-being of women in society should not be based only on direct comparisons between women and men; this assumes that in order to be "equal," women must be the "same" as men.

To order a copy of "Through a Different Lens," send $4 (includes postage) to The Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice, 208-947 Queen St East, Toronto, Ontario, M4M 1J9. Ask for the Economic Justice Report, *October 1998 issue. For more information about other ECEJ publications or the work of the organization, call (416) 462-1613, fax: (416) 463-5569, or email: ecej@accessv.com*

Celebrating queer art

The Pride In Art Society (PIAS) is putting out a call for submissions to be included in its 1999 Pride in Art Exhibition in Vancouver. The show will be on display from July 29-August 15 (around Gay Pride weekend) at the Roundhouse Community Centre. Opening night will be on July 30.

PIAS was created in July 1998 to nurture and develop culture within the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered communities. Inspired by the success of exhibitions organized by queer students of Emily Carr College of Art and Design, PIAS hopes to ensure continued spaces for Vancouver queer artists to exhibit their work.

All artwork is subject to a selection process. Any artwork considered to be "hate" art or "pedophilia" will not be accepted. Jurying will take place from May 29-June 6. A CD-Rom will be produced highlighting the artists and works chosen to be included in the exhibition.

To be considered for the 1999 Pride exhibition, send slides of your artwork to: The Pride in Art Exhibition 1999, c/o Robert L. Hong, 103-1065 Burnaby St, Vancouver, BC, V6E 1N9. PIAS also holds fundraising and other events to support and promote its goals, and welcomes financial contributions and volunteer help. For more information on any of this, email: robbieh@direct.ca, or call (604) 683-3884.

Taking it to the financial centres

A proposal has been put forward by various groups and movements of activists from England to hold an international day of action aimed at the heart of the global economy: the financial centres, banking districts and multinational corporate power bases. The suggested date for this action is June 18.

This proposal for a People's Global Action is made in the spirit of strengthening international networks and follows the success of coordinated global actions held last May. Among the organizations involved in calling for this campaign are: Reclaim the Streets (a popular movement seeking the liberation of city streets and public spaces using direct action), the Western European Conveners of Peoples' Global Action Against "Free" Trade, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and London Greenpeace.

The date for the action was chosen to coincide with the meeting of the G-8 (wealthy industrial) nations in Koln, Germany from June 18-20. It also coincides with a planned tour of Indian farmers and activists based in Europe to campaign against the WTO and multinational corporations.

The organizers are encouraging as many other movements and groups around the world as possible to organize their own autonomous protests or actions on the same day and against the same target groups.

Preparations for this day of action are being coordinated by email. To subscribe to the discussion list, send an email to listproc@gn.apc.org with the following request: subscribe J18DISCUSSION [then your email address]

For more information about the People's Global Action visit http://www.apc.org

WHAT'S NEWS

compiled by Robyn Hall, Amal Rana and Wei Yuen Fong

Another women's centre in jeopardy

The Kamloops Women's Resource Centre (KWRC) in Kamloops, BC has been forced to close down until April 1st due to a financial crisis. The historically underfunded centre has been unable to meet its payroll for its three part-time staff since early February.

Lack of support for women's programs by the federal and provincial governments is at the heart of the problem, says the centre's coordinator Sheila Smith. She adds that the Liberal government's recently announced federal budget includes no increase in funding for women's groups *[see page 5.]*

Started up in 1985, the KWRC offers various programs to help women in crisis, as well as those needing support finding jobs, childcare and information about welfare and other social programs. The centre also provides referrals to other women's groups and social agencies.

It costs about $8,000 a month to operate the centre, 70 percent of which comes from government sources. The rest of the centre's budget must come from its own fundraising activities.

The KWRC is currently facing a shortfall of $10,000, or 25 cents per woman and girl child in Kamloops. Intensive fundraising activities have been planned for the next six weeks to ensure the centre can re-open again. A dance has been planned for February 26th, and a raffle will also be held.

"This is truly a desperate situation for the women of Kamloops," Smith says. "The centre receives most of its calls from women who have or are currently suffering from abuse."

The KWRC is welcoming any and all financial contributions. Send donations to the Kamloops Women's Resources Centre, 7E-750 Cottonwood Ave, Kamloops, BC, V2B 3X2. Supporters are also asked to contact BC's Minister of Women's Equality Minister Sue Hammell to tell her about the financial crises affecting many women's centres in the province. Call Hammell at (250) 387-1223, or toll free through Inquiry BC if it is long distance at 660-2421 (from Vancouver) or 1-800-663-7867 (from the rest of the province).

Sweatshop-free campuses

Students at the University of Toronto (UofT) have stepped up their campaign against the use of sweatshop labour to manufacture clothes with the UofT logo on them.

In November, Students Against Sweatshops started handing out leaflets and collecting signatures on petitions, calling for a code of conduct that will ensure that the university buys clothing from manufacturers who uphold basic labour standards—such as a safe workplace, a living wage, no forced labour or child exploitation, *et cetera*.

Soon after, the university's administration said it would rework its current licensing agreement policy. However, students will not be allowed to have input into the process and they expect the final outcome will be weak. Students Against Sweatshops says it will continue its actions, and has planned a two-day conference on the issue for the end of February.

Similar protests have also taken place recently at the American schools Duke University and Georgetown University. A 31-hour student occupation of Duke's Administration Building in January forced the school to sign an agreement saying it would pull out of a 160-school apparel licensing deal if disclosure of the wherabouts of factories was not included in the contract.

Back in Toronto, the Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG) at UofT is speaking out against a series of Nike ads that have recently appeared in the school newspaper, *The Varsity*. Nike continues to be a target of protest for unfair labour practices in its factories in developing nations.

[information from Maquila Network Update, *February 1999]*

Little Sister's heading to the Supreme Court

Little Sister's Bookstore is taking its constitutional challenge against the censorship powers of Canada Customs to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Vancouver's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered bookstore has been involved in a long drawn-out court battle with the border guards. Customs has been regularly detaining or seizing books, magazines and videos sent to Little Sister's which it declares are in violation of the Criminal Code provisions related to "obsenity."

In their last round in 1997, Little Sister's received a partial victory at the BC Court of Appeal. The appeal court ruled that Little Sister's had been targetted unfairly by Canada Customs. However, the appeal court essentially said Customs could do so if it wanted.

That's why Little Sister's decided to pursue its case to the highest court in Canada. The bookstore plans to ask the Supreme Court to strike down the law that says customs officials can arbitrarily seize material at the border because they define them as "obscene."

Janine Fuller, manager of Little Sister's, says she is happy the case will be heard by the Supreme Court. "After almost a decade of legal battles, it's nice to get to the final stage." She adds she is hopeful that the Supreme Court will end the discrimination that continues to affect lesbian and gay bookstores across Canada. (The date of the appeal has not yet been set.)

Little Sister's will have to raise an estimated $100,000 to take its case to the Supreme Court. Donations are welcome and are tax deductible. They can be sent to Little Sister's, 1238 Davie St, Vancouver, BC, V6E 1N4. Also watch out for upcoming fundraising events. For more information call 669-1753.

Mexican women in double jeopardy

Recent statistics released by a psychologist in Mexico reveal that violence against women is leading to an increase in the number of women landing up in Mexican prisons.

About 500 of the 4,000 women in Mexican prisons are charged with homicide, and about a quarter of these women are locked up for killing husbands, lovers and male assailants who beat and raped them or their children, says Elena Azola.

Azola interviewed 50 women sentenced for murder at Tepepan Women's Reformatory in southern Mexico City. She found that 70 percent of these women had been abused by their partners or fathers. Once they entered the prison system, they were abused further. Azola reports that 60 percent of the women she spoke to were beaten and abused by police.

Although nearly 5,000 rapes were reported in Mexico City last year, only 387 arrests were made by police. The injustice women experience through poor police work is compounded when they are tried in court for responding to male violence—judges give women an average of one-third longer sentences than men.

[information from The New Internationalist, *September 1998]*

Guatemalan women kicked out of jobs

Guatemalan workers, mostly women, arriving at the Phillips-Van Heusen (PVH) apparel-for-export factory on December 11 were expecting Christmas bonuses before starting a three-week vacation. Instead, they found security guards blocking entry to the Camisas Modernas factory; the workers were handed written notice informing them that PVH had closed the factory.

In 1997, workers at the Camisas Modernas factory made national and international news when they won a six-year struggle to obtain union recognition and a contract. It was the only maquiladora in Guatemala that had a collective bargaining agreement at the time of closure.

The workers' victory was secured by an international support campaign which forced the factory owners to abide by a special investigation by Human Rights Watch, which found the company was under legal obligations to negotiate with workers.

In a statement to the workers, PVH, the leading US marketer of men's dress shirts, justified the abrupt closure by claiming that the loss of a major client resulted in overcapacity in its directly-owned factory. However, PVH's own figures indicate that the "major" client accounted for less than two percent of its annual apparel sales. The company has also said it will continue to contract work to low-wage, non-union maquila factories in Guatemala and other Central American countries.

After a series of roadblocks outside the factory and meetings with the PVH managers, workers learned that the factory had violated the workers' collective bargaining agreement by failing to give advance notice of closure. The workers' protests have also prompted the federation to which the PVH union belongs to file a legal action against the factory owners.

After another worker roadblock and a march on the Ministry of Labour on January 5th, the Guatemalan Minister of Economy threatened to suspend the PVH export licence.

[information from Maquila Network Update, *February 1999]*

Phone operators left in the lurch

In January, Bell Canada has announced it is unloading 2,400 jobs by selling its telephone operator division to US-based Excell Global Services. Bell has 61 operator centres in 39 cities in Ontario and Quebec.

The announcement could mean the total number of centres will be cut down to five, and that the mostly female employees will be forced to take a 40 percent pay cut and/or relocate.

It's likely not coincidental that these same employees are involved in a long-standing pay equity dispute with Bell Canada. The telephone operators are currently before the courts to get their salaries in line with the higher-paid, mostly male, telephone technicians. If the operators win their case, they could be awarded raises of more than 10 percent, retroactive to 1992. The total settlement package is estimated to be around $40 million.

The approximately 20,000 Bell employees involved in the pay equity dispute recently received a boost to their side when the Federal Court of Appeal ruled that the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) Tribunal could deal with the case. This is a positive step for the workers because, in another pay equity dispute involving federal public servants, the CHRC ruled favourably on the employees' behalf.

The company's rationale for "free trading" its operator-services division is that it is not financially competitive. A representative of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union, which represents the workers, says this simply is not true. "We have the figures to prove it is a profitable operation, " says Gary Cwitco. He also accuses Bell of selling what he says is a profitable division in order to sneak out of a pay-equity dispute.

Bell Canada followed up its announcement a week later with notice that it plans to challenge the Federal Court of Appeal's decision in the Supreme Court of Canada.

In Celebration of International Women's Day

Women with Disabilities:
We Know What We Need To Be Healthy!

Join us for a panel discussion based on the results from a recently completed research study and a second study in progress on the health needs of women with disabilities.

Women from across the province of BC were asked what they needed to be healthy and what barriers stood in the way of their good health. Women interviewed for the study said "Most of our problems are caused not by our bodies but by a society that refuses to accommodate our differences."

Panel Presentation: Shirley Masuda, Joan Meister, & Carol Bast of the **Pacific Dawn: Pacific DisAbled Women's Network.**

Date: March 11, 1999; 10 a.m. - 12 noon. (Free admission)

Audience: Feminist researchers & activists, policy makers, care providers, students. Everyone Welcome!

Event Location: BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, Room E311 (3rd floor) at BC Women's Hospital and Health Centre, 4500 Oak Street, (Gate 3 Entrance at Heather St & 29th Ave), Vancouver, BC.

Please reserve a seat by calling 875.2633

Refreshments served. Lower mainland transportation subsidies and services for persons with disabilities available with two days advance request. Wheelchair accessible.

Women's Health Speaker Series 1999

BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health
E311-4500 Oak St., Vancouver, BC, V6H 3N1
Tel: 604.875.2633, Fax: 604.875.3716, Email: bccewh@bccewh.bc.ca, Web: www.bccewh.bc.ca

This International Women's Day, let's end wage discrimination for women in community social services.

It's time.

Over 10,000 community social service workers around B.C. are on the verge of a strike in an effort to end wage discrimination for women in this sector.

These workers care for and work with the most vulnerable members of our society, and deliver a huge range of critical services to families, people with physical or developmental disabilities, youth and children, women in crisis.

Yet, community social service workers continue to be underpaid and undervalued.

We urge the government to live up to the promises it has made to these workers. Send your negotiators back to the bargaining table with a mandate to end wage discrimination once and for all.

B.C. union BCGEU

B.C. HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION OF CUPE

HSA

Globalization, women and the assault on equality:

What we need is a dose of democratic Viagra

by Linda McQuaig

Linda McQuaig is a journalist and best-selling author with a reputation for challenging the establishment. She has written for The Globe and Mail, The Toronto Star *and* McLean's Magazine. *She is currently writing a bi-weekly column for the* National Post. [To those who raise eyebrows at this, McQuaig says she is not working for Conrad Black, but against him; she's just doing it in his newspaper and at his expense.]

She is the author of Shooting the Hippo: Death by Deficit and Other Canadian Myths, *which traces the real story behind the deficit and shows how social program spending has been falsely blamed. In her most recent book,* The Cult of Impotence: Selling the Myth of Powerlessness in the Global Economy, *McQuaig refutes the popular notion that governments are powerless in the global economy to deliver full employment and well-funded social programs.*

Last February, McQuaig was in Vancouver as a guest speaker for Simon Fraser University's Margaret Lowe Benston Lectureship for Social Justice Issues series. [Benston was a long-time feminist activist who was instrumental in setting up the Women's Studies Department at SFU.] *McQuaig gave two lectures: one on "Overcoming the Cult of Impotence: How to Make Government Serve the Public Good," and the other on "Globalization, Women and the Assault on Equality," which* Kinesis *presents below.*

It is a great pleasure for me to speak to a group which is so heavily dominated by women and students. I like this kind of audience because I find women and students are very cynical about power. You tend to be more interested in the message I have, which is about the importance of putting limits on the amount of power certain overly powerful groups in society have. When I speak to groups of men, I find they're often quite hostile.

One time, I was invited to speak to a business group. There were hundreds of men and they were all dressed up. I thought, "Maybe I'm wrong, maybe business is interested in hearing me tell them how they should pay more tax." That wasn't quite the case. In fact, the man introducing me that night began with an apology. He said, "Gentlemen, I'm very sorry to tell you we have with us here tonight Linda McQuaig, who is here due to the cancellation of the real speaker, the man you all came to hear, Conrad Black." *[laughter]* Anyway, I'm assuming none of you came here today hoping to see Conrad Black, so at least that's a good beginning.

I want to talk about globalization and the assault on equality and women. When we talk about the global economy, one of the things we're really talking about is the enormous power of financial markets. The key point I want to make is, [this notion that financial markets are all-powerful has] been used to justify an enormous change in how society operates. Financial markets are seen as being so powerful these days because of the mobility of capital. We hear this all the time: capital can move everywhere. [Those who control capital] can threaten to withdraw it from countries which badly need it, and so they can force those countries to put in place the policies that they want. These policies include cuts in the size of government, bigger tax breaks, caps on inflation. The problem with this is that it restricts the power of governments to put in place the kinds of policies ordinary people want, such as full employment and well-funded social programs.

Linda McQuaig

It's very fashionable these days to argue that globalization is a reality, and that anybody who refuses to accept globalization as we currently see it is refusing to accept reality. You're treated as naive if you resist the global economy, as if you're advocating a return to feudalism or a pre-industrial society. I think this is definitely a misreading of the real issue.

The real issue is not: do we live in a global economy. Of course we do! In fact, we've been living in a global economy for more than 100 years, certainly since the laying of the trans-Atlantic cable in the late 1860s. The real issue is: what kind of global economy do we want to live in?

The simple truth is there's not just one kind of global economy, [even though this] is the way it's always being presented to us. If you even take the last 50 years, you'll find two very different kinds of global economies, which produced very different results. From the immediate post-war period until the mid-70s, we had a global economy that was highly regulated. Markets were regulated in order to defend the broader public interest. In other words, the rights of society as a whole were given precedence over the rights of investors.

This was a deliberate policy decision on the part of the people who constructed the post-war economic system [in the Western world.] They did this because, above all, they wanted to avoid a return to the disaster experienced during the Great Depression. They wanted to avoid the high unemployment, the lack of social support systems. They felt it was absolutely necessary to give governments the power to manage their own economies.

When it comes to things women want, such as daycare and equal pay, suddenly all that testosterone leaves the federal government and it just says it absolutely cannot do these things

One aspect of managing your economy is the ability to control the flow of capital in and out of your borders. The post-war architects put capital controls in place, explicitly to prevent the financial markets from using that threat we hear today, "We're going to pull our capital out."

The financial elite resisted capital controls all the way, but governments stood up to them. The result was an enormous increase in the level of equality throughout the Western world. For the first time in the history of the modern world, the vast majority of citizens was given access to things like health care, education and some financial security. In the past, those things were reserved for the elite; now, they were broadly available to a large number of citizens.

Maybe it sounds simplistic, but I call this the "good globalization" period. It was a global economy run, to a certain extent, in the public's interest. There were obviously still lots of problems, but the basic truth is that governments were empowered in a way we haven't seen since.

This system came apart in the early to mid-70s, and has been replaced by a global economy which rejects the notion that governments should be able to control their economies and the flow of capital. In fact, one of the basic tenets of today's global economy is that capital should be allowed to move freely around the world. What this has done is exactly what the post-war architects were trying to avoid—it has transferred a lot of power to the financial markets. One of the big impacts of this transfer has been a dramatic retreat from the egalitarian gains achieved in the post-war years.

This retreat has had an enormous impact on all members of society, but particularly on women. Women have had to bear the brunt of this [mainly because of] the demand of the financial elite for cutbacks in social spending. We've certainly seen that on a dramatic scale.

Women are, of course, very affected by [cuts to social programs] because women tend to be more concentrated at the bottom end of the economic ladder. Seventy percent of people living in poverty are women and children. Fifty-seven percent of families living in poverty are led by single mothers. When governments target welfare for cuts, obviously these cuts affect women. Even cutbacks to the more "universal" programs, like Medicare, affect women disproportionately. People at the upper end of the economic ladder can just pay the difference if health care is cut or if services are delisted from Medicare coverage.

There's also the flip side to social program cuts. We're always told the cuts are about deficit reduction. They're not; they're about tax reduction. It is becoming increasingly clear that governments cut social programs so deeply in order to deliver the tax cuts the business community demands.

The benefits of tax cuts go mostly to men because men are more concentrated at the upper end of the income scale. Tax cuts disproportionately favour men... I'll give you one quick illustration of this.

In Ontario, there was a 30 percent across the board cut in provincial income tax. Now "across the board" sounds as though everybody [benefits equally.] However, in fact, the bottom 10 percent of income earners—that is, those earning $15,000 or less, many of whom are women—saved $160 on average. In contrast, for the top one percent of income earners—who are almost exclusively male—the average tax saving was $15,540.

Another aspect of the transfer of power from governments to the financial elite is that it weakens the potential political power of women. Government, for all its flaws, is really the only vehicle the public has for

see MCQUAIG next page

from MCQUAIG previous page

political power. Financial markets are not only completely undemocratic in the way they operate, they're also completely dominated by the big financial players, who all happen to be male.

Transferring power to the financial elite disempowers women and limits the potentially positive role women can play in shaping public policy. There is somewhat of a gender difference in terms of political issues. An interesting study done on the gender gap argues that women are more cynical about the economic system that prevails, and that they're less likely to buy into the tenets of free market capitalism. This study shows that women are less likely to accept notions that poor people are poor because they deserve it, or that when the rich do well, we all do well. Maybe this is because of personal experience.

This kind of cynicism is really healthy, because as a society, we have been sold a real bill of goods about the economic system we have today. Our free-market system is destructive and self-defeating in the sense that we focus more on the ultimate goal of economic growth than on more reasonable goals like economic and social well-being.

A perfect example of this is that our society measures "progress" by looking at the growth of the Gross National Product (GNP). The GNP is a silly measure; it's just the sum of economic activity. That means things like environmental disasters which cost huge amounts to clean and the tainted blood fiasco get added into Canada's GNP. Clearly though, none of us are better off because we've had the tainted blood scandal or an environmental disaster.

The business and financial world is a very macho culture. It is so obsessed with this notion of "potency," that it's almost like it's taken an overdose of Viagra or something. It's also true that governments act extremely macho when it comes to delivering what the financial and business interests want. They wanted low inflation so the federal government set a target of keeping inflation below three percent. (They actually exceeded their own targets.) Similarly with the deficit, the financial markets wanted it down, so [federal Finance Minister] Paul Martin said he'd eliminate the deficit come hell or high water. (He then did it two years ahead of his own schedule.)

However, when it comes to things ordinary people want—such as social programs and full employment—and things women in particular want—such as daycare and equal pay—suddenly all that testosterone leaves the federal government and it just says it absolutely cannot do these things. The government refuses to set targets for any of these social goals, such as poverty reduction.

I think the extent of the cuts to social programs has not fully been appreciated. There's a tendency *[given that the Liberal government has suggested it will restore some funding to social programs, now that it has the deficit under control]* to believe that the worst is over and we're on our way back. We're a long way from being on our way back.

Since 1995, we've seen the deepest cuts [to social program spending] since the end of World War II. We're now in a situation where we have the lowest level of social spending, as a proportion of the overall economy, since the late-40s.

The cuts were sold to us as being necessary because of the deficit. I would argue that [the deficit] was greatly exaggerated. The deficit was never the threat people said it was. Even if you accepted that the deficit was such a serious problem that required greatly cutting back on social spending, the truth is the deficit is now gone. In fact, the federal government is generating huge surpluses—the surplus is expected to be $17 billion by next year.

You would think that we now have the freedom to take that $17 billion and put it back into social programs, to rebuild the programs we only reluctantly agreed to see cut back because we thought our backs were to the wall. Well, any serious reinvestment into social programs has actually been quietly pushed off the table by the people who are controlling the debate: the financial and corporate interests.

I'll give you one example to illustrate what I mean by this. The CD Howe Institute, [a right-wing think-tank,] put out a report just before Christmas which responded to the question, "What should be done with the surplus?" They noted how huge this surplus was getting and they tried to make it look as if they were considering all possible options. They laid out three, and every single one of them involved restricting social program spending to a very low level. Even their most "left-wing" options wouldn't see the level of real spending per person on social programs return to what it was in 1995 until the year 2046. They rejected this as too extreme.

The CD Howe Institute's preferred option would have real spending returned to its 1995 level, when? Never! This was the option they preferred, and that was their middle option. Wait 'til you hear their right-wing option... It would see real spending cut every year into the future. The CD Howe Institute, which is funded by Bay Street [the Canadian equivalent to Wall Street] didn't endorse this option (but said it had some merit) because they felt that Canadians would be more comfortable with the middle "compromise" option.

If you can track the movement of money, you can monitor it and you can control it, if you wanted to.

In case this sounds like the extremist views of a couple of cranks on Bay Street, let's just look at where Paul Martin fits in this framework. He's already indicated what his plans are for the next federal budget [which was announced February 16, one week after McQuaig's talks in Vancouver.] Martin's proposed plan would see Canada returning to the 1995 real spending per person level in the distant half of the next century.

I realize I've painted a depressing picture here, and I don't mean to do that entirely. I certainly don't want to give you the impression that I think all this is inevitable and that this is the way it simply has to be in the global economy. I certainly don't feel that. We had a good kind of globalization before it was replaced by this bad kind of globalization. So, why can't we have good globalization now?

If you listen to the conventional arguments, they say, "We can't because technology has changed everything." We now have computers and with the computers, money can move around the world quickly—in a flash of an eye it's halfway across the world. How could governments possibly control the movement of capital given this situation?

The interesting thing about that argument is it only tells half the story about the computer revolution. It's true computers allow us to move money around the world more quickly than ever before, but the flip side is that computers also give us enormous power to record and track the movement of money. If you can track the movement of money, you can monitor it and you can control it, if you wanted to. That's the key point.

The global economy has not made governments powerless; governments have made governments powerless.

I would argue that what has changed between the old good globalization and the new bad globalization periods is not so much a consequence of the technological revolution. What has changed is the political willingness of governments to stand up to financial markets.

I want to make the point that financial markets seem more powerful these days because we've handed power over to them through things like the Free Trade Agreement, NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement,) and through the removal of capital controls. Basically, we've empowered the financial markets. The global economy has not made governments powerless; governments have made governments powerless.

We don't need those treaties; we can rip them up. Now that's a huge political issue, but my point is that there is nothing intrinsic to the nature of the global economy which requires us to sign those types of treaties. I would further argue that, even given how bad the global economy we currently live in is, governments are not nearly as powerless as they let on. In fact, they tend to use this idea of powerlessness as an excuse for not doing the things the public wants. As long as the public buys this notion of powerlessness, it lets governments of the hook.

In the post-war period—the period of good globalization—the public was very demanding of government. The public held governments accountable. They wanted full employment and they wanted social programs. When the governments didn't deliver those things, they got kicked out of office.

I would argue that the public still wants those things today, but that we've bought into the idea that governments can no longer deliver on them. When governments fail to deliver, we don't kick them out of office—that leaves governments free to serve the financial elite.

When the public is mobilized around an issue, when the public cares about an issue, when it's involved, when it's activated, the financial elite doesn't always get its way. Governments are much more inclined to listen.

If that sounds naive, just look at [the campaign against] the MAI (Multilateral Agreement on Investments.) This is a classic example of an attempt to transfer more power to the financial elite. The public, fortunately, got activated and there were all sorts of grassroots organizing in Canada, the US and France. As a result, governments felt scared about moving forward on the MAI.

I would argue the exact same thing happened with the bank mergers [being proposed between the Royal Bank and the Bank of Montreal, and the Toronto Dominion Bank and CIBC.] When those mergers were announced, they seemed like a *fait accompli*. The bank chairmen were pretty certain the public would buy the argument that this is what they had to do to be "competitive" in the global economy. This is the way it seemed at the beginning, but the public didn't buy into it. The public's anger became quite clear and eventually Paul Martin did the numbers. Martin wants to be prime minister, and he recognized that he could not go through with the bank mergers and become prime minister.

It struck me as ironic that Martin was attacked in the press, and particularly in the business press, as a political opportunist: "He just wants to be prime minister." I thought, "Is there something wrong with that? Isn't that how democracy's supposed to work? You do what the people want." In fact, he should try it again sometime.

I would argue that Paul Martin would have loved to have approved the mergers to please the bank chairmen and have them on-side for his leadership bid. He just realized that there was no way he could be prime minister if he did that; the public wouldn't go for it.

The obstacles that stand in our path for achieving a more egalitarian society—a society where women, and people in general, are more empowered—are not technology or globalization. Rather, the obstacles are the same old obstacles we've always faced: the enormous power of the financial elite and its absolute determination to block anything that restricts its power.

The good thing is that we've overcome these obstacles before, and we can do it again. In terms of Viagra and all the money that's going into researching and promoting it... it seems like a waste that we're doing all this to improve the potency of an already very potent group. What we really need is some democratic Viagra.

Thanks to Sally Stevenson and Amal Rana for transcribing, and to Rana and Monica K. Rasi for help in editing.

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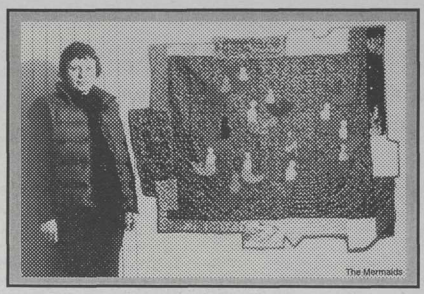
Quilting for social and political change:

All people are artists


The Mermaids

by Sima Elizabeth Shefrin as told to Kelly Haydon

Fabric arts have long been used around the world to make visible social and political statements. For example, in November 1994 women in rural areas in Cambodia started weaving together a Ribbon of Hope and Peace. The Ribbon was brought to Beijing, China for the 4th World Conference on Women in September 1995. There, women attending the NGO Forum continued to create and add pieces to what became a 10-kilometre long banner. The Ribbon was paraded through the "streets" of the forum site, then draped along the Great Wall of China.

Sima Elizabeth Shefrin is a fabric artist living in Vancouver who has been involved in social and political activism for more than 25 years. More recently, she has been teaching quilt making workshops and facilitating the creation of a Middle East Peace Quilt. Kinesis' resident painter and health writer Kelly Haydon had the chance to talk to Shefrin about the use of fabric arts for political expression.

Kelly Haydon: Can you give us a bit of history of the use of fabric arts for social and political activism?

Sima Elizabeth Shefrin: There are lots of ways fabric's been used in that way. Historically, many North American quilters used quilts to make political and social statements, as well as personal ones. There is still a misconception that quilting uses only standard patterns.

One of the stories I like to tell is found in a book called *Artists in Aprons* by Kurt Dewhurst and Betty and Marsha MacDowell. The story is about a quilt made in the 1800s by Elizabeth Rosebury Mitchell—the quilt had a graveyard in the centre and was bordered with coffins. Every time someone in Mitchell's family died, she unpicked a coffin from the border, embroidered the name of the person who had died on it, and stitched it down in the graveyard. This is one example of someone who was probably very isolated and used the quilt to make a statement about her life.

Many traditional quilting patterns also had subtle political and social messages in them. I've just been reading about how during slavery in the United States, secret messages were incorporated into quilts made by African American women, which were instructions for the Underground Railroad *[see sidebar page 14.]*

In other parts of the world also, people have used fabric to put across important messages. After the 1973 military coup in Chile, when people were disappearing and being tortured and killed, women who were family members of the detained and disappeared would get together under the protection of the church and make fabric pictures that told the stories of what was happening in their country. They told stories of their daily lives—of hunger, poverty, arrests, the tanks, the soldiers, and of resistance.

These women taught themselves and worked with rags or whatever they could find to make their statements. The tapestries were smuggled out of the country, in some cases at great risk, and sent all around the world to educate people. This was one of the big ways in which the rest of the world learnt about what was going on in Chile.

The Names Quilt is another example—it's the memorial quilt for people who have died of AIDS. It's not a women's project, but it comes out of a women's traditional artform. The Names Quilt inspired a lot of education not just around AIDS but around gay rights in general. It gave people a place to be compassionate toward people who were dying and it was instrumental in changing attitudes towards homosexuality.

Another project is the Life Quilt for Breast Cancer, started by a Vancouver woman named Judy Reimer. When she was diagnosed with breast cancer she decided, "If I die tomorrow I want my children to be able to say, 'My mom had cancer, but it didn't beat her'." The center panels of the three life quilts are painted by Coquitlam artist Gay Mitchell, and they show a clearcut forest, new life in the clearcut, and reforestation. All around the painted area are individual squares quilted by people who have some personal connection with breast cancer.

Another example of using fabric for social change are the t-shirts against violence against women: the Clothesline Project. The shirts are colour-coded; women work on a certain coloured shirt, depending on their experience, to tell their story. The t-shirts are then hung on a clothesline. It's an international project where women use fabric to speak about their experiences of male violence, and ultimately to stop the violence from happening again.

During the peace movement, people got really creative—a woman in the States named Justine Merritt did a project called a Ribbon Round the Pentagon, where she had people make banners about what they couldn't bear to lose in a nuclear war. She actually met her goal of getting enough banners to tie a ribbon around the Pentagon.

In Greenham Common in England, which was an American cruise-missile base, the women in the peace movement camped out around the base for four years. They did wonderful things with fabric—at one point, they made a giant serpent and wove its tail in and out of the fence of the base, four-and-a-half miles long. It was huge.

The women used costumes too. Wearing particular clothing in a demonstration is another way people use fabric for social change. There was one action they did at Greenham Common where they went into the base dressed as small furry animals and had a picnic. They did wonderful, creative things there.

And then there are all the different political parade banners, just looking at our own marches and demonstrations in Vancouver. It's a different way of reaching people, more expressive and more accessible; it moves people in a different way.

Haydon: Do you think political fabric arts moves more people to take action than just words?

Shefrin: I think it makes people think in a different way. The project I'm doing right now is organizing a Middle East Peace Quilt. I've asked people to make squares about what their vision is of peace in the Middle East. Some of the squares come by mail, but often the squares are made in the workshops I do with people.

I'm watching the process all the time, and trying to assess if it is effective and if it makes a difference. What I see is that when someone makes a square for the quilt, they're taking some moral responsibility because they're taking a position in their own mind. Some of the people who make the quilt squares wouldn't go out and demonstrate, they might not have figured out a position, or they might be confused about what's happening in the Middle East.

By making the square, they are taking a position that they weren't taking before. That's the thing about the fabric project: you reach a whole base of people who wouldn't consider themselves political. They wouldn't go out and demonstrate or speak publicly or even write letters. But the next time, with the quilt square in mind, perhaps they would say to themselves, "Well, I've made this quilt square, and here's this petition; I'm going to give this issue some real thought and consider signing it."

Haydon: Does fabric art lend itself better to social/political action than other mediums?

Shefrin: That's a bit hard to answer, but personally I think that the answer is yes. Painting and drawing and sculpture are embedded in Western European patriarchal art history, and they come directly out of that tradition. It can

The Dressmaker

Untitled

Visions of Lace

Canadian Mennonite

photo credits: top four quilts by Valerie Pudsey; bottom quilt by Brenda Hemsing

see QUILTING page 14

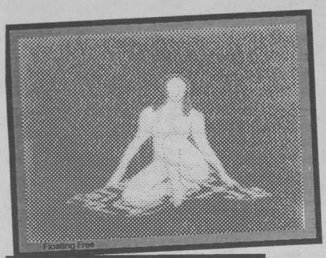
HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

illustration by Peggy Larivière

KINESIS
Celebrating 25 Years
1974-1999

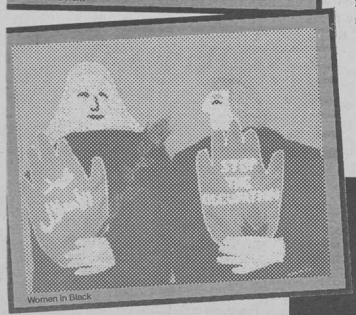
FEATURE

from QUILTING page 11


Floating Free

Do You Like My Hat?

We Demand Work


Women in Black

slides and in the afternoon the participants get to make a quilt square on the issue closest to their hearts. They're really fun.

Lately, I've been doing more workshops for the Middle East Peace Quilt, which are similar: I show slides of projects where fabric has been used for social change and videos about the Middle East. I don't teach technique; I just get out the fabric and the participants create their own quilt squares.

I believe all people are artists or start out as artists, but the school system has made it harder for us to see that. People sometimes come into the workshop with the belief that they can't hold a needle, they can't draw a straight line and they come out with the most beautiful pieces. It's wonderful to see.

Haydon: So what is the response of people to the quilts? Do people go off and do their own projects, or perhaps join other projects?

Shefrin: They might; I assume they do.

Haydon: Your workshops allow people to do their own individual projects, but the Middle East Peace Quilt is different in that it is a collective project...

Shefrin: The peace quilt has about 165 squares and I'm starting to put it together. There are still squares coming in. I'm doing workshops and connecting with lots of different kinds of people. The quilt's going to be exhibited at the Roundhouse Community Centre in September; the opening is on September 16th. It'll also be at the University of Victoria in February 2000. It's designed to be a focus for peace education and dialogue, bringing communities together.

Haydon: What about your own quilts that you've made over the years? Do you come from an arts background?

Shefrin: I've always worked with fabric. I'm self-trained as an artist; I didn't go to art school. I come from a family of sewers: my mother made our clothes, slipcovers, drapes. One of my aunts was a quiltmaker, another was a dressmaker, and my uncle was a tailor. Sewing was something which I saw all the time in my family.

Haydon: What was your first political quilt?

Shefrin: Before I started quilting, I did tapestry weaving for awhile. Those were the days when we first talked about how the personal is political. I'd go and see a folk singer who inspired me and I'd come home and do a picture of her. Or I'd do a piece of a man with a baby, which was an unusual image 25 years ago. I once did a piece called, "Changing the poopy baby." I didn't think of it as wages for housework but it's the same issue. All the images I made were political—a woman giving birth, a woman nursing—they were all political statements.

Haydon: Have you made quilts for specific events?

Shefrin: Around 1984, I started making quilts about Jewish themes, and that's mostly what I've been doing since then. I describe myself as a Jewish activist—I work against anti-semitism, racism and for peace in the Middle East. All those things are very integrated for me. My artwork is one way that integration happens.

I do pieces on garment workers—there were a large number of Jewish garment workers early in the century who were active in the labour movement. It's indirectly through the political organizing which those people did that I have the luxury of using fabric as an artform. I did pictures of them as a tribute, to acknowledge that connection.

I've done work on the Holocaust and on Jewish history, on holidays and celebrations. A lot of my pieces are Jewish pride pieces. I also do pieces about what's happening in the Middle East. I'm particularly interested in the hopeful parts, how people are connecting and working together. There's a substantial grassroots Middle East peace movement over there and in North America. This is what we never hear.

Certainly there are unacceptable things happening in Israel, like the demolition of Palestinian houses by the Israeli government. Terrorism is also still a problem. But some Jews and some Palestinians are working very hard to make connections with each other. For example, Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salam is an Arab and Jewish community, an intentional community that has been in existence for almost 30 years. They run a bi-cultural, bilingual elementary school where they celebrate Muslim, Jewish and Christian holidays. They run a peace school as well. They've raised a generation of children.

There are many projects and individual people who are working hard to make connections. I try to learn more about that and to get the information out there by using the peace quilt.

I think what happens in the Middle East is that it looks so discouraging and hopeless. I think people get confused: it looks like you either have to support the Palestinians or support the Jews. The stories of both people are important to hear, and you don't need to make that choice—supporting the Middle East in the best way is to support the peace process, helping people come together.

I use my artwork in a lot of different ways: I use it in workshops against anti-Semitism. I always put my artwork on the walls, to share with others, to tell my stories. That's an invaluable part of the workshops. I do shows and I sell pieces but that's not an important focus. I'm much happier when the work is being used. It's a way to share a part of myself. Sometimes people make a distinction between quilts hung on the wall and quilts used as blankets. I don't think that's a important distinction.

Haydon: Anything else you've been doing?

Shefrin: Last year I needed a break and I wanted to do some artwork that was lighter. I was going to a life drawing group at the time so I created a series in fabric of nude women. They're fun and yet, as I think about it, they are also political. We still don't get a lot of opportunities to see images of our bodies without a sexual connotation. Mine are simply women with no clothes on. Some of them are humourous; I had a good time doing them.

Elizabeth Shefrin will be offering quilt making workshops at the Roundhouse Community Centre on May 15 from 9:30am to noon, and on May 31 from 6:30 to 9:30pm. Admission is free. Participants are asked to contribute a $5 donation if they submit a square for the Middle East Peace Quilt. To register for the workshops, call the Roundhouse at (604) 713-1800. To Book a workshop on "Stitching for Social Change" or on "Eliminating Anti-Semitism artform" (for both Jews and non-Jews) or to find out more about the Middle East Peace Quilt, call Shefrin at (604) 734-9395.

Thanks to Lin Khng for transcribing this interview.

photo credits: top two quilts by Valerie Pudsey; bottom two quilts by Brenda Hemsing

be more of a challenge to use them differently.

Fabric art not only comes out of many traditions, it's also an artform that's been marginalized, and so there is a little more freedom that way. The boundaries aren't quite so fixed.

Haydon: You've been doing workshops on fabric arts and political activism. Can you talk about them?

Shefrin: I do a workshop called "Stitching for Social Change: The Use of Fabric to Build a Better World." I gave the first one in the summer of 1997 at the Community Development Institute, and I've done it several times since. In the morning we look at

Quilts and the Underground Railroad

Hidden in Plain View: The Secret Story of Quilts and the Underground Railroad, a ground-breaking new book by Jacqueline Tobin and Raymond Dobard [published by Doubleday], offers readers a unique and inspiring glimpse into the pattern of hidden quilt codes that were used as a form of resistance by Africans slaves in the Americas. The authors began their research after a chance encounter between Tobin and Gullah quilt maker Ozella McDaniel Williams. Williams described the various quilt patterns that were used on the Underground Railroad to help slaves escape. Her system, which came to be known as the Charleston code, used various mnemonic devices and symbols to clarify and designate a particular escape route. According to Tobin and Dobard, if an escape was imminent, the quilts were hung in a particularly sequenced line in order to guide the escapees towards Canada and freedom. Various quilts with a number of different designs were used specifically in the Charleston code. A code such as the "monkey wrench," instructed potential escapees to prepare the tools necessary for the trip. One of the final patterns in the quilts was the "tumbling boxes," which signified that it was time to leave. In order to teach the code in advance, smaller quilts were probably used. The escapees were expected to memorize the codes and carry out the various instructions they were given. The quilts worked extremely well as a method of communication between those using the Underground Railroad precisely because slave owners were not likely to become suspicious over a few pieces of patched together cloth being aired out on clothes lines. Individual quilt patterns could also have multiple meanings. For instance, the number of knots used could have had various meanings. Five knots often meant that the time for escape had come. The use of five knots, as well as other sections of the code, often derived their roots from different parts of Africa. In the Ibo culture of Nigeria, five square knots tied during a ritual signified a call to the ancestors for protection and guidance. Theories prevail about the other ways in which the codes were used. Some segments were thought to represent different tips to guide the escapees on their journeys. Various colors also played a significant role in the codes, with yellow used to designate a safe house amongst abolitionists. Ozella McDaniel Williams' Charleston Code is just one of the many examples of the intricate quilt patterns used to guide slaves onto the Underground Railroad and freedom. Many other stories and codes exist in the memories of African-American women who have had this tradition of resistance passed down to them from generation to generation.

Information taken from Angela Dodson's 'Secrets of the Quilts,' published in Essence Magazine, *February 1999.*

Immigration legislation in Canada:

Racist restructuring

by Sunera Thobani

The legislation that sits on the books in Canada concerning immigrants and refugees was enacted in 1978. Since then, there have been more than 30 policy changes made. Now, the Liberal government is gearing up to totally revamp Canada's Immigration and Refugee Act.

In November 1997, a Legislative Review Advisory Group (LRAG), commissioned by the Immigration Department, issued its recommendations for changes in a report called, "Not Just Numbers." Lucienne Robillard, the minister of citizenship and immigration, responded to the release of the report with cross-Canada consultations. Many women's and refugee groups panned the proposals.

This past January, the Immigration Department put out its own document outlining the Liberal government's proposed direction for legislative change. (The Liberal government also introduced a new Citizenship Act in December, which is currently before the House of Commons.) The feds hope to have a new Immigration and Refugee Act passed by the end of the year.

Robillard has set in motion a legislative review process, and consultations should take place this summer. Comments must be received by the Legislative Review Secretariat by March 31 to be considered in the developing of new legislation. [To submit comments, see end of article.]

At a recent forum on "Race, Gender and Ethnicity" in Burnaby, BC, Sunera Thobani, the Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair of Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University, challenged the agenda behind the federal government's proposed changes to immigration policy. The day-long forum was organized by the Burnaby Multicultural Society and the SFU's Women's Studies Department. Below, Kinesis *presents Thobani's analysis expressed at the forum.*

The restructuring of Canada's immigration program is central to the Liberal government's whole restructuring of Canadian society. When the Liberal Party came to power in 1993, the first thing it did was announce major reviews of two policy areas: social security and immigration. Since 1994 when the Liberal government initiated a round of public consultations on the immigration and refugee legislation, it has implemented a number of policy changes.

There are two contending goals which have always been central to Canadian immigration policy. The first goal is to preserve the social and cultural characteristics of the nation—that is, to "keep it white." The second goal is to ensure there is enough labour to meet market demands.

The argument I make is that the Liberal government is trying to restrict the ability of people, and in particular women, from "third world" countries to come to Canada as permanent residents or landed immigrants—that is, as people who can later make claims to Canadian citizenship. At the same time, we are seeing a tremendous expansion in the temporary migrant workers' program, where people, particularly from the "third world," are being allowed in to fill jobs "Canadians" don't want to do, without having the right to later claim Canadian citizenship.

Immigrant women—and I'm referring to "immigrant" in the racialized way employed by the state—have been set up as a threat to the interests of the nation. The Canadian government is appealing to "real" Canadians—that is, those already with citizenship—to preserve the cultural, social and linguistic characteristics of the nation. These are defined as bilingual and bicultural. Immigrants who do not fit that bill are portrayed as eroding the national identity and cultural cohesion of the country... *[unless they have enough money to make a significant "contribution" to the Canadian economy.]*

An example of how the Liberal government is promoting its restrictive immigration agenda are its proposed changes to the family-class and the independent immigrant categories. The way the immigration program is structured today, most immigrants come in either under the independent category, which is supposed to be based on selection criteria looking at individual occupation, education and skill levels, or the family-class category, which is supposed to allow Canadian citizens and permanent residents to sponsor members of their family. In the family-class category, education and job and skill levels are not supposed to be in the criteria for acceptance.

It is important for women's organizations to argue strongly against closing off immigration in such ways that restrict people from the "third world" from coming to Canada as permanent residents or landed immigrants.

Through this separation of immigrant categories, a gendering takes place. People who come in under the independent category are defined as economic actors who make economic contributions to the country, and are therefore welcomed. These characteristics are identified as "masculine" in patriarchal societies.

On the other hand, the family-class category reflects, even in its very naming, "feminine" characteristics. People who come in under this category are viewed as not making economic contributions, and are only allowed in because of family relationships. Most people who come in under the family-class are women. This particular framing sets immigrant women up as "burdens" on the nation. It erases all the contributions these women make, all of the unpaid work they do. Their contributions to the Canadian economy are rendered invisible.

The changes proposed to the family-class category would increase the sponsorship criteria and make sponsorship agreements stricter. Sponsors would be required to take care of family-class immigrants for 10 years.

This shows that unequal citizenship rights are structured into Canada's policies. In three years, family-class immigrants can apply to become Canadian citizens, but they have to wait 10 years before they can make any claims for social assistance, social housing, or other social programs. Immigrant women coming in under the family-class category are left dependent on their sponsors in ways that increase patriarchal power—the majority of sponsors are male—and increase women's vulnerability to abuse and violence.

I want to make it clear that not all sponsors abuse family-class women. However, it must be acknowledged that the state's policies create conditions that increase the potential for abuse and violence against women.

The sponsorship agreement and criteria are clearly class-based: it is easier for wealthy people to show they can sponsor family members. We see the gap between rich people and poor people increasing in this country—those at the lower end of the economic scale will find it harder to live up to the new sponsorship criteria.

The Canadian government has also restructured the Citizenship Act to narrow the grounds upon which citizenship can be claimed. This leaves immigrant women and migrant women workers more vulnerable, as claiming citizenship is a condition to being able to claim equality rights in Canada. Those of us who work for different organizations must be aware of how immigration and citizenship policies increase gender, racial and class divisions in society.

The Immigration Department plans to hold consultations on new legislative proposals *[which should be drafted by late Spring]*. It is important for women's organizations to argue strongly against closing off immigration in such ways that restrict people from the "third world" from coming to Canada as permanent residents or landed immigrants. We need to stand up to this racist treatment of people.

This is much more than being tolerant of immigrants and refugees or respectful of people from different cultures. This is an acknowledgement that what the Canadian government is doing through its promotion of the "free trade" agenda is creating the conditions for increased migration globally. The "free trade" policies which give corporations the freedom to move from one country to another without being subject to environmental laws or safety and wage standards are destroying environments and people's livelihoods in many parts of the world.

The Canadian state bears a responsibility for increasing this global migration. But what has been its response? Closing off Canada's borders.

The Vancouver Status of Women is calling together an Ad Hoc Women's Coalition on Immigration and Refugee Issues. Immigrant and refugee women, women working as advocates, lawyers and researchers, and women interested in better understanding the issues are invited to be part of this discussion and working group. The first Coalition meeting is on March 3rd at 6:00pm at the VSW office, 309-877 E. Hastings St. Among the topics for discussion will be the proposed changes to the Immigration and Refugee Act and the Citizenship Act, strategies for affecting legislative changes that best meet the interests of women, and the threat to the well-being of women and other socially and politically marginalized communities from the conservatizing of society by the federal government through its immigration policies. For more information or to confirm attendance, call (604) 255-6554. The meeting is a potluck; bring something to share if you can.

For more information on the proposed changes to Canada's immigration and refugee legislation, visit the Department of Citizenship and Immigration's website at http://cicnet.ci.gc.ca. To submit comments to the Legislative Review Secretariat, send them to: Narano Building, 10th Floor, 360 Laurier Ave West, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 1L1; fax: (613) 946-0581; email: legrev@istar.ca.

Thanks to Lin Khng for transcribing this speech.

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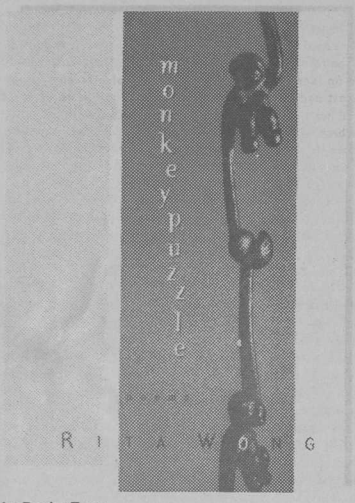
Rita Wong's **monkeypuzzle:**

Personal flows to political



by Denise Tang

MONKEYPUZZLE
by Rita Wong, Press Gang Publishers, Vancouver, BC, 1998

I cannot begin writing this book review without making a confession. It has been a long time since I picked up a book of poetry. You have to bear with me and follow my reasoning: I have the habit of reading poems one poem a sitting, even if they are all within a collection by a single poet. This leaves me feeling abandoned, emotionally disrupted, and, at certain times, politically disoriented.

In order to avoid such an, for the most part, unreasonable excuse for not doing this review, I put aside an afternoon to read Rita Wong's first published collection *monkeypuzzle*.

Her words led me through one corridor after another, lined with snapshots of historical moments and human portraits. Her poems urge you to challenge everyday assumptions in our problematic environments.

Wong offers images ranging from her work days in a family-run grocery store as an eight-year old to a nine-hour bus ride through the Gansu province in western China. We are reminded of Canada's Chinese Exclusion Act in "for kwong lee taitai, who landed in victoria the year of the monkey, 1860," the capitalistic garment industry in "*denim blues*," and the Tienanmen Square massacre in "*excerpts from a diary of resistance*." But just before one's blood boils over at the injustices and oppression, Wong etches in your thought canvas images of strong women.

In response to the historical records of China Annie's escape from her owner in Idaho to marry Ah Guan, Wong writes in the poem, "for annie:"

> i am not annie, i am
> of annie & i want it
> back. my eyes, my
> lips, my fingers, my
> breasts, my rumbling
> stomach. all mine. my
> blood
> thundering to deafen
> an army. jab of my in-
> sistent elbow. my
> pulse
> beats defiance: i am
> i am.

I can feel my pulse beating strong, my fierce eyes widening, my fists clasping in readiness to fend for myself and the causes that my feminist self believes in. Wong's words demand direct action aimed at exposing Canada's racist institutional immigration policies and practices. If political awareness is what this collection asks of us, then we must respond by equally balancing our thoughts with actions.

The flow and connections between Wong's personal memories and different oppressive acts of governments are presented in four sections: memory palate, monkeypuzzle, transidual, and passion rampant in small secret rooms.

In the poem titled "memory palate," the conflict between English and Cantonese is aptly put:

> this bittersweet taste:
> words we no longer have
> replaced by ones we no longer
> want

> the roof of my mouth hard
> with the sound of the mundane

It is as if the demands of the English language deposit bitter aftertastes in our mouths, and leave our tongues only able to reiterate frequencies of a monotonous tone.

Fluency of the English language creates many doubts around our cultural locations as immigrants, feminists and activists. The words we learn to utter are the same syllables, demarcating our bodies and our struggles. As we catch ourselves biting our tongues and swallowing our words, in a desperate attempt to reject the language in which many of us only know to speak, we create within ourselves a space of resistance towards the pervasiveness of English.

Through the poems in *monkeypuzzle*, Wong uses the English language against itself, making new words along the way to alert us to the multiple possibilities of a language revolution.

Political struggles are brought to the forefront revolution through poems such as, "down south peachwomen: minimum wage pickers" and "reading my dinner." Working-class and poor Asian immigrants are coerced into exploitative labour practices, while the state gets to define who-is-worth-what.

There is an old Chinese saying that when words of insincerity and of a sarcastic nature are spoken, we cannot hear because we do not agree with what is said. I have not heard clearly for a while. Have you?

The poet asks the question:

> can we catch a rhythm catch a
> train c'mon can we
> escape the pesticide curse

I can feel the pain of being in a larger scheme and trapped within its web of comforts and luxuries. I make note of my participation in giving excuses and crossed-arm poses. In "reading my dinner," Wong gives us a glimpse of her own survival tactic:

> only intuition at the back
> of my throat says
> a loose hand is faster
> than a tight one
> only laughing can i
> survive the violence
> of everyday transactions

If you have gotten the impression that *monkeypuzzle* is a book solely about social criticism and politics, then I have failed miserably in reviewing it. In my aim to finish reading the first three sections in one afternoon sitting, I went through varied emotions and imagined Wong's travels through endless landscapes.

Selfishly, I saved the last section on "passion rampant in small secret rooms" for another day of reading. I was waiting for the right moment to savour these poems.

I made a mistake in waiting...

Wong flaunts elements of strength, love and sensual naughtiness throughout these poems in mischievous sayings, flirtatious moments and (I have to say this) political acts.

Allow me to give you a selection of lines randomly taken from the poem "just one more love poem blossoming in a lilac spring:

> like an endless fall in dreams...
> like a wet tongue in a surprised ear...
> like food not bombs for everyone on earth...
> like hearing aretha franklin sing "Respect" live...
> like a burning bush...
> like cannons exploding into tulips...
> like fire hydrants released...

The entire poem is composed of 38 lines evoking images of random action, startling sounds and unpredictable consequences. It is a humorous jab at love itself. Each sentence challenges our assumption of what you and I see as passion. The "cheesiness-trap" is out of bounds for Wong.

Following the lines, my fingers snapped, my feet tapping to an imaginary hip-hop groove track. These words do not lie silently on the page.

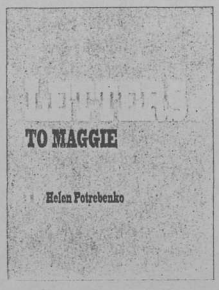
In her final poem, "somniloquy," Wong appeals to the reader's sense of passionate longing. It is not a typical poem full of tragically unfulfilled desires. By stark contrast, the poem calls for familiar touches, sweet smells and knowing tongues:

> when a lover appears in your dreams with an ankle red-string-tied to yours, you will know this is the one. ripple on still waters hums electric pull. poesy of nightblack space, the ache you know better than yourself.

I trip over myself, one time too many, my cluttered words cannot articulate desire, not for what I want and not of you who I want. Like a rhythmical string of notes with resonating sounds, Wong's words mark the tonality of my feminist consciousness. Are you up for it?

Denise Tang has a secret desire to be a kick-ass dj.

LAZARA PRESS



It's a party
to celebrate the publication of
Letters to Maggie
by Helen Potrebenko
Thursday, March 18
7 to 9:30 pm, Wise Hall,
1882 Adanac Street in Vancouver.
Reading by the author & special performance by the Euphoniously Feminist & Non-Performing Quintet.
Books and CDs for sale.
Everyone welcome!

Marusya Bociurkiw's *Nancy Drew & the Mystery of the Haunted Body:*

With magnifying glass in hand...

by leanne johnson

Written and directed by Vancouver based media-artist, author and academic Marusya Bociurkiw, *Nancy Drew & the Mystery of the Haunted Body* is a "comedy about incest, Freud and Recovered Memory." Bociurkiw's 45-minute video was filmed in Vancouver and edited at the Western Front, which explains the appearance of some of Vancouver's most notable artists. *Nancy Drew* had its world (Vancouver) premiere at the Blinding Light Cinema in the start of February.

I asked Bociurkiw a little about her process in making the film. She told me that four years ago, she had an idea to write a screenplay about incest and incest survivors. Bociurkiw based her video on the Nancy Drew novels (which began production in the 1930s and are still being printed), but says that it was equally inspired by the Nancy Clue mysteries (a racy lesbian series).

Bociurkiw was intrigued with the incest subtext of the Nancy Clue series, which was evident in the suffocating relationship between Nancy and her father in the original stories. Over the years, she read and heard her share of incest survivor stories. She felt that these stories failed to communicate themselves to a large enough audience. Bociurkiw wanted to reach a bigger audience, much like the creators of the Nancy Clue series had done, by appropriating the pop culture icon Nancy Drew.

Bociurkiw wrote the Nancy Drew video in a style similar to the multi-plot of the mystery series. Magnifying glass constantly in hand, Bociurkiw's Nancy (played with sublime naïveté by Kirster Robek) is looking for mysteries to solve. Nancy has a few of her own mysteries she is unwilling to pursue (the nightmares that keep her awake at night).

By day, she works as a researcher at The Psychology Institute (a front for the False Memory Institute), and by night, she pursues mysteries. One day her menacing boss Dr. D. Nial (played with sublime stiffness by Eric Metcalfe) calls Nancy in to help track down missing research papers of a recently murdered researcher at the institute.

Nancy stumbles about with a cheery, insistent innocence. Sleepwalking through clues and relationships, she eventually ends up in the middle of a debate on false memory syndrome versus recovered memory. Bociurkiw treads a fine line between comedy and farce, and the balance is almost tipped in the scene where Nancy finds herself on a talk show. Here, Bociurkiw splices together an episode of Oprah that includes celebrity incest survivors and a debate on false memory syndrome.

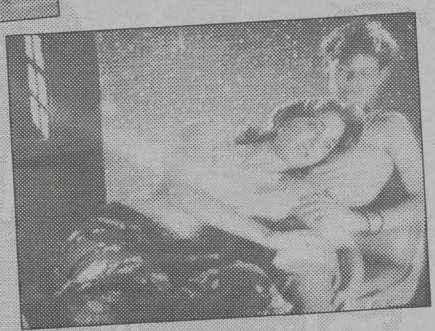
Perhaps the farce element is enhanced by the ridiculous arguments of the false memory adherents—men talking about what the victims' accusations have done to their lives. This scene is brilliantly parlayed in the final scene in the video when Nancy addresses viewers.

At moments, *Nancy Drew* gets pretty corny, such as when Nancy is pretending to drive her car and a prairie back-drop inexplicably appears, or through the use of her magnifying glass to change from one scene to the next. (Or worse still, the split scene cuts). Bociurkiw is definitely working within the limitations of an indie budget, and for the most part the cheesiness works.

I like Bociurkiw best when she is serious. The scenes that have Nancy alone are perhaps my favourite. Her flashbacks are magnificently and simply treated using a doll-sized silhouette of her family home. Nancy keeps returning to this darkened house. She cannot enter; she can only peer into it from the outside. Much of the time Nancy looks absurd carrying around her magnifying glass and flashlight—especially because it's usually broad daylight—but in these scenes she is full of pathos.

The most tender moment of the video is (appropriately) at the end when Nancy Drew addresses viewers after finally confronting her past. It is one of the most realistic moments of the film. It is made even more real because it steps away from comedy and deals with surviving incest in a quiet and gentle way.

Nancy Drew & the Mystery of the Haunted Body should be coming to a theatre near you, and I recommend you see it if it does. I hope that one day Bociurkiw gets a large bag of money to make a film version of *Nancy Drew* and that it gets maximum distribution. (I also hope that the projectionists win their strike battle before then.)



leanne johnson is a Vancouver based writer who lives in a cave.

video stills courtesy of Marusya Bociurkiw

Celebrate IWD with the film series "Long Live Voices"

The Women of Color Network, as part of the Women Students' Office at the University of British Columbia, is celebrating IWD with a film series narrated by various groups of women in Canada. Each screening will be followed by a discussion.

Monday, March 1st, 12:30-1:30pm

Older Stronger Wiser

directed by Claire Prieto, 1989
assistant director: Dionne Brand

Focuses on five rural and urban Black women who speak compellingly of what life was like for them in the 1920s, 30s, 40s, 50s. Their stories authenticate the untold history of Black women in Canada and the contributions they have made to the vibrancy of the community and to the heritage of Afro-Canadian people.

Tuesday, March 2nd, 12:30-1:30pm

Mother of Many Children

directed by Alanis Obomsawin, 1977

An examination of the role, socialization and living conditions of Aboriginal women in Canada. This film focuses on the cycles of personal growth from birth to old age as recounted by First Nations women in a series of

Friday, March 5th, 12:30-1:30pm

Where the Spirit Lives

directed by Bruce Pittman, 1989

This film follows the experiences of a 12-year old Blackfoot girl, Amelia, taken from her home on the reserve and relocated by the government to a residential school. Set in 1937.

Monday, March 8th, 12:30-1:30pm

Under the Willow Tree

directed by Dora Nipp, 1997

Tells of the first women to come to Canada from China and the women of subsequent generations. Included are stories of women who were sent from China to marry men they had never met; stories of battles against racism; stories of changing values and culture preserved and handed down.

Tuesday, March 9th, 12:30-1:30pm

Prairie Women

directed by Barbara Evans, 1987

Recalls life on the Canadian prairies in the 1920s and '30s. It shows how the women reached out from lonely farms and a harsh climate to come together to improve the conditions of their lives.

Monday, March 15th, 12:30-1:30pm

A Time to Rise

directed by Anand Patwardhan & Jim Munro, 1991

This moving and well-crafted film documents BC farm workers' struggle to unionize. The majority of these workers are South Asian and Chinese; many of them are women. The film depicts the conditions that

All screenings are free of charge. The films will be screened in Rm 204 D, Brock Hall. For more information call 822-2415.

SINGLE MOTHERS' RESOURCE GUIDE

They're going fast. This hot little resource guide is packed with all kinds of useful information on **child care, legal assistance, employment and training, housing, welfare, services for First Nations women, freebies and cheapies and more!** To get your free copy, pick one up from our office during office hours, or send us a self-addressed stamped envelope with $1.50 return postage on it (send a large size envelope please). Organizations can place an order for multiple copies by phoning **VSW** at **255-6554**. We ask organizations to contribute $2.00 per copy toward the cost of the guides.

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LETTERS

Don't be PC about fundraising

Dear *Kinesis*,
I was very interested in Jennifer Johnstone's piece *[on feminist fundraising, February 1999,]* and speaking as a woman living in poverty, I think I have something to add to the discussion. The major problem it seems to me is terminal political correctness, trying to be all things to all people. It would not bother me one bit if this fundraising collective were to hold a fundraiser every month, at a price far exceeding my price range. Surely it is more important to attempt to guarantee the survival of organizations such as those listed, who provide valuable services to all women, poor or otherwise, than it is to have to close your doors from lack of the wherewithal to continue.

It is also very important in my view to stop expecting the staff of feminist organizations to work or less money than they would receive in the mainstream, and pay them what they are worth. Too often they are also expected to put in many hours as volunteers. We would not expect The Bay or The Hong Kong Bank to expect that of their workers. In fact, we would probably mount a demonstration in front of their doors if they did so.

Verna Turner and I have been in a correspondence centred mainly on "how women within the women's movement treat each other" (for the most part in pretty appalling ways) for the past couple of years, and in the interim have also begun a fundraiser called, The Defiant Women's Support Fund, which has been set up to loan or grant funds to women who want to do something creative their own way without having to jump through the hoops of government grants or the stipulations of banks or their families.

It is hoped for the first year or so that women will be more interested in donating than applying for funds, but the hardest part from my past experience of fundraising for women's organizations is trying to pry women loose from their money. It's like pulling teeth for the most part. So a lot of education needs to be done around the issues of money and giving, especially with women who don't normally use a lot of the services. They don't see the need until the time they require a rape crisis centre, or a transition house, then a huge awakening takes place. But what a way to have to learn the value of all these different services.

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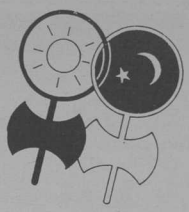

dear readers

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

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

Hope to hear from you very soon.

Kinesis

You see the same names on lists of sustaining subscribers to magazines and I would suspect those same names appear on the donations list of many other organizations working for women. So the need it seems to me is to talk a lot about women and money and women and philanthropy. You don't need to be a millionaire to give something to help support causes you believe in. Even $20 now and then is welcome. Twenty or $50 a month from a few thousand women would be wonderful. That combined with regular fundraisers would likely do the trick. I wonder too if there are women who have willed funds to places like The Vancouver Foundation, who would be willing to stipulate that it go to feminist organizations if they knew the need.

In my view, great fundraisers would be regular evenings of entertainment by *paid* women performers: singers, dancers, skit performers, comediens, speakers, poetry readings would be great. If some of us from out of town knew about upcoming events we could get a few carloads together and come into the city, and again as a woman living in poverty, if I knew well ahead of time, I could save up $20 or $30 so that I could attend too. Or maybe events could have a raffle for say 10 or 15 seats, that low-income women could put their names in a pot, and you could draw a set number, and let them know they could attend for say $5, $10, or maybe even nothing.

My feelings won't be hurt one little bit if I can't go to some function I can't afford, so have it. It's no different from not being able to afford a new coat for 10 years, which is the situation I'm in right now, so does that mean coats shouldn't be advertised or sold?

The only rules I'd apply to any fundraising idea is that the content be non-sexist, non-racist, non-violent and accessible to the disabled. Other than that, if you think a $500 a plate dinner would be successful, go for it. Staying alive is more important than being PC and having to close the doors.

Yours in Sisterhood,
Mary Billy
Squamish, BC

- 2 -

Pick on corporations

Dear *Kinesis*,
re: The Vicious Cycle *[December/January 1999.]* Wow! I really want to commend you women who wrote this literary flagrancy. You have consistently (twice) shown to me your own vicious cycle of narrow-minded and exclusive views. First, the anti-trans defamation *[March 1998]*, now the masterpiece attacking (even so much as boycotting!) one of the few dyke-owned, women-run businesses in our multi-divided and diverse community.

The whole hideous advertising business in itself is oppressive. You can open almost any silly magazine and see sexualized advertisements of women, men and children (not to condone that or anything.) So, why don't all you women over there get it together and put your excess energy towards the real oppressors, those big ol' corporate companies, sucking the $$, and laughing on everyone's behalf!?

Thanks for listening. I will be sure not to pick up your next issue and let my other friends know how I feel.

Marcus Horton
Vancouver, BC
PS: I am a F2M. I hope my opinion is still valid. Is my mind my own! It sure is.

RECOMMENDING WOMEN X!!

Vancouver Status of Women together with Coffey Miller & Co. and Davidson, Muir & Sandor will host the tenth anniversary of our premier fundraising event, Recommending Women on Thursday, April 15th, at the Sutton Place Hotel Ballroom, 845 Burrard (@Robson) in Vancouver. We are pleased to have as this year's guest speaker, Dionne Brand, Govenor General's Award winning poet and author of *At the Full and Change of the Moon*. The fun begins at 7:00 pm. A silent auction featuring the work of local women artists, hors d'oeuvres, entertainment, a cash bar and a grand prize raffle draw will be the order of the evening. Rogers Cable Television host, Fiona Forbes, will emcee. The venue is wheelchair accessible. Tickets are $50. Space is limited so call 255-6554 to RSVP today! VISA and Mastercard accepted.

BULLETIN BOARD

read this

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

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

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

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

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

Listings will not be accepted over the telephone.

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

Send submissions to *Kinesis*, #309-877 E. Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC, V6A 3Y1, fax: (604) 255-7508, or email: kinesis@web.net. For more information call (604) 255-5499.

INVOLVEMENT

WANNA GET INVOLVED?

With *Kinesis*? We want to get involved with you too. Help plan our next issue. All women interested in what goes into *Kinesis*—whether it's news, features or arts—are invited to our Story Meetings held on the **first Tuesday** of every month at 7pm at our office, 309-877 E. Hastings St. The next meetings are on **Mar 2** and **Apr 6**. For more information or if you can't make the meeting, but still want to find out how to contribute to the content of *Kinesis*, give Agnes a call at (604) 255-5499. New and experienced writers welcome. Childcare and travel subsidies available.

INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW!

Do you ever wonder how the pages of text in the newspaper you're holding gets lined up so neatly? Want to know what the fastest way to get wax off your hands is? How about all the cool things you can do with a scanner? Does thinking about the right dot pattern keep you up at night? Or do visions of rubylith enter into your dreams? If so, then you definitely need to come down and help put *Kinesis* together. Just drop by during our next production dates and help us design and lay out Canada's national feminist newspaper, and all your questions will be answered. We'll be in production for our **April 1999** issue from **Mar 17-23**. Come and join us. No experience is necessary. Training and support will be provided. If this notice intrigues you, call us at (604) 255-5499. Childcare and travel subsidies available.

FEMINIST FUNDRAISERS WANTED

VSW is seeking enthusiastic, energetic and creative women to join the Finance and Fundraising Committee. If you enjoy raising money for a great cause, organizing events, or just want to have fun, call Audrey at 255-6554 today!

INVOLVEMENT

VSW IS LOOKING FOR YOU!

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

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

Are you a volunteer at VSW or *Kinesis*? If yes, please feel free to make contributions to our new monthly "Volunteer Newsletter." The newsletter is for us—for all VSW/ *Kinesis* volunteers—and will be a place for updates on committee work, gossip, recipes, things for sale/barter, a calendar of events, and whatever else volunteers want to put in. There's a box at #309-877 E. Hastings St just waiting for your submissions. If you want more info contact Amal Rana (*Kinesis* production coordinator) at 255-5499 or Rita Dhamoon of the VSW Volunteer Development Committee at 255-6554.

RECOMMENDING WOMEN

1999 will mark the 10th anniversary of the Vancouver Status of Women's premier fundraising gala, Recommending Women on **Thurs Apr 15**. Confirmed as the keynote speaker is Governor General's Award winning poet Dionne Brand, who will read from her forthcoming novel *At the Full and Change of the Moon*. VSW is inviting women in the community to join the organizing committee for this very exciting event. If you have event organizing skills, enthusiasm, or just want to have some fun, call Audrey at 255-6554 to find out how you can get involved. VSW welcomes your ideas on how to make the 10th annual Recommending Women the biggest and best VSW party ever.

KINESIS MARKETING GANG

Interested in being on the hottest new committee at VSW. Then check out the *Kinesis* Marketing Gang. We're looking for women who have experience or are interested in advertising and marketing. The Marketing Gang works as a collective to strategize on innovative ways to promote and raise the profile of *Kinesis*. The gang meets monthly. Training and support will be provided by *Kinesis* marketing coordinator Jenn Lo. Call her at 255-5499.

EVENTS

NATIONAL FORUM

"Towards Filipino Women's Equality" is the theme of the first Filipino-Canadian women's national consultative forum to be held in Vancouver **Mar 11-14**. Organized by the Philippine Women Centre of BC, this forum will be an opportunity to gather on a national level to address a broad range of issues from the perspective of grassroots Filipino women. The forum will discuss five major themes: labour and migration; human rights, systemic racism and immigration; violence against women; young women and their issues; and challenges for women migrant workers. For more info contact Luningning Alcuitas-Imperial or Jane Ordinario at (604) 215-1103 or pwc@netcom.ca.

HELEN POTREBENKO

Lazara Press will celebrate the publication of *Letters to Maggie* by Helen Potrebenko on **Thurs Mar 18**, from 7-9:30pm at the WISE Hall, 1882 Adanac St. Refreshments and entertainment by the Euphoniously Feminist & Non-Performing Quintet and a reading by the author. Books and CDs will be available. For more info call Lazara Press at (604) 872-1134.

EVENTS

IMMIGRATION DISCUSSION GROUP

The Vancouver Status of Women is calling on women to come together for the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Women's Coalition on Immigration and Refugee Issues on **Wed Mar 3** at 6pm. Last December, the federal government introduced into the House of Commons a revised Citizenship Act. By the end of the year, the Liberals hope to pass new immigration and refugee legislation. The Coalition intends to be a place to discuss the issues and take action to ensure changes to legislation to best meet the interests of women. Immigrant and refugee women, women working as advocates, lawyers or researchers, and women interested in learning more about immigration and refugee issues, are all invited to attend. The meeting will be a potluck and will take place at VSW, 309-877 E. Hastings St (between Campbell and Hawk). For more info, call (604) 255-6554.

REGINA RYAN

Regina Ryan, a former Catholic nun, will discuss her book *The Woman Awake* **Thurs Mar 4**, 7:30pm at Women in Print, 3566 West 4th Ave, Vancouver. Ryan's book is the result of a 15-year search for the "feminine face of God." Admission is free. For more info call (604) 732-4128.

DIALOGUE ON EQUITY

The Joint Chair in Women's Studies at Carleton University and the University of Ottawa is hosting a symposium on "Women of Colour and Aboriginal Women: a Dialogue on Equity in the Academy." The symposium will take place on **Fri Mar 5** at Carleton University, and is organized by Rashmi Luther, Bernice Moreau, Bessa Whitmore and Reva Gutnick of the School of Social Work. Featured speakers are Madeleine Dion Stout, Patricia Monture, Sherene Razack, Joanne St. Lewis and Wanda Thomas Bernard. For more info contact Helene Boudreault at (613) 520-6644 or hboudre@uottawa.ca.

PROTECTING OUR DAUGHTERS

The Richmond Women's Resource Centre is holding a workshop on **Sat Mar 6** from 9am to 3:30pm for mothers and daughters (suitable for Grade 6 and 7 girls) about self protection from potential violence in school, in the community, at work and in the home. The day will include interactive workshops on communication, self esteem and self-defence, and will take place at Minoah Steves School, 10111 4th Ave, Richmond, BC. Preregistration is required. Admission is $10 per person, with lunch included. Some subsidies available. For more info call (604) 279-7060. Translations in Cantonese, Mandarin, Farsi and Punjabi will be available.

MIDWIVES & DOULAS

The Vancouver Women's Health Information Centre will present midwives and doulas **Sat Mar 13**, 11am-1pm at the Centre, 219-1675 W. 8th Ave. Join other women in learning the newest information on midwifery. Discover what doulas do. Reservations are encouraged as space is limited. A $3 donation is suggested. To register call (604) 736-5262 and leave a message.

MARY CAPPELLO

Mary Cappello will read from her memoirs, *Night Blooms*, **Tues Mar 23**, 7:30pm at Women in Print, 3566 W. 4th Ave, Vancouver. *Night Blooms* tells the story of a third-generation Italian American woman's struggle to understand the haunting contradictions of her family legacy. Cappello is the reader of the family, finding in their responses to loss and violence a context to describe her own isolation and emerging lesbian sexuality. Admission is free. For more info call (604) 732-4128.

EVENTS

INFORMATION RIGHTS FORUM

As part of the 6th annual Information Rights Week (Mar 22 - 28), Heather Menzies will give a free talk on information technology, "How Come the People Keep Disappearing?" at SFU Harbour Centre on **Weds Mar 24**, 7:00pm. Menzies is the author of "Whose Brave New World: The Information Highway and the New Economy." For more info call (604) 683-5357

CHILD RESEARCH

The Joint Chair in Women's Studies at Carleton University and the University of Ottawa will be hosting a symposium in honour of Sharon Stephens on **Fri Mar 26** at Carleton University. The event, organized by Virginia Caputo of the Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's Studies at Carleton University, will feature Pamela Downe, Jane Helleiner, Allison James, Cristina Szanton Blanc, and others. For further info contact Helene Boudreault at (613) 520-6644 or hboudre@uottawa.ca

POWELL STREET FESTIVAL

On **Fri Mar 26** from 7-11 pm, the Powell Street Festival Society will be holding a fundraising art and services auction at the Heritage Hall at 3102 Main St, Vancouver. The Society, in its 18th year, operates and supports an annual festival dedicated to celebrating the arts and culture of Japanese Canadian and Asian Canadian communities. The auction will include live performance, raffle prizes, refreshments, and hors d'oeuvres. Auction items include works by Taiga Chiba, Mas Funo, Gu Xiong, Joyce Kamikura, Roy Kiyooka, Laiwan, Haruko Okano, Yuxweluptan Lawrence Paul, Miyuki Shinkai, Kyoko Sumi, Henry Tsang, Amanda White, Paul Wong, Sherry Jamal, Michelle McGeough, Zainub Verjee, Lily Shinde, Alisa Kage, Kaori Kasai, and many others. For more info call (604) 739-9388.

JANICE WILLIAMSON

Janice Williamson will read from her moving and poetic book, *Crybaby*, on **Tues Mar 30**, 7:30pm at Women in Print, 3566 West 4th Ave, Vancouver. Crybaby is the memoir of a woman struggling with intimations of incest, her infertility, and the suicide of her father. Admission is free. For more info call (604) 732-4128.

BREAST HEALTH & BREASTFEEDING

The Vancouver Women's Health Information Centre is hosting a workshop on breast health and breastfeeding on **Sat Apr 10**, 11am-1pm at the Centre, 219-1675 W. 8th Ave. Pam Fichtner, RMT, will talk about general health and Juliette Smith, a trained breastfeeding counsellor, will talk about the pros and cons of breastfeeding and some of the common problems that can arise during the breastfeeding relationship. Reservations are encouraged as space is limited. A $3 donation is suggested. To register call (604) 736-5262 and leave a message.

NOT SO STRICTLY BALLROOM

Not So Strictly Ballroom offers dance classes and monthly dances to the lesbian and gay community — the only organization of its kind in Vancouver. Coming up on **Saturdays**, 12:30-2pm at the WISE Hall, 1882 Adanac is Triple Rhythm Jive and Foxtrot, and **Thursday** evenings, 7-8:30pm Rhumba and Quick Step. Everyone is welcome, singles and couples. Join us at our next dance on **Fri Mar 19, 8pm** at the WISE Hall, for dance lessons, demos, social, and country and western dancing. Not So Strictly Ballroom, where same-sex dancing is the norm. For more info call 688-West ext. 2145.

BULLETIN BOARD

GROUPS

POSITIVE ASIANS

Are you HIV-positive and Asian? Are you looking for support? Then, come to the Asian Society for Intervention of AIDS' "Positive Asians Dinner" (PAD) in Vancouver **Tues Mar 9**. The dinner will be a totally safe and confidential place to meet others who share the same heritage and circumstances. For more info call ASIA at (604) 669-5567.

16 STEP SUPPORT GROUP

SESRA (Survivors of Extreme Systematic or Ritualised Abuse) is holding an ongoing support group for women **Thursday** evenings, 7-8:30pm at Room 5, Gordon Neighbourhood House, 1019 Broughton St, Vancouver. The group is organized by survivor peers and based on the books of Charlotte Kasl and Chrystine Oksana. Cost is by donation. For more info call (604) 683-2554.

MENOPAUSE AWARENESS GROUP

The Surrey Women's Centre is sponsoring a Menopause Awareness Group which will meet the **4th Monday** of each month for informal discussions around menopause issues. The group starts at 7:30pm and will be held at the centre. For location or more info call Janet or Sharon at (604) 589-1868.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Building Blocks Vancouver offers information and support for Spanish-speaking, Vietnamese and Aboriginal women living in the Grandview Woodland area expecting their first baby or with newborns under three-months old. The program has a great team of Home Visitors to assist women. For more info call MOSAIC at (604) 254-9626 or the Vancouver Aboriginal Family and Child Services at (604) 251-4844, local 311.

WOMEN ABUSE SUPPORT GROUP

A support group in Vancouver for women abused by women is available for lesbians, dykes and bisexual women through Battered Women's Support Services. Emotional support, legal information and advocacy, safety planning, and referrals are offered. The group is free and confidential and on-site childcare is available. For more info call Sarah or Stacia at (604) 687-1867.

GODDESS ART SHOW

Calling all Goddess Artists. If you are interested in being involved either as an organizer or participating artist, or know someone who might be, in a huge show of Goddess Art for the year 2000. The plan is to organize a major show in Vancouver, combined with multiple bus tours of 3-5 days throughout different parts of BC. For more info contact Mary Billy, Box 2047, Squamish BC, V0N 3G0; tel: (604) 892-5723; or email: mbilly@sea-to-sky.net. Donations to help with postage and phone calls are appreciated.

RAPE RELIEF VOLUNTEERS

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

COMPULSIVE EATING SUPPORT

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

GROUPS

MIDDLE EAST DISCUSSION GROUP

The Vancouver Middle East Discussion Group in Vancouver meets once a month to discuss issues related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The group's focus is to be part of the struggle for equality and freedom in the Middle East. Some issues of discussion include Zionist exploitation of Nazi genocide, and settler colonialism in Palestine and North America. In the coming months, the group hopes to discuss the experiences of women in the Middle East, different types of Palestinian feminism, and the role of the United States in the region. To participate or for more information, call (604) 253-4047.

SHAKTI - "STRENGTH"

Shakti (meaning "strength") is a self-help group in Vancouver for South Asian women who have experienced the psychiatric system. The group meets every **1st and 3rd Saturday** of the month 1-3pm at South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, 6470 Victoria Dr. Join the group for outings, discoveries, peer support, relaxing massage. Participation is free. For more info call Helen (604) 733-5570 (for English) or (604) 682-3269 box 8144 (for Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu). Sponsored by the Vancouver/ Richmond Mental Health Network.

SUBMISSIONS

ART SHOW SPACE

The Vancouver Women's Health Collective is pleased to announce that it has opened its space to women artists. Shows will run for 4-6 weeks under contract guidelines. The Collective will host an opening, and provide some advertising as well as hanging materials. For details, leave a message for Christine Campbell or Tamara Flick-Parker at (604) 736-4234.

FILIPINA NURSES

Are you a Filipina nurse who came to Canada under the Live-in Caregiver Program? The Philippine Women Centre is gathering the experiences of Filipina nurses who enter Canada as domestic helpers. By sharing experiences, participants can identify what the systemic barriers are that prevent them from developing to their full potential in Canada. One strategy is to begin the process of getting collective recognition for the education and skills Filipina nurses bring to Canada. For more info about this research project or the PWC's Nurses' Support Group, call Maita or Mayette at (603) 215-1103.

API WOMEN AND GIRLS

Are you a wimmin or girl of full, mixed or partial Asian or Pacific Islander origin? Have you always wanted to see your work—be it poetry, art, recipes, rants, fiction or non-fiction—in print? Fire Moon! Asian and Pacific Islander Wimmin's Alliance, wants to print your stuff for its zine. All submissions can be handed into the Simon Fraser University Women's Centre, c/o Janet. Submissions are accepted on an ongoing basis. For more info call (604) 291-3670 or email: boun@sfu.ca.

ABUSE OF PARENTS

A group of women in Nova Scotia is collecting information about the abuse of parents by their teenage children. They hope to publish a booklet for families which includes reading lists for professionals and parents, and ideas for what groups, including support groups of parents, can do to help themselves and their communities. The group is looking for any research, resources or projects on this issue. To share info or for more details about the booklet, email to barbara.cottrell@dbis.ns.ca.

CLASSIFIEDS

WOMEN'SPACE

Women'space, a quarterly magazine about women, the Internet and activism, has moved from the East Coast to Ottawa. Its new mailing address is PO Box 1034, Almonte, ON, K0A 1A0; telephone: (613) 256-5682; and fax: (613) 256-5202. Also check out *Women'space's* recently updated website at http://www.womenspace.ca. The site now carries 11 back issues, a growing set of resources on what women are doing online to promote women's equality.

LIBERTY THRIFT

The WELL (Women Embracing Life and Liberty) Society in Vancouver is moving to a bigger location at 3070 Commercial Dr. Established in 1995, the WELL Society is a grassroots women's organization that provides women fleeing violent relationships with household goods and clothing to begin again. The Society operates Liberty Thrift, a store which offers fun, fashion and funk at bargain prices for women, children and men shopping for change. The Society continues to welcome donations of clothing and household items and furniture. To make a contribution, drop by the new store, or call (604) 253-3080.

SPINSTERVALE

Ever wanted to live on women's land? Small cabin(s) for rent by month, $200-250. Woodstove and outhouse. Also available at Spinstervale in Coombs on Vancouver Island are nightly rates ($7.50/woman), group rates and work exchanges (three hours a day equals room/board). Call (250) 248-8809 or email Sunshine@macn.bc.ca.

WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENSE

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

CITYVIEW CO-OP

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

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES FOR WOMEN

GAIA (Mother Earth) Adventures presents Outdoor Adventures for Women. Hike the Stawamus Chief **Mar 13** or **Apr 3** and discover exciting trails leading up to three different peaks. Ride the ferry to Bowen Island for an easy and rewarding hike around Killarney Lake on **Mar 20** or **Apr 24** (no experience required) or hike the Squamish Estuary **Mar 27**. Call 875-0066 today or check out our website at www.vancouver-bc.com/Gaia.

WANTED TO RENT

Two Canadian feminist writers, currently living in San Fransciso, in search of cozy quiet 1 BR cottage (water view nice) on Galiano for month of July. House exchange possible. Call (415) 285-5135, or email: ecwecw@mills.edu.

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KINESIS
News About Women That's Not In The Dailies

Position Available

SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE COORDINATOR

Kinesis, a national feminist newspaper published by the Vancouver Status of Women, is seeking an organized, self-motivated and creative woman for the position of *Subscription Drive Co-ordinator*.

With support from the Marketing Gang, she would be responsible for:

- Compiling a targetted mailing list
- Entering data and maintaining a database
- Writing and designing solicitation materials and subscription forms
- Determining costs for the production of promotional materials and the mailout
- Coordinating the printing and mailing
- Setting up a tracking system for solicitations
- Compiling feedback on the campaign

The ideal applicant would have experience with direct mail campaigns; database, wordprocessing and graphic design software; writing and designing promotional materials; and budgeting. Experience working onpromoting feminist or other alternative publications is an asset.

The position is an eight-week, part-time contract position. Remuneration will be $16 per hour for 20 hours per week. There is some flexibility in working hours. The start date for this position is **March 29, 1999**.

Aboriginal women and women of colour are strongly encouraged to apply.

Please send a resume, cover letter, and a short writing sample to the address below by **March 18, 1999**.

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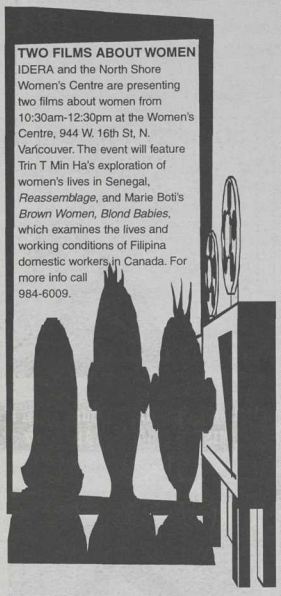
IWD CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH 1

FETE FOR WOMEN OF COLOUR

The Ruth Wynn Woodward Chair of Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University is hosting a celebration for women of colour at the YWCA, 535 Hornby St (4th Floor, Room 5) starting at 7pm. Food, conversation and poetry will be flowing. For further info call Ritz at 291-4023.

MARCH 5



TWO FILMS ABOUT WOMEN

IDERA and the North Shore Women's Centre are presenting two films about women from 10:30am-12:30pm at the Women's Centre, 944 W. 16th St, N. Vancouver. The event will feature Trin T Min Ha's exploration of women's lives in Senegal, *Reassemblage*, and Marie Boti's *Brown Women, Blond Babies*, which examines the lives and working conditions of Filipina domestic workers in Canada. For more info call 984-6009.

CELEBRATING UNSUNG HEROINES

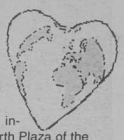
"Visions and Voices: Sisters in the Circle" is the theme of Douglas College's IWD celebration. The festivities will begin with a dinner at 6pm, followed by a ceremony honoring unsung heroines. The keynote speaker will be Viola Thomas, president of the United Native Nations. Tickets are $15 for students and $20 for college employees and guests, and are available at Douglas College's New Westminster Campus Women's Centre, Room 4810, 4th Floor S. For more info call 527-5148.

LILY'S FRINGE

Celebrate IWD with an evening of fun and foolery at the WISE Club, 1882 Adanac St. The festivities will include performances by the Mad Cowgirls (with Kathryn Wahamaa), writer Gwynne Hunt, the unique Latin flavour of Pancho & Sal, fiddle and stomp of the Bear Mountain Dancers, the raw energy of poet Andrea Alexon, and funny business by Erin Graham. Doors open at 7pm. Advance tickets are $10, available from Highlife, Urban Empire and the Port Coquitlam Women's Centre. Tickets at the door are sliding scale $12-15. For more info call Inspirit at 1-800-261-3281.

MARCH 6

THE MARCH AND RALLY



"Equality Through Global Solidarity" is the theme of this year's IWD March and Rally in Vancouver. Women are invited to gather at the North Plaza of the Vancouver Public Library, 350 West Georgia St, at 11:30 am. Participants will leave at noon for a march through the downtown core, and then return to the library for the rally and information tables. For further info call 253-0067.

CELEBRATION FOR LESBIANS

The Vancouver Status of Women is hosting a Celebration for Lesbians at Bukowski's on Commercial Dr, starting at 7:30pm. Performances will include members of Sawagi Taiko, Vera LeFranc, Terrie Hamazaki, and Anne Fleming. It's a women-only event. Admission is by donation. For further info call Shana at 255-6554.

MARKER OF CHANGE

Women on Galiano Island will celebrate IWD with a potluck dinner and the screening of *Marker of Change*, a documentary about the Women's Monument in Vancouver, which was constructed in 1997 to commemorate the 14 women murdered December 6, 1989 in Montreal and all women who have died at the hands of men. The event will be held at the South End Community Hall beginning at 6pm. For more info or accomodation, call (250) 539-5844.

CABARET V

The Rainbow Concert Band, Canada's only gay and lesbian band, presents Cabaret V at the WISE Hall, 1882 Adanac St. The band's annual revue celebrating IWD starts at 8pm and will feature emcee Karen Hoskins, Synchronicity, Psychotic Butler, Yvonne McSkimming and Mark James Fortin, the Nat Queen Cool Trombone Quartet, Main Dance, and Kunk. Tickets are $14 in advance at Harry's Off Commercial and Little Sister's on Davie St; or $15 at the door. Concession tickets for seniors, students and the unwaged can be reserved by calling the Band Line at 290-0556.

MARCH 7

DISCUSSION AND THEATRE

The Vancouver Status of Women and Britannia Community Services Centre are hosting an afternoon of entertainment and education on immigrant and refugee women at the Britannia Centre High School Auditorium, 1661 Napier Street. There will be a panel discussion on the proposed changes to Canada's Immigration Act from 1-3 pm, and "Storytelling Our Lives" by Puente Theatre from 3-5 pm. Admission is by donation. The venue is wheelchair accessible. For further information call 255-6554.

FESTIVITIES IN RICHMOND

The Richmond Women's Resource Centre and the Richmond Art Gallery are hosting a panel discussion on women artists and the portrayal of women in art from 2-4pm at the art gallery, 7025 Minoru Gate. Performances by Sawagi Taiko, the Happy Momma's Dance Group, Asian folk dances, and the Persian Women's Dance Group of Richmond. For more info call 279-7060.

SURREY CELEBRATION

A celebration to honour women's struggle for peace and equality will take place from 2-4pm in the main foyer of Queen Elizabeth Senior Secondary, 9457 King George Highway in Surrey. The featured guest speaker will be Fay Blaney of the Aboriginal Women's Action Network and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and there will be entertainment by the Raging Grannies and the More Than Just Pay Singers. "Rage," a student art exhibit, will also be on display. There will be childcare onsite. Tickets are $10, and free for the unemployed, and include refreshments. Proceeds of the gala will be donated to Surrey/White Rock transition houses. For more info call Surrey Teachers' Association at 594-5353, or the Surrey Women's Centre at 589-1868

PLAY DAY

Barbara Karmazyn will facilitate a "Play Day" to celebrate women's lives and experiences from 10am-4:30pm at the Roundhouse Community Centre, 181 Roundhouse Mews. In an atmosphere of play, exploration and discovery, women will use storytelling, dance, rhythm and art to speak their own truth. Dress in comfortable clothing, bring lunch and images and instruments. The cost is $35 and includes materials. For more info call 713-1800.

MARCH 8

CELEBRATING IN WHITE ROCK

The South Surrey/White Rock Women's Place and the Atira Transition House are celebrating IWD with the Raging Grannies and Vera LeFranc at Whitby's Bookstore, 14837 Marine Dr. in White Rock, starting at 7pm. Admission is a $5 minimum donation. For more info call 536-9611.

POCO OPEN HOUSE

The Port Coquitlam and Area Women's Centre is holding an Open House for IWD from 11am-5pm at 2420 Maryhill Rd, Port Coquitlam. For more info call 941-6311.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR WOMEN

The BC Pay Equity Network is sponsoring an event for women in unions interested in organizing around pay equity in the meeting room of the YWCA Hotel, 733 Beatty St, starting at 6:30 pm. Refreshments will be served, and childcare can be arranged if requested before March 1. Call Maire Kirwan at CUPE at 291-1940.

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE OPEN HOUSE

From noon to 4pm, there will be an Open House at the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, 44 East Cordova St, to celebrate the achievements of women in the Downtown Eastside. Drumming, dancing, music, an art exhibition, video exhibition and demonstrations. For more info call 681-8480.

CANADIAN ACTORS' EQUITY

The Canadian Actors' Equity Association Women's Committee will present an evening of performances from various local female artists, including stand-up comics, poets, actors, musicians and filmmakers at the Blinding Theatre, 36 Powell St, starting 8pm. Featured will be Carolyn Bentley, Tammy Bentz, Shannon Heath, Deb Pickman, Trish Pattenden, among others. All proceeds will go to the Breast Cancer Foundation. For further info call 731-3082.

IWD CONCERT

A concert with the First Nations dance troupe Traditional Mothers, Flamenco dancer Rosario Ancel, Chilean actor Carmen Aguirre, Chinese Yangquin player Chen Uyu Ping, Celtic musician Philomen Daly, and many others will take place at 8 pm at the Vogue Theatre, 918 Granville St. Tickets are $15 in advance or $20 at the door, and are available at all Ticketmaster outlets. Designated charities for this event are Amnesty International, Women Prisoners of Conscience, and the Vancouver Status of Women.

RED WOMEN SPEAK

Cleo Reece is hosting an Indigenous Media Arts Group event for IWD at Video In, 1965 Main St. starting at 7pm. The evening will feature works by local Aboriginal women including a sneak preview of Reece's *Red Power Women*, the coming of age of a young Native women and her contemporaries in the late 60s and early 70s. There will also be a screening and talk by Okanagan artist Tracy Bonneau who will present her video *Forbidden Culture* about the lives of women affected by the residential school system. Marie Baker will also read from her *Grannie Boot Camp* escapades. Food and refreshments will be served. Admission is $1-5 sliding scale. For more info call 879-6224.

MARCH 11

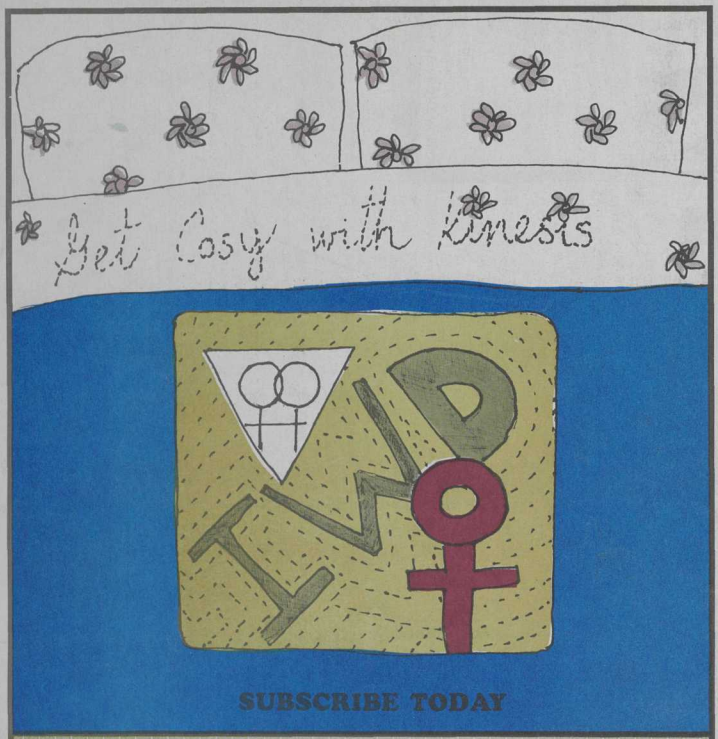
WE KNOW WHAT WE NEED TO BE HEALTHY

Join Shirley Masuda, Joan Meister and Carol Bast of the DisAbled Women's Network in a discussion on "Women with Disabilities: We Know What We Need to be Healthy" from 10am-noon at the BC Centre for Excellence in Women's Health, Room E311, BC Women's Hospital, 4500 Oak St. The three women will talk about two recent research studies completed by DAWN. Admission is free. Refreshments will be served. Lower Mainland transportation subsidies and services for women with disabilities are available with two days advance request. For more info or to reserve a seat call 875-2633.

MARCH 13

RANDOM ACTS OF SEXUALITY

The Asian Women's Outreach Project at ASIA (the Asian Society for the Intervention of AIDS) is hosting "Random Acts of Sexuality," a women-only dance event promoting healthy sexuality for Asian women and their friends. The party will be held at Club 23, 23 West Cordova St, starting at 8pm. Tickets are $5, and are available at Little Sister's, Harry's Off Commercial and East End Book Company. For further info call 669-5567.



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

Publication Mail Reg. #6426