

SP

# KINESIS

News About Women That's Not In The Dailies

## ENOUGH ALREADY! STOP THE RACISM!

### MIGRANTS SIPHON FUNDS NEEDED FOR OUR YOUTHS

Today, I will return with much apprehension to teach at Foundation Alternative Program, an alternative rehabilitation program for youth at risk who want a second chance at education. We have been decimated by cutbacks over the years but the most recent in June was considered by me as a death blow — it was the alternative program's end.

A Sept. 3 news article grants generate booria lawyers, hotels, 175 children from reals of Chinese in costing us \$615,000. This amount would instate alternative workers in more than tional programs, allow to work with at-risk kentine school year.

The student to staff jumped from 0.21 to a ing 10:1. There are some safety concerns because vision will not be at a sard and parents who have children attending these programs (more than 1,000 in Vancouver) should be concerned about their safety.

Let us direct our resources towards our own needy, at-risk youth first and then we can lo-

### 'CEASELESS CAMPAIGN' TO SNEAK INTO CANADA

## Canada being played for a sucker by those arriving here

### 'UNWANTED OVERLAYS EMERGENCY'

Rin Wong complains about racism in Canada. He says he is the child of a Chinese immigrant and he has been subjected to racism in Canada. He says he has been subjected to racism in Canada.

## pose health risk to Canadians

...carrying immigrants

## Compassion has limits when humanitarian laws are abused

I have been open minded and I will never have a racist attitude. I will never have a racist attitude. I will never have a racist attitude.

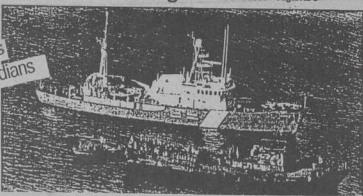
...the racist attitude...

## Suspend Charter to expel migrants, Manning urges

The Reform leader says Parliament recalled to consider rights reforms, his finding giving the migrants a refugee hearing within seven days.

## ENOUGH ALREADY

'It's time to toughen the law' Pages A2-3



A sailing freighter packed with Chinese migrants is escorted by the Canadian Coast Guard patrol boat near Vancouver. The vessel is Vancouver Island province.

Special Collections Serial

## The Real Snakeheads Exposed Prostitution and the Internet

# INSIDE

## KINESIS

News About Women That's Not In The Dailies

### KINESIS

Celebrating 25 Years  
1974-1999

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Kinesis welcomes volunteers to work on all aspects of the paper. Our next Story Meeting is on Tues Nov 2 at our office, 309-877 E. Hastings St.

Founded in 1974, 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, imperialism and anti-Jewish oppression. Views expressed in Kinesis are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect VSW policy. All unsigned material is the responsibility of the Kinesis Editorial Board.

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#### FRONT COVER

Racist attacks on refugees in the media  
Compiled by Bernadette Phan & Amal Rana

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#### SUBMISSIONS

Women and girls are welcome to make submissions. We reserve the right to edit and submission does not guarantee publication. If possible, submissions should be submitted on disk or by email. Kinesis does not accept poetry or fiction. Editorial guidelines are available upon request.

#### DEADLINES

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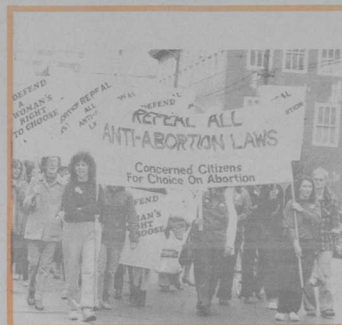
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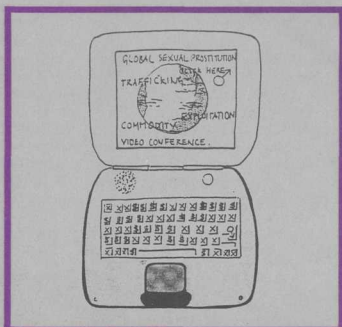
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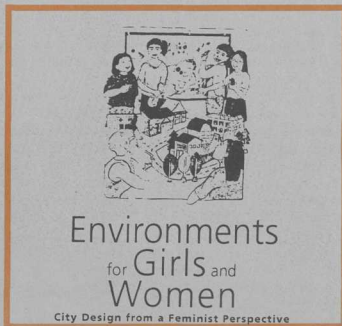
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As *Kinesis* goes to press, more than 300 people who came to Canada from China by ship this summer are still being held in detention—in jails in Prince George and around the Lower Mainland.

On top of that, detention and refugee claims hearings are happening on a daily basis. So far, the outcomes have not been positive for those who made the several month journey from Fujian province to BC. One refugee board adjudicator has rejected all 11 claims he has heard, including the case of a woman who is a member of an ethnic minority group in China.

There are serious concerns being raised about the fairness of the process—namely, with regards to the fast-tracking of hearings, the lack of adequate legal representation, and the group profiling (read: stereotyping) being used to evaluate claimants.

In October, a group of women in Vancouver calling themselves DARE (Direct action Against Refugee Exploitation) held a public education forum in Vancouver.

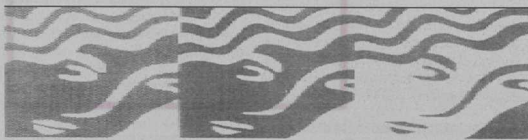
(DARE also provides support and advocacy for the Fujianese women, particularly those who are in Vancouver and those who are incarcerated at the Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women.)

The goal of the forum was to confront the racist and classist response to the arrival of the people from China—the response in the media, from federal and provincial politicians and cabinet ministers, and by members of the general public.

The goal was also to broaden the discussion around the arrival of people from Fujian province, placing their situation rightly within the context of economic globalization and forced migration.

In this issue, *Kinesis* presents three of the speeches from the DARE forum—from Nandita Sharma, Sunera Thobani and Rita Wong [starting on Page 11.]

DARE says it will continue to confront the scapegoating of the 590 refugee claimants from Fujian province, and is planning to launch another campaign in the near future. Stay tuned.



Our appreciation to the following supporters who became members of VSW, renewed their memberships, or who made donations during the months of August, September and October:

Barbara Bell \* Liz Bennett \* Regina Brennan \* Gwen Brodsky \* Karen Clark \* Gail Cryer \* Jean Elder \* Karin Federa \* Gloria Filax \* Dennis Foon \* Shauna Fowler \* Heather George \* Ieke Giese \* Ellen Hamer \* Jo Hinchliffe \* Nola Johnston \* Azra Kamrudin \* Else Kennedy \* Barbara Kuhne \* Maureen McEvoy \* Sedi Minachi \* Suji Moon \* Patty Moore \* Tanis Preiss \* Gloria Elvira Rogue \* Rosemarie Rupp \* Catherine Russell \* Ruth Sauder \* Debra Shogan \* Gale Stewart \* Ruth Lea Taylor \* Marlene Trick \* Jessica Ulrich \* Joanne Ursino \* Joan Vander Goes \* Christine Waymark \* Rita Kim Wong \* CUPE 2950 \* Telecommunication Workers Union 20 \* Vancouver Women's Health Collective

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:

Masoud Azarnoush \* Helen Babalos \* Merlin Beltain \* Wendy Baker \* Tanya De Haan \* Jody Gordon \* Erin Graham \* Nola Johnston \* Tamara Knox \* Valerie Raoul \* Linda Shuto \* Shelagh Wilson

In this issue of *Kinesis*, we also challenge the rise of another anti-woman campaign, courtesy of anti-abortion protesters [see Pages 14 and 15.]

For example, in late September, a US-based group called the Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform (CBR) tried to spread their anti-choice propaganda on the campus of the University of British Columbia. CBR, a privately funded organization whose purpose is to "educate" students about the anti-choice philosophy, was invited to the campus by the AMS Lifeline Club.

So what does CBR's "education" consist of? First of all, they call their campaign the "Genocide Awareness Project," which is (intentionally) misleading. One of their main "educational" is a billboard display titled, "The Changing Face of Choice."

Panel #1 is called: "Religious Choice," which features an image of entangled bodies of Holocaust victims and the Nazi swastika.

Panel #2 is called: "Racial Choice," which features an image of a Black man killed by the KKK.

Panel #3 is called: "Reproductive Choice," which features an image of what appears to be the limbs of a fetus clutching a dime.

(Each panel measures six feet by 14 feet.)

The (illogical) progression of the CBR's argument—which they freely admit—is: Nazis kill Jews. KKK kills Blacks. Women kill babies.

Other posters compare abortion to examples of genocide, such as in Cambodia, Wounded Knee (South Dakota), Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. Another poster compares Planned Parenthood to the Nazis.

In the end, CBR didn't get to set up its billboard display because it refused to pay the \$10,000-per-day security deposit requested by UBC. CBR reps did go onto the campus and held a public talk. Don't think they're done with UBC though... the CBR has said it will sue the university for violating its right to freedom of speech. Apparently, one of their tactics is to sue universities for any such "violation."

We should mention that the Students for Choice group up at UBC was very effective in organizing a strong protest demonstration against the Genocide Awareness Project. And even though, CBR was a no-show, pro-choice activists carried out their rally as planned.

On another anti-abortion front: there's the ongoing saga of Sissy von Dehn and the IWD organizing committee in Vancouver. Three years ago, in November 1996, von Dehn—a well-known anti-choice agitator—and her cohort Peggy Holland showed up at an IWD meeting. They proceeded to take photos of all the women present. Needless to say, the women attending the meeting—well-aware of von Dehn's involvement with the anti-abortion movement—didn't appreciate these tactics of intimidation and harassment.

A background: Cecilia von Dehn owns a house across the street from the Everywoman's Health Clinic, one of the two free-standing abortion clinics in Vancouver. From there, she and other anti-abortion protesters direct their propaganda towards staff and women going into the clinic.

von Dehn and Holland tried to get the police to charge two of IWD organizers with assault—there allegedly was a scuffle that night. They failed in that quest. However, true to expectation, von Dehn offered to share the photos she had taken with the police, the right-wing media, and possibly violent anti-choice organizations.

Now that their criminal charges against Claire Robillard and Judith Radovan have gone nowhere, von Dehn and Holland are trying to proceed with a civil suit against the two women. They're asking for \$10,000 in damages.

Robillard and Radovan vow to fight back, and call on others to help out with political, emotional and financial support. Call them at (604) 798-9491.

One more thing, as *Kinesis* goes to press... We hear that a settlement in the Public Service Alliance Canada's pay equity fight with the federal government could be close at hand. We can only hope that the feds finally deal fairly with women workers in Canada.

That's all for now. See you next month.

The following sentence must be sung to the Gilligan's Island theme song. "There was a story about a woman named Aggie and the feminist newspaper that she ran..."

Have we got your attention yet?!! We sure hope so.

Over the last few months, almost all of the editions of *Inside Kinesis* have started out with some kind of statement or the other about the weather. Although the women at *Kinesis* are firm believers in creating our own traditions, it was high time to put that one to rest. We certainly don't want to bore you—our readers—and really, how many times can you write interesting and witty things about the weather? Obviously one too many.

So enough with the preamble already! Let's talk about what we've been up to inside our mango colored walls this month. Well, let's start with the serious stuff. At one of our recent Editorial Board meetings—amidst generous helpings of goat curry and kimchi (the dish that is)—we decided to combine two months and make this the October/November issue. Was it the goat curry you ask? Alas, if only we could blame the food.

The truth is that there really is no one to "blame" and no one single factor that led to the late completion of this issue. A definite lack of articles and writers flowing in this month, demands on time in other areas of activism, and the process of finding a new editor, came together in a lethal combination that left us exhausted and scurrying to catch up to our deadlines.

We wish to apologize profusely to all our readers and would like to offer you the option of extending your subscription in order to make up for the bygone issue. Please let us know if you wish to do this and thank you for your continued support and understanding.

You might be wondering who we've hired for the position of *Kinesis* editor. Unfortunately, we felt that the resumes we received did not leave us with a large enough pool of qualified applicants. The position has since been reposted and we are hoping

to receive more applications as this issue goes to press.

In case you think all has been doom, gloom and stress at *Kinesis*, we thought we'd tell you about some new writers and volunteers who have revitalized our energies and creative spirits this month. Many new writers made their debut in *Kinesis* this month. They include Lisa Wulwik, Donna M. Hughes, Karen Page and Luanne Armstrong. A big thank you and welcome to all of you.

We'd also like to welcome some new faces to our production volunteer team. Heartfelt thanks to Georgina Farah, Shannon Furman and Lisa Wulwik for working on this month's issue and making our lives a whole lot easier.

We're on a roll here so we thought we'd keep the good news coming. The next issue of *Kinesis*—our December/January 2000 issue—will be a Native Women's issue.

We're pleased to introduce Audrey Huntley as the guest editor for that issue. Audrey worked with the Aboriginal Women's Action Network as the coordinator for their research project and report on Bill C-31 and its impact on Native women. She has been working hard to solicit articles and other pieces of writing from Native women both near and far, and has gathered some amazing material!

If you know any Native women or Native women's organizations who may like a copy of the issue, let us know and we'll add them to our list.

And now for the weather. Just kidding! We won't torture you! We will promise to continue with the Gilligan's Island/*Kinesis* theme though. However, you'll have to wait til the next edition of *Inside Kinesis* to get your next hit! Til then, we'll leave you in bone-chilling suspense and wish you a Happy Halloween/Samhain/All Souls' Eve, etcetera.

Enjoy the trick or treating and don't forget to save some candy for the hard working (and sugar addicted) women at *Kinesis*!! PS: Don't even try giving us raisins instead of candies...



# News

Forum on refugees and immigration in Canada:

## DARE-ing to be direct

by Fatima Jaffer

It was an historic meeting.

For the first time in a long, long time, a gathering of people in Vancouver placed immigration and refugee issues, racism and people of colour communities, at centre stage. It was also the first time in this writer's long life that a panel like this did not meet with a single racist, simplistic question, but rather an audience response that was intelligent, compassionate and showed a serious willingness to grapple with the complexities of the topic.

But most remarkable was that, for a few hours in October and for the first time in a very long time, people from the myriad fragmented movements in Vancouver came together to engage in serious discussion across issue lines.

There were representatives of the women's movement, lesbians, social justice activists, environmental activists, anti-poverty workers, labour activists, transition house and crisis line workers, immigration settlement workers, representatives from multicultural organi-

the people arriving on the second, third and fourth boats.

"Everybody knew they weren't getting the right story from the media. The reaction [to the Chinese migrants] was so venomous and the scapegoating so intense, it necessitated the kind of response we saw at this forum," says Yasmin Jiواني, an anti-violence activist commenting on the large turnout of over 250 people at the DARE Forum.

As for the broad cross-section of people who made up the audience, Jiواني suggests, "It's a sign of the revival of an anti-racist movement that has been fragmented until now. We've all been working in our own sectors, but we've come together in response to this very blatant re-entrenchment of the denial of racism."

Jiواني adds that the evening was also remarkable because it brought together a combination of people on the panel. Each presented a particular perspective on the issue with all its multi-faceted complexities, building upon the analyses of the others.

Victor Wong of the Vancouver Association of Chinese Canadians then filled in the gaps, speaking about the work his group has been doing in support of the Fujianese migrants. Zool Suleman, a lawyer and activist, looked deeply into the ways the state manifests its agenda in its refugee processes and procedures.

Finally, Rita Wong, a founding member of DARE, pulled some more of the strands together with an account of her own odyssey with the Fujianese people and the complexities surrounding their particular situation, as well as the various ramifications of trafficking, of going underground, and of being held by the state [see page 17.]

The speeches went on for almost two hours. The audience sat rapt, ignoring the food table with its impressive display of donated and home-cooked foods. When the speakers were done, moderator Agnes Huang called for a ten-minute break before taking questions from the floor. She urged people not to leave, even though the panel had gone over time.

Surprisingly, given the lateness of the hour, most stayed. Each question asked became a further opportunity for the panel to build upon its analyses, deepening the debate, compounding our already quite complex understanding of Canada's immigration policies and the global context in which they fit.

For example, Georgina Farrah, whose family is from Afghanistan, spoke from the floor about the difficulties of getting out of Afghanistan and the crucial role "smugglers" play. She urged us not to focus blame on the smugglers themselves, but on the governments that necessitate people to emigrate in such desperate circumstances. Another audience member asked about Canadian immigration quotas.

Suleman responded that Canada does not currently meet the limits it sets for immigrants or refugees, he said. As for talk of jumping the queue... "Let's talk about The Queue," he said. "The queue is getting longer, the queue is getting more expensive, the queue is becoming unfair, and people are then jumping the queue. We're under-staffing our embassies, there's bribery going on, there are people buying visitor visas," and there is a "raise-the-fortress kind of security apparatus" being put in place to control the flow of people to Canada.

The security approach, said Suleman, is also evident when one looks at how "CSIS [the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service] now identifies immigration as one of its top three threats to Canada."

Thobani jumped in: "We are not meeting the targets set for immigrants and refugees, but we are meeting the targets set for migrant workers. It's very selective which targets are met."

She referred to the law and order agenda prevailing in other areas of social policy, and reminds us how fears of welfare fraud became the ruse allowing the government to end the right to social assistance in this country without much notice being taken. "It's not useful to get distracted in talk of looking for the 'criminals'... By focusing [on that], the rights which are being taken away do not receive the attention they should."

There was much talk about strategies to change public discourse on immigration and refugee issues in this country. Debate ensued.



photo by Michelle McCaugh

**Comment from the floor:  
Paulina Chow**

Affect government policy? Or open the borders and rethink the nation state?

"There is a very simple solution to dealing with the organized criminal element," announced Thobani, in response to a question. "Take away their incentive. And taking away their incentive means that people are treated fairly, justly, that they have rights that are respected... We can't be closing down the borders, criminalizing people, then saying we're going after the true criminals."

Thobani explained that years at the helm of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women has taught her that lobbying for changes to policy yields little change. "Change comes through organizing, through fighting, through mobilizing."

She talked about how opposition to then-Immigration Minister Lucienne Robillard's measures to make either speaking English or French mandatory in immigration selection had provoked such an outcry, the measure was ditched.

Sharma picked up another thread, referring to a comment by Suleman that "Canadians" are upset with the Fujianese because of their disregard of "the integrity of the system."

"There is no integrity in this system," Sharma noted. "What this system does is feed off the misery it creates. We need to stop operating as if we want to maintain the system. We have to be able to provide avenues that are going to leave people in a stronger position to fend for their rights."

The conversation built to a head. "What is happening in this country is not about sending people back," said Sharma. "There might be a few undocumented people who might be sent back. But what is really happening here, the racism we are seeing in society, all of the statements we are hearing about how these people do not belong here, are ultimately making them more vulnerable when they are living here, and living here for generations."

"The headlines like 'Go home,' give the notion that these people don't belong here. And we know, that's us," Sharma continued. "Sure I've got Canadian citizenship status, but I'm told on a daily basis in one way or another that I don't belong here. That makes me vulnerable as a woman of colour in this society. Women of colour have been saying forever, regardless of our citizenship status, we earn less, we die quicker, we go to jail



photo by Michelle McCaugh

**DARE forum panellists: (R-L) Agnes Huang, Nandita Sharma, Sunera Thobani, Rita Wong, Zool Suleman**

zations, government employees, academics, artists, writers and other cultural producers, migrant workers, students, elders, First Nations peoples and people of colour.

The venue was the Heritage Hall. The occasion, the DARE Forum.

DARE stands for Direct Action Against Refugee Exploitation. It is the Vancouver women's group that sprung up in September to address the racist and classist response to the four ships carrying people from Fujian province in China which arrived in Canadian waters over the summer.

While just a total of 590 migrants arrived in the ships, from the racist furor unleashed in the media, it seemed as if hordes of Chinese peoples were swarming all over the BC coastline, threatening Canadian jobs and social services.

Headlines blared: "Expect more boat people, BC warned," and "Enough!" There was a demand for changes to immigration and refugee policies to stop any more "fake" or "economic" refugees from "jumping the immigration queue." Suddenly, everyone in the province was talking about "snakeheads" [human smugglers] as the "real criminals," even as they watched immigration officials detain all

The evening began with Cease Wyss of the Squamish Nation welcoming people to Coast Salish territories with an ancestral song which has been passed down many generations and now belongs to a woman named Syexwalia (Anne Wannock).

Nandita Sharma, a member of the Basmati Action Group, spoke first, drawing an overall picture of globalization and Canada's relations with China as the setting within which these particular groups of migrants fit. She stressed that the real "snakeheads" are the Canadian government and corporations that force people into tight corners and leave them with no choice but to enslave themselves to profiteers in order to escape poverty and exploitation in their communities [see page 11.]

Sunera Thobani, a long-time activist who currently teaches at Simon Fraser University gave perhaps one of her best presentations. She picked up Sharma's threads and spun the web more intricately, placing globalization as an ongoing phase of globalization, demasking the Canadian state's true intent with regards to its immigration and refugee policies, and exposing the scapegoating of the migrants as a ruse to strip away rights [see page 12-13.]



Male violence against women in Canada:

## The courage to leave

by Agnes Huang

September 1999. Within five days, two women in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia are dead, murdered by their estranged husbands.

On September 1st, Anita Barrera was dragged out onto the balcony of her apartment in Burnaby by her husband. He stabbed her repeatedly, killing her. He also stabbed himself and later died at the hospital. Barrera's four children were present in the apartment when the murder took place.

Four days after Anita Barrera was killed, on September 5th, Mitra Felfeli Mokarakeh was murdered by her husband Fariborz Kianipour in Coquitlam. Then hours later, Kianipour murdered Mitra's parents, Jamshid Felfeli Mokarakeh and Irandokht Khanbadi. Mitra and Fariborz's two sons were present when their grandparents were killed. Kianipour has pleaded guilty to three counts of murder.

Both Anita Barrera and Mitra Felfeli Mokarakeh were killed after they had courageously left their abusive husbands. Both were killed after they took steps to protect themselves and their children from their husbands' violence.

"Mitra and Anita left their husbands' sphere of power and they paid for it with their lives," says Fatima Jaffer of the Ad Hoc Committee on Violence Against Women. "These are not isolated incidents. They must be seen as part of the continuum of violence, and understood as being about power and control."

The ad hoc committee came together to organize a vigil on October 22 in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery in honour of Mitra Felfeli Mokarakeh and Anita Barrera, and all other women killed by men in their lives.

As Sedi Minachi, a member of the committee, said at the vigil: "We are here to recognize the courage of women who leave their violent and abusive relationships to save their lives, to recognize the strength of women who want to live their lives free of violence, and to recognize those who break their silence."

Another goal of the vigil was to challenge the way the media covered these murders, as well as other cases of male violence against women.

With headlines such as, "Three people killed in Coquitlam, man held in custody," and no references to killers being "wife abusers" or their motives being to maintain control over their wives, the media was able to frame the murders in a generic way.

"[The media's] very shallow investigation of dynamics that led to the killings and the lack of understanding about why it happens does no one any good and, in fact, can discourage women from making the decision to leave [their abusive husbands]," says Louise Hara of the Port Coquitlam and Area Women's Centre. "By failing to place the murders in the larger context, the media missed an opportunity to educate the public about violence against women."

Hara had to do a lot of work with the media in her community to get them to understand the connections between cases of



Vigil at the Vancouver Art Gallery, October 22nd

violence against women, and the pattern of abuse many women face at the hands of their husbands, which all too often leads to their deaths.

The media deliberately kept the murders of Mitra and her parents out of the context of violence against women by assigning a motive linked to Mitra's actions, and not Fariborz's intent, says Hara. "The media focused on the fact that Mitra was suing her husband for half the family residence as the reason for the killings."

These perceptions allow femicides to continue, says Mabel Nipshank, a front-line anti-violence worker with Battered Women's Support Services. "It is these women-blaming beliefs perpetuated by the media and authorities that keep women shackled to their abusers and intensifies their life-threatening realities."

"Women who go through the justice system are disbelieved when disclosing violence, especially women not of the dominant race," says Nipshank, who is of the Cree Nation. "As an advocate of women, I have been treated with mistrust and resentment; I have been accused of coaching women to lie, when in fact my only vested interest is the safety of women and children."

Hara says there is no reason for the media to not put these murders in their proper context. "It's not as if the media doesn't have a long track record of doing social commentary, or that the context itself hasn't been analyzed and defined," says Hara. "All our shelves are growing with reports and studies and stats on how and why men kill the women in their lives."

In fact, says Zara Suleman, an advocate who works with immigrant and refugee women surviving violence, it is well known that women are more at risk when they try and leave their abusive relationships.

Jaffer stresses that there are no excuses for violence against women. "Whether a woman is trying to leave her relationship, getting a divorce, seeking custody or access of her children, or suing for maintenance, nothing can justify these murders. Excuses only perpetuate violence against women."

Adds Hara: "If the media were to put its considerable influence behind validating the reality of women's lives, the violence and oppression of women would

have to stop and men would have to be held accountable for their violence."

Suzanne Jay, a front-line transition house worker who spoke on behalf of the Alliance of Feminist Transition Houses, echoes Hara's criticism that the media only told part of the story. For example, says Jay, the media failed to reveal that both Felfeli Mokarakeh and Barrera had left their abusive husbands and sought the help of transition houses.

"These two women did everything they were supposed to do to get safety for themselves and their children. The transition house workers did everything they were supposed to do—getting the women legal aid and working out safety plans. Their families did everything they were supposed to do—supporting the women's decisions and staying with them."

It was the "system"—the RCMP in Burnaby and Coquitlam—who failed these women, says Jay.

Anita Barrera's husband's violence was known to police. A few weeks before she was murdered, Barrera had gotten a restraining order against him. Her husband had also publicly threatened her and other parishioners in a church. When the church called the police to come deal with the situation, the Burnaby RCMP just calmed him down, then sent him home.

This is not the first time the RCMP in BC has failed to do their job in protecting women from their abusive spouses and ex-spouses. One only needs to think back to April 1996, when Rajwar Ghakal and her family were gunned by down her estranged husband in Vernon.

"We need to call on the Attorney General to take control of the RCMP, and force them to apply the laws in ways that will protect women," says Jay.

Suleman adds she is not surprised by these murders, or the response to them by the media and authorities. "Every day, I listen to women's stories about their fear, their lack of trust in the justice system, their rage and their sadness."

It is critical, says Suleman, that everyone demand that the criminal justice system not continue to give men the message that violence against women is acceptable, and to not give men the power to get away with abusing their partners and to, ultimately, get away with murder.

### Some reported femicides in BC

**September 1998:** Tammy Grono and her mother Cecilia Grono are murdered in Summerland, in the presence of Tammy's two children, aged two and four. Months after a nation-wide warrant for his arrest is issued, Kevin Machell, Tammy's ex-husband, is caught and charged with the murders.

**October 1997:** Leonora Holtam and her six-year old daughter Jenny Lee are bludgeoned to death in Mission. Her son Cody suffers from massive head injuries. After initially being questioned and released, Leonora's husband, Douglas, is finally charged with the murders and assault.

**September 1997:** Heidi-Jean Challand and her four children—Bobby, David, Calvin and Jewel—are murdered in Black Creek (on Vancouver Island). Heidi's husband, David Gorton, is charged with the murders. He is serving a 25-year sentence.

**April 1996:** Rajwar Ghakal and eight members of her family are shot to death by her estranged husband Mark Chahal in Vernon. Six-year old Justine Kaur Saran is shot but survives. Chahal kills himself.

**June 1995:** Teena Marie Lino is stabbed to death in front of her 18-month old daughter. Her husband is found not criminally responsible for her death for reasons of temporary insanity.

**October 1994:** Annette Roufouse is murdered in Coquitlam by her former common-law husband, minutes after he kills her parents. Darcy Bertrand pleads guilty to three counts of second-degree murder.

**July 1994:** Susan Roberts and one of her 13-month old twin sons are strangled to death. Her other twin son is smothered to death. Roberts' husband, Dean, is convicted of first-degree murder.

"We will not stop having these vigils; we will not stop reminding the system that violence against women is happening," adds Jaffer. "We cannot afford to stop being vigilant."

Sedi Minachi says one of the goals of the vigil, which was achieved, was to bring out members of the Iranian community.

"As Iranian women, we do not allow religious and cultural barriers to put our lives in danger," says Minachi. "There is no justification for any kind of violence, not in the Iranian community, and not in any society."

Several of Mitra's friends came forward to the open microphone and spoke about their memories of Mitra and the impact she had on their lives. "Mitra seems to have touched a lot of women's lives," says Jaffer.

As one woman said: "This is the loss of a very special human being—a kind and generous one, an extraordinary mother, a special friend, a very compassionate human being."



# WHAT'S NEWS

by Fatima Jaffer and Leanne Keltie

## Civil suit against BC's Attorney General

Two years ago, Tammy Grono's ex-spouse Kevin Machell violated his parole curfew and, the next day, allegedly shot and killed Grono and her mother, Cecelia Grono, at their motel in Summerland, British Columbia. [Ed Note: Libel laws require us to write "allegedly" until Machell is proven a murderer in court.] Tammy and Machell's two children—Tristan and Morgan—witnessed the double murders. They were aged two and four at the time.

Nobody called the Gronos to tell them Machell had violated his curfew so they could protect themselves in case he came around. No one from the BC Attorney General's office bothered to register on the central computer data bank that Grono had gotten a restraining order against Machell two months before, or that he had previously threatened to kill his ex-wife and her mother. [The central protection order registry was set up in 1995 to enable police and other systems officers to better protect women from violent exes. It has been criticized several times for inefficiency.] And Machell was not listed as violent, despite his threat to kill the Gronos.

Women's groups had worked hard and lobbied years for a multi-tiered response system that would give women and children at least a small fighting chance against abusive exes. Despite such a system being in place, the Gronos were failed at every level.

In September, Tammy's siblings and Cecelia's kids—Debra Passarelli, Terry Villeneuve and Gary Grono—filed a lawsuit against the system that failed them, charging it with "collective negligence." They are also suing Machell in civil court on behalf of Tammy Grono's children, who are currently being parented by Villeneuve.

Their lawyer, Gary Lauk, says the case will not be heard until after the criminal case against Machell, who has been charged with two counts of first-degree murder, is heard next year.

In the lawsuit, the attorney general of BC, Correctional Services of Canada, the National Parole Board and the Alberta Seventh Step Society are charged with failing to reasonably supervise and control Machell. Machell had been released August 12, 1997 from a federal prison in Saskatchewan. He was put on day parole at a Calgary residence run by the Seventh Step Society.

On September 6, he failed to return to the society's residence in the evening, as expected. He was known to be violent, but was incorrectly listed as a non-violent parolee.

The lawsuit specifically names two individuals, Sylvia Nathanson, a parole officer with Corrections, and Jim Hayman, also with Corrections. Three more men and two women officials are also cited, but not named.

After an investigation in 1997-98 into the Gronos' deaths, federal officials agreed to check with the BC central protection order registry to determine whether someone being released from the federal prison or parole systems are under court orders to keep away from their spouses. There has been no evidence that this is in fact being done, nor whether the central registry is up-

to-date on recording restraining orders and peace bonds.

## Transgendered "lesbian" wins case

The now defunct Vancouver Lesbian Connection has to pay \$3,000 to a former volunteer that was asked to leave the centre, according to a BC human rights tribunal ruling in September.

The former volunteer, Susan Mamela (formerly Eric/Susan Friday) claimed to have been asked to leave the VLC because of Mamela's political beliefs and because of Mamela's transgendered status.

No one from the VLC, which shut its doors in February, showed up to argue the centre's case. As *Kinesis* goes to press, we were unable to find out the reason for the lack of defence by the centre's former board members. It is unlikely Mamela will collect the \$3,000, as there is no society to collect from.

But Mamela's victory is striking in that it reads into the provincial human rights code protection for transgendered people under the category "sex" discrimination. Currently, transgendered people are not specifically protected as a group in the code. The government has twice been poised in recent years to introduce legislation that would add transgendered people to the Code.

The tribunal dismissed Mamela's claims of political discrimination, but found that the centre had discriminated against Mamela on the basis of sex. According to one member of the tribunal, Nitya Iyer, correspondence addressed to Mamela by former VLC director Tina Hurd addressed Mamela as "Eric Friday" which demonstrated "deliberate and signified disapproval of Mamela's self-identification as a member of the female sex." Eric Friday was Mamela's legal name at the time.

The tribunal's decision drew strongly from precedence that was set earlier this year in a case between transsexual Tawni Sheridan and Victoria's gay bar BJ's lounge, but takes a step further. According to Harinder Mahil of the BC Human Rights Commission, the body which refers cases to the tribunal, the ruling is "important [in] that Mamela's self-identification as a woman was enough for her to be recognized as a woman." In the Sheridan case, however, reams of medical evidence was required to prove Sheridan's gender dysphoria," before the tribunal ruled in Sheridan's favour.

*Kinesis* will bring you more in future issues on the impact, of this ruling and the BC Human Rights Commission's acceptance of self-identification as sufficient, on women-only centres, support groups, and other venues.

## NB mom wins legal aid case

Moms who cannot afford a lawyer and who risk losing their children to the state must be provided with legal aid, according to a Supreme Court of Canada ruling last month.

This is the strongest statement on legal aid since the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was inception in 1982. The ruling could be used as a foothold in the struggle for legal aid in other cases, and may be

the first of more court rulings curbing the erosion of legal aid programs.

No one was celebrating that decision last month more than Jeannine Godin, the New Brunswick woman who was appealing a lower court decision to deny her legal aid in a court battle with the New Brunswick Ministry of Health and Social Services (MHSS). Godin had called the Ministry for help in November 1993. She had recently miscarried twins, and was under pressure because of fatigue and harassment by her ex-husband. The state said they would look after her kids for the weekend. On Monday, when Godin went to pick up her kids, she was told to sign over custody for four months or face a court battle.

A few weeks later, MHSS applied for an extension of temporary wardship of her three children. When Godin walked into the courtroom, the state had lawyers, her ex-husband had a lawyer, and even her children had been appointed a lawyer. "The only person without a lawyer was [me]," Godin said. "I was just a single mom with three kids who didn't know how to represent myself in court. You shouldn't have to be a criminal to get legal representation."

As a result, her children of ages three, four and seven years were held in care, shifted from one foster home to another, until June 1995—a total of 14 months. It was only with the help of a lawyer who offered his services for free that Godin was able to get her kids back.

Last Fall, during the Supreme Court appeal to get legal aid for Godin, LEAF (Women's Legal Education and Action Fund), National Association of Women and the Law, and DAWN Canada (DisAble Women's Network) intervened. They argued that the state's failure to provide legal representation to parents in temporary wardship cases is a failure to provide access to justice for the poor, and therefore unconstitutional.

In the Supreme Court decision, the Justices found 9-0 for Godin. The decision clearly states that the prospect for a mother of losing her children is so psychologically devastating, it can trigger that person's right to security of the person. In writing the decision, the Chief Justice Antonio Lamer said wardship hearings by the state are so intricate, toughly fought, and the stakes are so high that cost-cutting measures that deny legal aid to parents in such situations are intolerable.

"I have little doubt that the state removal of a child from parental custody...constitutes a serious interference with the psychological integrity of the parent," he wrote. "Few state activities can have a more profound effect on the lives of both parent and child," and therefore, it is essential parents get proper representation.

Previously, the concept of security of the person had more or less been limited to use by prisoners. "The court has gone way further now than saying it applies only to jail," said Carole Curtis, one of two LEAF lawyers on the case.

By expanding the Charter of Rights guarantee to life, liberty and security of the person to include psychological harm (to parent and child), the case could be used in future to get funding for cases involving immigration, mental health and even women fighting child custody battles.

"We have a clear signal [from this ruling] that whenever the state is attempting to take custody of someone, that person—or anyone with a close interest in them—is entitled to legal aid," said Alan Gold of the Criminal Lawyers Association.

## Keeping co-ops accessible

The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) recently adopted new policy which allows co-ops to set their own minimum housing charges. In the past CMHC did not allow co-ops to charge members more than 30 percent of their total income for household charges. Individuals on social assistance were the only exception to this rule, and usually paid the shelter portion of their income assistance cheque.

The ramifications of this change are quite serious as some of the poorest people in Canada may no longer be able to pay their housing costs. One recent example of a housing co-op that voted to set a minimum housing charge caused an increase in the housing costs of a woman with disabilities from 26 percent to 70 percent of her monthly income.

[Source: The Long Haul, October 1999.]

## BC woman firefighter wins case

In the first ruling of its kind, the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) has declared that a mandatory fitness requirement of firefighters violates a female forest firefighter's human rights.

In 1994, Tawney Meiorin, who had worked six years as a forest firefighter in British Columbia, failed the running portion of a physical fitness test that required her to run 2.5 kilometres in 11 minutes or less. She failed to reach the mark by 49 seconds. Although, Meiorin passed the other parts of the assessment—chinups, situps and pushups—she still lost her job.

The physical fitness test was put in place in 1994 in response to a coroner's inquest report that recommended only "physically fit" employees be assigned as front-line forest firefighters for safety reasons.

Since she was fired, Meiorin has been fighting the aerobic criteria of the test in court. With the support of her union, the BC Government Employees Union, Meiorin won at labour arbitration and was awarded her job back with back pay. The BC government challenged that decision, and the BC Court of Appeal agreed, overturning the arbitrator's ruling.

On September 9th, Meiorin's trek was finally over when the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in her favour. The SCC found the government failed to demonstrate that this particular test identifies those who are able to perform the tasks of a forest firefighter safely and efficiently.

Meiorin's lawyers argued that women are physiologically different than men: most men have a greater aerobic capacity, giving them an unfair advantage in achieving the standard of the test. The government argued that having separate tests for men and women would be "reverse discrimination." (The BC Human Rights Commission, the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, and DisAble Women's Network and the Canadian Labour Congress also made submissions as intervenors.)

George Heyman, president of the BCGEU, affirms that "the aerobic standard was not a measure of fitness for her. It was an arbitrary standard."

Says Meiorin, "I know women who do marathons who say they'd have a tough time doing it." Meiorin will receive back pay from the time she lost her job.



# WHAT'S NEWS

compiled by Fatima Jaffer

## Domestic violence book launched in Pakistan

In a high-profile effort to break the silence around domestic violence, a women's organization in Islamabad launched a book about the increasing number of women who are being "accidentally" burned in domestic violence cases to cover up the fact that it is murder or attempted murder.

The launch took place at the United Nations' Information Centre in the Pakistani capital in October. The book, called *Trial By Fire*, is illustrated with photos of badly-burnt victims, case studies and data on 185 cases of women being deliberately burned by the husband or his family. In most cases, the crimes were described as accidents caused by kerosene stoves.

At the launch, Shahnaz Bokhari of the Progressive Women's Association, noted that her organization's investigation shows that the deaths in "so-called stove burning" were in fact "planned murders," and at least 300 women are burned to death each year.

After consulting with medical personnel, the organization found that "the pattern of burns on the bodies of the [women] were not consistent with what we would expect to see from a genuine stove accident," she said.

The women who experience this particular form of domestic violence tend to be young women in poor families in rural areas or small towns. "Causes" for inflicting such violence include suspicion of sexual immorality, low dowry, failure to give birth to a male child, or quarrels with in-laws.

Bokhari said her organization is calling for serious debate on this particular form of domestic violence, as well as effective remedial action by all state organs on the issue of violence against women.

(Source: South Asian Women's Network, on the Internet)

## Indian lesbians demand decriminalization

A lesbian rights group in New Delhi released the first-ever report on the state of lesbians in India and the crimes committed against them. At the press conference in August, Campaign for Lesbian Rights (CALER) also called on the government to repeal a 138-year-old law making sexual relationships between women illegal.

The 84-page report talks about how "Anyone who looks, behaves or lives differently from the norms laid down by a traditional, patriarchal structure is made to feel shame," among numerous other consequences deterring women from openly acknowledging their lesbian relationships.

"Women have been harassed, attacked, blackmailed, coerced into marriages and sexual relationships, have lost their jobs, housing rights, family property...and have been prevented from protesting by being threatened by the police and their immediate social milieu," according to the statement by the New Delhi-based CALER.

Much of this has been done using the archaic law outlawing homosexuality, which was brought in during Queen Victoria's reign everywhere in the British Empire. [Ed Note: The law has since been scrapped in Britain, but sits on the constitutions of many of its former colonies.]

"No lesbian may have been picked up and flung into jail because of this 138-year-old law drafted by Lord Macaulay in the

1830s, but it is used to blackmail lesbians, force them to consent to marriage and be invisible," said a CALER spokesperson.

In 1994, lesbian and gay groups filed a petition challenging the law in the Delhi High Court. The case has dragged on for five years and has evoked some strong reactions, some even violent.

And in 1998, Indian lesbian activists took to the streets to protest right-wing attacks against the film *Fire*, which portrays a lesbian relationship between a woman and her sister-in-law. After temporary shutdowns of the theatres, the government provided protection to the theatres and the censors allowed the film to be seen.

The right-wingers and others who disagree with breaking the silence about Indian lesbianism and decriminalizing homosexuality say that scrapping the law and portraying Indian women as lesbians is a sign of Western gay culture creeping into India, and could result in an explosion of homosexuality.

"We heard someone had called lesbianism 'contagious.' How I wish! I would have had an entirely homosexual family by now, and need not worry about them finding out," one lesbian activist said.

"Maybe even my landlord could catch it, then I wouldn't have to worry about being evicted," she added.

Activists say that the recent protests by lesbian and gay activists and visibility in the media has prompted women from all over India to write to them about their experiences being forced into marriages and being made to suppress their sexual orientation. One woman in Eastern India wrote about her husband allegedly arranging the killing of her lover, a woman who was working as domestic help.

However, despite the increasing openness of their activities, the members of the gay and lesbian movement individually continue to remain closeted, for safety reasons. None of the CALER members at the press conference in August allowed themselves to be named or photographed, nor did they give out their phone numbers.

(Source: AFP Press)

## Violence against Indian domestic worker

While Lalita Oraon from Ranchi, Bihar recovers from extreme wounds to her vagina and fractures to the ankle and vertebrae suffered during a recent attempted suicide, diplomats in France and India wrangle over how best to ensure they don't end up damaging Indian-French trade and diplomatic relations.

Oraon was brought to France from India in January this year to serve as the maid to Amrit Lugun, the first secretary in the Indian embassy in Paris. The 19-year old woman does not speak French and through an interpreter, said she was forced by her employer to work from 6:00 am to midnight every day.

She finally escaped Lugun's residence in mid-September and was found wandering the streets with a knife by an Indian man. He says she told him she wanted to kill herself.

She was taken to French police headquarters and then to a shelter, where she attempted to kill herself by throwing herself off the high building. In hospital, medical examinations found severe wounds to her genitals made by a blade in her vagina several days prior, which "could not have been accidental or self-inflicted." The doctor's report says she was also suffering from blood poisoning from the wounds.

A French group called the Committee Against Modern-day Slavery spoke with Oraon through an interpreter and found that she was being extremely overworked and mistreated in numerous ways; as well, she was only receiving a monthly salary of 2,000 rupees back in India (approximately 300 francs or US\$50).

Indian embassy officials and the Indian government have issued statements denying the allegations as "false," and have accused the French police of "wittingly or unwittingly, [abetting] the campaign of disinformation and defamation that has begun against the embassy's diplomat." They say the situation came about as a result of Lugun's decision to fire Oraon and send her back to India for constant "misbehaviour" with his two children.

French diplomats are also attempting to hush over the investigation and have promised that even after French investigations are complete, diplomatic relations and bilateral trade agreements with India will not be damaged. The incident is rumoured as being described as "too small a matter" to make a difference in relations between the two countries. And although France has not yet formally asked for any action to be taken against Lugun, it is suspected that Lugun will be allowed by officials from both nations to quietly slip back to India.

Meanwhile, the doctor's reports, an ongoing investigation by the Paris Prosecutor's Office, the activism of the Committee Against Modern-day Slavery and other concerned groups in France, as well as racism against "backward Indian cultures" are driving public interest and ongoing coverage of the case in the media, which is proving to be "an embarrassment" for the Indian embassy in Paris.

As Kinesis goes to press, Oraon finds herself caught between the two nations. On the one hand, she has been isolated and subjected to repeated medical examinations as "experts" tried to determine the precise nature of her wounds and put a date to them. Their investigation has prompted the Paris Prosecutor's Office to open a judicial inquiry into who is responsible for the "acts of violence" committed against her.

On the other hand, Indian officials continue to insist she be released by French authorities and allowed to return home. They accuse the French of "denial of access" to Oraon by embassy officials, including her former employer, thereby blocking them from finding out the truth. They say Oraon was in perfect health on September 5th when they visited her in the custody of French police, and her injuries listed in the doctors' reports were in fact "suffered in the custody of French authorities."

## Violence against women in the UK

An anti-violence against women group in the United Kingdom says their investigations found that one in two men think that raping a woman is acceptable in certain circumstances, while one in four think it is justifiable to hit a woman.

The research was carried out by Zero Tolerance charitable trust, a group based in Edinburgh. The report, released to the media in September, also found that a third of all girls surveyed thought that it is justifiable for men to force women to have sex with them in some circumstances.

Meanwhile, in Birmingham, police found a man hanged and his wife and children stabbed to death in their home. Two children, a boy of two or three years old, and a girl aged about seven, were found

dead in a downstairs kitchen. A boy about nine was discovered in an upstairs bedroom and his mother in another upstairs bedroom.

Neighbours describe the couple as "nice" and "respectable" and say the killing is a total shock. Police are investigating.

As Kinesis goes to press, news reports have yet to name the murder-suicide as yet another act of violence against women and children.

## from DARE page 3

more. These things happen to us because we are told we don't belong here."

Thobani took it further. "It is also about creating a national interest amongst Canadians. The statement, 'They are taking our resources away,' is the glue that holds this nation together. Having us as the Other, the threat against whom the state is actually able to create a national interest, is also about letting Canadians—who are actually also losing out by restructuring of the economy—feel they have a say in defending this nationhood."

Popular theatre artist Sheila James took the floor and called for more direct action against this agenda. "If that means somehow blocking up the whole border—thing so that it doesn't work for anybody, not even for the truck drivers taking Canadian forests into America or anyone else, let's do it."

Filmmaker Yue Qing Yang came forward. "When you said, 'Open the borders,' my eyes went wide open. Very revolutionary. China has one-quarter of the world's population. Possibly 50 percent would want to flee out. What is going to happen?"

Sharma responded: "Opening borders is an exciting possibility. It really challenges our imaginations which are so wrapped up in nation states. We've bought the hype that nation-state equals democracy and it's corporations that mean undemocratic systems. But we need to see how it is nation states that bring us corporate rule."

Thobani added: "It's obvious you can't have open borders without a fundamental restructuring of the global economy. All political stripes in this country have accepted globalization of the economy as inevitable. What this kind of demand does is argue for a transformation of economic structures at the local and global levels."

"When the question comes down to, who has the right to say, 'I can go anywhere in the world I want to, and others cannot?' Then you are challenging power at its real base," she concluded.

The evening ended with a man, who described himself as "Jim Wong, a World War Two veteran, 77-years-old, born in Chinatown," telling us the story of his grandfather who came to North America from China on a boat almost a century ago. "I don't like to call [the Fujianese people] refugees really," he said.

Wong came to the Forum, he said, because he found out, "There's women amongst the boat people. I have three daughters. The thought that these women can be exploited and made to be prostitutes and to work 10-12 or 14 hours a day astounds me."

He continued, "We have to tell the general population that we have to be more generous. This world is getting more crowded, and the world is getting smaller. I'm really lucky to be here. So for God's sake, we could be a little more generous."

For more information on DARE, see page 10.

Fatima Jaffer came to Canada when she was 21 from Kenya. She is a regular writer for Kinesis.



# MOVEMENT MATTERS

## listings information

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

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

compiled by Leanne Keltie and Wei Yuen Fong

## Project probes social origins of HIV/AIDS

For too long women have been told that if we get sick it's because we did something wrong; we weren't eating right; we weren't taking care of ourselves; we weren't practising safer sex. Finger-pointing at women who contract HIV can be particularly virulent.

Listen up!: Women are talking about... is an innovative community-based research project, sponsored jointly by AIDS Vancouver and Positive Women's Network, and funded by Status of Women Canada and The Vancouver Foundation, that is seeking to change this.

The project's goal is to examine the social determinants of women's health—the things happening in the world around us that make it easier or harder for women to eat right, take care of themselves, or practise safer sex. Three of the key determinants of health the project is looking at are: income; power in intimate relationships; and relationships to health care institutions and providers.

By illustrating how factors related to the broader social world affect women's abilities to enact optimally health-enhancing choices, the project hopes to contribute to a public dialogue that will shift the blame for illness off individual people who are ill. It also aims to empower communities to lobby for and enact change around social factors that are acting as barriers to health.

Having recently completed an initial exploratory phase, the project is now moving forward into its second stage which focuses on equipping 12 women peer researchers from across the Lower Mainland with skills to go into their home communities and conduct focus groups and interviews with other members of those communities. Peer researchers will be involved in collecting, analyzing, and writing about the information gathered for the project.

The six communities the project is currently working with are: Aboriginal women; women who are HIV+; lesbian, bisexual and queer-identified women; women who are current or former consumers of the mental health system; women who are current or former substance users; and immigrant and refugee women.

The training for peer researchers will happen over a two-week period at the end of November with information gathering and analysis happening into March of 2000. If you or someone you know is a member of one of the identified target communities and would like to find out more about the peer training or the project generally call Stephanie Kellington, the project coordinator, before Oct 30 at (604) 828-5403 or email stephaniek@parc.org.

## "Unstrike" against Starbucks

Employees at 13 unionized Starbucks in BC are taking a different approach to raising public awareness about unfairness in their workplace. They are holding an "unstrike."

Staff at the 12 Vancouver and one Westbank location are still serving Starbucks coffee. However, they have chosen to dress casual at work and hand out leaflets to customers in the hopes of drawing attention to their dispute.

They are asking for issues basic to any successful workplace: decent wages, paid sick leave, scheduling of work and training procedures. Most Starbucks employees work part-time and earn an average of \$8.60 an hour. That means, most are taking home less than \$800 per month.

How can you help? Starbucks employees are asking for customer support in the form of a signed letter to Starbucks CEO Howard Shultz, letting him know that they support the "unstriking" union members. Tear-off letters are being supplied to supportive customers as an attachment to a brochure put out by the Canadian Autoworkers Union. These can be picked up at any unionized Starbucks location in Vancouver or Westbank.

CAW national representative Jeff Keighley says, "We are encouraging the public to continue to patronize Starbucks at this time. If Starbucks decides to lock out or if we later find it necessary to withdraw service completely, we will then be asking for a full consumer boycott of Starbucks."

For more information on the "unstrike," contact the Canadian Autoworkers Union, 326 12th St. West, Vancouver, BC, V3M 4H6; tel: (604) 522-7911 or 1-800-665-3553; fax: (604) 522-8975.

## Health effects of sex work

Prostitutes Empowerment, Education and Resource Society (PEERS) was founded in 1996 by current and former sex trade workers in Victoria. Its purpose is to provide skill-based training, advocacy, and lay counselling for sex workers who wish to exit the trade. Street outreach and advocacy are also provided for sex workers whose safety and health are jeopardized by working conditions on the job.

PEERS is undertaking a new research project with the goals of documenting the health effects of sex work, looking at trends in the early lives and health practices of sex workers, and recommending policies to improve the effectiveness of the health care system.

The study will enable sex workers to promote better health in their community—health being defined as emotional, physical and spiritual well-being. The study will focus on sex workers using off-street venues, such as private homes, escort agencies, phones, massage parlours, hotels, and the Internet.

Three former sex trade workers have been hired to compile a list of 100 potential interviewees for the study. Fifty to 100 people representing the profile of the Victoria sex trade community will be chosen and paid \$40 each for participating in an extensive two-hour interview.

Interviews will be conducted by former and current sex trade workers. Their acquisition of skills in interviewing, trans-

cribing and data analysis are other benefits of this project.

The study will be completed by June 2001. Cecilia Benoit of the Department of Sociology at the University of Victoria is the research leader for the study. Judy Lighwater is the project manager. Funding for the study was provided by the BC Health Research Foundation.

For more information about the study, address questions to health@pacificcoast.net, or (250) 388-6506, or PEERS Health Research Project, 320-620 View St, Victoria, BC, V8W 1J6.

## ELP has new Vancouver Organizer

There's a new Vancouver Organizer at End Legislated Poverty, a provincial anti-poverty organization in British Columbia. Her name is Jo-Anne Ross, and she is of the Haisla People from the Northwest Coast of BC.

Ross is a graduate of Simon Fraser University with a degree in Political Science. She has lived in Vancouver for eight years, and has two grown sons who also live in Vancouver. She also helped raise a niece, who is now living in Haisla territory with her two children.

For several years, Ross has been involved in the Aboriginal community in Vancouver. Through her work, she has networked with many people—Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. She says she is a firm believer in Aboriginal rights, which she sees as basic human rights. Her long-term goal is to work on social justice issues.

A major part of Ross' work as the Vancouver Organizer is to contact organizations and groups in Vancouver that represent Aboriginal peoples, immigrants, refugees, and people of colour. Ross' goal is to meet with people in these different communities to work together to increase the awareness of the impact of poverty and discrimination. Ross is inviting people who represent different communities to work with ELP.

The objectives of ELP are to assist organizations representing low income and unemployed people through information sharing, development of joint campaigns and actions, and education on the need to end poverty and create decent jobs. ELP has 40 member groups in BC, with approximately 15 situated in Vancouver. ELP also publishes a monthly newspaper, *The Long Haul*, in which people are invited to share their experiences with poverty and anti-poverty activism.

Ross says she expects her job to be a very challenging, yet exciting experience. "It is my hope that through my work, we can begin bridging the gaps between our diverse communities, and work together on our commonalities as citizens of this land. In a land so rich in resources, we should not have families, Elders, women, children and people with disabilities living in poverty."

She adds that wealth is for all people—not only for a few select individuals. "Poverty is oppression against people. Governments must uphold their responsibility to all citizens. It must abandon its corporate agenda and meet the needs of all people. By bringing unity in efforts to alleviate poverty, hopefully we can pressure the governments to make good changes for all."

For more information, contact Jo-Anne Ross at End Legislated Poverty, (604) 879-1209.

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# MOVEMENT MATTERS

compiled by Leanne Keltie, Lisa  
Wulwik and Bernadette Phan

## Support the Purple Rose Campaign

The Philippine Women Centre of British Columbia (PWC) will launch its own Purple Rose Campaign in December, as part of a two-year international campaign focused on raising awareness about, and fighting against, the trafficking of Filipino women.

Women leave the Philippines every day to work abroad as domestic workers, entertainers, and prostitutes. This global trafficking in Filipino women also includes a significant portion who become "Mail-order brides," marrying men from various industrialized countries, Canada included.

The PWC's campaign will be held in conjunction with an intensive research project on Filipino women "mail-order brides" in Canada. Each year, there are increasing numbers of these women entering Canada through formal and informal networks. In many provinces, whether in urban or rural areas, their situation is one of extreme isolation, poverty, and vulnerability to violence.

The launch of the Purple Rose Campaign in Vancouver will be on December 4th at the Roundhouse Community Centre (181 Roundhouse Mews). The evening will feature local and international performers, artists, poets, and an auction of original pieces of art work.

The campaign will culminate with a fundraising concert in March 2000 for International Women's Day. All of this public education, awareness, and support will lead toward an international conference to be held in the Philippines in the Fall of 2000, hosted by GABRIELA-Philippines (a national alliance of women's organizations).

Help end the international trafficking of Filipino women. Buy a purple rose. When you buy a purple rose, you pledge your commitment to help end the international trafficking of Filipino women.

For more information about the campaign, contact Marilou or Ning at the Philippine Women Centre, c/o Kalaayaan Centre, 451 Powell St, Vancouver, BC, V6A 1G7; tel/fax: 215-1103; email: pwc@netcom.ca.

## Wake-up call on child poverty

Promises, promises, promises... are meant to be broken, according to the government of Canada.

On November 24, 1989, the federal parties in the House of Commons unanimously made a commitment to "end child poverty by the Year 2000."

However, a decade later, poverty is still on the rise. Today, one in five children in Canada still lives in poverty. That's greater than the one in seven children who lived in poverty in 1989. Since the all-party resolution was passed, the number of poor children in Canada has increased by 60 percent.

As well, many children still do not have access to quality childcare services, or to affordable, secure housing. And many parents cannot find jobs adequate enough to sustain their families above the poverty line.

In response to this increasingly dire situation, anti-poverty activists are planning "wake-up calls" across the country to

mark the 10th anniversary of the federal government's (broken) promise.

On Wednesday, November 24th, wake-up call events will take place at 12:00 noon local time (to coincide with workplace/school lunch breaks) in each of Canada's six time zones.

Local communities are deciding on the type of action they will take to mark the occasion. This may include the ringing of church bells, the sounding of fire engine sirens, marching bands, rattlers, whistles, and so on. Activists are also encouraged to hold up placards at various intersections which read, "Honk if you want child poverty to end." Be as loud as possible to create a "big noise to wake up those government members who are sleeping on the job."

The wake-up calls will be surrounded by various other activities, including vigils and the public launch of national and provincial child poverty report cards. Campaign 2000 based in Toronto, in cooperation with Campaign Against Child Poverty and Citizens for Public Justice, has also put together a petition calling on Parliament to fulfill the promise of the 1989 House of Commons resolution.

In Vancouver, First Call, a coalition of provincial organizations and community groups, will be "Shining a light on child poverty," with a candlelight vigil. The event will take place on November 24 from 5:30 to 8:00pm at the Plaza of Nations, and will feature entertainers, speakers, children's activities and refreshments.

For more information about the activities being organized in BC, contact First Call at (604) 875-5786 or 1-800-307-1212. For details about the various activities that will take place on November 23 and 24 across the country, check out the Campaign 2000 website at [www.campaign2000.ca](http://www.campaign2000.ca), or call (416) 595-9230 ext 244 or 228.

## December 6th in Bow Valley

Women and men in the Bow Valley, Alberta region will mark December 6th—the National Day of Action and Remembrance on Violence Against Women—with a celebration of young women in their community. December 6th marks the anniversary of the murder of 14 women at L'Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal.

Last year, more than 160 people came out to the community's first annual event to remember women killed by men, and to work towards ending male violence against women.

This year's event, titled *AppreSHEation*, is dedicated to celebrating young women by promoting their strengths and potential. The event will recognize many of the young women in the community by highlighting their accomplishments and contributions in areas such as: art, performance, sports, volunteerism, music, education/learning, and drama.

*AppreSHEation* will take place at the HUB in Canmore (Alberta) on Monday, December 6th from 5:00 to 10:00pm. It will feature live music, local performers, a candlelight vigil, booths, displays, food, and various activities.

For more information, contact Julia Lynx, Society Against Family Violence (SAFV) at (403) 762-3511 or email: [safv@banff.net](mailto:safv@banff.net).

## Support for women in Colombia

Human rights abuses taking place in Colombia are escalating and this is cause for great concern. Colombia has the highest number of internally displaced people in the hemisphere. A high proportion of these displaced people are Afro-Colombians, indigenous Colombians and campesinos (farm workers).

The political violence committed against Colombians is devastating. State supported bodies such as the paramilitary are responsible for the displacement, killing and "disappearance" of large numbers of poor people. In Colombia, there is a 97 percent rate of impunity for committing violent crimes.

Recently, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have proposed to infuse millions of dollars into the Colombian economy. This money would be granted without providing any stipulations that address the human rights abuses being committed against poor people, Afro-Colombians, indigenous Peoples and the campesinos. This is not acceptable.

The majority of Colombians reject the IMF conditions and want new social programs and anti-poverty strategies to be devised.

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), an umbrella organization for women's groups in Canada, is lobbying the governments of Colombia and Canada to uphold their responsibilities in regards to the people of Colombia. NAC is calling on women to show their support for the Colombian people and write letters to both the IMF and The World Bank, challenging them on their policy decisions. Letters should call on these organizations to take responsibility in contributing to the worsening situation for people in Colombia, and to attach human rights agreements, at a minimum, on any loans provided to the government of Colombia.

Send letters to: Michael Camdessus, president, International Monetary Fund, 700-19th St. NW, Washington, DC, 20431 USA; fax: (202) 623-4661; email: [publicaffairs@imf.org](mailto:publicaffairs@imf.org). And to James Wolfensohn, president, The World Bank, 1818 H St. NW, Washington, DC, 20433 USA; fax: (202) 522-3031; email: [info@worldbank.org](mailto:info@worldbank.org).

For more information about the letter-writing campaign, contact NAC at (416) 932-1718.

## Feminist think tanks

The Canadian Feminist Alliance For International Action (FAFIA), an alliance of over 40 women's equality-seeking groups in Canada, is sponsoring a series of think tanks.

The first think tank will take place in Ottawa November 13 to 14. The impact of Canada's trade policies and globalization on women's poverty, and inequality in Canada, will be the theme to be discussed at this session.

Organizers are currently seeking 15 to 25 women from across Canada to participate in discussions on the topic of women's poverty and economic inequality. FAFIA encourages a wide range of women to submit letters of interest. Included in these letters should be the knowledge and experience that you or your organization can bring to the think tank.

There will be opportunities for ongoing participation in the research project beyond the think tank.

As the goal of FAFIA is to generate information on international practices that will be relevant to women in Canada, the group aims to build an inclusive and representative think tank. FAFIA is committed to working within an integrated feminist analysis. FAFIA is especially looking for women who work within an anti-racist and anti-discrimination framework.

Future think tanks will address: international human rights mechanisms, the link between women's poverty and violence against women; and information and communication technologies.

For further information, contact Liz Philpott at (613) 233-5500 or email: [ljfaires@web.net](mailto:ljfaires@web.net)

## Ombres Solaires (The Sunny Shadows)

Dalila Kadri, a Moroccan filmmaker living in the South of France, is completing a film about "resistance and love between oriental lesbians." Shot during the months of April and May of this year in Marseille and the region of Forcalquier, *Ombres Solaires* (The Sunny Shadows) narrates the "necessary encounter" of two women of Maghreb.

Two worlds meet: Ferial, Algerian French, raised and educated in France discovers a whole other side to Marseille with Houria who is in France temporarily, on a mission to organize a net of resistance in the Arabian quarters of the city.

Houria's name means "freedom," and Kadri's film addresses the affirming identity of women of colour in France. The 60-minute drama is followed by interviews with the non-professional actors, serving as a documentary of the making of the film. The women talk of their experience with the shooting and their life as lesbians. There is also of photography exhibition of stage shots meant to be shown simultaneously.

In order to complete her film, Kadri is seeking funds of approximately \$30,000 (Cdn), for the editorial part of the production as well as the post-production. She is sending a call out to any woman interested in sponsoring or co-producing her film, inviting them to get in touch with her.

To do so, contact Kali Productions, c/o Dalila Kadri, 17 rue Saint Dominique, 13001 Marseille, France; tel: 0491917698; email: [dalilakadri@minitel.net](mailto:dalilakadri@minitel.net).

## ROAD TRIP!!!

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And let's mobilize some actions  
here in Vancouver

### Interested? Excited?

Then call the  
Vancouver Status of Women  
at (604) 255-6554

For more on the WTO, see Page 18



# FEATURE

Canada's policies on refugees:

## An issue of responsibility

by Kelly D'Aoust

There has been a lot of discussion lately about refugees, "illegal" migrants and the need to reform Canada's refugee policies. The mainstream media has centered its reports and commentary on how the refugee system is regularly abused, and that Canada is an overgenerous nation being taken advantage of by desperate people and organized crime.

What is consistently ignored in the current debates is the role that Western nations, like Canada, play in producing refugees in the first place. Instead of examining our responsibility and accountability for the existence of refugees, Canada is depicted as a compassionate nation that comes to the assistance of "other" people's problems.

To fully appreciate the current climate enveloping the 590 people from Fujian province in China who came to Canada by boat, a historical context is needed.

At the end of World War II, the United Nations formulated criteria for defining and determining refugee status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. The UN created international refugee policy as a response to the shameful scenarios occurring during WWII where Jewish refugees were turned away from countries like Canada and sent back to face the gas chambers. [In 1942, Canada turned back a ship called *St Louis* (also known as the *Voyage of the Damned*) carrying Jewish people fleeing Hitler's final solution. Of all Western countries, Canada admitted the fewest Jewish refugees.]

In adopting the tenets of the 1951 Convention, the international community made a commitment to protect refugees so that innocent people would not be persecuted within their own countries.

The UN documents concerning refugees, incorporated into Canada's Immigration Act, define a person as a refugee if "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."

The fact that Canada's refugee policy is couched within the Immigration Act is a subtle indication of how the government has moved away from the original intent of humanitarianism. Immigration has very specific objectives and goals which are incompatible with the hu-

manitarian ideal of assisting displaced peoples. Some of these goals are demographic where the government tries to regulate national growth. Other goals are to foster trade and commerce by selecting immigrants who have specific job skills that are needed to strengthen the Canadian economy.

Since Canada is officially bilingual, preference is given to those immigrants who speak either French or English. The explicit intent of immigration is to benefit the host country by selecting immigrants who will contribute significantly to the economic and social vibrancy of a nation. While these objectives may be understandable in the context of immigration, one has to question the ethics of grouping refugees into this system.

Since refugee claims are processed through government immigration agencies, immigration policy objectives underlie decisions of acceptance. Refugees who apply from overseas are often selected based on some of the same criteria as immigrants: education, skills, family ties in Canada, ability to support themselves financially, and validity of documents verifying identity.

The reality, however, for many refugees is that they are poor, often with little formal education, and have no access to identification documents. Depending on which part of the world they live in, they may not have any family ties in Canada since Canadian Immigration policy has historically selected immigrants primarily from western Europe and the United States.

The result is that economic considerations often take precedence over humanitarianism in the selection and acceptance of refugees, and unfortunately this trend has become more pronounced as fewer government resources are spent on social programs.

In dealing with refugees, Canada's priority has been and continues to be primarily about control. There are two broad categories of refugees: the first group applies for refugee status from outside of Canada, while the second group has already arrived using Canada as their country of first asylum.

The Canadian government prefers the first category because control over the refugee selection and review is firmly maintained. Immigration officials set up outposts in foreign countries and refugees are processed by the distribution of visas.

This system effectively controls the movements of refugees and places priority on administration rather than assistance in escaping persecution. Control is secured by a general lack of media exposure to immigration procedures in dealing with these claims. In fact, out-of-country claims are rendered invisible to most Canadians. As well, many refugees live in areas where there are no immigration outposts and the issuing of visas for asylum are reserved for those privileged few who can pay for exit.

In contrast, refugees who arrive in Canada requesting asylum are not so easy to control and are officially frowned upon by the Canadian government. Selection and processing of these refugees involves a series of mandatory hearings and reviews, instead of being left up to the discretion of overseas immigration officials.

A 1981 Task Force on Immigration Practices and Procedures made clear that the priorities of the government were "administrative convenience, a desire for efficiency and a wish to impose vigorous control which are not always compatible with justice and compassion."

Closely examining Canada's history of acceptance and resettlement of refugees exposes an evident trend in choosing refugees. In the 1950s and 60s, Canada accepted thousands of economic refugees from Eastern Europe. In the mid 1970s, following the end of the Vietnam War, large groups of Cambodians, Laotians and Vietnamese were allowed to resettle in Canada. In the early 1980s when Poland invoked martial law, hundreds of Polish people were granted visas to enter Canada.

And yet during the 1980s, people from Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador were not granted refugee status. The reasons given for rejecting the claims were both racist and imperialist in nature. Firstly, it was argued that Canada did not have enough Latin American communities to support newcomers in their expected assimilation. The preference was to resettle these refugees in countries with "culturally similar surroundings." Secondly, arguments were also made that these refugees were fleeing "economic" oppression and not escaping persecution and therefore did not qualify as refugees by definition.

But weren't Polish people and other Eastern European refugees motivated to leave primarily due to economics? And weren't Eastern Europeans moving to a

**This system effectively controls the movements of refugees and places priority on administration rather than assistance in escaping persecution.**

culturally unfamiliar place when they chose to settle in Canada? These European refugees were not fluent in French or English, but they did have white skin and would presumably assimilate well into the dominant culture.

It also appears that refugee policy is closely tied to foreign policy. In the case of the Guatemalan, Nicaraguan and El Salvadorian refugees, it was

feared that interference in Latin America could provoke hostilities with the United States who viewed South America as its "backyard." Consequently, the Canadian government made no protest against the Americans who were arming the rebels in South America in an attempt to retain neo-colonial control over foreign governments and their economies.

Very little has changed since refugee policy was first conceived in 1951. Canada has always and continues to accept certain groups of refugees when it suits our needs. When we needed cheap domestic labour in the late 1970s, women from the Caribbean were accepted in large numbers as refugees. In the 1980s, after Caribbean women mobilized to ensure their rights, the Canadian government changed its foreign domestic workers' policies to favour women from the Philippines and Thailand, thus effectively excluding women from the Caribbean from coming to Canada.

Sherene Razack, author of *Looking White People in the Eye*, says that there have always been groups, like the Jews, who weren't wanted in Canada. She cautions that "we need to look closely at the line that has been drawn between the deserving and undeserving refugee and simultaneously ask ourselves, what is the role that refugees and 'illegal' immigrants play in our economies? How much of our high standard of living is attained from the sources of cheap labour produced by refugees here and around the globe?"

Contrary to popular misconceptions, refugees are not suddenly created out of situations that are isolated from the influence of countries in the Northern hemisphere. Refugees are created when there is political instability, economic strife and power struggles over control of resources.

Capitalism, patriarchy and white supremacy intersect to create conditions of economic exploitation and political domination in the Southern regions of the world.

see REFUGEE next page



# FEATURE

## from REFUGEE previous page

Western nations like Canada need to recognize their complicity in global economic exploitation, which is part of the cycle for creating refugees.

Multinationals are heavily invested in labour markets in countries in the South, and use their power to influence governments to favour their capitalist endeavours.

Countries in the South are exploited for their cheap labour and natural resources, while the gap between rich people and poor people within the North and the South widens. It's a precarious balancing act that is easily overwhelmed by civil uprising, natural disaster or some unexpected change to the status quo.

In times of crisis, the West distances itself from the struggle, preferring instead to step back and send humanitarian aid while these countries resolve their own problems. This strategy offers the West the advantage of appearing humanitarian and generous while simultaneously disguising its participation and responsibility for creating refugee crises.

Of course, if foreign investments are threatened, more direct action is taken under the guise of assisting the oppressed people. How many times did we hear that the motivation behind the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) airstrike on Kosovo was to protect the Albanian refugees? We were also told that motivation behind the Gulf War was to protect Kuwait nations who were suffering at the hands of Iraq.

Yet, how long was Canada aware of the suffering of the East Timorese people? What interventions have been taken to protect Timorese over the past decade? How much foreign capital flows annually through these regions to support our quality of living?

It is no coincidence that China's Fujian province is both a region heavily invested in by Canadian capitalists as well as a place riddled with high unemployment, low wages, few government supports and desperate people trying to migrate to Canada.

Razack is currently working on a new book that looks at the 1990s as a "new era in policing the borders." In her research, she has observed that certain ethnic groups are accepted more easily than others, and of particular concern is the present erosion of rights for both refugees and landed immigrants.

Even those who have been granted landed immigrant status can now be deported without appeal if they are found to be a danger to society, says Razack. Children born in Canada of refugee parents no longer have full citizenship rights and do not qualify for medical benefits.

In addition, the recent emphasis on the need for high quality identity documents discriminates against refugees from the South, in particular Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, where such documents are often not available.

On November 10, 1998 *The Globe and Mail* issued a statement from Sadako Ogata, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, who said that "self-interest is winning out over humanitarian tradition when Canada selects refugees for resettlement from

abroad...Canada is giving less weight to refugees' need for protection and more to how much they are likely to cost taxpayers once they arrive in Canada."

Focusing on the costs of processing refugees through Canadian government bureaucracy diverts attention away from the real issue of global responsibility for the conditions that create refugees. Similarly, focusing attention on the problems of human smuggling and organized crime reduces refugees to objects, and ignores the conditions that compel people to leave their homes and seek asylum in another country.

Canada is implicated in the production of refugees because it continues to exploit the labour and resources of the South, while simultaneously supplying aid to corrupt governments to protect financial investments of itself and corporations.

Refugees are a product of this cycle and there will continue to be refugees created globally as long as Western nations deny the power imbalances between countries and blame refugees for social problems.

*Kelly D'Aoust is a former high school English teacher and a recent graduate of Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University. She is pursuing her writing interests as well as working as a business manager for an engineering consulting firm. She is also the volunteer coordinator at the FREDA centre for research on violence against women and children in Vancouver.*

## Who's worth what

### FACT:

There are roughly 6.5 million refugees in Africa, and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees is appealing for \$165 million to provide them with minimal shelter and the means to return home.

### FACT:

\$475 million has been allotted to assist the 3.4 million refugees fleeing Kosovo.

### FACT:

The United States and European countries provide 97 percent of UNHCR funding.

Question (after doing the math): What does this tell us?

(Information source: The Guardian, August 12, 1999)

## the facts HEAR THE MYTHS GET THE FACTS

*Ever since the first ship from China arrived on the shores of British Columbia, anti-refugee, anti-people of colour, and anti-poor people sentiments have been on the rise. DARE has put together a few myths and facts in response to the scapegoating by the public and the hysteria of the media.*

*Thank you to the Coast Salish Peoples — the Burrard, Musqueam and Squamish Nations — for allowing us to be here on their territories. We call on other non-Native people living in Canada — whatever their "immigration" status — to always acknowledge whose land they are on, and to work in solidarity with indigenous people here and around the world.*

## DIRECT ACTION AGAINST REFUGEE EXPLOITATION

DARE was formed by a group of women in Vancouver to support the rights of the people — especially the women — from China seeking refuge in Canada. We are concerned about their safety and well-being. We are working to ensure that they receive fair and just treatment from Canadian authorities, the media, and the public.

### MYTH #1:

The people from China seeking refuge in Canada are here for purely economic reasons, not "political" reasons.

### FACT:

Poverty is a human rights issue. Human rights issues are political issues. Escaping poverty is political. "One of the major reasons for an increase in migration is the destruction of rural economies in many countries in the South." (Women's Coalition on Immigration and Refugee Issues.)

### MYTH #2:

Canada's refugee laws are too loose.

### FACT:

Immigration Canada projects that, of the total intake of immigrants and refugees in 1999, only 11 to 13 percent will be refugees. In each of the past few years, Canada has received only approximately 24,000 applications from people asking for refugee status. Canada rejects 42 to 47 percent of applications for refugee status.

### MYTH #3:

Canada spends too much money on immigrants and refugees.

### FACT:

The impact of immigration on government expenditures is small. The total budget for Citizenship and Immigration for 1997/98 was one-half of one percent of the total federal budget. The reality is that refugees and immigrants contribute more to the public coffers than they take out.

### MYTH #4:

These refugee claimants are "illegal."

### FACT:

It is legal to arrive in Canada and claim refugee status. In fact, it is very difficult for people to apply to Canada for refugee status from within their own countries.

### MYTH #5:

Sending these people back to China will solve the problem of smuggling.

### FACT:

Sending them back will only cause people to go underground, and could lead to more women and children being exploited in the sex trade. There is also risk to their extended families in Canada and in their home countries.

**HOW TO CONTACT US:** by telephone: (604) 255-5499, or by email: [chineserefugeclaimants@canada.com](mailto:chineserefugeclaimants@canada.com)



# FEATURE

**DARE forum on immigration and refugee rights:**

## Exposing the real snakeheads

by Nandita Sharma

The title of my talk tonight is challenging the myths around Canadian immigration and refugee policy and arriving at some sort of reality around those issues.

The first task is to state very clearly that the real "snakeheads" profiting from the desperation of others are Canadian employers and the Canadian government. They are the real slave traders, and they are the real pimps, when we are talking about the trafficking of women and children.

We need to look at the source and the cause of the desperation of people and at what is continuing to make them vulnerable, instead of looking simply at the middle people who may be facilitating and profiting from it as well. We need to place the responsibility where it lies.

Canadian employers and the Canadian government are the real snakeheads because they are creating the situations that cause people to flee their homes and seek refuge elsewhere. They are very purposely creating the situations that leave migrants vulnerable to employers demands, to men's predatory advances and other forms of violence.

Canadian employers and governments alike promote globalization. This has been the buzzword since the 1980s. Globalization basically means promoting trade liberalization, which in turn means promoting people to have no other livelihood other than to produce commodities for the world market.

Globalization means the deregulation of environmental, labour and other kinds of protections. Globalization also means the privatization of social services into private capitalist services.

Canadian employers and governments around the world are promoting globalization and not coincidentally getting the Chinese government to follow suit.

Here are a couple of examples to show how this is actually happening; how the Canadian government and employers are creating the desperation from which women, children and men from China are seeking refuge.

First, the Canadian government and Canadian employers who are setting up factories in China are supporting and encouraging the massive privatization of state-run industries in China. That alone—that one act—is estimated to cause over 100 million people in China to be displaced and to lose their livelihood.

Another way that the Canadian government and employers are acting as snakeheads is in their support for the notorious Three Gorges Dam Project. [Damming the Yangzi River] is going to flood the ancestral homelands of approximately 10 million small-scale farmers and the communities that have sprung up around those farming activities.

The Three Gorges Dam is going to flood all of the lands that Chinese people have been writing poetry and singing songs

about, in order to provide factory owners with electricity. It is going to displace millions of people.

When Jean Chretien goes on trade missions to China he encourages privatization, deregulation and mega-development projects. The Canadian government and the mainstream media would have us believe that Canada is not responsible for these projects and that people fleeing poverty are not real refugees. They are "bogus" refugees, we're told. They are "economic" refugees.

Being able to speak of so-called economic refugees with such contempt is only possible because of the way that the criteria for becoming a refugee has been defined in Canada, as well as in the rest of the world. It is important for us to see that the category "refugee" has been defined for the benefit of "First World" governments, which have chosen to recognize only certain desperate political situations as meriting the attention of the world community.

The "First World" and its profoundly undemocratic organizations such as the United Nations, have steadfastly refused to recognize that the creation and intensification of poverty in the "Third World" is not a natural phenomenon. It is a profoundly political, economic and social act on the part of "First World" governments, corporations and the people who support them. They continue to insist that it is the poor who are responsible for their poverty, and it is the "Third World" that is responsible for its poverty.

By defining a refugee only as someone who is fleeing an extraordinary political situation, all of the everyday acts of violence that are perpetrated by First World states and their Third World cronies are dismissed as unimportant or as non-political.

The only way you can define people fleeing China right now as not being real refugees is by having a narrow definition of what refugees are.

To rethink migration, which is our task tonight, we need to reject this narrow definition of a "refugee," and recognize that all situations that rob people of their livelihood, that destroy the environment in which they live, that create conditions where mothers can't feed their children—all of these situations require refuge.

Canadian employers and the Canadian governments—provincial and federal—are also the real snakeheads because they create the situations that leave people seeking refuge in Canada extremely vulnerable. And that's what snakeheads do.

How do they do this? First, by erecting restrictive immigration policies that leave most of the world's people with absolutely no legal recourse to ever migrate to Canada. Another way is by pretending that Canadian border cops can actually prevent people from crossing the border.

No government in the world, no matter what they do to make it difficult to cross

the border, can ever stop the worldwide migration of people. This is for the very simple and just reason that human beings have a need to live.

While First World governments, corporations, and the people that support them might like to pretend that the lives of people of colour are meaningless and easily sacrificed, this is not true. People will do what they need to do to survive and if that means crossing oceans and crossing borders, that is precisely what they will do.

Pretending this isn't so only leaves those making these journeys extremely vulnerable once they're inside Canada, because it renders them "illegal."

The worldwide movement of people crossing international borders has doubled since the early 1980s when the Canadian government and Canadian corporations went around the world promoting globalization. There are now over 125 million people engaged in international migration. Most of them are fleeing desperate situations and most of them are not being given citizenship status when they arrive.

Another key way the Canadian government is leaving people vulnerable once they are in Canada is through a massive migrant workers' program that recruits people to come to Canada, not as permanent residents, but as temporary indentured labour. [They are left] vulnerable to the demands of their employers be it for low wages, no wages, no benefits, overtime, sexual harassment and sexual assault. That sounds like a snakehead to me.

It is important to note that the number one source country for migrant workers to Canada is China. This is not a coincidence. The Canadian government knows very well that the situation it is promoting in China is causing people to leave the country. In turn, Canada benefits by recruiting these people as migrant workers.

It is employers' demands and government policies that are making these people vulnerable. If they were given the same rights and entitlements of Canadian citizenship as others, then these people would be much less vulnerable. But the job of snakeheads is precisely to leave people vulnerable and force them to work.

The Canadian government's rhetoric about border control is ideological. Canadian employers and the Canadian government do not want to stop the movement of people into Canada, and that is what we need to rethink.

**It is important for us to see that the category "refugee" has been defined for the benefit of "First World" governments, which have chosen to recognize only certain desperate political situations as meriting the attention of the world community.**

The present situation is not about stopping people from actually entering Canada. What it is about is making the people who do cross borders, who do come into Canada, extremely vulnerable.

The borders the Canadian government is trying to protect are the borders between the Third World and the First World. This is why we're seeing such a racist backlash and such racist support for keeping people from China who are seeking refuge vulnerable.

More and more people from the South, the so-called Third World, are coming into Canada than ever before. This is something we have to come to grips with. Stopping their movement is not what it's about. The overwhelming majority of people coming to Canada are from the Third World. However, they are entering as indentured servants or as undocumented and extremely vulnerable workers.

What can we do about this? The most important thing we need to do is to fundamentally rethink our approach to people's mobility. By mobility I mean two things: moving and not moving.

We need to put an end to policies that force people to move. That is the first and foremost thing to do in order to have social justice in this world. It means challenging global capitalism at its very core.

Secondly, we need to put an end to national governments' monopoly on determining when, where, and if, people move. We need people being able to stay put and being able to move freely of their own volition, of their own autonomy. We need autonomous movements of people, not government snakehead driven movements of people.

If we don't recognize that people must be able to stay where they are and that they must be able to move if they need to when they want to, we are going to continue to create a situation of extreme poverty, desperation and vulnerability.

As I said before: nothing will stop the movement of people.

Nandita Sharma is a member of Basmati Action Group.



# FEATURE

DARE forum on immigration and refugee issues

## The creation of a "crisis"

by Sunera Thobani

The turnout [at this forum] is really great. It shows how much interest and concern there is about the way this particular group of refugees are being treated. Reading the mainstream papers, you increasingly get the impression nobody really cares about them. The only people who "care" are the minister of immigration and citizenship [Elinor Caplan,] who wants to change the law very quickly, and the RCMP, who want to fly off to China to try to restrict any such groups [from] coming over in the future.

This evening is also a good indicator of how much work we need to do to change the kind of public discussion that's out there.

In terms of understanding migration issues and Canadian policy, there are three important points within which we need to contextualize what is happening today.

The first is the context of globalization. We hear from the Canadian government that the changes taking place in the global economy are putting incredible pressures on the resources we have in Canada—somehow there isn't enough to go around for everybody—and there isn't anybody profiting from all of this. The global economy is some kind of nameless, faceless thing out there, which is forcing the government, and anybody else who might care about social justice issues and rights, to cut back on its responsibilities to provide a social safety network.

[The Canadian government would say that] because the times are so hard financially, we need to cut back, we need to pull back, and we need to look after people in Canada first.

I challenge this definition of globalization and the global economy. Globalization is nothing new. Globalization has been going on for 500 years. The very construction of Canada—the coming to being of this country we call Canada—depended upon and was part of that first phase of globalization, which was colonization. We have been living within a global economy for at least the last 500 years.

It's important to begin from this definition and analysis of globalization because what immediately becomes apparent is the colonization of Aboriginal peoples, and the attack on and the distortion of their sovereign governments and their self-determin-

As long as we continue to accept that definition of Canadian nationhood, what is inevitable is that people who look like me will continue to be called the "Other, the immigrant, the refugee."

nation. If we are going to fight back against globalization, this is the key issue for us to highlight and have front and centre in our analysis.

The other thing which becomes apparent is that all non-Aboriginal people

who live in Canada today came through some process of migration. Our presence here today—even those of you who are born here and are defined as "natural born" Canadians—is very much dependent on that first phase of globalization—colonization.

It then becomes apparent that the migration of different groups of people have been controlled and regulated in different ways by the Canadian state historically. Some came over as colonizers, as settlers, and had access to citizenship. The subsequent generations of those people are now called "natural-born Canadian citizens."

We need to get rid of this "natural" idea, and look at how that citizenship was acquired. Some of us who came over as immigrants continue to be called immigrants, even though we are citizens. We may have been here for generations, we may even have been born here, but we continue to be called "immigrant and refugee communities."

Who gets called a Canadian, and who is named immigrant or refugee depends upon the racialization of the conditions of our migration.

The racialized basis of the Canadian nation today originated with French and British colonization of this part of the continent. That racialized basis of the Canadian nation was never dismantled or changed. In fact, it became further strengthened and institutionalized through biculturalism and bilingualism, which today are defined as the national Canadian identity.

As long as we continue to accept that definition of Canadian nationhood, what is inevitable is that people who look like me will continue to be called the "Other, the immigrant, the refugee."

As long as we hold on to "Englishness" and "Frenchness," as being the defining factors of Canadian nationhood, the rest of us who have come here since will continue to be seen as outsiders.

It's very important to look at the racialization of our conditions of migration

see CRISIS next page

DARE forum on immigration and refugee rights:

## An intelligent and humane response

by Rita Wong

I became involved in publicly supporting the rights of the Chinese migrants for two reasons. One was the need to defend basic human rights, which should belong to everyone. Second, was as a reaction to the racist and classist hostility against the migrants which is fueled by the media, and which is so prevalent in the public discussion right now.

I jumped into the fray with primarily anti-racism motives. I need to emphasize that the answer to the backlash is not to distance oneself from the migrants, which some Chinese have done unfortunately. I think this only fuels the kind of scapegoating that has been going on. When you buy into this kind of blaming, you just

make it easier for others to scapegoat you as well.

Our well-being rests in supporting the human rights that any human being—whatever their nationality, colour or income—should have. When we deny those rights to anyone, we also weaken them for ourselves, whether we realize it or not.

I'm really worried about the Fujianese women, some of whom I have been working with. They are in a very tough situation; they owe a lot of money to the snakeheads and they're being criminalized by the Canadian government.

This puts a lot of pressure on the Fujianese women to go underground and serve as indentured labour. We need to remember that exploitation—whether it occurs in the sex trade, the garment industry,

housework, factories—is a real danger, and a reality, I'm afraid, for most of them. If we don't find options, most of these people are headed for miserable and extremely hazardous conditions, whether in North America or China, if they get deported.

Some people have disappeared and I fear that the underground which has taken them is both dangerous and exploitative. On top of that, to be criminalized makes it extremely difficult for them. State deportation and organized crime are serious threats to these women's lives.

I want Canadians to take a moment to put yourselves in that situation, and ask yourselves what you would want done to you.

Group detention and group profiling, which amounts to stereotyping, is not fair.

Imprisoning people in Prince George isolates them from any Chinese language services they might be able to access here. [The people incarcerated at Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt and half of the women incarcerated at the Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women were shipped up to a re-opened jail in Prince George, a community in central British Columbia which is a 10 hour drive from Vancouver]. Keeping mothers in prison while their children are moved to group homes is also cruel and inhumane.

These are things that our government is doing. As concerned people we need to speak up against these violations of very basic human rights.

see DARE on page 17



# FEATURE

from CRISIS previous page

and the subsequent treatment we receive to understand how immigration policies work.

The second point contextualizing what is happening with these migrants and un-

derstanding migration generally, is the current restructuring of the immigration program that is taking place in Canada.

The Canadian state is fundamentally restructuring the immigration program, along with other policy areas.

The way it is being restructured is through reducing the number of people coming into this country as landed immigrants, who can then make claims upon citizenship.

This follows Nandita's analysis about Canada having a growing migrant workers' program [see page 11], where more and more people are coming into the country on temporary work permits without the ability to become landed immigrants and to subsequently make claims upon Canadian citizenship.

What we've had is a reduction in numbers. We've seen the eligibility criteria being strengthened both for the independent and family categories. We're seeing the re-introduction of the head tax [the Right of Landing Fee], which again restricts the number of people who can afford to come in. This has very class-based consequences for the people trying to come to Canada.

We're seeing the "family" being redefined in narrower and narrower terms—the nuclear family is the model now being imposed on the immigration program. We're also seeing the strengthening of the sponsorship regulations.

All these changes are having the effect of restricting the number of people who come into the country as landed immigrants and who can subsequently make claims to citizenship.

In all of their policy papers, one of the projects for the restructuring of the immigration program is to actually restrict the eligibility criteria for claiming Canadian citizenship. The Canadian government has made no mystery of this. This is no secret agenda.

Nandita spoke before me about how the Canadian state—the federal government—is managing immigration so that more and more people will come into the country under more and more vulnerable conditions, with fewer and fewer rights. This is very much part of a consciously, clearly articulated strategy by the government.

Of course, once you start restricting the conditions under which people can come into the country and the rights they will have once they come in, people become desperate. They will try anything and everything in order to ensure a livelihood for themselves and their families, to try to keep their families together, to give their children options. People become increasingly desperate, and I think what we've seen over the summer is an indication of how desperate people can actually get.

That they would be willing to mortgage 10 or 15 years of their lives to be nothing more than indentured labour, and travel under horrific conditions with a very real likelihood that they would never even make it to Canada, shows a level of desperation which really is a result of this very

consciously articulated strategy around immigration, not only in Canada but also in other countries of the West.

The third point is to look at how the government is very effectively making immigrants, refugees, and this

particular group of refugees into scapegoats. The arguments we are hearing are that we have limited resources, we have to take care of Canadians first, and so on. This allows a very liberal discourse—one that says we have to provide for people here first, we have to take care of poverty in Canada first.

But what is creating poverty in Canada is the social and economic policies of the government; it's not these few hundred migrants who've come into the country.

They become an easy scapegoat, an easy target for the hostility and the anxiety that people in this country are feeling—a real anxiety, as unemployment is increasing, as poverty is increasing. Women know better than anybody else that what is effectively being done by politicians and the media, has shifted attention and blame onto migrants, refugees and immigrants, for problems that are in fact the result of the fundamental economic restructuring of Canadian society.

It is important to look at what function [blaming the people from Fujian] is playing. It's not just racism without a cause—it has a very specific purpose here. It is to shift blame away from where it really lies, and place it on people who have come into the country under very vulnerable conditions, and who are then made even more vulnerable through the racist hysteria we've seen.

What the Canadian government is trying to do is to use this so-called crisis [blaming the people from Fujian] that has been generated around the arrival of these few hundred people. It is being treated as a major "national crisis," which is interesting in itself. What becomes a major national crisis? Increasing poverty doesn't. Increasing homelessness doesn't. But a few hundred migrants become a national crisis.

This national crisis is being used to take away the rights that refugees currently have in this country. That is what is behind the amount of attention that this particular group of migrant people has been receiving. For example, the government right now is looking at a proposal to lock up refugees for months at a time.

This is a particularly disturbing proposal. It would allow immigration officials

to suspend the legal requirements for frequent hearings to review whether claimants should be held in jail or in detention, or whether they should be released. Instead of having periodic reviews, the proposal is that there would be one review and then the claimant would be locked up until the final determination was made as to whether they could stay or whether they will be deported.

This is obviously a serious infringement of their rights. Holding refugee claimants in jail is also very inhumane. There is already a process in place for how these cases are to be treated, so the proposal that we should bypass this process is a serious shift in the kind of policies we have had in this country so far.

What we hear again and again is that [detention] has become necessary because our borders are being "swamped." However, if we look at the numbers for the last 10 years, immigration [and refugee] targets levels have never been met. We've had far fewer people coming into the country than the desired levels set by the government.

So the idea that we're being swamped is a completely bogus. It is being used in a strategic way right now to try to take away the right of appeal that refugees currently have, and their right to be released and to live in Canadian society.

Also, there was a specific recommendation in the 1994 review of immigration policy that we should have detention camps, and that all refugees who come into the country should be held in detention camps.

I'm sure all of you can relate to what this is all reminiscent of. It was a proposal that was treated very seriously by the government and was actually included in their final strategic plan as an option. That is why I am concerned about how the government is using this so-called national crisis of a few hundred people from China.

There is one more thing I want to talk about, because it's a very controversial is-

communities. [These demands are] really just enabling them to claim to be "Canadians."

"Send them back! They're the problem, we are not the problem. Treat us nicely. We should not experience racism, because we can come through the proper and legal channels."

[These demands] become a way [for people of colour] to distance themselves from the current group of people who are coming in. It's a classist argument because most people who are making this argument did not come into the country under the same conditions [as this current group].

They had education; they had skills; they were professionals, so they could come into the country. They didn't need to "lie and cheat their way into this country," as people who are more desperate, who don't have those class options, have to do.

Some people of colour are using this argument to prove that, "We are even more Canadian than you are; we would send them back."

It's a terrible shame that the experience of racism has been translated into some people of colour picking on others who are more vulnerable than themselves. By reacting in this way, people of colour are on dangerous ground. If we choose to prove our patriotism and our "Canadian-ness" on the grounds of racism, it is a double-edged sword which can cut either way.

I think it's important for those of us advocating for refugee rights to expose the class basis of this "send them back" demand. We need to stand up and say, "No actually, we are not different from this group of people who recently came to Canada; we are the same. We face the same kind of conditions [of racism here]."

I don't want to make too much of this because, certainly there are forms of persecution that refugees face, which most of us as immigrants haven't personally faced. However, in terms of the structural conditions that push international migration, we

face similar experiences, and have seen similar destruction of our communities. On this basis, I want to make a real plea for those of us who are advocates to stand up and say, "Yes, we are the same as they are, and we

want them to have the same rights that we do. Put an end to this scapegoating."

My closing remarks concern the discussions out there that: "They want what we have; they will take away what we have." This is very much the sentiment out there, which is fuelling the racist response [to the people from China].

We need to change that into a question which focuses on who is this "we." What is it that "We do have," and "How did we come to have what we have?"

What makes it all right for us to buy a t-shirt on the streets of Vancouver for \$3, which was made in China, then stand up all outraged as Canadian citizens when the woman who made that t-shirt tries to come here and live with us on a basis of equality? What gives us that right?

That's the question we need to put out there.

**What becomes a major national crisis? Increasing poverty doesn't. Increasing homelessness doesn't. But a few hundred migrants become a national crisis.**

sue and a painful one. I think most of us who are activists and advocates for refugee rights, who are people of colour, don't want to talk about this, but it is an extremely important.

The racism out there, the hysteria in the media, is all very clear and it is all very reminiscent of previous periods in Canadian history. But what has been particularly disturbing and appalling to me is the demands we're hearing from so-called spokespeople for people of colour communities: "Send them back! These are not genuine refugees!"

We have to find a way of talking about this and actually confronting these demands coming from our "community" spokespeople. I don't need to point very low. I can point very high in this province—we can look at the attorney general [Ujjal Dosanjh] and the comments he has made.

It is our responsibility to confront these "send them back" demands from people of colour who claim to be spokespeople of our



# Rights under

## A legal herstory of abortion

It's been almost 12 years since the last law in Canada criminalizing abortion was struck down. However, that hasn't meant that abortion services are available to women across the country. There are still startling disparities between provinces, between urban and rural areas, between hospital/health board administrations, and so on.

In this issue of *Kinesis*, we wanted to remind readers of the struggle that has been fought to first decriminalize abortion in Canada, and then to ensure women can access abortion services. So, here below is a legal herstory of abortion rights in Canada, and well as an update on abortion services across the country. (Thanks to the Pro-Choice Action Network in Vancouver and the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League for the information.)

Also, don't forget to check out Page 16, for a flashback to the 70s, courtesy of *The Pedestal*.

**1869:** Abortion is made illegal, under the threat of life imprisonment. Dissemination of information about birth control is also made illegal.

**1892:** Parliament enacts the first Criminal Code, which prohibits abortion and the sale, distribution, and advertisement of contraception.

**1926 to 1947:** 4,000 to 6,000 Canadian women die as a result of bungled illegal abortions.

**1936:** Social worker Dorothea Palmer is arrested and charged under the Criminal Code with offering birth control information.

**1967:** A federal committee considers amendments to the Criminal Code on abortion. The committee hears from many groups and individuals on both sides of the issue, including Dr. Henry Morgentaler, who urges repeal of the abortion law and freedom of choice on abortion. Around this time, an estimated 35,000 to 120,000 illegal abortions are taking place every year.

**1969:** Parliament passes amendments to Section 251 of the Criminal Code, decriminalizing contraception, and allowing some abortions under extremely restricted conditions. Some hospitals with Therapeutic Abortion Committees can approve and provide an abortion, if the pregnancy would endanger the woman's life or health. Access to abortion is applied unevenly and unfairly across the country. Women wait an average of eight weeks for an abortion. Some provinces refuse to provide any abortion services at all, and abortion is largely unavailable to women outside major cities.

**1969:** Dr. Henry Morgentaler defies Section 251 of the Criminal Code and performs abortions in his medical practice in Quebec. In June, Morgentaler's office is raided by the police and he is charged with conspiracy to perform an abortion.

**1970:** The Vancouver Women's Caucus, a group of independent feminists, organizes political opposition to Section 251. The Caucus organizes the Abortion Caravan, the first national feminist protest. Women travel over 3,000 miles from Vancouver to Ottawa, gathering numbers as they go. In Ottawa, the Abortion Caravan, now 500 women strong, holds two days of demonstrations. Thirty women chain themselves to the parliamentary gallery in the House of Commons, closing parliament for the first time in Canadian history [see page 12].

**1971 to 1973:** Ten more criminal charges are laid against Dr. Morgentaler. In November 1973, a Montreal jury of 11 men and one woman acquit Morgentaler. In an unprecedented move, the Quebec Court of Appeal overturns the jury verdict and finds Morgentaler guilty in 1974. The doctor appeals his case to the Supreme Court of Canada. In 1975, the court votes 6-3 to uphold the Quebec Court's conviction and Morgentaler is sentenced to 18 months in prison. While serving his sentence, he is tried on a second charge. A jury acquits him again, and the Quebec Court of Appeal upholds that acquittal.

**1974:** The Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL) is founded, the first and only national group promoting abortion rights in Canada.

**1976:** The Federal Minister of Justice sets aside Morgentaler's conviction on the first charge and orders a new trial. Morgentaler, who had suffered a heart attack in jail, is freed after serving 10 months of his sentence. In September, he is acquitted at the retrial of the original charges, the third time a jury acquits him. In late 1976, the Quebec government drops all further charges against Morgentaler.

**1977 to 1983:** Clinics open in Quebec, Toronto, and Winnipeg in spite of Section 251. Prince Edward Island refuses to fund abortions and all hospi-

General appeals the 1984 jury acquittal. In October, 1985, the Ontario Court of Appeal sets aside the jury acquittal and orders a new trial. Dr. Morgentaler appeals to the Supreme Court of Canada.

**1986:** The BC Coalition for Abortion Clinics (now called the Pro-Choice Action Network) is founded to establish clinics in BC.

**1988:** On January 28, the Supreme Court of Canada strikes down Canada's abortion law as unconstitutional. The law is found to violate Section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms because it infringes upon a woman's right to life, liberty, and security of the person.

**1989:** In March, the Supreme Court of Canada refuses to decide on the claim of Joe Borowski that fetuses have a constitutionally guaranteed right to life, saying his case was moot, due to the abortion law being struck down.

**1989:** Dr. Morgentaler opens a clinic in Nova Scotia after the provincial government passes legislation prohibiting abortions at clinics. Morgentaler is charged under the provincial Medical Services Act. In 1990, a provincial court strikes down the Act as unconstitutional and acquits Morgentaler.

**1989:** In Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec, ex-boyfriends try to get injunctions to stop their former girlfriends' abortions. Chantal Daigle of Quebec is refused an abortion under an injunction and appeals to the Supreme Court. During the hearing in August, the court learns that Daigle has already had an abortion in the US, but overturns the injunction against her anyway.

**1989:** The federal government introduces Bill C-43, an amendment to the Criminal Code that would prohibit abortion unless a doctor finds the pregnancy is a threat to the woman's physical, mental or psychological health.

tals stop providing the service. Morgentaler's Winnipeg and Toronto clinics are raided by police and Dr. Morgentaler is charged with conspiracy to procure a miscarriage, along with other doctors. At the 1984 trial, everyone is acquitted.

**1985:** The Ontario Attorney

**1990:** In May, the House of Commons passes Bill C-43 and the legislation is sent to the Senate for approval. In 1991, the bill is narrowly defeated by the Senate in a tie vote. Abortion is now treated like any other medical procedure.

**1992:** A firebomb destroys the Toronto Morgentaler clinic. No-one is hurt, but the perpetrator is never caught.

**1994:** In November, Dr. Garson Romalis of Vancouver is shot and seriously wounded in his home by an unknown sniper hiding in the back alley. This is the first of what would become known as the infamous "Remembrance Day" shootings of abortion providers.

**1995:** In response to the shooting of Dr. Romalis, British Columbia introduces the Access to Abortion Services Act, the first legislation in Canada to prohibit protests outside abortion clinics, and doctors' offices and homes. In early 1996, a court strikes down two provisions of the act, saying they are an infringement of freedom of expression. In September 1996, the BC Court of Appeal restores the Act to its full force, saying that specific, geographical limits on free speech are justified to protect vulnerable groups.

**1995:** In November, Dr. Hugh Short of Hamilton, Ontario is shot in the elbow while relaxing at his home.

**1996:** In November, the Edmonton Morgentaler clinic suffers a butyric acid attack. Butyric acid is a toxic, foul-smelling chemical that is injected through the walls and ceilings of abortion clinics.

**1997:** Two more doctors are shot and wounded in their homes in November, an anonymous doctor in upstate New York, and Dr. Jack Fainman of Winnipeg. A national police Task Force is created to investigate the Remembrance Day shootings and catch the sniper.

**1998:** In late October, Dr. Barnett Slepian of Buffalo, New York becomes the first fatality in the Remembrance Day shootings. He is gunned down in front of his wife and children. The FBI joins the Canadian Task Force. They search for suspect James Kopp, a radical American anti-abortionist, whose car was seen entering Canada near the times of some of the shootings.

[The above history was compiled by the Pro-Choice Action Network in BC and is published as a brochure and on P-CAN's website. For more information, contact P-CAN at Suite 512-1755 Robson St, Vancouver, BC, V6G 3B7; tel: (604) 736-2800; fax: (604) 736-2869; email: pcan@vcn.bc.ca; website: http://www.prochoiceconnection.com/pro-can.]

# attack

## Updates from across Canada

### Newfoundland

Both hospital and clinic abortions are fully funded in this province. Services are available in St. John's at the Morgentaler Clinic and at the Health Services Centre Hospital. Access for women living in rural areas is problematic due to the cost of travel to St. John's.

### Prince Edward Island

Abortion services have been non-existent in this province since 1983. Women must travel to Fredericton, New Brunswick or Halifax, Nova Scotia for abortions in the early stages of pregnancy (up to 16 weeks), and to Montreal for later-term abortions. This province pays for abortions on condition they be approved by a panel of three to five physicians and performed in a hospital. Women must submit a claim for reimbursement. According to provincial statistics, PEI pays for fewer than ten abortions annually.

### Nova Scotia

Abortion procedures are available at five facilities in Nova Scotia. Although the province fully funds abortions performed in hospitals, it only pays a portion of the costs of clinic abortions. There is limited access to abortion because many physicians will not refer women to a surgeon for this procedure. Approximately 30 percent of the abortions taking place at the Morgentaler clinic are performed on women who live in Prince Edward Island.

### New Brunswick

On March 31, six Mount Allison University students chose to express their pro-choice feelings by covering up a very prominent anti-choice billboard (located between Amherst and Sackville) with a cloth sign proclaiming, "Our Bodies, Our Choice." An anonymous source to the *Argosy* (the student newspaper) explained that the billboard was "anti-choice and that goes against what we believe. As women, we have control over our bodies and over our destiny."

### Quebec

Abortions are performed in 49 facilities across the province. Access is concentrated in Montreal, where 22 of the facilities are located. The number of abortions performed in Quebec has recently increased. To some extent, this rising trend may be due to the new medical insurance plan introduced in 1997. Under the new system, women in receipt of social assistance must pay for contraceptives that were previously free of charge. Many women availing themselves of abortion services have said they cannot afford "the pill."

### Ontario

Nurses at a suburban hospital in Toronto reached an agreement with their employer allowing them the right to refuse to participate in abortion procedures. The mediated settlement culminates a six-year dispute by nurse Ailene George and seven colleagues. (*Calgary Herald*, 4/14/99)

### Manitoba

Access to services is concentrated in Winnipeg. Waiting lists are an acknowledged problem. Abortions at the Morgentaler Clinic are not funded and women must pay between \$500 and \$550. Information on abortion services is problematic for rural women who call a government-funded pregnancy counseling service, which discourages abortion and refuses to make abortion referrals.

### Saskatchewan

Abortion services are available in Regina, Saskatoon, Weyburn and Moosejaw. Saskatchewan has a very large rural population. With the exception of Weyburn and Moosejaw, there is no access to abortion outside of the two major urban centres. The cost of travel to obtain abortion services is not funded by the province, which makes access virtually impossible in many cases.

### Alberta

The Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons is deciding whether medical abortions (using methotrexate and misoprostol) should be restricted to clinics and hospitals that are approved to perform surgery. The College's concern centres on the fact that the drugs "don't work" in a small fraction of cases and "doctors have to resort to surgical abortion." (*Calgary Herald*, 4/14/99)  
A Calgary court has ordered *Alberta Report* magazine to stop publishing stories on late-term abortions performed at a local hospital, following a complaint by the Calgary Regional Health Authority that "the stories were endangering the lives of its staff." The magazine has anonymously quoted nurses saying the hospital forces its staff to carry out late-term abortions, "without regard for individual moral qualms." These abortions are performed when medical testing reveals debilitating genetic defects in the fetus. (*National Post*, 5/3/99)

### British Columbia

The new abortion clinic planned for the Kelowna Hospital has been approved. To become a reality, the clinic needed the full support of Penny Priddy, the Minister of Health who has supported it as part of the NDP platform.

### Territories

Access in the Territories is limited to the major centres. Some funding is available for medical travel expenses; however, this subsidy covers only a portion of the cost. Women must typically spend three to four days in Whitehorse, Yukon in order to have an abortion, which augments their travel costs.

[Information from the July 1999 issue of Pro-Choice Forum, the newsletter of the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League. For more information on CARAL, contact them at: 1 Nicholas St, Suite 726, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7B7; tel: (613) 789-9956; fax: (613) 789-9960; email: caral@interlog.com; website: http://www.interlog.com/~caral.]



# FEATURE

Flashback to 1970. "As we go marching, marching..." Abortion is still not legal in Canada. Though the federal government passed amendments to the Criminal Code that allowed abortions to be performed, abortions are still only available under very strict circumstances.

Abortion was a central site of the struggle for women's liberation, and during the late 1960s, women stepped up the campaign to decriminalize abortion and make it accessible to women across the country.

For its part, the Vancouver Women's Caucus called on women to join up with a cavalcade of cars and vehicles heading for Ottawa. Their goal: that abortions should be provided to women free of charge, and when women request them.

On May 9, 1970, more than 500 women converged on the nation's capital. Here's what happened on Parliament Hill...

*"Free Abortion on Demand"*

## Parliament forced to listen

by Gwen Hauser

After travelling for 11 days across Canada, picking up women from all across the country, we finally arrived in Ottawa. Meeting with our sisters in a shopping centre we proceeded to cavalcade through the town. The response we got was overwhelming. People lined up outside their houses and on the streets, giving us V's, fists and waves and shouting encouragement for our venture.

Next day at 1:30pm, after an open rally outside parliament, we held an open meeting in the Railway Room of the Parliament Buildings to present a brief to Trudeau, Munro and Turner. None of the government officials were there. Trudeau was on the eve of his mid-Pacific tour; Munro was at a World Health Conference in Geneva (where, however, he was met by 50 Austrian women reminding him of the health of women in Canada); and Turner was out playing tennis.

The only MPs who were there were Grace McInnis, David Lewis and Lorne Nystrom (all NDPers) plus the Conservative butterfly Gerald Baldwin, complete in mustard jacket and flashy tie.

Judy D'Arcy of Toronto Women's Liberation read a brief and Grace McInnis addressed the house. The best she could say was that she was "solidly behind" us but that she did not believe abortion would be removed from the Criminal Code unless we got petitions from all across Canada and

presented them to the government. This, she said, would take two years.

Women jumped up to their feet and immediate cries of "That's too late" and "We can't wait" greeted this last luke-warm proposal.

Doris Powers capped off the afternoon, speaking of her experience as a welfare mother, who upon seeking an abortion was generously granted a sterilization. "We the poor of Canada are dirt shoved under the rug of a vicious economy—I am not a young woman. I'm not one of the women

house in order to present him with the coffin. Trudeau, of course, was not there and after pushing past the pigs at the gate and being stopped by ones around the house, we decided to wait on the lawn and tried to get a government official from the house. None appeared (except for a gum-chewing pink cheeked Gordon Gibson, oozing with grease and phony concern).

So after about an hour of arguing with the pigs and various exchanges back and forth, we decided to take the coffin to the house. This we did, with a heavy police escort, and placed the tools of our action: direct confrontation of the government in parliament. Thirty-six of us got into the galleries, and chaining ourselves to the chairs, proceeded to disrupt parliament.

At first, we were not taken seriously, but as more

of "Whores!" "Sluts!" and other goodies from a male chauvinist repertoire, some of them rushed up into the galleries and the speaker was finally forced to adjourn parliament.

Outside a support demonstration was going on and when our sisters came out of parliament smiling and walking arm-in-arm we knew that the action had been successful and the first in-road on parliament was made.

However, we believe that despite Turner's prediction—two years of red tape without any action—our action in Ottawa was successful. Although the government officials weren't there, the women of Canada have finally been heard—at least by the people of the country—and the first declaration of war has been made with the first exposure of parliament. The form that this declaration of war will take is actions in hospitals all across Canada to force the officials to be responsible to the women they supposedly serve.

We will not be stopped by red tape or other measures of diversion. All power to the people! Women—power to the women—people!

This article is re-printed from the June 1970 issue of *The Pedestal*, the newsletter of the Vancouver Women's Caucus. Only a few copies of *The Pedestal* remain in our archives here at Kinesis. As we recognize how critical it is for us to ensure that the herstory of women's activism and lives is not lost, we encourage anyone who has copies of *The Pedestal* that they do not wish to keep to send them to us at Kinesis or to the Canadian Women's Movement Archives, University of Ottawa Library Network, Archives and Special Collections, 65 Université, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N



photo from Kinesis file

*May 2000 marks the 20th anniversary of the Abortion Caravan. In our May 2000 issue, Kinesis would like to devote several pages to looking back at the activism for the right to choose, particularly during the late 1960s, early 1970s. We invite women who were part of the Abortion Caravan in any way--organizing, participating or supporting--or who were affected by the actions surrounding the caravan to submit their stories, articles, photos, drawings, et cetera to us. If you have memories or ideas of other stories related to the struggle for abortion rights in Canada, please let us know as well.*

Kinesis can be reached at 309-877 E. Hastings St, Vancouver, BC, V6A 3Y1; tel: (604) 255-5499; fax: (604) 255-7508; email: [kinesis@web.net](mailto:kinesis@web.net). Deadline for submissions is February 28th.

way up here, because I don't have a goddamn thing to sing about."

This was the high point of the afternoon and after some more talking and speeches, we decided to march to Trudeau's

and more women got up to speak, and the guards were unable to stop us, the MPs became increasingly disturbed. Shouting cries

945.



# FEATURE

from DARE on page 12

Since the first boat arrived in July, I have come to realize that the situation is much more complex than matters of racism and human rights, although these are clearly an important part of it.

As previous speakers have already said, the situation requires much more thought about the globalized economic forces which displace millions of people and give rise to wide scale human trafficking.

Many Canadians seem willfully ignorant of the desperate poverty that forces people to leave China and other countries. And as others have pointed out, those who press for the free movement of goods, services and investments are being hypocrites when they react against the free movement of people.

I am not an economist, but like all of us, I am affected by what happens in the economy. I cannot afford to ignore how these forces operate on me and, indeed, on all of us.

I have had to question what my responsibilities are as a Canadian citizen, as somebody who has benefitted from historical migration.

Our government promotes trade liberalization policies which keep corporate profits and debt payments flowing from the South to the North. Given that the globalized economic system is heavily and unfairly weighted against the South, I have had to ask myself what I can do about this problem.

Canadians do not like to think about it, but our standard of living depends on the exploitation of cheap labour. If we paid what goods were worth, and if that money actually reached workers rather than CEOs and shareholders, do you think that Chinese people would still risk their lives coming here?

It is crucial to start thinking in terms of the larger context—the economic and political forces which impoverish and displace millions of innocent people. I find this situation overwhelming, but I think change begins, nonetheless, with an individual response.

So we come to DARE, Direct Action Against Refugee Exploitation. DARE is a group of women who are working to support the rights of the refugee claimants—especially the women, because women have specific needs and are particularly vulnerable in these situations.

We want the refugee claimants to receive fair and just treatment from the Canadian authorities, the media, and the public. We formed in September. We have various areas of knowledge and we're still learning from each other. We don't pretend to have all the answers to these difficult issues, but we're trying to educate ourselves and the public, and we're trying to find local ways of addressing this global problem.

DARE has formed two committees: one on media, and one on employment alternatives [for the refugee claimants].

In the short term, I hope that Canada increases its acceptance of immigrants and refugees. We really need to widen our definition of these terms, and not let them be so restrictive. Although the United Nations' definition of a refugee does not include those who suffer due to man-made economic policies, I suggest that poverty is a human rights issue, and that "economic" refugees—if you want to call them that—also deserve respect. This is not intended to weaken the [Geneva] Convention definition of a refugee, but to build on it in order to name an injustice that also needs attention.

In terms of legislation, we can do things like oppose Bill C-63 [the proposed new *Citizenship Act*]. Canada has signed a number of international agreements: the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; the Convention of the Rights of the Child. We have international obligations based on these agreements.

It should be noted that Canada has refused to sign the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Their Families. It is clear in the wake of this summer that Canada should sign this agreement.

I want to reiterate that whatever solutions are proposed, they must avoid

revictimizing people who have been trafficked to Canada. Deportation, as the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) has pointed out, often makes those who have been trafficked even more vulnerable to being abused and trafficked again. Deportation does not solve the problem and, in fact, might worsen it on a global level.

For example, you might want to ask yourself if deporting victims of trafficking might make it more difficult to prosecute smugglers in Canada because the witnesses are gone. I don't have an answer to these questions, but it is something that people need to think about.

One thing the Canadian government could do to stop the threat of being pushed underground is to grant people landed status, so that they have a fighting chance of being in control of their own lives. I don't know how likely this is to happen, but we still need to push for such things.

Trafficking needs to be recognized as a Canadian problem. In 1997, Jyoti Sanghera [of GAATW] was told by the Vancouver police that there are estimated to be a few hundred Asian women in Vancouver working in the sex trade. They are in the country "illegally;" they've had their passports taken away; they're made to provide sexual services, and there's nothing in place to take care of them.

These women work under conditions of debt bondage; they owe a debt of \$30-40,000. This issue of debt sounds very familiar now. It is a very invisible problem and I'm just learning about it as I go.

I'm going to move back to globalization. There have been two streams of globalization described. One is masculinized: high-tech finance, production and technology. And one is feminized: a menial economy of sexualized, racialized service, which includes both domestic work and the sex trade.

It's usually the first "male" stream which is recognized as globalization. The second stream, the "female" stream, gets ignored. In the long term, what we need is an economic system that aims for gender equity, global equity and the just sharing of resources and wealth.

It's a huge challenge obviously, but I think it is important to think about long-term structural change at the same time as we take short-term action.

There's a lot we can learn from work that's already been done by groups like the Philippine Women Centre. They recognize that foreign domestic workers and other women exploited in the labour market are victims of violence from the "socio-economic perspective," in Cecilia Diocson's words.

Chronic poverty requires a structural solution. Some of the actions proposed by the Association of Filipino Women Workers in Toronto include: debt relief, promoting the development of labour markets and employment generation in less industrialized countries, revising the [immigration] point system to value skills, and granting foreign domestic workers full landed immigrant status.

I'm just reading and learning about these issues, and I'm just sharing with you the things I've come across. This is by no means an exhaustive list.

I'm going to close by saying that, although trafficking is huge and complex, I want to encourage people to educate themselves about the issues. Share knowledge by writing to newspapers and politicians; lobby against reactionary legislative changes; and educate your friends, your family, and your co-workers.

Any long-term solutions will come from working together, not from scapegoating the poor. I hope we can generate some discussion. If we believe in the need for a fair and just society, then each of us has to find ways of putting this belief into action.

Rita Wong is a member of DARE, Direct Action Against Refugee Exploitation. For more about the group's work, contact DARE c/o 309-877 E. Hastings St, Vancouver, BC, V6A 3Y1; tel: (604) 255-5499; or email: [chineserefugeclaimants@canada.com](mailto:chineserefugeclaimants@canada.com).

**Canadians do not like to think about it, but our standard of living depends on the exploitation of cheap labour.**

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# FEATURE

Taking action against corporate globalization:

## Corporate cannibalism

by Lisa Wulwik

The current model that dominates our economic system is fraught with problems. It is organized within an expansionist frame of thought.

Expansionists encourage constant growth. This is very detrimental to the environment and to people because it assumes that the earth's resources are infinite. Expansionist economists support the amassing of more and more wealth, free trade, and the elimination of all barriers to trade.

The central problem with expansionist economics is that within it there is no real way of measuring "progress." It does not and cannot measure the impact its policies have on people and their communities.

Ultimately, agreements like the Free Trade Agreement for the Americas (FTAA), the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) and governing entities like the World Trade Organization (WTO)—which all fall under this framework—lead to the increasing exploitation of people and to the destruction of our environment.

In its 1997 document, "Women Oppose Corporate Globalization," the Vancouver Status of Women defines globalization as: "the forced integration of economies into a global system of capitalism." Globalization restructures economic, social and political systems in order to "fit" the demands of the corporate world. Under the current framework of global economics, corporations are pressuring governments to remove trade and other barriers which restrict them from gaining the most profit.

These barriers are often in the form of labour laws, human and social rights protections, as well as environmental regulations. These rights/protection are at risk of being abolished in order to appease the insatiable appetite of corporations.

The WTO, FTAA and MAI all intensify the exploitation of people. We become less and less like members of a community and more and more like anonymous consumers in a global market.

In most societies, women—especially indigenous women, immigrant women, poor women and women of colour—are often hardest hit with the effects of corporate globalization. Trade agreements do not have a homogenous effect on society, and therefore should not be assumed to be gender neutral.

According to the Women's Edge, "women throughout the world work seven to 48 percent more than men do (including unpaid work). In addition, women also have less access to credit, land and education. For expanded trade and investment to really work for women, negotiations must recognize and respond to women's needs."

Women's Edge is a group that aims to educate the public, policy makers and the media on issues surrounding women and economic globalization. Women's Edge presses for policies that work for women.

The current economic globalization framework, although helping to improve the lives of some women, has resulted in many women suffering from depressed wages, increased workload, and the erosion of their communities.

Amending agreements like FTAA and MAI to include clauses that focus on women's lives is in the end a band-aid solution. More importantly we need, as people who inhabit this society, to stand up and fight against the WTO, MAI and FTAA. The entire mode of economics from which our government operates on must be challenged and changed!

This article briefly explains the WTO, MAI and FTAA. It is essential that we inform ourselves on what is happening in regards to global capitalism.

It is paramount that we begin to strategize as women against these forms of corporate domination! Right now, there are many opportunities to become involved in order to try and resist the WTO [see box.]

### WTO

"We are no longer writing the rules of interaction among separate national economies; we are writing the constitution of a single global economy," so proclaimed Renato Ruggiero, the Director General of the World Trade Organization in 1995.

The WTO was established in 1995 in the "Uruguay Round" of GATT negotiations. GATT (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) came into effect in 1948. It was set up as the first step towards an International Trade Organization (ITO). In 1995, GATT was replaced by the WTO.

In total, 134 countries are involved in the WTO, but these countries do not have equal power. Countries in the North (the so-called developed nations) make key decisions while excluding the input of other WTO nations.

The WTO is an extremely powerful promoter of multinational corporate-managed trade. It has not been designed to advocate for the best interests of the public. The Canadian government is a very active supporter of the WTO.

The WTO is an international organization that has the power to enforce trade rules, such as GATT, Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS), Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). In January 1999, Japan and the European Union proposed that a millennial round of WTO talks be held in order to expand the TRIMS into an investment treaty akin to the MAI. Negotiations are to be completed by 2003.

In their *Citizen's Guide to the WTO*, the Working Group on the WTO/MAI states that: "A global system of enforceable rules is being created where corporations have

all the rights, governments have all the obligations, and democracy is left behind in the dust."

The WTO has the power to change the laws and regulations of individual nations by saying they violate WTO rules. This completely depreciates domestic law and can negate a government's ability to take action in areas such as employment, health, social programs and environmental protection.

If a country is found to be in violation of WTO regulations, it can either change their law to fit WTO standards, pay compensation, or face trade sanctions. No outside appeals are allowed and the WTO tribunals are held in secret.

WTO rulings affect the environment, copyright law, cultural industries, food safety and agricultural policy. It can also impinge upon human rights legislation, minimum wage laws, health and safety laws, and the ability of local businesses to succeed.

One example of the WTO exerting its power is when the European Union tried to ban beef containing artificial hormones. This ban was designed to protect public health but the WTO ruled that it was creating an illegal barrier to trade.

A WTO panel in 1997 ruled that a European preference to import bananas from the Caribbean was illegal. The US claimed that this was discriminatory against US companies in Central America. The US was granted the right to impose trade sanctions against European imports until they changed their policy.

In many Caribbean countries, the banana industry is the main source of income. Around 200,000 farmers in the Caribbean could lose their livelihoods. Most of these farmers are women. Banana farming has become one of the primary economic occupations for women in this region. If the exporting of bananas is stopped it would seriously impede health, educational and social development for people and communities in the region.

Different social roles, systematic discrimination towards women and the unequal access that women have in relation to resources mean that men and women are affected differently by liberalized trade. The WTO must take this into account.

Currently, it does not recognize the gender impacts of trade agreements and the harm that they cause women both socially and economically. Women's Edge offers some solutions such as, "The WTO should work with member countries to collect gender-disaggregated data to form a baseline survey."

The next WTO ministerial meeting will take place from November 29th to December 3rd in Seattle, Washington. This provides a good opportunity for feminists in BC to get active. Some things we can do



### Resources:

- A Citizens Guide to the World Trade Organization, published by the Working Group on the WTO/MAI in July 1999. To get a copy, call (202) 546-4996 or download a copy from [www.tradewatch.org](http://www.tradewatch.org).
- Pacific Centre for Alternative Journalists, which is organizing a WTO resistance roundup. For more information, call (604) 683-7123, then dial 3; or email: [pcaj@vnc.bc.ca](mailto:pcaj@vnc.bc.ca).
- [www.seattle.wto](http://www.seattle.wto)
- [www.canadians.org](http://www.canadians.org)
- [www.wto.org](http://www.wto.org)

are: educate ourselves about the WTO and write letters to members of Parliament as well as to the editors of various newspapers, outlining the negative impacts of the WTO on women and most people.

It is vital to get involved with the various days of actions that are happening in regards to the millennium round of talks. We can also organize teach-ins on the issue of economic globalization, and go to Seattle to protest this meeting.

### MAI

The Multilateral Agreement on Investment promotes the corporate agenda, at the expense of all other agendas. It is based upon the investment provisions outlined in the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The MAI is designed to facilitate the movement of capital across international borders. This agreement was originally negotiated at a WTO meeting in Singapore but when other WTO nations, particularly those in the South, objected to it the negotiations were moved to the Organization for Economic Development (OECD). The OECD is a Paris-based research group made up of 29 of the world's richest countries that favours liberalized trade.

In 1998 the OECD stopped handling the MAI negotiations when it seemed the opposition to the agreement within member countries, particularly France and Canada, was growing. Although the negotiations have subsided, the MAI is far from dead and it will likely be revived by the WTO.

The MAI negatively impacts standards of living, the sovereignty of governments, and influence of people on policy-making. Transnational corporations are given immense power within it. One nickname for

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# FEATURE

## WTO ACTIONS

### from GLOBAL previous page

this agreement is the "Corporate Rule Treaty," another is "NAFTA on Steroids."

The MAI limits a government's ability to effectively regulate corporate activities because foreign investors are to be given the right under the agreement to sue governments. This would, for example, restrict the Canadian government from enacting legislation that will protect such things as the environment, from fear of being financially penalized.

Governments, through the MAI, would become even more like puppets of big business. The MAI threatens the sovereignty of nations because laws are adapted in order to fit these trade agreements.

The MAI also guarantees corporations unlimited access to all markets. This could lead to transnational further exploiting our natural resources and being allowed to own Canadian operations such as hydro.

Through the MAI, investors would not be accountable to national governments. Foreign investors would not have to respect labour or environmental laws of the countries that they are investing in. Transnational corporations would have a legal status with the same amount of political rights as nation states.

Due to the increasing competition for capital, some countries might end up lowering their labour standards and regulations. The MAI will not benefit all Canadians, unlike it purports, nor will it necessarily increase the flow of money around the globe.

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women put together a globalization and MAI kit for women in 1999 called, "Coming to Grips with Globalization and the MAI: a popular Education Kit for Women." The kit is intended to: "help women understand and mobilize around some major aspects of global economies," and to facilitate discussion and workshops on globalization.

NAC's kit is very user friendly and includes a glossary of economic terms. Its popular education format makes it easy to understand. It is crucial that women lead discussions on the MAI because women's issues are swept aside and ignored in trade agreements.

The MAI is especially dangerous for women because of the clauses that allow companies to sue governments. According to NAC, corporations could decide to sue over equity policies by claiming that they are discriminatory. Corporations could use the MAI to argue that their profits are being hindered due to having to hire certain groups of people and then having to pay them equal wages. It is vital that women speak up and demand that the MAI's potential negative effects on women be examined!

### Resources:

- MAI-NOT Project, 1125 Colonel By Dr, Room 326, Uniceur, Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, K1S 5B6; tel: (613) 520-2757; fax: (613) 520-3989; email: oping@carleton.ca
- National Action Committee on the Status of Women, 234 Eglinton Ave East, Toronto, ON, M4P 1K5; tel: (416) 932-1718; fax: (416) 932-0648; email: nac@web.net
- www.mai.flora
- www.sierraclub/nation/mai/brief.htm
- www.policyalternatives.ca

### FTAA

The Free Trade Agreement of the Americas is a proposed trade and investment agreement for the western hemisphere that would include countries in the Caribbean, South America, Central America and North America. Its goal is to create a free trade zone running from Canada to Brazil, making it the largest trading block in the world. It would include over 34 countries and impact the lives of over 800 million people throughout the Americas.

This agreement came into being in 1994 and since then trade ministers have been meeting annually. Negotiations for the creation of FTAA are slated to be completed by 2005. The next FTAA meeting will be held in Toronto between October 31st and November 5th.

The FTAA is another tool of corporate globalization that will result in magnifying the exploitation of working and poor people across the Americas.

The FTAA is based on the investment provisions outlined in NAFTA and the MAI. The FTAA will likely encourage short term investments in a country. This often has devastating effects. Women's Edge uses the recent economic crisis in Asia as an example of this. The Asian crisis caused increased poverty and set back 20 years of advancements, particularly in the areas of women's access to education and health care.

The FTAA also stresses that foreign and domestic investors be treated equally. Although on the surface this may sound ideal, it actually has negative repercussions for women. FTAA trade rules could be violated by subsidies and grants that have been established for the use of women owned local businesses. Programs that help women to set up businesses could be abolished.

Both women's micro-enterprises and small businesses would suffer as they would find it hard to compete with cheaper imports. Their businesses would end up having to sell their products at below cost. Providing these businesses with the protection needed would ultimately violate FTAA investment rules.

The FTAA would also affect employment equity policies because foreign investors would not be subject to hiring quotas. These investors would also not have to promote the usage of local resources.

Agreements like the FTAA would result in creating more economic disparity. Corporate rule is undemocratic and people are denied the right to participate in crucial policy decisions because of trade agreements. These agreements also promote unaccountability in regards to corporations because they are not held responsible for the social and environmental crisis that they create.

Common Frontiers is an organization based in Toronto that promotes alternatives to agreements such as the FTAA. "Human, labour, and environmental rights must be given more importance than commercial interests." This group has produced a booklet called, "Alternatives for the Americas: Building a People's Hemispheric Agreement." It is co-published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. (A copy of this booklet can be obtained by either downloading a copy from the Common Frontiers website or by contacting them directly.)

Within this booklet are many suggestions on how you can combat the FTAA. Common Frontiers also supports the Hemispheric Social Alliance, which was

The next WTO ministerial meeting will take place from November 29th to December 3rd in Seattle, Washington. Below is an outline of some of the events—which, by no means, is a complete list of activities—that will take place in Vancouver and Seattle to challenge the WTO.

#### Thursday, October 2, 7:30pm

"WTO slashes and burns environmental standards"  
at La Quena, 1111 Commercial Dr, Vancouver  
Contact: Vancouver Grassroots Alliance, (604) 261-6657

#### October 22 - 24

"Trade, Labour and the Environment: Analyzing the WTO"  
at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington

#### Thursday, November 11

"Student and Youth Teach-in"  
(The main topics are: how the WTO affects public education, labour and food security)  
Organized by the Coalition of Youth Groups in Vancouver: Check Your Head, Young New Democrats, the Canadian Federation of Students and several student unions  
Contact: Check Your Head, (604) 685-6631

#### November 12 - 13

"Vancouver Teach-in on the WTO"  
at Robson Square Conference Centre - 800 Robson Street  
Organized by the Common Front (Council of Canadians, CLC, Sierra Club of Canada, Polaris Institute, West Coast Environmental Law) and Trading Strategies  
Contact: Steven Staples, Council of Canadians, (604) 688-8846  
Register for conference (604) 878-5424  
Sliding scale \$5 - \$20  
○ November 12, 7:30pm  
Presentations by Maude Barlow (Council of Canadians), Hassan Yussuf (Canadian Labour of Congress), David Korten (USA), Chee Yoke Ling (Indonesia), Agnes Bertrand (France)  
○ November 13, 9:00am-5:00pm  
Workshops on WTO's impact on culture, environment, community development, livelihoods, agriculture, public services, and investment.

#### Thursday, November 25

Public forum on WTO and food safety  
Tim Lang of the International Forum on Agriculture and the London Food Security Council  
Contact: Farm Folk/City Folk, (604) 730-0450

#### November 30 to December 3

Official WTO Ministerial Meeting at the Seattle Trade and Convention Centre

#### Tuesday, November 30

Massive rally on the streets of Seattle

#### November 30, evening

BC Federation of Labour, WTO educational event  
Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre  
(Labour and community activists join together at the opening of the BC Feds' annual policy convention)  
Contact: BC Federation of Labour, (604) 430-1421

#### Wednesday, December 1

United Methodist Church, Seattle  
Women/Democracy/Sovereignty/Development  
Alexandra Spieldoch, Centre of Concern  
Contact: aspieldoch@coc.org

created in Brazil in 1997 at the "Our Americas Forum." It is made up of different individual activists and organizations throughout the hemisphere. They would like to create an alternative that would be, "inclusive, democratic, ethical, sustainable and humane with full respect for diversity and ample space for citizen input."

### Resources:

- Common Frontiers, 15 Greves Dr, Suite 304, Don Mills, ON, M3C 1J8; tel: (416) 441-4073; email: comfront@web.net; website: www.web.net/comfront
- Women's Edge, 1824 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC, 20009; tel: (202) 884-8396; email: edge@womensedge.org; website: www.womensedge.org

### Guess who's invited for dinner?

Can you name the members of the G-7? Well, it doesn't matter anyway because the G-7 has been replaced... by the G-20. [OK, the G-7 was comprised of the seven wealthiest nations in the world: Canada, US, Italy, Britain, France, Japan and Germany.]

The expanded club will now include countries such as China, Argentina, Russia and Australia—essentially, covering half the world's population.

So guess who gets to sit at the head of the table (to chair the G-20)? Our own federal Finance Minister Paul Martin. Ah, but here's something even more interesting: guess who also gets to have seats at the G-20 dinner table? The World Bank and International Monetary Fund.



# FEATURE

The Internet and the global prostitution industry:

## Pornographic profits

by Donna M. Hughes

The Internet has become the latest place for promoting the global trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children. This global communication network is being used to promote and engage in the buying and selling of women and children. Agents offer catalogues of mail order brides, with girls as young as 13. Commercial prostitution tours are advertised. Men exchange information on where to find prostitutes and describe how they can be used.

After their trips, men write reports on how much they paid for women and children and give pornographic descriptions of what they did to them. New technology has enabled an online merger of pornography and prostitution, with video-conferencing bringing live sex shows to the Internet.

Global sexual exploitation is on the rise. The profits are high, and there are few effective barriers at the moment. Because there is little regulation of the Internet, the traffickers and promoters of sexual exploitation have rapidly utilized the Internet for their purposes. The pornographers and other promoters of sexual exploitation are the Internet leaders in the developing of privacy services, secure payment schemes and online data base management. The standards and values on the Internet are being set by the sex industry and its supporters and users.

This economic and electronic globalization has meant that women are increasingly becoming "commodities" to be bought, sold, traded and consumed.

### Newsgroups and websites

The oldest forum on the Internet for promoting the sexual exploitation of women is the newsgroup alt.sex.services (later renamed alt.sex.prostitution). Its aim is "to create market transparency for sex related services."

**New technology has enabled an online merger of pornography and prostitution, with video-conferencing bringing live sex shows to the Internet.**

Postings from this newsgroup are archived on a website called The World Sex Guide, which provides "comprehensive, sex-related information about every country in the world" (Atta and M., World Sex Guide, July 1996). The guide includes information and advice from men who have bought women and children in prostitution. They tell others where and how to find and buy prostituted women and children in 110 countries from seven world regions (Africa, Asia, Oceania, Europe, North America, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America).

Details of the men's reports of their prostitution tours and buying experiences include: information on where to go to find prostitutes, hotel prices, telephone numbers, taxi fares and cost of alcohol, the sex acts that can be bought, the price for each act, and evaluations of the women's appearances and performances.

One man includes a rating scale on the likelihood of getting mugged in that neighborhood. Other men go on to describe, often in graphic detail, their experiences of using women and children.

The scope and detail of this exchange are without precedent. The women are completely objectified and evaluated on everything from skin colour to presence of scars and firmness of their flesh. Women's receptiveness and compliance to male buyers is also rated.

The men buying women and posting the information see and perceive the events only from their self-interested perspective. Their awareness of racism, colonization, global economic inequalities, and of course, sexism, is limited to how these forces benefit them. A country's economic or political crisis and the accompanying poverty are advantages, which produce cheap readily available women for the men. Often men describe how desperate the women are and how little they have to pay.

This rapid electronic publishing medium has enabled more men to pimp and exploit individual women. Now, men can go out at night, buy a woman, go home, and post the details on the newsgroup. By morning, anyone in the world with an Internet connection can read about it and often have enough information to find the same woman.

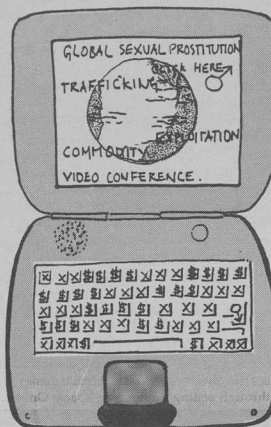
To my knowledge this is completely unprecedented. The implications for this type of public exchange in a fast-publishing accessible medium like the Internet are very serious for the sexual exploitation of women in the future.

### Prostitution tours

Centres for prostitution tourism are also the sources of women trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation to other countries. For centres of prostitution tourism in European countries, women from poorer countries are imported legally and illegally to fill the brothels.

One of the largest sources of trafficked women today is the countries of the former Soviet Union. Advertisements for prostitution tours to these sights appear on the Internet, usually described as "romance tours" or "introduction tours."

Prostitution tours enable men to travel to "exotic" places and step outside whatever community bounds may constrain them at home. In foreign cities, they can abuse women and girls in ways that are more risky or difficult for them in their hometowns.



As prostitution has become a form of tourism for men, it has become a form of economic development for poor countries. Tourism was recommended by the United Nations, the World Bank and United States advisory boards as a way to generate income and repay foreign debts (W. Lee, "Prostitution and Tourism in South-East Asia," 1991).

Nation states set their own tourist policies and could, if they chose to do so, prevent or suppress the development of prostitution as a form of tourism.

Advertisements for prostitution tours first appeared on the Web in mid-1995, when Alan J. Munn of New York launched PIMPS 'R' US. He arranged prostitution tours to the Dominican Republic and to Nevada.

### Bride trafficking

Mail order bride agents have moved to the Internet as their preferred marketing location. The Internet reaches a prime group of potential buyers—men from Western countries with higher than average incomes. The new Internet technology enables web pages to be quickly and easily updated. Some services claim they are updating their selection of women weekly. The Internet reaches a global audience faster and cheaper than any other media.

One mail order bride agent explained why he preferred operation on the Internet: "...when the World Wide Web came along, I saw that it was a perfect venue for this kind of business. The paper catalogues were so expensive and their quality was usually very poor; but on the web you can publish high-resolution full-colour photos which

can be browsed by everyone in the world" (Toms, Santa Barbara International 1996).

The agents offer men assistance in finding a "loving and devoted" woman whose "views of relationships have not been ruined by unreasonable expectations." The agencies describe themselves as "introduction services," but a quick examination of many of the Web sites reveals their commercial interests in bride trafficking, sex tours and prostitution.

One mail order bride trafficker complained that the Philippine government banned the operation of sex tour and mail order bride agents in the Philippines. He said: "The Philippine government is...definitely working against the interests of their own people. These girls want and need to leave that country."

The same agent also complained that the US government would not allow his youngest "brides", on offer, into the country. "The service itself is not restricted by the American government, although they are real picky about getting your bride into the States—they won't give a visa to a bride under age sixteen" (World Class Service, 1996).

The bride traffickers sell addresses to men. Later, they offer to arrange tours for the men to go to meet the woman with whom they have been corresponding, or to meet as many women as possible. Men can pay for these services over the Internet with their credit cards.

There are some catalogues which list women with young children. One website asks if men want women with or without children. On another website, there are pictures of naked children playing. I think children are being trafficked also in this way. The men are being subtly shown ways of acquiring women and children—all in one package.

### Live video-conferencing

The most advanced technology on the Internet is live video-conferencing, in which live audio and video are transmitted over the Internet from video recorder to computer. This advanced technology is being used to sell live sex shows over the Internet. Real time communication is possible, so the man can personally direct the live sex show as he is viewing it on his computer.

The only limitation of this type of global sex show is the need for high-speed transmission, processing and multimedia capabilities. The software required is free, but the most recent versions of Web browsers have these capabilities built into them. As more men have access to high-speed multimedia computer and transmission equipment, the demand for this type of private sex show will grow.

There are no legal restrictions on live sex shows that can be transmitted over the Internet. As with all Internet transmissions, there are no nation-state border restrictions. With Internet technology, a man may be on one continent while directing and watching a live strip show, a live sex show, or the sexual abuse of a child on another conti-

see INTERNET next page



# FEATURE

## from INTERNET previous page

nent. There have been several documented cases of live transmission of the sexual abuse of children through live video-conferencing.

### Growth of the commercial prostitution industry on the Internet

Who buys women over the Internet? According to the Internet Entertainment Group (IEG), the largest pimp on the Web, the buyers for live strip shows are 90 percent male, 70 percent living in the United States, and 70 percent are between ages 18 and 40. The buyers are young men in college, and businessmen and professionals who log on from work. This information was obtained from analysis of credit card usage (*Wired*, December 1997).

In the mid-1990s, the hottest place for commercial development was the Internet. In early September 1995, there were 101,908 commercial domains on the Web, which was 26,055 more than the end of July, and 72,706 more than the end of 1994. The sex industry was leading the way.

At the beginning of 1995, there were just 200 businesses on the World Wide Web selling "erotica services" and products—from condoms to pornographic videos (Strangelove, *Internet Business Journal*, January 1995).

I did a search on Yahoo, a popular search engine, in August 1995 and again in August 1996. In August 1995, the category Yahoo: Business and Economy: Companies: Sex had 391 listings for phone sex numbers, adult CD-ROMS, X-rated films, adult computer software, live video-conferencing, sex tours, escort services and mail order bride

agencies. In August 1996, there were 1,676 listings—a four fold increase in one year.

The popular mainstream pornographic magazine *Playboy* was quick to jump on the Web. In 1994, the *Playboy* website made its debut. Its content differed from the print magazine. The website was designed to appeal to a younger, wealthier audience—the majority of whom (75 percent) did not subscribe to *Playboy* magazine (Runett, *Playboy*, October 1998).

In 1996, *Playboy* magazine's site was the 11th most visited site on the Web (John Simons, *US News and World Report*, August 19, 1996). In 1997, the website generated US \$2 million in advertising revenue. Many of the advertisers are exclusive to the website and do not buy advertising in the print publication. In mid 1998, *Playboy's* CyberClub had 26,000 subscribers paying US \$60 per year (Runett).

In April 1996, another popular pornographic magazine, *Penthouse* went online. Its web site recorded the highest number of visits for publication sites on the Web in that month (Nielson Survey, *Wired*, December 1997).

A 1996 survey found that 20 percent of the users of the World Wide Web said they regularly visited pornographic sites (Simons). By 1998, another survey indicated that 30 percent of American households with Internet access visited online sex industry sites at least once per month (*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, April 1998).

In the same year, one report estimated that the Web had 600 commercial pornography sites, which were expected to generate revenues of US \$51.5 million. This does not include the amateur sites or those that are free sites; only those that make money through selling advertising space. Only

computer products and travel exceeded pornography sales on the Internet (Simons).

At the end of 1997, the online sex industry was estimated to be making US \$1 billion a year, just in the US (Carolyn Said, *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 19, 1998). In findings from a 1997 survey, *Inter@ctive Week* magazine reported that 10,000 sex industry sites were bringing in approximately US \$1 billion per year (*Chicago Sun Times*, June 1997). A mid-size site that was accessed 50,000 times per day made approximately US \$20,000 each month.

Established sex industry sites could expect to make 50 to 80 percent profits (*The Guardian*, May 14, 1998). A Sacramento, California firm that handles online credit card transactions said that in 1997, the largest sex industry sites had revenues of US \$1 million per month; while the smaller sites took in approximately US \$10,000 per month (Said).

### Regulation

Expressions of concern or condemnation of forms of sexual exploitation of women and children on the Internet are minimized by claims that pornographers have always been the first to take advantage of new technology—first photography, then movies, then VCRs, now, the Internet.

Those concerned about the use of the Internet for sexual exploitation are chastened with history lectures on new technology and pornography.

The solution that is being promoted is software programs that will screen out sexually explicit material. U.S. President Clinton announced that he supports a rating system on the Internet, so pornography

could be rated and software programs will screen it out. This is seen as a way to protect children.

Most adults are only concerned that their children may see pornography on the Internet. They aren't concerned about the women and children who are being exploited in the making of this pornography.

In any search for a solution to pornography and prostitution, it is crucial to remember that sexual exploitation starts with real people and the harm to real people. The European Union defines trafficking as a form of organized crime. It should be treated the same way on the Internet. All forms of sexual exploitation should be recognized as forms of violence against women and human rights violations, and governments should act accordingly.

Although the Internet offers open communication to people throughout the world, it should not be permitted to be dominated and controlled by men's interests or the interests of the prostitution industry, at women's and children's expense.

Donna M. Hughes is Education and Research Coordinator for The Coalition Against Traffic in Women. For more information about CATW's work, visit the group's website at: <http://www.url.edu/arisc/ums/hughes/catw>.

This article was first published in the Spring 1999 edition of *Women's Space*, a quarterly magazine published in Canada, whose aim is to promote women's accessibility to the Internet and to explore the Internet as a resource for organizing nationally and internationally. Subscriptions are available by contacting Women's Space, PO Box 1034, Almonte, Ontario, K0A 1A0; tel/fax: (613) 256-5682; email: [diamond@womenspace.ca](mailto:diamond@womenspace.ca); website: [www.womenspace.ca](http://www.womenspace.ca).

## Bigger bull for your buck

by Jackie Yeow

### Not just another ad

On October 15, 1999 the *Vancouver Sun* chose to print a full-page policy statement from the Coalition for a Humanistic British Canada in the major News section. The following day, the *Sun* pulled the ad and published a justification stating that "the ad slipped through screening systems." Apparently it had slipped through the screening systems at the *Vancouver Sun*, the *Toronto Star*, the *Globe and Mail* and the *Kitchener Waterloo Record*, as well.

So what was in this ad? And, why was it yanked from four of Canada's most widely read daily newspapers? The short and long of it: the ad oozes with white supremacist propaganda.

### Unjustifiable justification

The ad was printed in the *Sun* because no one in the marketing department had a problem with it. Even after the response was printed, the Director of Communications at Pacific Press claimed to have ran the ad because it did not "yell racism" or imply a "hidden agenda."

The ad was pulled, he said, because Pacific Press discovered that the founder of the Coalition, Michael Chessman, held racist views.

### The ad

In this full-page ad, the Coalition identifies seven areas related to changes in Canadian policy, which demand greater British dominance and control. With a glance, the discriminatory motives of white supremacists and the emerging political right reformers become transparent.

Beginning with institutional control of individual and cultural perspectives, the Coalition mandates school uniforms in Canadian schools. Complexities and diversities of peoples and cultural groups is stifled through indoctrinating students, early on in school, to the "teaching of English literature and moral values." The Coalition goes on to suggest how white dominance can be maintained through infiltrating communities with an increase in European art, culture and European architecture.

Racist motives are evident when we read the Coalition's intent to utilize immigration as a vehicle to marginalize and subordinate people of colour. In its demand for Canada to endorse a "massive increase" of immigrants, the Coalition specifies why only Eastern European and European immigrants should be welcomed. Immigrants from these countries are, apparently, "all peoples we share much with now."

After infecting public institutions, homogenizing social infrastructures and inducing a predominantly white populous, the motives of this ad gleam with appallingly sexist, homophobic and racist rhetoric. The Coalition climaxes to its final statements of achieving white supremacy with a call for "an end to Canada's multicultural policies and related affirmative action policies and initiatives for all." Upon their establishment of what is "mainstream," the Coalition furthers

its indoctrination through "a requirement that mainstream cultural assimilation be carried as a matter of course, for all Canadians."

Now if these seven statements aren't enough to stifle your individual freedom and spirit, here's a couple more. All you women out there, button up or zip out, you "should avoid too much exposure from aggressive clothing choices." Your option: "return to skirts and dresses." And just for your information, "men should wear trousers rather than jean clothing substitutes." Is that clear? And if you need to know, the "return to traditional modes of dress" is for the "preservation of traditional family values in Canada", understood?

Hard to believe that all this does not "yell racism" never mind all the other "isms".

So now we ask again: Why was the ad not rejected for its offensive and discriminatory content in the first place (as opposed to targeting the subsequent revelation of the founder's racist motivations)? What appears to be an apparent glitch in the screening process is in fact, not a glitch at all.

The accumulated revenue generated from this full-page ad, for all four newspapers is close to a quarter of a million dollars! What is really going on in the communications and advertising departments of these major newspapers? Were they motivated by money and therefore they could not hear the "yelling of racism" and see the "hidden agenda?" Or is there an alliance between the advertiser and the advertising department staff who hold similar discriminatory values? After all, this is no puny ad.

### On humanism

The Coalition for a Humanistic British Canada is not humanistic at all. In fact, the Canadian Dictionary of the English Language defines humanism as "a system of thought that centers on humans and their values, capacities, and worth." Clearly, not just "European humans" and their values, capacities and worth. Above all, the Coalition erases all other cultural traditions and fundamentally disrespects First Nations peoples as the indigenous people of Canada. The Coalition made a type-o. A more appropriate name would be the Coalition for an Unhumanistic British Canada.

The real humanistic question that needs to be answered is: What is the screening system at Canadian newspapers that is capable of overruling the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Human Rights Code, and allows in ads with white supremacist sentiments?

### What can you do?

There is so much appalling discriminatory material in this ad that it is not worth repeating, never mind reprinting. However, we need to believe that our reactions matter. We can make a difference and we will ask good questions. How does a full-page white supremacist propaganda ad "slip" through? What is in place to ensure that such "negligence" is not repeated?

Respond and direct your questions to the four newspapers that ran this ad as well as those sold in your community.



# FEATURE

"Frankenfoods": The food of the future

## What's really in your food?

by Lisa Wulwik

Genetically engineered (GE) food is food that has ingredients in it that have had their genetic makeup altered. This may be done to make the plant/organism grow larger, faster or to become pest resistant.

For thousands of years, farmers have been cross-breeding similar organisms. What is different in GE is that cross breeding occurs between very different species. One example of this was when genes from a fish were inserted into a tomato in order to create a "better" tomato.

Genetic engineering is a technology in its infancy, and it has many potential dangers. The genetic code is very complex, and it is not possible to fully predict the outcome of adding new genes into a plant or organism.

GE food is deemed by its promoters to be the "food of the future"; however, it is very frightening and has been nicknamed by critics, "Frankenfoods."

The Council of Canadians states that 75 percent of all pre-packaged food may contain genetically altered ingredients. They state that 57 percent of canola, 45 percent of corn and 25 percent of soy that is grown in Canada is genetically engineered.

The GE industry is dominated by multinational biotech corporations such as Monsanto, Novartis, Dow and Dupont. These companies make billions of dollars in short term profits, and we are being used as their guinea pigs.

The knowledge of possible health and environmental effects from genetically engineered food is inadequate and insubstantial. No long term risk assessments of these foods have been done. Concerns surrounding GE foods fall within four areas: health, environmental, ethical, and the increasing corporate control over genetic life.

The GE corporate propaganda states that genetically engineered food will solve world hunger, and that food will be made safer and nature will be brought under control.

But GE will not solve world hunger. Our world already produces enough food for everyone to eat. It is our unequal system of distribution of land, resources and wealth that must change.

Famine is caused by war, economic instability, colonialism and Northern imperialism. These biotech companies are using the "starving children in the Third World" as a tool to get the West to accept genetic engineering.

Biotech companies such as Monsanto believe that greater agricultural productivity will arise through the creation of pest and pesticide resistant crops. Insects will not be able to feed upon these GE crops and this is very dangerous. Insects are crucial to the food chain, as many animals live upon them.

GE corn that was planted in the United States on a mass scale was found to be deadly to Monarch butterflies. According to "The Campaign to Label Genetically Modified Food," in the Spring of 1999 lab tests showed that nearly half of the Monarch butterflies that ate milkweed leaves dusted with GE corn pollen died within four days. Those that survived were smaller in size than usual.

Having pesticide resistant crops may cause severe environmental problems by increasing the amount of agri chemicals being used. These chemicals seep into our food and water supply. Pesticide resistant crops also run the risk of reducing genetic diversity and disrupting the natural biodiversity of the area.

GE foods may also be very dangerous to our health. In 1989, a genetically engineered version of the dietary supplement tryptophan was found to be toxic. Before it was eventually recalled, 34 Americans had died, 1,500 were left permanently disabled and 500 became ill with a blood disorder.

GE foods may also trigger allergies. Many genes being thrust into these plants/organisms have never been a part of the human diet before, so their toxic and allergenic characteristics are not known.

Another health risk is that antibiotic resistant genes are often transferred into plants that end up on our dinner table. This antibiotic resistance could be transferred to the bacteria living in the guts of humans and animals which could in turn reduce the efficiency of antibiotic drugs.

Companies like Monsanto see the creation of herbicide resistant crops as a good thing. However, it is important to remember that the primary cause of weed infestation is the practice of monoculture farming. In monoculture farming, the same crop is grown in the same area year after year.

We must learn to rely less on technology and the promotion of biotechnological solutions. Instead, we must place more of our efforts on promoting research for sustainable agricultural practices.

Biotech corporations want to patent the genes of animals and plants. It is crazy to think that a corporation or any individual could actually own DNA. This patenting involves stealing indigenous knowledge of plants used by generations of people local to a region. The patenting of GE foods could drastically alter farming practices, as a small corporate elite will own their genetic material. It is vital that we question what the implications are of corporate ownership of DNA.

Soya is used in 60 percent of all processed food items. Monsanto's Roundup Ready soya beans were among the first genetically modified organisms to be widely marketed. These soya beans are resistant to Monsanto's Roundup herbicide. These genetically modified beans contain genes from bacteria, viruses and petunias. Not very much is known about the effects of this particular sequencing of genes.

Roundup is Monsanto's key agricultural product. The main chemical in it is one called glyphosate. The National Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides in the US found many problems with Roundup. Skin and oral testing on glyphosate placed it in Toxic Category 3 (Caution). Further

tests suggest that in regard to mammals, glyphosate could cause severe toxic reactions such as convulsions and stoppage of breathing.

These severe toxic problems are not primarily caused by glyphosate, but from other ingredients in Roundup. Glyphosate is also very bad for the environment as it remains active in soil and kills ladybugs and other beneficial insects.

Herbicide resistant crops like Roundup Ready soya will cause mass problems in farming. It may lead to the destruction of the bio diversity of the region which is crucial to the livelihoods of many of the rural women. What Monsanto classifies as weeds are often the food and medicine used by people in these local areas. Many of these

"weeds" have important economic value for the farmers.

GE crops also promote soil erosion as this method ignores the importance of mixed and covered crops.

Canada is one of the biggest promoters of GE crops and trades. Mandatory labelling of GE foods should be in-

troduced in Canada. They should be labelled for health, environment and ethical reasons. People who have allergies need to know what is in their food. Also, people with strict dietary laws require labelling to know if a product has been genetically modified and may contain food that they can not eat.

Biotech companies have been allowed to blossom under a veil of secrecy. It is our right to know where our food comes from and if we want to support it or not. Labelling is a consumer's right.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, along with the World Health Organization, compiled a report in 1996. In it, they stated: "Substantial equivalence embodies the concept that if a new food or food component is found to be substantially equivalent to an existing food or food component it can be treated in the same manner with respect to safety."

The idea of a "substantial equivalence" is a very arbitrary concept and should not be used as the base argument as to why labelling of GE foods is not needed. The idea of "substantial equivalence" overlooks all the possible side effects of genetically engineered food.

Monsanto defends not labelling GE soya by saying that no biochemical differences are noted between the chemical composition of GE soya and non GE soya. Labelling is also made difficult because commodity crops like soya and corn are sold in bulk quantities that mix both the modified and unmodified crops before processing. Crops would need to be segregated at an early stage in order for labelling to be possible.

Defenders of the non-labelling position state that this would require a new food distribution system and would therefore

disrupt the present national and global food distribution scheme. Another reason why labelling is difficult is because most GE products are processed foods and foreign genes are often destroyed in processing.

Defenders of the biotech industry claim that because traditional methods of breeding crop varieties do not require labelling, then products that have been genetically modified should not either. These companies are scared of the stigma that labels may bring.

But if we label fat and caloric contents of food because of concerns of potential health risks, then why shouldn't we also label genetically modified foods?

Unfortunately right now, even if a country decides to legislate the labelling of GE foods, the World Trade Organization can make those labels illegal by saying that countries cannot discriminate based on how and where something is made. [The issue of labelling of GE foods will be raised at the next meeting of the WTO to be held in Seattle, Washington from November 29 to December 3.]

There is lots of resistance to genetically modified food. A huge environmental campaign is being mounted. Opposition is coming from politicians, farmers, members of various communities, and even the Prince of Wales. Resistance is particularly strong in England, as well as in other parts of Europe.

In 1996, Greenpeace sprayed a large red "X" over an entire Monsanto soya crop in the US. In the Spring of 1999, 500 farmers from India and other South Asian nations went to Europe for a month to protest genetically modified foods and the corporate global economy.

There are many things that one can do to protest genetically engineered food. For example, leafletting information about GE products or by joining a politically active group. [In Vancouver, the Basmati Action Group has been engaged in a campaign to stop stores from carrying genetically modified and patented foods. For more information about BAG's work, contact them at (604) 255-4910.]

It is also important to educate ourselves and to write letters to our MPs and to editors of various newspapers expressing our concerns. Buying locally and organically can also be a form of resistance. Our health should not come before the profit of corporations! It is time to take action!

Lisa Wulwik recently moved from Peterborough, Ontario to Vancouver where she is involved with various political, activist movements.

### Website resources on GE foods:

[www.Canadians.org](http://www.Canadians.org)  
[www.thecampaign.org/brochurepromises.htm](http://www.thecampaign.org/brochurepromises.htm)  
[www.essential\\_tradingco.uk/gfianew.htm](http://www.essential_tradingco.uk/gfianew.htm)  
[www.enviroweb.org/shag/](http://www.enviroweb.org/shag/)  
[www.foe.co.uk/camps/toodbio/index.htm](http://www.foe.co.uk/camps/toodbio/index.htm)

**Biotech corporations want to patent the genes of animals and plants.**



# ARTS

Review of Environments for Girls and Women:

## Building supportive communities

by Emilie Adin

ENVIRONMENTS FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN: CITY DESIGN FROM A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

by Hinda Hanrietta Avery

Illustrations by Greta Guzek and Dallas Bolton

Have you ever felt unsafe cutting across a park on your way home? Have you ever seen a mother trying to get a stroller safely up an escalator? Have you ever found you had to commute twice: once to get to childcare, and again to get to work? If so, you can see that the built environment has a profound effect on our day-to-day lives as women.

In pondering these questions, Hinda Avery has, with great success, designed a feminist education guide on the built environment, geared for intermediate grades. Avery has taught Women's Studies at the Okanagan University in Kelowna, has

been an elementary and high school teacher, and is a practising artist.

Her interest in compiling the guide was to introduce better understanding of the built environment into the education system, encourage awareness of the needs of women and girls, and to increase the number of women in the architectural and planning professions.

The guide provides background knowledge and lesson plans for teachers who are helping their students envision the built environment through the eyes of girls and women of diverse cultural backgrounds. The overarching goal of this exercise Avery states, "is to empower female students by validating their experiences and their right to have an effect on the world in which they live."

Students are given the opportunity to ask themselves, "what does it mean to be female in an environment constructed almost entirely by white middle-class men?" The education guide helps them in exploring the answers to this question, in depth. Not only can students ponder who builds what for whom, and why, but they also have the opportunity to consider what could be built instead.

Throughout the education guide, Avery is very careful not to essentialize women, or to treat them as a homogeneous mass. Variables such as social class, race, ethnicity, age, disability and sexual orientation are examined, and there is a broad acknowledgement that women experience the built environment differently.

Section One of the guide introduces teachers to built environment education and provides an overview of women's issues in architecture and planning. In effect, Avery seeks to "teach the teacher"—to give them background knowledge which will be useful in planning the unit lessons.

Built environment education has largely been overlooked in the conventional education system. Environmental studies have generally looked at the natural environment, but not the human-made elements of our surroundings. Built environment education aims to help students become more aware of the planning and design of their home, school, neighbourhood and city. Students are also encouraged to think about the built environment in terms of their own values and life experiences.

Women's issues have been largely overlooked in the built environment. Housing, zoning, public transit, public space, children's space and public amenities are all important considerations in the planning of safe, practical

and comfortable environments for girls and women.

For example, issues in relation to housing include affordability, distance of housing from jobs and services, and access to the outdoors. Simple design considerations, like having windows that overlook play areas, can have a significant impact on women's lives.

The segregation of home and work is a common and sustained blunder among planners. The result of such zoning-by-laws is that women (particularly those with children or disabilities) have trouble commuting to work or accessing services. It is also difficult for women to start home-based businesses, which would better meet their need for flexibility, when home and work areas have been divided by zoning regulations.

Avery states, "seldom are women adequately valued, represented or empowered by the architecture and planning professions." She postulates that this lack of regard may in part be due to the small percentage of women practicing architecture and planning. In Canada, only nine percent of registered architects are women; in BC, only seven percent of architects are women. In the case of the planning profession, approximately 20 percent of Canadian planners are women, but less than five percent of senior positions in planning are filled by women.

Avery also includes in Section One of the guide a fascinating herstory of women's participation in planning and architecture. She dates this herstory back to the mid-1800s, and conveys the historical discrimination of women architects and planners. What I found really fascinating was Avery's incorporation of contemporary accounts of the exclusion of women within architecture and planning. For example, Avery says that American architect Denise Scott Brown recently stated that for her, discrimination as a woman continues at the rate of about one incident per day. When the search was on for a design for the new Vancouver public library, her husband and business partner Robert Venturi was invited to submit drawings, but she was not. Many projects which have been attributed to Venturi are, in fact, Brown's.

Avery also takes the opportunity to suggest some core principles that guide feminist design and planning, that are "based on women's ways of knowing and analyzing." These principles are: connectiveness and inclusiveness; ethic of care and value of everyday life; value of subjectivity and feelings; and value of complexity and flexibility.

Section Two of the education guide offers teachers a series of lesson plans that relate to the experiences of girls and women in the built environment. However, in following the feminist tradition of linking knowledge to action, and making the personal political, Avery calls these units Action Plans rather than lesson plans. Student activities over the course of the 19 units in Section Two include a safety au-



### Environments for Girls and Women

City Design from a Feminist Perspective

dit, sensory detective work, a study of the impact of globalization on city design and women, and explorations of community initiatives by Aboriginal women, women of African heritage, South Asian women, Jewish women, older women, women with disabilities and lesbians. In each of the units, teachers are urged to collaborate with women from the community, and with feminist architects and planners. A list of potential contacts is included within each Action Plan, as well as a resource list of audio-visual and written materials.

Section Three provides additional resources and information for teachers and students, as well as background information on the lesson plan contributors.

Although the program is designed for the intermediate grades (7 through 10), Avery assures us that the lessons can easily be adjusted for older or younger students. Units can fit well into Art, Social Studies, Geography, Urban Studies and Women's Studies.

The manual is not currently a part of the intermediate school curriculum, but teachers can order it for use in their classrooms. Parents can also suggest that their children's school incorporate this manual into regular curriculum. The guide is available through the BC Teacher's Federation, Lesson Aids, which can be reached by calling (604) 871-2283.

Emilie Adin is a graduate student at the UBC School of Community and Regional Planning. Her own research involves supporting a community initiative to conduct a needs assessment of aging lesbians. Emilie considers Hinda Avery to be a mentor for all budding women architects and planners.



A review of *Fidelity*:

# A deep, honest love story

by Luanne Armstrong

## FIDELITY

by K. Linda Kivi, Lyn Merryfeather, Joanne Hetherington and Catherine Fisher, Maa Press, Nelson, British Columbia, 1999

This is a love story, a complicated one, but a love story nonetheless. It is also a testimonial to the deep strength, honesty, caring and integrity of women's relationships with each other.

This is a book composed of letters written over a two year period by four women in varying degrees of relationship to one another. As K. Linda explains in the preface:

"In May of 1996, Catherine, K. Linda and Joanne returned home from many months abroad. During our time away, we wrote each other letters, something we hadn't done before. We all felt as though writing to one another had given our relationships another dimension so we decided to continue. At this point, Jo and K. Linda had been lovers for five-and-a-half years; K. Linda and Catherine had been lovers for almost a year; and Jo and Catherine were just beginning a friendship."

Very soon, Lyn became lovers with Jo, and the four women continued a writing circle which culminated in this book's publication.

What I love about this book is the deep thought and care with which these women approach the creation of what they term "polyamory." I love the title of the book. It

expresses their exact sense of loyalty to themselves and their own honesty.

What I also love and admire, is their willingness to be so open and honest within a relatively small community in the BC interior. As women who are active and open in their community of Nelson, which admittedly is more open to alternative ideas than some other places might be, they have chosen to continue their fidelity in honesty, openness and caring.

During the two years covered in this book, these women discuss many issues: jealousy, friendship, sexual attraction, celibacy, family and privacy. They do it without jargon, without pretence, and without artifice. Because these letters were initially not written for publication, there is a sense that we are being let into a very private sphere, that we are being allowed to share on a very deep level, an ongoing dialogue about meaning and connection. It feels like a dialogue in which we are silently invited to participate.

In addition, these women are all wonderful writers. The book reads easily, and

smoothly. Because it was published as a small, handbound edition, it's also a joy to handle. The tree-free paper is beautiful, the cover a delight.

There are so many memorable passages, I love this for example, when K. Linda writes: "Today I've been thinking and walking and thinking. What we call relationship is a map. Human relations themselves are an uneven and endlessly fascinating, sometimes dangerous terrain, spectacular gullies here, a subtly twisted tree there. Talking about what we do, being conscious, is our attempt to map this terrain, mark out the changes in elevation, the road, the cliffs, the uncrossable waterways, the limits. Ideally, I think it would be lovely to wander with

no map at all like I do on those days when I eschew paths and just plunge into the woods, going where I go. Rare and special days. Mostly though, I follow one of the paths we have worn into the earth by our repeated footfalls. This is familiar, safer. I think of polyamory as the best map at hand for me, given the changing and fragile state

of our relational world and our rudimentary, (though growing) knowledge of map making techniques."

Or as Jo says about jealousy: "The consequence of jealousy and shame, I feel, is a reaction from a society that places value on emotional and sexual ownership in lover partnerships. Our emotional work is doubly difficult because before we even deal with our issues of individual ownership, we need to shed our societal patterns of ownership. There is no set way, there is no rule book, in developing new relationship patterns based on passionate freedoms. My experience of going through jealousy and shame and not getting stuck in them, is that it continues to open doors."

When I talked to K. Linda recently about the publication of the book, and the impact it has had on her life and the lives of the other women, she mentioned, laughingly, that there are a number of pages which apparently have become favourites, so that the mention of a certain page among a group of dykes can often bring shared laughter.

She also said that many women have found the book hopeful and supportive, that often there is a sense in the lesbian community that non-monogamy, or polyamory, is too hard, too painful, even when women have a sense that this is a lifestyle they would like to live.

This is a book that, above all, gives us a sense of the best of ourselves, gives us a sense that with true integrity and respect, the best of all worlds just might be possible, on however small a scale.

**There is no set way, there is no rulebook, in developing new relationship patterns based on passionate freedoms.**

Canadian women tell their stories of illegal abortion:

## No choice

by Karen Page

For too long, stories of the desperation and ugliness of illegal abortion have remained untold. We need to hear them, in order to learn from this secret past, and to put a face to the issue of abortion. *No Choice: Canadian Women Tell Their Stories of Illegal Abortion*, released in January 1999 by the Childbirth by Choice Trust, gives us that opportunity.

Canadian women from the turn of the century through to the 1960s describe their horrific personal experiences with illegal abortion. Some are telling their story for the first time, having carried their memories in silence for years, feeling isolated, alone, and unable to tell anyone their secret. The courage of these women is monumental. The humiliation and degradation described in their stories is something no woman should ever have to endure.

We are reminded that contraception and abortion were illegal in Canada until 1969, and that an estimated 4,000 to 6,000 women died from unlawful abortions between 1926 and 1947. In 1936, the height of

the Depression, 42 per cent of maternal deaths in this country were attributed to illegal abortions. Many women risked their lives to end their pregnancies; the fact that abortion was against the law was not a deterrent. As Billie expresses, "I would have done anything to terminate this pregnancy, regardless of how dangerous or stupid it would have been."

This sense of desperate determination is a common thread throughout each story, as is each woman's conviction that she did the right thing. For most, choosing abortion was necessary for personal survival. Alone and in secret, women were forced by sheer desperation to attempt self-induced abortion, or to rely on strangers who were more often motivated by money than by concern for the woman involved.

These abortions were always accompanied by pain, since they were performed with no anaesthetic, followed by little or no recovery time or aftercare. Occasionally, the woman was assaulted, and she always had to maintain total silence—after all, she was a criminal who had just broken the law.

**Many women risked their lives to end their pregnancies; the fact that abortion was against the law was not a deterrent.**

Although the chance of infection was high, antibiotics were rarely available and many of these women suffered complications requiring hospitalization, where both staff and doctors freely showed their disapproval.

Although the women in this book do not regret their choice, many have paid extremely high costs for their abortions, financially, emotionally and physically. Some of the women died, often leaving children behind; others found that abortion in a crucial period in their lives allowed them to become loving mothers of wanted children later on. That so many women undertook and survived this ordeal shows their clear determination to be in charge of their own

bodies and lives, despite harsh consequences.

*No Choice* makes it abundantly clear that women in need will seek abortion and no law will deter them. I urge you to read this book and discuss it with friends, family and politicians. It's time to end the silence.

To order your copy of *No Choice* (at \$19.95, including shipping, handling and taxes), contact the Childbirth by Choice Trust at (416) 961-7812 or email: info@cbctrust.com.

Karen Page is with the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League. This review is re-printed from CARAL's newsletter, Pro-Choice Forum, July 1999.



# BULLETIN BOARD



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](mailto: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. 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 are 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 get lined up so neatly? Want to know the fastest way to get waf off your hands? 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. 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.

### 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 (604) 255-6554. Childcare and travel subsidies available.

## INVOLVEMENT

### 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 (604) 255-6554 today!

### VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

Are you a volunteer at VSW or *Kinesis*? If yes, please feel free to make contributions to our 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. waiting for your submissions. If you want more info call Amal at (604) 255-5499 or the VSW Volunteer Development Committee at (604) 255-6554.

### KINESIS MARKETING GANG

Interested in being on the hottest 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 (604) 255-5499.

## EVENTS

### ANGELA DAVIS IS COMING

Vancouver Status of Women will host a fundraising event featuring social activist and author, Angela Davis on **Sat Feb 12, 2000**. Tickets will be available through TicketMaster in late November. For more information or to reserve your tickets call VSW at (604) 255-6554.

### MAGGIE NICHOLS

Jazz performer Maggie Nichols will be in Vancouver at the Western Front Gallery, 303 E. 8th Ave **Nov 3-6**. For more info call (604) 875-9516.

### GATHERING THREADS

During the month of October, the exhibition hall of the Roundhouse Community Centre will be filled with textiles. *Gathering Threads: The Pleasure of Textiles*, a residency project of the Roundhouse, will feature various installations, free demonstrations and performances in rug hooking, quilting, embroidery, harness loom weaving, backpack weaving and more. For the complete schedule or more info contact the Roundhouse Community Centre, 181 Roundhouse Mews, tel (604) 713-1800.

### THE COLOR OF VIOLENCE

*The Color of Violence: Violence Against Women of Color* conference will take place on **Apr 28-29, 2000** at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The conference will bring together indigenous women and women of colour to explore and strategize around the relationships among racism, colonialism, and gender violence in the lives and herstories of women of colour and indigenous women. Angela Davis and Haunani Kay Trask will be the keynote presenters. For full details, visit the conference website at: [www2.ucsc.edu/people/andysm/](http://www2.ucsc.edu/people/andysm/) To receive registration materials, contact Andrea Smith at #4-3 Felix St. Santa Cruz, CA, 95060; tel: (831) 460-1856; fax: (831) 459-3733; or email: [andysm@cats.ucsc.edu](mailto:andysm@cats.ucsc.edu).

### WTO TEACH-IN

There will be a public *Teach-in on the WTO* in Vancouver at the Robson Square Conference Centre, 800 Robson St in November. On **Fri Nov 12, 7:30-10pm**, a number of speakers including Maude Barlow and Agnes Bertrand, will make presentations on "Canadian and Global Perspectives on the WTO." Then on **Sat Nov 13, 9am-5:30pm**, there will be workshops, issue panels and strategy meetings. For more info and to register call (604) 878-5424. Organized by the Common Front on the WTO.

### IMAGE NATION

The second annual Aboriginal film and video festival in Vancouver, *IMAG NATION*, will run from **Nov 2-6** at various venues around the city. Organized by IMAG (the Indigenous Media Arts Group), the festival will showcase works that are directed, produced or written by Aboriginal people. The festival opens **Tues Nov 2** at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre and in various screening venues in Vancouver. Among the program's categories will be: "Reel Warriors," "Sex Life Stories," "Wannabeez," and an animation series. A panel discussion will also be held **Sat Nov 6** from 2-4 pm, titled "Achieving Cultural Autonomy: Practices in Media and Scholastic Communities," with moderator Cleo Reece. The discussion will take place at the Video In Studios, 1965 Main St. For more info, call IMAG at (604) 871-0173.

### PURPLE ROSE CAMPAIGN

The Philippine Women's Centre will be launching its new campaign to end the trafficking of Filipino women on **Sat Dec 4, 7pm** at the Roundhouse Community Centre, 181 Roundhouse Mews. It will be an evening of exciting performers and artists, including Katari Taiko and Alvin Tolentino. The event will also feature an art auction of works donated by local artists. Tickets are \$10. For more info, tickets or to volunteer, call Marlou or Ning at (604) 215-1103.

### ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES

The Vancouver Women's Health Collective is hosting a series of education sessions on body-focused alternative therapies. The workshops will be held on the **first Thursdays** of the month from 6:30-8:30pm at the collective, 219-1675 W. 8th Ave. The next session on **Nov 4** will focus on traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture, and on Naturopathic Medicine. A \$3 sliding scale donation is requested. Seating is limited, so please register by calling (604) 736-5262.

### ELIMINATE CHILD POVERTY

1999 is the 10th anniversary of the all party Federal resolution to seek to eliminate child poverty. Join us on **Wed Nov 24, 5:30pm** at the Plaza of Nations for a vigil to remember our promises and celebrate our children's future. Entertainers, speakers and children's activities. For more info call (604) 895-5786.

### FAS CONFERENCE

A Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) conference is being held on **Tues Nov 16**, from 9am-4pm at the All Saints Anglican Church in Vernon, BC. There is no fee and lunch may be included—a non-perishable food donation for the food bank is requested. Margaret Boudreau and her daughter Kandice (who is 17 years old with FAS) will be presenting. They have presented at the Aboriginal Women's Conference last year. For more info contact Tammy Brown by email: [Info@junction.net](mailto:Info@junction.net)

## EVENTS

## EVENTS

### DENISE CHONG

Denise Chong will read from her recently released book *The Girl in the Picture: The Kim Phuc Story*. With this book, award-winning journalist Chong offers an incredibly powerful portrait of one woman's remarkable life—a woman who has been known over the years as "the girl in the picture." Kim Phuc was a nine year old Vietnamese child when she was the subject of one of the most famous photographs ever taken. The reading will be at the Vancouver Public Library Main Branch **Tues, Nov 9** at 7:30pm.

### ANDREA LEBOWITZ

Co-authored with Gillian Milton, Andrea Lebowitz, a Canadian feminist writer, will talk about their book, *Gilean Douglas: Writing Nature, Finding Home*. The book is a fascinating biography that includes a collection of some of Gilean's best writings. Andrea will be at the Vancouver Public Library on **Wed Nov 10**, at 7:30pm. Admission is free.

### RACHEL ZOLF

Rachel Zolf will be reading at Women in Print on **Tues Nov 16** at 7pm. Zolf will be reading from her first book of poetry, *Her absence, this wanderer*. The book deals with the complexities of being estranged from one's roots, as the narrator in her poems faces the long shadow of Holocaust family loss, on a journey to Poland and Czechoslovakia and a journey to and through absence. Zolf is an accomplished writer, and has also spent time in film/TV production. For more info call 732-4128.

### OTTAWA RCC

The Ottawa Crisis Centre is looking for committed volunteers to work on its crisis line, or Public Education and Fundraising program. Ottawa RCC is a volunteer-based organization which relies on over 8,000 volunteer hours a year. Volunteering can and often does lead to paid work. As part of the Centre's diversity plan, priority will be given to women from diverse ethnic/racial/cultural backgrounds. If you would like to join the Ottawa RCC in building a fully inclusive anti-racist service, call (613) 562-2334, ext 24 for an information package.

### SURVIVORS FOR SURVIVORS

Survivors for Survivors, a self-help group run by and for women survivors of childhood sexual abuse, offers referrals and weekly support meetings. The group aims to maintain a warm, safe and judgement-free environment in which women can speak about their lives, be heard by open ears, and move towards healing. Meetings take place in the North Vancouver area. For meeting dates and for more info call Maya at (604) 987-6486. All calls held in strictest confidence.

### JAPANESE QUEER GROUP

Are you interested in meeting lesbians, bisexual women and transgendered women of Japanese heritage? Let's celebrate Vancouver Lesbian Week together. For info call Aki on her pager at (604) 708-6867.

### NAC YOUNG WOMEN'S CAUCUS

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women presents its Young Women's Caucus for women between the ages of 16 and 30. It is imperative that young women have space where their voices are validated, celebrated and honoured. The NAC Young Women's Caucus is committed to providing that space, as well as demanding it! Please join in the struggle. For more info contact Rachel at (416) 755-9605, email: [thedivas@pathcom.com](mailto:thedivas@pathcom.com), or Kelly at (905) 525-0629, email: [hwetl-pr@interlynx.net](mailto:hwetl-pr@interlynx.net).



# BULLETIN BOARD

## EVENTS

### SHAKTI

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, and 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.

### BI-WOMEN'S GET-TOGETHER

A bisexual women's get-together in Vancouver is being held once a month for conversation, munchies, laughs and the occasional bi-related movie. For more info and to get on the email list, call (604) 734-9407 or email Liane at angelbum@netcom.ca.

### ALLIES TO FIRST NATIONS WOMEN

"Allies to First Nations Women," a subcommittee of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women-BC region, has been re-activated. The subcommittee works in solidarity with Aboriginal women, particularly in the areas of research, proposal writing and organizing. Any woman wishing to join is welcome. For more info call Jenea at (604) 294-8092.

### MENOPAUSE AWARENESS GROUP

The Surrey Women's Centre is sponsoring a Menopause Awareness Group which meets 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.

### 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.

## EVENTS

### RALLY AGAINST RACISM

Filipino students at Van Tech Secondary School are the most recent targets of the intensifying racism occurring today. Rally begins, 12 noon, **Wed Nov 3**, at the Vancouver School Board (Broadway and Fir). For more info, call May or Charlene at (604) 215-1103.

### FORUM ON GLOBALIZATION

This international forum presents speakers from around the world who will talk about the social, political, cultural and environmental implications of economic globalization, and the role of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Panel discussions will include diverse topics such as biotechnology, labour rights, agriculture and food safety, global finance and investments. The forum is on **Nov 25 and 27**, in Seattle. For more info call (415) 771-8094 or email: ifg@ifg.org.

## GROUPS

### BWSS SUPPORT GROUPS

Battered Women's Support Services in Vancouver offers a range of support groups for women who are in or who have been in abusive intimate relationships. Women meet to share common experiences and to receive emotional support, information and practical help on resources. BWSS has various drop-in groups, including a custody and access support group, a group for Japanese women, a group run through the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, and 10-week groups. Bus tickets and onsite childcare or childcare subsidies are available. Call (604) 687-1867 for more info.

### WOMEN ABUSE SUPPORT GROUP

Battered Women's Support Services in Vancouver is offering a support group for women who are in or have been in abusive intimate relationships with women. The group provides emotional support, legal information and advocacy, safety planning, and referrals. The group is free and confidential. Bus tickets and childcare subsidies are available. For more info (604) 687-1867.

### 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

### SATRANG

If you are into drama, theatre sports, *et cetera*, and feel strongly about issues affecting South Asian women, come and check out the South Asian Theatre and Networking Group. Satrang is about enthusiasm and having fun with your creativity in a positive scene. Meetings are every **Monday** from 3:30-5pm at the South Asian Women's Centre, 8163 Main Street, Vancouver. For more info call Anu at (604) 592-0013 or Sonia at (604) 325-6637.

### PRIDELINE

The Centre's Prideline offers information, referrals, and peer support to lesbian, gay, transgendered and bisexual people seven days a week from **7-10pm**. In the Lower Mainland call (604) 684-6869. Elsewhere in BC call 1-800-566-1170.

### MOTHERS IN TRANSITION

Mothers in Transition Support Group holds regular coffee meetings for mothers who have lost custody of their offspring due to mental illness. Come meet other moms of like mind and situation. Share experiences and interests. We hope together to lessen the burden of living without our offspring. We create friendship. Private meetings with Dawn are also available. For more info, contact Dawn at (604) 871-0151.

### LESBIAN SOCIAL GROUP

In the Company of Womyn, a social group for lesbians in the Lower Fraser Valley meets one **Friday** every month in the Surrey/Langley area to plan social activities. For more info call Jill at (604) 576-8107.

## SUBMISSIONS

### GENDER AND GLOBALIZATION

*The Journal for Gender Studies* is publishing a special issue on "Gender and Globalization" in September 2000. A broad spectrum of articles representing feminist perspectives on gender and globalization from all parts of the world are being sought. Themes may include: the feminization of labour and the gender of labour markets; transnationalization of identity politics (youth culture, gender, sexuality); effects on indigenous peoples and nationalist movements, *et cetera*. Submissions may be in the form of academic articles, poetry, photographs, artwork, and so on. Send submissions to: The Editors, *The Journal of Gender Studies*, CASS, University of Hull, Hull, HU6 7RX, England. For more info email: journal-gender-studies@cas.hull.ac.uk. Deadline is **Jan 30**.

### VISUAL ARTISTS

The Community Arts Council in Vancouver is holding a fundraising exhibition **Dec 1-23**. Professional artists are invited to submit a max of three art pieces (2D & 3D art work), and artists will receive 60 percent of the selling price. Submission requirements: CV, art work(s); labelled with artist's name, title, medium, and retail price (must be \$300 or under, and a \$10 submission fee per artist is required). Artist can drop off works **Nov 24-27**. Pick-up day on Dec 1. For more info contact the CAC, 837 Davie St; tel: (604) 683-4358; fax: (604) 683-4394.

### SPIRIT OF WOMEN 2000

Visual artists, performance artists, musicians, writers and dancers are invited to submit works that focus on the spirit of women. The exhibition *Spirit of Women 2000* will celebrate women during the month of March 2000, and in particular IWD March 8th. Submission Deadline is **Nov 30**. Send submissions to: The Community Arts Council of Vancouver Gallery, *Spirit of Women 2000*, 837 Davie St, Vancouver, BC, V5L 2Z2. For submission requirements, contact the curators and organizers, Barbara Bickel and Mary Lou Riordon-Sello, at (604) 683-4358.

### BLOOD/LUST

*Blood/Lust: A Mixed Queer Anthology* seeks essays, poetry and art that reflect the lived experiences of racially mixed trans, bi, lesbian, gay, two-spirit, hijra, bakla, patache, mahu or otherwise "queer"-identified people. The editor seeks writing by people of all racial mixes, social backgrounds, abilities and beliefs to speak about the complexities of being mixed and queer. Submissions must be typed or word-processed and double-spaced. Please include your name and address on each page. Please submit a cover letter as well as a brief bio. No queries or manuscripts can be returned without a SASE (and IRC if applicable). Deadline **Nov 19**. Poems: up to five; essays: up to 8000 words; art (no originals): up to five pieces. Send to *Blood/Lust*, c/o Qwo-Li Driskill, 1122 E Pike St, PMB #470, Seattle, WA, 98122-3939, USA. For more info email: mixedqueer@hotmail.com.

### CALLING ALL QUEER PINAYS

If you are a Filipina and identify as queer, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, tibo... If you have stories, essays, poetry, journal writings, drawings, photos, comics, recipes... Sa PinayKa, A Pinay lesbian group in Toronto, would like to hear from you. This is your last chance to be a part of this groundbreaking work. A Queer Pinay Anthology. Final deadline **Jan 31, 2000**. Send submissions to SisterVision Press, c/o Pinay, PO Box 217, Stn E, Toronto, ON, M6H 4E2; or by email to bengg@hotmail.com.

### PHOTOS OF GAY AND LESBIAN FAMILIES

*A Safer World*, a National Film Board documentary/animation project, is looking for a diverse array of out gay couples and their families to share their photos or to be photographed. For more info or to make a submission, call Chris at (604) 255-0057.

### WOMEN IN PRINT

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# BULLETIN BOARD

## SUBMISSIONS

### CHILD CARE ADVOCACY

Dr. Susan Prentice, a professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Manitoba, is seeking submissions for an edited text on the history, politics and practice of child care in Canada from 1945-1995. The aim of the anthology is to identify the particular ways that child care mobilization has contributed to the development of policy and services in Canada. For suggested topic ideas or if you wish to submit a paper, contact Susan Prentice, Department of Sociology, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3R 2N2; tel: (204) 474-6725 (call collect); fax: (204) 261-1216; e-mail: sprenti@cc.umanitoba.ca. The submission deadline is June 2000, but is flexible.

### HEALTH NETWORK

The Canadian Women's Health Network invites submissions for its quarterly newsletter, *Network*. If you'd like to contribute or wish to suggest a topic we should cover, please email the editor at news@cwahn.ca. Or contact her at CWHN Network, 203-419 Graham Ave, Winnipeg, MB, R3C 0M3, or visit the CWHN website at [www.cwahn.ca](http://www.cwahn.ca).

### ART SHOW SPACE

The Vancouver Women's Health Collective 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.

### RIDE THE WIND

*Ride the Wind* is collecting submissions for an anthology on women's experiences in the workplace. Poetry and personal essays of approx. 10-pages max; typewritten. Submissions should focus on the difficulties women have working in the labour market, how these difficulties have been coped with, or resolved, and also what successes the author enjoyed. Pseudonyms required for co-workers and companies, and may also be used for writer. Deadline Dec 31. Send to Ride the Wind, PO Box 965 Stn. A. Campbell River, BC, V9W 6Y4, fax (250) 923-0541, email [ridewind@angelfire.com](mailto:ridewind@angelfire.com)

### GLOBAL MIGRATION

The Canadian Council for Refugees and the UBC School of Social Work and Family Studies are looking for papers for the conference scheduled for Jun 1-3, 2000 at UBC. The call for papers from both academics and practitioners on their research/practice findings on issues related to refugee movements and refugee settlement. Deadline for abstracts Oct 31, notification of acceptance Dec 31.

### OF WOMAN BORN

The Year 2001 marks the 25th anniversary of the publication of Adrienne's Rich's *Of Woman Born*. In celebration, Demeter Press will be publishing an edited volume that explores how this landmark and far-reaching book has shaped and influenced maternal scholarship over the last 25 years. The press welcomes submissions from a variety of perspectives, chapters are to be 15-20 pages in length and in MLA format. Please send a 250 word abstract and 50 word bio by Dec 1. Notification of acceptance will be mailed Jan 8, 2000. Completed chapters must be received by May 1. The volume will be published late Fall 2000. For more info contact Andrea O'Reilly, 726 Atkinson, York University, 4700 Keele St, Toronto, ON, M3J 1P3; tel: (416) 736-2100 ext 60366; email: [aoreilly@yorku.ca](mailto:aoreilly@yorku.ca); fax: (905) 775-1386.

## CLASSIFIEDS

### WOMEN'S AIKIDO

Aikido is a non-competitive Japanese Martial Art emphasizing flowing circular movement to neutralize an attack. This is a women only class with varying ages and abilities - lots of individual instruction. Dynamic senior instructor uses skill and humour to introduce techniques. Good warm up, fun work out, practical, spiritual and transformative. On-going Sunday mornings 11:00am-12:30pm. Drop-in \$6 @ Trout Lake Community Centre, 16th and Victoria. For more info, drop by or call (604) 7394-233 or (604) 872-5129.

### OCEAN FRONT CABIN

Charming, secluded, ocean front cabin, Roberts Creek, Sunshine Coast. Two bedrooms, full bath, kitchen with all amenities. Relax in picturesque setting. Ideal for cycling, hiking, swimming, or kyaking. Children welcome. Friendly, trained outdoor felines OK. Smoke free indoors. Weekly \$350. Group retreat rates. Weekend rates. Available from May/99. (250) 352-3609 or [hgh@netidea.com](mailto:hgh@netidea.com)

### WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENSE

Women Educating in Self-defense Training (WEST) teaches Wenliido. 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 (604) 876-6390.

### MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION FOR WOMEN

This meditative approach to working with stress, pain and illness is offered in introductory classes, eight week courses or individual sessions. For more info call Deborah Prieur at (604) 733-6136.

### CITYVIEW CO-OP

Cityview Housing Co-op is accepting applications for its waitlist for one, two and three bedroom suites (\$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.

### OFFICE FOR RENT

The Vancouver Women's Health Collective has an office space for rent. The space is available immediately. Monthly rent is \$250.00 plus GST and incidental fees (i.e.: hydro, parking, etc.). For more info call or leave a message for Caryn Duncan at (604) 736-4234.

### ROOMMATE WANTED

Hey there women! I need you and you may need me! I'm looking for a roommate for Dec 1, Feb 1 or Mar 1, and this time my roommate is really moving out! I live in a sunny breezy top floor, two-bedroom suite in an East Vancouver co-op close to the Drive. Underground parking and laundry facilities on site. I am looking for a non-smoker, gay-friendly, tidy, responsible, easygoing woman to share my plant-filled apartment. No pets please, I'm allergic. You would pay \$348 per month plus share deposit. Call me, Lisa, at (604) 253-1827.

*Got Something  
to say?  
Classify it!*

First 25 words for only \$8.00 (+gst)

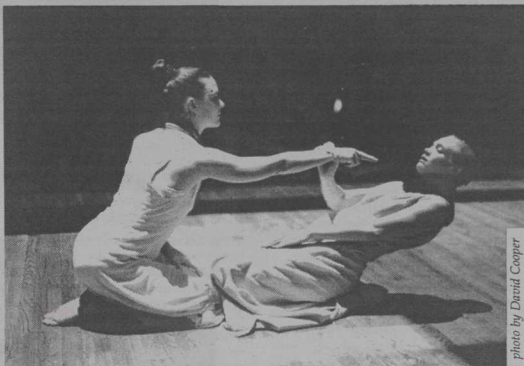


Photo by David Cooper

## "Still Green & Rock - Part ii"

The Dance Centre presents

## Dance in Vancouver,

the 2nd Vancouver Platform for the "Recontres Choreographiques Internationales de Seine Saint-Denis," from November 3rd to 5th, 7:30pm at the

Norman Rothstein Theatre, 950 W. 41st Ave. The evenings will feature performances by Astrid,

Karen Jamieson Dance Company, Kinesis Dance,

Kokoro Dance, Lola MacLaughlin Dance, Mascall Dance, and many more. Pictured above are Andrea

Gunnlaugson and Kathleen McDonagh who will be performing in *Still Green & Rock, Part ii*.

Three day passes are \$25 for Dance Centre/Jewish Community Centre members; \$35 for non-members. Single evening performances are \$12 for members, and \$15 for non-members. Tickets are available at The Dance Centre, 400-873 Beatty St. For more info call (604) 606-6400.

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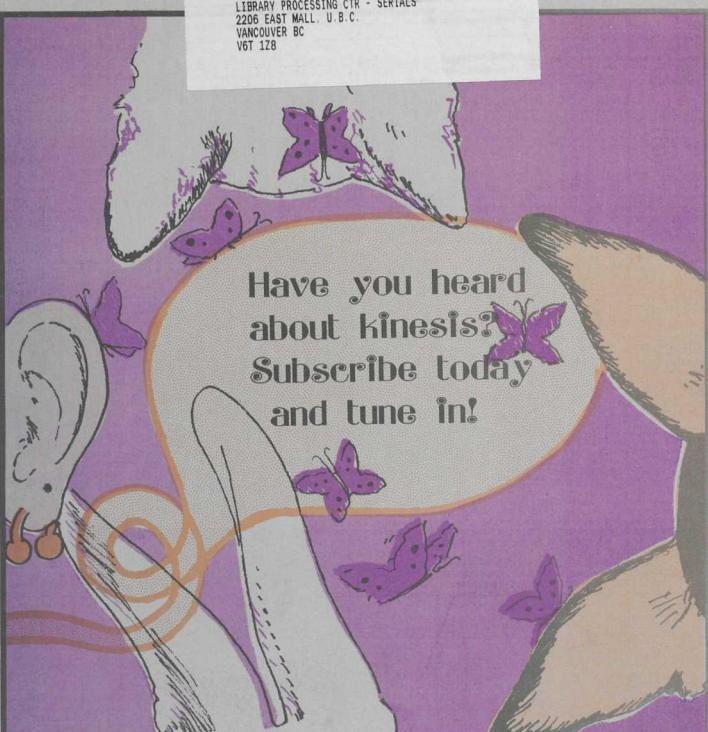
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