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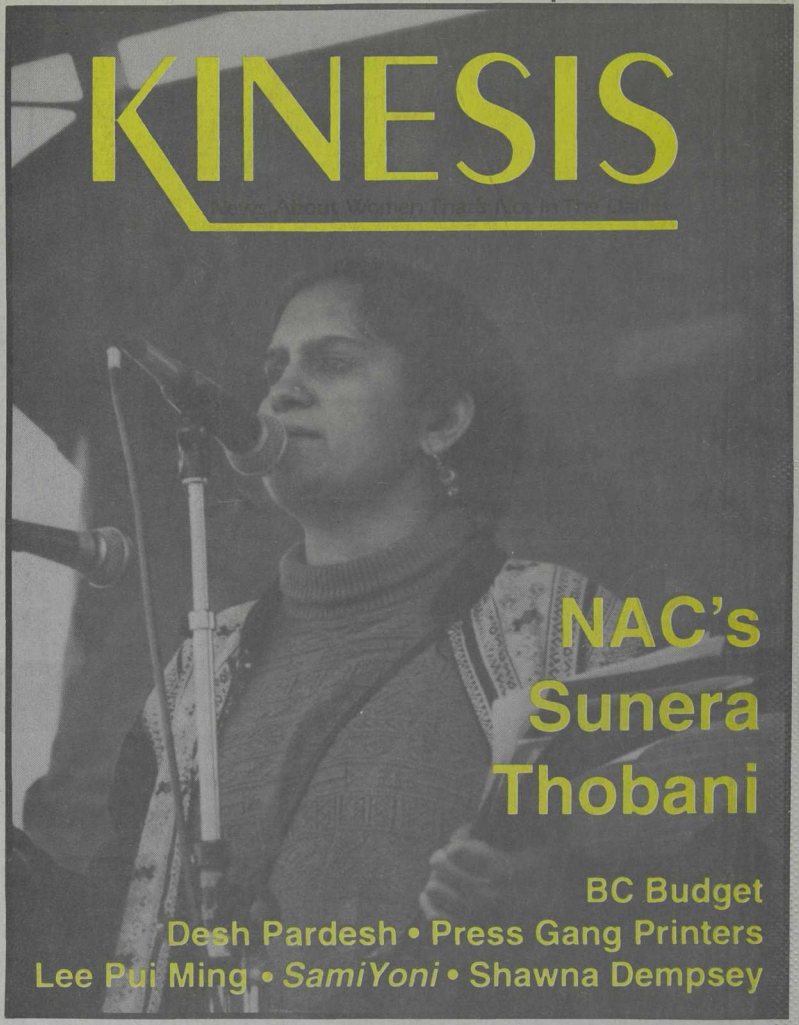
KINESIS

News About Women That's NOT In The Dailies



NAC's Sunera Thobani

BC Budget

Desh Pardesh • Press Gang Printers

Lee Pui Ming • *SamiYoni* • Shawna Dempsey

INSIDE

KINESIS

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Kinesis welcomes volunteers to work on all aspects of the paper. Our next Writers' Meeting is **May 4** for the June issue at 7 pm at *Kinesis*. All women welcome even if you don't have experience.

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

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

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It's been another crazee month and, horrors, it wasn't too different from the usual scramble to get the paper out..this means, stories fell through at the last minute—from a hard-hitting interview with **Clayoquot Sound** activist Valerie Langer, to making the connections between racism and **foreign aid cuts**, to looking at **South Africa** after the killing of **Chris Hani**, to a report on **NAFTA from Nicaragua**, to...to... then there's all that late-breaking stuff, that there isn't time to cover (the federal budget came out as we were going to press), gossip we haven't heard yet, (but we jus' know we will tomorrow), and that conversation we eavesdropped on last week...but what was it they were talkin' about...?

This means we'll be running these stories next issue...or the next, next issue...so much to write, so little time, energy, resources...Speaking of which, we just heard that NAFTA IS PROBABLY DEAD in the US. Before you celebrate, hang on...this is not confirmed as we go to press. The story is that Ross Perot, the rich, independant wanna-be-president is spending millions on a personal Anti-NAFTA campaign across the US. An aide close to Bill Clinton says NAFTA is dead. We never believe those guys but...maybe, just maybe...

Speaking of teasers, first up for this month is **that Big Bad Fed Budget...**we don't know much at this time but ....we heard Mazankowski sold his shoes the day he announced the budget, instead of buying a new pair. We didn't get it either, so we asked. Turns out it's a reference to finance-minister-stuff; they buy new shoes everytime they announce a budget...we still don't get it. The only concrete info we have so far is...three-quarters of the $1 billion in deficit reductions in the federal budget for the upcoming year will come from **delaying payment of next January's planned GST credit to low-income earners until April**. Translated, that means don't count on getting a GST cheque in the mail in January '94.

So then we thought about the other nice things that are happening right now, like about that **Big Bad NAC president-to-be, Sunera Thobani**. Actually, we think it's great news and...but she's certainly 'Bad,' according to folks. There's been an incredible backlash over her status—is she Canadian, landed...or, the racist thing they're saying about her, gasp, an "illegal immigrant" *[for more on this, page 3]*...the phones have been ringing, people are calling in and saying she should be, well, no, not lynched, and yeah, OK, so she's not "illegal" but, couldn't we have a *real* Canadian as president?

What's a real Canadian? we ask.

Well, seems like they've got a problem with an immigrant woman heading a national feminist organisation and..."**Judy Rebick** is a what? Judy Rebick is, gasp, a self-confessed American?"...except she's a Canadian citizen now so...but, funny, no one asked her about whether she was an immigrant during the referendum on amendments to the Canadian constitution. Hey, now that's...scary.

Anyway, point is, write a letter to the MP (John McDougall, PC-Timiskaming) and let him know what a @#$%! he is. And write to Brian and Mary Collins and anyone else you can think of. It's free. Things to note are: John M. says he got his info in a brown-paper envelope slipped under his door—there has to be a public enquiry about how that into got there. Why did John M. raise it on the floor of the House of Commons without bothering to check if the info was true? Is he really that stupid? Don't answer that one.

Meanwhile, if you know someone who's really mad at some immigrant woman running for national office in this country, don't tell her to call us—we're real mad too...hey, don't people know it's against the law to discriminate against immigrants...? Anyway, we think it's the most fitting thing for a national feminist organisation to have an immigrant woman as Pres. Think about it.

Another question: what do **provincial governments think about when they're drafting up budgets?** No, not deficits. No, not their asses. No, not new shoes. Actually, it's a real puzzle. If you know, call us. We're trying to figure out why the NDP government in Ontario cut refugees off free medical coverage? A cruel move, (we put it mildly,) coming on the tail of the fed's new immigration act that essentially forces refugees onto welfare (under the act, it's illegal for them to work).

April was a bad month in lots of ways...Cesar Chavez, who organised the Farmworkers Union in the US, died. Also last month: **the assassination of Chris Hani** of the Communist Party of South Africa and the African National Congress (ANC). Later, Oliver Tambo, a co-founder of the ANC, died in Johannesburg. Meanwhile, 300 women got together for **the first ANC Women's League conference**, and struck some resolutions. One is to fight for 30 percent of the ANC's seats in upcoming elections to be occupied by women. We're hoping to have more on this in an upcoming issue.

In all the coverage South Africa got over the last month, "appealing for calm" was probably the most popular phrase. Sound familiar? It's used to undermine anti-racist struggles against peoples of colour everywhere, from Palestine to Los Angeles. Yeah, the Rodney King thing. Hey, things were calm. The other day we found a small story on yet another person of colour (the term is Black in the UK) who was stabbed to death in Greenwich, a southeast London, England suburb. It was the **third racist killing** by groups of white youths in the area. The headline said "Police appeal for calm in killing of Black student." Ring a bell? Oh, okay, let's be calm.

Speaking of calm, it's anything but outside **abortion clinics** across the country. Not that it's ever been "easy" to go near a clinic without some anti-choicer getting very uncalm. The Ontario government recently filed for a court injunction to ban anti-choice protests outside abortion clinics, hospitals, doctors' homes and offices...after the news of this hit the streets, three **anti-choicers barred entrance to the Everywoman's Health Clinic in Vancouver for five hours**...legal charges *will* be laid, last time we heard, but we don't know *what* they will be. Feminists are calling for a national injunction (versus individual injunctions for individual clinics) against anti-choice harassment. We'll bring you more on that later.

On a happier note, the **March on Washington** in the US drew huge crowds of lesbians and gay men—the national daily in the US cites 300,000, while everyone else says 1 to 1.4 million. The high points—one intrepid Vancouverite who was there tells us—were the numbers; the tremendous energy of the crowd; the large numbers of lesbians of colour; and that it was a really hot, sunburning day. The low point was the big focus on the military—"groups of gay men from the Marines, Air Force, Navy, etc. coming from all over the country, the crowds cheering them on... Quote: It was scary.

A rumour: the final report by the **Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies** will be out in June. It'll be Fact when it's out in print...in our hands... Another rumour: that the Royal Commission is going to recommend **sex selection for "family completion."** Fact: feminists working on the issue of NRTs have **just formed the National Alliance on NRTs** and are working to address the impact NRTs will have on women/women of colour. Rumour/Fact: feminist activists are going to have a busy summer.

Speaking of which, it's almost June—though sometimes it doesn't feel like it—and we've got a few things for you to do if you're not booked up already [see Bulletin Board]. A last minute addition is the **June 5th fundraising dance by the Committee for Domestic Workers' and Caregivers' Rights** from 8 pm to 1 am at the Mount Pleasant Community Centre, 3161 Ontario Street, $8 per person and for info call Cora at 874-4306.

Just as we thought we were done, we heard NAC launched its national childcare campaign today. And at the same time, in parliament today, the Tories finally introduced their legislation on stalking. Guess you'll be picking us up next month to find out more...?!

In Vancouver spring has sprung, the roads are pink with flower petals, and it's still raining, just like it was last issue. However we're pleased to report that no one is leaving *Kinesis* this month (although who knows how many want to.)

But we're happy to welcome Lizzie, oops, we mean Cynthia Low, a potter who's been in the feminist community for a long time. She's also organized a number of local events and benefits as well as promoted several international and local artists. We're glad that she's agreed to work with the unpredictable schedules and the incredibly bodacious gals at *Kinesis* as our new advertising co-ordinator. She'll be out and about selling ad space, which is so cheap you'll think you're dreaming!

Also new on board is frequent volunteer Yee Jim as the distribution co-ordinator. She'll be bombing around town in a borrowed car (which may be yours) spreading the feminist word! Yee, if you get a parking or speeding ticket the best thing to do is tear it up, but don't tell anyone we told you that. Anyway, we'll deny it. Better tear this paper up too.

We have one new writer this issue. Anne Jew, our production co-ordinator for the past year (She just yelled across the room, "It seems more like ten!"), got tired of waiting around for Movement Matters and decided to write it herself.

Our new production volunteers, those brave souls, were the mother and daughter team of Lea and Asrai Ord. Lea has also offered to sort our disastrous and now legendary photo file. E.g. "I need archival photos of Press Gang." "Try under miscellaneous." "Oh, yeah, here they are."

And thanks to the Press Gang Printers Benefit for the yummy leftover desserts which we consumed like vacuums over sand. We're still riding off the sugar high!

Other *Kinesis* news includes our upcoming benefit in June, guaranteed to dazzle you like no other benefit for a non-profit organization desperately in need of money can. So far our line-up of fabulous feminist acts includes the always witty and stimulating band cub, featuring *Kinesis* volunteer Lisa Marr and raffle prize donator Robin Iwata, fresh (or dead tired) from their cross Canada tour; the bound-to-be-explosive combination of singer/*Kinesis* volunteer Kathy March and guitarist/video game wizard/VSW community programmer Miche Hill; the not as explosive, but equally entertaining pairing of our prod co/beginning guitarist Anne Jew and typesetter/assistant Sur Mehat with an inspiring sing-a-long, although right now their repertoire only includes *Four Strong Winds* and portions of various Beatles' songs so you might want to take a pee break at that time; and arts writer/ ed boarder/ more accomplished guitarist Kathleen Oliver, perhaps playing her oft-requested country rendition of *Stairway to Heaven*.

Our marvellous mistress of ceremonies Cynthia Low, will also delight you with her unpredictable antics. Oh, wait, maybe we should have told her that was part of her job description. We're also planning our version of *Star Trek*, complete with collective committee on the command deck, which will last 3-4 hours and separate into several caucuses by the end. Oops, have we given away too much? Of course, we do need volunteers for this event, for everything from food to (fanfare!) selling raffle tickets! If you'd like to donate a prize, we'd also be happy to talk to you and give you a tax deductible receipt. Call Anne at 255-5499.

Other volunteer activities include the (always fascinating) world of production weekends. Learn how to unjam the waxer! Find out about the fascinating world of exacto blades (especially when you drop them on the floor by your feet and Anne sees you doing it!) Find out what happens when Anne sees you near the final flats with a pen! Find out what all of this means! We also have brand new volunteer feedback forms to get your reactions to the volunteer process at *Kinesis*—what you'd like to see, what you don't want to see—we'd like to hear it all and promise not to cry.

We also *always* need writers, so if you've got a great story idea that you've been wanting to put to paper or want to see something that we're not covering, call Fatima at 255-5499. She would love to hear from you.

Well, until next time, have a good month of May, thanks for reading the paper and for all the support. We really appreciate it.

THANKS

VANCOUVER·STATUS·OF·WOMEN

Our thanks to Vancouver Status of Women members who support us year 'round with memberships and donations. Our appreciation to the following supporters who became members, renewed their memberships or donated to VSW in March:
V. Comensoli • Carolyn Delhey-Joyce • Val Embree • Sima Farhoudi • K. Heinrich • Beverlee Hubler • Catherine Kerr • Dorothy Kidd • W. Krayenhoff • Sheila McFadzean • Daya McIntosh • Anne Miles • Rebecca Raby • Antoinette Warren
We would also like to take a moment to thank our office volunteers who have helped us through the past few months by answering the referral line and dealing with the chaos: Olivia Anderson • Elizabeth Kendall • Karen Mahoney • Shamsah Mohamed

From Rebick to Thobani:

NAC gets new head

by Anjula Gogia

Women across the country celebrated when it was announced that BC-based South Asian activist Sunera Thobani is to be the next president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC). Thobani's two-year term as President of NAC comes into effect on June 7 at NAC's Annual General Meeting, when she will take over the post from Judy Rebick.

The news was announced one day after the deadline for nominations for executive positions. Like most past presidents of NAC, Thobani will be elected president by acclamation. NAC is a feminist organization with a membership of about 550 women's groups—or three million women—across Canada. Rebick, the organization's first full-time, paid president, is stepping down after three years at NAC's helm.

"Her insistence that women of colour voices be heard, that their issues be front and centre, and her persistence, are responsible for the maturity of the abortion rights movement in BC today."
—Joy Thompson

Thobani has been a NAC executive board member for the past two years, where she chaired the reproductive technologies and violence against women committees. She has also been actively involved in the grassroots women's movement in Vancouver, is a founding member of the South Asian Women's Action Network (SAWAN), and sits on the coordinating collective of the Vancouver Status of Women (VSW), which nominated Thobani for the position.

Thobani is the first woman from BC to head the national women's organization. Vancouver-based feminist historian Frances Wasserlein says it's an important recognition for the women's movement in BC. "Over the years, BC feminists and activists have been making strong statements to NAC to take care of women outside Central Canada. Political life in BC is different, and women in BC have a different view of things than in central Canada," says Wasserlein. "Sunera's presidency will bring those concerns to the forefront and get them attended to. It's an exciting time."

Part of Thobani's vision for NAC is to strengthen it at the regional level, and to make NAC more accountable to its membership. "We need to note that Canada is a much bigger country than just Toronto—or Ontario and Ottawa," says Thobani.

She adds that, while there has been a large BC presence on the board of NAC for some time—at least four of an executive of 23 are from BC—it is important that the most powerful position within the organization be held by a woman from BC, and particularly, by a woman of colour from BC.

Joy Thompson of the BC Coalition for Abortion Clinics (BCCAC) agrees. "The abortion rights movement in the past had viewed abortion as a woman's personal control over her body. Sunera's involvement in the BCCAC created a whole new understanding of community and collective reproductive rights for women. Her insistence that women of colour voices be heard, that their issues be front and centre, and her persistence, are responsible for the maturity of the abortion rights movement in BC today," says Thompson.

photo by Faima Jaffer

Sunera Thobani

Cenen Bagen, from the Committee for Domestic Workers and Caregivers (CDWC), says she believes Thobani's appointment will give NAC's regionalization process an added push. "It will make constructive links between the West and the East of Canada."

However, Mutriba Din at the Calgary Status of Women says Thobani's appointment is only one of the things that has to happen to ensure a stronger regional base for NAC. "It's a good direction, because this has been one of NAC's weaknesses," says Din. "But we need a paid position in the regions, because it's difficult for women to be completely active because of limited time and energy."

There had been a resolution at NAC's AGM last year that called for a paid NAC field worker to coordinate regional activities, but the membership opted instead for a full-time Ottawa-based staff person.

Thobani is also the first woman of colour president of NAC. "We think that it is high time that a woman of colour be president of a national organization like this," says Miche Hill of VSW. NAC has been traditionally viewed as white and middle class.

"This is absolutely vital for women's organizations all across Canada," says Hill. After hearing that Thobani was planning to run for the NAC presidency, Hill decided to seek a seat on the NAC executive as member at large.

In Toronto, community activist Punam Khosla says she sees Thobani's presidency as a reflection of "the fact that the key leadership in the women's movement in this country is coming from feminists of colour.

"It's important to realize this is not an individual achievement, but is very much part of a new political thinking in the women's movement," says Khosla.

Many are predicting that, with Thobani as president, groups that have been reluctant to work with NAC will now become members. Raminder Dosanjh of the India Mahila Association (IMA) says the IMA, which works on issues of violence against South Asian women in Vancouver, has not previously joined NAC because, "we've never been approached. There has really been no connection between [NAC's] work and ours."

The IMA will be considering joining NAC because they have been approached by Thobani and other women of colour active in NAC. "Sunera encouraged us to participate in the round-table discussion on violence against women last year, and we felt good about that. If she's able to bring more women of colour into NAC, that's what will make it more accountable."

Dosanjh says she hopes Thobani maintains her commitment to working with grassroots organizations in various communities, like the IMA and SAWAN. "That contact is important," she says.

Meanwhile, the media's response to the announcement of Thobani's acclamation mainly focuses attention on the fact that she is a woman of colour. "It wasn't well presented in the newspapers. Her qualifications should have been up front," says Noga Gayle of the Congress of Black Women.

Bagen of CDWC agrees. She says the media has "down-played" Thobani's contributions, her role in NAC and her qualifications, and "that's being racist. Thobani did earn that position. It wasn't as if white women handed it to her." Bagen is referring to stories in the media that have set Rebick up as being solely responsible for Thobani's presidency.

However, Khosla says that's the media's interpretation and not one that many in the women's movement hold. "There's no question that Judy Rebick's presidency had an enormous positive and progressive impact on bringing labour feminists, feminists of colour and Aboriginal feminists into the central decision-making processes of NAC," says Khosla.

"[Rebick] is a woman who's stuck her neck out for her principles, and she deserves credit for her courage in learning to change not only her own perspective but the perspective of the women's movement."

Dionne Brand, an Ontario-based Black writer and activist, says Thobani's presidency ultimately comes as a result of the work women of colour have done in the women's movement in Canada, in terms of race. "It's a watershed for women of colour...and I am confident she will bring a clear perspective of all the issues to the job."

Thobani's presidency also comes at a time of increased backlash against people of colour in Canada, Brand points out. "She has come at a point where the mood against people of colour is really grim. It's a hard time to be in front out there."

That racist backlash hit the floor of the House of Commons a mere two days after Thobani's presidency was announced when a Tory MP, John McDougall, questioned the Deputy Prime Minister about why the government funds an organization that has just elected an "illegal immigrant" as its president. McDougall claimed he received information about Thobani's immigration status in a brown envelope. Thobani, who is not an illegal immigrant, responded to the attack at a press conference held the same day: "It's a racist, deplorable attack, clearly meant to undermine my incoming presidency...to undermine NAC under my leadership, and...to undermine the women's movement in this country...This is going to have a chilling effect on other immigrant women who choose to seek national office."

"It's a watershed for women of colour...and I am confident she will bring a clear perspective of all the issues to the job."
—Dionne Brand

Thobani is now a landed immigrant, but was in Canada on a student visa for four years.

Since then, racist attacks on Thobani have continued. VSW has received numerous calls complaining about the fact that Thobani is "only an immigrant, and not a Canadian citizen" and shouldn't be head of NAC.

Says Jennifer Johnstone of VSW: "We're asking the callers to call NAC with their opinions if they are members of NAC, and reminding all callers it's against the law in this country to discriminate against immigrants."

Rebick has since been quoted in the mainstream media as saying she was never questioned on whether she was Canadian throughout her presidency. Rebick is American-born, but is now a Canadian citizen.

The attacks are an indication of the uphill battle Thobani will face as the leading figure in the country's largest feminist organization.

Anjula Gogia lives in Vancouver, and, like Sunera Thobani, will miss the mountains and her friends when she moves to Toronto later this year.

Feminist art centre closes:

Vancouver loses Focus

by Larissa Lai

Vancouver's only feminist, community-run art gallery and video/film distribution centre has ceased operation. After nineteen years, Women in Focus (WIF) succumbed to financial pressures and burn-out, and closed down its office and gallery space.

The decision to close was made at a membership meeting on April 26, after the Canada Council did not renew its funding to the WIF's distribution side. The organization was already $30,000 in debt, and sources of operating funds have dried up in recent years. All members of the board resigned to avoid being held personally liable for the organization's debt.

"It's not a forgiving economic climate," former board member Lorna Boschman said. While it may have been technically feasible to drum up funding to continue the organization, morale and community commitment have bottomed out, says Boschman.

Although the Canada Council grant for distribution amounted to only about 20 percent of WIF's budget last year, Boschman says it's a crucial percentage because it enables the organization to earn more money through rentals of films and videos.

Susan Ditta, Head of the Media Arts Department of the Canada Council cited Council's own 10 percent cutback from the federal government and lack of strength in WIF's proposal as reasons for WIF's loss of distribution funding. Decisions over who gets Canada Council funding are made by juries, made up of individuals with expertise in the competition field, and selected to ensure representation on the basis of gender, race and media.

"WIF's application was looked at seriously in a national context," says Susan Ditta of the Media Arts branch of the Canada Council. "You have to remember that it's the Canada Council *for the Arts*. [WIF was] looked at as a distribution house first."

She adds that WIF's mandate as a women's organization was taken into account, but it was not the primary focus of the competition.

After the Board resigned, WIF was told by the Visual Arts branch of the Canada Council that its application for gallery funding had been approved. However, the funding was granted in confidence to the board which had applied for it. Because the board has disbanded, that grant is lost.

Boschman points out that, even had they known they would get the funding, the outcome would have been no different. "$20,000 will not even cover the rent and basic needs like photocopying for a year," she says. Rent of their Beatty Street gallery alone costs them $2000 per month.

Ex-board member Kim Blain says that one of the most unfortunate things about the closure of WIF is having to lay off a new distribution coordinator, Margaret Gallagher, whom they had just hired.

Before resigning, however, board members made sure that no member will be held financially liable for the organization's debts. They moved the assets of the organization out of the Beatty Street location to avoid more debts in the form of rent owing. These assets have been inventoried and stored to avoid misplacement, which has been a problem in the past.

As stated in the contracts between WIF and individual producers, the film and video collection does not technically belong to WIF. They are on loan from the producers. Thus, creditors cannot consider them assets of WIF and repossess them.

The distribution centre at WIF is gone for good. However, the videotapes will be available at Video Out, and the films either at Video Out or Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West. Both are Vancouver-based distribution houses.

"It's not over until it's really over," says Ditta. "There is nothing to stop them from applying for funding next year. Council is responsive to the needs of artists. It's a question of whether they want to wear their [funding] history as a burden or as a badge." If, however, WIF members decide at some future date to set up a new organization, they will have to go through the Explorations program in the first year, before they can be eligible to apply for operations funding for distribution.

If WIF goes down the tubes, Blain says it will be difficult to start an entirely new organization.

She remarks that it is difficult for marginalized groups, who are just starting up, to compete with well-established organizations that have been in existence for 10 or 20 years. Recent cuts to Council and the threat of merging it with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, make competition stiffer than ever.

"That," says Blain, "is racism and sexism that's really well built into the system. That is what we need to challenge."

"We were thinking at one point," Blain continues, "of changing the name as a way of starting with a clean slate. It seems silly in a way but I think it's important to remember that it was two completely different groups of women who were caught up in the trouble with Sue Jenkins and those with Diana Kemble. The problems are with the system in which we live. Getting rid of WIF is not going to make them go away."

Blain is referring to WIF racism-related troubles since 1991, when its then Board expropriated funds from the women of colour film and video society, InVisible Colours (IVC). After a legal battle that cost IVC almost $20,000 *[see* Kinesis, *Feb. 1992.]* the members of WIF finally managed to wrest power from the hands of then director Sue Jenkins and her appointees: Dorothy Tinkley and Pat Martin. It was then that WIF issued a public apology to IVC.

These events had barely a chance to fall into the past, however, when WIF reopened its gallery a year later with white artist Diana Kemble's show, *Memory's Body*. Kemble's depiction of brown-skinned women offended many members of the board and gallery committee, particularly women of colour. Many resigned *[see* Kinesis, *Nov. 1992.]*

"There is no question," says Blain, "that the whole thing was poorly handled. There should have been a panel to discuss the problems, but it never happened." Many white women also resigned. In support or in fear? "People are afraid of the 'R' word. They learn to say nothing, do nothing," says Blain.

Her comments echo local artist Persimmon Blackbridge's remarks in a letter to *Kinesis* following the IVC incident. Blackbridge refers to "white flight...That's when liberal white people try to disassociate themselves from a white person who's been criticized for racism, in order to 'prove' that they themselves are not racists. This doesn't fight racism. It usually ends up leaving people of colour to deal with stopping the racist behaviour."

"The cuts from Council are extremely unfortunate," says Blain, "because WIF is the only women's distribution centre west of the Rockies. When it's gone, we all lose." She explains that in the past, WIF had a strong position within the women's community, in terms of distributing women's films and videos, offering screenings, showcases, panels, workshops and educational materials.

"It's really important for us to look at the bigger picture," says Blain, "and to remember who the enemy really is. Women's organizations such as WIF become a flashpoint for society's ills to manifest themselves in a big way, because we're so strapped for money. The way the system is set up, we all have to compete with each other. There's too much work, and not enough people to do it. Those that do the work are always either un- or under-paid. When we're under that kind of pressure, it's all too easy for the racism that is present in Canadian society as a whole to make itself apparent in a really big way. This feeds right into the hands of the tokenistic system. All they need to do is wait."

Ex-board member Andrea Fatona says, "Because we are political, when we see problems, we try to act on them. Unfortunately, at WIF, people jumped too quickly, without doing their homework, and the damage was tremendous." She cautions against using the same strategies that we use against the white patriarchy against other women. "We have to make more room."

Sur Mehat, one of the Gallery committee members who resigned over the Diana Kemble show, is not unhappy to see WIF go. "It's important to have organizations that work," she says. "WIF never resolved their internal problems. How could they be of use to the community? It was a white girls' organization. They didn't provide anything positive for women of colour.

"When [women of colour] joined WIF, the white women passed the responsibility for doing their homework onto us. There was something intrinsically wrong with the structure. I was ashamed to be part of it."

Lorraine Chan, one of the co-founders of In Visible Colours, says she feels sad that it has come to this. "Even with all the stuff that's happened, I still think it's really unfortunate."

Says Chan, "I have the greatest respect for [ex-board member] Kim [Blain] and Lorna [Boschman]. They are really committed. It's too bad they couldn't make a go of it. It's a grim situation for women film and video makers."

Larissa Lai also writes to her mother.

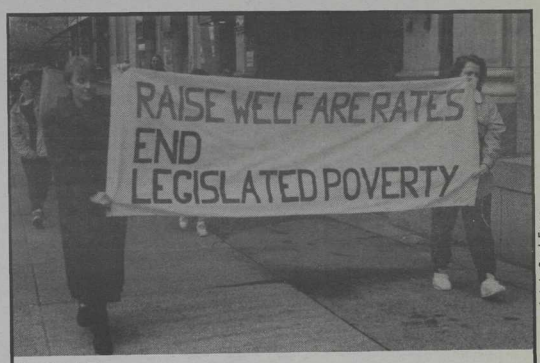

photo by Sarah Evans

by Sarah Evans

No Taste For Charity

About 120 people braved chill winds to participate in a rally against legislated poverty in front of the VAG on April 15th. Demonstrators cheered as speakers denounced the government for relying on band-aid solutions to poverty. The rally, held as part of Hunger Awareness Week, featured Sandy Cameron from End Legislative Poverty, Jennifer Fagan, a single mom who uses food banks, Gael Marriotte, a handicapped low income advocate from Maple Ridge, Cecilia Diocsin of the Philippine Women's Centre, and Jim Sinclair of the BC Fisheries Union. After the speeches, protesters marched around the Hotel Vancouver where a group called The Taste of Nations was holding a charity dinner for $85 a plate. The demonstration, organized by End Legislative Poverty, centred around the motto, "Put justice into hunger awareness."

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The NDP in BC:

A play-it-safe budget

by Faith Jones

While the mainstream media barks frantically around the west-side-of-Vancouver's "tax revolt," progressives are quietly organizing their responses to the 1993 provincial budget.

"We'd like to see that kind of fast action when *we* say the government has done something wrong," Pam Fleming of End Legislated Poverty (ELP) says of BC finance minister Glen Clark's abrupt change of heart over his controversial new property tax. The new property tax would have applied to houses valued at $550,000 or more. The majority of such properties in BC are located in Vancouver's west side. After two weeks of intense media pressure, Clark removed the tax from the budget.

While ELP did not advocate more property tax, Fleming does feel there's something wrong with a government that responds so promptly to the concerns of home owners who would have been affected—five percent of the population—but not to the concerns her group has put forward on behalf of thousands of poor people in British Columbia.

The media hype surrounding the property tax has effectively eliminated all other budget news.

"I really feel the public didn't get an analysis of what happened," says Christine Micklewright of the BC Federation of Labour (BCFed).

What we'll pay

The most regressive item in the budget is the increase in the sales tax. Sales tax increased from six to seven percent, and is now applied to formerly exempt items, such as car and appliance repairs.

"Sales tax is a punitive tax on the poor. Like the GST, it's not the way to raise money to cover the alleged deficit," Micklewright says.

Sales tax always hits the poor—most of whom are women—the hardest, because they have to spend their entire income on survival. The middle-class and the wealthy, who spend only a portion of their income on necessities, pay a smaller percentage of their income on sales tax on those items. To offset this, the provincial government is introducing a tax rebate for low-income people. This will be a maximum of $50 per person which, Fleming points out, is not a realistic estimate of the additional amount of sales tax people will pay. Fleming likens the new sales tax and rebate program to the GST.

There was also an increase in the corporate income tax, from 16 to 16.5 percent. Fleming says this increase should have been larger. The 0.5 percent increase will only generate $17 million in new revenue (the sales tax increase will generate $385 million). Even if a larger increase had made BC's corporate sales tax the highest in Canada, Fleming thinks the NDP should have done it because "we expect them to show some leadership."

Because of increases to personal taxes such as the sales tax, the higher corporate tax does not shift the tax burden away from the individual. Corporate income tax accounts for only 3.5 percent of provincial general revenues—as opposed to 58.7 percent from personal income tax, sales tax and other taxes on the individual. Clark's rationale for not increasing taxes for corporations—it would lead to the flight of capital out of the province—sounds suspiciously close to traditional right-wing excuses for not taxing corporations.

Fleming says ELP has suggested to Clark's Ministry that they initiate tax measures to shift the tax burden among individuals from middle and lower-income, to higher-income people. Fleming acknowledges that the province would have to lobby the federal government for permission to establish an inheritance tax, because of the tax agreement between the different levels of government. However, she says, "They could easily put in place a speculation tax," which would apply to real estate transactions in which people buy and immediately sell property in areas which are increasing rapidly in value.

There is one new taxation measure Fleming is completely in favour of: "We applaud them for the high-income surtax." The existing high income tax will be increased to 30 per cent for those earning over $60,000 and 50 per cent for those above $86,500. (The provincial surtax is calculated as a percentage of the federal income tax an individual pays.)

What we'll get

There are a few changes to the health care budget, but there is already confusion over how these changes relate to the large-scale restructuring of health care currently taking place in BC. Several of the budgetary items are self-contradicting. For example, health care premiums will be lowered or eliminated for over half a million "low-income" people. However, everybody else will actually see an increase—even single people earning only $19,000. Fleming points out that this will divide the poor from the lower-middle-class and reinforce the scapegoating of people on welfare and the working poor.

"If the government doesn't want to take responsibility for full employment, it's to their advantage to have a scapegoat," says Fleming.

There have also been fee increases to seniors living in care homes. Seniors with incomes of $17,000 or more will see their housing fees raised by 48 percent. Health minister Elizabeth Cull has said she approved the increase because those who can afford to pay should do so. A senior with an income of $17,000 will now spend $12,410 of it to live in a care home—the full cost of their care. Subsidies will still be available to those with incomes under $17,000.

"Sales tax is a punitive tax on the poor."
—Christine Micklewright

The government plans to spend less money on prescription drugs this year. The deductible for Pharmacare is increased in the budget from $400 to $500 per person, except for seniors. This means the provincial government will reimburse only the amount over $500 a person spends on prescription drugs in a year. (The high deductible on this program makes it so inaccessible that most people don't know it exists.)

At the same time, the NDP's "New Directions in Health Care" program is changing many forms of treatment, so they can be done on an out-patient basis, as opposed to requiring hospital care. Out-patients pay for prescription drugs which would have previously been covered as part of a hospital stay.

The Ministry of Women's Equality has received money to improve the wages of childcare, transition house, women's centre .and sexual assault workers, all of whom have their wages set essentially by the provincial funding available in those areas. So far, the Ministry has not announced how this money will be allocated, or when the workers affected can expect to see an increase.

The budget does not address the availability of childcare or its cost to parents. "I would love to see women have gotten a break on childcare costs," Micklewright says.

Fleming says she's disappointed that the budget does not reflect the NDP's own stated goal of increasing welfare rates to 1982 levels in today's dollars. While that would still not meet the poverty line, it would be significantly higher than the welfare rates are now. There was no increase to welfare rates in the new budget.

The budgets for health, education and social services have been increased by almost exactly the rate of inflation. The BCFed, in its budget summary, points out that this may actually result in a decrease in spending per person because of BC's population growth.

The overall plan

The government refers to this budget as a "balanced approach," in which social service needs are balanced against the need to reduce the deficit. However, people on the left are somewhat skeptical of the seriousness of the deficit.

Mickelwright says she doesn't think the NDP's decision not to expand the budget is a great achievement. "I don't have a problem with the deficit growing a bit more if it stimulates the economy." Fleming agrees. "We expect the government to operate at a deficit. They're just buying into the right-wing excuse (for cutting social spending)."

And reducing the deficit may end up hitting those with less already. "There are always trade-offs and women don't get their fair share," says Micklewright.

Where progressive groups agree with the NDP is that the reduced federal contributions to social services (through cuts to transfer payments) are playing a major role in how the province can fund and structure services.

"The Tories have escalated the debt and then stopped transfer payments," Micklewright says. "If I were in government, I don't know how I'd deal with that."

Fleming feels the NDP needs to develop a plan to deal with the cuts—which will only get worse every year.

"There's nothing in the budget that says sustainability," she says. "What's missing is a strong, effective plan."

Another problem is the legacy of many years of Social Credit administration. "What we have to remember is that they're inheriting the massive gutting from when the right was in power," Fleming says.

She says the government should deal with this by rebuilding the areas left devastated by the Socreds. "To make an economy work, you invest in your public service."

The theme of this year's budget is "Choices and Challenges." Fleming says: "They are making choices and the choice is to stay in the centre and get back in power next time."

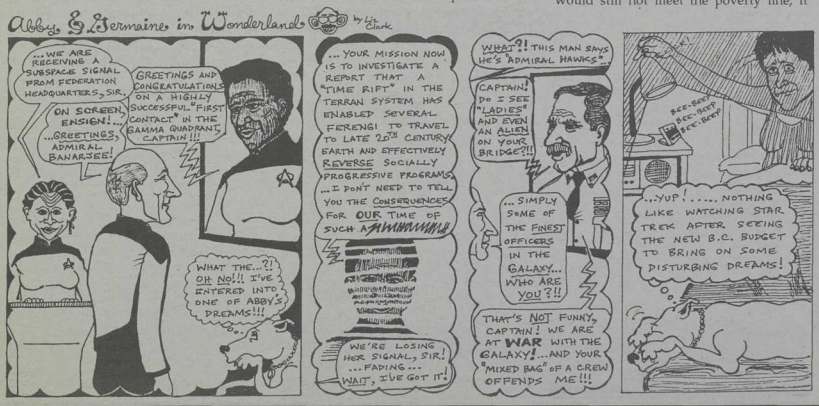
"They're trying to give the impression that they're balancing the budget and being responsible, fiscal-conservative politicians," Micklewright says. "They fear a backlash from the right wing and business—who they spend too much time kowtowing to... I think they've lost sight of the policies of the party and who they were put in power to represent."

To deal with this, Fleming says, the left needs to build a stronger lobby and new coalitions.

"A lot of people organized to get the NDP elected and are asking now 'What's next?' I think what's next is making the government do its job."

And while Micklewright acknowledges the BC budget is nowhere near as bad as the conservative-style restraint budget just brought down by Ontario's NDP government, "that doesn't mean I should be grateful."

Faith Jones is a Vancouver childcare worker who is waiting for her pay raise from the province.



MOVEMENT MATTERS

listings information

Movement Matters is designed to be a network of news, updates and information of special interest to the women's movement.
Submissions to Movement Matters should be no more than 500 words, typed, double spaced and may be edited for length. Deadline is the 18th of the month preceding publication.

by Anne Jew

Indian lesbians come out

Sakhi is a new support network for lesbians in India. Based in New Delhi, they have, to date, set up letter writing networks, a resource centre and a guest room for travelling lesbians.

Although being gay or lesbian is still a crime in India, it is not known how rigorously the law is enforced or how this might affect the group's status. Last year, *Sakhi* protested homophobia at an "official" AIDS congress, along with other Asian lesbians and gay men. Their handout was widely published in the press and they also had an interview on television.

Sakhi operates with limited funds, so any help would be appreciated. For more information or to send donations, write: Sakhi, PO Box 7032, Srinivaspuri, New Delhi 110065, India.

Saving Clayoquot Sound

The Friends of Tofino, a new environmental group, has formed in an effort to save Clayoquot Sound from logging. Clayoquot Sound is an area about 220 kilometres northwest of Victoria on the west coast of Vancouver Island, containing the second largest portion of old growth temperate rainforest in the world.

The group is fighting the BC government's decision to log 85 percent of its productive forest, with restrictions banning clearcuts and limiting road construction.

Julie Draper, a Friends director, explains that environmentalists will be non-violent and non-destructive at any blockades, and will not use tree-spiking, which can injure workers when spiked trees are hit by saws.

A broader campaign will be aimed at Canada's international markets, where they believe the impact will the greatest. A slideshow has just toured Europe and will be shown at an event entitled *Visions of Clayoquot*, also featuring speakers Valerie Langer and Garth Lenz of Friends. This event takes place on May 3, 7:30 pm, at the IWA Hall, 2859 Commercial Drive, Vancouver. Admission is $5.

Another fund-raiser for the group, *Clayoquot's Last Stand*, will be hosted by Vicky Husband of the Sierra Club, and features David Suzuki, at the Vogue Theatre, 918 Granville Street, June 24 at 8 pm, in Vancouver. Admission is on a sliding scale of $10-$25.

HIV positive women's group

A support group run by HIV-positive women for HIV-positive women has been formed in Vancouver by the Positive Women's Network.

Meetings are held on alternate Wednesdays, from 6:30-8:30 pm, in the downtown Vancouver area. Food, beverages, funds for transportation and childcare, and wheelchair access are provided.

For women new to the group, an initial interview will be arranged to talk about what the group offers and what your needs are. The intent of this process is to preserve the sense of safety for women already in the group, and to ensure women are being referred to services that are appropriate for them.

Contact Evelyn Hildebrandt at the Positive Women's Network, 1107 Seymour Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 5S8, or call (604)893-2200 for more details.

Conference of the poor postponed

The Canadian Conference of the Poor has been postponed to October 15-17 because of financial restrictions imposed by the Minister of Finance's mini-budget last December and other factors, according to the Conference Planning Committee and the National Anti Poverty Organisation's Executive Committee.

October 17, 1993 has also been declared by the United Nations as the international day for the elimination of poverty.

The conference will review Canada's public assistance programs and the need to build stronger links between anti-poverty groups.

For more information, contact National Anti Poverty Organisation, 316-256 King Edward, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7M1.

Northampton lesbian festival

The 4th Annual Northampton Lesbian Festival will take place July 23-25 in Cummington, Massachusetts. Performers include Mrs. Fun, Lesbian Lounge Lizards and Girls in the Nose, while activities range from hiking and fly-fishing to an after hours cafe.

The Festival offers scholarships, work exchanges, childcare, American Sign Language interpretation, and is wheelchair accessible.

Passes rates are as follows: one day/ $30, two days/ $55, three days/ $75 (postmarked by June 25); one day/$35, two days/$62, three days/$85 (postmarked by July 18); one day/$38, two days/$68, three days/$90 (at the gate). All prices are in US funds.

For more information, write: WOW Productions, 160 Main Street, Northampton, MA, 01060 or call (413)586-8251.

Spare Rib closes

Although no official notice was released, Britain's pioneering feminist magazine *Spare Rib* has closed down after 22 years of publishing.

The political and cultural magazine campaigned for and highlighted women's issues on a national and international basis, its readership spanning Britain, Europe and North America.

In 1981, members of its collective formed the Older Feminists Network (OFN), which will continue to publish its bi-monthly newsletter combating ageism and sexism. The newsletter welcomes contributions from all women and is volunteer assembled.

Canadian subscription rates are not available, but the UK rate for six issues is £3-£5.

For further information, include a SAE, and write to Older Feminists Network, c/o 54 Gordon Road, London N3 1EP, or call 081-346-1900.

Atlantic film and video festival

The St. John's Women's Film & Video Festival is celebrating its 4th year in St. John's, Newfoundland, October 14-17.

The festival is searching out works which present a wide range of women's experience, and is a forum for emerging and established artists.

To be considered, all film and videos must be directed, written, or produced by a woman, and original soundtrack or subtitles must be in English. There is no entry fee and a nominal artist fee may be offered.

Entries must be accompanied by biographies and publicity photos, and be shipped pre-paid by June 30 to: St. John's Women's Film & Video Festival, c/o National Film Board of Canada, 80 Water Street, St. John's Nfld., A1C 1G4. For all other inquiries, write: St. John's Women's Film & Video Festival, PO Box 984, A1C 6C2, or call (709)772-0358 or fax (709)772-4808.

Women and taxes

Tax Facts: What Every Woman Should Know is a new booklet published by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

The booklet attempts to deliver several messages concerning systemic discrimination against women. Included are: that the federal tax system fails to acknowledge women earn less and therefore are able to save less than men; and, on average, women earn 30 percent less than men as a result of job ghettoization and disproportionate family responsibilities. A review of the tax structure and the introduction of features, such as full indexation of income tax benefits and credits, are suggested changes to the current tax system.

Written by economist Monica Townson, the booklet can be obtained by calling Ellen Adelberg at (613)995-2781.

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WHAT'S NEWS

by Lissa Geller

Common law spouse ruling

A recent court ruling marks a shift in traditional thinking on housework, feminists are saying. The decision by the Supreme Court of Canada in March is the first to recognise that work traditionally done by women at home has value regardless of whether her relationship is marital or common-law.

The ruling dismisses traditional attitudes in courts towards women's labour as those that "...systematically devalue the contributions that women tend to make to the family economy...[that] has contributed to the phenomenon of the feminization of poverty."

The ruling says that a British Columbia woman, Catherine Peter, is entitled to half her common-law partner's assets after she left their twelve-year relationship. During the relationship, Peter and her four children lived with William Beblow and his two children. She took care of the six children, built a pigpen, kept and slaughtered chickens and worked part-time as a cook. Beblow's lawyers argued that Peter performed these duties only out of a sense of "natural love and affection." But the Court disagreed.

Courts have only recently begun to assign value to unpaid domestic work, and only a handful of cases exist where judges have ruled that families are entitled to compensation for the death or injury of unpaid housekeepers.

Tanis Day, an economics professor at Queen's University, says this latest ruling amounts to "saying that 'motherly duties' are worth half of [Beblow's] savings...that's a real affirmation of the value of household work."

This ruling could serve to protect the rights of about 750,000 women in heterosexual common-law relationships in Canada. But the ruling will also likely result in a move towards more "cohabitation agreements," where men will try to protect "their" assets from the women they live with.

Welfare decision ignores needs

Anti-poverty groups across Canada say welfare recipients, many of whom are single moms, have been struck yet another blow, this time by the courts. They refer to a Supreme Court ruling in March that allows provinces to deduct overpayments from welfare cheques, even when the errors are the fault of the social security administrators.

The case involves a Winnipeg man who had received about $1,000 in overpayments before the Manitoba government realized its mistake and began deducting the overpayment from his regular cheque.

Robert Findlay took the province to court, arguing that the province's administrative error and subsequent rollback were slowly starving him to death, and that the province was failing to meet his basic needs as defined by the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP). He won his case in a federal court of appeal, but the Manitoba government appealed the case to the Supreme Court.

The Court disagreed by a slim five-to-four majority. The justice writing the majority decision, said "basic needs" do not have to meet with an 'exact fit' and that, once overpayments were deducted, Findlay will have received exactly what he was entitled to. Thus he will have received an amount consistent with basic requirements."

Findlay's lawyer pointed out that welfare recipients "...are not camels—they can't store it up in their hump". An overpayment at one time does not mean that a recipient will be able to keep the money for later use, especially if they don't realize it's an overpayment.

At the heart of this debate lies the fundamental question of whether what lawmakers intend to do when making a law is relevant to the current status of the law, and the current court hearing a case.

Anti-poverty groups point out the Court chose to go with conservative views of the 1990s rather than the more liberal views of the 1960s. Under the CAP, passed by the Liberal government in 1966, provinces must take into account basic needs of welfare recipients, such as food and shelter, when developing welfare programs.

Anti-poverty activists point out that current moves by the Tory government to "reform" welfare and UI have contributed to a hostile climate for welfare recipients and made it easier for courts to attack people on welfare.

Justice Beverley McLachlin, in writing the minority dissenting decision, drew heavily from parliamentary transcripts of debates at the time CAP was passed. She cites the 'adequacy principle,' saying that "where social-welfare laws are unclear, courts should interpret them in a way that best assures adequacy of assistance."

But the five majority judges refused to examine the parliamentary transcripts, calling them "less reliable guides" of basic standards than the actual wording of the legislation. This refusal by the court to examine the intent of the original lawmakers in 1966 enabled the justices to dismiss Findlay's claim.

The debate over whether to use parliamentary transcripts when determining cases may continue for some time, especially since judges can use or not use them at their discretion. In another recent Supreme Court ruling, justices ruled against a gay man, Brian Mossop, because the intent of parliamentary lawmakers when including family status as prohibited grounds for discrimination in the Canadian Human Rights Act was not to offer protection to lesbians and gay men *[see* Kinesis, *Mar. 93]*. One of the justices who insisted on looking at parliamentary intent in the Mossop case, insisted on the irrelevance of such intent in the welfare ruling.

photo by Louise Leclair

by Faith Jones

Stopping Free Trade

Women from the BC chapter of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women joined the "On to Ottawa: Stop Free Trade" Caravan as it travelled from Vancouver to Hope on April 18. The caravan will stop in 50 towns and cities across the country to give out information and collect messages to take to the politicians in Ottawa. It arrives in Ottawa on May 15 where a huge rally is planned on Parliament Hill to let the government know people oppose the North American Free Trade Agreement. Pictured above from left to right are Cenen Bagen, Sunera Thobani, Jennifer Whiteside, Jackie Larkin, Joy Thompson and Kim Zander.

DDT and breast cancer

A scientific study has found that women with the highest exposure to the pesticide DDT have four times the likelihood of developing breast cancer as women with the lowest exposure levels.

The study, released April 21, measured levels of DDT in the blood of 58 women with breast cancer and 171 women without. They found that women with levels of DDT in the top 10 percent had four times the risk of developing breast cancer as those in the bottom 10 percent.

Mary Wolff, of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York where the study was conducted, points out this may explain why breast cancer has been on the rise in recent decades and is the most common cancer among all women. The rise in breast cancer following the increase in use of DDT in North America suggests there may be a link.

DDT and its derivatives were banned in North America in 1972 because of the presence of cancer in animals exposed to DDT and its tendency to concentrate as it moved up the food chain, ending in toxic concentrations in meat and dairy products. Nonetheless, DDT can be stored in the body for decades and most North Americans still have DDT residues. As well, after it was banned here, pesticide companies sold their stocks outside the Western world and DDT is still commonly used in Latin America, Asia and Africa.

The US National Cancer Institute, which funded the Mount Sinai study, has recently proposed a series of studies that would examine the potential relationship between breast cancer and the environment, instead of only looking at hormonal causes.

Another recent study also links the chemical atrazine, currently the most widely used pesticide in the US, with an increased risk of ovarian cancer. It notes "...growing concern that chemicals are causing cancer in adults and adverse health and reproductive effects in the offspring of both humans and wildlife."

The Tribune

The Tribune, Canada's left news weekly, has two full-time openings in Toronto.

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WHAT'S NEWS

Taxing child support payments

North Vancouver single mom Brenda Schaff appeared in court last month to appeal a ruling to the federal Tax Court of Revenue Canada which makes child support payments taxable for those who receive them (mostly women) and gives a deduction to those who pay them (mostly men).

"I have all the responsibility for the children and it's like I'm getting penalized for it," says Schaff.

Schaff received a tax assessment in 1989 that indicated she owed $1,100 of the $3,600 she had received from her ex-husband for the support of their two children. She appealed the assessment and lost. The Tax Court is the next step in the appeal process. A decision is expected by June 23.

Jeanne Watchuk, Schaff's lawyer, argues that the current Income Tax Act is unconstitutional since it discriminates against single parents, a group that by definition is poor. Watchuk says the law violates Schaff's children's guarantee to life, liberty and the security of person.

"The Schaff decision could have far-reaching implications for providing adequate support for children in single parent families," Susan Milliken, director of SCRAPS (the Society for Children's Rights to Adequate Parental Support).

A similar case is being heard in Quebec where single parent Suzanne Thibaudeau has appealed her assessment forcing her to pay taxes on child support payments. All other such appeals are on hold pending the outcome of these two cases.

Poverty committee boycotted

Almost every anti-poverty and social group in Canada is boycotting a Tory government's parliamentary sub-committee on poverty, which is trying to redraw the poverty line in Canada. The boycott is one of the largest to hit a parliamentary sub-committee in recent years.

Lynne Toupin of the National Anti-Poverty Organisation (NAPO), says NAPO joined the boycott because it didn't want to give credibility to the Tory poverty research. "They're trying to move the poverty line so they can say they've done something about poverty."

Other groups refusing to appear before the sub-committee include the Canadian Council on Social Development, the Social Planning Council of Metro Toronto, the YWCA, and the Child Poverty Action Group. As well, Liberal and New Democratic party representatives, who normally sit on the sub-committee, are refusing to attend meetings or public hearings.

A spokesperson for the Toronto Daily Bread Food Bank says the sub-committee is a waste of time. "I have 40 percent less food to give out, per person, than I had two years ago. If there's anything that isn't needed at this time, it's another study and another useless debate."

The sub-committee was struck to partially fulfil the Conservative government's promise to end child poverty by the year 2000. What became clear to those participating is that the Tories intended to "eliminate" poverty by redefining the problem out of existence. In 1991, the sub-committee produced a report, then began to split when the Tories focused on a study that said poverty has been over-exaggerated in Canada. Since that time, Liberal and NDP members have refused to attend meetings or public hearings.

As a result of the boycott, the committee hearing rooms are virtually empty, with only Tory MPs and government officials in attendance. The sub-committee chair, Conservative MP Barbara Greene, says she considers herself a champion of poverty rights and that the boycott "is not in the interests of poor people."

The Tories are continuing its work and have voted to pay Revenue Canada for special taxation data to help establish a new definition of poverty.

Looking at the cops

Women's groups from across British Columbia have formed an ad hoc coalition that will present proposals to a BC commission looking into the role of the police. Statements will be delivered to the Oppal Commission on Policing in British Columbia on May 4.

The Commission was set up in June, 1992 by the provincial government and was given the mandate of developing a blueprint for policing in BC through public consultations and research. It began hearings in December last year and is holding 16 days of public hearings in 12 communities throughout the province.

In addition to examining municipal police forces, the Commission will examine the role of the RCMP in smaller communities and in rural areas. The Commission is headed by Justice Wallace Oppal, a judge on the Supreme Court of BC since 1985.

Groups in the women's coalition include the Vancouver Status of Women, Women Against Violence Against Women, Vancouver Rape Relief/Women's Shelter, Vancouver Lesbian Centre, the DisAbled Women's Network (of Canada and of BC), the Native Women's Council of BC, and POWER (Prostitutes and Other Women for Equal Rights).

The women's groups decided to present their briefs together in an effort to share knowledge and increase their impact on the Commission.

The coalition has decided on a broad four-point plan that will frame their discussions with the Commission. These include:

- not calling for more police or more policing, but rather demanding that funds and resources be redistributed to better serve the needs of women;
- stating their solidarity to women who are traditionally criminalized by the justice system, including prostitutes, women convicted of welfare fraud, and women who defend themselves against male violence;
- focusing on how women's groups, feminists, Native groups, and women in the community are treated by the police, especially when making or supporting complaints;
- focusing on the policing system in BC and its racist, sexist and classist impacts on the community, and in particular, lesbians, First Nations women and women with disabilities.

The women's groups have also asked Gwen Brodsky of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre to investigate mechanisms for independent community reviews of police and police activities.

Lee Lakeman of Rape Relief, who will be collating the coalition's brief, says it is an opportunity for groups across BC to share information, tactics and analysis. "We expect a full hall of 150 or more women who will come together to hear one another and learn from the experiences of other women," she says.

The Commission will be hearing from women's groups on May 4 for the full day. Only the morning session will be open to the press. In the afternoon, women will make statements and presentations that they may not think appropriate to make in front of the media.

In addition to the coalition's brief, women's groups are encouraging individual women to participate in the hearing.

The Oppal Commission hearing will take place at the Native Friendship Centre on E. Hastings (at Commercial) and lunch will be provided.

Lakeman is cautiously optimistic about the outcome of the Commission. "Change won't happen in one fell swoop, there's work to be done on the complaints process as well as reversing the trend of the Socred government which Americanized and militarized the policing in BC." Nonetheless, she sees this as a great opportunity for women's groups to come together and share their concerns, strategies and stories.

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Sunera Thobani and NAC:

As told to *Kinesis*

as told to Fatima Jaffer and Anjula Gogia

Sunera Thobani will become president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) at NAC's Annual General Meeting in Saskatoon in June. Kinesis spoke with Thobani in Vancouver last month.

Fatima Jaffer: How does it feel to be the next president of the largest feminist organization in Canada?

Sunera Thobani: I'm very excited, and I'm looking forward to getting started. But it's going to be difficult for my daughter, because she resents me putting all of this time into my work. We live in a society where there aren't many resources available for single women so the burden falls on a woman alone to bring her child up. I'm lucky I have my mother. She's been a tremendous support.

Anjula Gogia: The focus of the media seems to be on Sunera Thobani, the "visible minority woman" rather than on Sunera Thobani, the political activist.

Thobani: That's a problem, because I want to put the focus on the issues that I've been working on and what I can bring, both personally and politically. Some of the media, on the other hand, has wanted to come into my home and find out how I eat breakfast!

The fact that a woman of colour will be president of NAC is not something I have achieved alone. There have been women of colour in the organization for decades, women fighting to have their voices heard, working in isolation, marginalized and without access to the positions of power.

It is important that I am the first woman of colour at the head of NAC—this should have happened decades ago. My political positions are inseparable from the fact that I am a woman of colour and come from a working-class background. I don't want the media to focus on my "otherness," and not look at the work I've done.

Jaffer: So will the real Sunera Thobani please stand up? How have you worked politically?

Thobani: I was born in Tanzania. I lived in Britain, in the United States and now Canada. When I was in England, I worked in student organizations on women's issues and also did anti-racist work. I worked with organizations, like Third-World First and groups like that were looking at communities of people of colour, on how to build international solidarity on anti-racism struggles and women's issues.

When I started becoming active, my involvement was kind of low key and on-the-ground.

Since I've been in Vancouver, I've been involved in a number of women's groups, such as the Vancouver Status of Women (VSW), and SAWAN (the South Asian Women's Action Network). I was also a member of the India Mahila Association.

Gogia: I've also seen your name around issues of reproductive technology.

Thobani: I've always been an advocate for abortion rights. When I came to Vancouver, I joined the steering committee for the BC Coalition of Abortion Clinics. When a US doctor [John Stephens] came to Vancouver and targeted the South Asian community for sex selection tests, I had my first encounter with new reproductive technologies *[see,* Kinesis, *Oct./92.]* I thought it was a really serious issue that no one in the community seemed to be addressing at the time.

Once I started learning more about the technologies, I was horrified at what was happening. I still feel it's an area we haven't really paid much attention to, and not only as women of colour. The white women's movement has still not taken this issue up as a serious part of their work. I believe we have to—it's alarming to see the growth and kinds of technologies that are being developed, especially the eugenic aspect.

Jaffer: What made you decide to put your energy into NAC?

Thobani: I was working with VSW, a member organization. I realized when I was working on the sex selection issue, and when we were demonstrating against the doctors' presentations to the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies *[see* Kinesis, *Oct. 92]* that NAC was an organization with a strong national voice and presence and that, as women of colour, we need a stronger national voice.

It's really important for us to have a national voice to put our concerns on the national agenda. The other thing was that, with Judy Rebick at its head, NAC has made a commitment to anti-racist politics. And there were women of colour who were very active in NAC and who were on the NAC executive. I respected them and wanted to work with them on a national level.

Jaffer: How do you propose to live down the white middle-class legacy of NAC, open up the organization and welcome women of colour into the organization?

Thobani: The fact that a woman of colour will be president of NAC is not something I have achieved alone. There have been women of colour in the organization for decades, women fighting to have their voices heard, working in isolation, marginalized and without access to the positions of power. This leadership is something women of colour have worked collectively for. Therefore, my position has to collectively benefit all of us.

The dilemma I face right now is that white women have claimed to represent all of us and we know that, to a great extent, these have been bogus claims. Now, I find myself in the interesting position of being a woman of colour who has to represent an organization which is still largely made up of white women.

We have to make the connections between the issues on which we can really unite and move away from this one-group-benefitting-at-the-expense-of-another-group mentality. For example, NAC has already played a strong role working with Aboriginal women's groups and with groups from Quebec and the rest of the country, creating a sense of unity between women, and I am committed to continuing that work.

We can build alliances and come together on certain kinds of issues—and new reproductive technologies is one of those areas. It targets every woman's body and her sexuality and her control of it, yet the impact and consequences are different for different women, according to race and class. It is important to have a united opposition to what those technologies are doing.

photo nby Fatima Jaffer

Sunera Thobani

We also know NAC has a commitment to anti-racism. If we look at the position NAC took during the referendum—we came out strongly in support of the Aboriginal women who were fighting for representation *[see* Kinesis, *May, Jun., Sep., Nov./92].* If we look at the government's panel on violence that was appointed—NAC said that if women of colour were not going to be represented, then NAC would not participate in the process. Those stands were taken by NAC because of the women of colour within the organization. This commitment by NAC has been more than mere tokenism, and we want to make sure that this commitment to inclusion gets taken even further.

Jaffer: What about lesbians?

Thobani: Certainly, within the South Asian community, issues of homophobia have to be addressed in a much stronger way. In fact, all women's groups have to make a commitment to addressing issues of sexuality and homophobia, so that we may move further in developing our political understanding. The lack of recognition of the destructive impact of homophobia has got to stop.

Certainly, the work that's being done by lesbians of colour has played a vital role in developing our feminist analysis and practise.

Gogia: How are you going to make NAC more accessible to poor women?

Thobani: Carol Ann Wright, who's on the NAC executive right now, has just organized a conference on women and poverty. More representation is needed and finding the resources to do this work is crucial.

NAC has taken the larger political battles on at the national level around employment equity, full employment, a national child-care program. What we need is to have build more alliances with groups who are already doing this work, and to create the mechanisms whereby organisations fighting poverty have more support. For me, that's part of the whole restructuring of NAC—we have to learn to share the resources we have.

Gogia: How do you see the structure of NAC changing to become more accountable to its membership?

Thobani: I am committed to an anti-racist, feminist movement and NAC has the potential to be that. It's true that NAC has traditionally been a middle-class, white women's organization. But the membership, has been changing.

When I go to the NAC AGMs, there's a powerful constituency there. The grassroots groups are there. We need to be claiming this organization as our own instead of letting the organization claim us as its own.

The regionalization that's going on in NAC right now is very important. Regionalization means making NAC work at the base and we need a NAC that is strong at the base. This requires members to have a more active role and to participate in the functioning of the organization—not just at its AGM, which is held once a year. By building networks and structures of accountability between the executive and the membership, NAC groups can start working together on the ground, in the regions.

Certainly in BC, NAC has had a strong drive towards regionalization. The BC representative, Jackie Larkin, has done a lot towards building a working regional structure. Larkin and others have set up a regional steering committee made up of NAC member organizations as well as women's groups that don't belong to NAC, but that are interested in what is happening in NAC. This drive for regionalisation has also been taken in other provinces.

Women of colour in BC have been working to change NAC—at the NAC regional conference in Vancouver last month, a third of the delegates were women of colour. Yet, two years ago at the AGM, there were 32 delegates from BC at the AGM and I was the only woman of colour.

I'm committed to an anti-racist, feminist movement and NAC has the potential to be that.

Gogia: How does your style of "leadership" differ from that of Judy Rebick's who, while she made NAC a more grassroots, accountable and stronger organisation, has also been criticised for her one-woman-show style of leadership?

Thobani: NAC has developed as a hierarchical structure, but I am committed to having a more collective style of leadership. As the president, I see myself as a representative of a movement. I want to see women on the executive have a greater external presence and represent NAC on issues. The women's movement has developed a collective process, that is inclusive and consensual.

I want my presidency to move the movement, if you will, further along, but I don't believe in this idea of individual leaders who lead movements. Rather, the strength of the

See THOBANI page 14

A herstory of a women's press:

Press Gang Printers

by Lynn Giraud and Sheila Gilhooly

Press Gang Printers is the only surviving women's print shop in North America. Throughout the 1970s, many such collectively operated feminist printshops sprang up, shaped by the vital political climate of the women's liberation movement and the new left. By the mid-1980s, there was even an organization called the Alliance of Lesbian and Feminist Printers. Sadly, the 1980s also saw the demise of the San Francisco Women's Press, Storefront Press in Seattle, UP Press in Palo Alto, and Iowa City Women's Press. Press Gang Printers remains, having adapted and evolved throughout its 22-year herstory as Vancouver's political press.

Press Gang Printers was not always women-only. It was formed in 1970, and the original collective of three men and six women mirrored the politics of the time. All work was volunteer, no one drew a salary, and members contributed a small amount to cover the rent. People worked elsewhere to subsidize their Press Gang labour, and put in long hours printing when they had the time, or when they felt like it. Though some of the first members had some experience in the printing trade, press skills were very rudimentary.

It was not unusual for a member to be involved in a political organization, design their poster/leaflet/pamphlet, do the camera-ready artwork, shoot camera negatives, print the job, bind it and deliver the finished product. Most groups that used Press Gang were feminist, left or community groups, though there was no "party line" in the collective. Gradually, the customer base expanded to include community groups lucky enough to have funding.

photo by Delia McCreary

Dorothy Elias

By 1974, tension between the men and women at Press Gang was increasing. To deal with the friction, women (the majority) took over the day shift and the men worked in the evenings. Finally, someone put "the problem of the women" on the collective's meeting agenda.

Sarah Davidson, a former member, recalls answering the phone one day and having a male voice ask for Schraeder. When Sarah answered he wasn't in, the caller asked for Ed or Richard. When Sarah explained neither of them were in either, the caller hung up after telling her he "would call back when someone was there!" These were the political times in the 1970s in which the "problem of the women at the Press" was discussed.

Eventually, one male member left and the remaining collective arrived at a reasonably amicable settlement. While the men had brought most of the equipment and some of the money into the collective, it was the women who were the keeners. They learned as much about the trade and the equipment as they could, both out of a sense of responsibility and a sense of empowerment. Two women were the only members who ran the large press and it seemed appropriate that the large press should go with them. And then, logically, so should the camera and the large collator. It was actually a male member who suggested the men

photo by Delia McCreary

Paula Clancy in 1986

leave and the women continue at the Press. A male member got a press in exchange and access rights to the premises. Though the problem was settled amicably, stories of how the "men were kicked out of Press Gang" abounded in political movements in Vancouver. Davidson once overheard a man on a bus telling his companion he was one of the men who had been purged by Press Gang. She had never seen him before in her life.

The remaining women at the Press worked at improving their printing and trade skills. Davidson was the first woman in a Vancouver Vocational Institute printing trades night course. The large press handled newsprint and many issues of the *Pedestal*, *Mental Patients News* and *Gay Tide* rolled off the press and into the community.

Women were working six days a week, caring for their children, doing their weekly shifts at the Women's Health Collective and Women's Bookstore and many other political organizations. Sometimes, customers could pay for their printing bill in childcare exchanges, or other work trades.

Press Gang worked closely with *Makara*, a type and design collective which also published a monthly feminist magazine. *Makara* made its camera and darkroom available to Press Gang, and taught them its use. It was the *Makara* collective's advance payment for a year's worth of magazine printing that gave Press Gang the necessary capital to purchase the Solna, a large press that enabled the printers to move out of newsprint and produce good quality printing. Anyone who owns collector's copies of *Makara* knows the quality that was achieved. *Makara* was also a casualty of the 1980s. Through its existence, however, it was an invaluable sister collective to Press Gang, providing knowledge, business, advice, sales work and feminist energy.

By 1975, Press Gang became interested in supporting local women writers by publishing books initiated by the collective. Their first book, in 1976, was *I'm not Mad, I'm Angry: Women Look at Psychiatry*, published in hardcover and paperback editions. It was initially thought that printing could subsidize the publishing efforts. For several years the publishing work was done at night—publishing a book took a long time. Eventually, one woman was assigned the publishing work as part of her work day, but a large part of the work was still done by volunteers.

Pat Smith, a long-time contributor to *The Pedestal* (the precursor to *Kinesis*), was one of the women who started the publishing work at Press Gang. Her skills in design, layout, editing, production and printing were invaluable—Pat continued to volunteer her time and skills at Press Gang until her death in a motorcycle accident in 1985.

In 1982, the publishing collective began to operate separately within Press Gang, and in 1989 the two collectives formed separate legal and corporate structures. The sister collectives still share a close bond and work out of the same space.

A move from the old space on Hastings to its current location on Powell Street was a big event. The Hastings street location had a number of problems: stagnant water in the open drainage gutters around the press room and no windows. There were rats in the building, mushrooms growing on the carpets, and overhead gas blowers, which played havoc with the press room's ink and water balance.

The move to Powell Street was a turning point. Many collective members left but, surprisingly, with fewer people the collective was more productive. Energy and time, which had previously gone into disagreements, was freed up.

photo by Francie Queyras

Lynn Giraud, Helen Krayenhoff, Dorothy Elias, Halftone in the arms of unidentified woman, and Chantal Laplante (left to right)

One shift in attitude involved the collective's perception of themselves as workers, rather than political volunteers. Previously, women worked elsewhere to save enough money to work at Press Gang. Anyone who really needed to, could draw a small salary, according to need. Of course, everyone drastically underestimated their expenses. Supporters still gave monthly pledges to keep the presses rolling. For many years after Lou Nelson left the collective, she donated $50 per month with one stipulation: it had to be given to a different collective member each month, and she encouraged people to use it for the "extras"—new shoes, glasses, *etcetera*. It was a real treat when your month came up.

But for many women, the drudgery of such hand-to-mouth living, combined with the long hours, led to a collective decision to pay everyone a salary.

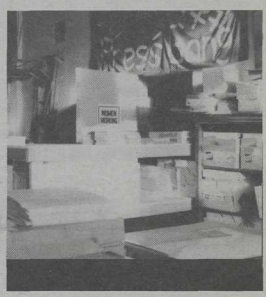

photo by Delia McCreary

Press Gang at rest

As the customer base diversified, the demand for higher quality printing grew. The older presses were adequate for the quick print posters and leaflets which were the bread and butter of the early days. But designers and customers began to want larger solids, multi-colour work, closer register. Newer presses and increased skill levels made this possible. Carmen Metcalfe produced some of Press Gang's finest work for the National Film Board and *Makara*.

Press Gang has always had a significant number of lesbians among its collective, often a majority of the workers. The lesbian presence and ethic has been an important strength of the collective. The Press has a policy that it will not print offensive or oppressive material. On one occasion, some gay male art work came up for discussion, as being potentially offensive. When it became clear that the issue was potentially one of homophobia, lesbian collective members argued that the material should be printed. Eventually the other members agreed.

Community support for Press Gang continued, no longer in the form of monthly donations for rent and extras, but in the form of benefits. Dances, pancake breakfasts, and other "fun fundraisers" kept the press operations possible. Pat Smith's original "Stay at Home Benefit," designed for political people who wanted to support the Press, but couldn't stand going to one more event, was a classic. For the price of a ticket, you got to stay home and watch TV.

In the last 10 years, the entire press room has been upgraded with four new presses. Several of these purchases were made possible by CCEC credit union and Women Futures, at a time when other banks and credit unions would have laughed at us.

As equipment was upgraded, so were the printers' skills. Many Press Gang mem-

FEATURE

photo by Janet Snell

Andrea Lowe

bers have gone through government apprenticeship programs at the Vancouver Vocational Institute. Press Gang is one of the few shops where women can be trained in this non-traditional work in a supportive, woman-centred environment. Consequently, the Press is rarely in the position of hiring previously trained employees from the industry at large.

With the decision to pay wages, it became easier to view other working conditions through workers' eyes. The members of Press Gang wrote an internal "worker contract" in the late 1980s: the workers at Press Gang also own the business. So the contract spelled out the rights and obligations of collective members for the assets and debts of the collective. As well, the collective spelled out the rights, responsibilities and benefits of being a member. Gone were the days of endless overtime. It still had to be done, but at least it was acknowledged. Many friendships were formed while collating or folding late into the night. Sick days, vacation times, and special leaves were formalized along with expectations for health and safety. Though workers still worked at poverty-level wages, the understanding of each person's relationship to the whole was vastly improved.

This process led logically to the discussion of unionization. The collective approached several trade unions, but none seemed to know what to do with this anomalous workspace. The Press hires only women, and all workers are paid the same wage, rather than the industry standard of paying according to seniority and journey tickets. And of course, the Press Gang wage was paltry compared to most unionized workers in the trade.

When an inquiry came from Communication Workers of America, Local 226, the women of Press Gang were delighted. Here was a union actively seeking to organize small shops. Over the next few months, the collective worked closely with members of the union executive and organizing committee, developing a contract which addressed both union concerns and reflected who Press Gang really was.

Press Gang has an unusual, but not unique, union set-up. The collective is the "boss." The collective agreement is between the workers and the collective, and includes all the usual provisions, including working conditions and a grievance procedure. Collective bargaining is done with the help of a business agent from the union. It is a goal of Press Gang and the union to work toward wages which are union scale. All workers are paid the same, regardless of their job description or length of seniority, except that women with children are paid 20 percent more than women without.

To be a union shop connected Press Gang in a concrete way with the labour movement which we had long supported. The collective had always honoured picket lines, boycotts, attended pro-labour rallies and conferences, and printed for the "women's" unions—AUCE and SORWUC. This was the type of work that was exciting to do. It was not unusual for printers to work late into the night to supply an emergency strike leaflet or flyer. During an AUCE strike at Simon Fraser University, we printed an emergency strike support issue of the student paper *The Peak* overnight.

photo by Dorothy Elias

Margaret Matsuyama on the job

A worker-owned, unionized workplace is an exciting model for the labour movement as well. There are other workplaces in Canada with a similar structure, and Press Gang receives inquiries about its experience.

photo by Janet Snell

Sarah Davidson

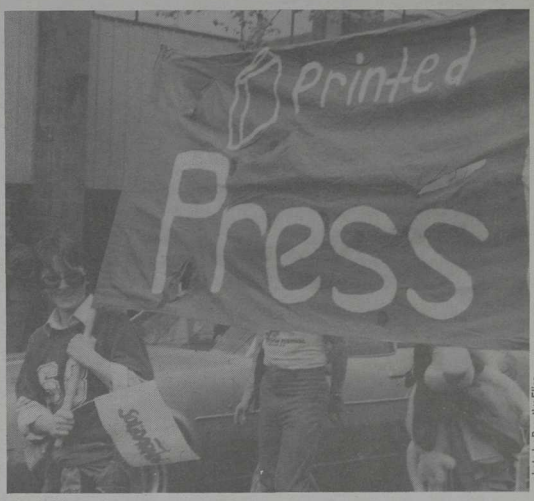

photo by Dorothy Elias

Paula Clancy in 1993

In 1990, when collective member Dorothy Elias, who had just attended an unlearning racism workshop, brought up the fact that Press Gang had never hired a woman of colour, the collective members decided to evaluate their hiring practices. That year, Margaret Matsuyama, the first woman of colour (who identified as such), became a permanent member of Press Gang. The bulk of the responsibility for reminding us of our racism, and keeping an anti-racist agenda alive fell on Matsuyama.

Shortly after the hiring, we held an unlearning racism workshop, and agreed to develop an affirmative action hiring policy. Three of the current seven collective members are women of colour. We have a continuing commitment to representation of women of colour at Press Gang. However, we have not been able to deal with accessibility issues for women who have movement restrictions, because the Press has many stairs.

Press Gang is not immune from the economic forces in the printing industry. Free trade has meant that the biggest print jobs are now being exported out of Canada. In turn, "bigger" print shops are now bidding on "smaller" jobs. And there have been dramatic technological changes over the past 10 years, from desktop publishing to faster xeroxes to printing presses that print two sides at once.

In the summer of 1992, Press Gang faced and survived a financial crisis much bigger than the usual fiscal tightrope and, for a while, it looked as if we might fold. But with the help of the community and a wildly successful community auction—which generated $8,000 in one evening—the Press squeaked through. A loan of $10,000 from a generous supporter made it possible to begin to recover from the near-disaster. Workers contributed to the recovery by buying equity shares in the Press.

Press Gang has been an early leader in developing environmentally respectful options for its customers. Its own recycling policy included a (finally successful) two year search for a way to dispose of its stockpiled hazardous waste. We have researched and offer recycled paper and vegetable based inks.

The Press continues to survive. It is a testament to the resilience of the people in the collective over the years, and the ongoing commitment and support of the progressive communities, that Press Gang has been able to change its structure, focus, operations and technology, to meet the changing needs of its members and the communities it serves. It is astonishing that the collective has never been closed down from internal friction, stopped dead by collective process issues, defeated by a collective loss of interest, or overcome by financial disaster. Why? In part, because Press Gang is supported by the progressive communities of Vancouver, who understand the importance of a politically committed printer.

photo by Janet Snell

Sarah Davidson, Morgan McGuigan Nancy Pollak, Carmen Metcalfe and Pat Smith (clockwise)

Press Gang continues to reciprocate the support of trade unions, feminist, environmental and other progressive movements in Vancouver by offering free or reduced printing costs to groups which cannot always afford to set their message out. Information technologies are becoming more and more expensive, with computers and modems and faxes speeding up the form and access to information—but only for people who can afford the equipment and technology in the first place. It will be more and more important to preserve a way to produce quick, cheap ways for poor and progressive groups to communicate and organize.

With the support of the community that we support, Press Gang will survive and thrive.

Lynn Giraud has been a printer at Press Gang for the last ten years. Sheila Gilhooly is a 41-year old, white lesbian printer at Press Gang, who was raised working class.

TO DESH AVEC PYAR

still from Shakti by Sonali Fernando

by Sur Mehat

The third annual "intra-national" Desh Pardesh conference and festival, exploring the development of Diasporic South Asian arts, culture and politics in the West, took place from March 24-28 in Toronto.

The festival was made up of five days of panel discussions, workshops and caucuses, while performances, readings, film and video screenings, presentations, an opening night reception and three parties took up the evenings and nights. A South Asian women's art show was also organized in accordance with the festival.

Many who attended were from Toronto, but a significant number came from across Canada, the US and the UK. Noticeable was the large representation of lesbians from Vancouver, New York and smaller communities in Ontario.

Programs were structured around a central theme. Some of these included art and politics, working class culture, fundamentalism and communalism, racism and colonization, lesbianism, feminism, and coalition building with of colour and Aboriginal communities. There was a feeling throughout, as participant Shelina Velji of Vancouver put it, of being "thoroughly indulged to be with so many South Asian people who were so politically and artistically strong."

photos by Fatima Jaffer

Festival organizer Punam Kholsa

According to Desh organiser Punam Khosla, this was one of the intentions of the festival. "But we have to make active use of political spaces," says Khosla, "not only taking that space for ourselves, but also creating useful strategies by which to work together within them."

The efforts of this year's working committee, a group of Toronto based artists and activists—Amita Handa, Vinita Srivastava, Sheila James, Deborah Barretto, Amina Sherazee, Shyam Selvadurai, Saeed Khan, Kalpesh Oza and Sudarshan,—and the festival's coordinators, Punam Khosla and Steve Pereira, culminated in a well-put-together conference.

According to objectives and principles drawn up by the Desh Pardesh Working Committee and ratified by the membership of Desh at the closing plenary at the festival this year, Desh Pardesh (home away from home) is "lesbian and gay positive, feminist, anti-racist, anti-imperialist and anti caste/classist...[and] exists to ensure that the voices and expressions of those constituencies in the South Asian Community which are systematically silenced are provided with a community forum."

Desh Pardesh developed this year from its origins as an idea sparked by Salaam Toronto, a 1988 festival celebrating gay South Asian culture, into a permanent organization with a membership that is committed to bringing forward the issues and voices of women, seniors, people with disabilities, working class people, and lesbians and gays.

Despite the effort of organizers and committee, it appeared to leave many people wanting something else, something more. Some of the participants *Kinesis* spoke with felt that a space for women to get together, to meet and talk, outside of mainspace events, might have increased the opportunity for further dialogue.

AVEC PYAR MEANS WITH LOVE LOVE

Not surprisingly, some of the best acts, readings, work and panel presentations were by the emerging performers, writers, film/video makers and community workers as opposed to the more established presenters. Deserving special mention are Anurima Banerji (a 20-year-old Montreal student who dances in the Odissi tradition), Regina Fernandos (of the South Asian Women's Community Centre in Montreal who told of her experience as a garment piece-worker trying to get her rightful pay), Farah (a young South Asian woman who presented a paper on the experiences of growing up female in a South Asian family in Toronto,) Meena Nanji (a videomaker from the US whose video *Voices of the Morning* premiered at Desh), and many of the writers who read at the writers' cabaret.

Eun-Sook Lee, Nada El Wassyr and Marilyn Kaney from Toronto

The following are excerpts of some of the presentations made at Desh Pardesh.

"Arranging the Marriage of Art and Politics"

Panelists: Shani Mootoo, Sonali Fernando, Ratna Roy, Ian Rashid, R. Cheran and Sadhu Binning.

The following is an excerpt of one of the six speeches made at a panel discussion on art and politics. Shani Mootoo is a videomaker, visual artist and writer of Trinidadian nationality living in Vancouver.

by Shani Mootoo

I assume that everybody who's taking part in Desh has some...level of awareness of their "politicalness." Yet I'm always amazed when I still hear a lot of people say that they're not political beings. I hear artists say that, and artists of colour.

In my life, there hasn't been a more important time than now when I feel that just about every action I make must be a political statement in my own defence. Firstly, as a woman; more importantly, as a woman who is not white—and I purposely phrase it this way—; and—the place where I feel most marginalized and obliterated—as a woman who prefers the company of women far better than the company of anything else.

Sometimes I feel as though there is nothing else in my life but political activism, which is absolutely necessary simply to ensure that I don't exist in this chosen home of mine, Canada, as a powerless living corpse. Politics is a matter of survival for me...but my first love is making things and using words and images that come together in what we categorize as art.

I came across a quotation from Albert Camus in a short story by Nadine Gordimer and it goes like this: "that which has prevented you from doing your work has become your work."

All I have as a record of my existence as a passionate being is my artwork. I can't stop being political—every action, whether I'm making art or not, just walking down the street, is a reminder of so much about myself—not just my colour, which is visible, but my lesbianness, which is sometimes very invisible, and that's a-knowing, and sometimes very visible, which is also a-knowing...for different reasons.

My life has been...too squeezed for me to make art that speaks only in academic ways...I recognize that my work has my communities at heart. I've chosen not to beg to present from the outside, but to make wherever I am the centre. By doing that, I'm combining the insistence on not being the passive victim. The use of art forms as a political tool, my love of telling lies and cluttering up the world with not so useless objects, I've found ways to be at the center through my work, to assert my point of view, to seat myself, a brown woman, a brown lesbian, represented doing and saying things that I and people like me do and say, to choose whom I address and the message that that choice sends out.

Amita Handa from Toronto

Too often programmers fall into the trap of giving the audience what it already knows. They continue to sell ethnicity to perpetuate the myth that ethnicity is colour. Don't talk about being Trinidadian, talk about being brown. Homosexuality equals sexual practice. It's fine to want to climb mountains but what about the sex, where is it? That's what they want to see in lesbian and gay films, and so on. For me, there's so much more to life than just being brown, or lesbian or a woman.

"Running From the Family"

Panelists: Meena Alexander, Sharmini Peries, Urvashi Vaid, Kalpesh Oza and Farah.

The following are excerpts of speeches made at the panel on diverse South Asian family experiences. Urvashi Vaid is a lesbian/gay activist from the US. Farah is a young South Asian woman who speaks from her particular experience as a young girl at odds with her family pressures, expectations and repression.

by Farah

Most young South Asian women face many problems on a daily basis within their household and society. The best way to get an idea of how it feels to be a young South Asian girl is to picture yourself trying to reach for a star but you can't, because something is holding you back. Until you break loose from it, you can never ever truly reach that star.

Most young South Asian girls have invisible chains that mentally hold them back—some even have physical ones. So, as the cliche says, "opportunity knocks," yet many of us are neither allowed nor permitted to open that door. I feel like I'm on the edge, but never allowed to look over.

Family is an important part of South Asian culture. Much is centered around it. Girls are supposed to be passive and live up to the high expectations of their parents—being a good housewife, a good cook, speaking the language well. These all lead to the girl getting a good marriage and starting a family of her own and instilling these values into her own children.

However, the boys get away with a hell of a lot more than the girls do. This double standard within the family causes lots of problems. The other problem many girls have is trying to conform to Western society and its ideals, while keeping her South Asian values. Many girls grow up with a strong South Asian culture—surrounded by the dress, food and language—but once they go to school, they see a different world. Some forget their own culture, [but] most are trying to find a balance between the life at home and life at school. In most situations, the girls are different at home, acting like the "typical South Asian girl." But once they walk out that door, many girls not only change their physical appearance but also their mentality. Most are hiding a part of themselves away from their family.

This leads most girls to be confused and lonely. However, many do not know where to turn. Most will not go to their parents because they know how they'll react, and feel distanced from them in family conflicts. Next, most would turn to their friends and counsellors, but most high school counsellors are not equipped enough to talk to them, because they don't know anything about the South Asian culture. They can't get adequate and sufficient advice.

This isolation and build-up of emotions is dangerous. Some girls are suicidal, but most end up just confused. Although family structure may look strong from the outside, many do not have good communication lines with their parents and this leads to bad results.

Anjula Gogia from Vancouver with Sabina Chatterjee from Kingston, Ontario

Every time I think about reaching up at that opportunity and grabbing that star, I think of the consequences and get frustrated. I want to be free from the chains that are holding me back from finding my own voice. Is it possible to balance my South Asian culture in a western society? Can I meet my parents' expectations and still be accepted by the western world? This feeling of questioning myself is all too familiar to me—I carry it with me every day of my life.

by Urvashi Vaid

I came out in college. Immediately, I came out to my sisters...they were very accepting. But their fear was "the parents," don't tell the parents. So I didn't tell the parents. When I...extended what had begun as feminist activism into gay and lesbian activism, I realized I couldn't have my parents reading about my gay activism in the paper—I didn't want to come out that way. So I came out to them.

They went through a period of denial, even though I brought home my activism to them in letters and eventually started sending them press clippings. When I started working with the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in 1986, they didn't want to hear about it.

It felt horrible to me and my reaction was—I ran from my family...I made family elsewhere. I found my home in political communities. I have to say I think I was saved by the political movements I worked on. It gave me a strong sense of self and gave me the strength that I had to keep developing a sense of self and eventually coming full circle and start the integration process with my family which is where I am today.

It has taken me 13 years to come home to them. In the past year or two, we have come full circle and begun a process of really talking honestly about what their fears are about me—they range from AIDS, to the other fear they have—the fear of themselves having to come out as the parents of a gay person. It isn't just our own coming out we live through, it's their coming out to the community.

I want to live my life openly as a lesbian everywhere I am. I don't want to be lesbian in a lesbian and gay ghetto. I don't want to just have my gay life over here, and my Indian family in India, and then maybe in my sisters' homes, we can all come together. I'm seeking much more of an integration of all these parts of myself and I think that many of us who are gay and lesbian South Asians living in this country want that.

"A Class Act - Zindabad!"

The following excerpt is one of five speeches given during a program of presentations about creating a working class culture of resistance. Regina Fernando is with the South Asian women's Community Centre in Montreal.

Dolores Chew and Nilambri Ghai from Montreal

by Regina Fernando

I work as a bookkeeper and community worker in the South Asian Women's Community Centre [in Montreal]. I have been in Canada since 1976, when my daughter and I came to join my husband.

I started doing piecework at home to supplement my husband's income. At the time, I was quite busy with my three children and with managing the household. I was good at sewing, so when I heard about doing piecework, I thought it would be suitable for my needs. Although the extra money helped around the home, I felt myself feeling isolated. The nature of piecework is such that one is discouraged from integrating into society because the work must be finished in a very limited time. Sometimes, I had to stitch throughout the day to finish that work.

BUTTER LAMP (writer's cabaret, 28mar93, toronto, desh pardesh) as to how it feels being in this company, it feels great & inspiring, to be among familiar mixes. really, my arteries thank you. i can't say it any better than urvashi vaid did last night, when she said that being at desh has been a 'very clarifying experience'. nice turn of phrase, eh: some of the new americanism? i wondered. somewhere along the walk that night from the euclid to art metropole, i started to feel hungry. the next day it occurred to me. i think, you know, it has to do with ghee.

jam. ismail

[At one point] I felt that I needed to give up sewing for the summer months so that I could be with my kids [for the holidays]. I informed my employer about my decision and, when I completed my job, I asked him to come and pick up the material I had done. When he came, he didn't bring me the cheque for the work I had done. I was assured I would receive the payment within a week. One month later, I had made several calls to have the cheque delivered to my home—he kept saying they had sent the cheque by mail to my house; he told me that the delivery man had come to my house several times and rung the bell but no one had answered. I had been home most of the time, so this could not be true.

At this point, it became clear that the employer had no intention of paying me the money. I decided to contact the South Asian Women's Community Centre because I didn't know what else to do. When I saw I had support from someone, I didn't fear to face my ex-employer. Together, we went to the ex-employer—he showed his true colours and told me I had no proof I had not been paid already. He called me a liar.

Anita Nayar, Gayatri Gopinath and Radhika Balakrishnan from New York City from left to right

I felt angry. If I didn't get the money at this point, I decided to get legal advice. Many employers of piece-workers think they can use them for cheap labour, that pieceworkers can be easily exploited because they are usually ignorant of their rights. This is true—pieceworkers are a hidden and an ignored workforce.

I went to the Joint Commission for the Garment Industry for Women and was told this was a clear case of exploitation and that I had been paid only one-third of what I had been guaranteed. The commission contacted the ex-employer, and I finally got my full payment.

It was this incident that led the South Asian Women's Community Centre to write a research proposal for a grant to produce a pamphlet on the rights of women working in the garment industry. It was published in different South Asian languages so that all the South Asian women can read their own writing in their own languages. One can be exploited because of their ignorance and language barrier. I am proud of my contribution...in producing this pamphlet.

From this discouraging experience, I determined to overcome my ignorance and upgrade myself. One course led to another and now I'm going for my degree in social work. If no one had reached me, I would have stayed as the same insecure and dependent person for a long time. Now I try to help women who are in situations such as I was once in. I want to be a small instrument in helping them to build their self esteem and come out of their shell...I hope of the women I help, at least one will travel in the path I did and encourage others to do the same so that we, all the women, can come out of ignorance, know our rights and come out of our ignorance.

Conference for Indigenous peoples in the arts:

Beyond survival

by Lynne Wanyeki

Haunani Kay-Trask, Hawaii, speaking on the commodification of indigenous culture as seen in tourism.

Miriam Yataco, Peru and Marta Orozco, Bolivia in a workshop on education, literacy and the arts. Both women are members of the Quiche Nation.

The first international conference for Indigenous peoples in the arts took place April 16-18 in Hull, Quebec. Called *Beyond Survival: The Waking Dreamer Ends the Silence*, the conference drew about 300 participants from all over the globe, over half of whom were women.

Indigenous peoples, coming from places as far apart as Greenland and Tasmania, Zimbabwe and Canada, Bolivia and Vanuatu, met and shared strategies for the promotion of Indigenous art forms and artists under colonial and post-colonial conditions.

The three-day conference opened with presentations. Participants addressed questions of authenticity, cultural appropriation, and the commodification of Indigenous art forms from a variety of perspectives.

Workshops were held during the second and third days of the conference. Workshop coordinators shared strategies for dealing with many of the issues brought up in the previous day. Ground plans were made for the establishment of an international non-governmental organization for the promotion of indigenous arts an dfor advocacy around issues affecting the production of Indigenous arts. An international database for Indigenous artists, cultural producers and arts organizations was also set up.

Participants also had an opportunity to share their work with conference delegates during two evenings of performance. Readings took place throughout the gathering.

Beyond Survival was organized by the Enowkin School of Writing, run by Jeannette Armstrong of the Okanagan Nation in BC.

Lynne Wanyeki is of the Gikuyu Nation in Kenya and Scottish Canadian.

Women featured strongly at the international conference of Indigenous peoples and the arts. Shown here are Pure Fe, an Aboriginal women's acapella group based in New York, USA.

Freedom Nyamveaya, Zimbabwe, presenting on the maintainance of indigenous expression under neo-colonial conditions. "Culture is the one area of life not directly controlled by the IMF and the World Bank in Africa."

photos by Laiwan

THOBANI from page 8

women's movement has been in empowering all women.

My presidency will only be effective and successful if I am clear about listening and interacting with women's groups all over the country, learning how the issues are different and what our points of unity are. Because, at the end of the day, that is where it counts—at the grassroots level and in women's lives.

Gogia: What do you see as the upcoming hot issues for NAC?

Thobani: The first thing will be the mobilizing for the election campaign. Childcare, employment equity, violence against women and new reproductive technologies will also be hot issues. The government panels and commissions on NRTs and violence against women are due to come out with their reports and we have our own ongoing campaigns and committees on these issues.

Also, in terms of violence against women, the NAC committee has been developing our own policy position on this and we're launching a national campaign. There's the issue of refugee women, who are facing deportation or have been deported, and the issue of recent changes in immigration policy—those are going to be big areas of work. We have much to do in the area of domestic workers rights. And NAC is committed to fighting for a national child-care program. And in the process of working on all these issues, we'll be working on finding better ways of working together.

Jaffer: What kind of support are you looking for from member groups and from individuals?

Thobani: In terms of the membership of NAC, I'd like to encourage groups to take a much more active role, to own the organization.

I know a lot of women of colour don't join NAC and I would like more women of colour groups to join. If not, we can build coalitions, not just between women of colour, but between all women who feel that, even though they support NAC's work, they don't themselves want to join NAC. I want to make myself very available for input because we can find ways of working and supporting each other's work—and it can only strengthen the women's movement.

Fatima Jaffer and Anju Gogia are members of the South Asian Women's Action Network and regular contributors to Kinesis.

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Review and interview: **Mary Medusa**

An appetite for power

by Kathleen Oliver

MARY MEDUSA
by Shawna Dempsey and Lorri Millan
Western Front Lodge, Vancouver
April 2

"Is a woman without a body in fact a woman? Does a woman without a body in fact exist?"

These questions open and inform *Mary Medusa*, the latest project from Winnipeg-based performance artists Shawna Dempsey and Lorri Millan. With all of the attention that women in contemporary patriarchal cultures are trained to give to things like weight, size, diet, fertility and reproductive control, food, PMS, and sex, what exactly constitutes femaleness if not the female body?

Dempsey and Millan, best known for their short film, *We're Talking Vulva*, which has screened to over one million people worldwide, have been artists in residence at Vancouver's Western Front Lodge throughout the month of April. One part of their residency was a multi-media presentation of their most recent performance project, *Mary Medusa*.

The work incorporates a video component, *Medusa Raw*, slide-tape sequences, and several live performance pieces which show the Medusa head (complete with toy plastic snakes) "embodied" in a variety of contemporary guises.

In Greek myth, Medusa was one of the Gorgons, three sisters with snakes for hair, who (the legend goes) were so terrifying to look upon that their beholders were instantly turned to stone. Medusa, the only mortal Gorgon, was beheaded by Perseus, who subsequently used the head as a weapon against his enemies.

As a woman with power, the Medusa figure was an irresistible one for Dempsey and Millan. "The question we were dealing with," says Dempsey, "is how can women in our society have power? How are we allowed to have power, and how can we take power?"

The *Mary Medusa* performance explores variations on this theme, presenting Medusa as bride, mother, and corporate businesswoman. In each, the woman possesses a different type of power, and a different relationship to her appetites.

Appetite is one of the themes that recurs throughout the piece. At one point, the bride character confesses, "Beneath this demure feminine exterior lurks a dark side...an animal nature...that wants to sell you a weight-loss program that really works." The bride's dress becomes a screen onto which is projected an image of a woman's mouth locked shut with steel braces and wires. "Never has controlling what goes into your mouth been so easy," trills the bride, "or for that matter, what comes out."

Women's socially constructed obsession with our weight is only one of the tools that serves to keep us from speaking out on far weightier matters, but women's silence is also valued in a patriarchal economy. The "locked jaw" weight loss program has the added bonus of giving a woman "a little mystery...a little *je ne sais quoi*...a little *je ne sais rien*..." and ultimately turning her into "a little woman."

Dempsey recalls her own experiences with dieting and denying herself pleasure, a pattern that many women can relate to. As Millan notes, "if more women could only put some of the energy, resources and money that they put into dieting into other things, can you imagine what it would be like?"

Food is certainly a fertile image for the discussion of appetites, but it also ties in with sex and with women's hunger for power. And along with appetites are the inevitable themes of control and containment. Among the "design flaws" the bride identifies in her new home are windows and doors—anything that prevents her from being fully contained. Later, the mother figure talks about her inability to contain herself—

photo by Cheryl Bellows

Shawna Dempsey in *Mary Medusa*

which she equates with female ejaculation, from *everywhere*—and begins to bare her breasts. Her "self," she tells us, has begun to escape from her, and "each time she oozes away, she stays away longer."

"There's this interesting duality," says Dempsey, "whereby we're defined by our bodies and completely alienated from our bodies at the same time. We're judged by how we look, but we're not given information about our bodies, or invited to experience our bodies."

This duality is beautifully embodied by the *dis*-embodied head of the Medusa. Interspersed with the performance segments are slide-tape sequences in which Medusa interacts with Athena, Greek goddess of wisdom. Although Athena has a body, her mythical fame is associated primarily with her mind, and, as one of the "virgin goddesses," Athena's possession of a body is almost incidental. As she says to Medusa, "You get your head cut off: I never get fucked."

And while a woman without a body may or may not be a woman, she certainly can't be the sort of woman who is obsessed with her weight. As Medusa reflects: "Being without a body is the closest I've come to a perfect figure, and still I feel inadequate." Her conclusion: "You're damned if you do and damned if you don't have a body." At least, if you're a woman.

It's worth remembering that most of what we've been taught about Greek myth draws on the patriarchal versions of the various gods and goddesses, but many goddesses had a strong pre-patriarchal following. In many cases, myths were created in an effort to contain the power of the matriarchal goddesses. The Medusa image, for instance, "has been around thousands of years longer than the Greek story from which we all know her," says Millan.

"When we were travelling in Greece and Turkey, we saw her image in some very ancient settings—from about 20,000 BC—and it became apparent that she was a powerful and ancient icon that the Greeks were subduing in some way. In the story, they cut off her head and use her head—that is, her power—as a weapon against other armies. So it seemed like an interesting metaphor for the so-called switch from matriarchy to patriarchy."

The various themes culminate in the image of Medusa-as-businesswoman who, with her "challenging job, stunning apartment, and a retirement plan that's nothing to sneeze at," has achieved a measure of power in a man's world. But at what price?

"A woman out of control is a frightening thing," she muses, using the example of "wen-do murders...women stalking the streets of Kitsilano in search of victims on whom to practice self-defence." She talks about her appetite, which is "huge" and "inappropriate," until, at her command, a chocolate cake begins to slide across the stage. The businesswoman's pursuit of "sex and food—for what else is there?" leads her to—well, *fuck* the chocolate cake. It's quite a closing image.

"We're not even sure, intellectually, why it works," says Dempsey, "but I'm clearly doing something for my own pleasure that involves appetite, both in terms of eating and in terms of sex. But there's no room in the picture for a man; I'm not doing it so a man can get off watching me, and the cake is not personified as male." She adds with a laugh, "It's a very female thing...all that whipped cream..."

This last sequence has generated some controversy: in Winnipeg, Dempsey performed it live on television last fall during the *Festival du Voyeur*, Winnipeg's celebration of queer culture and the arts. The on-air personality who hosted the show was subsequently fired as a direct result of the performance. Millan relates that the station manager was unable to explain the grounds for dismissal: "The station manager's reaction was sort of to inarticulately splutter and say, 'Need you ask? It's—*the cake! The cake! The cake!*'"

But, like other lesbian artists, Dempsey and Millan are no strangers to controversy or to the peculiar sorts of attention their work generates. The success of *We're Talking Vulva*, the five-minute film in which Dempsey, dressed as a giant vulva, raps out a "wear and care manual" for this previously unsung heroine of female anatomy, has led to all sorts of strange encounters. Viewers have offered unsolicited "testimonials" (for example, "I used to wipe from back to front, but then I saw your film..."), and Dempsey once had a stranger approach her at the Sudbury, Ontario bus terminal and say, "Hey, you're the giant cunt."

Recently, Dempsey and Millan travelled to the Third International Istanbul Biennial, where the film was one of seven entries chosen to represent Canada at a "high art" event where many of the audience were "dripping with jewels," according to Millan. Unconventional venues have become part of the package for the *Vulva* piece, which has screened throughout the world in such diverse settings as a United Church Conference and opening for a thrash band in a punk club.

So what's next for Dempsey and Millan? During their residency at Western Front, they have been working on a video adaptation of an earlier performance piece, *Object/Subject of Desire*. In May, *Mary Medusa* continues on its cross-Canada tour and in September, it's off to Berlin to perform in the Angry Women festival. And Dempsey and Millan are at work on some new costumes, including an arborite housedress, which they hope to bring to life within the next year or two.

Women's bodies are clearly a fertile place from which to explore the relationship between women and the power that has been taken away from us for so long. And it appears that there is no shortage of ideas for Dempsey and Millan to tackle in their increasingly sophisticated game of dress-up. *Mary Medusa* closes with a statement that is at once a reflection on the mythic past and a rallying cry for the present: "A woman with power makes people nervous. A woman with power stops people dead in their tracks. So take it all back, sisters, take it all back."

Kathleen Oliver first became aware of Shawna Dempsey and Lorri Millan's work three years ago, when she received a postcard with a picture of a woman dressed as a giant vulva on the front and some inexcusably florid prose on the back. Her mailbox has never fully recovered.

Review: **Looking Like Dykes:**

Looking like academics

by Alice Swift

LOOKING LIKE DYKES: PARTS THREE AND FOUR
Pacific Cinematheque, Vancouver
April 1 and 15

The *Looking Like Dykes* series, presented by a Vancouver independent theatre, the Pacific Cinematheque, wrapped up in April with two very different perspectives on "issues of lesbian representation and spectatorship."

Part three featured a presentation, "Tropical Butch," by Ali McIlwaine and the screening of the 1968 British film, *The Killing of Sister George*.

The film stars Beryl Reid as "George" (real name: June) and Susannah York as "Childie" (real name: Alice), two women trapped in the histrionic confines of a relationship that could be described, at best, as dysfunctional.

George is an aging soap opera actress whose star is fading and who takes out her control-freak tendencies on Childie, whose role in the relationship has been moulded into one of unqualified dependency. It isn't hard to figure out who's the "butch" and who's the "femme": George wears the same tweedy suit throughout the film, makes crude jokes, and rides a motorcycle. As Childie, Susannah York minces around the flat in skimpy teddies, can't uncap a bottle without a lot of trouble, and has such wide eyes that she appears to have perpetually just been stabbed.

Their relationship involves lots of yelling, lots of drinking, and not much left of what must, at some point, have been love.

When George discovers she's being written out of her soap opera, she becomes at once contrite, prankishly rebellious, and suspicious and abusive of Childie. At the same time, Childie begins to grow more assertive, to the point where she is clearly outgrowing the relationship.

Even dressing up as Laurel and Hardy and going out to a way-too-groovy queer nightclub (London's Gateway, a real-life hangout for lesbians, gays, and other "freaks") can't save them. Especially when Childie gets "friendly" with Mercy Croft, the same station executive who has delivered George's death warrant. The friendliness culminates in a truly unforgettable sex scene between the two women. As McIlwaine pointed out, the sex is presented in such an elusive way (due largely to Susannah York's having refused to do the scene; she was shot solo and spliced in later) that you have to know an awful lot about lesbian sex in order to figure out what they're doing.

This is hardly a lesbian vision of lesbian life. Directed by Robert Aldrich, who also created *Hush, Hush, Sweet Charlotte* and *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* (neither of them particularly kind to their female protagonists), the film shares the sort of anaesthetically bleak outlook that seems to characterize so many British films of the 60s.

The film screening provided McIlwaine, a graduate student in Communications at SFU, with a starting point for her discussion of butch-femme roles, and she confessed her "psychic investment," based on her own socialization and role-identification, in the reality of butch. Role-play indicates a permanently ironic stance, says McIlwaine, which parodies the very notion of an original set of genders. The image of masculinity that butches are trying to live up to is every bit as unattainable to men as it is to dykes—but at least the dykes know that it's a game, she says.

McIlwaine maintains that *all* images of butches—including Sister George—are empowering. Frankly, I'm a little more ambivalent about the image of Sister George, drinking herself into oblivion and lashing out at everyone around her as she realizes how little control she has over her situation. Even her efforts at resistance are ultimately more self-destructive than revolutionary—as one audience member pointed out, her rebellious pranks add up to "cutting off her nose to spite her face."

And, as another audience member noted, there is very little about George that is expressed in a sexual way. It is almost as if the repression of her sexuality forces it to be channelled into the histrionic violence and tongue-lashing that are her primary activities (besides drinking) throughout the film.

Sister George is certainly a compelling cinematic text—but I have to wonder how much we lesbians have to gain from directing our energy toward analyzing and understanding less-than-sympathetic male visions (obscure ones at that) of who we are. (McIlwaine's was the only presentation in this series to feature a film that was not lesbian-made.) While there is much food for thought in *The Killing of Sister George*, is any of it really nourishing? Or is it more likely to poison us?

Which doesn't mean there aren't dangers in the study of lesbian-produced images, too. While the range of films comprising the final presentation in the series was more appetizing, Silva Tenenbein's April 15th lecture suffered from a few troubling ingredients.

Tenenbein's presentation, "Are Lesbians Ugly?", was an examination of the ways in which "beauty" and sexual attractiveness are constructed, represented and perceived by lesbians. The starting point for Tenenbein's discussion was that if, in the hetero-patriarchal world, female beauty (as defined by men) equals "fuckability" (i.e. with a penis), then how do lesbians reshape this male-defined concept of beauty? What is it that makes lesbians attractive to other lesbians?

Standouts among the six short videos and films screened were Barbara Hammer's *Hot Flash*, a playful, arty video in which we join a group of older lesbians sharing the experience of menopause, "the most liberating time of a woman's life"; *Body Hair*, Carla Wolf's quick, powerful and extremely affecting (ouch!) examination of the politics of plucking, shaving, waxing, peeling, and depilation; Shani Mootoo's *Lest I Burn*, a defiant stride along Vancouver's unofficial dyke neighbourhood, Commercial Drive; and Lorna Boschman's *Butch and Femme in Paradise*, a radical take on the "siren-on-the-rocks" theme that blows up every mainstream preconception about what is an "attractive" body size for a woman.

With the exception of American Barbara Hammer, all of these film and video artists come from Vancouver's lesbian community, and their works present an impressive range of styles and visions. Unfortunately, Tenenbein's lecture tended to gloss over that complexity to some degree. For one thing, her discussion relied on a rather simplistic equation of "difference" with "deviance." It's true that, as with sexuality, differences in race, ability, age, size, and so on are primarily socially constructed in terms of the *values* that are attached to them. However, social norms are constructed in a variety of ways, and it is dangerous to put every form of difference into a big pot labelled "deviance"—difference and deviance don't have the same values or mean the same things.

And while it's true that women as a class are significantly oppressed by the male construction of the ideal feminine body weight, I don't think that the obsession with thinness which affects so many women is *really* the worst and most universal form of oppression—as Tenenbein suggested early in her lecture, citing a survey in which over 25 per cent of US women ranked weight loss as a more significant concern than nuclear war—certainly not "worse" than racism, lesbian-bashing, elder abuse, and the many other limitations on the freedom of women of all sizes.

Tenenbein's conclusion was that, for lesbians, it is not beauty that makes us powerful, but power that makes us beautiful—a conclusion that seems overly glib when there are still so many problematic power differences within the lesbian community.

Such as the difference between academics and non-academics.

I may be harping here, but one of my concerns about the Looking Like Dykes series was that so much of the discussion makes so little sense outside the hallowed halls of the university. While I do think it's important that lesbians are working toward inclusion in the curriculum, we can't ignore the ways in which the curriculum is still inherently exclusive. Is this really a place where we want to be and be seen?

Alice Swift is still recovering from too much post-secondary education and bristles at the sound of post-anything rhetoric.

videograb courtesy Video In

Susan Polling and Jennifer Watkins in *Lest I Burn* by Shani Mootoo

videograb courtesy Video In

Still from *Body Hair* by Carla Wolf

still from *The Celluloid Closet* by Vito Russo

Susannah York and Beryl Reid at left in *The Killing of Sister George*

Review: SamiYoni:A Journal for South Asian Lesbians:

"The power is now mine"

by Sur Mehat

SAMIYONI: A JOURNAL FOR LESBIANS OF SOUTH ASIAN DESCENT
Edited by neesha dosanjh
Toronto, Ontario

I have to admit it—I didn't think it would be even fractionally as impressive as it turned out to be. *SamiYoni: A Journal for Lesbians of South Asian Descent*, launched during the third annual Desh Pardesh conference and festival in Toronto in March, was nothing I expected it to be.

What I expected was a thin stack of photocopies held together by a single staple at the upper left-hand corner with no cover. What it turned out to be is a magazine (that's *two* staples), 38 pages of prose, poetry, essays and visual images laid out in the most readable format that this reader has ever come across. The work of 18 South Asian lesbians is featured along with a directory of resources.

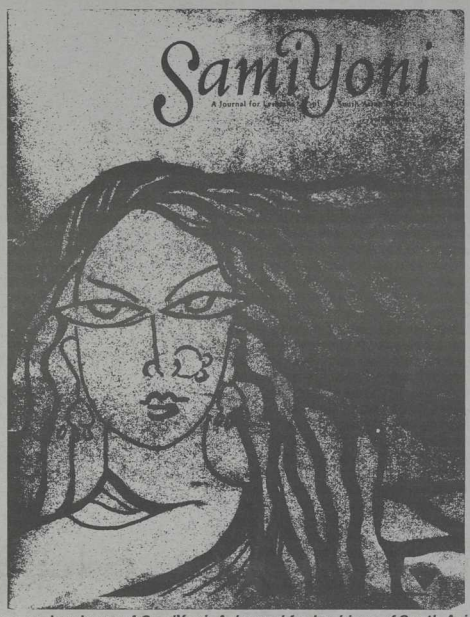
Why didn't I expect a magazine? Why didn't I expect a well put together publication that gave respectful and thoughtful treatment to good work during a festival where South Asian women are in the forefront? Part of my reactions and expectations have to do with being an out lesbian in a region of the country where there are few out South Asian lesbians. That is not to say that sheer number could ever replace quality of interaction, but the projects undertaken are, by necessity, of a certain type, scale and number to maximize effectiveness and make the most of the energy at hand. And along with that is my every day experience of invisibility as a South Asian dyke. An experience which, though I'm not complacent with, I have certainly grown accustomed to.

The word *SamiYoni* is a combination of two hindi words—*sami* translating as the same and *yoni*, female fertility. It is an attempt to name lesbianism (a word that does not exist in many Indian languages) from a cultural perspective. The publication is an attempt to provide a space for us, as South Asian dykes, to dialogue and see each others' work and, as such, it is meant to be one drop into an immense well.

As such a drop, it is not only unique but also groundbreaking. Although other publications exist that speak to our realities as South Asians in the diaspora, such as Montreal's *Serai* and *Rungh Magazine* from Vancouver, none exclusively address South Asian lesbians. *SamiYoni* is the first publication in Canada exclusively about South Asian lesbians.

Based in Toronto, the journal—according to neesha dosanjh, the editor for this issue—would ideally be a collective production. The intent is to publish twice yearly and have an international readership and worldwide contribution. Currently mail-outs have been made to India, Fiji, the Pacific Islands and the US, for the upcoming "international forum."

As it stands, several women, in various ways and capacities, assisted in the production of the first issue; a formal collective has yet to form. Eighteen South Asian lesbians contributed to *SamiYoni*. And there are plenty more where we came from. There is more than simple strength in numbers here; there is the possibility of solidarity, the inevitability of shared experiences and excitement. *SamiYoni* is about us and our experiences with each other, with family, with communities and society and the wealth of talent that none of us could deny the existence of. And ***that*** is significant.



cover graphic by Sharon Fernandez

The premiere issue of *SamiYoni: A Journal for Lesbians of South Asian Descent*

The "enormous strength and spirit" that dosangh acknowledges of us is as undeniable in this collection as it is in our political, as well as cultural collectives, collaborations and gatherings. But this is different. This journal is solely about us as South Asian dykes, and, as such, raises compelling questions about our social needs and desires.

As affirmation of our existence, and a site of potential interaction and communication, correspondence and claiming/creating space, *SamiYoni* is an important political statement of the value we place on ourselves and each other and our right to a space for our voices. But, aside from the political significance of *SamiYoni*, there is the social function that it could potentially play should we decide that there is a need for it.

"There is a need," contributor Manisha Singh says, "to actively engage in working on a project instead of simply talking about doing things." Singh is the contact for *SamiYoni* in Vancouver. The question is can we establish a sense of community based on this act of bringing together our individual work? And what role does this journal have in that community-making when the readership of and contribution to it is worldwide?

The production of this journal by South Asian lesbians working at the grassroots level cannot succeed unless we believe in its value and right and need to exist. As Sabina from Kingston, puts it: we have to believe that it is "...really important to have a forum for South Asian dykes." We have to believe that it is equally important to voice our support of each other and engage in activities that prove and strengthen that commitment.

We have to believe that our work deserves the 'professional' treatment of considerations around such things as layout, design and typeface. We have to believe that we have a right to expect that our work should be available in several forms, not just the cheapest (even though that doesn't mean the cheapest is not valued). And we should understand the monetary value of our labour and the work we produce.

The social potential of *SamiYoni* is based on how much we are willing and prepared to work towards. As it stands, with this first issue the journal plays an important role as a forum for the work of South Asian lesbians. Whatever types of communication it provides—debate, correspondence, support, *etcetera*—is really up to the contributors and collective alike. If nothing else, it reassures us that, no matter how isolated we may be or feel at times, there are others out there and that there is a place where one can engage interactively or just take up space, an important social—as well as political—strategy in itself.

As for the work reproduced in this first issue, there is an undeniable richness and depth. Poetry is the dominant form of expression followed by prose, artwork and herstories. The contributions are consistently strong. Subject matter ranges from the experiences of being of mixed race, and writing the real Canadian anthem, to attempting to deal with the "sense of loss" in the lesbian community from AIDS-related deaths, and expressing the anger we feel at the racism and homophobia we encounter.

It is this sheer variety of subject matter that strikes the reader. It makes a refreshing change from the theme-oriented issues of other publications.

Though the majority of the writers and artists are Toronto-based and only a handful come from across Canada, there is little that makes this issue of *SamiYoni* purely Torontonian. Lezlie Lee Kam's humourous exploration/reflection on the attempts of others to 'peg' her racially, aptly titled *"what kind of indian are you?,"* is an essay that takes the reader through her labyrinthine experience of dealing with people dealing with her mixed-race identity. After describing some of her experiences she writes "[m]y life and way of living in this crazy world has been enriched by my varied racial and cultural background. However, please do not allow YOURSELF to be so politically correct you forget that...".

Nila Gupta's poem, *"oh canada,"* is a correction of the national anthem that tells it the way it is—white supremacy, exploitation, racism, homophobia—without pulling any punches. Diane Srivastava's drawing, a visual representation that makes the familiar experience of growing up being called every name in the book, makes physical (in the experience of reading) the emotions of coming to a place of taking control. The text winds around and around, finally into the central image, where it ceases to spiral, instead winding its way carefully around a solid-colour figure. It ends in the assuming of the power to name oneself—"the power is now mine, boy."

One prose piece, by Vancouver-based writer Manisha Singh, is an excerpt of an interview that the writer did with her mother. The piece is short but engrossing for the images it creates of a woman trying, through memories of her mother, to create, to no avail, "any satisfactory image."

Another interesting piece was a poem by Natasha Singh, a Jasper, Alberta-born Montreal resident. Entitled *"in loving Ravi,"* the poem methodically lays out the terms of Singh's relationship with her brother. The work succeeds in portraying the complexity of her relationship with him and her exhaustion from frustrated attempts to get him to acknowledge and accept her as a lesbian. The pain of homophobia and family is something that most of us face and, in her poem, Singh conveys that pain, frustration and anger, as well as the exhaustion they bring on.

She writes: "I'm tired today my brother\tired of worrying about\your comfort zone\tired of censoring my woman\when you don't yours\tired of being conscious\of taking up too much space\tired of feeling guilty\for loving her\tired of your inability\to draw parallels between the racism\which exploits you\ and the homophobia\which exploits us\tired of extending a consideration\when you won't\tired of extending my hand\ alone it shakes\alone it clenches into a fist\then unclenches\alone it reaches out\falters, then falls\for my brother, I'm tired now\I'm tired from loving you."

Also featured in this issue are the works of Vashti Persad, Shahnaz Stri, Nalina Singh, Kaushalya Bannerji, Sharon Fernandes, Gita Saxena, Marilyn Fernandez, neesha dosanjh, Geneffa Popatia, Sunita, and one anonymous contributor.

The future of *SamiYoni* depends on the involvement of as many South Asian lesbians as possible. At a time when we continue to struggle to be seen and heard, it is important that we take stock of what and who is really worth our efforts and I, for one, firmly believe in the value of our supportive collaborations and the production of tangible work.

If you want to get involved in *SamiYoni* and/or wish to contribute to the next issue (deadline September 30, 1993), write to: *SamiYoni*, Attn: neesha dosanjh, PO Box 891, Stn. P, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2Z2.

Sur Mehat is a local South Asian lesbian artist living in Burnaby.

Review: Lee Pui Ming:

Music to watch

by Laiwan

LEE PUI MING: TO VOICE, TO COME TO POWER
Tom Lee Music Hall, Vancouver
April 10

Lee Pui Ming is a remarkable woman—and an exciting woman to watch. She plays piano, not only with her hands, but with her entire body. In a complex juggle of tension and release, everything about her reveals her years of practice, of becoming friends, getting to know and arriving at an intimate ease and companionship with her large, whimsical instrument—the piano.

In the slightly awkward setting of the Tom Lee Music Hall—where the two largest signs are the names 'Tom Lee' and 'Steinway and sons'—Lee literally shook the dust off the piano and the surrounding patriarchal signifiers with her energetic, uninhibited improvisations.

Exploring blends of jazz, Chinese classical and folk music and improvisation, Lee's strength and humour come across in the flexibility and accuracy of her body, hands, fingers and keyboard techniques, as do her passion and lack of pretension.

Now living in Toronto, Lee was born in Hong Kong and lived there for 19 years. Her mother, Hui Pui, was a singer trained at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, who became one of the top vocal coaches of China.

Lee Pui Ming

"Because my mother taught every day, there was always lots of activity and noise from morning to night, with people singing. My mother put me at the piano when I was between three and four and that is how it all started for me," says Lee.

This early background of encouragement and creativity is reflected in Lee's brilliance at the piano. Her music conveys a complex, intense emotional landscape—a commitment to honesty of self, perseverance and a desire for discovery, and a modest maturity. She also has an understated quirky sense of humour—in one wonderful piece, she bends over into the body of the grand piano and soulfully calls out in Cantonese: "*Sui chair, nei hai pin do-ah?*" ("Miss, sister—where are you?") as if she were a child, singing into an echoing well, calling out a name, searching for a missing companion.

She also uses the piano as a percussion box, playing the strings inside the piano with her hands or mallets, as well as using fists, arms and impeccable fingering on the keyboard. Lee is adept at playing classical pieces that become brilliantly twisted and re-interpreted into contemporary improvisations that express the complexity of our modern, inner lives.

In the week before her performance, Lee rehearsed with the Vancouver Chinese Music Ensemble and percussionist Sal Ferreras to produce a much-anticipated compact disc recording.

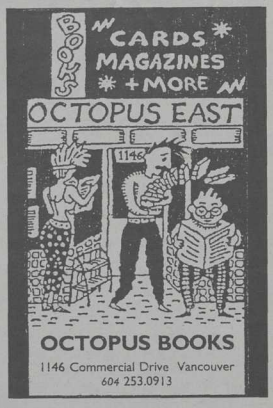
"It's a wonderful collaboration, even though, by writing the music, it is mostly my project. I am composing original contemporary material for traditional instruments and contemporizing traditional music. It's a real challenge because, in Canada, Chinese music has never been contemporized before.

"...For so many years I denied that part of my background [Chinese music] and didn't want to have anything to do with it. I had to grow and integrate everything of who I am to be ready. I'm thrilled it has all come together."

And it has come together—for me, witnessing Lee Pui Ming translate into music her life, her passions, her humour, her soul, against the staid backdrop of tradition in both western and eastern contexts, is exuberantly inspiring. Her music embodies resistance to the stereotypes and confinement that come from a modern society that stifles creativity, innovation, identity and voice.

Lee is a woman to watch and listen to, a woman voicing and already with power.

Laiwan is a Vancouver-based writer, born in Zimbabwe of Chinese origin, who was inspired by Lee Pui Ming's performance to write this piece despite a hectic schedule.



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LETTERS

dear reader

Kinesis loves receiving mail. Please get your letter to us by the 18th of the month.
If you can, keep the length to about 500 words. (If you go way over, we might edit for space.)
Hope to hear from you very soon.

Love,
Kinesis

Not news

Kinesis:

Maybe I'm just bitchy because it keeps on snowing here but honestly, an entire page of nasty infighting in the Vancouver women's community does not give us in the rest of the country the impression that *Kinesis'* priorities are clear *[see* Kinesis, *Letters, Mar. 93]*.

Write us something concrete on Kim Campbell for God's sake. Rise above the other stuff for a while, okay? We don't really care.

Thanks for consistently good articles.

Sincerely,
T. Middlebro
Ottawa, Ontario

Bi debate part 3

Kinesis:

I want to respond to Marlene Wong's comments about bisexuals *[see* Kinesis, *Letters, Mar. 93]*.

Wong writes about her opposition to the inclusion of bisexuals on the masthead of *Angles*, a lesbian and gay publication (this has not increased its coverage of the bisexual community, however). Because of this change, she charges that we "...no longer have a gay and lesbian magazine in Vancouver."

She also states that bisexual women enjoy 'heterosexual privilege' and [they] cannot fully understand her own issues as a lesbian of colour.

Comments such as these about bisexuals have created an open sore in the women's community. I value the concept of lesbian-only culture and space. I believe that our ability to fight oppression is directly related to the strength of our sisterhood. However, the idea that the lesbian community can be defined as women who have sex exclusively with women is simply not true. We have sex with men for pleasure, for procreation, and for protection. Sometimes we are forced to have sex with men. Have you ever asked a bunch of friends: "do you fantasize about sex with men?"

The fact that lesbians choose to have sex with men blurs the line between lesbianism and bisexuality. These labels are chosen by women and cannot be tacked on to anyone without their consent. Consequently, the issue arises that some bisexuals are more woman-identified than some lesbians who prefer not to belong to the women's community because of personal, social and political differences with feminists and/or other lesbians.

Many lesbians equate bisexuality with heterosexuality, and I believe we have to re-examine this prejudice. Our two communities co-exist and many women experience sexuality in various forms over one lifetime.

The difference between lesbian culture and bisexual culture will remain and should be valued. To achieve the most vibrant lesbian culture possible, we need to listen to the many voices who share our women's community and recognize that bisexuals are not part of the straight world unless they choose to be. Just as lesbians are not part of a lesbian community unless they choose to be.

Sincerely,
Chantal Phillips
Vancouver, BC

IMA article lacks

Kinesis:

I would like to make some comments about an article on the India Mahila Association (IMA) by Manisha Singh *[see* Kinesis, *Mar. 93]*. I understand from the article that Singh prefers to see herself in her interviews with members of the IMA as sitting "at my mother's table." Furthermore, she continues with, "It is because of these women, my mothers, that I stand and speak at all."

It's fine if she feels so strongly that her relationships with the women at IMA are only mother-and-daughter defined. However, Singh continues with this classification of relationships between women as being defined by mother-daughter contexts, and then includes me within her very narrowly defined notion of what relationships are possible between women irrespective of age.

Specifically, she says that, as a "younger" woman, I "came to the IMA to 'sit around the kitchen table with their (meaning my) mothers'." I would like to raise issue with how the term "younger" is used and with her clarification of what my relationship was to other members of the IMA.

First of all, I would point out that Singh does not know me, nor my work with the IMA, so she can hardly speak for me or my relationships with other women in the group.

Secondly, I reject her reducing my varied and numerous relationships with other members over so many years into a mother-daughter mould.

Thirdly, maybe Singh should try and understand the heterosexual bias in how words such as "younger" are used and also, what are the implications of reducing relationships between women to only mother-daughter configurations.

For example, it is amply clear that, if one is not married in the South Asian communities and does not have a husband, children and a household—and, if not all, at least some of the above—then one is never quite legitimate. After all, the only way one is recognized as a "real woman" and taken seriously, and given age recognition is when one is married, and/or has children.

I worked with the IMA for over 5 years and there were always women of my age or around my age—younger and older than me—in the IMA. Yet, how is it they are not considered "younger" in the same way as some of us are?

It seems that, because we are not married, we eternally remain "young," which also implies we are immature and thus have an insufficient understanding of what goes on in our communities. So, of course, we never know *what* is going on, and *who* is doing *what* to whom. That is, somehow, only the prerogative of the kind of women I have described above.

To the point then: all this kind of business continues to deny lesbians/lesbianism in South Asian communities.

As women can and do have many different relationships, it is short-sighted to ignore the many dimensions of us as women, sisters, friends, lovers, comrades, aunts, nieces and enemies into only mother-daughter ones.

Surely, our struggle in the IMA was also about challenging how patriarchy has de-

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9:30 PC Nitrate Kisses	9:30 PC WOMEN'S SHORTS Rosebud Transportations Bar Jeder Frau Safe Sex is Hot Sex	9:30 RS Il Etait une fois (Once Upon a Time in the East) MIDNIGHT PC Flaming Ears	9:30 RS Thank God I'm A Lesbian TBA MIDNIGHT PC Too Hot to Handle II Mens Program	9:30 RS Sex Is The Dead Boys Club

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LETTERS

fined our relationships to each other as women.

Sincerely,
Prabha Khosla
Toronto, Ontario

Singh responds

Kinesis:

I am writing in response to a letter to the editor from Prabha Khosla *[see above]* regarding the article I wrote on the India Mahila Association in the March 1993 issue of *Kinesis*.

I appreciate and thank Khosla for her insightful comments.

I would like to begin by providing some personal context. I have been working on a paper about the IMA—specifically—and South Asian women organizing in general for two years now. I interviewed four women from the IMA. It was from those interviews that I received most of my information regarding the activities, politics and personal relationships of this organization. I accepted most of the oral testimony at face value. I should have been more critical. I am very well aware of the many different kinds of relationships which are possible between women and the whole range of relationships which are possible between mothers and daughters. It was not my intention to trap my experience, and yours (which I do not know) within a one-dimensional and suffocating metaphor.

I embarked on this project precisely because "I wanted to sit at my mother's table again." At that time, I needed to see these women as my mothers. For so long I wanted to be white and for me these women became mythic foremothers, who gave birth to my new-found South Asian identity. I recognize now the danger of romanticizing and putting women on a pedestal. It was a learning process which was joyous and painful and always difficult. It still is. In the last month, I have come to realize that while it is important to honour women's voices, we need to be more critical. We have to find ways to challenge each other and most importantly ourselves.

Sincerely,
Manisha Singh
Vancouver, BC

Sage's project ends

Kinesis:

The Vancouver Lesbian Centre (VLC) Collective has had to make an unfortunate decision concerning the Sage's Restaurant Project. We offer our sincere apologies for the length of time it has taken to make this decision and inform you of our decision. The VLC Collective continues to operate the VLC, but we are unable to proceed with our plans to open and operate a women's restaurant.

The VLC began working on the Sage's Restaurant Project in 1988. As part of a Community Economic Development Project, we began to set about the work of opening a non-profit restaurant in Vancouver. Our goal was to operate a non-profit business through which we would accomplish the following objectives: provide employment for women; provide the VLC with a sustaining income; and provide another service to the community by offering women/lesbians a safe, comfortable place to socialize and enjoy cultural events.

We appreciate the support we received from the 115 women who purchased Sage's Restaurant Memberships ranging from $10-$100. Thank you to the women who worked on fundraising for the project and for sharing our vision.

However, the Collective accepts the fact that appeals for further support, either financial or labour, for the project have not been successful and indicate that the project is not a priority for women in Vancouver at this time.

Sage's Restaurant has remained in the planning stages due to the high start-up costs of operating a small business. The pre-opening costs were estimated at $55,000 for a full-service restaurant. An additional $39,000 was required in order to ensure six months operating expenses.

Our business plan was sound and responsible. Our fundraising efforts only allowed us to reach a ceiling of $20,000. The VLC sold Sage's Restaurant Memberships to 115 women and raised $5,790. The remaining funds ($14,210) were raised through coffeehouses, the Restaurant Food Booth at the Folk Festival, raffles and dances.

The VLC Collective now has seven members. Most of us have full-time employment in addition to our VLC work. Several of the founding members of the organization had a very creative solution to the on-going problems of raising enough money to do the service and political work of the VLC.

The restaurant project required a full-time commitment and perhaps several more years of fundraising work. This is not a commitment the current collective is prepared to make at this time.

So where do we go from here...

The VLC Collective will return Sage's Restaurant Memberships to women upon request and we plan to do this without further delay. We want to make the process of returning memberships to women as easy as possible. However, we are not forwarding cheques to addresses which were given to us in 1988 as these addresses may be inaccurate and we want to respect those women who would rather not receive mail at their homes from a lesbian centre.

Should you wish to have your fee returned, please write to us at 876 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3W6, Attn: Fundraising Committee or phone us at 254-8458 and leave a message with your current address. If you wish to donate your fee, we will issue you a tax receipt.

Again, please advise us on which option you prefer. Fees donated to the centre will go towards the cost of continuing the VLC's work. Please let us know if you want your fee returned by August 31, 1993.

If you wish to discuss our decision, please call the VLC and we will return your call.

Thank you for supporting the Sage's Restaurant Project.

Sincerely,
Maureen Mills for the VLC Collective

Kemble smarting

Kinesis:

Diana Kemble and I have known each other in a nomadic sort of way over the period of a couple of decades. We had a visit sometime last year, after [the story] 'women out of focus' by Agnes Huang appeared in the November issue of *Kinesis*.

Regarding her part in the debacle: it was dumb of her, Diana admits; and, "...but, no one mentioned the painting"—that's how she's smarting.

Sincerely,
Jam Ismail
Vancouver, BC

Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women
Conseil consultatif canadien sur la situation de la femme

- **Tax Facts: What Every Woman Should Know**
- **Young Women Speak Out: 1992 Symposium Report**
- **Fact Sheet on Sexual Harassment**
- **Re-evaluating Employment Equity**

These are just a few of the titles recently published by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (CACSW) and available free of charge.

The CACSW is an independent organization, funded by the federal government to advise the government and inform the public on matters of interest and concern to women. The CACSW produces original research on social, economic, and legal issues affecting women in Canada, including reproductive health, employment, income security, and violence against women.

CACSW research is published as books, booklets, background papers, briefs and fact sheets, For a complete list of free CACSW publications, contact the National Office. (The Council reserves the right to limit quantities.)

Western Office
900 West Hastings Street
Room 403
Vancouver, B.C. V6C 1E5
Telephone: (604) 666-0664
Fax: (604) 666-0667

Eastern Office
2021 Union Avenue
Suite 875
Montreal, Quebec H3A 2S9
Telephone: (514) 283-3123
Fax: (514) 283-3048

National Office
110 O'Connor Street
9th Floor
Box 1541, Station B
Ottawa, Ontario KIP 5R5
Telephone: (613) 992-4975
Fax: (613) 992-1715

CACSW/CCCSF
1973 • 1993

BULLETIN BOARD

read this

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

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

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

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

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

Listings will not be accepted over the telephone.

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

Send submissions to Bulletin Board, *Kinesis*, #301-1720 Grant Street, Vancouver, BC, V5L 2Y6. For more information call 255-5499.

EVENTS

VSW WANTS YOU!

Want to get more involved but not sure where to begin? Join us—become a volunteer at Vancouver Status of Women. VSW volunteers plan events, lead groups, raise funds, answer the phone lines and help to connect women with the community resources they need, organize the library and other exciting tasks! Come to committee meetings: Finance/Fundraising **Tues, May 18**, 5:30 pm; Publicity, **Wed, May 19**, 5:30 pm; Programming, **Thurs, May 20**, 5:30pm. The next volunteer potluck and orientation will be on **Wed, May 19**, 7 pm at VSW, #301-1720 Grant St. For more info, call Jennifer at 255-5511.

INTERNATIONAL MOTHER'S DAY

International Mother's Day is a time to support justice. A fundraiser for FEDEFAM (Network of Latin American Committees of Families of the Disappeared) will be held at La Quena, 1111 Commercial Dr., **May 9** at 7 pm. Featured are speakers from El Salvador, Chile and Guatemala with up-dates on the situations in their countries and a FEDEFAM video. Presented by the Vancouver Committee in Support of FEDEFAM. Admission by donation.

WALKATHON AND PICNIC

The 15th Annual Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter Walkathon and Picnic will be held **Sun, May 30**. The 10 km walk around Stanley Park, which is wheel chair and bike accessible, will end with a free lunch and entertainment. Call 255-4294 to register or Regina Lorek at 872-8212 for more info.

POLICE TREATMENT OF WOMEN

A Commission of Inquiry on police actions towards BC women will be held **Tues, May 4**, 10am to 4pm at the Aboriginal Friendship Centre, 1607 E. Hastings. If you wish to present a brief as a member of a women's group or as an individual, please contact Chris or Miche at 255-5511. Wheel chair accessible, signer provided and lunch included.

LIGHTEN UP COLETTE

Come to Hot Flashes Women's Cafe, 106 Superior Street, Victoria, BC, **May 14** between 8 and 11pm for the event. Tix are $2.

FULL MOON POTLUCK

Women's full moon potluck and ritual on **Thurs, May 6** at 6:15 at Josephine's, 1716 Charles. Pre-register at 253-3142. Tix are $2-$5 plus potluck dish.

HAGS, CRONES AND MENOPAUSE

A 3 week workshop for women wanting to dispel myths about menopause and celebrate this passage of their lives. Begins **Mon, May 10** from 7:30-9:30pm at Josephine's, 1716 Charles. Call Pat at 253-7189 to pre-register.

WOMYN'S OPEN STAGE

A monthly event at Josephine's, 1716 Charles, where poets, singers, dancers and performers demonstrate their hidden, or not so hidden, talents. Tix are $2-$5. Doors open at 7:15 pm. If you want to perform, sign up by calling 253-3142.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS

A workshop on "Identity and the Snapshot" will be given by Emily Carr photography teacher Chick Rice on **Sat, May 8** at 9:30am. "Centering the Eye," is a workshop by multi-disciplinary artist Shani Mootoo on strategies of subverting the assumption of the prevailing dominant gaze. Participants will be asked to submit a project idea 2 weeks before the workshop to be held **Sat, May 29** at 9:30am. The workshops are at the Praxis Film Development Workshop, 2-1142 Homer St., and are limited to 15 participants. Pre-register or pay at door. Phone 682-1116 for more info.

ANIMATED READINGS

Christine Taylor, the producer and actress of *Man on the Moon, Woman on the Pill*, will present readings from "More Than One Story" at Josephine's in **Jun**. Call 253-3142 in late **May** for date.

RESIDENTIAL WOMEN'S CAMP

BCWC is offering "Sappho," a camp for pagan lesbians and allies to be held **Jul 25-31**. Workshops on divination, magical herbs, writing the healer with Jena Hamilton, sex and magic, basics of ritual, maskmaking and more. Includes vegetarian meals, lake swims and hiking. Call 253-7189.

WELFARE RIGHTS WORKSHOP

The Vancouver Lesbian Connection, 876 Commercial Dr., is holding a Welfare Rights Workshop on **Tues, May 4,** 7-10pm. Empowerment for those using the system. Bus fare and childcare (at $3/hr) reimbursed. For info call 254-8458.

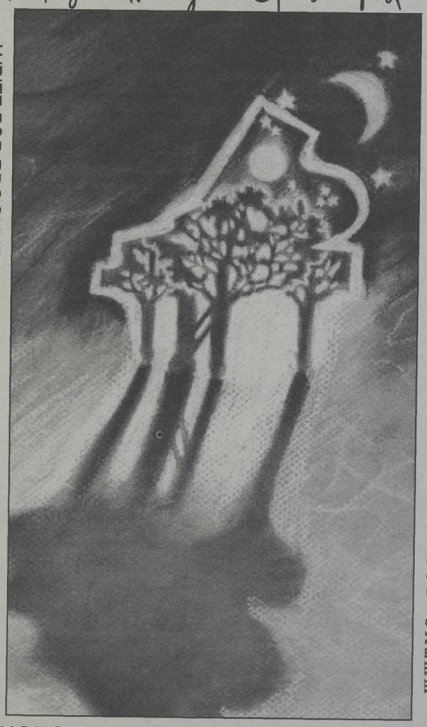
INCIDENT AT OGLALA

OH-TOH-KIN Publications presents a benefit screening of *Incident at Oglala* on **Sat, May 15,** 7:30pm at Carnegie Centre, 401 Main St. Admission by donation.

PERFORMANCE POET

R2B2 Books presents Toronto performance poet Penn Kemp on **Fri, May 7** at 8pm, 2742 W. 4th Ave.

Michigan Womyn's Music Festival



WRITE FOR BROCHURE WITH INFO ON CONCERTS & WORKSHOPS

WWTMC POST OFFICE BOX 22. WALHALLA. MICHIGAN 49458

AUGUST 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15, 1993

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

HER VOICE, OUR VOICES,

A WOMEN'S CAMP

CREATING PATTERNS OF RESPECT

AUGUST 14-21 1993 ❄ BELFAIR, WASHINGTON

ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE
STORYTELLING
Crystal Clarity Bujol, Lakota Harden, Colleen Kelley, Olga Loya

INNER MOVEMENT
DRUMMING
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Barbara Borden, Lizanne Fisher, Adele Getty, Tasnim Hermila Fernandez

SACRED CLOWNS
SACRED THEATRE
Arina Isaacson, Naomi Newman

RITUAL GARMENTS
ROPES
WRITING
Rae Gabriel, Ann Linnea, Christina Baldwin

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
Women's Alliance, P.O. Box 21454, Oakland, CA 94620
510 658-2949
OR LOCAL CONTACT
Hilary Mackey 604 251-9057

BULLETIN BOARD

EVENTS

BOOK LAUNCH
Montreal writer Gail Scott will launch her new book *Main Brides* at R2B2 Books, 2742 W. 4th Ave., **Sun, May 16** at 2pm.

MAYWORKS FESTIVAL
The sixth annual Mayworks Festival runs from **Apr 29-May 8**. Film and Video Festival: Independent directors including Pratiba Parmar and Sara Diamond deal with subjects ranging from motherhood to wage labour at the Pacific Cinematheque, 1131 Howe St., from **May 4-8**. Censored in BC: Art by Kiss and Tell, Melva Forsberg, Katie Campbell and others which has been censored for sexual, racial and political reasons, will be on exhibit at the IWA Hall, 2859 Commercial Drive. Censored Performance Cabarets: Music and poetry performances by Veda Hille & Her Band, Deirdre Walker, Evelyn Lau, Heidi Archibald, Dana Claxton and Ingrid Percy, **Apr 30 & May 1** at 8pm, IWA Hall. Dish Pigs and Wage Slaves: May day youth afternoon at the IWA Hall with videos and bands, including cub, **May 1**, 2pm, for all ages. Fiction ,Fantasy and Fragmentation: Leila Sujir will present a lecture and screening of "Fiction, Fantasy and Fragmentation" on **May 6** at 8pm at Video In, 1102 Homer St. Visions of Clayoquot: Speakers including Valerie Langer of Friends of Tofino will be at IWA Hall on **May 3** at 7:30pm. Solidarity Cabaret: Yellowknife Miners Solidarity Cabaret to be held at the WISE Hall, Adanac & Victoria, on **May 7** at 7:30pm. Call 874-2906 for Festival info.

GEIST EVENING
Susan Crean will talk on "Imagining life in North America" on **May 6** at 7pm at the Grandview Restaurant, 60 W. Broadway. Tix are $25. Reserve by calling 254-9155.

EVENTS

A STEP BEHIND
The Victoria Status of Women Action Group and the UVIC Faculty of Law are sponsoring a conference on stalking, threatening and intimidation to be held at UVIC **May 14-15**. For more info call SWAG at 381-1012.

DAY CARE CONFERENCE
The third national conference of the Canadian Child Day Care Federation will be held in Toronto **May 26-29**. For more info phone (613) 729-5289.

UNLEARNING RACISM
The workshop on **Jun 4** at 7:30pm and **Jun 6** at 3pm, will focus on safety, confidentiality and communicating with respect. Cost: $250-$85 sliding scale. To pre-register call Celeste at 251-2635.

FREE LAW CLASSES
The People's Law School presents free law classes on: "Separation and Divorce"-find out how to get a divorce, what your property and pension rights are, and if you need a lawyer. At Champlain Heights Community School, 6955 Frontenac, **Mon, May 17** at 7pm. To pre-register call 438-4041. "Welfare Rights and Gain"-at Gordon Neighbourhood House, 1019 Broughton, **Wed, May 19** at 7pm. Pre-register by calling 683-2554. "Child Apprehension"-learn about your rights if a ministry social worker comes for a home visit. At Carnegie Learning Centre, 401 Main St., **Wed, May 19** at 2pm. Pre-register at 665-3013.

WITT CONFERENCE
The Western Regional Conference of Women in Trades and Technologies will be held **May 6-9** at Island Hall Beach Resort, Parksville, BC. Registration deadline is **Apr 28**, however late reservations will be accepted if space is available.

EVENTS

TALES OF DESCENT
The Karen Jamieson Dance Company presents *Tales of Descent*, a physical allegory about a journey to the underworld. It will be held at the Waterfront Theatre, Granville Island from **May 20-Jun 5**. To reserve call 685-6217.

FORGED SUBJECTIVITY
Cornelia Wyngaarden will be showing a multimedia installation of videos, photographs, paintings and text at Presentation House, 333 Chesterfield, N Van, from **Apr 14-May 30**. Through her reconstruction of the inner life of a 19th century woman, the artist investigates feminist issues such as gender difference and its public expression.

JUDY SMALL
Vancouver Folk Music Festival presents Judy Small at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre, 1895 Venables, **Jun 6**, 8pm. One of Australia's best-loved singer/songwriters, her music provides social comment that is sharp, honest, and filled with humour and pathos. Tix $18. VECC box office 254-9578.

PEGGY BAKER
Vancouver East Cultural Centre presents Peggy Baker **May 5-8**, 8 pm at the VECC, 1895 Venables. One of Canada's most acclaimed dance artists, Ms. Baker will perform a "dazzling" program of dance and live music featuring three Vancouver premieres. She will be accompanied by dancer Janie Brendel, and musicians Andrew Burashko and Ahmed Hassan. Tix: $12 **May 5**, $14 **May 6**, and $18 **May 7-8**, available from the VECC box office at 254-9578 or Ticketmaster at 280-3311.

CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL
The 16th Annual Vancouver Children's Festival takes place **May 31-Jun 6** at Vanier Park, 1100 Chestnut St. This year's focus is the Pacific Rim. Music, dance, theatre, comedy and storytelling from 10 different countries. Tix at Ticketmaster or charge by phone, 280-4444. Info: 687-7697.

ALL GROWN UP
Vancouver actor/singers Lori Valleau, Ellen Kennedy, and Bonnie Panych present their celebration of 60s Girl Groups at the Arts Club Revue Theatre on Granville Island. Runs until **May 15**, showtimes 8:30 pm **Mon-Fri**, 6 & 9:30 pm **Sat**, 2 for 1 matinees **Wed** 5pm. Tix: Arts Club Box Office at 697-1644 or Ticketmaster at 280-3311.

JEWISH THEATRE
Jewish Young People's Theatre presents *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, **May 30,** 1 pm & 3 pm at the Van East Cultural Centre, 1895 Venables. Drawn from the poems, diaries, drawings and letters of the children of Terezin concentration camp. Written by Celeste Raspante, directed by Lynda Goldhar-Smith. Tix $8 general, $5 children (12 and under).

EVENTS

ANI DIFRANCO
Ani DiFranco returns to the Van East Cultural Centre, 1895 Venables, **May 16,** 8pm, with new songs and a new recording, *Puddle Dive*. Presented by the Vancouver Folk Music Festival. Tix $18.

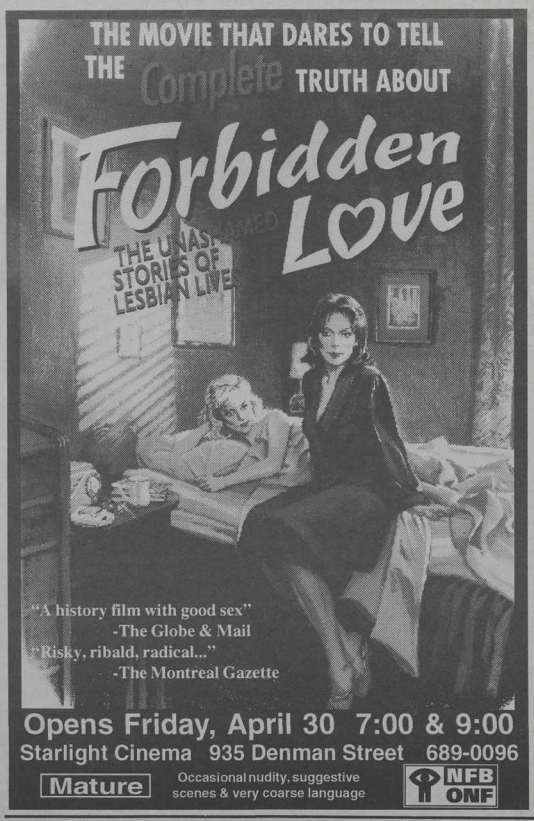
AMANDA HUGHES
In concert at the Van East Cultural Centre, 1895 Venables, **May 22** at 8 pm, Amanda Hughes celebrates the release of her new CD. A unique blend of gospel, R&B, Jazz, Funk and Reggae. Tix $15.

CENTRE FOR ECONOMICS
The 13th Summer Institute on Political Economy and International Institute on Economics will be held **Aug 8-14** in Northfield, MA. Designed for activists from labour unions, women's groups, anti-racist and community organizations. Fees: $475-$675 includes room & board and instruction. Some scholarship money available, childcare provided. Info: Centre for Popular Economics, PO Box 785, Amherst, MA, 01004,(413)773-5454.

LESBIAN & GAY FILM FEST
The Sixth Northwest International Film Festival takes place at Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA, **May 1-2**. Pratibha Parmar will be showing clips from her work and sharing her personal process as filmmaker in a presentation entitled "Framing Identities" on **Sat**, 8 pm. Call (206) 866-6000, ext. 6542 for info on free housing, childcare, and other films. Tix $5 US per film/$8 US for Parmar presentation.

NWSA CONFERENCE
National Women's Studies Association holds its 1993 conference **Jun 16-20** in Washington, DC at the Washington Marriott Hotel. The theme is Reweaving Women's Colours: Scholarship, Curriculum and Our Lives. Also featured are Saffire: The Uppity Blues Women, the Reel World String Band, a book fair, and three days of films and video screenings. Fees: $45-$140 based on income. Contact NWSA, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, 20742-1325 or call (301) 405-5573.

7TH ANNUAL GOLDEN THREADS
Golden Threads, the worldwide network for Lesbian women over 50 and their younger women friends, will celebrate in Provincetown, MA, **Jun 25-27**. Entertainment, banquet, dancing, feminist videos, raps, sing-a-longs, etc. Limited to 250 women. Info: Christine Burton, Golden Threads, PO Box 60475, Northampton, MA 01060-0475, (413) 247-9936.



Opens Friday, April 30 7:00 & 9:00
Starlight Cinema 935 Denman Street 689-0096
Mature
Occasional nudity, suggestive scenes & very coarse language
NFB ONF

Spring Marathon May 19-30
CO·OP 102.7 Roots Radio
12 Days in May
Co-op Radio CFRO 102.7 FM
Listener Powered!
Community-Based!
Programming Highlights
Friday, May 21, 9am-noon: ***Blues & Jazz: A Womenvisions Perspective***
Blues & Jazz in relation to women as listeners, as performers and as musicians.
Friday, May 21, 8-10pm: ***Women Who Shaped the 60s***
Join Connie Kuhns for Rubymusic and an overview of the women who shaped the 60s and their music.
Thursday, May 27, 9am-midnight: ***Police, Power and People: In the Global Village and in Our Village: To Serve and Protect... Who?***
Featuring Barbara Ehrenreich, Bev Scow, Angela Davis and others.
Saturday, May 29, 8am-6pm: ***Generation Z... A Focus on Our Collective Futures, Children***
A day long presentation with segments about, for and by children.

BULLETIN BOARD

GROUPS

VLC

Vancouver Lesbian Connection, 876 Commercial Dr., is open **Tues & Thurs** 12-7pm and **Sat** 12-5pm. Please call before coming down because we are understaffed. Still looking for volunteers for all areas of the centre - fundraising, political action, outreach and education, and centre staff is the most needed. Thank you to the women who have called interested in volunteering. The numbers have been larger than expected (and certainly welcomed!) so we're planning on holding an information night soon.We need a facilitator for the youth group on Sunday eves. We are still taking names for the Coming Out Groups, however, the next group starting will be in September while we strengthen the program; please call the centre for more info or alternative groups in the city. Free professional counselling by appt. only. **Mon** 3-5 pm Free body massage with Jo, no appt. necessary; 7 pm Survivors of Incest Anonymous. **Tues** eves. Body piercing by appt. only, call Book Mantel for info. 30's and Up Social and Support Group, 1st & 3rd **Fri** each month. Women's Writing Group 6-9 pm 1st & 3rd **Sat.** For info, call 254-8458.

WOMEN'S LAND TRUST

Sky Ranch is a non-profit land trust for women in a semi-wilderness area north of Tweedsmuir Park. We are feminists aiming for self-sufficiency and an ecologically sensitive lifestyle within a co-operative structure. We are committed to accessibility for low income women and children, and are involved in the politics and concerns of our community. We invite women who are interested in joining or visiting to contact us: Roxanne Sanderson and Judith Quinlan, C4 Site 20 RR 2, Burns Lake, BC V0J 1E0

LEGAL ADVICE PROGRAM

The Law Students' Legal Advice Program (LSLAP) is offering free legal advice to those who cannot afford a lawyer. The program will hold 20 neighbourhood clinics throughout the Lower Mainland, including a specialized clinic for women. Advice offered on small claims actions, landlord-tenant disputes, welfare, UIC claims and appeals, WCB, wills, employer-employee relations and criminal matters. LSLAP also offers a Do-Your-Own-Divorce program which provides low-cost divorces for those seeking uncontested divorces. For info call 822-5791.

SUBMISSIONS

RACE, CULTURE AND SEXUALITY

The Contemporary Cultural Projects Committee of Vancouver's Chinese Cultural Centre is calling for work for Race, Culture and Sexuality, a multidisciplinary series of art events scheduled for **Oct-Nov**. It is intended to showcase the work of artists of diverse backgrounds and artistic practices, actively engaged with how these issues interact. If you have or are preparing work in any media—writing, visual art, music, film, performance, video—that deals specifically with race and culture and sexuality—we want to hear from you. Please send information about your project including: form of presentation (film, dance, reading, etc.); brief description and working title; number of artists involved; technical needs; sample of your work; your background as an artist (brief bio or resume) to: Curatorial Committee, Race Culture & Sexuality, Chinese Cultural Centre, 50 E. Pender St., Vancouver, BC, V6A 3V6. Deadline: **May 21**. Artists will be notified by late **Jul**. Info: Beverly Yhap, interim coordinator, (604) 687-0729.

CRIAW RESEARCH GRANTS

The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women offers annually 8 grants of $2,500 for projects that promote the advancement of women. The project must make a significant contribution to feminist research and be non-sexist in methodology and language. Priority will be given to emerging independent researchers, women's groups, and projects with Canadian content. CRIAW does not fund research which is part of the requirements for an educational degree nor does it fund projects for aid to publication. The Marta Danylewycz Memorial Fund was established with the primary objective of continuing, promoting, and supporting work in women's history from a feminist perspective. The Fund supports historical research undertaken in the following areas: women and ethnicity, women and religion, women and work, women and social reform, women and education, women and family. The Fund is administered by CRIAW. The award consists of one grant of $2,000. Masters or Doctoral students who are in the latter stages of their thesis or dissertation are eligible to apply. Applications for the above grants are available from the CRIAW office and must be postmarked no later than **Aug 31**. Candidates should send four copies of their CV along with four copies of their application. Applicants will be notified of the results prior to the AGM and conference, held in mid-**Nov**. Contact: 151 Slater St., Suite 408, Ottawa, Ont. K1P 5H3 Tel: (613) 563-0681. FAX: 563-0682. TDD: 563-1921.

ASIAN LESBIANS AND BISEXUALS

Sister Vision Press is publishing an anthology of writing and artwork by Asian Lesbians and Bisexual women. Sexuality, activism, racism, homophobia, relationships, immigration, identity, erotica, bi-culturalism, family issues, art—in short, our lives. Send fiction, poetry, essays, interviews, short plays, autobiography, journal entries, photographs, prints, drawings, photos of sculpture or paintings, etc. Deadline is **Sep 1**. Send submissions with an SASE. Please write if you have special needs or questions. Sister Vision Press, PO Box 217, Stn. E, Toronto, Ont. M6H 4E2

CLASSIFIEDS

COORDINATOR WANTED

Women Aloud!, a new Surrey feminist collective, needs a professional Counsellor/ Support Group Coordinator. As one of a team of three women providing sexual assault services with the centre, the candidate should have extensive experience and appropriate education. The position will include crisis work and training facilitators for groups. Position is 28 hours per week at $18/hour. Women of colour and of Native ancestry are encouraged to apply. Fax resume to 583-3271 by **May 7**, Attn: Women Aloud!

SALTSPRING ISLAND RETREAT

A rural oceanview home on 1.5 acres is for rent by the week or month. Includes all amenities and sleeps five. Near the beach, park and ferry, this retreat allows an affordable holiday great for those who love nature, creative pursuits or biking. Call Donna 1-537-1046.

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smoke free cappuccino bar · light vegetarian meals · art & crafts · gifts & music · pool table
Open Tuesday → Sunday
Womyn's Open Stage
Friday, May 28th
Book your Special Event with Us

photo by NJ Pollak

The forecast is sun, sun, and more sun (we hope) for this year's Single Mother's Day Sunday, May 9, 1-5 pm. Frolic, laughter, free snacks, clowns, puppeteers and other endless excitement will be on hand. Call Miche at 255-5511 for more info and location.

CLASSIFIEDS

ATTENDANT NEEDED

A personal care attendant is needed to live at house 4 days/week. Call Mary at 254-4026 before 10am or after 7pm.

ART THERAPY

The Canadian Art Therapy Association and the BC Association will be holding a joint conference in Vancouver on **Oct 2**. The theme will be "Images of Healing from Within." Call 273-3451 with enquiries.

MEETING FOR UNITY '94

There will be a general meeting **Sat, May 8** at 10am for anyone interested in helping launch Vancouver's teams heading for the Unity '94 Games in New York. It will be held at the West End Community Centre's Bidwell Room, 870 Denman.

HOUSE SITTER AVAILABLE

A house sitter is available from **Jun 1** for 1 -3 months. Will care for plants and pets. Stable and working—wants some time alone. Call 254-5824 and leave a message.

GIBSONS ROOM AND BOARD

Are you looking for an opportunity to move away from the city? A chance to live a ferry ride away—by the ocean? A single parent family—busy, friendly and political—is looking to provide board and your own space in exchange for gardening, some yard work and household duties. These tasks are part-time and will leave you free to pursue your interests in a secluded setting. Drop a line to: PO Box 1033, Gibsons, BC, V0N 1V0.

CELEBRATE YOUR SEXUALITY

Rubyfruit Erotica is a Canadian mailorder company operated by women for women. Our catalogue offers an exciting range of erotic accessories including massage oils, vibrators, dildos, condoms, and sensual lubes. Rubyfruit arises out of the conviction that we are the best experts concerning our own sexuality and by discovering it first on our own terms. For your plain-wrapped full colour catalogue send $4 to: Martin Enterprises, Postal Station P, Box 386 K, Toronto, Ont., M5S 2S9.

ROBIN GOLDFARB RMT
Registered Massage Therapist
Approach Massage Therapy Clinic
3585 West 4th Avenue
Vancouver, B.C. V6R 1R6
731-7838

CLASSIFIEDS

HOUSE TO SHARE

Roommate (female, N/S) to share bright, beautifully treed home and garden in Dunbar with professional N/S lesbian. Rent $600 or $525 depending on size of bedroom. Available mid **Jul** or **Aug 1**. Call 263-7675.

CABIN FOR RENT

Sunshine Coast cabin by the water available for monthly or weekly rentals. It is furnished and sleeps 3-4 people. Phone 1-886-4584 for more info.

SEX ADDICTION

Affordable counselling for exploring your family issues and relationship conflicts and concerns. As a registered professional counsellor, I work with women overcoming abuse, co-dependency, sex and relationship addiction and increasing their self-esteem. For a brochure or information call Carol Vialogos, 731-0758. First session free.

A WOMAN'S PLACE

Emotional Fitness Centre Counselling, education and consulting service of the North Shore. Offers feminist and lesbian affirmative counselling, workshops, support groups. Areas of specialization: low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, communication, relationship difficulties, emotional, physical, sexual abuse recovery, coming out. Call Lou Moreau at 924-2424 RCC.

COUNSELLING NOW

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