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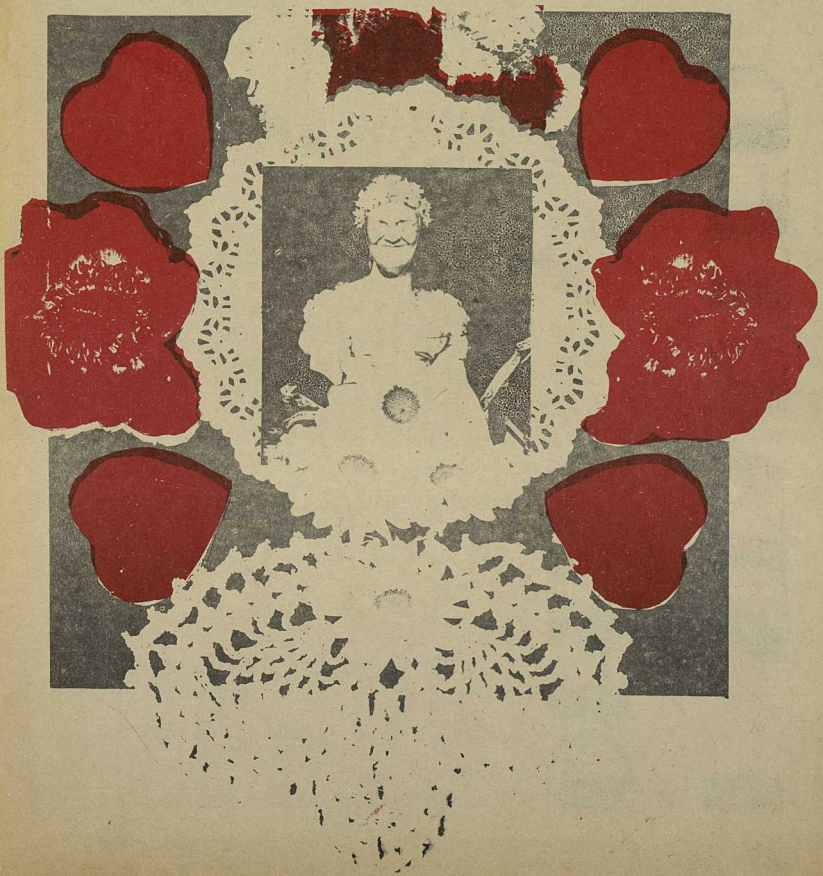
PEDESTAL

VANCOUVER WOMEN'S LIBERATION NEWSPAPER



I STARTED OFF...

I started off with Betty Frieden's The Feminine Mystique. It was back some 8 years or so ago, so I don't know how it would be thought of today. I've heard a lot against it. But regardless, it was the very beginning for me. I had been miserably unhappy, but not really knowing why. I had everything the stereotyped image said I should only expect. I had a husband, home and four children. I was kept under a roof, and fed regularly. So why should I be unhappy?

The image never was for me. But back in the fifties, everyone just followed it, no questions asked. And at 18 I followed the crowd, and gave in to it. And I had moments of happiness. I'm very maternal so having children was a nice experience. And I like moments in front of the fireplace, and all that. But more and more I saw, that I was not to be allowed to be myself. The more I grew and changed into a woman, the less I was allowed to leave the structure of the image. And the whole thing was stifling me. I felt like I was choking to death. I couldn't even feel that I had my own days. I had to wake up to a role, and that role interchangeable with other roles, took over, and the human being that I was, inside, was not being allowed to come forth. There wasn't enough time to be a person. The roles were demanding and time consuming.

Finally I was 29, and I had gone through a nervous breakdown. The common outlet, against the choking prison my life seemed to have become. And a doctor talked to me one day, while I was in hospital. He was the only one who didn't stuff me full of pills, and ignore me. He told me I should go out and find who I was. He told me I should follow my own tune, not others. He asked me who I was, and I couldn't even answer him. I just didn't know. I didn't even have one single opinion on anything. To actually sit down and think about things, and form my own opinions on them, was the hardest thing I had ever done in my life.

But when I forced myself to do it, I found reasons why I was so unhappy. It was not my own life I had been living. It was my husband's life, or my mother's life, or my mother-in-law's life. I spent my days trying to please them. Trying to be accepted, but never really making it. It got to be a merry-go-round, without my ever being able to get off. And I wanted to get off. I wanted to touch things again, as I had as a child. I wanted to forget about the demands of roles, and lay out in the grass, and touch it, and smell it, and taste it. One day after I'd come home from the hospital, I noticed some strange looking flowers, on the trees in the wood across from my home.

I had lived there for many years, and yet I'd not seen those flowers before. So I got out of the house, and walked across the street to the wood, and looked at these strange looking blooms growing from the trees. What were they? And I asked an old man walking down the street, collecting old beer bottles from the ditches, what they were, and he looked at me very strangely, and said, "They are dogwood blossoms, my dear." and off he went, down the road.

I swear I'd never seen them there before, and yet I had gone through many springs in that home, and obviously the blossoms must have been visible from my living room window, all those years. Where had I been?? Had I been dead, without knowing it?

Nothing could stop me from that time on. I picked up rocks and looked at them, I laid for long periods of time just looking at the clouds and their different shapes, and what magical things they do in the sky. I touched and I smelled, and I tasted everything. I took my children away from their T.V. sets, and I gave them things to touch and smell, and taste too.

I was alive, and I had discovered it, before I had died. How very lucky I came to feel, and the more alive I became, the less alive I saw others to be. People just walking without looking. People just talking without speaking, and nobody wanted real answers to questions. People wanted other people to play the games they had played for so long. And I couldn't play those games anymore. And people became frightened of me. They backed off from me, and the loneliness was another thing to have to cope with.

My life as a wife, had to come to an end. I didn't want it to end, but my husband would not accept the new woman living in that house with him. I frightened him, I think, or threatened him, I don't know exactly which. I didn't stay in the background anymore, I had come to read a great deal, and I spoke my opinions at parties, and he didn't like it. He did not like the way I wanted to go out with a girlfriend for a beer. He became quite scared of what I had become. But once I had started to grow, I couldn't go back. It would have been impossible for me to go back. So I left the marriage.

I then found out, that being independent in theory, was far different than living it. And a whole new struggle came about. But I weathered it, and I survived. I didn't think I would some of the time, but I did, and so did the children with me. I learned to stand on my own two feet. And after a few years it was much better. The court hassles were over with, and I felt like I was able to breath again.

It is a good thing to have a achieved one's own freedom. Sometimes I felt like throwing in the towel, but I stuck it out, and now I see the reward. The reward being my own freedom.

This article is actually part of a longer letter sent to the Pedestal Collective. Our thanks to N. Miller who shared this experience.

Where I came from, no one ever talked about Lesbianism, not even dirty jokes. It was simply not considered. I was having fantasies about women at the age of eleven and thoroughly convinced that I would be satisfied doing this for the rest of my life. Of course, it was not enough and I withdrew. When I was thirteen my mother, my sister, my brother and I all moved to Edmonton, the big city. My mother told me later that she made the decision to move because I needed help. And help I got. Professional people said why don't you wear dresses and try to be more pleasant. I didn't like dresses at all but I wore them and became even more aware of my ugliness because I just didn't feel natural wearing them. I just drifted along feeling ugly and unpleasant.

A shrink I had put me in hospital for 6 weeks when I was 14 and I took a crash course in being femininely well-adjusted. I knew that I had failed once more. After about a year I broke down completely and was taken crying and screaming to the provincial mental hospital in Alberta where I was put in seclusion. Being sixteen is no easy thing and knowing underneath that you are attracted physically and emotionally to other females does not make it any easier.

I had reached a point where all I wanted was someone to tell me that I wasn't an ugly perverted creep but really a pretty nice person which I was and still am today. Nobody did it. I got the old dresses and makeup routine again which I went along with but I knew wasn't working. Boy I must be really fucked up. Those people know what the're doing and it isn't working for me.

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LESBIAN DROP IN every Monday nite at Women's Bookstore 804 Richards 8-10 pm phone no. 684-0523
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Months and months went by and I went in and out of hospital. When I was home I tried to do the things girls are supposed to do like fucking. I found out that fucking hurts, at least it hurt me in my head and in my body. It hurts a lot more when you are trying desperately to be something you're not.

In the hospital everything you did was part of someone else's schedule. And when you got upset and needed someone to be real with you, you messed up the schedule and were punished according to how upset you got. Not wanting to work in the laundry or patient coffee shop got you doing ward duties like cleaning washrooms or tidying the linen closet every day. If you were really upset, nobody bothered to ask why, they just carted you off the the other building and locked you in a concrete room. Getting out of seclusion depended on how quickly you could decide to play their game once more. And if you were a lesbian, it was another abnormality to be dealt with. I was still thinking that fantasies were enought but they weren't because I wasn't "getting any better". In and out for two years, then I got Shock Treatments which don't appear to do much except mess up your memory and label you as chronic. If you need shock you must be really sick because nothing else has worked. Doctors saw me but they didn't want to know about how I felt or why I felt it. They wanted to know why I wasn't doing this or that. Why wasn't I conforming to their standards. I didn't know.

I must be really fucked up. I passed through those years feeling totally alienated. There was pain I can't describe, crying at night and wearing Maybelline in the day time. Sick because I didn't fit in. I told a male social worker when I was in hospital for the last time that I thought I might be a lesbian. He didn't seem to want to talk about it and immediately got on about making myself more attractive for my husband (I had married this creep and lived with him for a few weeks). So I kept on passing the time all the time feeling that I had let the cat out of the bag. Two or three months later I moved to Vancouver and checked into the YWCA. A big step for a fraidy cat. Some months went by and then the Public Health nurse at the Y suggested that I see a psychiatrist friend of hers whom she happened to be seeing as well. She said he wasn't like the rest of them. Prepared to go through life having fantasies and being miserable about all my perversions I figured why the fuck not. It took me a long time to warm up when I saw a shrink but I was feeling a little braver now that I had made the move to Vancouver. Eventually I told him that I thought I might be bisexual almost sliding off my chair in embarassment. I was so humiliated. All he said was...so what. We got into talking about it and I started to notice all kinds of good feelings inside me.

Wendy McIvor

UNIONS (Or an insight into the workings of a male union organizer)

The following is an interview with a 47 year old Union Organizer for the Retail Clerks Union, local 1518. The man's name is Fred Pflueger, he has been in this field for 18 years, organizing unions who's memberships are predominantly female, and most recently he was instrumental in organizing Shoppers Drug Mart .

ME: How did you get started in this occupation?

FRED: I worked as a clerk in an unorganized Shop Easy and initiated the steps to organizing it.

ME: If a group of women wish to get organized in their place of work, what things should they know in order to avoid legal hassle at the outset of their attempts to institute unionization, i.e. for what things can they be fired or prosecuted?

FRED: Everything about this is sort of up in the air because all previous labour laws are being changed. Bill 11, the Trade Unions Act is soon to be released as law. Unfortunately a lot of this new bill contains fragments of the old labour laws; some things are not so good. A lot of this new Act is untested and it'll go to court on a lot of things but that's normal procedure for anything new.

Women who want to organize should know that it is their legal right to join not only a trade union with no interference from management, but any organization. Management will interfere immediately because it is going to cost them money in wages and fringe benefits. Regardless of what the Act says, management will interfere. That's why speed is so important.

The first thing to do is to talk it up among other employees and find out if you have a majority but be careful. I hate to say this, but you have to be secretive initially when you are assessing interest. Then seek competent information, if you know you have a majority (51%), regarding how to go about getting a union in. Then assist the union in it's endeavours to organize. Speed is of essence!

ME: What does the 51% actually entail?

FRED: 51% of the employees of the employer within the bargaining unit must verify their intention of wanting union representation by signing cards and normally, spending a very small fee to join. This information is held in strict confidence by the trade union and only shown to the Department of Labour.

ME: Who could they get their competent information from?

FRED: Someone from the Department of Labour or a full-time officer from the trade union they would come under. Just call the Department of Labour and they will direct you to the correct trade union.

ME: What can women who are attempting to organize do to be sure they won't be fired?

FRED: Nothing...but they should make notes of all discussion that takes place with management regarding the institution of a union in their company. They should record everything they can think of and list all people present. Anyone who is fired for organizing can be reinstated as soon as the union is in. They are reinstated with all lost wages and they do not lose their seniority. If they are asked, "Did you sign a card?" they do not have to answer that. Women should know this. This information is confidential and there is no way management can find out for sure.

ME: I'm interviewing you primarily because you are a union organizer for a union that has a predominance of female members and because you are accessible to me. How many women organizers are there in your predominantly female union?

FRED: None. At least none on a full-time basis. Why not? Because no women have ever applied when a vacancy has come up. It is not restricted to men. Only one woman has applied for a position as full-time officer over the last several years. However, the Executive Board is well represented by women.

ME: How well represented?

FRED: Well here, let's take a look. Well...gee I thought there were more...it seems there are still more men than women but even so, I feel this is very good representation.

There are Women organizers in the drug industry but they are just beginning to get involved. The women in the food industry are not discriminated against so they don't particularly feel the need to have women organizers.

ME: Would you say generally women are receptive to organization or not?

FRED: Yes, they are. Those who aren't just don't know how easy it is to organize and get a contract regarding wages and conditions. They're receptive because they are underpaid and overworked compared to men doing similar jobs.

ME: Why aren't department store female employees organized?

FRED: Because management does a good job of public relations, i.e. "We're one big happy family." They employ so many part-time people who feel they personally won't benefit because they'll be in the field such a short time. There's always the fear of being fired. Retail Clerks employers are penalized for employing part-time people excessively by having to pay part-time employees a premium hourly rate above the full-time hourly rate, thereby discouraging part-time positions.

ME: What about bank employees?

FRED: The laws work against unions in banks in British Columbia. The law states that all branches of a bank must be in favour of having union representation before any one branch can organize. They have to have that signed up 51% of all branches. Bank employees are among the most poorly-paid in B. C. but it's hard to build up solidarity when the branches are so spread out throughout the province.

ME: Women in industry?

FRED: Men in industry are oriented to unions because the blue collar industry is highly organized and it has a predominance of males, so it carries on and on from industry to industry. Now they simply expect to belong to a union. Originally the white collar segments were only a small group in an industry but due to expansion and centralization, one finds large office segments unorganized and predominantly female.

ME: Why are they predominantly female?

FRED: I think it's because women can do better office work than men because of ingrained mental and physical aptitude. Many women take office training in school. They're conditioned to think they can only do light work.

Also, for some reason I can't explain, women will accept the low wages and men won't.

ACROSS CANADA FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA ETC.

NORTH WEST TERRITORIES

c/o Nellie Cournoyea
Inuvik

N.W.T. Status of Women
Box 1225
Yellowknife

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Women's Centre
804 Richards Street
Vancouver

Women's Centre
Box 521
Nelson

Women's Resource Centre
2961 Jackman (272nd)
Aldergrove

Women's Centre
#414-1029 Douglas Street
Victoria

Women's Place
639 Selby Street
Nanaimo

Women's Centre
459 Nicola, upstairs
Kamloops

QUEBEC

Women's Info & Referral Ctr.
3595 St. Urbain
Montreal 131

La Place Des Femmes
3764 Boul. St. Laurent
Montreal
845-7146

ALBERTA

Women's Centre
118812 95th Street
Edmonton

SASKATCHEWAN

Women's Centre*
147 2nd Avenue S.
Saskatoon

Women's Centre
1 Angus Street
Regina

MANITOBA

Women's Liberation
c/o Millie Lam
#10-812 Wolseley
Winnipeg

Women's Place
300 Victor Street
Winnipeg

ONTARIO

Women's Centre*
136 Lewis Street
Ottawa

The Woman's Place
968 University Ave. West
Windsor

Women's Centre
306 Herkimer Street
Hamilton

Women's Resource Centre*
283 Dufferin
London

c/o L. Silvonen
318 Marks Street
Thunder Bay, "F"

Women's Collective
300 Erb Street
Waterloo

Women's Place*
31 Dupont Street
Toronto
929-3185

Women's Place
366 Water Street
Peterborough

NEWFOUNDLAND

Women's Place *
204 Water Street
St. John's

NEW BRUNSWICK

c/o Linda Gow
YWCA
27 Wellington Row
St. John

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

c/o Joanne Opperman
Wellington
RR#1
Grand River

NOVA SCOTIA

Women's Bureau
Box 3596
Halifax South Postal Stn.
Halifax

WHY

HAVE YOU BEEN CONSIDERING THE ORGANIZATION OF A UNION WHERE YOU WORK?

Are you fed up with being asked to work little past 5, just to "get this caught up" and fed up with it being 25 minutes only so you are made to feel greedy if you press for overtime pay?

The following are excerpts from the contract of the Retail Clerks Union, local 1518. Read them and see what you are missing.

"Effective December 31, 1973, regular full time employees shall accumulate paid time off at the rate of three hours for each basic work week completed. Basic work weeks shall be those described in this subsection.

Days off with pay as a result of accumulated paid time off shall in the week in which they are taken be considered as hours of that basic work week.

When an employee has accumulated 8 hours he or she shall receive a day off with pay scheduled by the employer within the next four weeks, such day to be combined with an employee's regular day off when it does not interfere with the efficient of the store.

If an employee is required to work more than one (1) hour but not more than two (2) hours overtime, he or she shall be given a fifteen (15) minute paid rest period. If overtime of more than two (2) hours is to be worked, an employee will be given a one-half unpaid meal period and a meal allowance of two dollars ($2.00). This provision applies to overtime in excess of an eight (8) hour day.

All work performed on Sunday, whether part of or in addition to an employee's regular work week, shall be paid at double time.

All employees shall be paid their regular hourly rate for hour worked except where employed for less than four (4) consecutive hours per day, in which event, they shall receive a minimum of four (4) hours pay. An employee who is called for work and upon reporting finds that his or her services are not required shall receive two (2) hours pay.

The employer shall not discrm inate between male and female employees by paying a female employee at a rate of pay less than the rate of pay paid to a male employee for the same work performed in the same establishment

An employee who is pregnant shall be given leave of absence without loss of seniority or other privileges from eleven (11) weeks prior to delivery until six (6) weeks after delivery or for such longer period after delivery as her doctor may certify providing this does not exceed twelve (12) weeks after delivery. In order to qualify an employee must have worked for her employer for one year prior to the commencement of the leave of absence.

No one could think of a title for this.....

"I've been thinking of doing a music thing about women for the Pedestal; maybe I'll come to the meeting and see what people think."

Pat said that what I should in fact do was to write the thing and then bring it in. True, actually. The only way I will get it done. If I go to the Pedestal meeting on Sunday morning and we all talk about a music column or article or a series of articles and maybe about who it should be about it would seem to me like it was already done, and then I would procrastinate and think about maybe I should do it on Joan Baez, for example because actually she was one of my first ones, or maybe Joni Mitchell from Saskatoon 158 miles from my home town or maybe Buffy St. Marie who was born on the Indian Reserve close to home instead of Dory Previn who just appears right in the middle all chronological logical order be damned for no reason at all. I told Beth at lunch the other day (names can be changed to protect the guilty...) that I was going to do it on Dory and she said to me, triple-O sauce spattering my hair as she whipped her hands about in the air, "Oh, she's my hero!" Mine too, Beth, and Dobbyn's and Pat likes her and my friend Paul who never used to really appreciate or understand or cope with the woman, my friend Mardou, whom he lives with, has come to know her better through Dory's songs. I understand myself better too. It's nothing heavy-cosmic, don't misunderstand me. She tells the truth about what she knows; she knows her imagination is not going to kill her.

I guess it was 4, maybe 5 years ago. It was cold out and there was snow, and I was walking down Hamilton Street to the Lasalle Hotel Coffeeshop to meet someone for something. I had just passed Harmony Records and was down about to the Pay-N-Save Drugstore when I heard Max call my name and tell me to please right away quick come into the store. So I turned around and came in to Harmony Records which is actually called Harmony Audio Visual on the sign and in the telephone book. Max owns it and he's been my friend for years. From him I learned about Jacqueline du Pre and Jacques Brel and Barbra Streisand; Edith Piaf...and he is a good, funny man. He took me down to the basement, gave me a cigarette, and told me to listen. Then he put on a cut from an album called "On My Way to Where" by Dory Previn. I sat and began to listen politely but then I just listened. This was the dumbest, craziest, most beautifully insane song I had ever heard in my life about a woman driving in a 20 mile zone and screaming to let out all her mean reds and a motor cycle cop stopping her and telling her she couldn't scream in a 20 mile zone and her telling him she's just a creature looking for a little release and didn't they all scream at football games and boxing matches and him telling her that yeah, but she was doing it alone! It ends up with him taking her in and turning on the siren and as they whipped off into the L.A. night towards the cop-shop, Dory ends with "...We were doing it alone, we were screaming.....we were doing it together alone...in a 20 mile zone." I loved it. I bought it and listened to it and made all my friends listen to it.

I went to the library to see if she was in Who's Who. Prevert, Jacques: scholar, author...nope. Preves, Milton: violist,...uh uh... PREVIN: Oh good...Wait a minute ...just Andre? Well, maybe they'll say something about Dory, the creeps, she's only got 5 albums out for gods sake, if they have Jacques Pervert the scholar in here why don't they have Dory??? Well, anyway they didn't. Just old Andre, Hollywood's fairhaired boy.

She mostly wrote lyrics. She was almost always on her way into or on her way out from a nervous breakdown. Yeah, so what else is new. So what's new is the more stuff she writes and plays now, the stronger and more confident it gets. And she gets. But back then in the sixties when she was wed to Andre, she wrote lyrics to "Theme from the Valley of the Dolls"; "Come Saturday Morning" from The Sterile Cuckoo with Liza Minelli; "Inside Daisy Clover", the only good Natalie Wood movie I've seen; "Two for the Seesaw". She said in a Rex Reed interview on August 30, 1970, about her first album, On My Way to Where: In a way the songs in my album have been a way of reminding people, 'Look, I'm a person too. I exist!" But they didn't start out that way. After I married Andre, I just kind of gave up my career. For ten years everything I did was subordinate to him. Any lyrics I wrote depended entirely on his own composing jobs. He was the star, or celebrity--I guess artist is a better word--and I would only write occasionally if he had a job where he needed a lyricist."

"I just kind of dropped out. I lived in his shadow for a long time and people thought of me, I guess, as 'Andre's wife who writes cute little lyrics.' I'm not complaining. He became a conductor and I encouraged him, knowing it was the beginning of the end."

I sort of don't like telling gory personal details about people. It's especially shakey when you tell gory personal details about someone you've never met, who if you did meet, you'd want to like you. So I'll try to be as brief and clinical as possible: Dory hates planes. She won't ride on them. Ever since the Hindenburg blew up she's hated them and so she wanted to get to Andre after she heard about him and Mia Farrow so she got on a plane and started to scream so they put her in the nuthouse for 3 months. That makes me almost toss my breakfast coffee because I like Dory so much. So anyway after she got out she had all this poetry (therapy, no doubt...) and a friend said, "Why don't you put your own music to them?" Dory said that she was always afraid to write music. "I wouldn't have presumed to with a musician like Andre around the house."

DORY PREVIN CONT'D

Aha. A pattern. Don't you love it? Woman, talented lyricist leaves home and makes it in Hollywood. Woman marries talented musician and stops being talented lyricist for awhile. Man meets thin actress and fills her up with twins. Ex-talented lyricist, now cute wife lyricist, gets on plane to find talented musician, now conductor, starts screaming and gets locked up in crazy jug. Emerges talented lyricist musician who also sings. Catharsis City. If that pattern sounds cold and hard it's because it bugs the bejeesus outa me. I'm sick of women having breakdowns in order to purge themselves of their talent. But that is or was another story. Anyway, her first album is full of madness, and Dory says that what she was doing in that was letting the demons out: "If the demons are let out we'll find we aren't as terrible as we think we are."

Dory Previn is one of those women who not only can empathize with people who don't fit, but can make it work in her songs. Like this verse in "Scared to be Alone":

Sweet Marilyn Monroe
on the silver screen
platinum relfection
in a movie magazine
hey did you ever have a headache
did your momma have a gramaphone
did you like to be an actress
were you scared
to be alone?

And Janis Joplin, too. There's a song called "A Stone for Bessie Smith" on her second album, "Mythical Kings and Iguanas" and I can't talk about it, I can only write it down here:

isn't it amazing
shakes you to the bone
she bought a stone for bessie smith
she bought bessie smith a stone
she got it for her grave-site
on a temporary loan
but she forgot she had not paid
for her own.
she forgot she had not paid
she forgot she had not paid
after all the contracts
and arrangements had been made
she went to bessie's grave
and marked it with a stone
but she still had to pay
for her own.

she went home to her class reunion
where a classmate he confessed
she wouldn't want this getting out
but she used to be the best
in school she was a nice girl
as decent as the rest
though she never was
conservatively dressed.

isn't it amazing
you think she could've known
she bought a stone for bessie smith
she bought bessie smith a stone
she got it for her grave-site
on a temporary loan
she forgot she had not paid
for her own.

she forgot she had not paid
she forgot she had not paid
no sooner had the letters
on the deed begun to fade
when her ashes had been scattered
been battered and been blown
she still had to pay
for her own.

she knew
miss gloria swanson
on a tv show they met
they talked across a hundred years
miss gloria's with us yet
but janis was a gambler
who'd already lost a bet
and the time had come to
settle up her debt.

isn't it amazing
shakes you to the bone
she bought a stone for bessie smith
bought bessie smith a stone
she got it up for bessie
on a temporary loan
but she forgot
she had not paid
for her own.

When I was typing that out I was singing it in my head and now reading it over in poetry form it works, but you should buy the record. All 5 of them. I had a whole lot of pertinent points and facts about Dory, but the only one that really matters is that she is getting better, I'm sure of it. The difference between her voice on the first album, and on the last one I've heard is like the difference between sleeping on a 5 dollar mattress and a Sealy Posturpedic. It feels good, not because it's soft, but because it's strong. She has mellowed out considerably. Maybe I have too. Rex Reed, that Turkey of a Hollywood Reporter who played Myra Breckenridge's Myron described her as a soft, gentle woman with curly hair. I see her as a strong, gentle woman with chutzpah, talent, and humour: as these lines from her song (The New Enzyme Detergent Demise of Ali MacGraw show)

"mine was a Wednesday Death: not grim, not gory, more like Ali MacGraw's new enzyme detergent demise in Love Story..."
Gotcha Eric Segal Coff Coff

There isn't enough room to tell you. You have to hear her yourself. You just have to.

1. On My Way To Where
2. Mythical Kings And Iguanas
3. Reflections In A Mud Puddle
4. Mary C. Brown and the Hollywood Sign
5. Dory Previn at Carnegie Hall

Carolyn Bell

THE PEDESTAL CONTEST ends March 7. We are changing our name to show our growing involvement with all the Women's Groups in BC, Canada, and all over. But mostly we will be in close contact with Vancouver groups (our roving reporters will cover meetings of groups like Status of Women, Women's Information, Health Collective), etc. We still need your help. Send suggestions to The Pedestal, 804 Richards, Vancouver BC, right away! You could win dinner out with the Pedestal staff, a book from the Women's bookstore, or a membership to Mrs. Goguen's Pool Parlour and a pocketful of beer tickets, not to mention a couple of free games of pool!

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We at THE PEDESTAL are always pleased to receive your articles, poetry, cartoons, etc. Mail to us at 804 Richards St., Vancouver, BC.

Anyone wanting to help put THE PEDESTAL together, or distribute it, or type it...call us right now at 684-0523.

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MENTAL PATIENT'S ASSOCIATION WOMENS ********** RESIDENCE **********

URGENTLY needs donations of bedding and or furniture. They can pick it up!! Contact Anne Marie or Judy at 738-3616.

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O L I V I A R E C O R D S !!!

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This is a new record company who wants to record women's music. They are staffed by women only and are working at being at independent as possible from the male-supremacist economic system. If you want to work with them, or submit your music, write to:

Olivia Records, P.O. Box 1784, Main City Station, Washington, DC. 20013 USA

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SINGLE PARENT DISCUSSION GROUPS are held every Wednesday between 7 and 9:30 p.m. at 1705 Nelson with FREE babysitting at 1115 Pendrell or.....

every THURSDAY between 7 and 9:30 p.m. at 1811 W. 16th with free babysitting in the same building.

For any information, call Anne Hurst at her home, 261-7555 or at Crossreach, 732-3245.

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L O N G T I M E C O M I N G

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BOX 161, STATION "E",
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QUEBEC, CANADA

POEM for WOMEN in MOTION

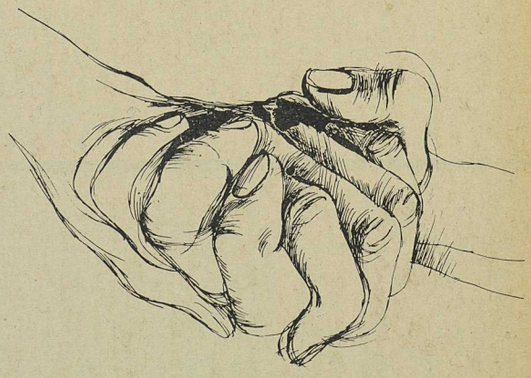
my hands:
unreasonable eloquence
bequeathed by an unknown mother
for an unknown reason
that i have since forgotten
and replaced
with this:
my hands are thunder crying
the root of a tree, ancient beyond any memory
and many yellow eyes in the night
a sleeping bird with a breast of snow
scars, scars, scars
and the rain, falling forever
on an island with no voice but the wind
my hands are the wind crying
my hands are the taste of blood
glazing the rim of the world with a swallowed sun

a poem is a colour, a sound, a circle, a minute a soul
a poem is what two hands say out loud
as they touch each other
a poem is a poet feeling

i feel all the poems i have ever written or read
that drench me with the fire of loving and leaving and grieving
and living
and my life, or as much of it as i am present for;
i feel the free and ever-rhyming rhythm
of the days and nights, gentle knives,
that i have passed and passed by
in the company of women
all possessed
by a consuming, whispering scream--
we are, we are here, we are, we are in and with us, and in
our eyes, of highest, blinded light and deepest, longest dark
our eyes that never end
our visions, righeous, outpouring
our labor, bringing forth seasons and questions and children
(tomorrow, and tomorrow's children
our pain, ignored (we are far, so far under the sea
our singular beauty, unequaled
our laughter, deep in your throat, unchallenged
the waiting of all the centuries we know
our poems our poems our poems
the lightest feather
our love our power our love
we are travelling, travelling
yes
we will get there
and arrive where we are going
when we arrive from where we have been
we have been travelling
for so long

and these are our faces:
Medusa, Isis, Ishtar, Hecate, Aphrodite, Astarte
Amara, Amara O
Patience, Truth, the Fair, the Blessed, the Wise
Joanne, Patricia, Jacqueline, Judith, Valdine
she who rides a dark horse, a white mare
she of the sun and moon and stars
she of the sowing and the harvest
she of the ocean's tides

she who surfaces in the waves of my life
she who flounders on the shore
she who lights the candles at night, she who brings dreams
the mothers and daughters
the hard women who begin and die
inside outside
within, without but mostly in spite of --
the women with faces of distinction
exploding mouths, treachery and prayers
and rising hands
hands full and empty, open fists
hands remembering invasion
hands enfolding everyone within their perfect grace
hands with a perfect memory
hands, loving
hands



you know how i feel
there is a dawn that must surely come
there is salvation, a vision beyond chains
there is a grace that brings us together
in this evening, in this room
aged with a sweet and bitter edge of blue
the women who rise with the sun
the women, born in quiet fire
seizing my hands with their own
in tragic, titanic procession through my time
i feel with my hands
i feel my friends around me
circling in a sure swift desperate arc
circling and falling, circling forever
bound for glory
this is our revelation
this is the revolution
all together now
this is the revolution

you know how i feel
i feel with my hands
i feel with my delicate, windswept, winterspring, wounded, wanting
wishing, wishing
simply wise
waiting hands

every vein in every finger
is a major artery to my soul
fingers tattooed with the ink of everything i have ever said
fingers extended in votive tapers to the edges of my awareness
fingers marked with the sins of all holy books
fingers clutching at the memory of other fingers
fingers that remember everything

and the face of every woman i have ever loved
of all who have loved me
rising with my eyes
with my hands, white red silver black in motion
the many hands that lead my faltering, possessed eyes
to this room and its unions
to the pain and pleasure of truth
to separation
to slavery and then freedom
to the women, blue green violet grey
golden and so blue
to this song, to the litany of a thousand voices, to silence
to you

my hands
twisted with trusting
and the delicate erosion of desire
the flushed breathing of the first morning when i believed
the morning when i first raised my hands
to my eyes, to the sky
to you to you,
whom i embrace in a meager, full embrace
so that we move together
hands moving
women in motion
winging in formation through this room's unquiet night
towards morning

and an ultimate sea towards me
and the truth which sets us free
we will be free

JUDI MORTON

UNIONS CONT'D

Less than 3% of the white collar industry is organized. Most trade unions are male dominated. Women will accept more abuse and lousy working conditions than males. Women originally started working because of necessity and they accepted lousy working conditions because they couldn't afford to be out of work.

A lot of female employment is part-time...this holds back development of unions in white collar areas. Part-timers won't demand better conditions.

The biggest problem with women is that you get them good wages and conditions in their contract and a good portion who are married with employed husbands then restrict their available hours to 3 or 4 days a week since they still get the good wage and they receive the majority of fringe benefits. This weakens the strength of the membership because they, the part-timers, aren't really involved, they just hang on to skim the cream off the top.

ME: What do you think can be done to erase fears women have about unions?

FRED: We need more severe laws with financial punitive penalties where management interferes in the formation of a trade union anywhere. I have been fighting for this all my life. The workers have the right to discuss and organize on the job. The company would be less likely to interfere if they knew they'd have to pay a stiff penalty. That would erase the fear.

ME: How can you reach women who are reluctant to join?

FRED: You can't. If you reach any at all it will be through the news media or by word of mouth.

ME: What are your idealistic goals in the organization of women? Your realistic goals?

FRED: The real goals are job security, wage increase, moderate fringe benefits, better holidays, dental, pension and general health and welfare benefits and contracts which are re-negotiable every year or every other year as economic factors change. The ideal goals are wage parity and non-sexist contracts. Some contracts now drawn up for women say "he" all the way through when it's common knowledge it refers to women. The Retail Clerks doesn't say that though. For instance, we use the term "salesperson" .

ME: What are some benefits the Retail Clerks enjoy?

FRED: A $4.70 per hour minimum wage, dental plans, trust plans which are not set up by the employer and which are portable from company to company.

ME: What have you done for benefits concerning pregnancy?

FRED: The main accomplishment is the recall clause. After a certain period of time following confinement, a woman can return to work at her original position with no loss of seniority or position. She retains the wage she had prior to her confinement.

ME: Do you think housewives should be paid for their labour? Should they be unionized? Would you pay your wife retroactively to the first day of your marriage?

FRED: Sure, I agree with it all. If someone comes up with a way to do it, I'll go along.

ME: Have you anything you'd like to add that I haven't hit on with my questions?

FRED: I sure do. All this should be taught in our schools, not only about women and unions, but women's liberation of any nature.

ME: Would you consider talking on this subject to the rap session Tuesday night at the Women's Bookstore in Vancouver?

FRED: Anytime. As far as I'm concerned, I'll do anything I can to further the cause...

The Letter

January 22, 1974

Hon. Robert Andras
Minister of Manpower
and Immigration
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Mr. Andras:
We have just learned that you personally, have turned down the L.E.A.P. application of "Reel Feelings" a women's media group. Last September workers from your department approached these women and urged them to submit an application, saying to them that they as women were a priority disadvantaged group. They spent two months of hard work developing a proposal. These women, if they had financial resources, are capable of developing media programs from a woman's perspective. Such media programs could assist employers to accept women as workers in a greater variety of jobs. They could also assist various government departments including Manpower to improve their services to women. This capacity is also the very reason why they are unemployable except for short term insignificant pieces of work. Employers cannot emotionally cope with intelligent women. Your department has used these women and your decision has left them with the following alternatives:

1) Continuing the cycle of short term work, unemployment insurance and welfare.
2) Prostitution
3) Armed revolt.

When we met with you in December we believed you were sincere in your desire to improve your department's services to women. Your failure to understand that the disadvantage of these women is that they are educated and competent, in spite of the evidence accompanying the proposal, can only lead us to the conclusion that you do not want to understand. The suspicion easily arises that you believe women should be consigned to perpetual poverty so that you and your male colleagues can continue to administer misery.

Yours truly,

Alice James
President
Vancouver Status of Women

JILL

ON MOTHERHOOD & OTHER THINGS

JILL JOHNSTON SEPTEMBER 17, 1973

Student Union Building Art Gallery, U.B.C.

Smell of incense. Women settling down on the floor and in the few chairs. A smattering of men in the audience. Jill not there and then someone is saying, there she is, but amongst all the jeans it is hard to find her at first, another jeaned and jacketed figure.

She starts to talk. Midwestern monotone at first -- nervous. Says immediately that she is not American, but that she has U.S. citizenship.

Reads the first chapter of the book she is writing, which is an autobiography. From the age of five til she was ten she lived with her grandma. Snatches scrabbled down: "I went to the Frank Jones Funeral Parlour to see Arturo Toscanini laid out." She lived in Little Neck for a spell. She did a lot of things as a kid that boys do too, because "nobody said I couldn't." "What could be more normal than what ever your circumstances happen to be," she says in relation to the oddities of her childhood, which to the child were not odd at all.

A rhythm of words comes over and the midwestern monotone is all right, it is Jill Johnston, and as she gets into the reading and feels the response from the listeners, her voice gathers volume and variety. Fitting in well with the concrete recollections are the refrains which go sometimes like this: "Her mother my grandmother, her mother my grandmother, her mother my grandmother..."

"I was determined to be a British bastard," and the intricate and deliberately confusing details of her childhood fantasies about her parentage and the real facts as she found them out, much as any of us does, but in the end, we are as confused as she wishes us to be about her real or unreal father, and in the washroom after the lecture she says, "what I want to say is that we are all fatherless; who carries us for nine months? whose bodies do our bodies resemble? we are the children of our mothers."

In her continuing reading comes this:

I did not want to be Shirley Temple
I did not want to be Joel Cupperman
  who was the smartest kid on the
  Quiz Kids Show
I didn't want to be Margaret O'Brien

I wasn't involved with Elizabeth
  Taylor and National Velvet

I did want to be Douglas Fairbanks
I did want to be Edgar Bergen
I did want to be Ginger Rogers

"Mother and Child"—Catherine M. Urrillo (1974)

Then back to the father: "A True Rumour: The one died of a tuberculosis and the other of a pneumonia," about the demise of her father, mythical or real.

"We must overthrow the mother within" she says--waves of shock from the audience. Then the explanation. The mother as a cultural image, a dominating, caring-for figure WHO KNOWS WHAT'S BEST FOR US.

Then the Audience: We don't know what the sister relationship is.

J.J.: Right.

A problem the audience and Jill wrestled with: how to nurture without imposing your nurturance.

Answer from the Audience: "More of an acceptance of an individual? Mutual acceptance, child and mother?" J.J. tells of her own personal revelation which came to her while she was watching one woman on a TV panel demolishing another woman who was less than politically correct in terms of The Movement: FEMINISM IS WOMEN AFFIRMING OTHER WOMEN. That was her own bolt from the blue and had a profound affect upon her. She said that "mothers" don't affirm women. "Mothers" very often are strong, frustrated women who must of necessity put their daughters down, to maintain their power and control and self-respect. Jill suggested a better way: the more self-affirmed I am, the more I affirm you.

Women in the ensuing question period told of their problems which did not seem to be answered by Jill Johnston's philosophy or revelations. She listened and said, "I don't want to answer to the practical problems. After you have the revelation, the practical problems work out."

Audience: "Having a revelation is a wonderful way of shirking responsibility."

J.J.: "Like what responsibility?"

Audience: "Like raising children."

J.J.: "I object to the idea of "raising children" because you set yourself apart from children then.

Questioned about her stand regarding men as expressed in her book Lesbian Nation Johnston said, "I have woman-pride in a world that is men. I live in a besieged world."

Audience: "What is it like to be a big-shot lesbian?"

J.J.: "What was it like for Janis Joplin being a rock singer? I don't think about this stuff. It's interference in your real life. It's an artificial trip."

Audience: "It could be part of your job and what you project for your life?"

J.J.: "The feelings I have about it is that something floated away from me that was a balloon and that was the fame and it would come floating back sometimes and I would look at it and sometimes get hold of that balloon and think that is very strange..."

ALL I ASK. . . .

It is really very difficult to convey the flavour of my experience to you if you are a man, because much of what I have to say sounds so trivial that you must wonder why I mention it. I mention it because these attitudes and expectations are symptoms of what seems to me to be an extremely unhealthy attitude towards women in our culture.

I do not see men as the enemy, however. Women have internalized these unhealthy attitudes towards ourselves and we do a good job of keeping outselves in our place. We all, men and women, learned these attitudes together and I hope we can unlearn them together.

What is it like to be a woman?

It is shaving my legs and underarms because to be a natural woman is somehow unattractive and unacceptable.

It is to be 35 years old and have people quite routinely call me a girl. How many of you men over 30 have been called a boy recently? When I object to being called a girl I am usually called a lady. I am happy to have been granted at least that measure of maturity, but the term still seems too limited. I am not always a lady, but I'm always a woman. So I wait patiently while my friends stumble through their vocabulary to find a term that grants me adult status and a less restricted image. Trivial? Our language conveys our expectations. If you are uncomfortable calling adult females women, you might ask yourself what you expect adult females to be.

Part of my experience is being unable to watch TV without being grossly insulted by the stereotyped women presented there, eternally scrubbing, polishing and being ever so dependent on some male to rescue them when the going gets tough. And then turning off the TV and finding something wrong with the plumbing and being too damn helpless and dependent to fix it. If you are a man, please don't smile indulgently. Unless you've grown up believing that you never would need to know the difference between two different types of wrench, never really need to know how a car engine runs just because you drive it every day, you don't know how difficult it is to begin to train yourself to be independent and self-sufficient. No one ever expected me to be truly independent and self-sufficient. Now I'm trying to teach myself and the last thing I need is someone to smile at me as at a precocious child. I'm working my way up from under, and I'd like a little respect.

Part of my experience as a woman is going to church on Remembrance Day and hearing some god-awful poem about some stereotyped war hero not coming home to his pliant, submissive but virginal lady and trying to make people understand that the tragedy of war begins when men project their softness and submissiveness onto women. As long as women deny their strength, as long as men deny their softness, we will deny our humanity and act out these senseless, tragic scripts that call for strong military heroes to do their thing.

Part of my experience is hearing other women put women down. I still hear women say "I don't really enjoy women's company too much. Women tend to gossip" or "Women tend to talk about their kids all the time." For God's sake, have a little mercy. If you've been trained to get all your satisfaction from your kids, what else do you talk about? It hurts me whenever I hear women put women down because I see it as self-hatred.

Last night in my sleep I began to snore
and my husband, tired of the roar,
reached over and clamped his hand
over my mouth, leaving my nose
free, but he began to doze
and soon was asleep.

Unaccustomed to the hand, my mind stirred,
trying to define the bizarre, the absurd
sensation of skin closing over the hole
where my mouth should be and then
it became clear to me but when
I tried to scream, I couldn't.

Though still asleep in a half-way sense,
my body rose to it's own defense.
My fingers, feeble with sleep,
clutched and grabbed, my throat screamed
disparagingly, but it only seemed
a whimper, the sound I made.

A thought passed through my anguished head,
they'll say, "Of course, she died in bed".
"Poor Paul," they'll say, "lay at her side,
the night that Marnie upped and died."
They'll say I choked and lost my breath,
thus causing my untimely death.

I kicked my legs and tried to scream
while wondering, "Is this all a dream?"
Oh No! I knew! Then the hand, still there,
moved and my lungs took in air.
"My God! My God!" this atheist cried,
"whatever made You then decide

to wake him up and move his hand?"
I gasped and sputtered this demand.
Restored at last to normalcy,
I turned to Paul for explanation.
He failed to grasp my consternation
Replying,

"You could have used
your nose..."

?!?

And now I'm convinced he tried to kill me.

Marnie Smith

Part of my experience as a 35 year old woman is seeing marriages dissolve among my contemporaries. The man often ends up with another woman considerably younger than himself. The woman almost never ends up with a younger man. I am fascinated that women seem far more capable of being attracted to a homely male than vice versa. Why is it that a homely woman, or an older one, is so much more likely to be disqualified as a sexual partner? Why is it that many men are turned on only by women who fit into a freakishly specialized mold -- young, slim, dependent, pliable, all physical signs of maturity such as adult hair or muscular strength carefully hidden from view? I can only conclude that there really is a dislike of women behind such an attitude.

I can understand when men dislike women or women dislike themselves. We've been carefully trained to do that all our lives. I am less sympathetic when people mouth liberal platitudes or radical rap and never really come to terms with the sexism in themselves. I am most unhappy when I discover, down deep in some dark corner of my psyche, some vestige of sexism that I thought I'd got rid of. So I drag it out and examine it and come to terms with it somehow. That's all I can do. That's all I ask you to do.

Jill Johnston cont'd.

Later she said, "I think we must glorify ourselves and want to feel very important important. But the way the public media does it is some other trip. We can try to use the media any way we can. The more we get it on this way with ourselves, the more the bigger situation will be affected."

Audience: "I'm bothered about the nurturing and not nurturing."

J.J.: "We need the rescue team, not the mother trip."

Later: "What I feel about the total society is that men are all my potential rapists. I know there are certain men who would never dream of raping me. I'm speaking generically, do you understand?"

She spoke about the total society with profound pessimism, and in passing said, "I don't really care that much. But right now with a whole bunch of women I think it's cool. Right now."

Being at the Jill Johnston meeting was for me a little schizy (how I hate that phrase...) I think I mean that I had many things I wanted to say during the discussion period, but as at home in childhood, as at school as a kid, as in my long dead marriage, I did not say what I wanted to say: I stayed silent, a proper submissive woman, allowing the others who obviously knew better (or more truthfully, were in the majority and more articulate and powerful than I, to speak up and talk with Jill Johnston).

For years and years I had read her columns in the Village Voice and watched her change and reveal more and more of herself, a self that was violently funny and crazy and good-hearted and best of all, compassionate. One time when I was aspiring to learn to make nice posters to stick up on my walls, or give as Xmas gifts (horrid thought) I copied down and calligraphed her phrase: OF ALL THE SENSES COMMON IS THE BEST.

I liked it, I was prepared to like her, I liked what she read of her auto-biography, and when she began her attack on the men in the audience or rather the man who was baiting her, I shrank. There was the strength, and this is something she had acquired --was it innate? Could we all have such strength? Should we all? The mood of the crowd was with her; I sat there on the floor, out of place because as usual I was the oldest person in the room, and (to my mind) the most exhausted, wishing the meeting would end and I could go home; then an inspiration to lie down on the floor (despite age and dignity) and nobody minded, and the physical strain became bearable. God, if one could only do that at political meetings, I'd go to a hell of a lot more and say more of the stuff that Jill says and I believe needs to be said. And that really plenty of other women do say, so who do I think I am, the only saviour of womankind? No, the thing is those women who get up at meetings and are put down by the men need us other women there to support them, if only from a prone position on the floor, that's what I think, and when I am well again, that's wot I'll

another long digression.
back to J.J.

As I was saying, back at the J.J. meeting was for me a little schizy. There were many women I knew from other meetings, or if I didn't know them, their faces were familiar, and they were right-on with-it, I thought or assumed. Whenever J.J. made a slur against men and the few men who were there were sent out about 3/4 of the way through the meeting because one had become verbally abusive and then some of the women left in sympathy, taking umbrage at the treatment of the men and the atmosphere was then (I thought) more that of a free-wheeling lesbian rap group: That's when I felt like an intruder. When J.J. spoke of "Women-oriented Women" (Lesbians) and "Male-oriented" Women (Hetero-sexuals) I became still and even more anonymous than ever, fearful that someone might turn and point and say "There's a heterosexual woman, she must be male-oriented and we should throw her out."

And even though I was so very tired I didn't want to be publicly thrown out of a meeting and had felt sick fear to see even the truly non-violent expulsion of the men--the one who wouldn't move and who kept shouting abuse had been gently lifted out by four women. He kicked one when they got out into the hall. It had reminded me of the craziness of the engineers who throw other men into the UBC Library fishpond even though I know I know I know the circumstances were entirely different.

I liked Jill Johnston, her gentleness and friendliness came through despite the tough questions that even the women put to her. Ever since then I've been trying, trying to kill the "mother" as she defines "mother" in me, so that instead of being an all-knowing oppressive person I am a person who can affirm other women. It's a tough struggle after a lifetime in the jungle.

B. Thompson

WHAT GOES ON HERE!

This is the part of the Pedestal where we tell you who put out the paper even though it was still February. B. Thompson, Nym, Bonnie, Liz, Carolyn, Dorrie, Millie and Pat did. Sarah printed it.

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LESBIAN DROP IN every Monday nite at The Women's Bookstore, 804 Richards 8 - 10 pm; Phone 684-0523

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Dialogue with egomaniacal Man

overheard by jeannine mitchell

I'm working in the bookstore, late and alone. Footsteps, a man's voice:

"HEY - LOOK AT THAT PICTURE-- THE WOMAN WITH THE GUN HOLDING HER BABY."

Woman's voice: "mmmmmmmm"

"NOW THAT'S SOMETHING I CAN UNDERSTAND! YOU KNOW HOW I HATE BLACKS, YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT THEM, BUT HERE'S A BLACK WOMAN, OKAY, BUT SHE'S A MOTHER, EH, AND HER HUSBAND IS PROBABLY AT WAR TRYING TO PROTECT HIS FAMILY AND ALL SHE'S TRYING TO DO IS PROTECT HER BABY. THAT'S ALL SHE'S TRYING TO DO. NOW I CAN SEE THE POINT OF THAT. D'YOU SEE WHAT I MEAN? GET THE POINT I'M MAKING?"

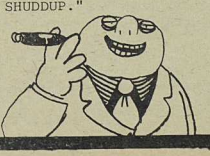
"Yeah, sure. She's just trying to protect her baby -- anybody would do that."

"WELL, YOU KNOW AS MUCH AS ANYONE HOW MUCH I HATE THE BLACKS, YOU KNOW WHAT I THINK OF THEM, BUT I CAN SEE THE POINT OF A PICTURE LIKE THIS. AND THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH THIS WOMAN. HER HUSBAND IS AWAY, MAYBE HE'S DEAD TOO, AND SHE'S DOING WHAT ANY NORMAL WOMAN WOULD DO, SHE'S JUST TRYING TO PROTECT HER BABY. DO YOU GET MY POINT? HUH? SEE WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY?"

"Well of course I see what you're saying, jesus christ!"

"WELL, THAT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH WOMEN'S LIB! NOTHING AT ALL! NOT THAT CRAP, I HATE THAT CRAZY WOMEN'S LIB GARBAGE! LOOK AT ALL OF IT! PISS ON THAT GARBAGE! SHE'S A MOTHER LOOKING AFTER HER BABY, AND THAT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT GARBAGE IN THERE."

Footsteps leaving. I hear her murmur something, and he says, "THAT'S RIGHT!" Then there's another murmur and he says, "AH, SHUDDUP."

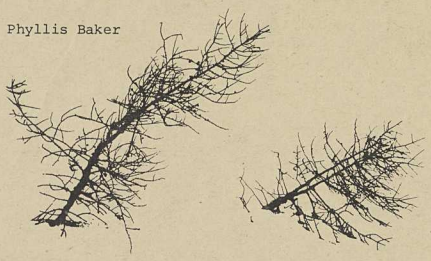


To Marry
that is gotten to the same house
and left the door opened
and coming out to plant the low hedge
and making a small gate for the
world to come through.

And then
that is making the best rooms inside out
and only one small dark one
left to sleep down in.

And marry
that is to become the house
and making wider doors and cutting
down the hedge
and the little gate down.

Phyllis Baker



Yes, we have no bananas, steaks, eggs, blue jeans, candles, gas, tennis balls, freezers, wheat, leather, air conditioners, fuel oil, pyjamas, floor covering, sardines, chicken, paper, hot water bottles...

(BUT WE DO HAVE A GOOD WOMEN'S CLUB)

Despite what you may have read in the Pedestal last month about there being no recommendable night place for women, let me tell you about Mrs. GoGuen's Pool Parlour. It's an all women club at 1066 Seymour St. and it's probably one of the most confortable places in Canada for women to sit and talk, play pool and have a beer.

It is not like any other place I have ever been, and when I look at all the other clubs and their varying shades of gross, I'm really glad. It's run by three women who, one, seem to really know what they are doing and two, seem to really enjoy it. The place is always clean and tidy and the staff and patrons are always warm and friendly. I haven't yet seen a fight nor any display of blatent/latent hostility.

The sound system is pretty good and the volume level won't damage your ears. And that is a nice change from most clubs; so is the music. A good percentage is women's music a and it feels good to boogie to something other than a Led Zeppelin phallic celebration.

There is a monthly pool tournament with prizes and there was an amateur musician's night complete with local guitar-picking, singing women and free wine and beer.

The club's hours are from 4:00 P.M. to Midnight and that isn't exactly prime time for a night place. It seems that the women rent the space from a man who rents it from someone else who specializes in overpriced gay bar locations. All in all the women aren't exactly getting the best of the deal. But I'm sure that details like that will eventually be resolved. There have been a couple of general meetings where members discussed what they wanted to see happen in the club a and a number of sound, workable proposals were brought up.

At any rate, Mrs. GoGuen's is right now the only club in Vancouver I'd recommend to anywoman.

Pat. Smith

WOMEN'S WORK

A NEW SORT OF REGISTRY

CARPENTERS:
PLUMBERS:
GRAPHIC ARTISTS:
ADVERTISING SPECIALISTS:
HOUSE PAINTERS:
CATERERS:
FURNITURE MOVERS:

These and many others are occupations which we will be happy to advertise free for women only -- because they will help us know which woman to call when we need a job done (if we can afford to pay) or which ones to recommend to our friends with bread.

Women doctors and dentists we can find out about from the health collective.

Any categories we've missed? Please register your skill with us, and your phone number so that we can place your ad, and if you want, your fee or rate per hour (unless you prefer to dicker depending on the finances of your client).

more herstory

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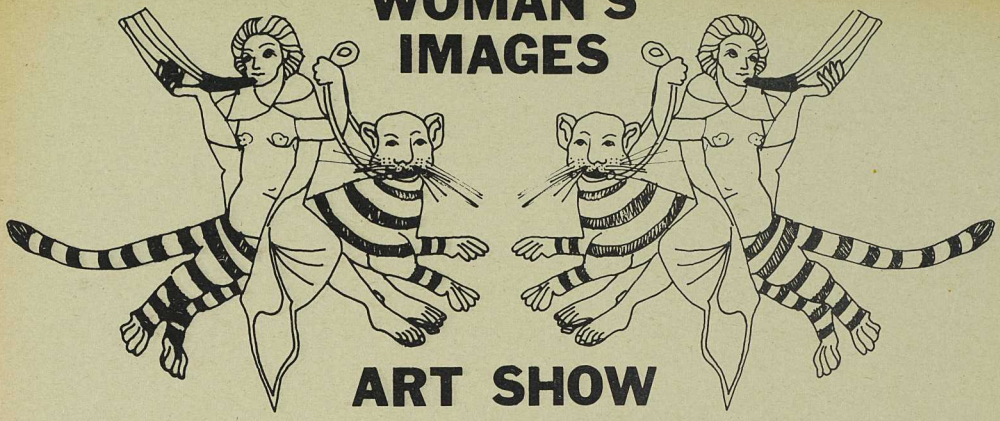
A group of women from Saskatoon are compiling information for a Canadian Women's Calendar and would appreciate any information regarding women in all areas and professions. This data can be herstorical or current. They would like to know more about Canadian farm women and women of various ethnic groups. If you can participate, send your material to:

Saskatoon Women's Calendar
Collective,
416 - 5th Ave. N.,
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7K 2PG

WOMAN'S IMAGES



ART SHOW

At the University of British Columbia Student Union Building Art Gallery on Monday, March 4, a six-day showing of drawings, water colours, etchings and banners opens. The artists are Beverley Davies, Colette French, Diana Kemble and Josie Cook. The following day, Tuesday, March 5 at 7:30 p.m. in the SUB Art Gallery, a panel discussion with the artists, moderated by Fran Isaacs, will be presented. The theme of the discussion will be Women's Images and the Use of Images From Their Lives. A slide show about Canadian Women artists and refreshments of cookies and apple juice will follow. All women are invited to come and join in the discussion. Admission is free and children are welcome.

The four women collectively have written what they want to say about their work, as follows:

We believe the artist has to be part of society. We live in this world and can't give up everything else except our art. As women, we don't have the classic ways of closing off society that men do. Male artists have "wives" to support them, to do their baby-sitting and give them moral and physical support. A lot of women cannot seriously do their life work until after they have had their children; raised their children. It is no different for women artists unless money buffers them from the realities of diapers and day-care and dinners. What does a talented woman say to someone who says: "If you want to 'make it' badly enough, if you really want to make it, make a success, make a career, make a picture, you can,"...when she has no money of her own for materials, and mainly no time or energy? Women are often left feeling inadequate that they somehow cannot juggle babies, home, a career and ten worthwhile organizations. Many women wait until their children are grown, as we said before, and some are disappointed to find that by that time they are considerably worn out and the old staying power isn't there although the mind and skills are sharp.

And too, after being first girl, then wife, then mother over the years, without being yourself, it takes a long time to repair an ego, to get back to thinking you can do things for yourself. That you belong to yourself. Young women are still taught the traditional lie that marriage will solve a lot of things. Marriage or living with someone isn't going to magically enable you to be creative. There is also an aspect of women being afraid--women having ambivalent feelings about success. It is sort of like the perennial question a woman puts to herself: "Will he still love me if I let down my guard and say what I think?"

The subject-matter of women's lives is not considered valid artistic material by the art "Establishment". Is the embroidery of women an art? Is the delicate painting on delicate eggshells by Ukrainian and Russian women at Easter an art? Is the original design on a Canadian quilt art? We feel that art can be about our lives and an expression of our feelings about our lives. That is the way we work.

What does a woman artist see happening to her if she is "successful"? Emily Carr worked alone at the same time as the "Group of Seven" were painting. She felt herself to be in isolation, and indeed she was--looked upon as eccentric and even laughable by her neighbours. Old maid Emily. The Group of Seven had their male support group. It is harder for women to form such groups. They are often forced into lonely endeavour. We read recently something about a woman photographer, Margaret Bourke-White, who made herself unpopular during her working life by insisting on being in the forefront of news coverage, even in battle zones. It was said of her: "Exploration, whether of jungles or minds, is considered unfeminine and dangerous".

Back to the question of what a woman artist sees happening to her when she begins to be "successful". The whole money thing in relation to art is extremely depressing; that is, valuing a painting, putting a price on it. Because the people we really want to see our work, the ones we create it for, can't afford to support us financially. Our idea of audience is to have other women see through our eyes what we have seen, and perhaps think, "Gee, I could do that too!" We want to let people get joy out of seeing; get ideas and go away from our work with a feeling of confidence, having recognized the same emotional or physical experiences which we have depicted. We want to say to women, "Yes, you are real. Your life is valid."

We want our art to be encouraging to other women. Why should we set ourselves apart as "the artists"? We are women who want to share our experiences, and the way we do that is through drawings and paintings and banners and etchings. Maybe when you look at our work you will recognize something in yourself. See your life or a part of it in what we paint from our lives. What is important to us is that a real feeling comes from someone.

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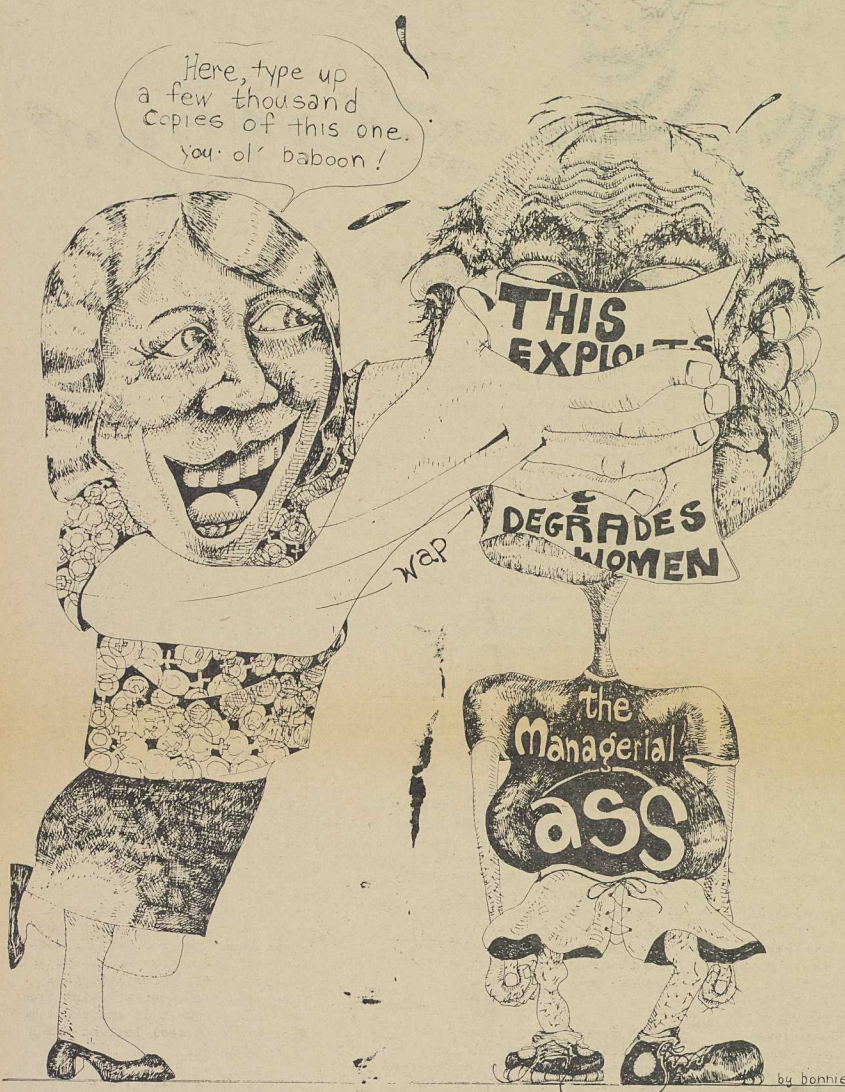
THE SLIDE SHOW

What we are interested in doing here is uncovering women's art. All the art in the slide show doesn't necessarily represent one point of view, but shows that women's art does exist in Canada. We hope it will be the very beginning of a really good collection of slides of Canadian women artists.

FEBRUARY



by bonnie beckbaboondetector

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3 PEDESTAL MEETING 804 RICHARDS 11:00	4 Lesbian drop-in Van. Women's BkStore 804 Richards 8:00pm	5 EVERY WOMEN'S drop in 804 RICHARDS 8:00 pm	6	7	8	9
10 "	11 ditto	12 ditto	13	14 Valentine's day.	15	16
17 "	18 ditto	19 ditto	20	21	22	23
24 "	25 ditto again	26 yep, ditto again!	27	28		

This is one of a series of 12 CALENDAR GRAPHICS AVAILABLE FROM P's BOOKSTORE 804 RICHARDS ST VAN. $2.00

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WOMEN'S BOOKSTORE
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At 804 Richards Street, Come down and peruse our wide variety of Women's & children's literature.

The friendly sales personnel are pleased to assist you in your selections. If we don't carry the book you want, we can probably order it for you. Call us at 684-0523. Hours 12-5 on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. 12-9 on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. There's a space for coffee and talk, too.

Special contributions to this month's PEDESTAL

made by:

N. Miller, Jeannine Mitchell, K. Beckhardt

Isobel, Alice James, D. Kemble, Joy Long,

Diana Best, Wendy Mc Ivor.... um... oh yeah..

Phyliss Baker, Judy Morton

SUBSCRIBE!! make cheque payable to The pedestal, 804 Richards ST, Van. BC.

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RATES PER YEAR:			
CANADA:	$3.00	FOREIGN	$4.00
USA:	$3.50	INSTITUTIONS	$10.00

This is the last month the Pedestal will be the Pedestal (sob). But we are going to be coming out just the same with a new and pertinent (we hope!) name!! thanks!