the ubyssey women's issue

spicy since 1918

volume 78, issue 39 MARCH 11, 1997

the ubyssey

Classifieds

Accommodations/For Rent

Accommodation available in the UBC Winter Session single student residences
Rooms are available in the UBC single student residences for qualified women and men student applications. Single and shared rooms in both "room only" and "room and board" residences are available. Vacancies can be rented for immediate occupancy in the Walter H. Gage, Fairview Crescent, Totem Park, Place Vanier, and Ritsumeikan - UBC House Residences*.
Please contact the UBC Housing Office in Brock Hall for information on rates and availability. The Housing Office is open from 8:30 am - 4:00 pm weekdays, or call 822-2811 during office hours.
* Availability may be limited for some residence areas and room types.

Pledged and didn't like it? Start your own fraternity! Zeta Beta Tau is looking for men to start a new chapter. If you are interested in academic success, a chance to network and an opportunity to make friends in a non-pledging brotherhood, e-mail zbt@zbtnational.org or call Bret Hrbek at (317) 334-1898.

Accommodations Wanted

Are you moving out of a 2 bdrm. apt. in a house? Rent is between $750-900, dog ok. Has garage. West Side pref. May 1st or June 1st occupancy. Reward $75. Call Dan @874-1289.

Employment Opportunities

Summer jobs! Now hiring painters and job-site managers. Some experience preferred. Vehicle an asset. Wages range from $8-$17 per hour. Work begins in the Spring. Contact Paul at Alumni Painters @983-2970 or fax resume to Paul @985-2885.

Word Processing/ Secretarial

Word processing/typing, 20 years experience. APA specialist, laser printer, student rates. Tel: 228-8346.

Miscellaneous

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu
Info call 688-5303

UBC Young Conservatives Present
Alberta Election Night Party!
Tues., Mar.11 - Tonight!
6:30-9:30, International House Pub
All people of all political preferences welcome!

FREE Friday Classifieds
Every Friday, for UBC Students Only

Deadline: Wednesday at Noon

Throwing like an athlete

by Jennifer Wiebe and Amanda Kobler

The sporting world proudly establishes and maintains (male) standards of athleticism where masculine strength, speed and endurance are unquestionably upheld as the ultimate standard. It is a system which perpetuates sexism; a system within which women are viewed as second-class competitors. Women have attempted to challenge their own position, within this system, and have been successful in many ways. That is, we see the gap between men's and women's performances rapidly narrowing, evidenced by Tracy Wyckman, who swam the 400 meter freestyle faster than Mark Spitz swam it in 1968, Nancy Lieberman, who, by her incredible abilities, "revolutionized" women's basketball to become comparable in strategy and style to the men's game, and others.

However, women and men have not truly challenged the nature of a system which holds masculine standards as the standards and have not come to a place, in theory or in practice, where women's sport is evaluated as something worthwhile in its own right as an autonomous and meaningful sphere of human experience.

Sports scientists are finally saying that the differences measured between the strength, endurance and agility of men and women are attributable to functional differences, that is, how much or how little activity women experience as they grow up, and are not due to some innate, biological, genetic inferiority of women. So that, by the time most girls become adults, their physical capabilities have become limited because of social and cultural restrictions regarding the types of activities deemed "appropriate" for them, not because of any inherent female inferiority.

Though this may be acknowledged among some communities of academics and some (perhaps fewer) communities of athletes, it is not the prevalent attitude demonstrated by many coaches and participants, and is not reflected in financial and media recognition. The assumption that "good" performance is characteristic of male athletes and female athletic performance is inferior underlies accusations of a player "throwing like a girl" and the sex-testing of successful female athletes. Martina Navratilova symbolized the advances women had made in the athletic world and more broadly in traditionally male activities involving money and power. At the same time, she was criticized for being an "amazon", butch lesbian who had an unfair and unnatural advantage over the other "normal" women players. So, in this system, the cost off tossing of the cloak of "B" rated athleticism (being an "athlete-ette") and achieving some measure of "success" is, at the least, to have your feminine identity and sexual activity critically scrutinized.

JOANNE MALAR, Canadian record holder and Olympic team swimmer.
RICHARD LAM PHOTO

Another strange paradox is found in the age old rationale for the prohibition against contact sports for females. The assumption (was) that women will irreparably damage, among other things, their naturally protected reproductive organs, whereas the fact that the exposed male genitals have to be protected is never considered problematic. This, though, demonstrates the nature of the biological-determinist debate. Whoever is the dominant party can twist biology to suit almost any rationalization for keeping another group oppressed. Some people don't even attempt a rationalization. Walter Byers, a past NCAA executive director who denounced legislation that would reduce inequality between women and men in sports, simply stated that "men's programs would suffer irreparable damage if forced to endure budget cuts, scholarship reductions and loss of other resources that would go toward support of women's athletics."

Restrictions on opportunities for participation including inequality of resources and deliberate prohibition, that at times verges on the illegal, is an issue that needs to be addressed. But, this may be an irrelevant issue in the broader sense of a feminist effort to end sexist oppression. That is, improving women's place within a male system, generally and sport-specifically, does not address the underlying assumption that there is one, "right" standard by which an athletic, or any other, endeavor is judged and does not provide a place in which girls and women who wish to do so can explore their athletic potential without threat to their feminine identity or without exposure to illegitimate and irrelevant comparisons.

A deconstruction of this system might have to precede a new system. This new system would not hold male performance and male sports as the objective criterion of success, and would not dichotomize sport, necessarily, by gender, assuming one inferior to the other. It might be a system in which psychological and social impediments to women as full athletes are removed, where fear and hostility directed against physically strong, aggressive, independent , and confident women is dissipated and performance is limited only by imagination, determination, and nerve.

Information gathered from *Coming On Strong: Gender and Sexuality in 20th-century Women's Sport* by Susan K. Kahn and Female Athlete by Anne Popma. ♀

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES FOR MARKETING IN THE NINETIES

A free seminar presented by the
Canadian Intellectual Property Office and PATSCAN

Date: Wed. 12 March, 1997
Time: 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM
Place: Woodward Theatre No. 3, Instructional Resources bldg., UBC

Speaker: Joe Willmott, WTD Management.

"Effective new-product development tactics are critical to the growth and survival of any company manufacturing goods for consumer or industrial markets."

Previously CEO of a US manufacturing enterprise, Mr. Willmott has since managed product launches, mergers, business start-ups, and acquisitions. He is currently involved in several BC-based junior companies marketing new technologies.

The seminar will appeal to students, entrepreneurs, inventors and officers of small companies wishing to learn the basics of new-product development.

A question an answer period will follow the presentation. For more information phone PATSCAN at 822-5404 or fax 822-9532. E-Mail rsimmer@unixg.ubc.ca or visit our web page at http://www.library.ubc.ca/patscan

Editorial elections

the ubyssey

*Editorial candidates must be voting members of staff
*Voting will take place from March 31 to April 6

Editorial position job descriptions

General duties of editors: Editors are responsible for the orderly day-to-day operation of the newspaper; recruitment and training of new volunteers; coordinating assignments; participating in the general upkeep and maintenance of the office space, files, etc; attending all meetings and keeping regular office hours.

The coordinating editor: shall prepare agendas for staff meetings, sit on the board of directors, act as an intermediary between staff and the business office.

Two (2) news editors: shall assign and ensure the completion of at least three (3) news articles per issue.

The arts and culture editor: shall assign and ensure the completion of at least two (2) culture stories per issue.

The sports editor: shall monitor and coordinate coverage of sporting events and sports-related activities on campus.The national/features editor: shall be responsible for ensuring the completion of at least one (1) feature article per week; shall seek out and facilitate exchanges of news and other information with other members of the student press; and ensure a balanced quality and quantity of coverage among all departments, in conjunction with those department heads.

The production coordinator: shall facilitate and coordinate the design and production of all editions of *The Ubyssey*, shall be familiar with and train staff in the use of *The Ubyssey* equipment, and to ensure that such equipment is in good supply and working order.

The photo coordinator: shall coordinate the availability and quality of photos for all editions of *The Ubyssey* in consultation with other departments.

Position papers deadlines: Friday, March 24, 1997 at 8:00 am

ubyssey

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The Ubyssey is the official student newspaper of the University of British Columbia. It is published every Tuesday and Friday by the Ubyssey Publications Society.

We are an autonomous, democratically run student organisation, and all students are encouraged to participate.

Editorials are chosen and written by the Ubyssey staff. They are the expressed opinion of the staff, and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Ubyssey Publications Society or the University of British Columbia.

The Ubyssey is a founding member of Canadian University Press (CUP) and firmly adheres to CUP's guiding principles.

All editorial content appearing in *The Ubyssey* is the property of The Ubyssey Publications Society. Stories, opinions, photographs and artwork contained herein cannot be reproduced without the expressed, written permission of The Ubyssey Publications Society.

Letters to the editor must be under 300 words. Please include your phone number, student number and signature (not for publication) as well as your year and faculty with all submissions. ID will be checked when submissions are dropped off at the editorial office of *The Ubyssey*, otherwise verification will be done by phone.

"Perspectives" are opinion pieces over 300 words but under 750 words and are run according to space.

"Freestyles" are opinion pieces written by Ubyssey staff members. Priority will be given to letters and perspectives over freestyles unless the latter is time senstitive. Opinion pieces will not be run until the identity of the writer has been verified.

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Tattoo needles in hand, Alison Cole joined Sarah O'Donnell who was marching madly into the storm. Hurricane Elsa Roque raged up the coast, obliterating the Namiko Kunimoto starr in the night sky, as red leaves whirled around Federico Barahona. Cecelia Parsons was diving through the pages of her book. Lawn Prain and Jessnick Nan Morrison drew their pens. Tara Murphy and Shelly Gornall rolled some film. While Andrea Breau dithered and spit. Joe Clark smoothed Ian Gunn Glitter Hairgoop into his coif. Peter T. Chattaway slumbered on unphased by Sarah Galashan lactating languidly. Always willing to lend a hand, Theresa Chabayer delivered a wee bairn; Wolf Depner and Richard Lam set to work, finding a bed and snacks for the new arrival. Jennifer Wiebe and Amanda Kobler were throwing like athletes. Emilys Mak and Reid fled in horror from Penny "The Steriliser" Cholmondley but it was all in vain: Lisa Chen-Wing, Rose, and Andea Gin set her Scott Hayward on the hapless pair. Stanley Tromped angrily on Faith Armitage's camera, jealous of Richelle Rae's successful modeling debut.

Canadian University Press

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opinion

When it's Not a Matter of Choice

by Penny Cholmondeley

Everyday in Southeast Asia unsuspecting women are rounded up like cattle and sterilised. Government and military officials are the henchmen of strict policies designed to limit population growth. It's an ethical war, where the fight is between population control and human rights.

For women made to suffer through forced abortions and sterilisation, the implementation of an aggressive government policy for controlling population isn't merely about economics and demographics. It's about pain and the loss of personal freedoms.

China stands accused of some of the most severe human rights violations against women, resulting from its infamous "one-child" policy.

Instigated in 1979, the policy was designed to reduce China's population growth to one percent by 1980. In return for compliance, the Peking government rewards families with cash payments, free schooling and access to preferred housing. The system is based on a "reward and punishment" philosophy, and those who go against the policy, intentionally or not, face reductions in salary, increased medical costs, and a decrease in housing space. In a country where overcrowding has become critical, these "punishments" can be economically crippling.

In its defense, the Chinese government claims that curbing its exploding population is necessary to improve living standards. Yet its policy has been met with desperate resistance, and many refugees have fled to Canada and the US. to avoid forced abortions and sterilisation. They have found little help. Despite US legislation granting asylum to refugees fleeing the threat of forced sterilisation and abortions, many refugees remain in prison, their voices silenced.

Atrocities also occur in Tibet under a similar 'two-child' policy.

According to human rights groups Free Tibet and The International Campaign to Free Tibet, women and young girls are caught up in a genocide against the Tibetan people by the Chinese government. The August 1995 National Report on Tibetan Women states that rural areas are most vulnerable, as women are targeted by mobile birth control units that comb the countryside performing mass sterilisation and abortions. An estimated 764 women of child bearing age were sterilized in the Zachu district in 1987.

East Timor has been witness to similar horrors in the hands of the Indonesian government. The East Timor International News Summary claims that since 1985, birth control "safaris" of government and military officials, use threats of violence to coerce women into receiving Norplant. Procedures are usually performed while women are sedated for different operations, or immediately after giving birth.

Birth control injections are also given to young girls who aren't capable of refusing, or women misled into believing they're being inoculated. Sterilisation and abortions can be fatal, as they're frequently performed using crude methods and without adequate medical attention.

It would be naive to believe that such abuses are only a problem in Asian nations. Brazilian women live in fear of concealed and forced operations. Trusting women agree to procedures due to ignorance, deception and desperate need. According to *The Montreal Gazette*, women seeking employment are often forced to take pregnancy tests as part of the interview process; some companies later coerce employees into undergoing sterilization procedures. It was reported that 7.5 million women in Brazil have been subjected to clandestine sterilisation during cesarean operations. Many women are still unaware of what has been done to them.

Canada and the United States aren't free of the disgrace of human rights abuses, as issues in eugenics and coercive population control are firmly rooted in our recent past. Both governments devised policies aimed at removing "undesirables" from the population.

One woman was recently awarded a $750,000 settlement in a lawsuit against the Alberta government. Under the "Sexual Sterilization Act," Leilani Muri was sterilised without her consent while residing at a provincial school for the mentally disabled. A NFB documentary *The Sterilization of Leilani Muri,"* examines her case and the act which allowed, until 1972, the Alberta government to forcibly sterilize 3000 individuals amongst the mentally ill, unwed mothers, Native women and the poor.

In the US., coercive birth control became an issue in the early 1990's, after the FDA approval of Norplant. According to the ACUU Reproductive Freedom Project, the United States government considered mandating the use of Norplant in women convicted of drug and child abuse, and women receiving welfare. Female abusers would be given the choice between Norplant and prison, and women on welfare would receive financial incentives to receive the drug. Rejected as both unconstitutional and discriminatory, these measures intended to coerce women who may not have been in a position to refuse into taking birth control. By targeting only women, the responsibility of men in birth control is neglected.

Responding to criticism, the UN attempted to deal with these issues at the Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. The theme was Women's Rights as Human Rights and for the first time the UN put into writing that women have the right to reproductive freedom. "The State of World Population" prepared by the UNPF in 1995 promotes a combination of reproductive education, the empowerment of women and improved health care as a more appropriate strategy for dealing with population control.

Progress has yet to be seen. While these declarations represent a positive step, the Conference and its Platform For Action have come under attack by many human rights groups including Amnesty International, whose Media Guide to the Conference criticises the omission of many widespread abuses against women and the failure to make strong recommendations at the international level. Tragically, proposals made by the PFA are only guidelines for governments, who can reject propositions they don't wish to follow. Many actions of the UN itself perpetuate the systematic abuse of women, as the World Bank and the UNPF continue to supply offending nations with the funds needed to carry out inhumane policies. These misguided actions mock all claims made in support of women's rights.

Canada and the United States carry their own weight of guilt, remaining idle when presented with evidence of gross human rights abuses. The US maintains a trade status of "Most-Favored-Nation" with the Chinese government, and Indonesia remains Canada's largest trade partner in Southeast Asia. Later this year the President of the Republic of Indonesia will arrive, on the invitation of the Canadian government, in Vancouver where he will be received with honors. His warm reception will stand as callous disregard for the suffering of women, and as an insult to Canadian integrity.

Coercive population policies infringe upon the most basic of human rights, including (to mention only a few) the right to bodily security, freedom from cruel or degrading treatment, and the right to privacy and information. Any government that tortures and abuses women and unborn children has no real understanding of population. ♀

AMS Update

brought to you by your student union

Apply Now! Cool Jobs at the AMS !

So you need a job over the summer and during the school year?But you want a job that will challenge your skills, help you gain new ones, and allow you to assist other UBC students. Well look no further -- the AMS is proud to announce the following openings in its student services:

Position: Director of AMS Tutoring Services
Responsibilities:
• supervise the AMS Tutoring Services Program
• plan new programs for upcoming terms, including scheduling and booking SUB tutoring rooms, Dene Lounge in Totem Park and Netinfo Terminal
• maintain overall payroll
• design promotional materials
• advertise tutoring service sessions on available outlets
• advertise and interview applicants for NetInfo Assistants and Course Tutor positions
• liaise with AMS JobLink to maintain the Tutor Registry
• Periodically conduct and prepare program evaluations
Qualifications:
• Working knowledge of word-processing and UBC 's Netinfo System
• Ability to work under minimum supervision
• Must be a registered UBC student for the 1997/98 academic year
• Previous related work experience an asset

Position: Director, AMS Ombudsoffice
Qualifications:
• experience in conflict resolution, mediation and university policy
• Excellent written and verbal communication skills
• supervisory or managerial experience is an asset
• Knowledge about the Ombudsoffice
• Experience in advising students
• Flexible, responsible and able to listen to both sides of a story while maintaining neutrality
Also to be hired: 2 Ombudsoffice assistants

Position: Director, AMS Orientations
Responsibilities:
• promotion of the Orientations program to prospective students
• hiring and training of staff
• coordination of high school information sessions and tours of campus
• managing a budget
• extensive interaction with new students
Qualifications:
• strong organizational skills
• excellent verbal and written communication skills
• confidence and ability in public speaking
• be sensitive to the concerns of new students
• knowledgeable and involved with the university
Also to be hired: Orientations Assistant

Position:Director, JobLink
Responsibilities include:
• organizing the transition from summer program to the academic year
• managing and hiring staff
• administration of office operation, finances and policy
• preparing statistics and periodic reports
• initiating marketing and promotional activities
• conducting and organizing student information seminars regarding employment issues
• liaising with students, the AMS and the local employment community
Qualifications:
• Experience in Human Resources, Marketing and Media Relations
• ability to work effectively with students, employers and staff
• ability to manage office staff and volunteers
• strong organizational and computer skills
• extensive knowledge of the AMS and UBC
• must be innovative, a self starter with excellent interpersonal skills
Also to be hired: 2 JobLink assistants

Position: Director, Safewalk
Responsibilities:
• organization and management of all aspects of the volunteer team, including training, screening, etc.
• serve as a student representative of campus safety concerns on several university and AMS committees
• administration of the program, including budgeting, records, documentation and addressing various legalities.
Qualifications:
• previous experience with Safewalk and/or a similar program is essential
• availability during the summer months for organizing and planning is an asset
• strong organizational skills are essential

Position: Director, SpeakEasy
Responsibilities include:
• manage the InfoDesk in SUB over the summer (full-time)
• plan for Winter Session 97/98
• successful planning and direction, including volunteer management for 70 volunteers, training, budget and administration
Qualifications:
• self motivated, willing to learn, strong organizational skills, time manangement skills
• strong stress coping mechanism
• prior experience as a peer counsellor, knowledge of the nature of crisis centres, particularly Speakeasy, is needed.
Also to be hired: Speakeasy/Infodesk Assistant

Position: Director, AMS Volunteer Services
Responsibilities:
• prepare and manage a budget
• public relations development with non-profit agencies in the community and other volunteer centres
·maintain the Volunteer Services membership system with agencies in the community
• develop organizational systems and technology that will assist in the efficient operation of the volunteer interview/· referral process and office in general
• select, train and manage an executive team of volunteers and their working groups
• ensure the successful execution of the annual Volunteer Fair and all other special events
• act as a support to working groups, executives and referral volunteers and their special projects
• ensure the continued maintenance and development of the AMS Volunteers Services web site
Qualifications:
• experience as a manager of volunteers
• experience in a volunteer centre
• demonstrated ability in administration and human resources
• voluntary experience with an organization in the community and/or within the university
• strong skills in public relations and organizational ability
• computer programming skills an asset
• theoretical knowledge of volunteer management
• demonstrated strong leadership qualities
• knowledge of the infrastructure of the AMS and/or previous experience with the AMS

Position: Director, AMS Student Discounts
Responsibilities:
• Hold regular office hours (at least 3 hours per day, preferably during lunch hours) to be accessible for student groups. Office hours will be utilized for placing orders, artwork designing, and consultation.
• Placing and picking orders with various clothing wholesalers, screen printers, and embroidery companies.
• Accounting and all promotion campaigns involved.
• Delegating responsibilities to assistants and delivery personnel
Qualifications:
• This student service is very work intensive, applicants must be hard working, dedicated, and has flexible working hours.
• Good communication and leadership skills.
• Accounting, marketing, logistics background an asset.
• Artwork designing ability not necessary but an asset.
• Retail experience an asset
* The wage is based on commission sales.

Position: Director, Used Bookstore
Responsibilities:
• complete operation of the used bookstore
• preparation and setting-up during summer and Christmas breaks
• manage the bookstore's finances
• operate the Book Consignment System database program (training provided)
• hire and manage staff members
• administration of logistical supplies
• production of advertisement
• bookstore inventory
Qualifications:
• Excellent managerial and organizational skills
• Financial accountability
• Personnel management
• Some computing skills
• Ability to work under stress
• Ability to work in a fast-paced environment
• Some sales experience
• Responsible, hardworking, energetic, sociable

Detailed job descriptions are available in SUB 238. Please submit a resume and cover letter no later than noon (12:00 pm) on Thursday, March 20th, 1997 to:

Philip Ledwith
Chair, Services and Appointments Advisory Committee
c/o SUB Room 238

For more information, please contact Ruta Fluxgold, AMS Vice President, at 822-3092, email at vicepres@ams.ubc.c or drop by SUB Room 248.

Be on the lookout for Safewalk Volunteers who are now walking the campus and offering walks to students. Safewalk volunteers can be identified by their Safewalk jackets and will be carrying a flashlight and hand radios

What's On At UBC

March 12 to March 18

wednesday
AMS Volunteer Open House
SUB Concourse
All Day!

thursday
UBC Life Drawing Club
12:30 pm to 2:15 pm
Only $3.00 drop in or $20 per term
Email carmenn@unixg.ubc.ca for more info

Pride UBC Bzzr Garden
4pm to 8pm
SUB Room 212A

Hypnotist, Leigh Sterling will mesmerize you at The Pit Pub
9:30 pm
Come early!

The Carpark in the C.K. Choi Building
Asian Street Foods
11:00 am to 2:00 pm
Call 822-4688 for more info!

Cheap Tuesdays at Your AMS Food Outlets!
Discounts at The Pendulum, Pie-R-Squared, The Gallery Lounge, Snack Attack and more!

Would you like to see your event here? Call Faye Samson, AMS Communications Coordinator at 822-1961 for more info!

Int'l Women's Day highlights political diversity

by Sarah O'Donnell

As an anti-poverty activist, Alice Kendall moved out west from Ontario with the belief she was moving to a better place. What she saw when she arrived shocked her.

"What I have discovered in this short time is that not even Mike Harris and his pals could dream up a way of further punishing and pushing people into poverty as has Glen Clark and his entourage," she explained.

"The difference: Mike Harris is identified as the oppressor. Glen Clark on the other hand will seek your support as your ally while making decisions that destroy what we have already accomplished."

Kendall, who is now affiliated with the Vancouver Status of Women, was just one in a diverse group of women that included Kelly White of the Coast Salish Nation and Maggie Blaney from the Canadian Labour Congress, who spoke at Saturday's International Women's Day rally.

International Women's day, Kendall said, is not just a celebration. It is as political as it was 87 years ago when delegates of the Women's Socialist International protested against low wages, long working hours and inhumane working conditions.

And true to Kendall's words, participants in this year's IWD march proudly showed their political stripes on the steps of Vancouver's public library, carrying banners for organisations like the Vancouver Status of Women, Vancouver Rape Relief, Radical Women, the Downtown Eastside Residents Association and the anti-APEC coalition.

Despite the rally's theme of "Women Moving Forward Together," the political schism between pro-choice supporters and anti-abortionists made this year's rally unique.

According to IWD organisers, the anti-abortionists weren't welcome. Joan Robillard, one of the event organisers, told *The Ubyssey* she made a conscious decision to make this year's march a pro-choice event.

"It's actually, maybe for the wrong reasons or the right reasons, stimulated a lot of the organising. Unfortunately the anti-abortionists managed to get a table at last year's information events...so this year we wanted to make sure that they weren't [at the march]."

"They've affected us in that we've had to be aware of them, but in another way it's created a lot of solidarity and some waking up in terms of taking stock of the backlash that there is against women and women's rights," she said.

Clair Robillard, who was MCing this year's rally, even asked the crowd if the placard-wearing anti-abortionists were welcome at the rally. She received a resounding no. None of the anti-abortionists left, however.

The other outstanding feature of this year's event was the number of women involved in the organising.

"In previous years we've had an average of seven to ten women," said Robillard. "This year there have been 30 to 40 women at each organising meeting, consequently the number of points of view have increased dramatically.

"It has been exhilarating to see so much interest and enthusiasm, but it also indicates the need for organisational clarity and understanding the foundation upon which women make social progress and defining what IWD has meant in the past, the present, around the world and in Vancouver.

Organisers said they have now decided to establish a permanent IWD committee, and will solicit the widest possible input from women outside the right-wing.

"There are no guarantees that this will be a tea party, unless you're thinking of Boston," she said.

Most women, however, were content to think about participating in this year's march and reflect on the meaning of International Women's Day.

Dawn Oleman, who was participating in IWD for the first time with a group of First Nations women, said she heard about the event from her step-mother.

"I felt beautiful when I woke up this morning and the whole reason for that is because it makes me want to cry when a bunch of women want to get together and support each other. When they get together in smaller social groups it's harder to find that support, but when you're here it's solid and it's real." ♀

A RAINBOW COALITION of women stand together celebrate International Women's day in Vancouver.
SARAH O'DONNELL PHOTOS

Breastfeeding case goes before human rights commission

by Sarah Galashan

Six years after her employer told not to breastfeed her daughter at work, Michelle Poirier is still fighting to make breastfeeding in the workplace a legal right.

In a hearing that began March 6, Poirier charged her former employer, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, with sex discrimination. Her pioneering efforts to have the case heard by the BC Human Rights Commission will determine if women have the right to breastfeed their children at work.

As a speech writer for the ministry, Poirier regularly breastfed her child at her desk over the lunch hour. And initially, she said, she felt her colleagues accepted the situation. "It hadn't been a problem. Everyone around me was really supportive and enthusiastic," Poirier told *The Ubyssey*.

After breastfeeding at one of the ministry's public lunch-hour seminars, however, tension developed. Poirier was asked not to attend upcoming lectures, and told not to bring her child to work because it made some staff feel uncomfortable.

"The beauty about having my child brought to my desk was that if I had a deadline I could delay my lunch, pick up my child and breastfeed while I was working," said Poirier.

As a result, the former ministry employee—whose job change was in no way connected to her allegations of sex discrimination—was forced to take her infant to restaurants or shopping malls over the lunch hour.

This, she said, was often an unpleasant experience. "I was in the Eaton's cafe and an elderly woman came up to me and shouted 'you should be doing that in the toilet'."

Despite people's hostility towards public breastfeeding, Poirier said, the benefits for her child made the experience "unquestionably worth it."

"As far as I'm concerned there is no comparison between breastmilk and formula. This is a health issue," Poirier said, "and for me it was choosing between health and employment."

INFACT Canada, a non-profit organisation that protects, supports and promotes breastfeeding, backs Poirier.

According to INFACT, breastmilk can protect infants from infection and reduce a breastfeeding woman's chances of developing breast cancer.

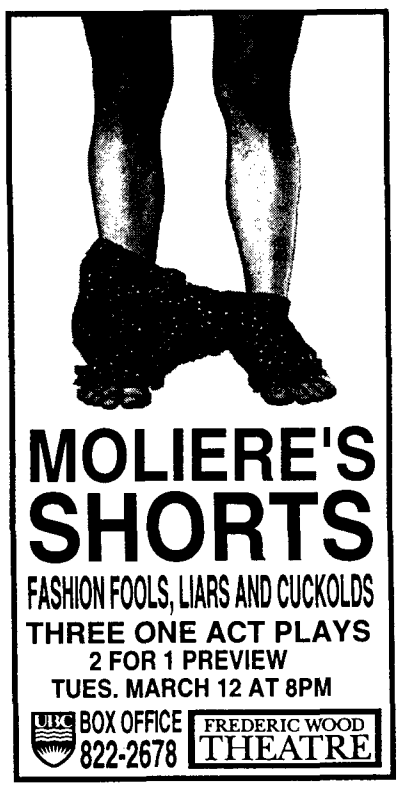
However, INFACT feels this natural form of child nutrition is still not widely accepted, despite the health benefits.

"We've sexualized breasts so much in this culture," said Jean Geary, fundraiser for INFACT Canada. "It's got to the point where to expose your breasts for sexual purposes is perfectly fine, but to expose your breasts to love and nurture your child is seen as disgusting."

Poirier anticipates the hearings will take some time to be resolved but is anxious for an outcome that will affect the rights of all Canadian women. "I don't think women should ever have to chose between the health of their child and a paid job," she said. ♀

BC midwives ready for birth of a profession

Canada is one of the few industrialised countries not to recognise midwives as legitimate medical professionals. But that will all change within months, in BC at least, if the provincial Ministry of Health has its way.
***Theresa Chaboyer* explains.**



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eoe

Even as an obstetrics nurse, Deb Little was unhappy with the way the medical establishment treated pregnant women. So she exchanged her nurses' cap for a midwifery license in an attempt to make up for the gaps she saw in the health care system.

"Women weren't being treated and receiving the care that I thought they should be getting," said Little, who is now the director of the BC Women's Hospital midwifery practice.

"Physicians, I think, agree with us that there is a better way to care for these women, and within the traditional system physicians are unable to provide the type of care that is required."

The point of midwifery, she explained, is to "to reduce intervention and to have a more satisfied woman with her birth experience."

And within a few months, midwifery will finally be legally integrated into the health care system as part of the provincial government's new, more holistic approach to health.

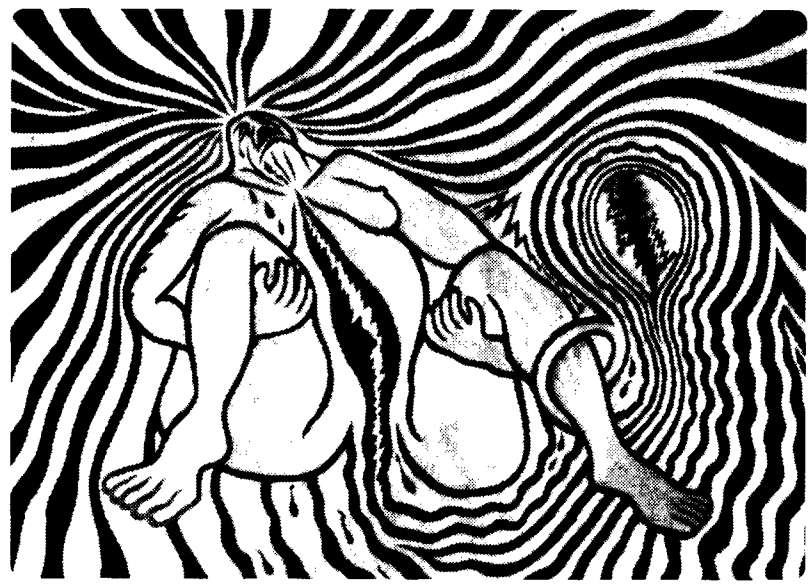
John Kay, communications officer for the Ministry of Health, said the legalisation of midwifery is part of a growing trend within the province's health services. "We have traditionally grown up with a health care system that has been built on hospital-based acute care and physician services. We are now moving into a phase where Medicare is expanding well beyond that; we are really looking across the board at a shift into alternative methods of care," he said.

And while BC midwives are happy to hear they will finally have legal recognition, they say it has been a long time coming.

Camille Bush, who is also a practicing midwife, said the slow sanctioning of midwifery is primarily due to misconceptions and a lack of exposure.

"North American women by and large have very little experience of what midwifery care involves, but I think as women become more aware of it as an option, they find it attractive," she said.

Bush herself decided to become a midwife after her own birthing experience. "I became a midwife primarily as a result of my first child's birth which was a conventional hospital birth of the 1970s," she explained.



Under Little's command, the midwifery unit at BC Women's Hospital recognises the woman as the primary decision maker; women are encouraged to actively participate and make choices about the way care is provided throughout their pregnancies, birth and postpartum experiences.

A good candidate for the use of the midwifery service, said Little, is a woman who would like to stay home in labour as long as possible, would really like to try and avoid having medications during the birth and labour, would like the least intervention at the birth as possible and would like to go home as soon as possible after the birth.

Although the midwives at the hospital currently only provide hospital-based services and are not allowed to head the delivery team, they will soon have the same privileges as doctors during delivery.

"The midwife will be able to act the same as a doctor in terms of being able to provide instructions to nursing staff and others in the care of her patients," Kay said.

Clients of midwives will still have to consult with a general practitioner in the first trimester. But after that, the midwife is only required to defer to the doctor if the pregnancy is deemed to be high risk.

Some doctors, however, are not entirely comfortable with the change, despite the fact that Kay insists the ministry has received support from the BC Medical Association.

Obstetrician Dr. Jack Burak said ten years ago he would have said "absolutely no" to the legalisation of midwifery. But after years of working with midwives at the Women's Hospital, Burak said he now recognises their value in the hospital setting. He is, however, still concerned about midwives' roles in home births. "I do not feel home births are safe because problems develop very quickly during the birthing process that you can not predict," he explained.

Even though Little said she has no doubt that home births will be legalised, a Home Demonstration Project is being conducted to assess not only whether home births should occur, but "how they will occur and what services need to be put in place to make sure that home births can occur in a safe and effective way."

BC's midwives still have a battle to fight when it comes to credentials. Both Little and Bush had to go outside the province to obtain their license; Little went to school in Scotland and Bush was licensed in Washington state.

According to Kay, most of the midwives currently practising in BC will be automatically licensed when the bylaws are passed since their licenses from other countries or provinces will be recognised. But since many midwives have been trained by apprenticing with a practicing midwife, Kay said the province recognised the need for its own fair evaluation and licensing process.

"All aspiring midwives or those requesting licenture need to complete an examination that determines who is ready for licenture or who requires additional training," he explained.

To be eligible for the exam the applicant must be a graduate of midwifery education or have the clinical experience of attendance at least 60 births and the primary birther at at least 40 of them.

The educational standards for BC midwives are still being negotiated by the College of Midwives and the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training.♀

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Model behaviour from behind the scenes

by Richelle Rae

She is beautiful; there's no denying it.

The first time I met Allison Beda was in an elevator in Hotel Vancouver on my way to New Filmmakers Day. She wasn't wearing any make-up or trendy clothes. I remember staring at her, squirming in my "Simple" runners and chewing off the lipstick on my lips. This is not an uncommon reaction to Allison; she used to be a model. Today she is a documentary filmmaker.

Allison didn't notice me in the elevator, even though it was just the two of us – she had important things on her mind. She was on her way to "pitch" her film to a group of panelists at New Filmmakers Day. The film Allison was pitching is a documentary she's been working on for the past two years called *How To Be A Model.*

Allison Beda spent four years of her life in front of the camera, strolling down runways and looking pretty.

DIRECTOR Allison Beda (centre) with model Peggi LePage.

Transitions

Like many young women graduating from high school, Allison didn't know what she wanted to do.

"After I finished high school I went to UBC for two years to work on my bachelor's degree. I didn't know what my major was going to be and I thought 'I'll figure it out, I'll figure it out.' It never happened, so I decided to drop out. I had the opportunity to go to Toronto to model. So I thought 'I'll do this.' During that time I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do. Sort of eliminating things."

What started as a modeling gig in Toronto ended up being four years of Alison's life where she got to travel the world, make money and grow up. Filmmaking was still a long way into her future.

"I had no idea when I started modeling. I started quite late, when I just finished high school. It was just something that was fascinating for me 'cause I was a real tomboy. It was like trying to be a girl. It was a very stereotypical feminine thing to do. At one point I was even considering fashion design. Eventually I realised I needed to find something that I could do for the rest of my life."

Allison decided to quit modeling. She spent her last year as a model working on a portfolio so she could get into film school.

"I applied to the film programs at SFU and UBC. I got accepted into both. I talked to a bunch of people when I got accepted and they said that UBC was more commercial and that SFU was experimental. It sounded like SFU was where I should be."

Experimental is a good name for the film Allison made while she was at SFU. *Be Zero Be* is a short film shot in black and white that is reminiscent of early Degas films, full of interesting textures and odd composition. Allison's film aired on a WTN series called *Shameless Shorts.*

A window of opportunity

After graduating from film school Allison had a chance to do what she's wanted to do for a long time - make a film about modeling.

"When I was modeling people would ask me stupid or insulting questions about it. There was this polarity: people would think that modeling was just amazing or great or that it was basically a route to prostitution. People would say 'how can you consider yourself a feminist and still be a model?' I thought that it would be a really great idea of how to address those issues."

How to be a Model follows Peggi LePage, a 27-year-old model, as she deliberates a career change or modeling for "just one more year."

Allison and crew trekked from New York to Paris to Toronto to London to give a behind-the-scenes look at modeling and the women who have not nor ever will become "supermodels." Allison argues that although Hollywood has made several films about the fashion industry lately, none of them have been about the models. About their reality.

"I like *Unzipped.* I thought it was funny and gave you a good sense of how things are from the designer's perspective. My problem is that the models didn't get to talk. And that was something I wanted to do with my film. I mean the whole idea is to have these two dimensional beings portrayed as real three dimensional people. The models actually talk, you don't see that very often."

All models are dumb

All models are stupid. All models are superficial. All models care about is fashion and make-up. These are popular myths that Allison is intent on disproving.

"I think one of the issues we're dealing with is what you have to put up with when you're being taken at face value, and how you can become very obsessive about it. Because that's your money. It's very difficult to remain grounded and level-headed if all you do is exist in that world. You are constantly told that modeling doesn't take any intellectual skill. I mean, you just kind of stand there. Even if you know that's not true, you sort of buy into that and think that other people lead these vastly deep intellectual lives. But not you."

But now she's moved behind the camera, giving a voice to women who are rarely heard.

Many critics of modeling argue that models get the reputation for being stupid because so many of them start when they are so young. Girls are pulled out of school and thrown into an adult world with no experience or education.

"I think that plays into it, but I also think that people see models as women that epitomise a physical ideal that normal people will never attain. You can't possibly be beautiful and intelligent. It's a way of making someone who is potentially threatening to you less threatening. It's funny – we asked a lot of models when they think is the optimum age to start, and they all pretty much said 18."

Starting from scratch

Allison has learned something that takes some people a lifetime to learn: no one is going to do it for you. She is what you call a self-starter.

"I started making the film without any funding or money in place. I had done a lot of the research already and the woman that I wanted to star in the film told me that it was going to be her last year modeling. So I thought that I should at least attempt to start and try to get as much as I could get done, and sort of get funding after the fact or along the way."

This has proved to be more difficult than Allison anticipated. She applied three times to the Canada Council grant program before finally getting accepted.

But Allison still feels lucky. When she started the film she was fresh out of film school, so she had a great resource pool to draw from.

"I knew all these really talented people that were willing to help me out and everyone in the crew worked for free. A lot of people donated their air fares to places we were shooting. It was pretty insane, the amount of personal investment of time, energy and skills."

Despite the fact that Allison had modeled in the past and knew the fashion industry from an insider's perspective it wasn't easy to get people to talk to her.

"It helped that I had modeled in the past, and that models could relate to me on that level. I found that a lot of fashion people were really hesitant because they had been misrepresented so often. It would have helped if we could have talked to people beforehand. A lot of the time I was going into things cold. I was having to do all this preliminary stuff at the same time I was trying to get a good interview."

Shit happens

As with making any film there are surprises and setbacks, although it seems as though *How to be a Model* has had more than its fair share.

Helen Yagi, the producer of the film, talked about the film's lowest point.

"Allison was working in an edit suite in Yaletown and her car got broken into. One of the things that got stolen was some shot footage and negative stock. So she called the police and they couldn't really do anything because this kind of thing happens all the time. So what she did was go through every dumpster in Yaletown from midnight until the wee hours of the morning. I could just see the headlines in the paper the next day, 'low budget film directer goes dumpster diving.' Fortunately, she found all the footage. It was incredible, a real miracle."

Allison agrees. "Getting the negatives stolen sucked." But they had other problems along the way.

"When we were in London we found out that we could interview this photographer who was really great only he was photographing Carla Bruni, the supermodel, that day so it was really difficult to get permission to shoot. Anyway we got down there and shot the interview. Carla Bruni was there, she kept asking questions about what we were doing and stuff and so we asked to interview her. Right at the beginning of the interview the batteries ran out, and we didn't have the AC to fix it. I didn't want to interrupt her and say, 'Oh by the way, we've run out of batteries.' So we have this talking head interview with Carla Bruni with no sound; which is kind of ironic because the whole point of the documentary is to reunite models with their voices."

Although Allison has suffered her share of disappointments and lost opportunities in making this film, she says there's not much she would do differently.

When Allison isn't borrowing the editing facilities at the NFB to put together a rough cut of *How to be a Model,* she works on producing and directing a film from a series of short films based on modern fairy tales called, *Once Upon Our Times.* She also hopes to return to documentary filmmaking and direct a film about girls that skateboard.

Allison has some advice to offer new filmmakers based on her experiences:

"Get lots of help. Talk to as many people as you can. Establish a support network of people that know more than you do. You need people, it's not something you can do on your own. Be passionate, if you choose to do something that you're really interested in, or want to find more out about, it will pull you through the horrible times. That you'll still have something in it that you connect with that makes you get up the next day to do the work." ♀

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URBAN BODY ART
a penetrating investigation

by Alison Cole

Jenn Moffat spends her days poking holes through peoples' body parts, and getting paid for it.

As a professional body piercer at *NEXT! Body Piercing & Aftercare*, 23-year-old Jenn has spent the last three years in Vancouver pursuing an interest that goes back to her pre-teen years.

"I'd always had an interest in [piercing], since age 11 or 12, piercing my own ears, eyebrow, navel and nose."

Despite Jenn's age she possesses a maturity she reflects through her professionalism; after all, her work requires precision, care and thoroughness. Yes, even a trained monkey can poke a needle into someone's skin, but it takes a degree of skill and knowledge to do it properly and responsibly.

Jenn takes her job seriously. To her, body piercing like surgery—not much of a stretch given the fact that her work space has the same sterility of a doctor's office.

Jenn's first client is "Jesse," a 17-year old whose reason for getting pierced is "to be trendy".

"I hope I cry," Jesse tells us.

And though Jesse represents a significant portion of the clientele, body piercing isn't something just for the young and foolish. People from all walks of life are interested in this tribal urban trend.

"We've got people in their 50s and 60s getting piercings done. They're a rare breed, but they're out there. It isn't just a youth thing. A lot of people think that piercing is just for young kids, and it's definitely not."

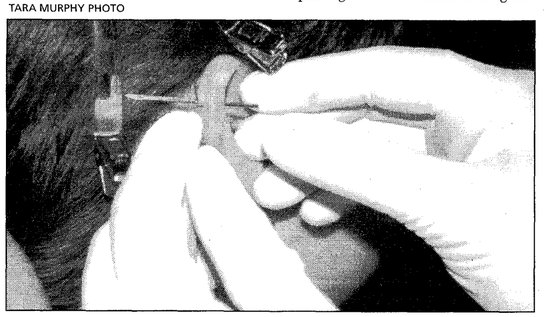
Jesse will be having his helix done - the upper cartilage area of the ear. It will take two to three months to heal, which is average for body piercing. A tongue generally takes a week to three weeks, whereas a navel can take anywhere from six weeks to six months to heal. She warns Jesse to expect what is called an inflammatory response. This is the body's reaction to the foreign object, and will produce a pus sack on the outside of the jewelry, which is a collection of white blood cells that draw bacteria out of the fresh piercing. These hardened "crusties" must be cleaned two to four times a day.

"I want to be one of those old, bitchy, crusty whose heads don't fit through doorways..

After explaining the cleaning and aftercare procedures, Jenn does the deed. She cleans the ear with iodine and marks the spot to be punctured. Then she uses aromatherapy to help him relax. Jesse seems fine and only writhes briefly in pain as the needle goes through the ear. But not all clients are as comfortable with pain.

"You have your share of people passing out. That's called neurogenic

TARA MURPHY PHOTO



shock. A lot of times people get all worked up for this enormous pain, the piercing happens and it's such a relief that it barely hurt at all. Then they kind of go into shock after that. They go white, their temperature goes up, and they usually take a brief nap."

After watching Jesse's fruitful experience, I later decide to get my helix pierced as well. The sharp pain is instantaneous, but brief, and I feel the one second adrenaline rush that Jenn jokes is the reason behind this "addictive sport." She diagnoses me as "one of those alien non-bleeders," while inserting the ring.

Navels are currently the most popular of all piercings, though nose rings and eyebrow rings are very popular as well.

"Basically, whatever's on music videos at the time is popular. I've been noticing a lot more eyebrow piercings on Much Music lately, so we get a lot more of those."

Unfortunately for Jenn, there are no genital piercings in store that day; male genitals, Jenn explains, are her favourite piercings to do. She believes it's one of the most important things to have her clients happy with the work she's done, and with male genital piercings, "that's a guaranteed happy... piercing."

Jenn recalls during her first week of work at NEXT! a 'giche' male genital jewelry replacement wasn't one of her best experiences.

"A giche is the piece of skin that lies in between the frontum line, at the base of the sac, and between the anus. It was really just a difficult situation because when you start getting into the thicker gages, the opening and closing of the pliers are harder to do, they take some muscle. He's in a spread eagle, and we're trying to get this ring open enough to put the bead on. He was there for half an hour, and we had three helping hands, and it was just a mess."

Genitals are the most expensive of all body piercings. At NEXT!, the highest priced is a Prince Albert piercing that goes for $98, and the cheapest piercing are ears, at $46. This includes the $30 piercing fee ($15 for ears and noses), plus the cost of the jewelry.

As far as her job is concerned, Jenn's parents don't like it, and she doesn't frequent bars much anymore "because the topic always rolls around to piercing".

The job itself has its setbacks as well, Jenn confirms. "It's really hard on you mentally. And we have eight to thirteen clients a day - that's a lot of energy. And sometimes some clients just take a little more energy than you want to give. That's about the only downfall."

JEN PERSON tattoo artist. RICHELLE RAE PHOTO

Being a tattoo artist in the winter is difficult; there simply aren't as many people willing to show a little flesh. In the winter months it's minimum wage, around $1000 a month. But in the summer, 27-year-old tattooist at *The Devil's Den*, Jen Person, says you can average around $9000 a month.

Jen is honest about why she is a tattoo artist. "The main interest is money and a large ego."

Jen first fell in love with tattoos as a child playing around with those cheap, tacky tattoo stickers that came as a prize inside of a box of stale "cracker jacks." She got her first tattoo when she was 12; she lied and said that she was 15. Her mother cried when she found out what she had done. Jen still keeps that first tattoo, a cartoon of "chilly willy penguin."

In 1990 at the age of 20, Jen progressed to tattooing herself and other people.

"A friend of mine had a gun and was working out of his home, and out of boredom I would tattoo myself, and pieces of fruit, trying to learn. I tattooed a lot of honeydew melons with beautiful tattoos."

Jen says she quit for a few years because she was making mistakes all over the place and wasn't confident enough. She gradually began tattooing again last fall.

"It's scary. It is very scary. Scary in the sense that I'm a woman in a male dominated field. Also in the sense that you are involved with something that is permanent...You can't make mistakes you can't fix, you don't know how it's going to heal. Every time you do a tattoo you're rolling the dice. Are you going to be allergic to the cream I give you? Are you going to reject the ink? How is this going to look in six months?"

"Forever" can mean anywhere from seven minutes of tattooing or eight hours and still being nowhere near done. Prices at *The Devil's Den* go anywhere from $50 to a couple of thousand, depending on the amount of work the tattoo will require.

"My favourite tattooing to do is stuff that challenges me, and stuff where there's the potential to mess up big-time. I'm a pressure person, so [it's] something that gets my adrenaline going. I've done a Welsh Flag on somebody, and that was tense, and throughout the whole thing I was biting my fingernails going 'Please work'."

Jen doesn't like doing all tattoos; there are some she'd rather not do.

"I think some of them are pretty silly. Like the Tasmanian Devils - I really have to step back and go 'Why do I do these things?'"

The walls of The Devil's Den are covered with thousands of tattoos that have all been used on someone some time. Even designs of psychopathic bleeding clowns, rainbow coloured ying-yangs, and hotdogs and ice cream cones have walked out of the store on a human canvas.

The clientele varies from 18 year-old high school kids to 70 year-old men come in to be decorated.

"Little grunge rockers to guys who walk in in business suits. There's no set person or group. The only thing they all have in common is something has changed in their lives or they're going to change something."

Business is slow, so Jen decides to perform on her co-worker, Randy. As she puts on the latex gloves and prepares the needle and ink, he placidly sits in his seat, playing his handheld video black jack game in his right hand as his left arm waits for the intrusion of Jen's needle.

Even after Jen begins working on his arm, he calmly continues with his game, tuning out the 18 tiny needles that are jutting in and out of five layers of his skin at 2000 times per second.

Jen works with precision, making a circular grind to abraise the colour into the skin. She uses mostly all natural pigments; sand is mixed in the ink, which acts as a carrier, and stop the ink from spreading. The number of needles penetrating the skin at once can range from three (the thickness of a household tack), for outlining, to 14 and 18, for colouring in.

After about 20 minutes, Jen stops her work, and Randy's blood is seeping through the bright orange and purple colours of his newly tattooed skin.

I've always said I'll never get a tattoo, but Jen offers to give me an "inkless" one, so I can personally experience how it feels. I experience a sensation that feels like very sharp knives cutting into my skin.

Jen's says her goal is to have her entire body, except her neck and face, covered with tattoos.

"I want to be one of those old, bitchy, crusty tattooists whose heads don't fit through doorways...And I look forward to being a great-grandmother and sitting in my rocking chair, wandering outdoors in the herb garden and scaring the neighbour's children."

My dose of the world of body decoration is not over yet. Next stop, a domain that has yet to become anywhere near as popular as body piercing and tattooing: branding.

I had wanted a brand ever since I saw them doing it on TV at a Lollapalooza concert. Of course, seen from the safety of one's own home, I really had no idea what to expect.

Mike "Bear" Walsh runs *Taboo Tribalware*, a body piercing and branding business, and is one of only two people in the branding business in Vancouver catering to the mid-20s clientele. For $25, plus an additional five dollar "strike charge," you too can feel like cattle.

"I don't sweeten it at all," Bear says as he explains the series of third degree burns that make up a brand. "I want people to know what they're getting in to."

Even so, he gets about ten phone calls a month from people who want brands. But as a result of "frighten[ing] them off," either from the preliminary phone call conversation or the hour long consultation, he ends up doing only about one brand per month.

"It's not hugely popular, and it won't continue to be as long as we continue not to sweeten it, and I won't. It's not for everybody; it's a fairly intense act to do this."

I am not discouraged.

There are two methods of branding Bear uses. The first is called the 'multi-strike' method, which involves breaking the design into a series of straight lines, curves and dots, and then applying them on the skin as a series of third degree burns. The second technique is called the 'hyphercation' method, using a device that was originally intended for burning off warts with electricity. The design is stenciled on the skin and is manually "drawn" in, burning the image into the skin.

I decide to go with the second method, which is also Bear's preference. But before my brand becomes a work of art it has to go through a process.

"Well essentially it looks like little strips of raw hide, which is just the burnt tissue...So you're looking at five days or so before those strips come away. At that point it starts leaking. It's mostly clear fluid, and a bit of milky fluid...the scabbing stops. At that point it's pretty much just purple scar tissue," he explains.

I have decide to have the design of an ankh burnt into my lower calf. The brand will be about two inches tall, and then eventually expand slightly beyond that.

Because everyone's skin is different, there is no way of guaranteeing how the brand will turn out, and this, Bear believes, is another reason why branding will never be popular. He also warns me against getting the brand wet or exposing it to light since the shape of the burn will warp and produce ugly effects.

Two days after my consultation, I go in to have the brand done. Ignorant to pain, I am completely calm about having third degree burns etched into my skin; in fact, I'm looking forward to it.

Bear gets me to lay down on a table ; he applies the stencil onto my leg, and the last thing I see is the hyphercator instrument, emitting shiny sparks of electricity.

The sensation of the hyphercator burning my skin is excruciating. It feels like I'm being blowtorched with electricity and is unlike any other pain I have experienced.

As the time ticks on and on, Bear and Colin inform me what parts of the ankh are being done. I lay there desperately waiting for it all to be over. And then, after what seems like the longest moment of anguish in my life, I'm told that it's done. I ask Bear how long the whole process took, and he tells me two to three minutes max.

Bear rubs some aloe onto the burn and asks me if it feels good. "It doesn't feel good," I answer, but it doesn't feel "bad" either. I am surprised that the aftermath is completely painless.

Bear makes a comment about the "smell" to Tara, the photographer. What smell? Later, Tara tells me it made her want to vomit. I am shocked and disappointed that I was not able to smell my own burning flesh. ♀

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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Official Community Plan: Update

What is the Official Community Plan?

The OCP is a statement of policy which sets objectives for land use and transportation, particularly in relation to non-institutional development. It is intended to achieve the common objectives of both GVRD and UBC to implement the Livable Region Strategic Plan and to sustain UBC's main mission and responsibility as a leading educational institution. The OCP has been prepared through a consultative process involving GVRD, UBC, interest groups from both on and off campus, and the public.

Once in place the OCP will provide guidelines for detailed Local Area Plans which will be presented and reviewed through a public consultation process. The Local Area Plans will be guided by a joint GVRD/UBC task force.

Overview

An Official Community Plan (OCP) has been prepared for the University of British Columbia by the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) through a consultative process involving UBC, interest groups from on and off the UBC campus, and the public. The OCP was developed in a manner consistent with the GVRD's Livable Region Strategic Plan, which calls for the protection of the Green Zone and building of complete communities. It has been approved by UBC's Board of Governors and on Nov. 1, 1996, the GVRD Board of Directors gave third reading to Bylaw 840 - 1996, the Official Community Plan for Part of Electoral Area 'A' (UBC Area).

At the time of third reading, a number of modifications were made to the OCP including:

- amending policy 4.1.14 to indicate that the goal is that, in addition to student housing, not less than 50 per cent of market and non-market housing serve households where one or more members works or studies on the UBC campus;
- amending policy 4.1.16(f) to provide an open space standard for residential use of 1.1 hectares per 1000 people and provision to lower the standard based upon resident access to appropriate UBC facilities;
- amending policy 4.2.2 to strengthen the requirements for transportation planning and to provide the goal that single occupant vehicle travel be reduced by 20 per cent;
- amending the wording of policy 4.3.3 regarding slope and erosion issues.

The GVRD Board of Directors will forward the plan to the board's May 1997 meeting for final consideration, after UBC has provided further information on key issues, as follows:

- a comprehensive planning process for UBC that involves on-campus and off-campus stakeholders and addresses transit use, truck travel, parking and transportation demand management;
- an approach to achieving the housing objective of not less than 50 per cent of households having one or more members working or studying on the UBC campus;
- an approach to providing required social and community services for residents.

• • • • •

As part of the review process, UBC is working with consultative committees with membership from both on- and off-campus stakeholders. These committees are reviewing issues as they relate to transportation, community services and housing and provide important and direct feedback to independent consultants retained by UBC to review the OCP amendments outlined above. Once this consultative process is complete, a series of public information meetings will be held for the community at large. These will be advertised in local newspapers and will provide an opportunity for further input prior to final consideration of the By-law by GVRD in late May.

Committees

Consultation Committee for Community Services

The Consultation Committee for Community Services is working with the consultant to provide direct feedback on the type of community services presently lacking for on-campus residents, identify some short-term solutions (such as access to UBC's libraries) and provide feedback on a long-term strategy for the provision of municipal-type services that an on-campus community might expect.

The committee, chaired by Kathleen Beaumont of Campus Planning and Development, includes UBC representatives from: Faculty of Arts, UBC Residents Association, Treasury, Students, Faculty, Public Affairs, Staff, Library, Athletics and Recreation, President's Property and Planning Advisory Committee, and UBC Real Estate Corporation. The committee also includes representatives from: Greater Vancouver Regional District, Hampton Place Strata Corp., City of Vancouver, and University Endowment Lands.

Consultants: Mark Betteridge and Associates (MBA) Inc., Jane Fleming and Associates Inc., Urban Systems

Consultation Committee for Housing

The Consultation Committee for Housing is working with the consultant to address innovative approaches on how both GVRD's and UBC's objectives can be met regarding an approach to addressing the housing objective of not less than 50 per cent of households having one or more members working or studying on the UBC campus.

The committee, chaired by Jim Carruthers of Campus Planning and Development, includes UBC representatives from: Treasury, Alma Mater Society, Faculty, Public Affairs, UBC Real Estate Corporation, President's Property and Planning Advisory Committee, and Housing and Conferences. The committee also includes representatives from: Greater Vancouver Regional District, City of Vancouver, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Montrose Financial Group, Urban Development Institute, University Endowment Lands, and Hampton Place Strata Corp.

Consultants: Mark Betteridge and Associates (MBA) Inc., City Spaces Consulting, Jane Fleming and Associates Inc.

Consultation Committee for Transportation

The Consultation Committee for Transportation is reviewing a series of options to achieve three major objectives, i.e. the reduction of the 1996 24-hour Single Occupancy Vehicle Travel by 20 per cent, to reduce the impact of truck travel patterns, and to optimize safety by reducing vehicles passing through the surrounding communities. The review of these options includes the impact of these policies to both the community and to UBC.

The committee, chaired by David Grigg of Campus Planning and Development, includes UBC representatives from: Faculty, Alma Mater Society, Students, Staff, Greening the Campus, Public Affairs, Parking and Transportation, Senate, and President's Property and Planning Advisory Committee. The committee also includes representatives from: City of Vancouver, Point Grey Ratepayers Association, SW Marine Drive Homeowners Association, Dunbar Ratepayers Association, B. C. Transit, University Endowment Lands, Greater Vancouver Regional District, and Ministry of Transportation and Highways.

Consultants : Mark Betteridge and Associates (MBA) Inc., N. D. Lea Consultants, Jane Fleming and Associates Inc.

You can read the Official Community Plan and supporting documents on the Internet and send questions and comments by e-mail:

http://www.cpd.ubc.ca/ocp/index.htm

If you would like to ask questions or comment on this process, please write or e-mail:

Geoff Atkins, Associate Vice-President, Land and Building Services
University of British Columbia
2329 West Mall, Vancouver, BC
V6T 1Z4
e-mail: geoff@plantops.ubc.ca

BOSNIAN WOMEN grieve at a funeral for 224 civilians buried after being found in a mass grave outside Biljani, a village in northwest Bosnia. SUZANNE AHEARNE PHOTO

Photojournalist finds war rape a hard sell

by Faith Armitage

Rape is not just a women's issue. That much is clear to photojournalist Suzanne Ahearne after months of research and three weeks of on-site reporting on the rape campaigns in Bosnia.

But a "lukewarm reception" from Canadian national magazines, plus her resolve to have the work published as a photo essay and story—not just a story with pictures—has made finding a mainstream market difficult.

"Writing for something like *Ms.* magazine is in a way like preaching to the converted," Ahearne says. "You don't have to convince people that rape is an insidious, horrible tool of war. Writing it for *Maclean's*, you have to...give background and the psychological and emotional garbage that comes with rape; you can't take any of that for granted with your audience."

While she sees the value in having publications devoted to women's work and issues, Ahearne says she would prefer to see her work published in a general issue magazine. "I don't think rape, especially on the scale that it happened [in Bosnia], is a women's issue," she explains.

Ahearne says the sheer scope of the rape campaign means the story works on many levels. "It was perpetrated physically against women but it was used largely to humiliate men, which makes it all the more insidious.

"When Serb soldiers rape women...they did it more to completely humiliate their husbands and fathers because they know how families react, especially Muslim families, to a woman being raped. This is common in our culture too—maybe to a lesser extent—but it's as if the woman has been party to it somehow, that she's not truly a victim. And she is now soiled. There are a lot of cases of women who were raped in front of husbands and children and fathers as a particular psychological weapon."

Because children themselves were victims of war rape, or forced to watch their mothers being raped, the atrocities will scar generations.

"In the coming years, the youngest generation are going to have to grow old with that trauma," she explains. "Whatever long term effects it has it'll be part of their culture and mythology forever."

Rape, she says, was a tool of ethnic cleansing and genocide. "It's quite clear that war rape is used as a method of clearing the land by raping people in their own homes. And that's been very successful. A lot of people we talked to were living as refugees because they just can't stand to go home. Others, of course, have a different reaction and it's part of their survival just to get home; a way of not being beaten is to go home despite it all."

But for members of the international press corps, going home is routine. "By the summer of '96 pretty much everyone had gone; a lot of press centres were beginning to close down," she says. "It seemed really typical of the coverage of most wars because it seems the press leaves at the height of action. If the media's there to teach us something or communicate something, not just about the acting out of events, but real human truths, then it's really missing out on a lot by leaving right at the end of the war."

Ahearne herself bucked the trend and went to Bosnia in November 1996 with Toronto writer Kim Heinrich-Grey. The pair is currently on the verge of a contract with a Canadian magazine. But wherever their work is published, Ahearne insists she will protect the integrity of the story.

> **"It's quite clear that war rape is used as a method of clearing the land by raping people in their own homes."**
>
> **SUZANNE AHEARNE**
> **FREELANCE JOURNALIST**

"The thing that I think is really necessary to do with a story like this is not to mince words, and speak in euphemisms; to tell it as gruesomely as it really is, without it being sensational. This is a real stumbling block when editors want a kind of sexy news appeal, which sells probably more covers than anything. To sell the story of rape in that context is, at best, at cross-purposes, and at worst, part of the whole problem. It has to be done very delicately because you don't want these women who are telling their stories...to be pornography in itself, to have people reading it for some kind of titillation."

Ahearne has a sheaf of compelling photographs from Bosnia. But it's been more than three months since she returned and so far, no Canadian national magazine or newspaper has published the photos and story; it may soon be time to turn to *Ms.*

"Optimistically I'd like to think we don't need women's issues anymore, especially in university [papers], but you know, I suppose we do," she adds. ♀

MUSLIM WOMEN mourning at the same funeral. SUZANNE AHEARNE PHOTO

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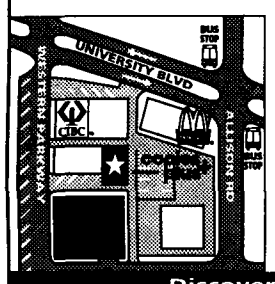

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More than you want her to be

by Namiko Kunimoto

KINNIE STARR
review and interview

During this year's Women in View Festival, Kinnie Starr took the stage at the WISE Hall, mesmerizing her audience with her diverse vocal abilities, guitar fixins' and spoken word.

Although my tardiness caused me to miss all but the last two songs of her show, upon entering I could see the smiles on everyone's faces as they enjoyed Starr's casual demeanor—well-suited to her stocking feet. Starr's blend of poetry, acoustic guitar and samples, that she dubs "chuck-hop," creates an expression that crosses musical genres.

Starr's expressiveness is also inherent in her visual art: she designed the cover of *Tidy* as well as several inside sketches, making the CD an artistic package. In fact, Starr says she has thought about exhibiting her artwork, "If I had a lot of control and organisational skills, I would combine [my art] with shows,"

Sexuality free of sexism is a theme running through much of Kinnie Starr's lyrics and artwork. T-shirts and other merchandise feature a logo of a dripping wet pussy, anatomically correct, with the words "I am more than you want me to be" spelled across the top.

In "Buttons," a song off her first album *Learning to Cook*, Starr belts out the words, "I wanna feel the freedom to be sexy, without his eyes sliding all up, under and into me."

Undoubtedly some people may be interested in her work because of its sexual explicitness, but Starr asserts that expressions of her own sexuality are not meant for someone else to exploit.

In the midst of sexism in the rock world and the rise of so-called grrrl bands, Starr plays mostly with men. She seems to prefer networking with women through shows like Rock for Choice, the pro-choice benefit concert. Gender plays less of a role than personality for Starr, who says, "I choose to work with people because of their attitudes."

While she acknowledges that the "huge, huge majority of musicians" are men, there are a lot of women just working really hard to get their songs and their voices out...a lot of women who do play together, with female drummers, everything."

Kinnie Starr performs with an entire troupe of friends for some shows. At others, like Rock For Choice and the Women In View Festival, she goes it alone. Rock For Choice "was way too intimate for me to want to make it into a rock thing," said Starr.

Starr is a bit cynical when it comes to how the music industry treats women artists. "Women are sometimes politicized instantly, into 'Well, she's a woman so she must be doing something good for the cause of women and music'."

"You know what? There are a lot of women kicking ass."
KINNIE STARR

On the other hand, said Starr, "there are so many labels looking for a pretty face. It's like, 'Okay, here honey, I'll write your songs for you and you just hold an acoustic guitar for a song and play A and look pretty."

"But you know what?" she added. "There are a lot of women kicking ass."

Keep an ear out for this heroine's rise to fame as she has recently moved to major label status. Also, check out *Tidy*, her most recent independent release.♀

The sound of missing music

by Elsa Roque

freestyle

I'm given an assignment in Music History class. We have to critically analyse a music piece dating from between 500 AD and 1600 AD. Since I'm unfamiliar with European music from the Ancient period through to the Baroque I begin to panic.

We have studied quite a few composers, but none of them stimulate a single nerve in my body or raise a hair off my head. I flip through my textbook and find there are only three women composers in the entire book: Hildegard of Bingen, Beatriz De Dia, and Barbara Strozzi. I begin to think about the missing music; about the music never transcribed, and in later years, never recorded.

I think about the music erased from history because it was created by women. I think about the righteous and talented composers and how sad it is their creations never found their way to the ears, hearts and minds of others.

I begin to feel angry. I find myself caught in a spider web of a daydream. My vision starts off foggy, but becomes clear as I go along. I visualise a great big open field, empty but for what appears to be a metal music stand placed right in the middle. I see a stack of music sheets on it. I see the notes written in black ink. I begin to make sense of them.

The day is grey and it rains. All of a sudden a raging wind sweeps in, carrying away the stack of music. Papers fly everywhere. They are lifted far, far away. The papers are gone like a balloon that finds its way out of the small sweaty hands of a child and soars through the sky toward the sun, disappearing without a trace.

I think of ways to find the lost music. I imagine a wind as tranquil as the current of a temperate ocean. The wind picks up speed and becomes as violent as the tides of a tsunami. There's a hurricane of music sheets. I can hear very strange and beautiful music. There is no end to it.

I see the ones who silenced these women: the dream killers; the boogie men of women's art d'oeuvre; those who convicted women of offenses against the creative mind and soul. They ensured there would be no place for the work created by women. I see them covering their ears. They can't stand the music! They are haunted by the music in their dreams. They are haunted by the music, eyes open or closed.

In this fantasy the earth is an indigo sphere. It has two big ears on each side. Its ears are receptive to the music. The music fills the earth and it becomes bloated and pulsates. The Earth's ears are finally open to the genius of women. This genius reaches the farthest galaxy. In this fantasy women's music takes back its space and lost voices are retrieved.

In the end I chose to critique a liturgical drama, a musical about morality, *Ordu Virtutum*, written by Hildegard of Bingen. In the play, characters abound: lost souls tempted by the devil, good souls, the prophets, and the devil.

Hildegard also wrote sixteen virtues to be sung separately representing characteristics such as obedience, innocence, mercy and chastity: stereotypical female characteristics. With that in mind, I see many of her ideas were stained with misogynistic ideals. However, her accomplishments reveal perseverance. Hildegard overcame barriers and produced work that would influence thinking. It is unfortunate that the oppression she fought against was internalized in her thinking.

Hildegard also wrote *Scivias*. Her first work, it portrayed prophecies and visions she experienced and an explanation of the rule of St. Benedict. She wrote on herbology, botany and medicine. She also wrote about illnesses, their effects and cures. Hildegard was a poet and the composer of 77 hymns. She died in 1179 at the age of 81.

I am the one whose praise echoes high
I adorn all the earth
I am the breeze that nurtures all things green
I encourage blossoms to flourish with ripening fruits
I am the rain coming from the dew
that causes the grasses to laugh with the joy of life
I am the yearning for good

- Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179)♀

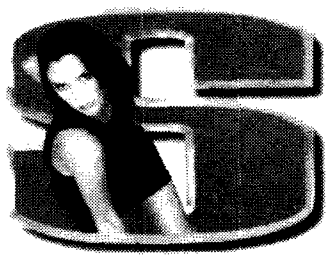
books

Rockin' bimbos

SPICE GIRLS [VIRGIN]
Can You Handle A Spice Girl?

by Andrea Gin

In the spirit of trendy, cute singing groups like Menudo, New Kids On The Block, Backstreet Boys, and Boyzone comes the Spice Girls, whose international chart-topping



hit "Wannabe" has placed them in the middle of a great pop music debate: Are they victims of a media-created monster?

If you don't know what I'm talking about, then a) you're an alien b) you're still in the denial phase of dealing with the Spice Girl phenomenom and have not yet progressed to the anger stage or c) you're lying.

In case it's `a' then here's a brief introduction. Meet Victoria, aka "Posh Spice" (all five of the girls have descriptive nicknames) - who, as her name implies, is the most extravagant and aloof of the group. Her greatest regret according to her internet profile? "Not having a boob job."

Emma is the youngest and hence known as "Baby Spice," and her motto is to "be sweet and honest and good always." Then there's the high-kicking Mel C., "Sporty Spice," who claims her deplorable trait is "not being able to lift heavier weights than blokes." Geri "Ginger Spice" has the scandalous past, and knows how to win an argument: "I throw in a lot of big words and a lot of verbal to confuse the situation!" Finally, there's Mel B., who is called "Scary Spice," although I can't figure out why she is called that except maybe because

she's the loudest and has the biggest hair.

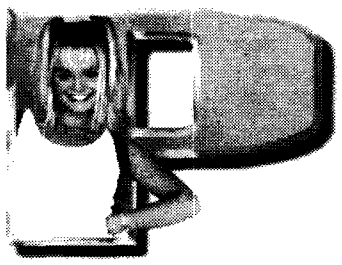
To their fans, the Spice Girls represent feisty femininity-trashiness, independence and the ability to do and say what they want. To their detractors, they are riding a wave of flavour-of-the-month over-fascination by the media, and are being exploited for the way they can pose in a bikini. To everyone, they are basically Barbie and her friends come to life.

And it's no exaggeration to say they are starting to wield influence beyond the conventional pop-stardom perimeters. For instance, based on a few over-interpreted comments in a right-wing British political journal, there is now an effect called "the Spice Vote" that strategists are seriously monitoring before the next general elections (this even though three of the five members have said they will not vote—the other two are Conservative).

Perhaps equally as troubling is the Spice Girls' fan club presence on the World Wide Web. There are 16 Spice Girl sites on the WWW, 9000-plus article hits with the words "Spice Girl" in Alta Vista.

In case you're interested, Chen Shumowitz' site is definitely the hottest at the moment, with 3162 visitors in the first week and a half. In terms of quality though, go to Edjes Spice Girls Page, which greets you with a sweet organ instrumental version of "Wannabe" and is backed with some excellent photos and text.

If you were to explore some links to other pages, you could find a Spice Girls lookalike contest - compete with other spice girl lookalikes around the world! - as well as posts from Spice Girl fans.



But who can be blamed for all this? Them, for filling a need for a Boyzone equivalent in pop music, or the mainstream pop music public, for buying into it?

The Spice Girls are a group of women who have got it and are flaunting it for the big bucks. What seems to be so offensive is that they have so much fun doing it. But consider how brazenly over-the-top they are and you will begin to have a sneaking suspicion that they might be the ones having the last laugh.

How can they not when they look at the phenomenon they have created: the insanity of having male reporters mockingly over-analyse their obviously flippant political commentary; the lunacy of the editors who simultaneously use their images to sell magazines and snicker at them in print for being empty-headed; the folly of people who, when they talk of the Spice Girls, talk about everything but their music.

Because really, the most serious crime they are guilty of is churning out idiot pop, something which this world definitely does not need more of. In the end, the joke is on anyone who thinks that they are not, at least in part, the manipulators of this whole phenomenon. I think (I hope) they know what they

are. It's their fans we have to worry about. Anyone who can read the comments on the bios and love them for the image they portray are the real victims of a Spice Girls monster.

Don't hate them because they're beautiful. Hate them because their music sucks. Hate them because they don't vote. Or hate them becuase they're obnoxious and lie about their age to the press. But please don't hate them just because they look good in a bikini. ♀

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Giving young women a voice through art

by Richelle Rae

"Can anyone do this?" I heard this question asked easily a dozen times during the time I spent on Commercial Drive. The answer is always yes. The young women smile as they reach for your hand, welcoming strangers into an ancient tradition of hand painting called Mehendi.

It's been two weeks now since my hand was painted. The henna is fading; the experience, however, is not.

For two hours on February 23, young women from across the Lower Mainland converged on Commercial Drive to set up tables at local coffee houses to participate in a "social-art" project. This public art performance was part of an ongoing series put together by a project called *Turning Point*.

The project, which was brought to Vancouver two years ago by international artist and activist Suzanne Lacy, targets young women between the ages of 13 to 19. The goal is to give young women a voice using public spaces and a personal connection through performance art. The women who have joined are from different socio-economic backgrounds and represent the diverse ethnicity that makes up the Lower Mainland.

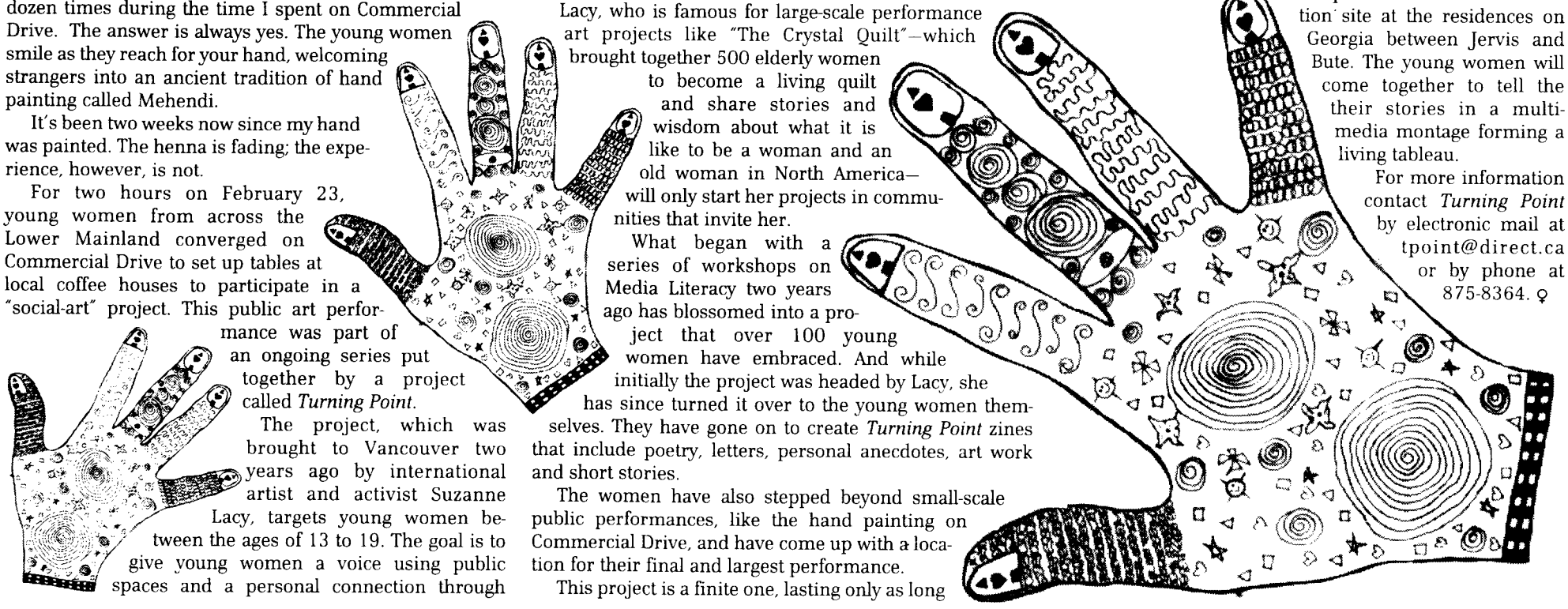
Lacy, who is famous for large-scale performance art projects like "The Crystal Quilt"—which brought together 500 elderly women to become a living quilt and share stories and wisdom about what it is like to be a woman and an old woman in North America—will only start her projects in communities that invite her.

What began with a series of workshops on Media Literacy two years ago has blossomed into a project that over 100 young women have embraced. And while initially the project was headed by Lacy, she has since turned it over to the young women themselves. They have gone on to create *Turning Point* zines that include poetry, letters, personal anecdotes, art work and short stories.

The women have also stepped beyond small-scale public performances, like the hand painting on Commercial Drive, and have come up with a location for their final and largest performance.

This project is a finite one, lasting only as long as the original women who joined the group are still of age to participate. The project will end on May 25, 1997 with a final performance at a construction site at the residences on Georgia between Jervis and Bute. The young women will come together to tell the their stories in a multimedia montage forming a living tableau.

For more information contact *Turning Point* by electronic mail at tpoint@direct.ca or by phone at 875-8364. ♀



Body art lacks life

by Lisa Chen-Wing

While walking through the *Pierced Hearts and True Love* exhibit, I realised something: much like women, tattoos have come a long way, baby. This exhibit, currently showing at the Vancouver Art Gallery, surveys the past century of body decoration in Europe and North America. It takes us on an artistic odyssey: from the bulbous-breasted women on a sailor's arm, to the psychedelic flourescents of the sixties right up to the urban tribal decorations of today.

At the turn of the century, skin pictures were embraced by marginal peoples and tattooed women such as Edith were circus attractions. Today, having a tattoo is as mainstream as Henry Rollins or Tupac. What once was affiliation with your Navy ship is now a symbol of membership of a sports team or infatuation with a flame of the moment. "Winona Forever" indeed!

Speaking of forever, a short film in the exhibit titled "Forever Yes: Art of the New Tattoo" tells a blank canvas like me that getting a tattoo *does* hurt and that I don't *have* to get an anchor on my arm. The three things to consider before getting a tattoo are: subject, execution, and placement. Consider them carefully because yes, a tattoo is forever.

As the exhibit consists solely of drawing for tattoos, there was no live display of a hulking man flexing to make his belly dancer wiggle, or the sails of his ship fill with a strong breeze (events I've heard of, but sadly never seen). Since a body is an integral part of a tattoo, taking these drawings out of the realm of parlour and into gallery, further emphasises the mainstream acceptance of the art form.

However, in this environment, one loses the story of the canvas. Why did that sailor want to have a naked lady on his bicep? And what does that dragon on this woman's head mean to her? Just as if no one hears a falling tree. . . what does a tattoo on one's back mean if one is unable to disrobe, display, and tell the story behind it? Wearing your heart on your arm has so much more impact than on your transient sleeve.

The exhibit closes March 31. ♀

Chinese mythological goddess inspires

THE GALLERY'S TITLE PLEASE....
Community Arts Council of Vancouver Gallery

by Emily Reid

I've never seen a woman's body expressed in such a spiritual way. I've seen it plastered on billboards, stuffed with sillicone, and totally objectified but Judy Lee transforms these images, raising women's sexuality to a much more legitimate and spiritual place.

Lee's work showcased last month at the Community Arts Council of Vancouver Gallery. The exhibition was a series of mixed media drawings on paper and wood. With the use of strong lines, Lee depicts the female body in various positions, bringing her figures to life and giving the illusion of multiple subjects.

Historically, Chinese artwork repressed women's sexuality; the notion was taboo in the patriarchal society.

Judy Lee is an up-and-coming artist whose drawings explore the female human body, and hint at her perceptions of sexuality. Her images are erotic, sensual and spiritual.

Through an examination of the history of her culture, Lee's recent work is an exploration of the popular diety "Guan Yin", the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy. During the Tang dynasty, Chinese mythology follows Guan Yin's transformation from a male to a female diety and artwork that survived the era recorded the change. Although there is no written explanation of the change, historians agree that the diety had changed into a woman.

Lee says she "had to deal with that artistically because it's so fascinating." Lee turns to China's rich history as a source of inspiration. Her examination of Chinese mythology leads to her "not discovering, but really representing where I am and where I'm coming from—it's an exploration."

Judy Lee is a graduate of Emily Carr with a degree in Studio Arts. Though art seems to be her main focus, Lee also played an integral part in bringing Asian Heritage Month to Vancouver. This experience raised her consciousness about her place in Vancouver's culturally diverse society.

"I am in touch with so many contacts within the Asian Arts community. We feed off of each other over time and people get connected that way," said Lee. "It's exciting because there are so many levels of Asians in the Vancouver area."

In the future, Lee wants to continue to explore the theme of women with her artwork, "specifically Asian women and art, how I relate with that and how the history of Asian women and art coincide." Lee sees her art as "a continual search, an exploration into defining things for myself." ♀

Race and representation

The Ubyssey presents its most Racy issue March 21, 1997. Anyone interested in contributing call Peggy at 822-2301, 221-8870 or peggyw@unixg.ubc.ca.

A clash of culture

TAMARIND MEM BY ANITA RAU BADAMI
[The Penguin Group]

by Cecelia Parsons

Imagine all the stories you've ever told about yourself, then imagine how the stories others would have to add. Now imagine embodying this in a well-written novel.

Tamarind Mem is a great first novel, it plays with the idea that each single event leads to innumerable stories. The theme pulls together the lives of two East Indian women, mother and daughter, as they try to make sense of their existence amidst constant input and interference from their friends and family.

Her family followed Indian tradition and decided that she should have a husband instead of a career in medicine.

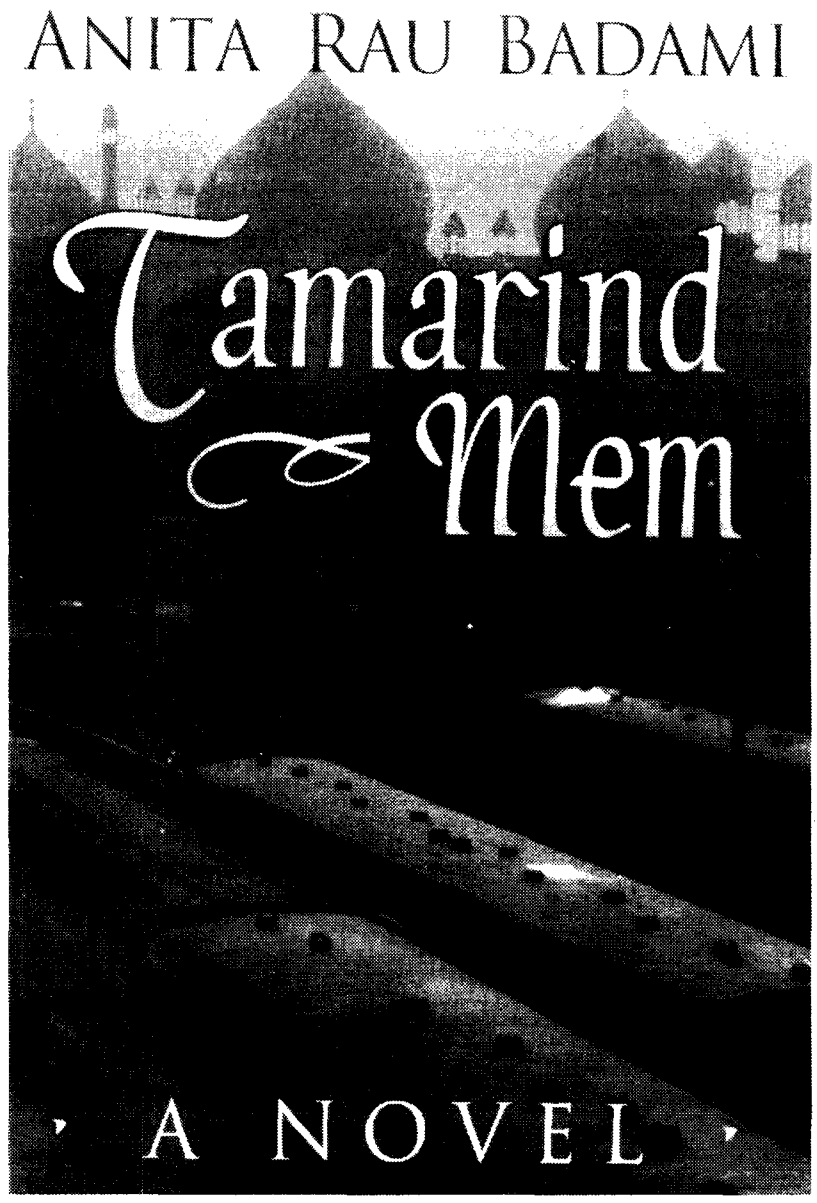
The first half of Vancouver writer Anita Rau Badami's novel is narrated by Kamini, who wades through the memories of her childhood in order to gain some insight into the bewildering motives of her mother, Saroja. To Kamini, Saroja's drastic mood swings are inexplicable. Kamini calls up an abundance of stories and memories from a seemingly bottomless reservoir, but still draws a blank on "mommy dearest." This is when the narration switches over to Saroja and we learn a chunk of her history and are able to discern the reasons for some of her apparently erratic behavior. It later on becomes clear that the source of Saroja's bitterness stems from her dissatisfaction with her lot in life; her family followed Indian tradition and decided that she should have a husband instead of a career in medicine.

Underlying the central plot is the desire of four generations of women to escape preordained futures. Saroja spends her life dealing with the reprocussions of a marriage that she was forced into by a mother obsessed with appearances. Kamini, on the other hand, shivers alone in Canada presumably trying to come to terms with her identity and avoid any ancestral pitfalls.

The striking contrasts of a post-colonial world and the traditions of India work well to create a rich and textured story; Saroja's sharp tongue is likened to the sour tamarind fruit, while Kamini's mouth gets washed clean in the proper English style. Badami uses the foreign British influence to highlight the traditions and lifestyle of the Indian people, a world that includes mangos, almond oil for the skin and saris made of "whispery fabric like a butterfly's wing."

Badami's language is written to excite the senses and stir the emotions of her reader, and she succeeds. The many passing trains of Saroja's husband's railway job provide a beautiful metaphor for the characters of *Tamarind Mem*. This metaphor works well for the reader who also drifts from station to station with each additional story. Nostalgia abounds, but by no means is the sole virtue of this charming novel.

But in the end, the most winning aspect of the novel has to be decided by each reader. Like any good story imagination is often the most important ingrident, Badami has written the recipe, the reader must make the dish. ♀

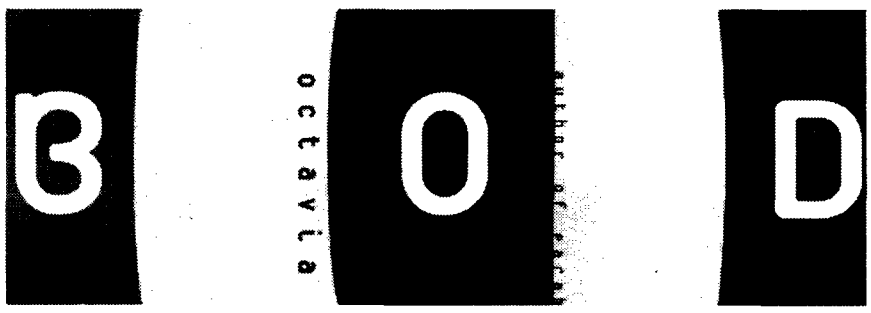


A new way of looking at love

BLOODCHILD BY OCTAVIA BUTLER
[Seven Stories Press]

by Richelle Rae

Bloodchild is a small book; it only has five short stories and two essays in it, hardly worth noticing. Despite this, take a moment and read this book. Slowly.

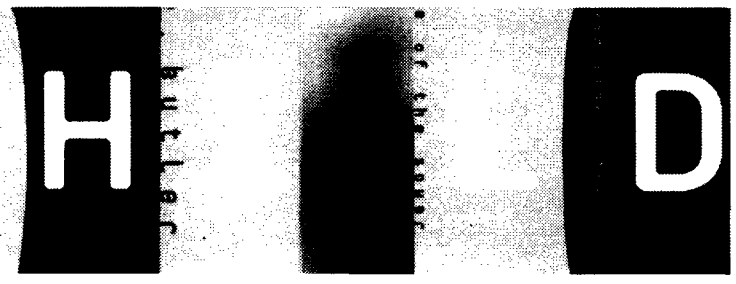


Octavia Butler has thoughtfully put together a collection of stories reflecting the paradoxes of the human experience in an elegant and compelling style. Butler's prose is at once disturbingly observant and merciliously honest; she is a self-described "hopeful pessimist."

Butler calls the collection's first story ("Bloodchild) her "pregnant man story." She creates a world where men are put into a position women have occupied for centuries—a position where women are valued solely for their reproductive purposes.

The story explores whether it is really possible for a man to make the same physical sacrifice women are forced to, although not for the purposes of propagating the human species. Butler herself sees this story as a love story; I am inclined to agree with her. She explores the act of intimacy and love on a level that few have experienced or would choose to.

"The Evening and the Morning and the Night" explores a catch-twenty-two situation where the central character is divided between the personal responsiblity she bares to herself and society that result from her genetic illness and the talents that she posesses because of it. The questions that Butler poses are not easy to answer; how much are the choices we make a result of our personality and how much of it is genetically predetermined?



The other story that stands out for me is "Near of Kin"; here Butler writes about the incest taboo. The story Butler acknowledges grew out of the biblical stories of incest that she read as a child. What interests Butler is not the victims or consequences of incest but rather the story behind it; this is a sympathetic tale about incest. It is also a love story. Something to think about.

What sets this collection apart from others are the personal afterwards that Butler has written complimenting each story. The commentary that Butler gives is not only insightful but also very frank. Butler does not want anyone to preach her message or interpret it for the masses. Though the stories are small and decieptively simple the issues that Butler tackles are large., she is not afraid of ideas or imagination no matter how horrific the journey may be. The last two essays in the collection are auto-biographical accounts of how difficult it has been for her to get acceptance and recognition for the work she has done facing a double prejudice for being a woman and for being a black woman writing science fiction.

Octavia Butler has written ten novels and received both the Nebula award and the Hugo award for her writing in science fiction. ♀

Participating in gender stereotypes

"LIP SERVICE" BY KATE FILLION
[Published by Harper Collins Ltd]

by Andrea Breau

Women love, men lust. Women are nurturing, men are aggressive. These old stereotypes are repackaged, resold, recycled, and reinforced in best-selling books, the media and in everyday relations between men and women.

Most of us are so accustomed to thinking of men and women as psychological opposites, we don't even notice when our actual experiences contradict our beliefs and social practices. It is crucial to recognise that while it is possible to make some generalisations based on gender, there will always be substantial, within gender, variations between individuals.

Perhaps it's a product of my very liberal upbringing, but this is a philosophy I subscribe to. However I admit I've had a difficult time justifying it to other women at times. From my perspective, Kate Fillion's book is well overdue. Books like this are necessary to help dispell the myths propagated by and about both sexes.

In real life, argues Fillion, men and women step out of their assigned roles all the time and behave, think and feel in ways that are supposedly characteristic of the "opposite" sex. Even though as women we're not really "following" these roles, we still pay lip service to them, creating confusion and complications in our relationships. Myths like "women are better at caring and sharing" and "women are morally superior" end up hurting us. Fillion writes as long as women do not give themselves permission to behave in "masculine" ways, we have only two choices: deny the reality of our own experiences or suffer guilt and shame for acknowledging them.

Fillion illustrates her point with some examples of women's life experiences - everything from dealing with the "popular girls" in high school to work and romantic relationships. Though Fillion's research is technically correct, it does not reflect the diversity of women. Her examples largely come from white, middle-class, heterosexual women. Fillion acknowledges the shortcoming, citing the lack of diversity in existing research on gender differences for her narrow focus.

Despite its flaws, *Lip Service* is still a very brave book. Fillion succeeds in smashing some of the most potent sexual stereotypes of our time.

If women want self-determination, Fillion asserts, we have to challenge the idea that agency is only present in happy endings. Women have to resist the temptation to flee from responsiblity because equality doesn't look the way we thought it would and power is not as glamorous as we hoped. Most importantly, we must reject the notion of our own essential innocence. It is a lie that costs us nothing less than everything, including our power to choose a new kind of future for ourselves, one in which we are more than "victims" and less than "saints", fully human and equal to any man. ♀

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