The Ubyssey

Founded in 1918 — Vancouver, B.C., Friday, maybe March 8, 1991 — Vol 73, No 42

Classifieds 228-3977

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Between Classes

Deadline for submissions: for Tuesday's paper is Friday at 3:30pm. NO LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED. Note: "Noon" = 12:30 pm.

FRIDAY, MAR. 8

Womyn's Centre. International Womyn's Day Party! 2pm SUB 212.

School of Music. University Chamber Singers. C. Hultberg, director. Noon. free adm. Recital Hall. Music Bld.

Library & Archival Students Assoc. Booksale (2nd handbooks). 9-4 pm. SUB con.

Students of Objectivism. Weekly mtg/discussion. Noon. Scarfe 207.

Family & Nutritional Sciences Nutrition Week. U.B.C. Nutrition Grand Prix - fun walk/run; T-shirts & prizes. $7.50 entrance FNSUS office. SUB Noon Hour Run Site.

AnSo Stds Assoc. 4th Annual Symposium. Beings at 1:30pm. ANSO Bld. ($2.00 Admission). Special Panel on Colonialism in South America: "Columbus Go Home: 500 Years of Resistance & Beyond."

SATURDAY, MAR. 9

AnSo Students Assoc. 4th Annual Symposium. 9am - 4:30pm Anso Bld. ($2.00 adm.). Panel on Racism & Sexism: "Making Links: The Chains of Oppression from our Department to Society."

English Students' Soc. Grad Cruise-Postponed til further notice.

Canada Tibet Cmt. Rally & all night vigil at Chinese consulate. Sat. Rally noon Sat March 9. Vigil to follow. March down Granville. Art Gallery.

SUNDAY, MAR. 10

International Socialists AGM plus talks on "Fighting the Tory Offensive from the Gulf War to the G.S.T." Noon-4:30 p.m. SUB 205.

MONDAY, MAR. 11

Tools for Peace, Global Dev't. Centre. Abuela Speaks on Human Rights in El Salvador & Video Presentation. Noon SUB 205.

UBC Debating Society. "Hate Laws Should Be Abolished." All welcome. Noon. BUCH B314.

UBC Student Counselling and Resources Ctr. Workshop: Career Search Strategies. Noon. Brock 200.

School of Music UBC String Chamber Ensembles. Noon. free adm. Recital Hall. Music Bld.

TUESDAY, MAR. 12

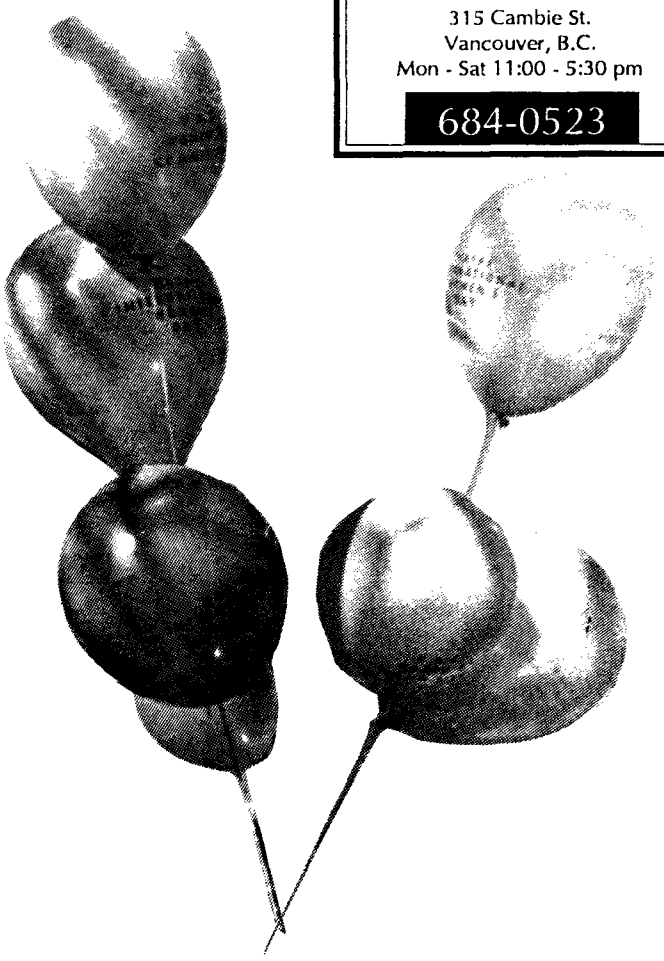
UBC Std. Counseling and Resources Ctr. Workshop: Reducing Test Anxiety for Int'l Students. Noon. Brock, 200.

Tools for Peace - Global Dev. Ctr. B. French speaks on background to the contemporary crisis in Central America. Noon. SUB 205.

The Institute of Asian Research. Brown Bag Seminar by Dr. Richards: "East Asia and the Global Economy." Noon. Asian Ctr, Seminar Rm 604.

Students of Objectivism and Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Interclub Debate: DOES GOD EXIST? Two members of each club will debate. Noon. Buch A205.

Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Prayer mtg. & breakfast. 7:30am. SUB 211.



House of subversion

A women-only space in East Vancouver was recently destroyed by men.

One of the six houses on Francis Street that was occupied by squatters between February and November in 1990 was designated as a women-only space.

Initially, there were only two houses, one of which was for women only—the Bushwomen's squat. Two women moved in, and a third followed shortly thereafter.

by Carla Maftechuk

Ro, one of the occupants, had never squatted before. "I think the idea of the women-only space was what drew me there to a large extent.

"I had never given a lot of thought to squatting before. As soon as I heard about the community I was really eager to participate in it. I was in a space where I needed the validation and support of other women."

Throughout the duration of the squats, as the number of occupied houses increased from two to six, there remained only one women-only house. There were always more men than women in the other houses.

Access to the house was restricted for men to one day a week. Men were allowed into the house on Wednesdays "if all the women living in the squat agreed to that particular man coming in at that particular time. You had the right to say `No, I don't want to deal with men today.'"

Relations with the other male squatters were strained. "Most of them paid lip service [to the women-only squat], but when it came down to it, I'd say only a couple were really supportive. We did have a lot of problems with the men challenging our right to our own space and feeling threatened."

"Sexism was a serious problem, right to the end. We had a few meetings of women-only, women from all the squats, to deal with the sexism that we'd all encountered in this 'ideal anarchist community'; we brought it back to the men and it was slightly dealt with and then life went on."

"The people who tended to make use of the space were lesbians, because they didn't want or need to participate in the men's things or deal with men in the same way that heterosexual women did.

In the Bushwomen's squat, it was physically safe and emotionally safe because you didn't have to deal with sexism. You didn't have to deal with men's actions, reactions. It was just a really beautifully supportive environment because these women were all struggling for the same thing."

"I feel that squatting is an important part of creating women-only space, because by squatting you remove yourself and are free from the hierarchical rent structures in male-dominated society. It's men that own and control everything. And as women, I think to get completely away from that, to build our own space, to create our own community, I think it's important to squat to make sure you've created a free space so that you're not part of that. I'm not just in opposition to the patriarchy but capitalist society."

"In July, I moved out. Soon after that the Bushwomen's squat was barricaded. That wasn't agreed upon by the women that were living in it. Afterwards, after August, the Bushwomen's squat didn't really exist as women-only space. It had no facilities, it was dark, the stairs were ripped down. It just became like a shell of the home that it had been."

"I see the latter part of the squats, the time from August onwards as a very male-dominated, macho movement that took control of our head-space at the time. A lot of those people were what we call the 'barricaders'. Women did support the barricades, but it was a really macho kind of ego-tripping movement, I think, at the end."

"I think it was really significant that the only house that didn't really last until the end was the women-only space. I don't think enough people in our community are looking at that. It's just kind of glossed over."

"My dream right now is to open a women-only squat. I think I'll do that this spring. I'm really excited about it because it worked really beautifully at Frances street for awhile there. It can work again, definitely—it's needed, it's essential."

Cat

BECK BISHOP PHOTO

"The squatting movement is dominated by men because women tend to have more responsibilities than men in society. Women have children and that makes it next to impossible to squat. Women have concerns of safety, which men don't have to the same extent."

"It is very scary, being in a squat, knowing that male cops can come into your house at any time and bust you. That's really terrifying. If you live together as women, you can support each other emotionally on that. "

"Issues of gender and of sexual orientation just weren't seen as central to the struggle. They should understand that the means to the end, the way you go about the process is all important. No matter where you're going, if you don't work together all the way through, then what the fuck are you working for? And they should understand that, I mean that's part of their politics as anarchists."

"The women's squat was an alcohol and drug-free space, and one of the women wasn't respecting that. We felt like it was really essential to be supportive by taking a stance of no drugs and alcohol because people had problems with these substances and wanted to be stronger women, more empowered as individuals. We felt that getting over an addiction was part of that process. That's why we took that stance." "In the women's squat we shared everything we had; I think that's why it was unique, in that we were a really cohesive group, and we shared food and money. That's the only way I'd want it. That's the way I want to live. It didn't work that way in the other squats. We worked more as a family unit than any other squat did."

"It was the most beautiful and important experience of my life, living there. But at the time I felt like the larger issue—like all the men were saying—of squatting was way more important than us challenging the issues of gender."

"I really think that we were under the influence of the general squatting community on Frances Street, and we didn't validate our position as women. And the men certainly didn't. Now, it would be different. I would make it an issue."

"I think we need to create our own environment, to start from scratch and just to take over a house and say `We have the right to this space. You men control everything, but this is our space and you stop here. Within these walls, we have freedom.'"

JJ, who started the women-only squat, had squatted several times before, in mixed-gender houses only.

"A lot of us saw [squatting] as an opportunity to have homes and also make a statement about the housing issue. I opened up a house of my own and created the type of house I wanted. I decided from the beginning it would be women only. In this situation, we got to make the rules. It was very empowering. It was the first time I've ever had my own home."

"The existence of the women-only house polarized the situation. Because men didn't respect that in the beginning, we set up this rule that they couldn't come to our space. We forced them to respect our space, and that made it very easy for them to make us invisible."

"In the beginning, there was a real attempt at community. We had really good energy happening. The problem was, the way the meetings went, whoever spoke loudest and quickest and with the most authority, spoke the longest. So it became tense. It was definitely male-dominated."

"The men in general, were intimidated by, or afraid of, the women's squat. They didn't quite know how to deal with it. For the most part, the men just avoided it, they avoided the issue, they avoided the space, they avoided us to a large extent."

"I pulled out of the mixed-gender meetings, because of the power dynamics and just the machoism, and I began to take on some of that myself."

"More women are below the poverty line than men. The options that they have are contingent on who they sleep with. People can say `that's not true, I don't see half as many women on the streets as I do men' but what are women giving up to have a roof over their head?

"A lot of women sell their bodies to be able to just sleep. And I don't mean for money, I mean saying to someone `can i stay the night at your house,' and them saying `yeah, as long as you fuck me.' And them agreeing, because when those are your options sometimes it's better than sleeping in the snow."

"I think that housing is definitely a gender issue, and there is always a need for safe space for women. Especially when you're homeless."

"I find it interesting that the women-only squat was the only one that didn't last to the very end, the only one that didn't make it. By not putting in the extra effort into supporting the women's squat, I think that helped to perpetuate the end."

"As far as any lasting effect, I think it was lost to the macho impact. That's what people are going to remember when they remember the squats—they're going to remember the final stand, the barricades, militant police with shotguns. That's not what squatting's all about. Squatting's about having a home."

"I'd never squat with mixed gender again. Never."

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Office for Women Students cuts counselling by 50 per cent

by Franka Cordua-von Specht

The fifty percent reduction in one-to-one counselling services at the UBC Office for Women Students will hurt students on campus, according to counsellors at the Office and women students.

"A lot of women need that counselling," said Ellen Pond, spokesperson for the student-run Women's Centre. "We are talking about women's survival. We're talking about fewer suicides, fewer breakdowns and fewer women dropping out of school."

In December the director of the office told the Office's four counsellors that they would have to slash their appointments by half. The reductions are currently being phased in for May.

The Office's director, Marsha Trew, who started work in August, said she wants the office to take on a more activist role to create a more welcoming environment for women on campus, as recommended in a 1989 UBC review committee.

"In the future [the focus of the staff] will be balanced between filling an educative function and counselling," she said.

Though they agree that advocacy work is important, counsellors Nancy Horsman, Caren Durante, and Penny Lusztig say that one-to-one counselling is a priority and should not have been compromised.

"This is the only place on campus where women students have, as women, to get help and support," said Horsman, who has worked in the office for 18 years. The counsellors deal with issues that range from marriage and custody battles to sexual abuse to poor working conditions in the classroom.

"I find it inappropriate that in a time when student fees go up, that student services such as one-to-one counselling should go down. I think students have the right to protest this loss," Durante said.

Lusztig said that if the university is serious about creating a safer environment for women on campus then they should not be cutting back in services where women can get support.

One student who is in the long-term counselling at the Office fears the reduction in appointments will mean she'll have to wait longer to see her counsellor. "I'll probably have to wait a month between sessions instead of two weeks," she said.

The outlook is bleaker for new students calling up for short-term and long-term counselling. This past Wednesday seven new students were on that waiting list.

"There's no way to tell how long they'll have to wait," said Trew, adding they might not get in before the end of the term.

There is, however, no wait for students who need immediate help, crisis counselling. Nancy Horsman handles the crisis counselling but, because of the demand, can only spare half-an-hour sessions. "That's not nearly enough time for students, and it's exhausting for me," she said.

Trew says other types of counselling will augment the one-to-one but says she doesn't know what they will be yet.
She said she's waiting for data from women's offices in universities across Canada and the United States.

Trew hinted that group counselling, which would help a greater number of women, might be an alternative.

Durante agrees that group counselling should happen at the office but not at the expense of one-to-one.

"There are many issues that come into this office on a personal level that those students would not fit into a group counselling situation," Durante said.

Trew said she welcomes input from faculty and staff on the second half of the mandate which calls for more advocacy and "planned organizational change" on campus.

But Horsman said that when the counsellors asked Trew to clarfify "planned organizational change", "we got words like: operationalize, data base and performance efficiency."

"Administrations (in US universities) are using "organizational development" as a management tool for efficient operation of the male hierarchical, patriachal, model for institutional efficiency," Horsman said.

"It appears as an alien concept in women's office and has been a large part of my concern for the new "directives" and "administrative mandates" for the Office," she said.

Equally concerned are the women from the Women's Centre.

"We don't know what [Trew] means with advocacy. We feel that pushing for such things as anti-sexism workshops for professors is important, but we don't know if this is what Marsha Trew means with advocacy," Pond said. "We haven't seen anything happen."

Pond suggested that the Office could have lobbied for more resources from the administration to help implement the broader mandate.

"Advocacy could mean advocating for another position that would be hiring a woman of colour who would be specifically helping women of colour on campus."

Trew said the meaning of the terms would be clearer once the planning process nears completion. She hopes the Office will implement the dual mandate by next fall.

Dispelling the misconceptions of womyn and AIDS

by Sharon Lindores

Although AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) was inaccurately known as GRID (Gay-Related Immune Deficiency), the truth is that AIDS may affect anyone.

The number of women who are HIV (Human Immuno-deficiency Virus) positive and who have AIDS is increasing; awareness is not.

"British Columbia has the highest total number of AIDS cases per capita in Canada," ministry of health spokesperson Sandra Chan said. She predicted more women will be infected in the future.

There are 17 reported cases of women with AIDS, but there are, by a conservative estimate, 400 women who are HIV positive in BC. According to Chan, statistics are deceiving because of many unidentified cases. "AIDS cases are just the tip of the iceberg. There is an incubation period of ten years for HIV."

One of the problems is conveying the information. Lezlie Wagman of the Vancouver Health Department believes that education is not completely successful. "Surveys show that the public is quite knowledgeable. However, less than ten per cent of the population use condoms—obviously something is wrong.

"Homophobia is an obstacle to obtaining information. Trying to educate women is difficult because they've been told for so long that it's a gay disease. And it's hard to educate the public because they don't want to know. Denial is a problem in the population. Women are not solely responsible, it's a shared concern."

HIV is contracted more frequently through sexual intercourse than intravenous means in Canada. According to a Vancouver Health Department publication, 62 per cent of women with AIDS acquired the infection through heterosexual contact in Canada.

According to Rebecca Fox, spokesperson for the Women and HIV/AIDS Support Network, physicians may have little or no experience in dealing with HIV and AIDS. As well, physicians do not acknowledge the symptoms because of social stereotypes.

Martin Schechter, an associate professor in the UBC health care department, agreed that there are problems in the medical field. "There is less experience in dealing with women than with men. Some of the manifestations of the disease are different."

For example women are unlikely to develop a purple skin cancer (Kaposi's sarcoma lesions) common in HIV-positive gay men. Some vaginal infections seem to be related to HIV such as: recurrent yeast infection, pelvic inflammatory disease, and a virus which causes genital warts (human papillomavirus). HIV positive women also tend to have abnormal Pap smears and irregular periods.

However, these symptoms are normally common in women and are therefore easily overlooked. Nobody wants to create unnecessary anxiety. "Some women have never dealt with HIV," said Schechter. "They think of a lot of possibilities before HIV. The virus has all different ways of presenting itself. Diagnosis may be missed because sexual histories are not adequate."

Late diagnoses cause problems because the illness is further developed and can be unknowingly passed on. Once diagnosed, women with HIV/AIDS may be very isolated because they do not share an established community for support.

Two main organizations are available to women in Vancouver. The Women and HIV/AIDS Support Network provides support and information for HIV positive women. The group meets the first and third Tuesday of each month. The Women and AIDS project focuses on education and public awareness and is open to all women.

A Vancouver Health Department publication and Ms. Magazine claim that AIDS has become the one of the leading causes of death for women between the ages of 20-40 in major cities of North America, Western Europe and sub-Saharan Africa.

AIDS Information and contacts

AIDS Information Line
872-6652

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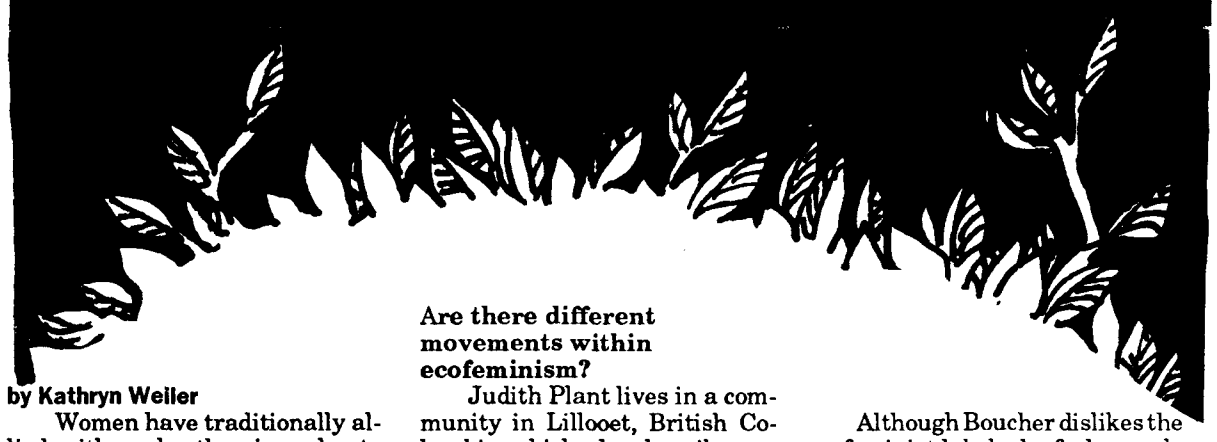
"Most people think they don't know what ecofeminism means...until through example or discussion the connections are made. Then, very often these same people say they knew it all along."—Judith Plant

ECOFEMINISM: A RADICAL NEW MOVEMENT OR A MODIFICATION OF OLD IDEAS?



by Kathryn Weiler

Women have traditionally allied with each other in order to survive, according to Judith Plant, ecofeminist and author of the book Healing the Wounds.

"Historically women have been oppressed and women have co-operated and shared amongst themselves because this is what the oppressed do behind the back of authority," Plant said.

The question of power with regard to women and nature is one that has been redefined by ecofeminism. Traditional patriarchal structures of dominance must be replaced with a more balanced approach.

"Women must learn to assume more responsibility. Women must learn to take leadership and responsibility and men must learn and practice empathy. But it's not a question of one dominating the other, it's a question of finding balance," said Plant.

How are feminism and ecology linked?

The ecological movement and feminism must go hand-in-hand because according to Plant women have often been relegated to the role of nurturers but, "we have reached a time in our evolution when we must insist that what we as women have stood for and been identified with all along be recognized and taken up by society-at-large."

Certain female qualities must be recognized for their importance in addressing environmental issues. According to Plant, women's attributes must be used for the humanizing and creative elements they provide.

But more importantly, ecofeminism redefines the conventional question of power.

Are there different movements within ecofeminism?

Judith Plant lives in a community in Lillooet, British Columbia which she describes as bioregionalist, as a community that depends on local resources, self-sufficiency and local government. She feels more emphasis must be put "on human society and its relationship to nature" and the home and local environmental issues.

According to Plant, by engaging in holistic living whether in the urban or rural context, one addresses environmental issues on a personal yet significant level.

Women's role in the reorganization of community is indispensable. "Traditionally, feminism was seen as something that divided. Women on one side as the good guys and men on the other side as the bad guys," Plant said. This notion of feminism, she said, did not make sense when applied on a community level.

"But feminism is essential on a community level or we will create the kinds of social structures that have destroyed the environment—unconsciously," said Plant.

Priscilla Boucher, a PhD student at UBC in urban and regional planning, has different ideas about ecofeminism.

"There are different approaches to ecofeminism just as there are different approaches to feminism," Boucher said.

Boucher outlined the importance of not romanticizing women. "Women's role as the nurturer has been historically defined and devalued but this denies men's capability as nurturers. We need some kind of balance; we need men to share."

Boucher acknowledges the need to bridge the gap between men and women. But she feels that women must be heard and given credit. "We need to recover the voices of people who are doing the work."

Although Boucher dislikes the ecofeminist label, she feels people must begin to question the way we live and recover our ability to share and care. "Part of that recovery I see as coming out of ecofeminism," she said.

The irony of environmentalism....

An irony of the environmental movement rests in the fact that the stage is dominated by men. Women represent an extremely active force behind environmental change and yet few women environmentalists receive the publicity of someone like David Suzuki.

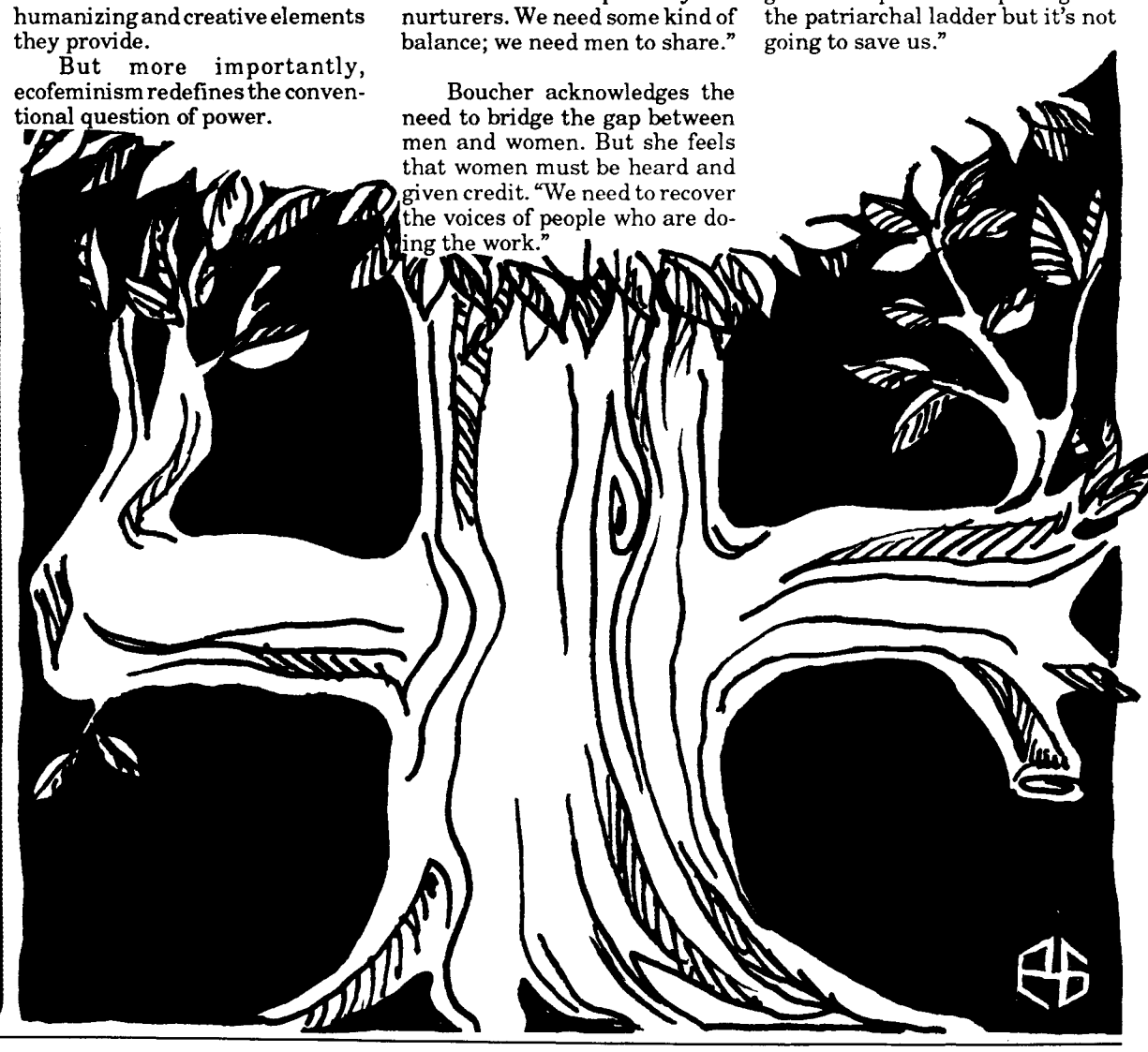
Plant said the reason for this reality is, "men are trained to leap up and have the answer... What we need is a lot less of one person standing up with the answer and a lot more of us all talking together. Dialogue," she said.

"Women's role is to take leadership because we know what it's like to have as our fundamental premise caring and well-being.

"We must take leadership in such a way that it draws men towards us and not away from us so that we can all learn," Plant said.

The fact remains that feminism and ecology are inseparable. In order to start dealing with environmental issues we must deal with ourselves; men and women must modify their roles and together become better equipped to deal with the planet.

In the words of Judith Plant, "Liberal feminism is not enough—it won't save life. Women might gain more power and prestige on the patriarchal ladder but it's not going to save us."



Women in the media and the women's media

by Laurie Newell

In response to what has been called abysmal coverage of women and women's issues in the mainstream media, a primarily feminist alternative media has been growing across Canada since the early 1970s.

In Vancouver, this media network includes the newspaper Kinesis, published ten times per year, and a weekly radio program on Coop radio, called Women Do This Everyday.

According to a member of the Kinesis' editorial board, Nancy Pollak, it "has become almost cliche to say we're invisible, and it's profoundly true."

Many people argue that the coverage of women and women's issues in the mainstream media has changed, and that the charge of invisibility no longer holds true. According to a 1990 study of Canadian newspapers conducted by the national feminist organization Mediawatch, a proactive group working toward more equal representation of women in the media, women remain both underrepresented and misrepresented in mainstream Canadian newspapers.

The Mediawatch study, which analyzed fifteen newspapers from major cities from Victoria to St. John's, found that of the total number of stories with bylines, less than 30 per cent were credited to women.

As well as being less visible as authors, the study found that women are far less visible than men as subjects of newspaper articles. Women in these newspapers were only discussed 18.2 per cent of the time, while the other 81.8 per cent of quotes or references were by or about men. When women were present as subjects, the were often discussed with sexist language.

According to Mediawatch's Communications officer Jennifer Ellis: "This invisibility implies that women's achievements and contributions are not important. It also means fewer jobs for female journalists."

Pollak believes that this invisibility is also a way of maintaining women in a powerless position. She calls her work at Kinesis a "reality hit," and says one aim the newspaper is "to rectify the imbalance of [women's] invisibility in the mainstream, and to encourage political thinking and action among women to empower them to change their lives."

In addition to the misrepresentation of women, Pollak believes that feminism is misrepresented in the mainstream. To Pollak, feminism is not simply a question of seeking equality for women and men, but a question of looking for something better for everybody. Feminism, said Pollak, "is not women wanting a bigger piece of the pie, but changing the recipe of the pie altogether in order to achieve a better balance between collective needs and personal freedoms."

Pollak sees Kinesis as providing an opportunity for women to get involved in the media, who may have had no previous experience, something Mediawatch's statistics imply would be difficult in the mainstream.

Member of the Women Do This Everyday collective at Co-op Radio, Dierdre Aitkin, also sees this as an important role of the program she works on. Aitkin said the show provides "an opportunity for women to get involved in the community...an opportunity for women to gain skills in order to help shape the media themselves."

As well, Aitkin sees Women Do This Everyday as providing a community service, addressing issues of interest to women, such as pay equity and women in the arts, as well as offering coverage of local events not covered in the mainstream.

While both Kinesis and Women Do This Everyday are unwavering in their focus on women, Pollak and Aitkin see their work as being relevant to the larger community. Pollak says Kinesis' readership has both activist and research-oriented components, including people in government and trade unions, as well as grass-roots feminists.

While Aitkin and another collective member Genevieve Jackson say they have never encountered opposition in their work as a women-focused radio show, Pollak cannot say the same of Kinesis.

In 1990, the Secretary of State cut what federal funding Kinesis used to receive, based on Secretary of State guidelines which explicitly state that they will not fund activities relating to sexual orientation and abortion. According to Pollak, this is because they are seen as too controversial. In Pollak's words, "I think it's safe to say that our funding was cut because of our continued willingness to publish material on abortion and on lesbianism."

In light of such responses, it is not surprising that Pollak, Aitken and Jackson all foresee the need for a women's media network continuing indefinitely in the future. According to Aitkin, an alternative women's media is important as an educational tool, to let people know that there are viewpoints other than those of women in the mainstream.

Pollak talked about the recent revival of Ms. magazine, and its attempt to reflect the diversity among women, by including international content, as well as that by and about lesbians and women of colour. Pollak sees the success of the new Ms. as evidence of the ongoing need for a women's and feminist media network, saying it "reflects the hunger of women for self-expression and information."

Both Kinesis and Women Do This Everyday welcome new members. Kinesis can be reached at 255-5499.

Dykes, diversity & discord

by Carla Maftechuk

Homosexuality is still finding a place at UBC. Two groups, Dykes Unlimited and Gays and Lesbians UBC, currently exist for womyn and men on campus; however, a gender split exists within the homosexual community.

Two womyn, one from each group, expressed their beliefs on the subject.

Karen MacDonell was one of the founders of DU: "Its primary purpose is for womyn to get together and talk. It's supportive."

"I don't see GLUBC as speaking for womyn, but I feel that the Womyn's Centre does that because it is a womyn's space and inherent in that is respecting the lifestyles of lesbians. GLUBC could be like that but it's not; it's like that for men."

"Men like to hear the sound of their own voices. If it's 50-50, it's always still a battle to have them shut up. Men, be it gay men or straight, need to feel like they are being heard to maintain their self-esteem."

"It always comes down to men and womyn in this world having different balances of power. There is a fundamental lack of understanding by men of womyn. That's there in a gay and a straight community."

"It comes up every year, that the guys there say: 'We have to get more womyn involved, at least let's have a womyn president' but I'm not sure where that's all coming from."

"Maybe because they're feeling the pressure from womyn. But there's not really a connection between what womyn want and them listening."

"They make an attempt by at least talking about it, trying to figure out what the womyn want. That never really works; I just don't see womyn caring that much about GLUBC. I get all I need from Dykes Unlimited."

"And then there's the Gay Games. I know there were a lot of womyn involved but if you look at who were visible, right in the hierarchy of the people who were doing the major work for it, well it was men. And even look at the name of it—'Gay Games'. It's supposed to include women but it doesn't do the trick."

"It would take a lot of energy to give Dykes Unlimited a higher profile. We were pretty visible in the first year and everyone was really excited about it."

"I think that any event that goes on that has some sort of gay and/or lesbian aspect to it is great."

"It really is an extension of our society that womyn listen, care, and can be vulnerable, but fewer men can, and it ultimately causes a rift. It's a long process for a man to come to terms with what it means to be a womyn."

Sylvia, a member of both Dykes Unlimited and GLUBC, does not find the differences problematic. "I understand their arguments for being separatist, but personally I don't find that a healthy choice for me. For me, that would be an over-reaction."

"Dykes Unlimited is a support network while GLUBC is more involved in the community and it's more a social club. It does address the concerns of lesbians."

"There is definitely a split between homosexual womyn and men. I think GLUBC is quite male-dominated; it's hard to say where it starts.

"The womyn aren't going, but if they would get involved more then maybe that would help the problem. You can't say there's no womyn involved and not be involved. There's people there that are definitely doing something," Sylvia said.

"I think some of the more enlightened men are gay men. That's been my experience."

Crime distorted by gender-neutral language

by Carla Maftechuk

Homicide should be recognized as a feminist issue, visiting professor Christine Boyle told more than 200 people who attended a Walter S. Owen lecture presented by the UBC faculty of law a week ago.

"Part of the reality of the subordination (of women) is death," said Boyle, who teaches law at Dalhousie University. "The present law of homicide is largely structured as if homicide were gender neutral, although there are traces of a different perspective."

Boyle believes that victims of homocides should be clearly identified and that the legal system should take their identity into account.

"The way things are labelled may have a difference in terms of public perception of them. If we have specific crimes in terms of violence against lesbians, so that trials are reported as that in the media, then people may see part of their experience reflected in descriptions of reality.

"The practical significance legally would be in terms of sentencing. Hate motivation could operate to increase the sentence," said Boyle, who supports a call for a Royal Commission on violence against women.

Boyle said there has been a general movement within the legal system to eradicate gender, as evidenced by the replacement of the word "rape" with the term "sexual assault" in the early 1980s.

"Part of the reform was to make it gender neutral so that men could be victims and women could be charged," she said.

"To a certain extent it does reflect some reality because men can be sexually assaulted. A change to a gender-neutral term did bring in some victims, but there has been some concern that we have lost our sense of the distinctive harm of rape."

The movement to gender neutrality encourages the courts to understand the crime in a gender-neutral way, which means that they may not be concerned with the construction of sexuality in our culture today, according to Boyle.

Using that approach, one New Brunswick court said that breasts weren't sexual and that a man touching a woman's breasts was not sexual assault. The Supreme Court of Canada overruled that decision.

Boyle expressed a concern over this way of thinking. "Sex is deeply gendered, it may be the most gendered thing we have. It has a lot to do with what it means to be a woman and what it means to be a man."

"There are small signals, both positive and negative, that gender-neutrality doesn't exist" in the law today. For example, section 233 of the Criminal Code states that only a female person can commit infanticide.

"What this offense deals with is post-partum depression. When a woman who has given birth is still recovering from the effects of that, if she kills her new baby, then she may be charged with infanticide rather than murder. It's a much lesser charge."

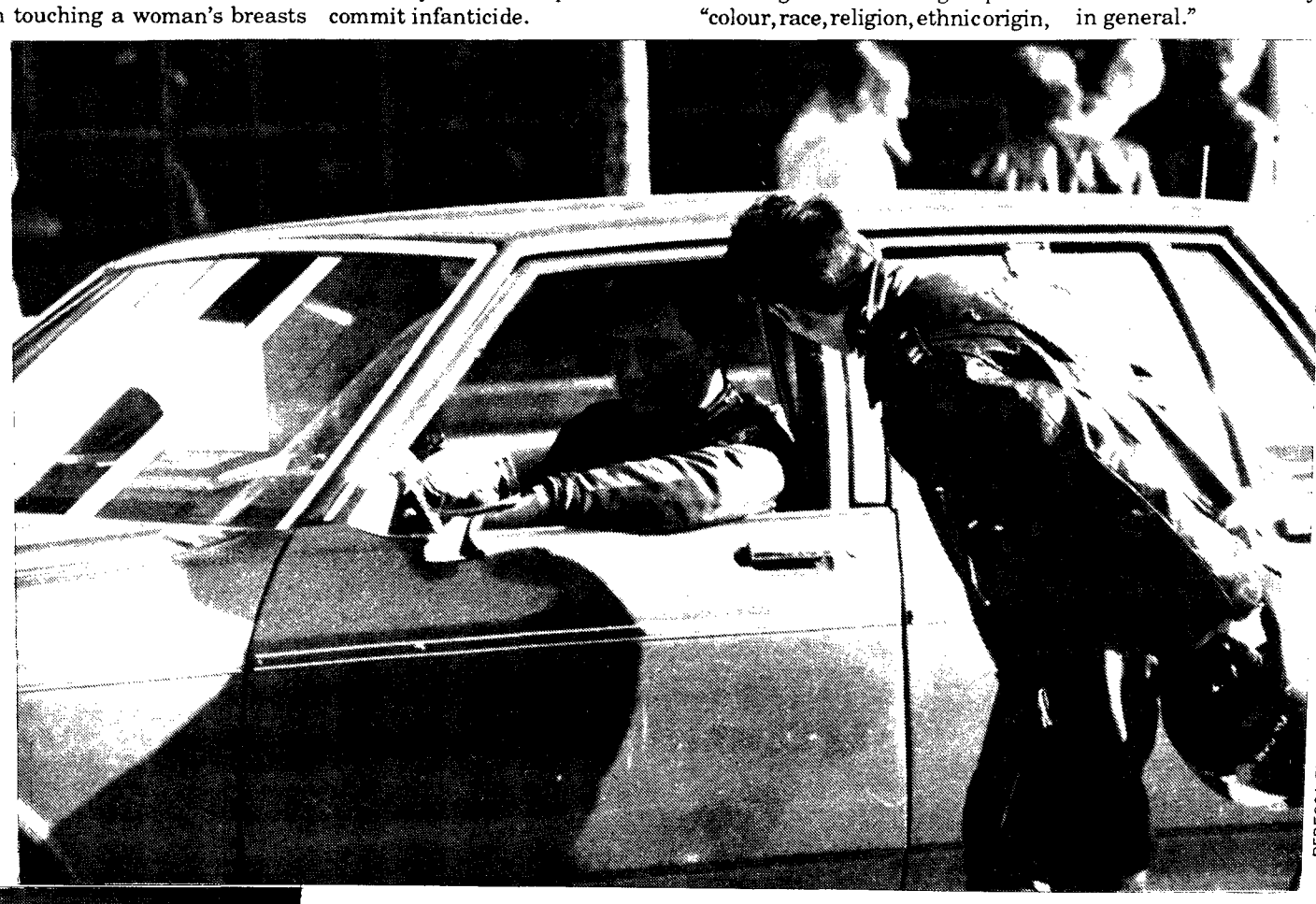
A male who kills a newborn would be charged with murder.

However, a woman is not currently considered to be part of an "identifiable group" which might be targeted in the act of homicide. Defining factors in a "group" are "colour, race, religion, ethnic origin, but not women," Boyle noted.

In the United States, gender is beginning to become a factor in consideration of a crime. "In 1983 the New York legal definition of bias-related violence included sex and sex-orientation."

"Whether there is any significant political attention paid to these questions and whether any change occurs will be a matter of whether there is any public pressure for change."

"Homicide is a feminist issue. Such crime is used to maintain the hierarchy in society in general."



REBECCA BISHOP PHOTO

Fight the Power – Empower!

by Carla Maftechuk

Eighty-five percent of sexual assaults on women are committed by men that are known to them. A woman has a 1 in 4 probability of being sexually assaulted in her lifetime. A group of women is continuing their work to combat these numbers by educating women in self-defense.

Women Educating in Self-defense Training (WEST) arranges courses in WenLiDo at many locations across the country, including UBC.

WenLiDo is a course in practical self-defense for women, ranging from how to handle harassment on the bus to dealing with a life-threatening attack.

Wen is a short form of women, Li means strength, and Do refers to the way or path.

Jennifer Kirkey, a college physics teacher, is instructing this semester's course at the AMS Women's Centre.

"I hate teaching the course," said Kirkey, expressing her belief that women should not have to find themselves in threatening situations where action becomes necessary. There is an ongoing demand for the classes and new instructors are always needed.

The course emphasizes the importance of removing oneself from a dangerous situation, if possible, before action becomes necessary.

The consensus of WenLiDo students is that it is extremely empowering.

Women in the Male-Dominated Media

by Holly Longdale

Women in the media profession can expect to encounter sexism, according to women working in the field.

"At a reporting level I still think there are biases on the part of some men who think women can't do "tough" stories involving murder and politics," says Shelly Easton, 31, a reporter at The Province with special interests in Health and Medecine.

Easton tackled such stories when she worked as a police reporter at The Hamilton Spectator in 1986—the first woman to assume this job in the paper's history.

"There was lots of anxiety and anticipation as to whether I would be able to do this job or not," she says. "I did a fine job."

Easton says that sexism also occurs when she's reporting out in the field.

"There are some men out there where they see a woman reporter and a man reporter, and there's a hostage taking, they will instinctually go to the man."

When she worked as assignment editor at the city desk, she was often mistaken for a secretary. She says men asked to be put through to a man or "someone in charge."

"At a management level, we have fewer women in management in newspapers, and as women move up into management, I think we are seeing a lot more threatened men," she says. "I definitely think that women in management have to be twice as good."

At The Province, the positions of city editor, news editor, and acting editor-in-chief are held by women. "They have had to put up with a lot of abuse, snide comments, jokes and whisper campaigns from many threatened men."

"[The Province] has been dubbed the Ovary Tower because they have women in positions of power," she says. "Would it have been otherwise called the Testicular Tower? No."

But Easton is satisfied with current working conditions. "I have been given equal opportunity to cover the Gulf War."

She says the women in The Province's management have brought the paper a long way.

Kim Prissick, 30, media relations co-ordinator at ICBC was warned during her media training that she may face discrimination in the field.

"They were very blunt in telling me about the fact that I am blond, and a woman, and will have to work harder to prove myself."

"There are people, and a lot of the time, other women who will not accept you because of your looks," Prissick is told in her ongoing media training.

"Very few women have high profile positions in television." Because these women are attractive, they have to struggle to gain credibility, especially from the female audience, Prissick adds.

When she was supposed to be interviewed by a Japanese television crew working on a story about Canadian culture, she was rejected by the Japanese producer.

"The producer looked me up and down, from my shoes to the top of my head, and his face went deathly white," she says. He then said: "too pretty, no TV."

Although she had the authority to speak on behalf of ICBC, she was told the crew would not understand. When a male representative of the corporation arrived the entire crew's response: "Ah, yes."

Power, violence & upper body restriction

The following is what happens when six womyn converge on the Gallery Lounge to talk:

...Anyways, we were discussing why the term "girls" is offensive to people, and to womyn who know anything about society. One womyn put up her hand and said that it was not men who had come up with this term and call womyn "girls"--womyn do it themselves. The prof wanted me to explain why it is offensive since no one seemed to know, so I had to tell them that it belittles womyn into being something...

Being childlike.

There's a real resistance to changing these things.

Men get power in many ways, and one of them is to control language.

There's also a real resistance for womyn to do it, too. They don't want to be labelled as "radical feminist."

They're afraid - it's like that old saying: "I'm not a feminist, but..."

I used to say that. I can see how people say that. I think it takes a certain amount of ...

Strength?

Strength... but coming to realizations.

That's why the womyn's centre is so important!

Space... control of language, no men looking in, no male voyeurs, freedom, power..

Men are always saying, "Don't be stupid, don't be idiotic." They don't argue with you, they just put you down.

A lot of times in class, I have something to say, but I can't put it into words. I start to doubt myself, which I cannot do - I'd go insane.

When I talk to profs, I can't say my gut feelings, I have to say what I've read, and what I can support through literature.

You have to refer to someone else's authority. You're never the authority on your own life.

Classrooms are a hostile environment. Simply the way they are set up in this institution on strictly enforced hierarchical lines. There is the prof, who has all of the power in that room, and then the power ranges down from there to the men in the class, and then to the white womyn and to people of colour and so on. And it's very, very hard to speak out in those situations. Its not a matter of a specifically sexist or racist incident that you can challenge the dominators on. It's hard for people to understand how that process works unless they've been a part of it.

Sexism is so pervasive that you can't just pluck out an incidental. It is central to my being, and it is part of everything I do. It is everywhere I go. And how can you logically prove that the air you breathe is sexist, heterosexist, and racist? You can't prove that to someone.

That's totally true! That's happened to me over the past year, and I haven't been able to realize it. And it's not only in classroom situations. It's in personal things that happen to you. You get in a situation with a guy, and you say "no," and he has the power over you, and you want to say no, but you just don't. Because it's not the way it should be - you feel so "not you." You put yourself out of it, and you're someone else, and you let yourself be someone else, because that's the way he wants it.

In my experimental research class, there was a study done, and we looked at who was participating in the study, and they were all males--all homogeneous middle class males. And I said "how can you do that? It's not representative of our population". And I asked the prof this, and instead of the female professor answering my question, one of the male students--who was about six foot four and over two hundred pounds--answered my question. All I felt like was why the frigging hell are you answering my question? I wasn't talking to you! Shut up!

Let's not talk about profs. Let's talk about bras.

Restriction, fashion, advertising!

What if you find them [bras] uncomfortable?

Who the hell does find them comfortable?

I have to have special designs that bruise my shoulders...

It's another way of making your body presentable to a certain audience.

You should see what those underwire bras do. I've got scars because of the underwire strips. I felt like I was supposed to wear them to turn on my partner, because that's what you see on tv and in the movies. I got this bra because I wanted to look like Madonna, and that's the only reason. I really regret it now. The scars are there, and I keep looking at them, and they hurt me. They really do....I like my sports bra.

I still have the bruises. This is part of the fashion designed by men to torture womyn.

And tampons! Why is it that they persuade us that the only way of being feminine is by shoving a piece of cardboard up. It's not the most natural thing I ever thought of.

I'm all for a bleed-in, now that there's GST on all feminine hygiene products. I'd really enjoy wearing all white and bleeding for a week on the steps of parliament.

I love it!!

Something else I want to talk about is this interview I did at Christmas. This guy was saying how do I experience sexism? He kept wanting examples. Well, I can't give a specific example. I know what he wanted to hear. He wanted to hear that I'd been followed home, or that I'd been raped. That is one example, and it is a serious, horrible thing, but there is so much more to it than that. Unfortunately, our media has warped it, and our media is part of the problem, because they cater to the advertisers. And that is the reason we have tv! It's to have enough stuff that people will watch the advertisements. Sexism is so central--it is a comment that someone will make, it's a feeling that I get. It's a sentence in class that I have to read! And when I complain, I am seen as being "bitchy", whiney--just, why are you complaining so much, why are you rocking the boat? Why can't you be "content with equality?" And I don't have equality. I am demanding it, and I am not going to shut up. But if equality happens in my lifetime, I'd be really shocked.

I don't want to be considered the same, I want to be different. But I want to be respected--I don't want equality. I want respect.

Respect! The biggest thing that I'm angry about is that I have to fight. I think that it is absolutely despicable.

The fact that I have to take a Wen-Li-Do class, and it doesn't matter if I have it or not, if a man attacks me, and I don't fight back, it would be my fault, and not his fault for attacking me. Well, why the fuck did he attack me? Men shouldn't have the right to do that.

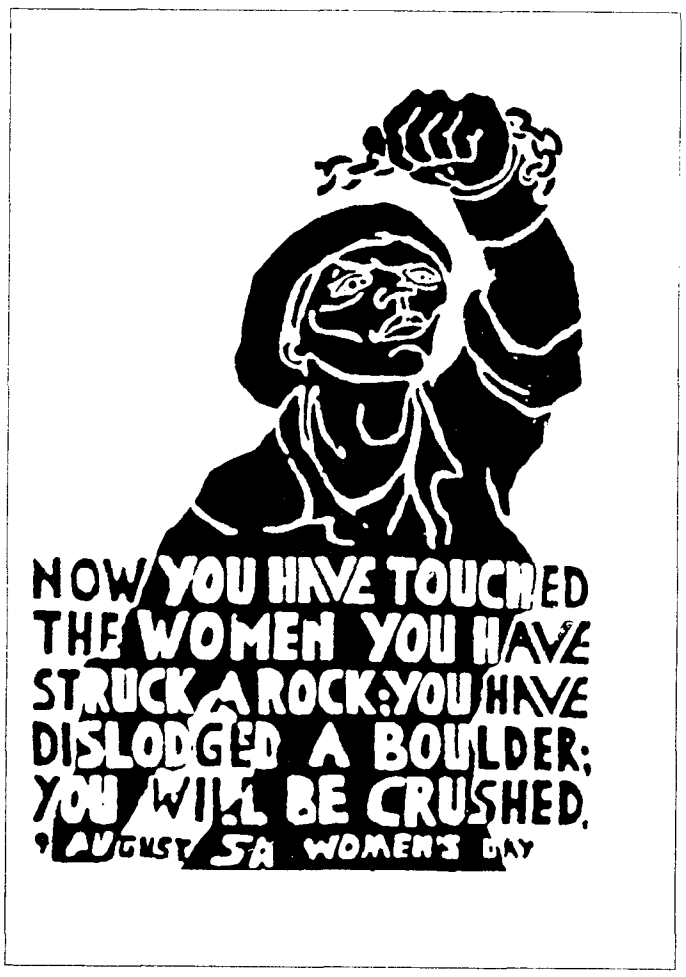
I hate the fact that I didn't know all of these things earlier on in my life.

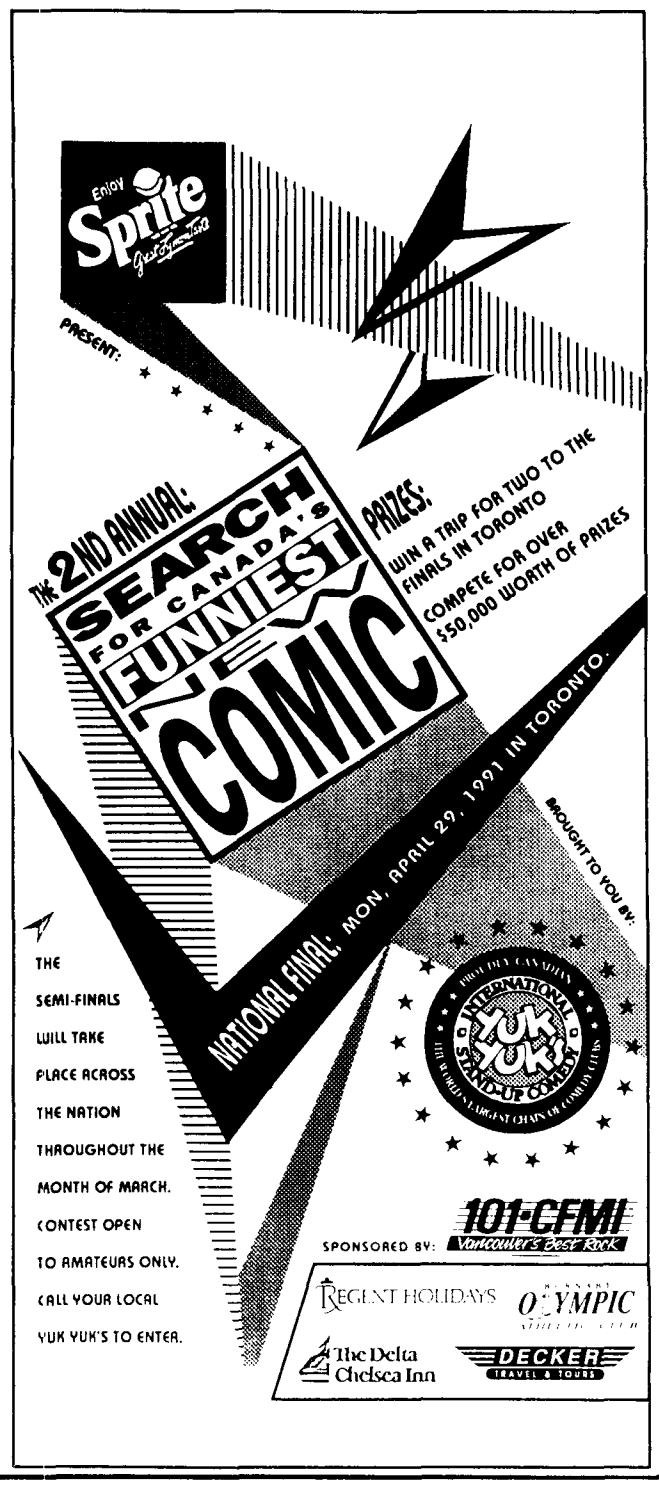
I hate the fact that I know about them.

I hate the fact that they are...

I hate the fact that I have to feel lucky about not being attacked, when it should be a given.

I believe that nothing will happen until men--and I think they will have to be forced, simply because I don't see how else it will happen--give up that power and that abusive privilege that they have. That is the power of white, middle class heterosexual able-bodied men, and there has to be some way that that power is removed, because the imbalance is so great now, that there will be no change until that is addressed. Until the institutions that breed this kind of systemic oppression and violence...





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RE-VISIONING POWER

by Ellen Pond and Linda Shout

UBC is not a safe place for womyn. There are more than ten sexual assaults reported monthly to the administration. In reality, the number is much higher because most sexual assaults are never reported—most are acquaintance sexual assaults.

Though statistics are often used to discuss violence against womyn, they cannot represent the numerous incidents of harassment, silencing and intimidation that we and our friends struggle with daily: male students' use of misogynist language (fucking bitch, etc.), any use of racist language (such as "black sheep" or using "race" uncritically), professors who say "what every young man should know"...

...the Vanier letters, remarks by profs regarding womyn's physical appearance ("spring is great because womyn wear red dresses that show off their legs"), silence regarding lesbians, profs choosing not to interfere when people of colour or First Nation's people are verbally attacked by their classmates...

...hostility when assumptions about "the family" are questioned the former AMS president treating womyn as sex objects, professors telling sexist (wife) jokes in class, professors invading our personal space...

...death threats on womyn's lives, the president speaking of Marc Lepine as a twisted and incomprehensible individual, and casual references to raping womyn of colour written on desks.

Given all this, it's important to talk about the privilege of being born male, or white, or middle-class—or all of the above and every combination thereof—as well as into a society that only accepts heterosexuality. Although we don't choose our sex, class, or social race, etc., institutionalized heterosexism, racism and sexism are present in our society: many of us benefit from these, and must work to challenge the existing power imbalances.

For example, we as white womyn who benefit from being white must not attempt to control the space that people of colour take for themselves. Similarly, when womyn choose to take space and time to be with other womyn, men must respect this and see that their attempts to control us perpetuate their abusive privilege.

Until new ways of seeing power are visioned and realized, UBC will not be safe.

Do profs give students the chance to call the profs on their sexism, racism, and heterosexism?
Is the classroom a safe environment for doing so?
If profs facilitate discussions around these issues, are they facilitated safely?

Are there any womyn in course the material?
Are there any womyn of colour?
Is lesbian existence acknowledged and are lesbian writings made visible?

by Manisha Singh

I am a token. This issue is written by white women, about white women, for white women: it is not about ALL women. This issue has excluded the voices of women of colour, which means many of the women on this campus are not being heard. I know I am a token. Tokenism means that the racist structure still remains unchallenged, in other words, business goes on as usual. Why are the voices of women of colour always muted? Why does no one care that only white women's agendas are on the table? I am really angry, I hate being a token, it hurts. But I have chosen to do this. Would you even have noticed the invisibility if I hadn't included my story?

Ain't I a Woman?

by Manisha Singh

This is the debut of my voice as a woman of colour, and a symbol of self love. I am reaching into the core of my soul and embracing the power that lets me sing. I honour and respect the process I am about to describe. These were my coping mechanisms.

Once...I longed to be white. The dream that never came true. I couldn't wait to fall asleep, maybe one day the good fairy would come and purify me. Maybe this was a caterpillar state and tomorrow I'd emerge a butterfly.

I was manure then, the other children called me manure. I was the colour of manure. I smelled like manure or curry, same difference. All the children teased me. They flushed my gym bag down the toilet. They flushed my spirit away.

I was dark, the beautiful people were fair. They had colours, blond, blue, green. I was only muddy, devoid of colour, of light, of spirit, of love. My vision darkened. I hated looking at myself.

I remember my heros. I worshipped the Charlie's Angels, more than any white girl did. I prayed that I might one day too be blonde, blue-eyed and white. There were no superstars who looked like me. Why were there no beautiful Indian women on TV? Every time India was mentioned in class, every time I heard an imitation of the accent, I turned browner. I couldn't even turn red.

I began to clothe myself in imaginary white skin. My appetite was insatiable. I straightened my hair, hungered for the styles. I turned against my parent's food, hungry for white nourishment. I was consumed by a hatred for everything Indian. I remember my mother's tears when I told her I wished for a white mother. I told her this as she combed the knots out of my thick, rough, black hair. Her hands trembled only slightly.

When a white man liked me I was thrilled. When men my colour liked me, I hid from them, I was scared of the dark. It angered me when my white sisters, my friends, tried to match me up with my kind. My kind smelled, were unattractive, my kind were manure. I was "white" then. I wouldn't let anyone steal that from me.

It wasn't until I graduated when one of my friends in a cold embrace whispered, "I never even notice that you are different, you are white just like the rest of us."

I cried, because I couldn't see myself in the mirror anymore. I was invisible. No one could hear me, because I couldn't speak. I hadn't spoken for years. There was silence. Silence is starvation. Silence is suicide. I resurrected myself that day. My brown self. I still bear the scars, but I survived because my mother cradled my silence, nurtured me when I wasn't looking.

Today I can see. I have a vision and I have a voice. I am surviving.

Racism operates as a strategy of divide and conquer. The systematic mistreatment of people of colour relies on the regeneration of lies. "They are dirty." "I must be dirty." The hatred, the racism is internalized. Racism pitted me against myself. Resisting and unlearning are the keys. I have entered the process; divide and conquer have become define and empower.

Are there many or any womyn profs?
Are there any womyn of colour profs?
Do they have tenure or full professorships?
Are their numbers at all proportional to the number of womyn students?

Do profs encourage student participation, with a non-hierarchical classroom format?
Do profs listen to and validate womyn students?

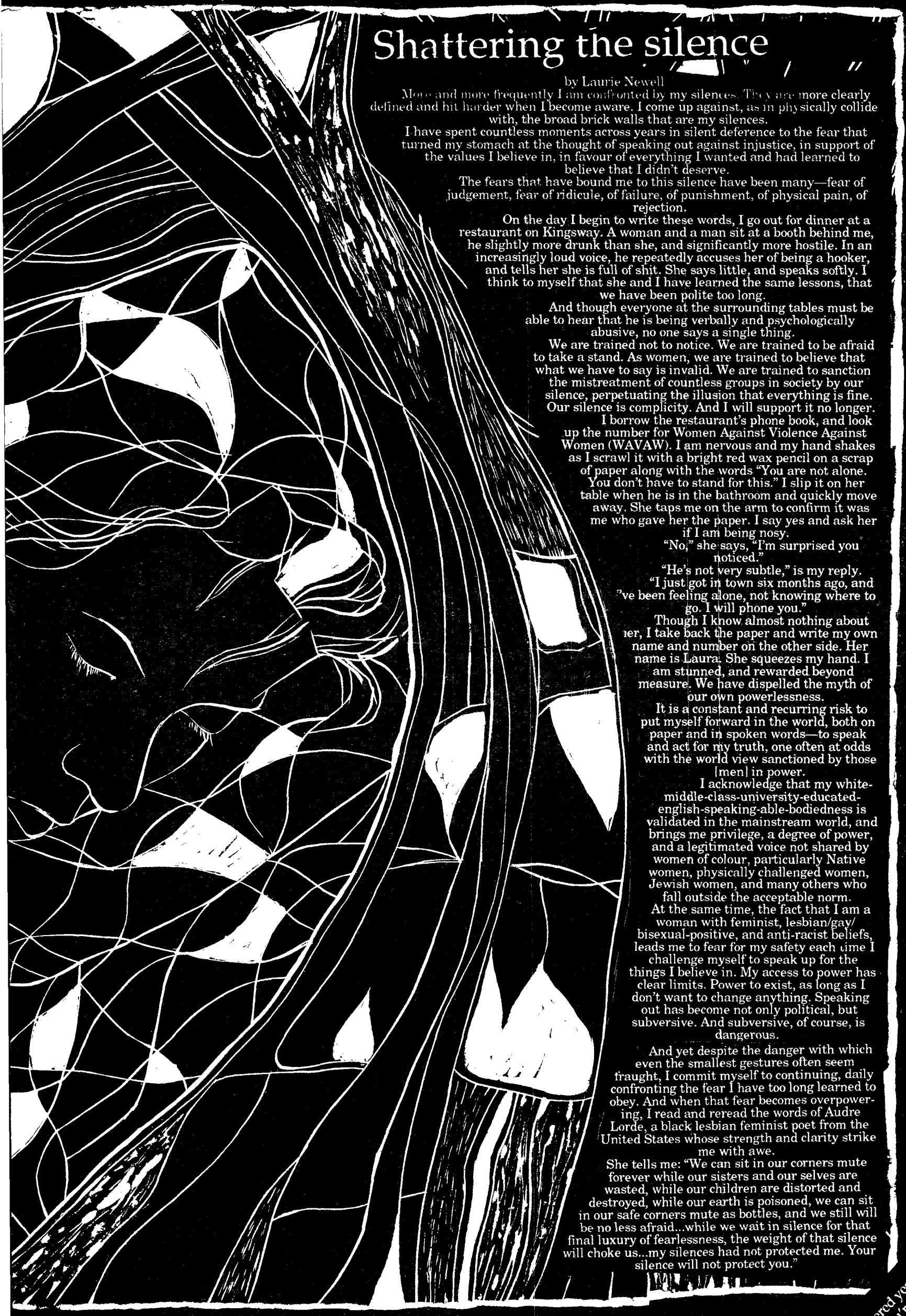
Are womyn and womyn's issues presented in a positive way? (joking/degrading presentation does present womyn, but not positively.)

Are feminism/womyn's issues presented and incorporated in the required courses?

Are works by womyn of colour incorporated?

Are profs open to questions about womyn, and to explicitly/implicitly feminist perspectives?

se gender specific language?
o the multiplicity of experience?



Shattering the silence

by Laurie Newell

More and more frequently I am confronted by my silences. They are more clearly defined and hit harder when I become aware. I come up against, as in physically collide with, the broad brick walls that are my silences.

I have spent countless moments across years in silent deference to the fear that turned my stomach at the thought of speaking out against injustice, in support of the values I believe in, in favour of everything I wanted and had learned to believe that I didn't deserve.

The fears that have bound me to this silence have been many—fear of judgement, fear of ridicule, of failure, of punishment, of physical pain, of rejection.

On the day I begin to write these words, I go out for dinner at a restaurant on Kingsway. A woman and a man sit at a booth behind me, he slightly more drunk than she, and significantly more hostile. In an increasingly loud voice, he repeatedly accuses her of being a hooker, and tells her she is full of shit. She says little, and speaks softly. I think to myself that she and I have learned the same lessons, that we have been polite too long.

And though everyone at the surrounding tables must be able to hear that he is being verbally and psychologically abusive, no one says a single thing.

We are trained not to notice. We are trained to be afraid to take a stand. As women, we are trained to believe that what we have to say is invalid. We are trained to sanction the mistreatment of countless groups in society by our silence, perpetuating the illusion that everything is fine. Our silence is complicity. And I will support it no longer.

I borrow the restaurant's phone book, and look up the number for Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW). I am nervous and my hand shakes as I scrawl it with a bright red wax pencil on a scrap of paper along with the words "You are not alone. You don't have to stand for this." I slip it on her table when he is in the bathroom and quickly move away. She taps me on the arm to confirm it was me who gave her the paper. I say yes and ask her if I am being nosy.

"No," she says, "I'm surprised you noticed."

"He's not very subtle," is my reply.

"I just got in town six months ago, and 've been feeling alone, not knowing where to go. I will phone you."

Though I know almost nothing about ıer, I take back the paper and write my own name and number on the other side. Her name is Laura. She squeezes my hand. I am stunned, and rewarded beyond measure. We have dispelled the myth of our own powerlessness.

It is a constant and recurring risk to put myself forward in the world, both on paper and in spoken words—to speak and act for my truth, one often at odds with the world view sanctioned by those [men] in power.

I acknowledge that my white-middle-class-university-educated-english-speaking-able-bodiedness is validated in the mainstream world, and brings me privilege, a degree of power, and a legitimated voice not shared by women of colour, particularly Native women, physically challenged women, Jewish women, and many others who fall outside the acceptable norm.

At the same time, the fact that I am a woman with feminist, lesbian/gay/bisexual-positive, and anti-racist beliefs, leads me to fear for my safety each time I challenge myself to speak up for the things I believe in. My access to power has clear limits. Power to exist, as long as I don't want to change anything. Speaking out has become not only political, but subversive. And subversive, of course, is dangerous.

And yet despite the danger with which even the smallest gestures often seem fraught, I commit myself to continuing, daily confronting the fear I have too long learned to obey. And when that fear becomes overpowering, I read and reread the words of Audre Lorde, a black lesbian feminist poet from the United States whose strength and clarity strike me with awe.

She tells me: "We can sit in our corners mute forever while our sisters and our selves are wasted, while our children are distorted and destroyed, while our earth is poisoned, we can sit in our safe corners mute as bottles, and we still will be no less afraid...while we wait in silence for that final luxury of fearlessness, the weight of that silence will choke us...my silences had not protected me. Your silence will not protect you."

... if you answered yes to all of these questions, are you sure that you're at UBC?!!!

Are people silenced or made invisible when they speak out about sexism, racism, and heterosexism?
Are you afraid to speak out about heterosexism, racism and sexism?

Are students encouraged to write about womyn or people of colour?
Are students even made aware that feminist writing exists and that it is valid?
Do the profs even know that womyn and feminism exist?!!!

Are students encouraged to look into relevant feminist writings?
Are students even made aware that feminist writing exists and that it is valid?
Do the profs even know that womyn and feminism exist?!!!

Are womyn's studies classes offered in your department?
If yes, are they ghettoized?

Is there any job sharing (other than the current method of less well paid, mostly womyn, sessional lecturers)?

Are the positions of power (department head, committee chairs...) held by white men and the "support staff" positions (secretarial, janitorial) held by womyn, with corresponding pay inequity?

Is "race" examined in a critical way?
Is gender examined?
Is the intersection of "race" and gender examined?

Are womyn's experiences validated?
Are womyn's experiences even acknowledged?
Are there any womyn authors?
Are there any womyn of colour, Native authors?
Is the word feminism even mentioned?

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Wake up Oscar!

by M. Maenling

Once again, The Academy is royally thumbing its nose at women in the film industry. With the announcement of the Oscar nominations, Awakenings was nominated for best picture but director Penny Marshall was conspicuously absent from the nomination list for best director.

She would have been the first ever, North American woman to be nominated for best director. Even more conspicuous is the fact that traditionally, best picture nominations carry a best director nomination along with them. (How could one of the best pictures be made without the expertise of one of the best directors?) Enough of my kvetsching (..whining, sniveling,...snorting..).

Penny Marshall's Awakenings, based on a true story, deserves a standing ovation for being one of this year's most interesting films. Robin Williams plays Dr. Malcolm Sayer, a doctor who, through his intelligence and sensitivity, finds a way to reach "the statues"—the virtually catatonic post-encephalitic patients whose minds are suspended in unresponsive bodies.

Robert Deniro plays Leonard, the first patient to "awaken" from receiving the drug L-Dopa. The film is fascinating in its treatment of medical subject matter, as well as the emotional problems faced by the patients as they come out of their suspended states.

Penny Marshall's gutsy, unflinching film deals with difficult subject matter in a sometimes agonizingly realistic manner. Bring Kleenex.

The Panther

His weary glance, by the passing of the bars,
Has grown into a dazed and vacant stare;
It seems to him there are a thousand bars
And out beyond those bars-no world.

The pad of his strong feet, that ceaseless sound
Of supple tread behind the iron bands,
Is like a dance of strength circling round,
While in the circle, stunned, a great will stands.

But there are times the pupils of his eyes
Dilate, the strong limbs stand alert, apart,
Tense with the flood of visions that arise
Only to sink and die within his heart.

Rainer Maria Rilke

(* From Awakenings)

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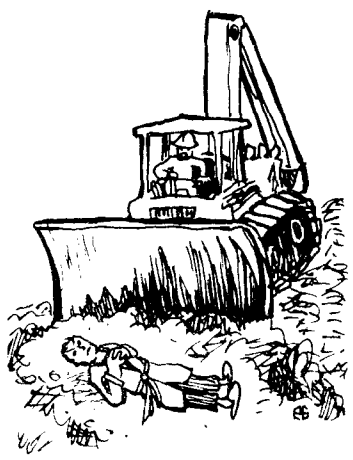

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WIMMIN'S ISSUE

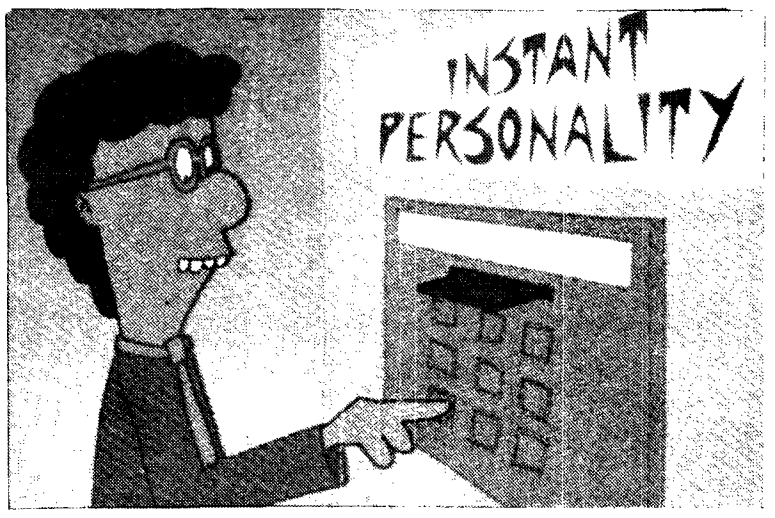
Film animator's plug-in personalities

From an interview with Sylvie Fefer.

by Celia Griffith

Remember when cartoons played before every movie? Today we find them mainly in collections such as The Third Animation Celebration, which opens Friday at the Ridge Theatre.

Among 19 baffling, amusing, and often breathtaking new offerings from nine countries, is a quirky piece by Vancouver's own Sylvie Fefer.



Still from Personality Software

Q: How did you come to do the film Personality Software?

A: The National Film Board asked me and I submitted the idea. They seemed to like it, so they commissioned me to do a storyboard. That's like a comic strip version of the film—what it will be like.

Then they didn't want to do the film after all. I asked for the film rights back and for help with some of my cost, and they were very generous to do that. So I applied to the Canada Council and got rejected about a million and one times [laughs] until finally I had animated most of the film on my own and I submitted a line test.

For a line test all or most of the animation is done in black and white, so one can get a really clear idea of what the film is going to be like. They gave me the money to complete the film, so I finished animating it, I inked it, and then I didn't have enough money to pay for painters to paint the film. I applied for a new BC Film grant and got the money to pay for painters. That's basically the history of the making of Personality Software.

Q: Why did the NFB approach you?

A: I've made two other films, Brushstrokes and A Short Story. So the NFB knew of my work and they knew me.

Q: Where can people see Brushstrokes or Short Story?

A: I made Brushstrokes in 1982 so it's getting a bit old now, but it's at Canadian Filmmakers Distribution West on Howe Street—you can rent them. Brushstrokes was shown on the CBC, Knowledge Network, pay tv. Brushstrokes won the Short Film Showcase, something that doesn't exist any more. People who won got paired up with a feature, so their film was played before that feature across Canada. And mine was played with some horrible—oh, I shouldn't say horrible—with a film called Stroker Ace, with Burt Reynolds.

A Short Story was finished in '85, and it's been shown in the places that I just mentioned. But it's about being short. It played a lot on the Knowledge Network, and I think maybe there's a short person over there that liked it.

Q: What distinguishes Personality Software particularly?

A: Well, first, it's my most ambitious film, because it's full colour. My other ones were done on paper; this one was done on cel. Cel is really a clear acetate, so what happens is that the characters are painted on it, and then you can see the background behind the characters. Since you don't have to redraw it for each frame of film, you can have a full colour background. My other films had very minimally coloured drawings.

Second, Personality Software is filled with characters talking. You know—it's as if they were real people, but they're cartoon characters and they're interacting with one another. In my other films, Brushstrokes had no talking at all, and A Short Story had just a narration, and maybe a couple of lines that are lip-synched. Also, it's a much more complex story than my other two films, and it's got way more characters. It's more polished.

Personal Software takes a look at what life would be like if you could go to a store and buy yourself a new personality and install it in a slot that's custom-cut into your head—what the repercussions of this supposed Utopia would be.

Q: Were you looking for any particular reactions to this film?

A: I wanted to make a film people would find funny. It's a twist on what's happening in technology. What if technology had advanced so radically that this were possible? It's a bit of a twisted way of looking at the way life is now and how it could be. So I want them to maybe chuckle on the premise, and then laugh at the different jokes that are in the film.

Q: Do you find any particular difficulties, or any advantages for that matter, to being a woman in the animation field?

A: People ask me, are there more women than men or are there more men than women? As far as I can tell, when I look at my friends who are animators, it's evenly split. I don't know what it's like in the studio system. All I know is what it's like as an independent animator. And as an independent animator, whether you're a woman or a man, you still have to have the creativity to come up with an idea, and the drive to see it through to the end. I don't think that it's any more or less difficult if you're a woman.

I haven't had any cause to feel discriminated against, or that it was any harder for me than a guy. Other people's experiences might be different, but that's my experience.

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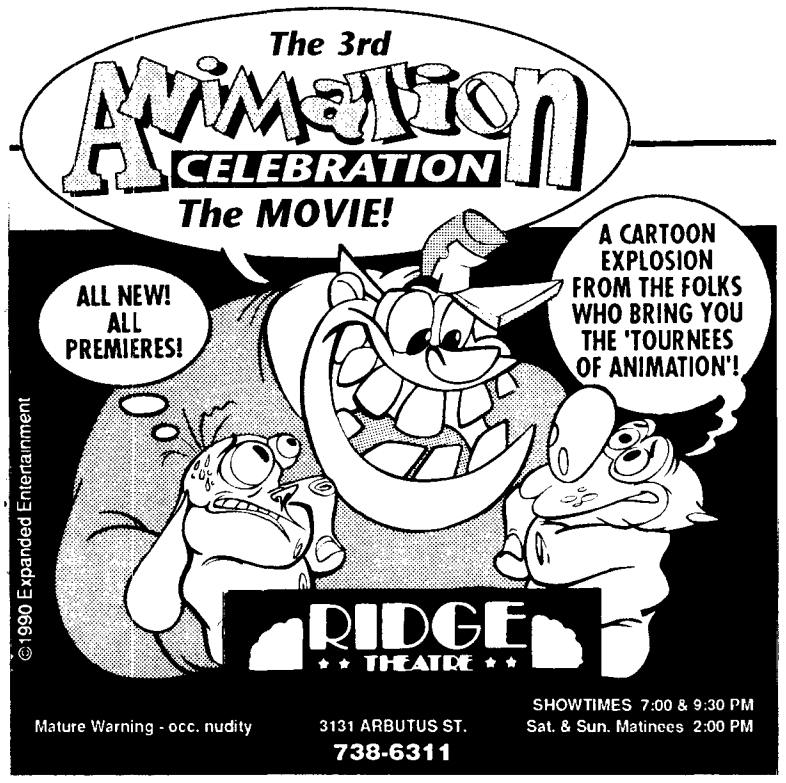

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Asserting our right to be...

by Laura Mayne

Self defense as an issue often comes up with the topic of how women can protect themselves from sexual assault.

Although learning self defense can be useful and empowering, assertiveness skills may be more realistically applicable to real life.

The major drawback of many self defense programs is that they assume attack by strangers. Stranger rape receives the most media attention and is a great fear for many women, but it is actually not the predominant reality. Because over eighty-five percent of all women who are sexually assaulted know their assailants, assertiveness training is often more relevant.

For example, for self defense techniques to work, we have to be willing to hurt someone else to protect ourselves. For women this is often difficult because we are taught that our bodies are not our own, and as such we have no means to assert what we want. Assertiveness training can teach us things that we don't learn anywhere else: that we don't always have to be nice and smiling.

The following are tips that may help you feel confident and live more safely, but it is important to put them into perspective.

As women we should not have to change our lives so that we can be safe. We will not be safe until men take responsibility for their actions. Society must stop blaming women who are sexually assaulted.

You are NEVER to blame if you are sexually assaulted--whether or not you follow any of these tips. Whatever a woman does to survive a sexual assault is the right thing to do.

Every situation is different and there is no perfect way to protect yourself from sexual assault. These tips are not a guarantee but following them may improve your safety.

Self Protection Tips: These have worked for many women.

1. Know that you have the right to set sexual limits. You may have different limits with different people; your limits may change.
2. Communicate these limits. Get them across clearly to the other person. E.S.P doesn't work.
3. Trust your gut feelings. If you feel you are being pressured into unwanted sex, you're right.
4. Pay attention to behavior that doesn't seem right. Someone sitting or standing too close who enjoys your discomfort. Power stares--looking through you or down at you. Someone who blocks your way. Someone speaking or acting as if they knows you more intimately than they do. Someone who grabs or pushes you to get their way. Someone who doesn't listen or disregards what you are saying (like NO).
5. Be Assertive. Get angry when someone does something that you don't want. Act immediately with an assertive response. Stand up for yourself--it's okay to be rude to someone who is sexually pressuring you, even if it hurts their feelings. After all they're not paying attention to you feelings.
6. Take an assertiveness class. It takes work to learn to be assertive and to unlearn our socialization into passivity.

War & women

by Iris Bitterlich

Every night on the T.V. and everyday in the newspapers, the mainstream media has been busy rationalizing and justifying the mass destruction and slaughter called the Gulf war. We are told that it is wrong for Iraq to invade Kuwait. But what then of the recent invasions of Grenada and Panama by the United States? We are told this is a war for the liberation of Kuwait, although one wonders whose liberty is at stake since Kuwait was ruled by a sheik and his family. When Saudi Arabian women recently protested for the right to drive motor vehicles, western governments didn't want to get involved. Apparently the allies' fight for liberty and freedom does not include Saudi women who, among other things, cannot board airplanes or check into hotels without written permission from male relatives. We hear about the brutality, torture, and murder of Kuwaitis by the Iraqi army, but little or nothing about the torture, arrest, and detention of Yemenis by the Saudi forces. Hussein is labelled sick and mad. He does not follow the Geneva convention for P.O.W.s and aims scud missiles at civilian targets. These events are indeed sickening, but no less than all the talk about acceptable ways to fight a war - the propaganda which tells us that the murder of human beings is okay as long as we use conventional weapons. In the final analysis Hussein is no more sick or mad than Bush and Mulroney because all see the use of force and violence as acceptable.

To stop wars we need to reject the ideology which justifies their use. This ideology is called nationalism. It is a form of bigotry which tells people that their country and they as citizens of that country are superior to people from other countries. Under the banner of patriotism rulers can convince people to be slaughtered or to murder other humans. Talk of God, freedom, liberty, or a perceived threat of attack are also thrown in for good measure. We need to see that nationalism is nothing more than a ploy to manipulate peoples' emotions for the benefit and interest of the elite who are our leaders. Certainly to the average person it doesn't matter who rules. A repressive regime is a repressive regime irrespective of its nationality.

We also need to reject the social programming which dehumanizes us to the point that we accept the use of force and violence as normal. This is especially true for men who have to deal with a gender role that tells them if they are not tough then they're not real men. Part of the way our society dehumanizes us is through the use of verbal put downs. Within a group, verbal put downs desensitize those people who are the butt of the jokes and create the need in them to "prove" themselves. When negative talk is directed at people outside the group it creates subhumans who deserve any mistreatment they might receive. Depending on which outside group this talk is directed at, it results in and perpetuates sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, nationalism, etc. Therefore, it is important for us to speak out against negative talk and stereotyping as it happens. If we are told we are too sensitive, counter that others are too insensitive.

Another manifestation of the macho mystic is the need to dominate and use physical force to resolve conflicts instead of talking things through and arriving at a compromise, usually a slow process requiring social skills. I personally have talked to two men who felt it was perfectly acceptable to punch out other men as a way of solving disagreements and saving face. Hence, in the Gulf crisis we see the two little boys, Bush and Hussein, facing off. Too bad for Hussein, but Bush has more little toys so he's going to win.

The above attitudes must change. We have to get rid of hierarchies and the incessant need to dominate, rank, and compete. For example, at our schools and universities we could easily eliminate the position of "teacher" and replace it with facilitator. I personally find discussing ideas, sharing experiences, and working with peers a very rewarding experience. Such schooling would also help us to develop skills in cooperation and communication. Getting rid of testing and grading would also be a vast improvement.

At a global level there is really no need for parliaments, politicians, or leaders. The technology is readily available to hook up computers in every household to let people vote on every issue themselves. If this happened we would actually have a true democracy. Heaven knows we can't do any worse than the politicians.

After a few months of voting and taking care of business we would be left wondering why we ever had leaders in the first place. How was it that anyone ever took them seriously, how did they ever manage to get so much press time, and how did they ever con anyone into those senseless slaughters called war?

Women are responsible for war too

Several women, and one man, have told me that masculine aggressiveness is a main cause of war. Balderdash, poppycock and fiddlesticks. That annoying notion is not only wrong, it is divisive; and for women it's a cop-out.

Men's aggression is not a cause but just another weapon, like explosives. The actual causes of war are unisex. Let's take the most obvious one, greed, which is all around us and in us. Listen to the voices singing "Hush little luxury, don't you cry, you'll be a necessity by and by." You'll hear both baritone and soprano.

Allied to greed in causing war is the gradual buildup of power in irresponsible hands. In our culture we let this happen by voting carelessly with the ballot and the dollar. The Iraq, Panama, and Nicaragua crises came about this way. Is there any distinction between the sexes in such unthinking behaviour? Well maybe because of their different roles women pay less attention to candidates' political records, and possibly men more often fail to realize a connection between General Electric and nuclear bombs. But such differences aren't exactly striking.

In our culture, wars can't be started and maintained without massive manipulation of public opinion through the media. Are women immune to this?

Even the macho image that shapes so much of North America's policies is far from being a men-only phenomenon. Who went to see Top Gun? Reagan was rated as the most popular president of all time, right after he invaded Grenada—didn't the pollsters ask any women?

I rest my case.

Iris Griffith is an ex-UBC student and a peace activist.

PERSPECTIVE

SCREAMING

It happened some time ago. I don't like to remember. You know who you are. You are free and living your life exactly the way you want. Since then, my life has been very different.

Who do you think you are to have done this to me. You stole something from me. You robbed me of my right to make a choice and took away my sense of self. It has taken me this long to say "I want it back."

You showed me what it is to hate. You took away time that should have been mine and left me consumed with fear. You left your hate with me also; a piece of baggage I would very much liked to have passed right back to you. I chose not to pass it on (like you did to me) and I pay the price of having it eat away at me, leaving me empty.

Most of the time I don't remember what I was like before. I liked who I was before and I don't know how to restore myself.

I have lost much of who and what I cared about. The few who I have told, reacted with silence; as if they had never heard what I had said to them at all. Their silence deepens my pain and isolates me. Their silence protects you from having to be held accountable for your actions.

The time has come for you and the Silencers to be held accountable. We are watching you and you will pay. That is how we indemnify ourselves. The time has come for you to make restitution. I use my voice to demand it.

Female Geers speak out

by J.Randall, Christa Greentree, and Evie Wehrhahn

We are part of the ever-increasing number of female engineers.

Daily, we are forced to listen to uptight and uninformed comments of some "feminists" that claim to represent our cause. They so grandly take it upon themselves to stand up for our rights that have supposedly been violated, in the belief that we feel too repressed by our male counterparts to do it ourselves. Well, the time has come where these comments have gone too far, and we feel compelled to express OUR opinion, rather than accepting the opinion with which we have been labelled.

First, we are proud to be engineers...not female engineers, just simply engineers. We are sick and tired of people (who presume to know our inner thoughts) telling others that we are frightened of our own faculty. We consider ourselves members of one of the only groups on this apathetic campus with the initiative to express an opinion on any subject.

We are not saying that we agree with every opinion expressed by other members of our faculty. We are not homophobic, racist or sexist, and the majority of engineers are not either.

And we resent being classified.

Feminism has different meanings to different people. To some it means equal pay for equal work, and for others it means affirmative action programs, changing "women" to "womyn", and equating sex with sexism. Some feminists have an unrealistic perception of what men are like.

Some have told us that we should feel unsafe and ashamed of our own faculty. We have NEVER felt unsafe around the men in engineering, nor ashamed to be associated with them.

The media is constantly portraying engineers as a group of chauvinistic, straight, white males with women playing a negligible role in student activities. In fact, women in engineering are twice as likely (and twice as encouraged) to get involved with EUS activities.

Basically, we want the UBC community to know that every time anyone makes an unfair, biased generalization about the engineers and what they may or may not represent, she labels us as well. And before she presumes to represent our stand on any issue, she should consult us.

Stats on Wimmin

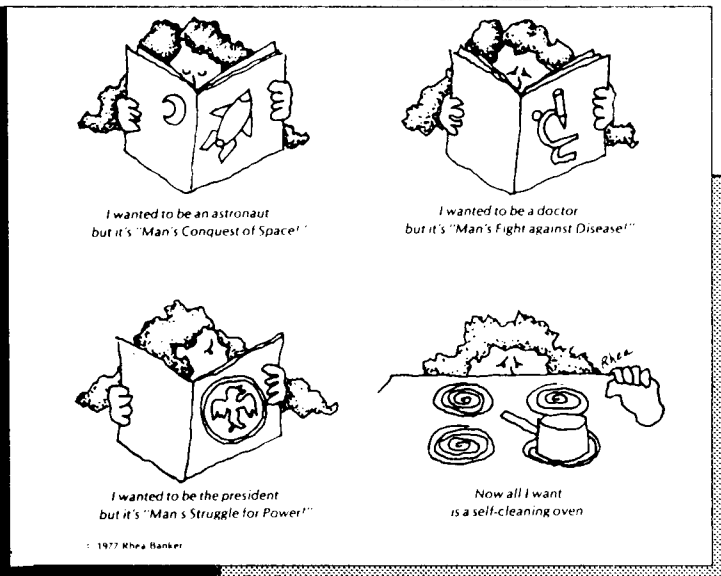
Nursing: 97%
Family & Nutritional Science: 95%
Social Work: 82%
Rehabilitation Medicine: 82%
Education: 67%
Elementary 78%
Secondary 45%

Agriculture: 60%
Music: 55%
Pharmacy: 52%

Arts
Total: 62%
Undergrad: 63%
Grad: 59%
French: 82%
History: 54%
Anthropology: 74%
Geography: 50%
Psychology: 74%
Political Science: 45%
English: 71%
Economics: 31%
Sociology: 67%
Philosophy: 28%
Int. Relations: 57%

Medical Laboratory Science: 53%

Fifty-one per cent of UBC's undergraduates are women. This table shows the percentage of women enrolled in various faculties and departments at UBC. Unless otherwise stated, the percentages are for undergraduate enrollment.



Source: Registrar's "Count of registered students" as of February 15, 1991.

Law
Total: 49%
Undergrad: 49%
Grad: 53%
Physical Education: 44%
Medicine: 40%
Commerce
Total: 40%
Undergrad: 43%
Grad: 32%

Science
Total: 39%
Undergrad: 40%
Grad: 36%
All Biologies: 45%
Math: 27%
Chemistry: 38%
Computer Science: 17%
Geology: 31%
Physics: 10%
Architecture: 36%

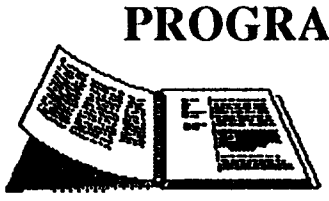
Dentistry: 33%
Master of Business Administration (MBA): 29%
Forestry
Total: 18%
Undergrad: 18%
Grad: 15%
Engineering
Total: 11%
Undergrad: 11%
Grad: 11%
Bio-resource: 30%
Others: 5-12%
Chemical: 22%

"Although the world is full of suffering it is also full of overcoming of it"
-Helen Keller (1880-1968) American writer

"When she stopped conforming to the conventional picture of femininity she finally began to enjoy being a woman."
-Betty Friedan (born 1921) - American writer

watch for the
Superstar
ATHLETIC FOOTWEAR
shoe sale
March 13, 14, 15
10AM - 4PM
PLAZA SOUTH, LOWER SUB CONCOURSE
see Tuesdays Ubyssey for details

THE GENERAL B.A. PROGRAM
UBC



This program, offering a broad Liberal Arts option instead of a Major or Honours Program, is now in place.

For information, come to:
The General B.A. Office,
Buchanan C158,
or call 228-6700.

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by William Shakespeare
Directed by Gordon McCall
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3 Addit. Eve. Perfs. - *March 21, 22 & 23*
SPECIAL 2 FOR 1 PREVIEW
- Wednesday, March 6
Matinees:
Thursday, March 14&21 @ 12:30pm
Res. 228-2678 Support Your Campus Theatre

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A N N U A L
GENERAL MEETING
Thursday, March 21, 1991 - 5:30 pm
Graduate Student Centre Banquet Room
AGENDA
1. Intro of New Executive
2. Financial Statements
3. Report from Council
4. Auditor's Report
5. Other Business
GRADUATE STUDENT SOCIETY UBC

WHAT IS FEMINISM?

No one should have to dance backwards all their lives.
-Jill Ruckelshaus

Radical bra-burners who center out white males as being women beaters.

by M. Maenling

"Feminist?!....who?...Me!?.....Hell No!!... Please don't associate me with one of those cold hard, men-hating, bra-burning, career-climbing, lesbian bitches!"

Have you heard this sacrilegious drivel before? Perhaps this phrase or one similar to it has erupted from your very lips. Do you really think all feminists are cold and hard? Do you think they all loathe men? Do you think all feminists are lesbians who are pyromaniacal underwear fetishists? ...if you think there's something wrong with lesbians please refer back to the Ubyssey GLB Valentine's issue and correct the error of your thought patterns...

I wonder, when exactly, feminist became a dirty word. Maybe the day many women began to take their shaky, new-found equality for granted. Have they forgotten a few things?

For example, their suffragette ancestors who had to fight for the right to vote in the 1920s. The countless women who, over the last fifty years, have fought for the right to an education, or the right to have a job; the right to leave abusive partners, and the right to control their own lives and bodies. Not so long ago, women were still legally treated as property, owned by their fathers or husbands. In other countries, even today, women often do not have the basic rights we take for granted. There is no guarantee in the future that we will always have these rights.

Do you want to have equal pay? Women, on the average, still only make approximately 60 cents to every dollar that a man makes. Do you want to have a career in a male-dominated profession? Look out...your presence will still, at times, be resented. Worldwide, women do the vast majority of labour (over ninety percent of it), yet own only two percent of the property. Women all over the world are still being beaten, sexually abused and murdered; primarily by men. The day these inequalities no longer exist is the day we no longer have a need for the term feminist.

Please think about this when you are on your way to your Metals and Materials class, or your Gross Anatomy class (or wherever you happen to be going). At its broadest common denominator, feminism seeks universal egalitarianism (equality). To the best of my knowledge, its mandate has never, nor should it ever be, to spread hate or oppression of any kind (although some sectors of the male-dominated world might prefer that you did believe so).

Why are you ashamed to call yourself a feminist? Find out what it means, and if the majority of it applies to you, hold your head up, be courageous, and don't be afraid to call yourself a feminist.

Humanism means equality of sexes, all people regardless of race, nationality, etc.

FEMINISM IS WIMMIN BEING EQUAL TO MEN. EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK.

A movement to bring equality, respect and fair treatment for all.

Feminism is a symbol of itself.

Women fighting for themselves.

Feminism allows this.

"Feminism" is just one of those words that you (mis) appropriate + make your own + then work like hell to inflict on everyone else.

FEMINISM

Definitions solicited from UBC students

Often a label

2 women are murdered each week by their male partners

For now, I consider myself a feminist because I ask questions about gender-

An excuse to hate men.
An excuse for being a dyke.

To respect a woman as an individual being and NOT as an object.

The belief in, and struggle for a society in which one's sex does not limit the ways in which one can choose to live. (i.e. humanism)

Feminism stands for human rights and equality for women.

Feminism is female chauvinism. As reprehensible as male chauvinism.

여성이 주인이 되는 사회가 되어야 한다!!

I am woman. Hear me ROAR!

To have one's individuality ignored is like being pushed quite out of life. Like being blown out as one blows out a light. -Evelyn Scott

I wanted to go out & change the world, but I couldn't find a babysitter.

Waitress in a Fine Restaurant

If I keep one eye
green and venomous,
as quick as snakespit,
and the other eye
diaphanous, lake-like
pooled with pupil,
I can keep the same balance
as the tray on my fingertips.

My hands can be supple and fluid
for the pouring of wines,
the small gestures
to indicate the lusher meats.
They shall light the candles
and whet the appetites.
My rings and knuckles
are dainty hors d'oeuvres.

My dress is religiously plain.
I hold my body rigid
and as beckoning
as a board.
But the brooch at my neck
must rivet the eye
and confound the senses
into contemplation
of the delicacies
that may swell and shimmer beneath.

I move like a metronome
from kitchen to table.
And arrive at last
amid stupified silence
with my head on a plate,
my hair in blue flambe,
and each eye r[illegible]

You Always Won

When we sat
before the television,
our hands held high and ready,
in a race to see
who could pick off the Starship Enterprise first
zinging out of the announcer's voice
to orbit our living room.

I always waited to see which star
looked likely to explode into the white dwarf.

But you had memorized the exact location on the screen,
letting me believe
your index finger was prescient.

Now it's hard to believe in the light years between us,
Mr. Spock.

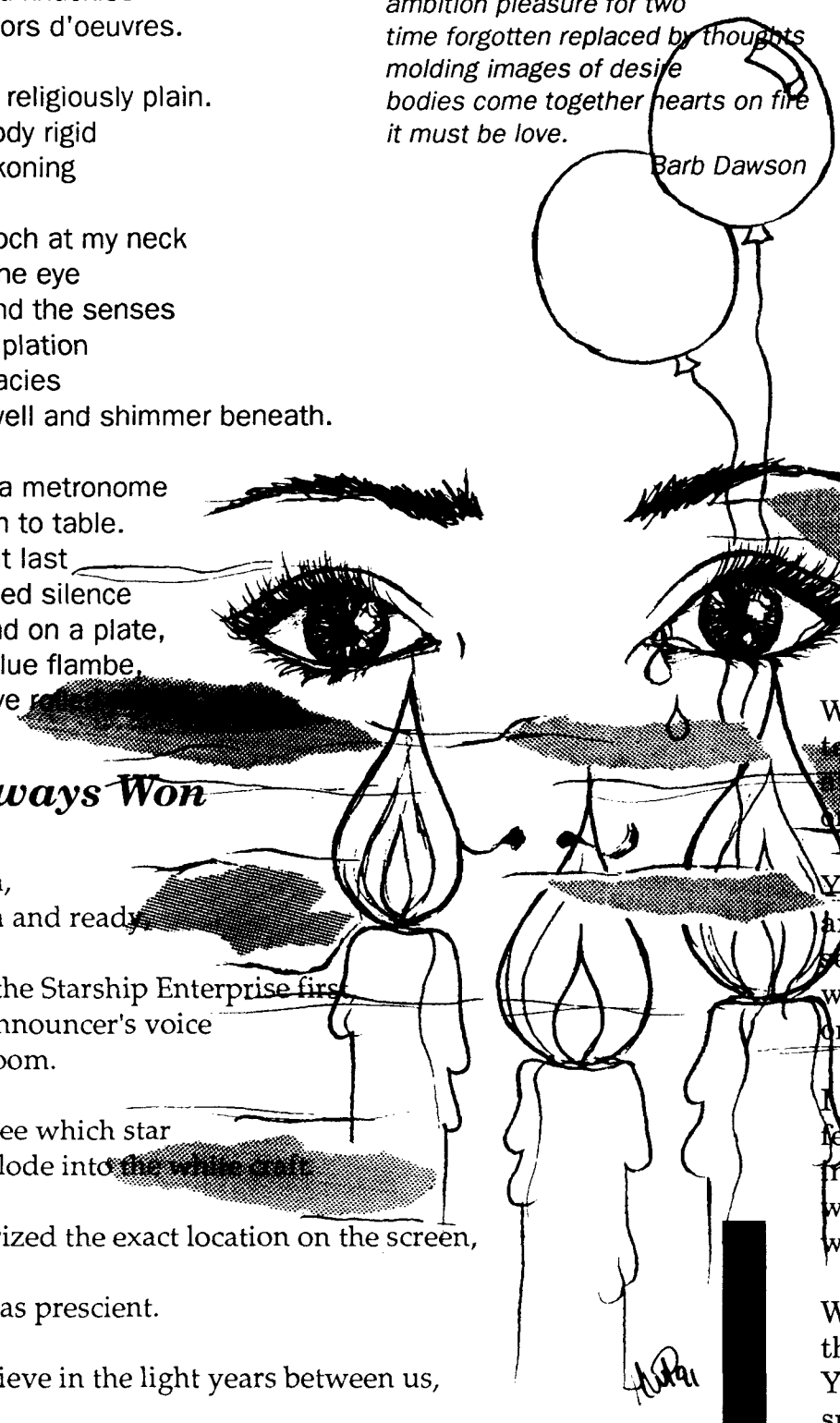
When we played alone on the lawn all day,
how I loved to be Kirk or McCoy,
trusting or hating you,
but still by your side,
phaser in hand and firing
into the fogs of the frog pond.

But when we played with your friends,
I was just a Klingon.
Or worse, a woman in a mini-skirt
who did nothing but scream.

How those roles have wrapped around us,
as if, then, we could choose to boldly go
so far away from each other.
You, to your planet of logic,
and I still hooking my dreams onto falling stars.

minds wonder minds explore
time occupies space
people come and go
as time came and went
feelings invade mind corresponds
thoughts exchange
bodies mingle curves acquaint
sweat abundant feeling faint
is it lust?
feelings are familiar
body wants craving mind
roaming hands warm sensations
compliments by touch
perpetual thoughts of hungering
ambition pleasure for two
time forgotten replaced by thoughts
molding images of desire
bodies come together hearts on fire
it must be love.

Barb Dawson



Bar Maid

In this bar I float like a bright balloon,
A prick sensitive
Globe of air
I squeak off the touch of hands,
Quivering in tight-skinned excitement,
I float as a surprise,
Circling tabletops,
Rounds of amazed eyes,
Lips of wine glasses.
I waft on pillows of smoke
Tapping bodies lightly
And moving on.
In league with shiny surfaces,
I carry finely pointed tips
In my pockets.
But I am unpoppable.

Inside the balloon
Someone hides
Her sharp elbows,
Fingernails,
Incisors.
Spreadeagled,
Her hands and feet
Flatten against the inflated sides,
Her mouth opens
In a full
And frozen
O

Sacrifice

We played easily, you and I,
taking dad's hatchet into the woods
and chopping up giant slugs
on the old cedar stump.

You were the Priest
and I was the Slug-Gatherer,
searching the forest for our languid sacrifices
who left glistening trails of mucous
on the footpaths.

I picked them up in leaves,
felt the slick of ooze contract
into hard nugget of muscle,
which I brought to you
wrapped like a Chinese delicacy.

We watched them unfold from the leaf,
their fluted edges rippling to a full length.
You would say a prayer,
sprinkle holy pine needles,
then raise your brown sinewy arms,
taut under the weight held high above your head.
Your blue eyes watching the sky,
pretending God was at the end
of each smooth stroke.

But when the blade was sliced the body,
the only divine flash
was of our own making.
It was not for God we performed,
but for each other.

God was the way in.
But it was only you, brother,
I loved for the killing.

Poems by Shannon Stewart and Barb Dawson

Racist ruling handed down to Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en

Continuing the institutionalized oppression of the First Nations' People which is integral to the history of Canada, the B.C. court has upheld the racist arguments put forward by the province and the federal governments. Today, March 8, 1991, the British Columbia court under Chief Justice McEachearn handed down his decision about the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en People's aboriginal land title action in British Columbia. The Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en People have issued statements regarding this judgement. In support of their positions, we, the womyn working on the Womyn's Issue, are running them here. We have also included Judge McEachearn's ruling.

STATEMENT FROM NORTHERN OFFICE -

Office of the Hereditary Chiefs of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en People:

Millie Chen

"Chief Justice McEachearn has delivered a brutal decision to the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en People and to all aboriginal people. The Royal Proclamation does not apply to British Columbia he said. This decision issued by Justice McEachearn is wrong. It is wrong in principle and it is wrong in law. It is a decision that is undeniably political.

"All arguments that the province argued have been adopted. Justice McEachearn does not want the court burdened with injunctions and court cases concerning aboriginal title. Justice McEachearn accepts the Calder and Catherine Milling cases both of which were repudiated by the Sparrow decision. The Sparrow decision, Justice McEachearn said, has no effect as it is on non-tidal water.

"The court says that aboriginal title is a non-existent concept. This decision is very much like the 1969 white paper meant to destroy aboriginal people through assimilation.

"The decision doubts that the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en were organized societies at the time of contact. The crown recognized ownership around villages but not traditional territories."

From Don Ryan, speaker for the Gitksan and Wet'wuwet'en please note: this text has been edited due to lack of space. The full text is available at The Ubyssey office.

"The decision of the Supreme Court of British Columbia on Delgam Uukw et.al. vs. the Queen, the longest running aboriginal title and rights case in the country, was handed down this morning. As it reads, Mr. Justice Allan McEachearn has handed down a political decision that clearly demonstrates that the interests of the courts in British Columbia are not those of justice, but of the legalistic manipulation of facts and history to justify the continued sanctioned marginalisation of aboriginal people to the point that their existing rights as protected by the Canadian constitution do not apply in British Columbia.

"In a turn of retrogressive legal thinking, this judge is attempting to push back justice for native people in Canada at least 20 years. This has been done by either ignoring or rejecting legal claims made in the last few years by native people all over the country. This judge goes as far as saying on page 300 of the document [the judgement] that native people, especially Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en, are economically marginalized because they live on reserves and that the only hope of change can come if they leave and assimilate into the mainstream. This is the 1969 White Paper, a policy long rejected by successive federal regimes.

"Even at the introduction of the document, this judge states '...I have been brutal." (p.3) Indeed this is an understatement. The volume of evidence that this judge rejects in respect to the continued ownership and jurisdiction of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en territories, the details of cultural organization, of the language, of their whole cultures, is amazing. Was not this judge actually there through the whole of the trial? It seems not. After three years of hearing testimony, the judge even rejects the idea that the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en cultures were and are complex and sophisticated (p. 237) instead asserting that thousands of years of social development happened since Europeans' contact.

"...This judge goes on... to extrapolate that the colony was able to extinguish all aboriginal rights, including those to land, by some sort of fiat, that required neither the knowledge or the consent of the native people living in what is now British Columbia...this judge concludes more or less that prior to contact, native people in British Columbia led a life that was nasty, brutish and short and that it took European contact to make them culturally self-aware and to give them any sense of territoriality. In short, prior to contact, this judge thinks native people were little more than fairly bright animals.

"This judgement is full of similar arguments that either debase and belittle aboriginal people and their cultures and certainly render them subject to European cultural domination in total...

"The tone this judge is attempting to set is that native people in B.C. have no rights, no real culture that could in any way be equated with what was imported from Europe and certainly no say in what happens to their land... Given that it could have been a great day for justice in this country, we come away with nothing. McEachearn's judgement is a travesty, based on the economic imperatives of a province driven by exploitation of people and resources. He has rectified nothing. Perhaps he expects the native rights struggle in B.C. and Canada to magically end because of this decision. Instead, in his myopia, he has fueled the causes of racism. Judgements of this kind foster only enmity. Aboriginal people will protect their rights and will force this agenda. The actuality, or threat of violent force by the state cannot keep people down. It has not worked in South Africa and it did not work last summer at Oka. Justice will be served in the end and this province may expect considerable unrest, protest and direct political action if the government attempts to use this small, silly judgement to inform policy. An appeal can be expected."

AN EXCERPT FROM THE JUDGMENT IN THIS CASE

"The foregoing answers the legal issues arising for decision in this case. It remains only to state my conclusions in more precise form and to add some comments. Nothing I have said applies in any way to any lands set aside as Indian reserves.

"(1) The action against Canada is dismissed.

"(2) The plaintiffs' claims for ownership of and jurisdiction over the territory, and for aboriginal rights in the territory are dismissed.

"(3) The plaintiffs, on behalf of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en people described in the Statement of Claim... are entitled to a Declaration that, subject to the general law of the province, they have a continuing legal right to use unoccupied or vacant Crown land in the territory for aboriginal sustenance purposes as described in Part 15 of these Reasons for Judgment.

"(4) The plaintiffs' claims for damages are dismissed.

"(5) The Counterclaim of the Province is dismissed.

"(6) In view of all the circumstances of this case, including the importance of the issues, the variable resources of the parties, the financial arrangements which have been made for the conduct of this case (from which I have been largely insulated), and the divided success each party has achieved, there will not be any order for costs."

Editorial

Mynifesto

A list of demands made by the feminists of The Ubyssey Womyn's issue.

Freeze all hiring of male employees on campus; hire only womyn, preferably womyn of colour, lesbians and differently abled womyn.

All professors required to take a series of anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic workshops.

Recognition of Native languages and all foreign languages to fill the language requirement for undergraduate degrees.

Free daycare for children of student parents.

Subsidize womyn's self defense WenLiDo classes 100 per cent.

All male heads of faculties be assigned janitorial duties in their departments.

Implement myndatory coursework on power structures in this society (and not in English 100).

More representation from feminist authors in courses.

Any UBC employee proven to be connected to sexual harassment get fired and gets their therapy paid for.

Pay sessional lecturers as full professors as most womyn are lecturers.

University funds channelled into research on AIDS, organic agriculture, birth control and STD's like chlamydia.

Rape relief stickers be legally stuck in bathrooms.

Free abortion services and pregnancy counselling at Student Health.

Free tampons, condoms, latex gloves and dental dams in washrooms.

Replace all stop signs with "stop rape."

Replace Hampton Place with free student housing for single female parents. Convert student housing into co-op housing.

UBC Reports publish their first issue of the year as a lesbian, gay, and bisexual issue.

AZT provided for people with AIDS—free, of course.

Convert President David Strangway's house into something useful. (...a retreat for Chippendale's dancers... ...a methane production plant which operates on animal exhaust..)

Start a womyn's research and resource centre.

Abolish the term "ladies"; we know gentlemen haven't existed in a long time.

Freddy Wood Theatre produce more plays by women playwrights, with more women actors, directors, designers and technicians.

THE UBYSSEY

March 8, 1991

The Ubyssey is published Tuesdays and Fridays by the Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia. Editorial opinions are those of the staff and not necessarily those of the university administration, or of the sponsor. The Ubyssey is published with the proud support of the Alumni Association. The editorial office is Rm. 241k of the Student Union Building. Editorial Department, phone 228-2301; advertising, 228-3977; FAX# 228-6093

Once upon a newspaper there dwelled 3 little engineering students: Evie Wehrhahm, Christa Greentree, and Julie Randall, who died, decomposed and were consumed by the blue goop that spewed from Celia Griffith's mouth. "Aaaack" read the flag that popped mirthlessly from the gun of Carla Maftechuk who was inconspiciously bathing her earlobes in liquid nitroglycerine, which spilled vociferously onto the ground and quickly created a hole out of which materialized Ellen Pond.

Iris Griffith and Iris Bitterlick were the eyes of destiny, scanning the horizon for Barbara Dawson the twinket of the coast. Franka Cordua-Von Specht with her spechtacles stared back in defiance, exposing her armpits in protest.

Retro in funda, the blue priestess of the Goddess, Lisa Tench, cast a divine enchantment on Ela3ine Griffith, who sprouted unsightly facial hair, grew hazy, and vanished into the future. Everyone else had to settle for a spell of insomnia.

Meanwhile, Linda Shout, the Grand Exalted Black Brassiere, screamed in astonishment at Effie Pow licking the coloured sprinkles off of a chocolate skinhead, exposing a giant vulva, which framed Johanna Wickie's head. A suggestive yet incorrect conclusion was jumped to by Laura Mayne, who emptied her nostrils in the general direction of Nadene Rehnby.

Suffering from the anti-sleep spell, Katherine Weiler, in a delirium verging on total exhaustion, threw a blunt object shattering the bottle of purple Irish whiskey sitting beside Coreena McBurnie, who metamorphosed (transmogrified) into a 90-foot Greek verb, but she didn't know hoe to conjugate it, and she spontaneously combusted.

This brings us to the tragic plight of Morgan Maeling who hoarded 36 million mooshy peas to the dismay of Rebecca Bishop who prayed to the Goddess for 36 million mooshy peas. But Helen Willoughby-Price got them instead and used them to build a lifesize statue of Sharon Lindores in honour of Elizabeth and Holly who lost their last names in the chaos. Manisha Singh fell down on her knees in reverance, or was it fatigue?

Like a bridge over troubled waters, Laurie Newell the Palliative, the symbol of Truth, Justice, Freedom, and Democracy emitted a glowing light which caused Sam Green to utter the immortal words: "I dunno, you'll have to think of something for me..." Paula Danishka

Some problems we share as women, some we do not. You fear your children will grow up to join the patriarchy and testify against you, we fear our children will be dragged from a car and shot down in the street, and you will turn your backs upon the reasons they are dying.
-Audre Lorde

"To have one's individuality completely ignored is like being pushed quite out of life. Like being blown out as one blows out a light."
-Evelyn Scott (1893-1963) - American writer

No longer silenced: Women gather together, speak out, and make demands in the fight against sexual assault

by Nadene Rehnby

In a world where almost every woman can tell you about an experience of sexual assault, it is easy to feel defeated. Faced with a society that still looks upon rape as a woman's fault, or as something to make jokes about, a world where the authorities fail to give justice to women, not wanting to talk about our experiences becomes a way of protecting ourselves.

But despite this, women are demanding to be heard and making it difficult for the "system" to turn women away.

"Women are talking with each other, gathering together, and making a hell of a fuss," according to Lee Lakeman of Vancouver Rape Relief.

Exposing the rapists:

One action women are taking is getting the names of rapists out. While police are one avenue that women can take to both protect other women and to deter other rapists, innovative means of exposing rapists are emerging.

Both VRR and WAVAW (Women Against Violence Against Women) are recording the names of men who rape.

Another tactic, taken recently on a US campus, is postering. In this case, a woman obtained a photo of the man who raped her and used it in a poster that identified him as a rapist.

Direct confrontations are also increasing. Women are grouping together to confront rapists at their home, at work, or in a social context, and to let them and others know they have been identified as a known rapist.

Women are also speaking to each other. At UBC, notices on washroom walls and other places frequently have lists of names.

Identifying ourselves:

While women are taking action against rapists, many women still feel society is ill-prepared to deal with them as human beings.

"I knew I didn't want to go through the cross-examination," said a UBC student who was raped by her employer. "And I didn't want my family to know." She believes she will be called a flirt, a slut, or a liar. "That's the reason I haven't prosecuted—and for that reason alone."

She said her opinion of society was upheld when she told a co-worker. "'It wasn't rape,' she told me. She said I wanted it. I thought maybe she was right."

She said it was difficult to tell her current boyfriend because she felt he would think worse of her. "He calls me his sweet and innocent. If you've been raped, there's no way you'll be allowed to have that image."

"Sexual assault says nothing about a woman," Lakeman said. "It says everything about men, and the way we talk about it doesn't reveal that. It's as if they're saying if you're smart enough you can somehow get out of those situations. And it's just not true."

"Women are also seen as broken, damaged, psychologically or sexually impaired—and this is also not true. Women have amazing ways of recovering, resisting and getting through."

Breaking down the barriers:

After a woman is sexually assaulted, daunting walls erected by society and institutions stand between her and justice. Only 1.08 per cent of rapes, based on one in ten reporting, lead to conviction.

In the case where a woman does choose to tell someone, she fears being looked down on. In seeking medical attention, she risks being treated by a male physician, a difficult process for a woman who has just been sexually assaulted by a man. The RCMP also can not guarantee that a complaint will be dealt with by a woman officer.

And if a woman does get that far, there is no guarantee her report will lead to charges. It is even less likely a charge will lead to a conviction.

According to Bernie Smandych, an officer with the UBC detachment of the RCMP, none of the 35 reported cases of sexual assault received by her detachment from 1987 to 1990 led to a conviction.

One woman who did report to police said she wishes she hadn't. "I regret reporting it because of the garbage I've had to go through," she said. "I spent a lot of time there, telling them what happened and writing out statements. They talked to him and concluded there was not enough evidence.

"You just about have to be raped in front of a police officer in order to get into court. Never mind getting a conviction," she said.

She said, for herself, she is still glad she acted on it, even if the system did nothing for her.

Smandych said the RCMP are doing what they can. "I have to admit, the system is not easy," she said. "Sometimes it does come to his word against hers. But we can prove or disprove those statements," she said.

Smandych also said that a woman who reports a sexual assault at the UBC detachment can speak to a woman officer if she chooses.

"She can also have someone with her the whole time," she said. "Or she can call WAVAW or Vancouver Rape Relief to accompany her."

UBC hospital will also attempt to get a woman physician on sexual assault cases, according to Susan Wanamaker, head nurse at emergency. "If not," she said, "women also have the option of being transferred to Shaughnessy where a woman doctor is available."

"We will give as much support as we can possibly give," she said.

Forcing institutions to listen:

"The University has said that we do not want sexual harassment on campus," according to Margaretta Hoek of the newly created Sexual Harassment Policy Office. "The office educates and explains what the consequences are."

Created in the spring of 1989, the office has since heard approximately 160 incidents of sexual harassment, Hoek said, some of which included sexual assault.

But one woman, whose sexual assault forced her to drop her classes, said UBC slammed the door in her face.

She said the residence life coordinator at her residence was "really apathetic. She couldn't have cared less."

"I couldn't believe the way they treated me."

Meanwhile, the man who raped her still lives in residence and is attending UBC.

Lakeman said these attitudes are going to start costing the university. "Universities are alarmed because women are going to cost them profits—because women are speaking out."

"There are uprisings of women on campuses across the country about sexual assault," she said. "Women are not willing to back down anymore."

Breaking the colour barrier:

Instances of sexual assault against women of colour carry even more societal baggage.

"Native women are at increased risk of sexist violence by white men as a racist/sexist attack," states The Truth As We Know It, a VRR publication. "They are less likely to report to a court that has a long history of working against Native people. When Native women are attacked by native men, they may want to protect him from the racist "injustice" system that is likely to punish him, not for the assault, but for being Native."

A Native woman now attending UBC said she was raped by a white man before coming here, and chose not to report it after receiving little support when she went for medical attention.

She said she has not experienced sexual assault from within the Native community, but said there is a problem.

"The residential schools have had a lot to do with it," she said. "The cycle hasn't been broken. People who were abused become abusers."

Getting the information women need:

The following letter recently appeared in the McGill University student newspaper:

Violence must be publicized

To the Daily:

On September 27, 1990 at Berkeley, Ca., 33 women and men were held hostage by an armed man. The blonde women were singled out and forcibly sodomized with carrots by men under the force of the armed man. One man was killed, numerous were injured and eventually the armed man was fatally shot by the local police. This incident was reported by "Off Our Backs" in January 1991.

As members of the McGill Women's Union, we are outraged that this event was not acknowledged by this newspaper. In light of the Polytechnique Massacre, it is crucial that incidents of violence against women are always addressed and made public. We do not believe that the Montréal Massacre was an isolated atrocity against women and, therefore, demand that this issue be publicly confronted. By ignoring violence against women, you are promoting it.

Would you please cover this story now? Thank You.

McGill Women's Union

ed. note: our phone number is 398-6784. News tips are always welcome.

"It is a patronizing insult to women to say that we don't need the information to protect ourselves," said Lakeman.

Neither student health, the university emergency ward, or student residences keep statistics on the number of cases of sexual assault they see.

VRR statistics show an increase in the number of cases reported to them. In their first year, 1974, VRR recorded 112 cases of sexual assault. In 1990, VRR received 1059 crisis calls reporting 1199 attacks, of which 736 were lived in 1990.

UBC's Sexual Harassment Policy Office also said the number of incidents has doubled since last year, particularly in the area of formal complaints.

But on campus, rapes have occurred everywhere from Main Library to Buchanan Tower, the residences, the trails to Wreck Beach and leaving the Pit Pub, and still we hear very little from the university.

Women together:

"It's important that other women come to the aid of women who have been sexually assaulted," Lakeman said. "Because it's our future we're talking about."

"Women must take action to increase their security and to make it clear that they belive in themselves and have a right to a better future for themselves, and for all women."

"A very high percentage of women called (the crisis line) because they wanted to protect other women," said Lakeman.

The UBC student raped by her employer said: "I belive he's done this to an awful lot of women. It wasn't an isolated incident." She said that, while she chose not to press charges, if she learns that a woman has, "I'll be right there."

Women have had to find ways to circumvent a system that ignores women or fails to bring justice, and are working together. Women are talking to each other about experiences, teaching each other successful methods of self-defense and assertiveness, and are coming to the aid of other women through work in rape crisis centres and in demanding recognition in the courts and by the government. And women are aiding women by naming and confronting rapists.

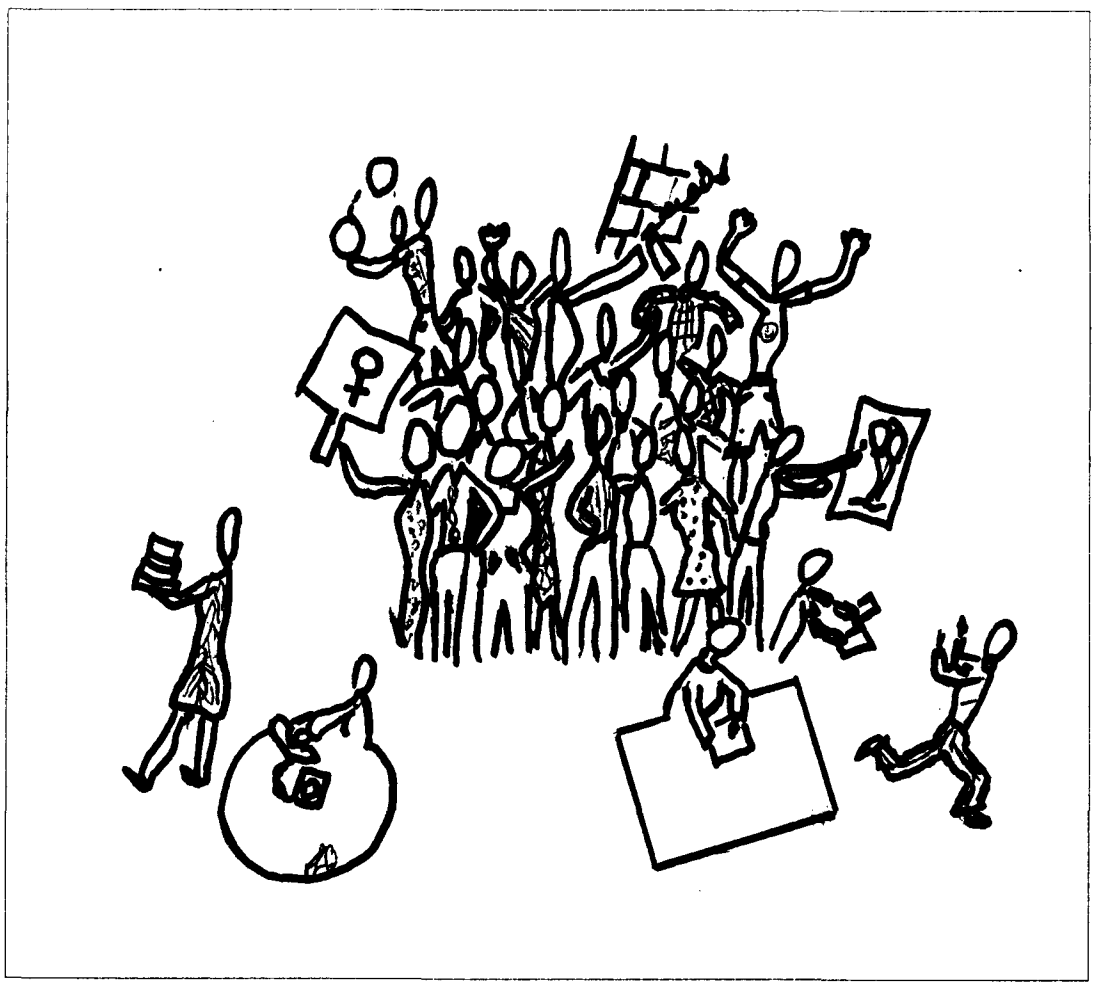
And these are the demands:

Women are demanding that the men in our lives accept that we live in a misogynist world—perpetuated by their lies, their silence, their jokes, their pornography. And by the patriarchy that tries to silence women's voices.

Women are not speaking of nameless, faceless rapists. Men who rape are our brothers, our fathers, our neighbours or partners. Eighty-five per cent of men who rape insist that what they did was not rape. And men continue to believe that we wanted it or that we asked for it.

Women are making demands of our society that it confront its sexist and misogynist attitudes, and find ways to break them down.

Women demand that our police forces and courts stop putting barriers between women and justice, particularly for women of colour. That they stop dismissing our cases or taking the power out of our hands.

Women are demanding that our institutions, including The University of British Columbia, take bold steps to eliminate cases of sexual harassment and assault that we are experiencing in our classrooms, our professors' offices, the university buildings and in our residences.

Women demand that our governments comply with requests for funding so that we can take action on our own. We want funding put behind the front line work, the real sources of research, proposals, community responses, law reform and aid to survivors of sexual assault: transition houses, rape crisis and women's centres, on campus and off.