Branching Out

CANADIAN MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN

JULY/AUGUST 1975 $1.00

ROSEMARY BROWN

STRAITJACKETS —
FEMINIST MUSICAL

CATHOLIC WOMEN:
MOVING TOWARD EQUALITY?

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WOMEN IN THE ARTS

cover photo, Rosemary Brown, by Diana Selsor Palting

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letters

The arrival of your magazine on the newsstands has been welcomed by me, and many other women. At last, a vehicle for our expressions of ideas, and a way of learning more about each other. But Marylu Antonelli's editorial in the March/April issue alarmed me a little.

The assertions that we have achieved so much already as a group, and that therefore we should concentrate more on individual introspection, and open the magazine's separatist pages to the problems of men, conveyed to me a feeling of elitism, and, I fear, short sightedness.

I can understand Ms. Antonelli's ideas about self-examination and growth, and how this can scare us, leading to emotional and intellectual inertia or dishonesty. I agree with her, but I think that, for women in general, this state of awareness is a long way off, and that it is somewhat egotistical of us to assume that it is the most important next step towards true equality.

So much of the "wrong" in our society is the result of stratification, minority privilege and power, and the obsessive individualism which effectively keeps us from banding together to change things.

"We" may have read the "right" books and "have freedom either within or without marriage", but "we" are still liable to be raped, underpaid, mauled, undervalued and degraded if we step outside of our small, middle class, privileged worlds. We are still controlled by male power values in terms of basic political/economic manipulation of the society at large.

I am aware of hundreds (and I would venture to guess that there are millions in Canada alone) of women who have not benefited from the feminist movement as yet, and who are not even aware of the basic tenets and who are frightened not just of the anger of their men, but of the apparent lack of concern of those of us who are "liberated" and going our own ways.

I feel that the freedom that "educated and intelligent" women have is too often determined in terms of how we match up to the competitive, exploitive values and norms set by the male Anglo-Saxons of our society.

Of course, there are many of us who understand and sympathize with the exploitation and repression of men, too. But many millions of women have not yet been able to see and understand their own positions, so this extension of sympathy to those in power is a sophisticated and meaningless stage of consciousness so far as the majority of women are concerned at this stage in the struggle.

I think that if we compare feminist political consciousness and action with other oppressed groups, such as blacks and native Canadians, we can understand how important it is for us, and them, to establish our identities and to recognize our strength and beauty before we can feel free to extend ourselves and be completely open to the former oppressors—unfree as they too may be.

Because of this, I think that it is too soon to be opening the doors of our very few women's magazines to the sympathetic men who wish to join us. The sensitive and aware men who realise the evils of sexism and its effects on all humans already have many magazines in which to express themselves. If these bastions of male chauvinism, run by males, exclude their more liberated brothers, then perhaps new magazines can be started which may serve to reach out to some of the less aware, but searching men in society.

Like most people, I look forward to the day when we are all humans together — in all political spheres, not only in sexual equality — but it is only realistic to be aware of the stages that political development must go through, and I simply cannot agree with Ms. Antonelli's optimistic claims about "our" achievements and freedom. We're on the way, but it's a long, long road.

Kay Ryan, Vancouver

I didn't read the review of Erica Jong's *Fear of Flying* but I did read the book, and I was disappointed in comments made in Helen Potrebenko's letter. If sisterhood died a long time ago, it's because women like Helen have turned on other women who have made some sort of achievement and accused them of being irrelevant.

Erica Mann Jong's book is semi-autobiographical. She may be a spoiled middle class bitch who can afford to pay a shrink to listen to her troubles, but she has troubles. Isadora Wing, the central character, may hate Germans, but this is Potrebenko's oversimplification; what Erica-Isadora tries to do is come to terms with her feelings, as a Jew, about Nazi genocide. The chapter on Germany is all about being honest with oneself and coming to terms with one's background and experience.

According to a recent report in *Newsweek*, Jong is getting mail by the cardboard cartonful from women who admire her book, women who have had the same feelings about sex as Isadora Wing has. At the end of the novel Isadora Wing doesn't pursue a "sad round of promiscuity and perversion", she has gained some additional self-

assurance, and she returns to her husband not because she can't bear to be without a man, but because she feels she can pursue a mature relationship with him. One of the last lines in the book is: "I knew for sure I wasn't going to grovel."

Maybe Erica Jong-Isadora Wing's experience isn't universal; we haven't all had to live with a psychotic husband; we don't all have a desire to be writers. Apparently, though, it is a valid experience, there are lessons that can be learned from the book. Helen Potrebenko shouldn't sneer at Erica Jong for making her statement; instead she should get busy and write or tell about her own non-middle class experiences which would give us (perhaps) another view of womanhood.

Carole Neral, Islington, Ontario

In a rush as always, but wanted to say, as a former contributor and continuing reader, BRAVO on your editorial in the March/April issue. I think you were brave and wise to write it; I was delighted to see it in BRANCHING OUT!

Nancy Thayer, Massachusetts

I would like to applaud Carole TenBrink for her excellent article on nursing (March/April issue). As a medical dietitian I have witnessed many of the ward situations she describes. The nurses are very often the interpreters for us between what doctors have ordered and what they actually want. Their contribution in a demanding position is consistently underrated or ignored.

However, I disagree with her when she states that "all other health professionals receive 'consults' or 'requests' from medicine". In the hospital I work in, and to my knowledge the majority of others, the only other professional a doctor will truly consult with is another doctor! Physiotherapy, therapeutic diets, and other aspects of "paramedical" treatment are also *ordered* on the patient's chart and must be followed to the letter, regardless of how ridiculous they may be. A dietitian's "consultation" with a doctor usually consists of a phone call or note (from us to them, not the opposite — and always couched in respectful terminology) in hope that the order will be changed to what the patient really needs. So I can identify in this with nursing staff; happily I am not exposed to the subterfuge as consistently as they are.

Donna Crowe, Edmonton

P.S. The following poem expresses my view of the subject more concisely.

DEAR DOCTOR
by
Donna Crowe

Just find it in the textbook,
Write it on the chart,
And we who are mere mortals
Will try to do our part . . .
Including
  carrying out all orders
  without a human error
  or weary protestations that the
  order is ridiculous,
  and covering up your screw-ups
  and pacifying patients on the
  days that you don't show
  and NEVER letting on to them
That the fate of human guinea pigs
Depends to quite a large extent
On whether their particular god is
A surgeon or an internist
Who in spite of general belief
Is only
  human
  too

I was prompted to write by another comment about illustrations in the letters section of your March/April issue. I enjoy reading all your articles, interviews and poetry but the drawings have bothered me since first receiving your magazine. Especially since I was told it was rather "artsy". Any enthusiastic responses in this direction, I think, must also be uneducated ones and I'm sure you'd do very well to upgrade the quality to that of your photography, which is extremely good. I find the advertisements as poor and as jarring to the continuity of the magazine.

I certainly agree with comments in the January/February issue about needing more involvement by rural women. More and more people these days are finding how well their physical and mental needs can be met in the country.

Also in your magazine, I think various racial groups ought to be included, native women in particular.

Colleen May-Albarda, Paisley, Ont.

In the article *Female Prisoners*, the most important final question was left to the end of the article, and not given the fuller discussion it deserved. After all, reforms can and should be made in prisons, but if we, the outsiders, are not prepared to share the responsibility, the reforms will mean very little in the end. Are *we*, not just prison personnel, ready to accept female offenders in our communities? *That* is an important question. I hope more people ask themselves that question, and I hope the next article on prisons deals with that question.

The article on abortion was the best such article I have ever read — bar none. Abortion is an important issue, and because it is so important it deserves and indeed needs to be discussed calmly and intelligently. I get very tired of reading articles that are little more than emotion and vitriol. They give us "pro-choice" (I like that) people a bad name, and distort the abortion issue. But this article took the time to be thorough and rational. The authors took the time to analyze their own arguments, as well as those of the opposition. It was a sensitive, intelligent article and I am very excited by its quality. I am in the process of researching abortion in the province of Quebec, and I plan to keep this article handy.

Jane Dick, Montreal

here and there

Beginning June 2 and running until Labour Day, the Ontario Government will sponsor information units in 20 key locations throughout that province. The units will be staffed by 60 university students who will not offer counselling, but will act as on-the-spot information and referral agents on a wide variety of government and non-government programs available to women in individual communities. The students will also work with women's groups in each area. In response to requests, they will assist in organizing and promoting special International Women's Year activities and events. In some locations, and with the cooperation of community groups, a two-day workshop on films for and by women will be conducted in conjunction with the National Film Board.

The Ontario Women's Bureau, Ministry of Labour, has acquired five new films which can be lent to groups or organizations on request. Three films are from the National Film Board's series on working mothers:

.... Mothers Are People
.... They Appreciate You More
.... Would I Ever Like To Work

(These are also available from the N.F.B.)

The other two films are from the U.S., on career choices:

.... Anything You Want To Be
.... Other Women, Other Work

(Also available from the Ministry of Education)

For more information, call Judy Stoffman, Communications Coordinator, Women's Bureau, Ministry of Labour, 10th Floor, 400 University Ave., Toronto, phone 416-965-1537.

Ontario has so far awarded more than $23,000 in grants to 74 women's groups and organizations, for I.W.Y. Grants of up to $1,000 are being given to voluntary and non-profit organizations for special I.W.Y. projects. Projects cover the widest possible spectrum, from a feminist speakers' bureau to a provincial women's softball union. Information about these projects and how to obtain a I.W.Y. grant may be obtained from the International Women's Year Office, Ministry of Labour, 10th Floor, 400 University Ave., Toronto M7A 1T7.

Law and the Woman in Ontario, a layperson's guide to legal rights, has been recently revised and expanded and deals thoroughly with such issues of concern as keeping one's name after marriage, rape, obtaining credit, common-law relationships, and support. The bulk of the research for the 45-page book was done by Jennifer Bankier, the top graduate of Osgoode Hall Law School last year. Single copies of the book are available free of charge. Copies after the first one are priced at 50 cents each. There are four pamphlets excerpted from the book entitled *Support, Dissolution of Marriage, Women and Labour Law,* and *Property* which cost 20 cents each after the first 5 copies.

The Women's Programs Division of the Ontario Ministry of Labour is publishing a special I.W.Y. bulletin each month giving information on what different groups and individuals are doing. Requests for copies of the bulletin or project information to be publicized may be sent to: Yvonne Crittenden, I.W.Y. Office, Ministry of Labour, 10th Floor, 400 University Avenue, Toronto M7A 1T7,

In Halifax, Real Life is offering media skills workshops in areas such as Electronic Messages (everything from ½ inch closed circuit T.V. — portapak to production on cable T.V.) Print, Film, Sound, and Photography. Write to 1671 Argyle Street, Halifax, N.S. for further information on these workshops.

A broad spectrum of women's groups across Canada has been asked to participate in a mail survey to determine the need for and possible functions of a national Women's Communications Centre. The centre is a I.W.Y. project funded by Federal Secretary of State. While its functions will be determined by the national needs survey, initially the centre would provide information about women's activities and resources, encourage groups to exchange or share materials and information, especially in rural or remote areas. For further information contact The Women's Communications Centre, 392 Markham Street, Toronto M6G 2K9, phone 416-924-4728.

Persons interested in obtaining the bibliography used to research the article "ABORTION: Woman's body, Man's law", which appeared in the May/June 1975 issue of *Branching Out*, may do so by writing Ruth Olson, The Abortion Action Committee, Kingston Women's Centre, 346½ Princess, Kingston, Ont.

editorial

At about the time we reached high school, my friends and I became conscious of two things: boys and clothes. Both had always been there, but now we saw the boys as potential boyfriends. We knew that after a series of boyfriends would come a husband, so it was imperative we have boyfriends. Somehow, we had to attract the boys so they would become boyfriends.

We saw the ads which told us gentlemen preferred blondes, that a certain perfume would drive men mad, that girls wearing Brand X pantihose got whistled at. We saw pictures of fashionably dressed young women surrounded by admiring young men, and we knew that part of the secret for attracting men had to do with the way one dressed.

It came as no surprise to us. There had always been rules of acceptable dress for school, play, church and visiting relatives on Sunday. We expected, therefore, that the dating game too had rules of dress. We spent hours trying to convince our mothers to buy us this or that item of clothing, trying to decide what to wear on a date for the movies, and worrying about the face and figure that went with the dress. Were we too fat, too thin, was our hair right, what to do about those damned pimples. Dressing for school was fairly simple, because from day to day we could judge how well we fit the prevailing style. If we went to school in a dressier than normal outfit, someone was sure to ask if one had a dentist's appointment at 4:30. School dances caused much agony. Someone would say, in all seriousness, that she couldn't go to the dance because she didn't have a thing to wear. She didn't mean that she didn't own a dress; she meant that the dresses she had were either too dressy or too casual, or the one dress she did have that was suitable she had worn to the last dance, everyone had seen it already, and it was therefore unsuited to another public appearance. What nonsense, and how we all believed it!

The women's movement came along, and our thinking about clothing began to change. We realized that what one did and how well it was done were more important than looks. Many women decided they would no longer be slaves to the designers and the cosmetics companies who presented, every season, an image each woman was expected to adopt as her own. We recognized the artificiality and the economic waste of trying to follow fashion faithfully. We recognized the impractical nature of so much of women's clothing. We tried to run in high-heeled shoes and rejected the fashion game.

But did we? After dismissing "fashion", many women turned to the clothing the counterculture had adopted, to blue jeans and sandals. I notice now at the meetings and conferences of feminists, the majority of participants is wearing blue jeans and earth shoes or boots, which have replaced sandals. Those women not wearing the blue jeans and boots uniform find themselves on the fringes of the group until their ideas win them acceptance. Many women cannot wait for acceptance on that basis, for it is slow in coming. They leave. They have been told they can't come to the meeting unless they are dressed appropriately. They are back in my high school, being judged by what they wear.

I call myself a feminist. If on Monday I wear jeans and on Tuesday a dress, am I more a feminist on Monday? Do I dare call myself a feminist at all because I wear dresses? And if the answer is yes, then is it still okay that I wear long, polished fingernails all the time, and that I often wear makeup? Do these invalidate my feminist principles?

I had thought and hoped the women's movement was moving away from such superficial thinking. We object that men rate women by the size of their breasts or the shape of their legs. Why are women rating other women by equally superficial criteria?

Those women who didn't wear jeans to the meeting — where are they? Has the movement lost their time, energy and ideas forever? I suspect many of them will not return, because after they have been told they can't join the club, they won't risk a second rebuff.

A woman can work at a rape crisis centre in full evening dress or in a bikini. We should be concerned with how effective a woman would be at the centre, not with how she is dressed. Does the cut of our pants influence the way we would put out a woman's newsletter? Many women who never wear blue jeans are staunch feminists. Are they never to work within the movement?

Think of all the goals that must still be achieved before women will have equal status in society. We still don't have quality day care, equal employment legislation is not enforced, the abortion laws are still repressive and arbitrarily applied. These and a thousand other problems must be solved, and we require time and energy to find the solutions. We are making headway against the dumb blonde stereotype. Let's not set up an image of the feminist in jeans and boots that we must eventually tear down.

by Mary Alyce Heaton

both sides now

CANADA DAY IN SOUTH AFRICA

by Marianne English

On July 1, 1974, I attended a Canada Day party at Canada Koppie, the Canadian Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa.

It was my understanding that technically the Canadian Embassy was Canadian territory. After nine months (at the time) in South Africa, I thought it would be very nice to be back in Canada, even if just for a few hours.

The party was thoroughly shocking to me. There was nothing Canadian about it; it could have been any party held in any two or three-star hotel, anywhere in South Africa. By that I mean that all the guests were white, and all the waiters were humble, shuffling blacks who addressed male guests as "boss" or "master" and female guests as "missus." Some of the embassy staff and even a few of the guests joked a little with the waiters, but in the manner common to white South Africans who consider themselves enlightened and benevolent, that is, you treat your black servants like children who can't think and don't know what's good for them.

Western International's Carleton Hotel in Johannesburg, like all five-star hotels in South Africa, has all-white waiters and waitresses in their dining rooms and lounges. (Hotels in South Africa are rated from one to five stars; a one-star hotel is good, a five-star hotel is equal to the best anywhere in the world.) A chain of coffee houses called the Cafe Wien also has white waitresses. So it is not that white waitresses aren't available in South Africa, they simply cost five to ten times as much as black waiters. Presumably the international travellers who frequent the five-star hotels would find it disconcerting to be addressed as "boss" or "master" by a cowering black waiter, and so the hotels find it worthwhile to pay the extra cost. (I remember how I cringed the first time my now ex-husband was addressed as "boss" in my presence. Even after a year in South Africa, hearing someone addressed as "boss" or "master" still made me uneasy.) Possibly also some of the owners of these hotels, which are mostly foreign-owned, object to South Africa's racial policy, as I know is the case with the owner of the Cafe Wien restaurants. On the other hand, it may simply be good public relations with the folks back home to stay away from very obvious racial discrimination. The Carleton Hotel in Johannesburg even has a license to accommodate non-whites with "honorary white" status (usually accorded to visiting black dignitaries and all visiting Japanese) so that one can even see whites serving blacks there.

Apparently, the Canadian government does not object to South Africa's racial policy enough to pay the extra cost of having white waiters at its Canada Day party in its embassy.

The guests at the party were mostly Canadians living in Pretoria and embassy Staff. Undoubtedly, there are no Black Canadians living in Pretoria. But neither are there any Black Americans living in Pretoria, and yet the American embassy continuously irks the South African government by inviting a few prominent non-white South Africans to its parties. Furthermore, the Canadian embassy must have some non-white staff, such as messenger boys, cleaners, servants, etcetera but those obviously were not among the guests, even though all the white embassy staff seemed to be present.

It seems the Canadian government believes "when in Rome, do as the Romans do." The other guests at the party (mostly Canadians who had been in South Africa for 20 years or more and who had adapted to the South African way of life) seemed in accord with the concept. And so the Canadian Embassy may simply have been fulfilling its obligation to them by giving the type of party that they expected to have. However, considering Canada's many pious words of condemnation of South Africa's racial policy at the United Nations, I find it inconceivable that such blatant discrimination should be practiced in a Canadian Embassy for a Canada Day celebration.

"Both Sides Now" is intended to serve as a forum in which women can dicuss their opinions on different topics. We welcome articles that take issue with ideas expressed in *Branching Out* **and other media, with government policies, with opinions of prominent individuals, with popular attitudes. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your copy and send to "Both Sides Now"** *Branching Out,* **Box 4098, Edmonton, Alberta.**

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advertisement courtesy of the Alberta Women's Bureau

Isabelle Foord

HURRICANE

To stay secure in the eye
    of the hurricane
run with it
    keep in its centre
stay with it
run with it
    keep in the middle
of the eye
move with it
"Hurricanes haven't rules
you are drawn into
    its centre
by an inverse
    spiralling
wind"
run with it
hurricanes change directions
pick up speed
change with it
    keep in the middle
stay secure in the
    i

ITINERANT

A hammock salesman
came to the door
and I ran off with him.
I left you a note—
on the arborite counter
among the clatter
of Corning wear
and Mel-mac.

He's young.
He has a prick
like a pendulum-
always in motion;
hands like hemp
thighs of sisal,
weaves his own wares,
travels by camel.

A hammock salesman
came to the door
and I ran off with him.
I left you a note—
right by the mortgage,
rammed up the tailpipe
of your Mustang.

Shirley A. Wishart

PHOTO ALBUM
JULY 197_.
page 6.

Exposure: one

Near Kingsville
a great
granite rock
endures, dawn
after dawn inviting
people to come and sit
and dangle their
bare toes
into Lake Erie

Exposure: two

Someone is there
in cut-off jeans
knees almost touching
ear lobes, hands
between legs
palms stroke
the worn surface
of granite,
he poised: intuitive frog

Exposure: three

Eyes fasten on
the spectacle of fish
flinging themselves
in a gyre of crazy motion
skyward falling
rising unceremoniously
splash after splash
he thinks
of survival

Exposure: four

His toes slip
into the lake
noon shimmers
toward him
in waves
a sylphish figure
glistens
on
his damp thigh

Dianne Feser

by Karen Lawrence

Erna VanDaele, Kem Murch
photo by Erica Lazi, London, Ont.

Several months ago, when they were looking for funding for *Straitjackets*, Erna Van Daele and Kem Murch marched into the local Secretary of State's office — Kem armed with her lyrics, Erna with her music and guitar, and they sang their first song together for Secretary of State representative Carole Aziz. The secretaries applauded, the man in the next office gave them an encore, Carole beamed, and that was the beginning of a long hard and beautiful journey of self-confidence, personal growth, and deep affection for the many women and men who made this musical happen.

Straitjackets is the story of a new friendship between men and women — a friendship built upon individual human potential rather than pre-defined male and female role-playing.

Straitjackets

Last December, I sat in Erna's music room and she played a song she had just finished composing, singing Kem's lyrics. It was the first time Kem had heard what Erna was doing with the song, and I shared the excitement she felt about hearing her work performed in another dimension. Erna's score was impressive, a real *tune,* and it fit the words Kem had written about the pain of being called 'tomboy' so well as to evoke the sharp, bitter-sweet pain of growing up in a world where nobody seems to understand how you feel.

Erna Van Daele is a conductor, composer and performer of music; the two summers she spent as music director of the Huron County Playhouse in Ontario left her frustrated at the scarcity of good Canadian material, especially musicals, available for production. She began thinking about writing some music for a show, with the conviction that International Women's Year would be the right time to attempt such a project. Kem Murch, a voluble writer of poetry and fiction, was full of ideas about themes and formats. Together they decided to produce a multi-media review centred around the problem of sexual stereotyping, which both women feel hampers real communication between people and "contributes to an artificial and incomplete way of life for human beings." The format best suited to their theme seemed to be a series of about ten sketches, each presenting an example of the status quo in a particular role or situation, and then demonstrating an alternative to this. Both women wanted the review to be an educational project, in the sense that it would be geared to reach a wide audience, of all ages, both sexes, and from various walks of life, rather than "an already-converted audience of feminists and intellectuals". Through a wide range of moods from anger to sadness to mirth, using a mixture of songs, slides dance and mime, they hoped to communicate their message to an audience, while providing good, lively entertainment.

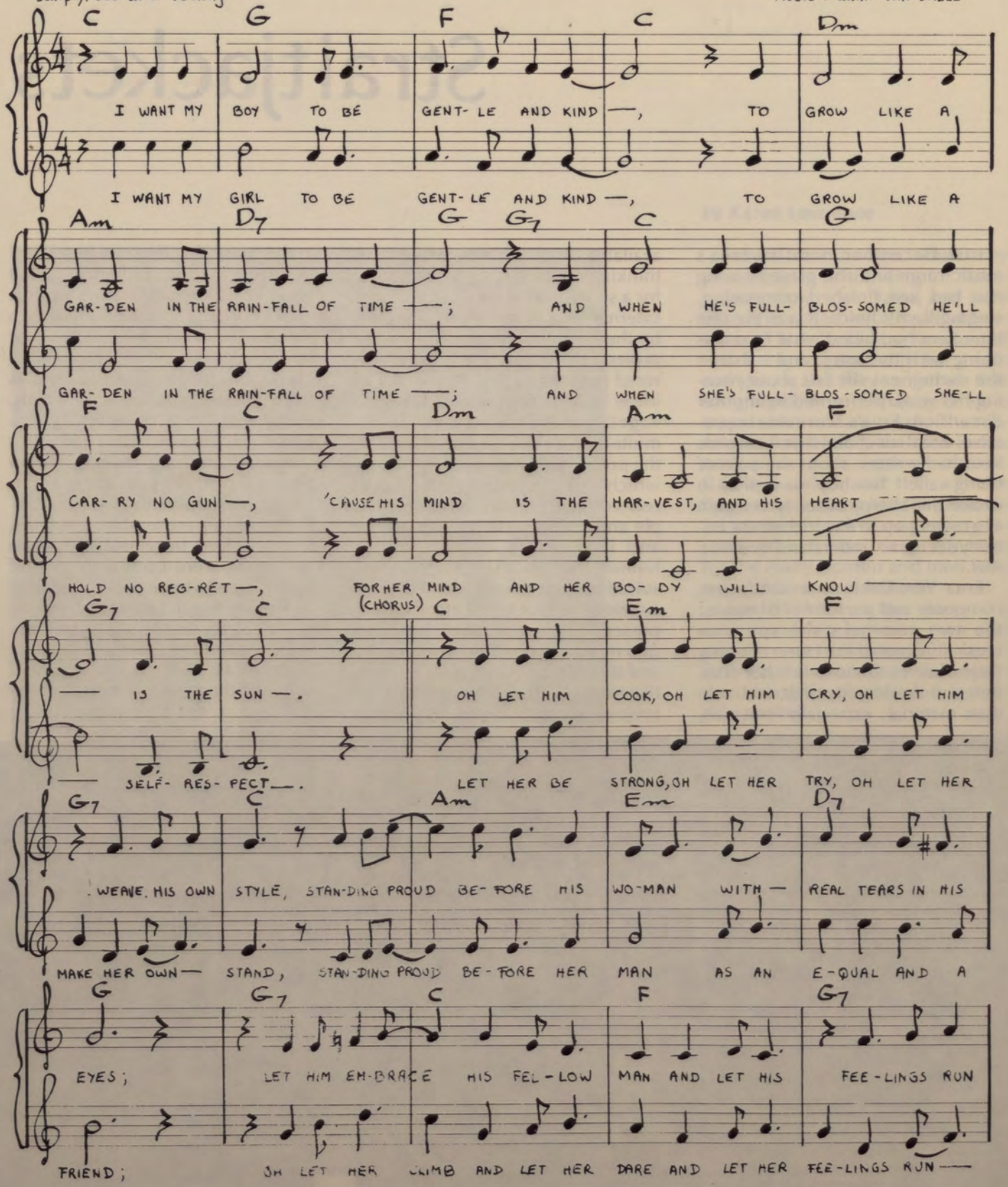
As their partnership evolved, Kem and Erna became more aware that there were both creative and practical tasks to be performed, and according to each other's strengths and weaknesses, interests and dislikes, shared the responsibilities in both areas. Both women agreed that deciding who is better at ac-

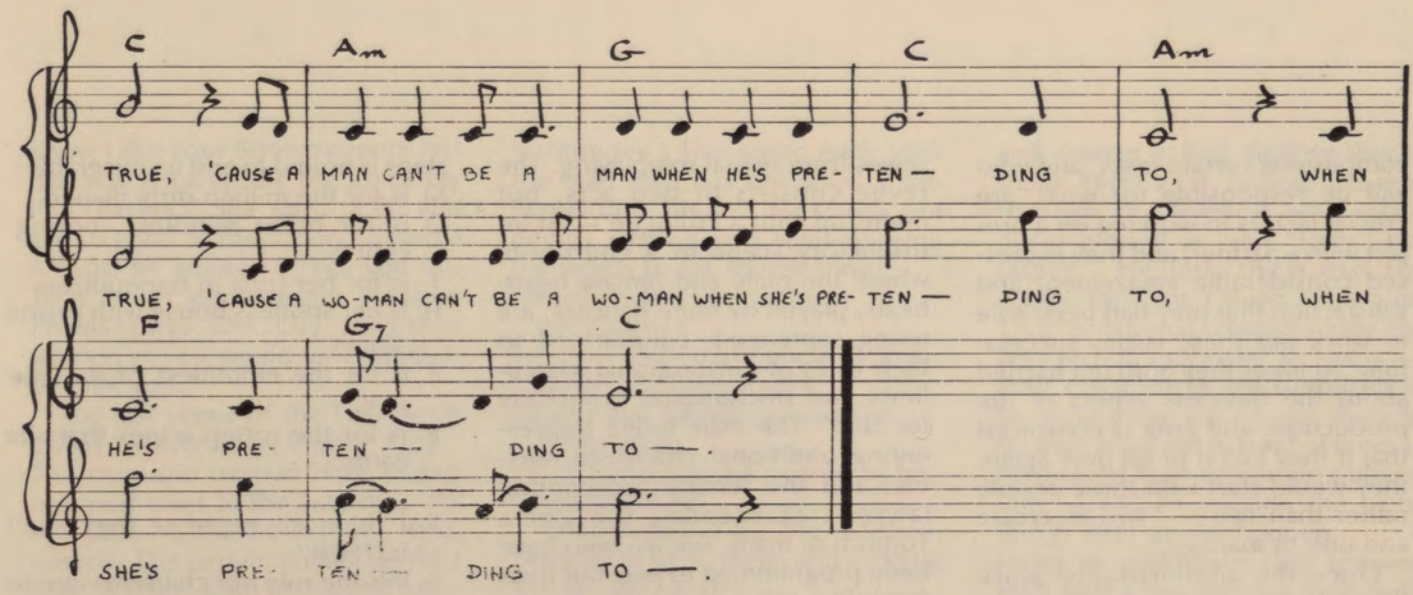
cont. on p.14

THEME FROM THE MUSICAL "STRAITJACKETS"

A MAN / A WOMAN . . . .

LYRICS : KEM MURCH
MUSIC : ERNA VAN DAELE





I WANT MY BOY TO BE BRAVE, NOT A FOOL
TO DARE TO BE GENTLE, REFUSE TO BE CRUEL;
TO BE WISE IN THE FRIENDSHIPS HE CARRIES THROUGH LIFE,
AND BEWARE THE FALSE MEANINGS OF HUSBAND AND WIFE.
OH LET HIM FEAR, OH LET HIM DOUBT, OH LET HIM SING
A LULLABYE,
STANDING PROUD BEFORE HIS CHILDREN WITH REAL
TEARS IN HIS EYES.
OH LET HIM LEARN THE WAYS OF LOVE WITHOUT
COMPETING TO OUTDO,
'CAUSE A MAN CAN'T BE A MAN WHEN HE'S PRETENDING
TO.

I WANT MY BOY TO STAND ONE WITH HIMSELF,
TO KNOW MEN AREN'T MADE BY THEIR POWER AND WEALTH;
TO FEEL THAT A WOMAN INSIDE OF HIM STANDS
TO BE FREED AND DISCOVERED AS HIS NATURAL FRIEND.

OH LET THEM FALL, OH LET THEM LOVE, OH LET THEM
FIND EACH OTHER WARM,
AND LIE PROUD UPON THE EARTH WITH <u>HIS</u> FREEDOM
IN <u>HER</u> ARMS;
LET THEM REJOICE IN BEING WHOLE, IN BEING ONE,
THESE HUMAN TWO;
'CAUSE A MAN CAN'T BE A MAN WHEN HE'S
PRETENDING TO.

I WANT MY GIRL TO BE HONEST, NOT COY,
FOR MEN TO RESPECT AS A PERSON, NOT A TOY;
AND HELP OTHER WOMEN TO SET THEMSELVES STRAIGHT
BY SHARING THEIR COURAGE AND FIGHTING SELF-HATE.
OH LET HER STRIVE, OH LET HER FALL, OH LET HER
KNOW THE REAL WORLD;
LET HER SEE THE ROADS ARE ROUGH, BUT THE JOYS
ARE MANY-FOLD;
OH LET HER LEARN TO LOVE HERSELF BEFORE HER
FAMILY TAKES ITS DUE,
'CAUSE A WOMAN CAN'T BE A WOMAN WHEN SHE'S
PRETENDING TO.

I WANT MY GIRL TO STAND ONE WITH HERSELF,
TO KNOW WHO SHE IS - NOT SOME DOLL ON A SHELF;
TO QUESTION THE VALUE OF SEX-ROLES AND NAMES:
"YOU ARE WOMAN, YOU ARE MAN, YOU ARE HUMAN ALL
THE SAME".

OH LET THEM FALL, OH LET THEM LOVE, OH LET
THEM FIND EACH OTHER WARM,
AND LIE PROUD UPON THE EARTH WITH <u>HER</u>
FREEDOM IN <u>HIS</u> ARMS;
LET THEM REJOICE IN BEING WHOLE, IN BEING ONE,
THESE HUMAN TWO;
'CAUSE A WOMAN CAN'T BE A WOMAN WHEN SHE'S
PRETENDING TO.

<u>AUTHORS' NOTE</u>: THIS COMPOSITION CONSISTS OF TWO PARALLEL SONGS WHICH MAY BE SUNG INDIVIDUALLY OR TOGETHER. IN THE PLAY, TWO SINGERS ALTERNATE THE MAN/WOMAN VERSES, JOINING TOGETHER FOR THE LAST CHORUS.

complishing certain tasks, and who will be responsible for what are crucial factors in working on a project with a partner, and they expressed considerable amazement and satisfaction that they had been able to work out these issues successfully. At times they both felt harried about the business aspect of the production, and Erna is convinced that if they had it to do over again, they would start with three people rather than two — "two to create and one to manage."

Once the administrative work was in process, the creative task loomed large. As a writer, Kem was accustomed to being confronted with a blank page, "Only suddenly the pressure is intensified because you have all these people *looking* for something." "It's incredible how scary it is when things start to become *real,*" Erna said. I was very much interested in how two women who had known each other such a short time worked on a creative project together, how their concepts became dramatic units, and how two different modes of expression, music and poetry, were fused into an artistic product. "It's a total trust thing," Kem told me, "we spend a day talking about ideas for a sketch, then I go and spend some time working on lyrics — Erna never knows what she will get into until she sees the words." From Kem, Erna gets lyrics, stage directions, suggestions about dance, an indication of mood, and then she sets to work on the music — anywhere from one to five songs per sketch. She writes for four musicians, playing bass, piano, percussion (including traps, vibes, marimba) and a colour instrument (flute or recorder).

Straitjackets is a series of glimpses into the lives of one man and one woman as they develop from fetal heartbeats into grown adults, exploring the pressures which surround them as they grow up in a wilderness of sexual stereotypes, and demonstrating that there are joyful possibilities which open up when people learn to free themselves from sexual roleplaying. The revue consists of two acts, but opens up with a Prologue — an introductory scene in a courtroom where the male and female heartbeats, played by mute dancers, are being sentenced, condemned to their roles of "Institutional Masculinity and Institutional Femininity for Life." The male judge (representing traditional chauvinist society) and the female prosecuting lawyer (representing the Uncle Tomism of many women who have been programmed to play out their feminine roles according to the rules) head the kangaroo court, supported by two male and two female "witnesses" who add their testimony as 1. an ulcerated executive male; 2. a muscular "jock" male; 3. a pregnant housefrau and 4. a Playboy centrefold, female. The two undulating fetal heart beats are then sentenced to their separate roles of "MAN" and "WOMAN" with the help and guidance of all the cliches of history handed down from famous historical figures such as Aristotle, Queen Victoria, St. Paul and many others.

In the second scene, the fetal heartbeats have grown into preschoolers, being wheeled around in prams and toy trains. Each one is being sung to — the song is called "Ask Mattell — They're Swell", and incorporates all the sexist literature for children found in Mother Goose Rhymes, school primers, fairy tales and popular legend. While the children become saturated with these sexist toys and rhymes, two dancers act out the male and female roles envisioned in each tale.

The second scene finds our two leads now grown into ten year old children. The boy is being called "Sissy" and the girl "Tomboy." They're swinging on swings in the park, trying to figure out their problems, when an old trash collector comes by. He pulls an old Vaudevillian hat out of the trash can, converts his paper stabber into a cane, and does a bit of soft shoe with the kids, explaining to them that anyone who follows in their mother's footsteps is bound to end up miserable:

M is for the million dirty diapers
O is for other mindless, boring chores
T is for her trust in tranquilizers
H is her spotless house with prison doors
E is for the emptiness of daytime T.V.
R is for the rotten wages that she earns - - -

Put them all together they spell "MOTHER"
Is this the role our children want to learn?". . . .

Now the children have grown into teenagers. They look at each other questioningly and realize that they've both succumbed to the programming of sexual stereotyping after all. In these roles, they do the expected thing and fall in love and get married. They are suddenly thrown into darkness. They're trying to find each other, yelling "Who started this change we're going through? Was it the girl or was it the guy?"

"It was *I*!!!!!" answers the villainous, black-caped magician who pounces between them.

"I'm the Ad Man on Madison Ave.
I tell the boys what they want
And the girls what they can have. . . .
I put hygiene sprays in Mother
And margarine crowns on Dad
I squeeze sex out of toothpaste
I wring glamour out of bread
And you're under my power 'till the day you drop DEAD!"

Oh anything, anything,
please don't demure
How about a MALE hygiene spray?
We'll call it "Cocksure" . . . .

Then the Ad Man winds up the playpeople toys of North America —the Barbie Doll and the Hughie doll (Hefner originals). They go through doll motions and predigested conversations like Barbie: "Am I really big busted enough for you?" to which Hughie replies "You

know I like your Booozzzooom just the way it came off the assembly line, Barbie." She says, "Oh, you are so good to me, I don't deserve it" and he answers: "Yes you do. That is all part of my Playboy Philosophy: Do ON to other women as you would have them do UNDER you."

The last scene of the First Act is called "Madwomen:Violent Men." The man and woman have played out their roles to the extremes. He has attempted homicide; she, suicide. The curtain comes up on a blue-lit stage, both sitting and rocking in chairs on opposite sides of the stage, silently. Two asylum attendants come to take them away. (These male and female crimes and punishment parallel the actual statistics for homicide and suicide attempts by men and women, as well as the statistics for percentages of men in jail, and women in mental institutions.) This scene ends after the lead man has delivered a soliloquy from his cell. He stands and begins singing and remembering the words to the theme song:

I want my boy to stand one
with himself
To know men aren't made by their
power or their wealth
To feel that a woman inside of
him stands
To be freed and discovered as his
natural friend . . .

Simultaneously, the woman reawakens to his song and picks up the second verse:

I want my girl to stand
one with herself
To know who she is,
not some doll on a shelf
To help other women
to set themselves straight
By sharing their courage
and fighting self-hate. . . .

The Second Act opens on the man and woman in bed, neither able to sleep. Enter a fat, lovable old man through the window who introduces himself as their "Fairy Godfather." He tells them that the reason they can't sleep is because it's International Women's Year and they're not *supposed* to sleep. — their consciences are supposed to be waking up! He advises them to lay their fears out in front of them — their worst fears of women's liberation — and to imagine the *worst* things that could happen. . . . A series of nightmare skits follows, each only a few seconds long, with the man and woman being pushed and pulled by their Fairy Godfather from one nightmare to the next — all insanely funny and absurd. Afterwards, the Fairy Godfather returns the couple to their beds, asking them, "Now, was that really so bad?" They answer that these radical fears of women's liberation are really pretty unrealistic. As he exits by the window, they can finally sleep again, ready for a realistic approach to their own lives.

In the next scene, after much arguing, the couple reverses roles: husband making dinner, wife coming home from work. The audience sees some humourous twists and faux pas each has made with their new duties, but generally there is a satisfaction with these new roles for now — husband working at a part-time job he enjoys; wife working full-time at work she enjoys; kids more independent and responsible in family contributions.

The woman sings "A Song About Myself", as she tries on her new self for size, letting her feelings and her body and her mind all unite and rejoice in being a woman-person. The song ends in a realization that she also needs other women to help her, to encourage her in her struggle for freedom:

"Can I trust you, other woman
With my failures, my victories,
my man?
Can I trust you, other woman,
I need to trust you
And I feel now that I can."

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The Radical

by Sharon Batt
photographs by Diana Selsor Palting

"There are only two things in my biography that I think are relevant," Rosemary Brown told her Edmonton audience. "One is that I've lived in this country for twenty-six years, the second thing is that I've been a socialist for three generations, which adds up to about 150 years."

Inside the Alberta Room of the Chateau Lacombe, a crowd of people had gathered to "meet the candidates," one of whom would be chosen at the July 4-7 convention to head the New Democratic Party. There was a sense of expectancy as Rosemary Brown took her place at the microphone. Many in the audience had come, as I had, specifically to hear her. Before the proceeding began, I talked to one woman wearing a "BROWN is beautiful!" sticker, who had heard her speak a year ago in Winnipeg. A veteran of many political speeches, she admitted she was jaded about the ritualistic representations, but recalled that when she first heard Rosemary Brown she was deeply moved by her intelligence and humaneness. Confident, articulate and often witty, the MLA from British Columbia has gathered a large following since she was persuaded to run for party leadership by women who wanted a strong female candidate to contest the position.

"First you notice that she's a woman and she's black, but when you listen to her, it's obvious that she knows the issues," one woman told me. So, what's the problem? Why, for example, haven't we read more about Rosemary Brown in the newspapers? And why did I get the feeling that this pre-convention meeting was just a formality — that Ed Broadbent was inevitably the next party leader? For one thing, controlling powers within the NDP are not necessarily ready to allow her to test the prejudices of the electorate as party leader. Nor are they all at ease with her feminist views. Perhaps most important, she is ideologically to the left of the present party philosophy. Her support comes from those who identify with the 1933 CCF manifesto, from the now-defunct Waffle group, and from women.

When I interviewed Rosemary Brown the next day she said early in the conversation that as far as she is concerned, she has always been in politics in one way or another. She was born into a family that was politically involved as far back as any of its members can remember. Her grandmother was active in the 1930's fighting the system which then allowed only the landed gentry of Jamaica to vote. "My grandmother talks about her grandmother in terms of what she learned from her about the abolition of slavery, because originally we were slaves, and it seems to me the political involvement probably goes back even farther than that." Other members of the family helped to form a socialist party in Jamaica, and to organize working people to form trade unions. She herself wanted to go into law.

"I had this dream of being a great courtroom barrister, but that's not the way it worked out. . . . We had the feeling in my family about law that many people have about politics — that it's a pretty rough and tumble kind of place, and better left alone by 'nice' people."

She came to Canada at nineteen to take her B.A. at McGill University. She worked at the Montreal Children's Hospital, and following her marriage to a medical student, moved with him to Vancouver. At the University of British Columbia she received an M.A. in Social Work. Social Work "was part of the tradition, because my aunt, my grandmother's eldest daughter, was the person who designed and started the welfare program in Jamaica."

Initially the passivity of white North American women surprised her. "Black women have always worked. We've always had to work. And there's never been, certainly not until recently, this idea that we're frail, and helpless, and have to be protected. In the West Indies, in my own family, the women always worked . . . and there were very few women in my own personal experience who didn't have a profession, skill, trade or whatever. It was always a bit of a shock to me to find out really just how helpless North American women were supposed to be, and how helpless their men demanded that they be. I found this very restrictive."

She and her husband, a psychiatrist, have three children. Describing their family life, she says, "My husband has had to accept, and always did, that his role as a parent was as important as mine, that it is important that he spend as much time with the children as I do."

In Vancouver her commitment to social causes continued. She worked as a psychological counsellor at Simon Fraser University. In 1972 she was granted a United Nations Human Rights Fellowship, and the next year she received the National Black Award of Canada. The U.N. fellowship will allow her six weeks of study in both Sweden and Cuba. So far she has been only to Sweden, so she is not able to draw the comparisons she hopes eventually to make between a society in which socialism evolved through the electoral process, and one that came to socialism through revolution.

In the 1973 provincial election she ran in Vancouver-Burrard, and won. This was the election that brought the NDP to power in British Columbia, and Rosemary Brown was considered by many to be cabinet material. When she didn't get a cabinet appointment, there was speculation about the reason. A recent magazine article quotes Judy LaMarsh saying that her strong character "makes Barrett a little nervous." She was aloof when I asked her about this. "I really think that that's the kind of question that should be directed to Dave.I don't like speculating on why people do what they do, because I don't know what's going on in their heads, quite frankly. If my commitments make some people uncomfortable, it is their problem, not mine."

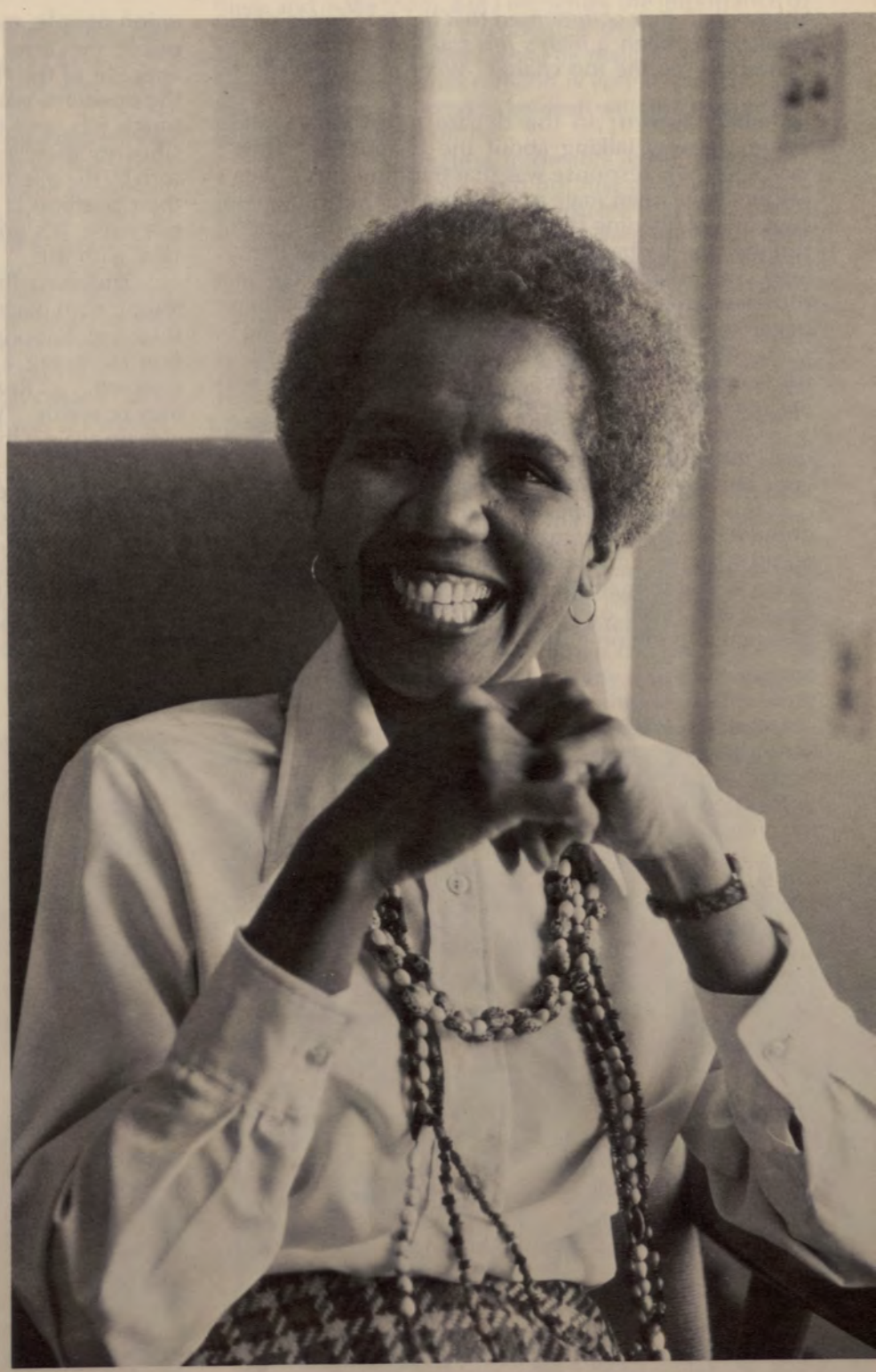
Tradition of Rosemary Brown

Socialism is her basic political philosophy, and she believes that the NDP, as a socialist party, must base its strength on the support of labourers, farmers, small business-people, and such disadvantaged groups as women, the aged, immigrants, Indians and Metis. She is radical in the literal sense of the word: she wants to make changes that will solve problems at their root. In her speeches she argues that there is a need to educate people about the meaning of socialism, so that policies will be understood. To illustrate what can happen when new policies are introduced without adequate explanation, she refers to the bill the Barrett government brought in to stop the sale of farmland to developers. When the legislation was announced, much controversy ensued. Explains Brown, "A lot of people still equate socialism with old age pensions, family allowance and Medicare.

"When they voted NDP, they thought they were voting for good pension plans and good health programs, and that was it." In fact she dismisses the handout system. "I'm not committed to welfare measures. I don't think they get at the root of the problem. I'm committed to the eradication of all poverty, to its being wiped out. I'm not hung up on guaranteed incomes and that kind of thing, because I don't think that's the solution. We've got to change the system and make it impossible to be poor."

In the legislature she is an active backbencher. One measure she has argued for is an act that would grant tenants collective bargaining rights on all rental matters. In a private members' bill, she proposed to legislate against sexist hiring practices in companies or organizations receiving government contracts. Immigration, conservation, and Canadian ownership of natural resources are other topics on which she has taken strong positions.

cont. on p. 46



Sharon Batt: You commented that the leadership of the country has been a man's job too long, and that you wanted to see the job change. What did you mean by this?

Rosemary Brown: In the debate I had with Dalton Camp, he was talking about the leadership being a man's job. My response was that traditionally Canada's leaders have been male *and* bachelor. The whole concept of our needing this kind of cold, analytic mind to run the country has to be challenged. We're not impressed with what they've done. So it's about time that representatives of the other half of the population began to say, "Now we're ready to start participating in some of those decisions. We're ready to take on some of those responsiblities." It's not good enough to be working really hard to get men of good will elected.

I would think that you must be finding quite a bit of resistance coming from men in unions. Does the fact of your being a woman cause them some concern?

It is cause for concern — absolutely! No question about it. It's nice the way they put it though: they worry about whether I'm strong enough. It's really gratifying to know that so many people are concerned about your health and these other kinds of things! In fact it has happened to me on more than one occasion that trade union people, men, have said to me after one of these public meetings "I really wish I could support you. I approve of the things that you are saying. I agree with the positions you take. But leading a political party is a tough job, and I really think you need a man." In all sincerity they seem to believe this, and are being torn by the dilemma of finding that their philosophy and their position is best represented by someone who is not male. It's going to be interesting to see how they deal with this.

They have the vision of the political arena as being a tough, hard place to be . . . When it comes down to the final negotiations, I'm sure the idea of the president of theCLC being a woman would give them the same concern. . . . Really it is a fear.In the back of their minds they're saying, "Would I like to see my daughter or my wife up against that kind of tough situations?" And there is probably some genuine concern. Not all chauvinism is based on sheer blind ignorance. Some of it has its roots in a sincere feeling that women really have to be protected.

I encouraged trade union women to get out there and run. Don't stay away. It's not good enough just to pay your dues. Men will become more accustomed to seeing women in positions of authority and will just take

"It's been left to men too long"

it for granted that we can do it.

What do you think of the strategy that many feminist groups have taken, of separating themselves from political parties, from various male organizations, and trying to work as women's groups?

Well, I don't see the struggle as being a monolithic one. I maintain that you fight in the arena that's best suited for you. And certainly there are some groups of women that find that it is really important for them to come together and raise their own consciousness and identify for themselves how the struggle is relevant to them. Working outside of all groups, whether religious or educational or political or whatever, is the arena that they work best in, in terms of strengthening themselves and growing and developing — and that's great! I don't think that there should be any rule that says that it has to be done in this way, or if you do it that way it's wrong. Because we're not just fighting on one front.

Wherever you happen to be, that's where your battleground is. I see the political arena as just one of many. There are some people who question whether it is the most important one — I don't know. But it certainly is one arena in which decisions are made that, for better or for worse, affect our lives and it's been left to men too long. If we want changes, we're going to have to get in there and make them. But I recognize the importance of the academic arena. I recognize the struggle that's going on inside the churches to be really vital. There are some people to whom religion is very important, and the feminist struggle has to be dealt with in that context, as well as in all the others . . .

Part of the struggle is to be able to be responsible for your own decisions, and not just go where you're told to go, or do things the way you are told to do them. You have to start deciding and defining your own priorities now. Certainly this is the message that I take to women . . . As an individual I'm ready to make decisions about myself, and to set my own priorities. . . .

What was the situation of women in Sweden when you visited? What I've found is that in terms of laws, in terms of institutions, women in Sweden have all the equality that it is possible to have. In terms of the reality of their lives inside the home, the jobs are still divided. There's still women's work and there's still man's work, inside the family unit. I've found that the Swedish people now are not talking about the liberation of women, they're talking about the changing of roles.

They would like men to be able to move into roles that are traditionally considered to be feminine or female with the same ease with which women have succeeded in moving into male roles. Women can pretty well go into any job they want, and take any university degree they want. Now they want to see this work the other way. The feeling is that until men are comfortable working in some of these fields that are traditionally considered to be female . . . women end up doing two jobs, and the men are still doing just one. So it's interesting, . . . how it's going to work. I'd like to look at Sweden ten years from now.

I think the process that we are going through at this time can probably be speeded up as a result of the Swedish experience. Instead of concentrating solely on opening up avenues for women, we can try the role interchange at the same time. There isn't any reason why we cannot, for example, in counselling in the schools, be just as supportive and encouraging to boys going into areas that were supposed to be traditionally female, at the same time that we're encouraging the girls to go into areas that were supposed to be traditionally male . . . I don't know if it will work, but it's worth a try.

Do you see the nuclear family as oppressive to women? Is it necessary to find new family structures if women are going to be liberated?

That certainly has been the position taken for a number of years, not by feminists, but by sociologists. I can remember as a student . . . being taught that the nuclear family was extremely oppressive, not just to women, but to children . . . The smaller the nuc-

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Rural

The recent International Women's Year seminar on rural women, held in Saskatoon, found, according to *The Western Producer,* April 10, that rural depopulation "was the number-one issue for many participants." Concern was expressed "about preserving not only the quality of rural life, but rural life itself."

"The needs of rural women" were identified at this seminar. They included betterment in "health, recreation, education and communication," as well as in legal areas and producer-consumer relations. Rather than trespass on this seminar's grounds, I'd like to describe a few inconveniences that affect us in rural Manitoba.

To me, the distance from a public library is a handicap. Inaccessibility of research material is a damper on a stove-pipe. Our village Women's Institute has for years operated a lending library — chiefly novels, historical biographies and such. Formerly open on Saturday afternoons, this source is now available only on the monthly meeting afternoon. The school resource centres serve their own needs but are not public libraries. The university extension unit gives excellent service, but . . !None of these equals dropping in at a city library to browse.

This, for the rural woman, could entail a jaunt of fifty miles or more. (There may be a regional library half that distance away, but if it's not in a larger shopping centre it's not for you.) A day in the city is always rushed: sandwiched between bus times, if that's your mode of travel; or between departure and return of school children; or between chore times if you farm. Naturally, one's browsing is rare as rain during a drought.

Most farms and villages in our area now have running water. The former get their supply from a dugout, possibly with a well in it, or from a deep well. Some farms still depend on a soft water cistern, and a well for drinking.

Water on tap from the cistern is measured in carats. Replenished before freeze-up from available outdoor tanks (plus harvest rains!), and augmented by the welcome trickle from the roof as the winter sun strengthens, the cistern is filled by hauling from the spring run-off. Then, rain determines the extent of our splashing.

"Temperance" is the theme song. Can't you hear its strains before city guests reach the bathtub? As a friend remarked, "When I hear those taps run, I hold my breath!"

With this set-up, flush toilets, dishwashers, and the water-extravagant washing machines are ruled out. Lawn sprinklers, too.

My husband keeps a tank of water as near the garden as a very long hose will reach from the well. A day in the sun, and the icy chill is gone and the water usable.He carries it to the vegetables and I coax my flowers with the sprinkling can. Wizened faces freshen while roots push deep. The sparseness of bloom, the aggressiveness of weeds, and a million mosquitoes make my effort seem an exercise in futility. But every opening bud repays me! Next night I repeat the performance. And next year.

"Thou shalt not envy," the Bible instructs. It's not a lush garden that makes us green-eyed, but the city hostess ordering in a ready-cooked meal. If Colonel Sanders, or whoever, doesn't reside in your town it's always maid's day off. Freezers are fine but something in a tin takes care of emergencies, for meat takes time to thaw. Wouldn't it be nice, sometimes, to open the door and usher in a meal!

We envy, too, the city dweller's shopping opportunities. In some lines of clothing, selection-wise, the small town can't compete. A day in the larger centre, crowded with searching, perhaps ends in failure or, in desperation, something that's not truly the heart's desire. I've dragged myself home, after fruitless hours, and ordered from a catalogue. After returning the goods and re-ordering, and waiting, only to face disappointment again, I've sworn off catalogues and tramped the stores once more. It's a frustrating treadmill.

May we be forgiven these envies! And may our city sisters be forgiven such thoughtless remarks as, "Why don't you buy yourself a so-and-so?" The words and the tone can be a double-edged knife. Why, indeed? Could be we have reasons that make sense to us.

Then there's the dearth of

Reflections

by Winifred N. Hulbert

drawing by Iona MacAllister

"places to go" to suit city tastes. A young urban wife transplanted to a small town is sometimes so bored that, to keep the peace, her husband forsakes a promising professional practice in favor of metropolitan life. The problem is not a famine. It's the individual's unwillingness to adjust her appetite. It could happen anywhere.

A young Ottawa friend was our daughter's guest. Her brother had asked, "What will you *do* on a farm for three or four days?" There was no problem. She was happy. So were we.

Before we had water on tap and a bathroom, our teenage niece arrived with her parents from Washington, D.C. Propped on the lawn, our oval galvanized bathtub courted the sun's rays, drying sand for my house plants' soil mixture. My brother, with a twinkle, said, "Look, Elaine, this is where and how they bath in the country."

The incredulity on the girl's face hastened my explanation: "We remove the sand, and even lift the tub into the privacy of the kitchen." A visit to the country can be educational!

I've touched on conditions which are cheerfully accepted as our way of life. Nowise can the inopportunities outweigh the attractions of life in the country. I speak of the West. To the rural woman, problems are the lot of the city dweller! Inasmuch as these filter out from the larger centres, they become rural problems too. They come diluted. They are not unique to rural areas.

There is one exception: magazines. It becomes increasingly difficult to find magazines to which rural women can relate. In this field, ours is the forgotten acre.

Sex has been overplayed to the point of revulsion: imagination burned out by the heat of exposure. Fiction, when a diet of weird characters in exotic settings with a foreign flavor, becomes as palatable as a diet of gelatine. Poetry, abstruse and dismal, is beyond our simple comprehension. But who wants to read anything that could be labelled "homespun"? We do.

Now we learn from an editorial, "Urbanizing the subscription lists" by Charles Gordon of the *Ottawa Citizen* (reproduced in the *Brandon Sun*, April 3), that *Maclean's* publisher Lloyd Hodgkinson has said, re its new bi-weekly news-oriented format: "We're going to urbanize the publication and therefore urbanize the content." All because, apparently, "farm . . . or small town or city" dwellers are unlikely customers "for the whisky, watches, cars and bras that bring in the magazine's revenue." They don't want our subscriptions!

In other words, advertising decrees that "non-urbanized Canadians"— who can read too — will be hard put "to find magazines which tell them about themselves." Also in need of "figuring out", goes on Mr. Gordon, is "how the urbanized reader is going to find out what goes on in the smaller cities, towns and villages which make up this country. We're all in this together, after all." (Unquote)

Great. Just great. We don't count at all.

"How do you feel about city women?" I put the question asked me to a friend in our social circle.

"City women?" she said, "I don't think there's much difference now."

Basically, I agree. Each of us has fine city friends. The difference, as I see it, is in the life style and in the interests moulded within the social structure. In any cross-section of society, rural women find urban soul-mates with whom they can put their feet up and let their hair down. It's the inner woman that counts, not whether she's country- or city-bred.

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Saskatchewan — Images

photoessay by Sandra Semchuk


United Grain Growers


EVAPORATED MILK
PLEASE OPEN OTHER SIDE

Interstice

by Judy Ritter
drawing by Barbara Hartmann

My brother kept his secret and special possesssions on the highest shelf of his closet, and when he and my mother were not at home, I would drag a kitchen chair across the hall, climb up, and fish around in the darkness. There was a dusky smell of sneakers and baseball mitts languishing until summer, and there in the forbidden odor and clutter of someone else's secrets, I grew excited. I already knew in some yet unexplored niche of my mind that this single act was the worst thing I did. It was a violation, and an intrusion into my brother's world, a boy world where I surely and irrevocably did not belong. And perhaps it was just that that made the whole adventure so intoxicating and important.

The slick and worn baseballs, rusting skate runners, and piles of magazines all had some incomprehensible meaning for me, but my small arm always sought the farthest corner, the one treasure I never tired of. Time after time I reached for the blue box, no bigger than the hand in which I held it. It was tin and shiny gold on one side and had a blue lid on which even bluer writing proclaimed "RANGER TOBACCO", and its inside was filled with thousands of tiny glass Indian beads of marvelous colors. But finally it was the box itself I coveted, the curio, that remarkable possession whose tobacco smell was both passport and initiation back and forth in time, back to an old comfortable house where we had lived with a father I hardly remember, and forward into the private world my eleven-year-old brother had inherited.

My older brother was not the only one with this precious box. Three or four other boys also had one, the ownership of which graced them with a prestige envied by most other boys, unreachable for all girls, for it was the ancient Mr. Patch who bestowed this prize. No girl, by tradition or uncoded law of Oceanside Avenue, ever dared to speak to or walk with Mr. Patch, but the boys surrendered every game and ran to him when they saw him coming down the street, one hand in his baggy pocket, the other on his pipe. And when they were beside him they seemed to mirror his walk and his bulky gestures. It was a gentle imitation, not like the vicious burlesque of spindly stiffness with which they tormented Miss Duval, the old maid, or the savagery meted out to one of their own who showed some miscalculated weakness. They wanted to be *like* Mr. Patch. My brother Abbey even carried my grandfather's pocket watch, with the chain stuck in his flannel shirt, and the broken clock in his jeans.

Now and then on these walks, Mr. Patch stopped, took his pipe from his mouth, and seemed to study the sky, and then he reached into his vest pocket and took out his blue tobacco tin. If the box was empty he would hand it to some boy. This is what the boys waited for, not for a word, but for this single gesture, a message, a sign that summoned to them from the enigma manhood. Or so it seemed to me watching from the front stoop where we girls all played bouncing balls aimlessly and saw the boys and Mr. Patch grow smaller and smaller as they passed out of our sight.

Mr. Patch was old, the oldest man in the town (the boys said the oldest in the world). He moved slowly, not from infirmity but because he really had no place to go. He lived in someone's basement at one end of the street, and his walks took him no farther than the five blocks to the grassy town square where I could not yet venture alone. But when I was out with my mother I often saw him sitting on the bench in front of the mossy statue of a Spanish American War Soldier, a boy from this town frightened to death in some field, beside the wrong ocean in a place that angular New England jaw could never pronounce. Now the soldier was home again and stood stiffly (and sadly I thought) guarding Mr. Patch and the other bent and grey men who sometimes sat there.

I never knew what Mr. Patch said to the boys to make them laugh or look so monkey serious. I tried to find out. From my mother I overheard that Mr. Patch had had a wife and she died, or not exactly died, but disappeared, and he cried for twenty-three days. I did not believe this because I knew two other men with mustaches: Father Cancileri who said a speech at my father's funeral, and Dr. Charles who rubbed my face with his mustache when I had to have some unpleasant tasting medicine. They did not cry even when my father died (maybe he disappeared too), so Mr. Patch would not cry either. But I gleefully told Abbey Mr. Patch was a crybaby to see what he'd say, and Abbey said he wasn't and offered as proof that Mr. Patch had been in the First World War and killed people. The mystery of Mr. Patch obsessed me. Several times I even stood secretly in front of a mirror in Abbey's shirt holding the stupid broken watch, but nothing came to me except anger at my foolish aping image staring back at me.

Usually I was content with the

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RANGER
TOBACCO
RANGER
TOBACCO

CATHOLIC

"It was Calvary all over again!" "declared a headline in the Catholic newspaper, the *Wanderer*. "Howls of amusement and jeering laughter re-enacted the mob scene at Calvary," the *Wanderer* continued. Claiming that grace and the sacraments had been openly ridiculed by Catholic women, the *Wanderer* urged its readers to offer prayers of reparation for "the affronts to Christ which are becoming increasingly audacious."

What kind of scandalous goings on had the Catholic women been up to? At the event in question some 50 Edmonton Catholic women had expressed their views on the status of women in the Catholic church to the Western Conference of Priests, and they did it entertainingly.

Sensing a growing dissatisfaction among Catholic women, the priests had invited them to present a brief of some kind. The "women's presentation" as it came to be called, was one of the highlights of the four-day meeting in Edmonton.

The resulting outrage in the press was not confined to ultra conservative papers like the *Wanderer*. Edmonton papers also received their share of irate mail. "It is difficult, indeed impossible, to forgive and forget that kind of foolish irresponsibility, so devoid of a sense of the sacred," exclaimed one reader of the Edmonton *Journal*. "Utterly disgraceful!" said another. ". . . radical actions and views of a minority group," snorted one reader of the *Western Catholic Reporter*.

"O tempora! O mores!" lamented a despairing older priest.

The 50 women who perpetrated this bold venture were members of the Edmonton Catholic Women's Group. Formed in 1970, and co-chaired by Ann Dea and Kay Feehan, the group includes women from every stratum of Catholic society. Professional women, nuns, housewives, grandmothers and a handful of high school girls, they share a common goal: to become equal members of the church, with the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as men.

The group prepared briefs to this effect, and sent them off in 1971 to Canada's bishops, and even to Pope Paul VI himself; they promoted in-depth studies of the question of women's role in the church; and supported and encouraged each other to serve, "each according to her gifts."

They recognized the invitation to present their views to the priests' conference as a real challenge. They chose a lively multi-media format which they hoped would get the intended message across to their audience. For five months they wrote, the script, skits and songs, assembled a formidable number of slides, pondered the addition of a few slap-stick routines (humor in a sacred setting? . . . would it offend?) rehearsed, reworked, rewrote, and then rehearsed some more. The result was a 45-minute entertainment which they hoped effectively summed up their feelings about their lives as women in the church.

Neil Diamond's "Dear fathers, we dream, we dream . . ." was the song that opened the show. Then followed "Venerable mothers, beloved daughters, sisters, all women of good will". A burst of laughter from the assemblage. The Mistress of Ceremonies grinned, "Well, that probably sounds a bit strange to you, but perhaps that should give you some idea of how we women feel when the church speaks to us so often in terms of fathers, sons, et cetera."

"We come to you as friends," she said, adding that the spirit of the presentation could best be expressed by Cardinal Leger's statement: "To-day it is often those who are impatient and criticize who have the deepest love for the church, our Lord and the coming of His kingdom."

"We're asking you to help us so that we can make use of all our God-given gifts. With your support and encouragement we hope to free both men and women from sexual stereotyping, making us both more effective witnesses to Jesus Christ."

The fast-paced show began.

One skit took a pot shot at the way the church has discouraged women from participating in politics.

In another song the women protested the lack of programming for girls in most parishes, as compared to the lavish activities that are provided for boys.

Some of the things that church fathers and theologians have said about women came under scrutiny. From several readings we learn that St. Thomas Aquinas said, "Woman is, after all, a defective man, conceived because of a weakness in the seed, or because a damp south wind was blowing at the time of conception."

And that in Gregory the Great's opinion women have only two uses: harlotry and maternity.

Clement of Alexandria said: "Every woman ought to be overcome at the thought that she is a woman." And St. Cyril felt that "every woman is death's deaconess and her sex is especially dishonoured". A recent comment from a Canadian bishop was offered: "Problems are caused by people and people are born of women."

A traditional mother's day sermon was delivered: "From early in the morning until late at night they worked tirelessly for the good of the family." The words; "Sacrifice, yes; suicide, no." flashed on a background screen.

"We think this is what mother would like to hear, on her day.

More emphasis on Mary's strength and courage, rather than her passivity; the idea that our daughters must grow to discerning, thinking, confident women, capable of making their own value judgements; and looking forward to the future for women in the church, a hope that they will cease to be invisible so that Christ may become visible in and through them."

The daily prayer of the Jewish man was quoted:

"Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has not made me a gentile . . . who has not made me a slave . . . who has not made me a woman."

Then followed the Jewish woman's prayer, accompanied by a slide of the Annunciation, as Mary said "Yes" to God:

"Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has made me according to thy will."

Slides were presented of heroic women of history from Joan of Arc, Teresa of Avilla and Therese of Lisieux, to to-day's Barbara Ward and Sister Teresa of Calcutta. One memorable slide showed a view from the dome of St. Peter's at the close of Vatican II. In colorful robes some 2300 churchmen from all over the world debate the position of the church in the modern world. Women are noticeably absent.

The last slide was of a ten-year-old girl as she knelt on the altar steps to receive the sacrament of confirmation from a bishop.

"The spirit has been given her," said a voice from the wings. "What is her future? And what is ours?"

With the opening bars of "Go tell everyone, the news that the kingdom of God has come," the priests rose spontaneously and sang the hymn with the women. A little later they joined them in small informal discussions.

Comments were generally positive. Bishop Mahoney of Saskatoon enjoyed the show. "There were about a hundred needles in it, and they were well and delicately administered."

From Winnipeg's Cardinal Flahiff came the tribute: I think there was real art in the way they made their point. They didn't try to make it a face to face confrontation. They kept hinting with a good deal of humour, a good bit of satire.

"It was like impressionistic art. You can't analyse it or treat it logically at all. It keeps hammering at a certain point — women are not treated with the degree of equality that they have a right to be."

At the closing session of the priest's conference, a resolution asking that they "continue to press for the admission of women into the ordained ministry" drew much vocal discussion from the remaining 131 priest delegates. Forty-seven per cent of the priests voted for the resolution, 37 per cent voted against, and 19 per cent abstained.

Are things changing for women in the Catholic church? Is the Catholic woman making any headway at all in her quest for equality?

In the year that has passed since the presentation, there have been advances big and small, and even some lost ground.

Following the recommendation of the World Synod of Bishops, Pope Paul VI established, in 1973, The *Papal Commission on the Role of Women*. From the beginning the commission was told that it should not discuss the question of priesthood for women.

Headed by an Italian archbishop, the commission consisted of 10 men and 15 women from all the continents. Married, single and professional women, including sociologists, theologians and Biblical scholars, and one university student were chosen to represent the women of the world.

Though it will still continue to function until January of 1976, the commission handed in its first report in the summer of 1974. The topics dealt with: personhood of women; women in God's plan; women in the church; and women in society. The report pointed to a general need for changes in the mentality and education of the clergy; more participation of women at every level of the church; and further studies of church ministries.

While organizations such as St. Joan's International Alliance and The World Union of Catholic Women continue to press for changes in the church's attitudes towards women, interesting things are happening at the grass roots level.

Some 30 parishes in Edmonton employ nuns as pastoral assistants. Members of the parish team, the sisters' function includes adult education programs, catechetical work in the schools, counselling, and sacramental preparation.

An increasing number of women are serving on archdiocesan boards and commissions; two women teach theology at Edmonton's Newman Theological Seminary; the number of parishes who encourage altar girls to assist the priest has doubled (from two to four!); and more and more women are distributing communion and acting as lectors in their parishes. This last situation is not without its problems, however, as each parish has its share of women who object vehemently to their sisters' activities. One such group, perhaps suffering from the "Adam and Evil" syndrome, recently approached their parish council with the suggestion that females taking part in liturgical functions might be a grave source of sin to the men in the congregation. Their solution: loose, floor length robes should be mandatory.

Across the North American continent, women are taking part in diaconate programs in colleges and seminaries, though they cannot, at this point in time, be formally installed into the ministries of lector and acolyte, nor ordained to the Permanent Diaconate.

In an address to the commission in April of this year, Pope Paul made his position clear on the subject of

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WOMEN SPEAK OUT

by **Helen Fitzpatrick** drawing by Iona MacAllister

perspectives

CHILD CUSTODY: Who should decide?

by Linda Armstrong

This story begins ten years ago in London, England. That's when my husband, Donald, and I were married. At first everything went well; then, as prescribed in all good marriages of the early sixties, we decided to start a family. Donald and I were both in the same precarious profession — the theatre. When my first child, Andy, arrived, I was no longer able to work. We had to live on Don's earnings, which were erratic and small. Between times we lived on the "dole", the British equivalent of welfare. We rubbed along okay, though things were not going quite as well as before, due to the usual pressures, which we, both too young and immature to handle them sensibly, thought to blame on one another. Then I became pregnant again. I had an incredible doctor who had told me that a nursing mother would not becomepregnant. This time, things were worse. Don was finding it hard to get work, and we had many money worries. My younger son, Peter, was born one year and four months after my first.

When Peter was about two years old, and after many dead-end jobs here and there, Don had a break. He had applied for a job in Canada, and after much suspense, he got it. This meant a great deal of change for both of us. The most important thing was the fantastic salary of $9,900 a year — it seemed an absolute fortune to us back in Britain, in 1969. We arrived in Edmonton feeling excited and pleased with our good fortune. Canada is very, very different from Britain. Our whole way of life changed. We went from a small apartment with few amenities to the relative luxury of hi-rise living, with pool, sauna, — the works. I was sure that at last things would go really well for us.

However, we both had to learn lessons about life. The first thing we learned was that money does not necessarily equal happiness in marriage. We fought, and behaved terribly toward one another. Don hated Canada. I liked it, because I had friends at last, and a social life which was lovely compared to living in London, where friends had to travel a long way in order to visit, making it difficult to see them often.

Things finally became so bad that I decided to leave Don. He was at the point of threatening to kill himself if I didn't go. The children were, of course, being affected by their miserable, angry parents. So, about a year after we arrived in Edmonton, I moved into an apartment which some friends lent me while they were away on holidays. Two or three months later, I managed to get work in a television station. I was ready to begin my life again. Don and I continued to quarrel all through this time. He would try to come and see us. He would spend hours looking in the windows of our home, and standing in the yard. I was so angry I could not be sorry for him. He made spiteful phone calls and threatened to kill me. It became so frightening that I finally agreed when my lawyer suggested a restraining order, which is supposed to be a deterrent to a person who is hassling another person. It didn't work well. The harassment continued and Don attempted suicide. Finally, about a year later, things became too much for me. I found that the change from being at home, to juggling work, children and Don had dragged me down to the point where I felt that all that was left for me was death. I didn't want to be part of these situations which had become too complicated for me to sort out. So I copped out. The doctors said I was "dissociating". I in fact denied who I was. This happened over the course of a few days, and worried friends had been looking after the boys while I was in hospital. They contacted Don, who took the boys. I was in the hospital for ten days. I came out weighing about 100 pounds, and very weak, since my normal weight is about 115. I just couldn't cope anymore. My lawyer advised me to let Don keep the children until I was able to look after them again. After a month or two, the boys were spending weekends with me, and weekdays with Don. This arrangement suited me fine, as I was engrossed in my work during the week, and was free Saturdays and Sundays to spend all day with the children. Don had left his job, and was working part-time, so that he had more time than I for the children anyway — so I reasoned, to get rid of some of the massive guilt I was feeling.

Things went on this way for about eight months, and then Don told me he was thinking of taking the children to the country for a holiday. That was quite agreeable to me, as I would have some time to myself. A few days after the weekend, thinking the children still in the country, I received a phone call at work. "Sit down, please, Linda I have something very difficult to tell you." It was a friend of mine who had been sent a letter from New York. From Don and the children, it read, "We've left, I can't stand it anymore, it's too much for me, this whole place is getting me down, so I'm going back home to Scotland, to live with my parents, and Andy and Peter will be brought up the way I was, in a decent way, none of this Canadian nonsense . . . tell her that she won't have them anymore, to screw up their lives . . . she'll be able to visit, but that's all. I'm sorry but I've had enough."

I was silent, then curiously, a sort of excitement welled up inside me, then a trembling panic, resulting in many tears while I stumbled into the office of my friend, my sensible friend, who gave me a kleenex, and suggested a call to my lawyer. Later, the phone call was confirmed by another letter, from Don to myself — stating much what I had already heard.

My most difficult task was to decide if I should really have the children back. Did I want them? I did. Why? Was I good enough for them? I had reached a point where I felt I was not good enough for anyone. I could barely live with myself. I convinced myself, after much talking to others, and assessing of my life here, that I would be best for them.

This is a very difficult decision for a parent who has lost the children. They are born to you, and they are your responsibility until they can take care of themselves. It's not usual to have to sit down and decide whether or not you are entitled to them. After my decision, I had to find out how to get them back.

I now had a new lawyer, who was much more active than the previous one. She initiated a plan of action. First, we had to get a custody order; custody had never been clearly established, and we had both looked after the children separately over the past two or three years. We were not yet divorced, so the formal arrangements of divorce had not been made. All we had was a separation order, giving me custody of the children, but that was before I had allowed Don to have them during the week. Was it still valid? My lawyer took the usual steps to try to untangle the incredible mess that was our lives. She put it to me this way. The laws of Canada are different from the laws of Britain. The children were in Scotland, which again had its own legal system, different from England's. And although the laws of Canada are based on British law, you cannot apply the law of one country to another. Don had broken Canadian law by taking the children out of the country secretly. But now that he was safely away in Scotland, he was within his rights in the country he was living in. If I initiated action in the Scottish courts I would probably lose; and it would cost a great deal of money, and would take a long time, perhaps years. I could not afford either. So she told me that my only other hope would be to somehow get them back, using my Canadian custody order as a safeguard in case I were caught — because if I were caught, I could be imprisoned for kidnapping. Did I think I could go through with it? I saw it as my only way to get them back. I knew I had to do it that way, although it was very hard to imagine myself as a kidnapper. I was lucky in one thing. I had the children on my passport. Otherwise it would have been impossible to travel anywhere with them.

It was four months before all the arrangements were finally completed, and I left for Europe. I went first to my father, who lives in Holland. There we discussed through the night how I could reach the children. Could I simply go to the door and ask for them? I felt that this approach would not work. Don's parents might not let me see them if I turned up unannounced. I decided to snatch them away, perhaps while they were playing in the yard. I needed help to do this, and my father could not be involved in such an undertaking. I decided to check with my cousin Eleanor in London. The next day, I arrived in London. Here, my cousin and her friend Jean advised me to obtain the services of a private detective. This was almost funny, because the whole idea of detectives and cloak and dagger plots did not seem to relate to my need to be united with my children.

The following day, we looked up detectives in the yellow pages. We chose one whose offices were nearby. We arranged a meeting for that morning, were shown up into a seedy little office in a run-down house in Kensington. Here, the well-dressed young man casually discussed the fees, which were very high, and the fact that his boss was already in Edinburgh, so that he could take on the case there. Arrangements were made to meet with the boss that afternoon. My plans were changed because of the weather, which did not allow our plane to land in Edinburgh. We were diverted to Glasgow, a city much nearer the children, who were now only about twenty miles away, in a small Renfrewshire village.

Having phoned the boss, I went, at his direction, to his Glasgow office, to meet the two men who would help me carry out my plan. We met, and talked on the way to the village, which they had decided to reconnoitre. The detectives had the idea that they should snatch the children in one car, and then switch cars, so that the police, if they caught up with them, would get the wrong car. The day was rainy, and cold for August. I had bought dark glasses and a scarf as a disguise, now incongruous in the rain. The familiar village made me feel guilty. The houses where Don's relatives lived, the doctor's office I had visited with the children, the church where they were baptised as Presbyterians . . . but I had gone so far, I would see it through, although my hands shook and my body trembled with fatigue and too many cigarettes. I found a four-leaved clover in a field, but although I'm superstitious, no luck came that day. There was no sign of Andy and Peter. They never came out of the house, and neither did anyone else. Perhaps they were away somewhere, and all was for nothing, but I felt they must be there. I had checked on their plans before I left Canada, lying on the phone that there was a chance for me to visit them, perhaps, in the summer, and would they be there? The answer had been positive.

We three skulked around the village a few hours longer, and then left. The younger detective felt sorry for me, and offered me a place to stay for the night with his wife and family. He had two boys as well, and sympathized perhaps with my situation.

After an unsettled night we resumed the watch of the previous day. The children never appeared, as we cruised around, trying to be inconspicuous in the few streets of the small village. Finally, as we waited in the car at the bottom of a road adjacent to the house, we saw the children. They came wandering out of the gates between the high stone walls, calling to a group of passing friends. . . clear Scots accents in the cool summer day . . . "Where ye awa te?" . . . "Doon te th' brook fer minnies" . . . "Shall we go now?" the detecitve asked me. Yes, go, go. Now! But the car would not start the first try, then finally caught. God! Let's GO!

And up the road we went, and out I ran, and grabbed Andy and flung him into the car, then raced back for Peter, grabbed him and threw him in after, and fell in myself. We spun away, as a woman with some parcels started to shout the alarm, and the children began to scream and cry and the car sputtered and raced away down the road. What a mess! And very confusing with the two children sobbing and crying so loudly.

The other man was waiting with the other car just a mile down the road. We had not been pursued as yet. We changed cars, and the young detective and the children

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Joan McNerney

THE SUBLIMINAL ROOM

That weepy October,
marigolds were so full.
I made an omelette of
them. (Do you remember?)

All November, leaves
mixed with rain, making
streets slippery. I
listened mostly to Chopin.
Leaves droop in September
too ripe and heavy for
trees. I was careful
not to slip, dreading
when the leaves would
grow dry and crumble.
Some live all winter
through the next spring.
Chased by winds, they
huddle in corners,
reminding me of mice.

I confessed to you
how I loved Russian
poets and waited for
a silent revolution.
I revealed by childhood
possessed by rosaries
and nuns chanting Ave,
Ave, Ave Maria. "Your
navel exudes the warmth
of 10,000 suns", you said.

We still live in this
subliminal room. I heard
Jona did not want to
leave the whale's stomach.
We continue trying to
decipher Chopin. Your
eyes are two bunches of
morning glories. Sometimes
the sky is so violet.
Will we ever live by the
sea, Michael, and eat
carrots? I do not want
my sight to fail. Hurry,
the dew is drying on the
flowers.

THE FOX ON LAKE ONTARIO

In a dream
walking downhill
feet warm as dark
earth is warm, warm.
Slender girl slipping,
wrapped round by slender
dress. Stepping past
trees, over moss. Hair
blown by swollen summer
wind. Sliding through
moving pattern of sun
on leaves.
Leaves,
sleeves of
trees.

Walking to the grass,
through the grass,
lush, long grass,
dancing on ankle,
the girl stops
frightened by a fox!

If a fox should see me,
should be near me and
I take off my slender
dress. O how fast
the fox will come,
showing his great red
face, staring at me
with pinched nose.
O the fox, leaping
into me. I would be
captured without my
slender dress wrapped
round my swollen breasts.

Swans are swimming
on the lake. Swans
swimming on Lake Ontario.
I will not be afraid.
if he were near, swans
would never swim on this
lake. I will take off
my slendor dress wrapped
round my slender waist,
find a hole in the lake.
The fox will not be in
the lake. I will stay
in the lake. I will
stay with smiling swans,
swimming, swimming
across the lake.


Do you like or
Love
either or
both of me?
Phoebe Snow
Copyright 1973
Tanka Music

music

by Beverley Ross

drawing by Audrey Watson

Phoebe Snow: "Phoebe Snow" Shelter SR 2109
Bonnie Koloc: "You're Gonna Love Yourself in the Morning" Ovation OVQD 14-38

Some of you have probably already heard Phoebe Snow's first album since "Poetry Man," the Top 40 release taken from it, has done well on both sides of the border and nothing sells albums faster than a hit single.

I sometimes wonder who has heard of Bonnie Koloc. When her first album appeared three years ago, I was sure it would be her last: totally uncommercial. Each song on it was open-faced and genuine. Koloc's clear, calm voice, sounding very much like Judy Collins (but with the constant control that Collins seldom obtains) shone throughout the album. Happily, my rather cynical speculations were wrong and a second, a third, and now a fourth album has appeared, each stepping a little bit further away from the original simplicity of the first, but the voice is still there, usually shining brighter than whatever is placed behind it.

To record "You're Gonna Love Yourself in the Morning" Koloc moved from Chicago to Nashville. In the industry, a Nashville record carries a certain prestige. (Yes, Nashville *is* the home of Country music, but there's a lot of money in them thar' country tunes and, consequently, the studio facilities there are excellent and often used by artists of other genres.) The result has its good and bad points: there are licks on this album that we've all heard before as well as an unmistakeable commerciality. This arises, partly, from the fact that most of the musicians on this album are studio professionals and although excellent, they maintain a professional distance. Yet the worst track on the album, a heavy-handed patriotic number that sounds exactly like it might have been made for a U.S. bicentennial ad campaign, was recorded in Chicago, presumably among friends.

However, beyond these dismaying moments lies a lot of magic. Jackson Browne's "Colors of the Sun" is masterfully arranged and well suited to Koloc's voice at its best. The vocal back-up work is the strongest of any of her albums so far.

Koloc has always gathered her material from many different sources: three of the songs are her own. She is probably most appreciated as a "folk" artist but the clarity and almost classical purity of her voice delivering a blues lick is something to be heard.

Her other albums are listed below.

"Poetry Man" is one of the rare examples of a successful Top 40 song that is also good music. The album "Phoebe Snow" stands up to the promise of the single.

All but two of the songs are Snow's own: musically they are interesting and unforced; lyrically they're often delightful:

Sometimes this face
Looks so funny
That I hide it
Behind a book
But sometimes this face
Has so much class
That I have to sneak
A second look.

"Either or Both"
Copyright 1973
Tarka Music

Her voice has a definite bite and the percussive quality of the phrasing reminds me of Van Morrison. Snow admits to an infatuation with nightclub torchlight sound, evidenced by many jazz influences in the material and arrangements, most noticeable in her version of the standard "San Francisco Bay Blues." Jazz buffs may recognize the acoustic bass of Chuck Delmonico and saxophone of "Zoot" Sims on a number of tracks.

The album is a saleable item but with its integrity intact. "Phoebe Snow" is a success because the feel of Snow's music and the solidity of her voice appeal to the public's taste at this time and this, luckily, is without any apparent compromise on her part.

Snow is much more at home in this album than Koloc is in hers. I wonder what would have happened to Koloc if the public had claimed her for what she is, the first time around.

Bonnie Koloc on Ovation:
"After All This Time" OVQD 21
"Hold on to Me" OVQD 14-26
"Bonnie Koloc" OVQD 14-29

books

A review article of books about women by two women with very different views.

by Alison L. Hopwood

The First Sex, Elizabeth Gould Davis, Penguin Books, Baltimore, Maryland, 1971, $1.95.

Woman's Consciousness, Man's World, Sheila Rowbotham, Penguin Books, Middlesex, England, 1973, $1.50.

Women, Resistance and Revolution, Sheila Rowbotham, Penguin Books, Middlesex, England, 1972, $2.50.

The need for more information about women, past and present, for feminist examinations of all fields of knowledge, are constant themes among women trying to liberate themselves and others. The two writers whose books are reviewed here cover a wide range of times and topics; both are committed to advancing the status of women. It would be satisfying to be able to say that between them we have a feminist history of women from remotest times to the present, but not only are their points of view different, they are contradictory. Sheila Rowbotham is a Marxist and feminist revolutionary, who believes "the solution to exploitation and oppression to be communism," and that women must work with men for the liberation of both. Elizabeth Gould Davis believes that women are superior to men in every way, including the possession of the power "to see the unseen," and that in the next century "divine woman" will once again be "the pivot" of civilization. Each provides a criticism of the other's position. Davis sees the cure for all ills in "the rediscovery of the non-material universe," and the "overthrow of the beast of masculist materialism." Rowbotham finds that "the problem created by . . . inverting existing male values to make a female culture out of everything not male is that the distortions of oppression are perpetuated."

A second difference between the two writers is their contrasting reliability as sources of information. Rowbotham provides much carefully documented background material on women in the last few centuries. Davis mingles fact with fiction and misquotation so indiscriminately that the reader cannot rely on the validity of anything she writes. Rowbotham's books are useful even to the reader who disagrees with her politics. Davis' book is a well of misinformation. Such contrasts of outlook and method are startling evidence of the confusing range of thought within the women's movement. By examining Davis' and Rowbotham's work, we can try to clarify our own thinking.

Davis begins her analysis by citing the well-substantiated record of mythology and archeology that pre-historic peoples in Europe worshipped a mother goddess. Her conclusion, however, that a Great Goddess must therefore exist ignores the male and animal deities of many kinds and places that by the same reasoning must exist too. Her further assumption that "where the goddess reigned, woman ruled," is not axiomatic, and is made very dubious by the evidence of countries like modern Mexico, where the adulation of the Virgin Mary amounts practically to worship, and yet women are very far from being the rulers.

Her attempts to back up her theory of "divine woman" leads her into tangles of errors and improbabilities. Describing the appearance in Europe of the first humans of the modern biological type, she reports a theory that they "came from the sky". Unwilling to credit the possibility that they evolved first in Africa and emigrated to Europe from there, she states that they couldn't have crossed at Gibraltar, "owing to the fatal whirlpools and hidden shoals — the Scylla and Charybdis of the ancients." Apart from the fact that Scylla and Charybdis are off southern Italy, not at Gibraltar, some absolutely undeniable evidence would be required for most minds to find the arrival from space more credible than a sea voyage of ten miles. There is no such evidence, and Davis' readiness to believe in space-people rather than ancestors from Africa suggests a racist bias in her thinking. Her identification of the fair-skinned Celtic tribes as a kind of super-race and descendants of the supposed space travellers, her disparaging remarks about the Teutonic and Semitic peoples, and her very scant attention to history outside Europe show a similar tendency to prejudiced views.

At numerous points in her book Davis refers to the writing of other authors so that they appear to substantiate her views, when in fact they don't. For instance, she quotes a linguist as stating that "the word for father does not even exist in the original Indo-European language." Checking the reference, I found, as I expected, the passage she refers to says nothing of the kind; it merely mentions two exceptions to the general rule that the Indo-European languages have a word that is cognate with the English word "father." More extensive misquotation marks her chapter "Archeology Speaks." On the first page of it she attributes to archeologist James Mellart the statement that the first art was "in the form of statuettes of the supreme deity, the Great Goddess." Mellart actually wrote "animal carvings and statuettes of . . ." which is different in meaning as well as in precise wording. A second quotation is turned into its opposite. Ivar Lissner wrote: "No one looking at these dainty little figures would form the impression that they were

intended to induce fertility by magical means or to portray worship." Davis omits "or to portray worship," and implies that Lissner backs up her contention that early cult figures did portray worship. It is scarcely possible that she read all of Lissner's book, as he uses archeology to substantiate his claim that all people from earliest times worshipped a *male* god, not the female deity that Davis asserts. But Davis has many examples of a similar misuse of sources. Not satisfied to state the evidence that pre-historic people viewed women in a very different way from later societies, she describes a woman-ruled utopia that enjoyed peace for a thousand years, practised vegetarianism, and buried women's bodies reverently, "while men's bones were thrown into a charnel house." She claims to be summarizing this from Mellart's accounts of his excavation of an ancient city in what is now Turkey, but Mellart does not report any of these things; he does describe how families, including the men, were buried together under their houses, along with jewelry for women and weapons for men.

In dealing with historical times, Davis discusses at some length the organization of society under the Roman empire and the rise of Christianity. Here and elsewhere she shows a decided antipathy to Christianity, which may account in part for her strangely eulogistic picture of late Roman law and customs. The legal rights which she says were enjoyed by women were confined to the women of the patrician, or upper, class. She has not a word for the vast majority of women who were not patricians and were governed by different laws, nor for the large number of women who were slaves. Her statement that Romans "considered the woman's body her

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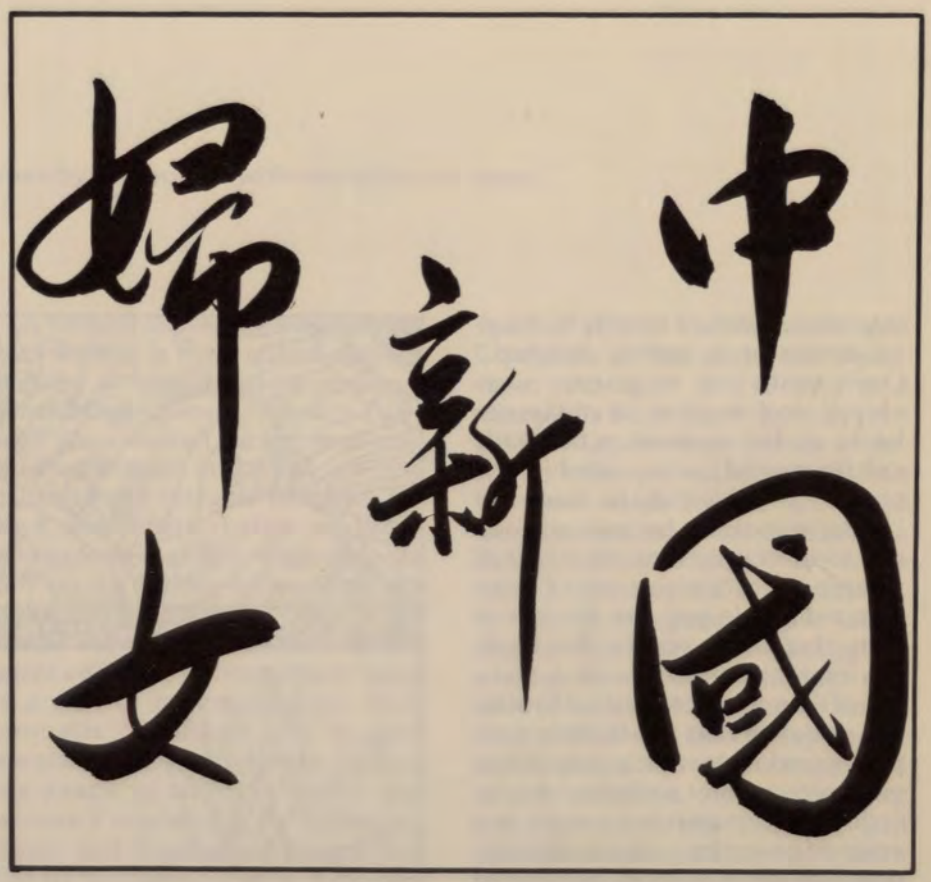
film

by Brigitte Kerwer



The Chinese characters for "new Chinese women" — drawn by Bosco Kwan

When Shirley MacLaine's documentary on China was shown on cable television recently, it was a stunningly positive, exuberant picture of a new society. There, happiness and self-fulfilment for women seem possible. To find out how much was filmmaking skill and how much propaganda, I consulted *Women in China* by Katie Curtin, a Canadian feminist, and Shirley MacLaine's own account of the tour in her recently published *You Can Get There From Here*.

The film's use of impressionistic camera techniques, its fast pacing, and the rapid accumulation of details make a written account useful. While watching the movie, it is difficult to evaluate the ideology of the Chinese, or the American attitude to it. Fortunately, as well as the book, there is an hour-long filmed interview with Shirley MacLaine, the film crew and the delegates, all women varying greatly in age, background and experience. Conflicting views emerge in the discussion, but all were inspired to change their lives to become more public-spirited and independent.

To Shirley MacLaine, China was a childhood dream, "a mysterious place, a symbol of the unreachable and the remote," as she states in her book. Another possible reason for her desire to visit China is a disillusionment with the Hollywood star system and the capitalist society that made her successful. She describes her personal evolution with objectivity and self-awareness in an earlier book. *Don't Fall Off The Mountain*, (W.W. Norton, 1970). Like other stars of the sixties, MacLaine now has trouble getting decent movie parts, which explains her desire to write and direct movies herself.

Like her contemporary Jane Fonda, MacLaine first became politically active as a civil rights supporter, and then campaigned for George McGovern in the 1970 presidential elections. During the campaign she clashed with feminists like Gloria Steinem over the abortion issue. Out of loyalty for McGovern, she suppressed the issue in the party platform. In October 1971 she was invited by Chiao Kuan Hua, Chinese foreign minister at the United Nations, to visit China with a representative group of American women. She accepted, and in addition to a female film crew of four, chose twelve women, including a black woman from Mississippi, a Navaho Indian, a sociologist, a psychologist, and a twelve-year-old school girl from Wisconsin. All had been indoctrinated with anti-communist propaganda, and none knew how traumatic the experience would turn out to be, how shaken their values and beliefs. They were not prepared for joyous experiences, nor agonizing reappraisal.

China was a place of "absences": no advertising, slums or poverty. They travelled everywhere in a beautifully appointed train with a woman translator whom they grew to love. Frequently the women complained about spartan hotel rooms, foreign food, long and tedious briefing sessions.

Gradually they came to question their comfortable, bourgeois lives. Some became upset and demoralized to the point of refusing to go on tours, preferring to stay in the privacy of their hotel rooms. The areas that puzzled them most are still the most controversial in the women's movement here: sexuality, day care, alternatives to the family such as the commune. The happy and joyous children they met in nurseries were the cause of the first of the group's many quarrels. Some said they were conditioned and programmed, while others admired their willingness to share, the spirit of cooperation and love of working in a group. Karen, the twelve-year-old delegate, burst into tears when she remembered the incidents in her life that had made her distrustful of people: she returned home a confirmed Communist, in

contrast to the older women whose politics, though qualified, remained essentially the same.

The delegates followed a strict schedule set up by the Chinese. They went first to Canton, then to Shanghai and Peking. Women worked hard in the communes they visited, and the men conducted the briefings. Chinese women are underrepresented politically, and as yet do not receive equal pay for equal work with men. Compared to their former servitude, however, the cruelty of footbinding, the tyranny of husbands and mothers-in-law, their lives are purposeful and free from oppression. They are free from hunger, starvation and insult. A young wife showed her tidy apartment with pride. Her husband described his jealousy when his wife first started to work. Through self-criticism he and others learned to accept women's transition to a new society. Women, too, are encouraged to criticize men if they are repressive or cruel, and the community exercises a strong pressure to give up traditional habits.

In Peking during the May Day celebrations they meet Teng Yingch'ao, wife of Premier Chou En-lai, who participated in the Long March of 1935. They discuss Shirley MacLaine's favourite topic, the role of the artist in society. Art must serve the revolution, she is told, although a conducive environment for writers and intellectuals must be provided. Shirley believes that "art and individuality helped make people more human while politics helped make people better organized," but ironically, when she returns home it is to a singing and dancing career in Las Vegas. MacLaine is too caught up in the western concept of art as entertainment to be considered a feminist. She cannot give up her career and join feminists who believe in socialism as the political solution to women's oppression.

In the film on China, we see the strength and vitality of the Chinese, the confident good looks of the women. However we don't get to know one individual Chinese woman, nor do we perceive the Americans as anything but tourists travelling abroad, noisily and often hilariously communicating their confusion. When they observe a woman giving birth by Caesarian section, fully conscious under acupuncture, they react like girls at a pyjama party, jumping up and down in the observation room, partly terrified and partly elated. All the doctors are female.

Sexual mores in China are still rigidly puritanical; public displays of affection are unheard of, kissing on the screen is not allowed. Young people receive no sex education and usually marry in their late twenties. Sexual deviance is considered depraved, and masturbation is discouraged. In fact, sexuality is deemphasized through the use of unisex clothes and a casual, matter-of-fact attitude between men and women. By contrast, the American women openly discuss their sexual frustration. They wear a lot of make-up and colorful clothing. "They're so selfless, and it defies everything I've ever known . . . If I could stop thinking about myself, I could function better. These people remind me of my own defects, and it's tough to face," says one. When they encounter a team of Western men in their Peking hotel, they have parties instead of going on the official engagements. Even Karen decides to see American movies at the Canadian Embassy. Their demoralization continues until they depart a month later. Two women remain, sick in hospital; while Shirley MacLaine waits for their recovery, she travels to Sian and Yenan, historic birthplaces of the Chinese Revolution.

In *You Can Get There From Here,* the author reflects on her Chinese experience. "Perhaps human beings could really be taught almost anything;" perhaps we are "simply blank pages upon which our characters are written by parents, schools, churches, and the society itself. If evil and fear and oppression could be written on those blank pages, then so could kindness, sincerity, goodness, compassion and a collective spirit." She marvels at the human experiment she has witnessed, and attributes its success to the self-criticism sessions which are a constant, ongoing examination of values and attitudes so that people "tend to act as watch dogs on their own behaviour, taking care not to slip back into habits of unkindness, selfishness, or non-communication."

In her admiration, Shirley MacLaine forgets, however, that self-criticism can turn into a form of brainwashing. She does not see the inside of a film studio where truths are manufactured in attractive packages, nor does she see labour camps where political prisoners are cruelly treated until they are considered safe for release and exile. As some victims testify in books written after release, the indoctrination is so complete that they have forgotten what they formerly believed, and these accounts have a sinister ring.

Nevertheless, Shirley MacLaine in China rediscovered hope in human beings and gained faith that they can change themselves and the world around them. Her image as a woman changed: "I believe the insight into our sex roles in the West was what made us break down," she says.She envied theChinese for their ease of equality, their unwillingness to play power games and their simple acceptance of each other. Romantic love is a completely foreign concept; instead, women are encouraged to extend themselves to the limits of their capacities and contribute to the reconstruction of their country.

Katie Curtin, author of *Women In China* (Pathfinder Press, 1975), gives a more critical account of the historical and social background to

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theatre

What Glorious Times They Had

reviewed by Anne Green

What Glorious Times They Had was presented in Edmonton June 10 by Toronto's Red Light Theatre. The company toured the Maritimes in January, and in June brought the play to the West.

Redlight Theatre was conceived by three women, Diane Grant, Marcella Lustig and Francine Volker, who were dissatisfied with the woman's position in the professional theatre. There is absolutely no doubt that this is a valid sentiment. Most plays are written by men, with the best roles for men. The few women directors have a much harder time finding work than their male counterparts, and production staffs are almost exclusively male. Redlight Theatre was formed for the admirable and necessary purpose of presenting original material by women and about women. *What Glorious Times They Had* is about Nellie McClung and the role she played in the struggle for female suffrage in Manitoba. Written by Diane Grant and members of the company, and directed by Diane Grant, the production reflects a wise choice of material. Nellie McClung's work with the Political Equality League occurred recently enough that many people can relate to the play on a personal level. In addition, this play, about Canadian women, is being presented by Canada's only professional women's theatre during International Women's Year.

These ingredients help guarantee a sympathetic audience, and a sympathetic audience goes a long way to making a successful show, although it cannot create a good piece of theatre. *What Glorious Times They Had* is indisputably a successful show. The company as a whole displays a good ensemble feeling, a high level of energy and apparent enjoyment of what it is doing. The basic weakness of the production lies in the script. Diane Grant has fallen into the trap of not being sufficiently selective when directing material she has written.

Throughout the work the characters exist on a rather superficial level. There are minor references to their families; the only indication we have that the members of the Political Equality League have any human weaknesses is a reference to some rivalry concerning cookie baking. Ms. Grant indulges her women. She condescends to her men. They are portrayed as corrupt and malicious schemers who drink to excess on the sly. She writes such lines as ". . . it is more difficult to toilet train a male child than a female child. Then the same . . . when training them in parliamentary procedure." I wonder if it is really necessary to resort to this level of humour.

Working from a basis of factual data, a large factor in the development of the production was obviously improvisation. At times, I really felt the show was going to take off, but the level was not sustained. I wonder how many of those moments were comprised of documented text. I felt that the script was still in the stage of an early draft. At a workshop level it would have been very good.

The production was simple and effective. Designed for easy transportation and use on any stage, it consisted of different acting areas being created on what was virtually a bare stage. I could have wished, however, that the Company had received the support it deserved from its lighting technician.

Maida Rogerson as Nellie McClung, Geoffrey Saville-Read as Premier Roblin, Paul Brown as P. T. Fletcher and Araby Lockhart as E. Cora Hind deserve special mention. Ms. Rogerson, Mr. Saville-Read and Ms. Lockhart all brought depth to their underwritten characters, and Mr. Brown can only be admired for the versatility he displayed in his various roles.

The material was handled as an historical documentary revue, and, despite the rather linear blocking often inherent in this kind of production, with actors frequently obstructing each other from view, the presentation served the material quite well. I wished that the renderings of the WCTU songs had been more imaginatively staged — as it was they were dully reminiscent of high school operettas, and I wonder if we still need this kind of thing in Canadian theatre. At moments like these I felt that Redlight Theatre would have been well served had they taken note of the comment made in the production about the "Canadian play".

On the whole, however, the energy and enthusiasm, on the part of both the Company and the audience, overcame the faults of production, and made for a generally refreshing experience in the theatre.

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docile pastimes of girlhood, bouncing a ball absently, pushing my doll carriage purposelessly up and down the block, or sharpening popsicle sticks on the cement. (The boys built forts with the pointed sticks, the girls wove them carefully into trivets. Sometimes I liked to burn leaves with a magnifying glass, and it was on one of those days that I saw Mr. Patch coming down the street and I decided to talk to him.

I was sitting in the middle of the sidewalk and as he walked toward me I saw his dusty shoes, his loose pants and that old red plaid jacket he wore every day. He almost walked over me. (There was a special place to burn leaves where two sidewalk cracks intersected. I thought the sun was strongest there.) A few steps beyond where I sat, he stopped, and took out the box to refill his pipe.

"Hi Mr. Patch." I got up and went over to him holding out the glass and the leaf with the perfect black edged hole in it. "Do you like this?" I handed him the leaf and I was trembling, but I couldn't stop staring at the blue tin box. He looked at me, curiously, I think, and then took my outstretched wrist tightly, and suddenly we were walking. So mesmerized was I by the empty tobacco tin, that at first I didn't hear anything. When he slipped the tin in his pocket I turned my curiosity to what he was saying as we walked up the street toward the beach. He was talking in a muffly mustached way, telling me secrets I thought, but I couldn't be sure if they were real or somehow made up ones or diluted ones for girls.

". . . I planted this old oak when I was a boy . . . the reason all the cellars flood when we have a rainstorm is that these houses are all built over a stream. Used to fish in the stream right there," and he pointed to the Coolidge house. It was hard to imagine that lumpy brown house a field.

"That was a hundred years ago," I said, but the words were choked out for here I was already two blocks from home and talking to Mr. Patch. He let go of my hand and was showing me something, drawing an imaginary map with a stick he picked up. (The stream is silver in the sun and Mr. Patch is my age only with a yellow mustache, sitting on the bank with his wife, Mrs. Patch with a big hat blowing . . . and he is fishing and she is dropping crumbs to the minnows and singing to the air). He was still talking, saying things I didn't understand . . . "good Scottish stock . . . ragged old man."

What if anyone saw me and Mr. Patch? I hoped they did, and said, "That's the only girl Mr. Patch talks to." I also hoped they didn't see us. These were *my* secrets. When we approached his house, he led me down the gravel drive in the back. "Had Abbey ever been here?" I wondered. This must be the best and most important secret. We opened the storm door and went in. It was dark and cool. There was a cot against the wall, some ragged slippers under it. (Where did Mrs. Patch sleep when she lived here?) He led me to another room and pointed to a small high window where the sun came in and was reflected through many rows of pickle, jam and jelly bottles all filled with a golden liquid like many huge ambers. We stood there together looking at the giant transluscent gems before us, both of us smiling. Then Mr. Patch searched in his pocket, opened the tin and stuffed a clot of tobacco in his pipe. The world became his hand flipping the blue lid closed. He held the box for a moment looking at it, and then, with it still in his hand, he pointed to the bottles. "Bottles of my pee pee for twenty years!" Then the arm came around and the blue box rested in my hand. He was smiling mutely, not looking at me but staring up over the bottles and through the window. He didn't move. "Bye girly!"

I stuffed the box in my pocket and ran a block to the beach as fast as I could, scared and victorious. There I pulled the box out and looked at it. Dark blue letters etched across a background as blue as the periwinkles I rent from the sticky safety of the rock, as blue as the underwater I lolled in in summertime. I opened it. Shiny and empty except for a tobacco smell and a piece of my own jiggly reflection staring up from a smooth tin surface. I closed it quickly and turned it over. It was perfect, but I felt a curious and dim sadness I couldn't explain. And then the sadness became anger. An unarticulated refusal to be part of Abbey's or Mr. Patch's secrets made me raise my arm in a tiny curve against the horizon and hurl my prize into the ocean.

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and myself went away, down south to the border — the other detective was stopped by the police within a half hour.

The rain began to fall hard, and the children would not be pacified. I did not know what to do. I tried bribery, since it had turned out that they had been on their way to the post office for candies when I had re-entered their lives. Everybody was very upset. The children, only four and five years old, barely remembered me after the separation of four months. I told them that they were going on a trip to see another grandpapa, in Holland, and that I would buy them some candy to make up for that which had been promised. We risked a stop, in a town about twenty miles away, and many books, candy and other things were bought to distract the children. I felt like a criminal for the first time. After a terrible journey, lasting a day, during which the clutch went on the car, and the rain never ceased, we arrived in Liverpool and went straight to the airport, where my luck held up. I was able to get a flight to Amsterdam within the hour, on Aer Lingus. Terror of being caught stalked us all the way, until we left the ground and Britain behind us. I had not been caught, and I had the children.

The rest was easy enough. A formality of notifying Interpol of the children's whereabouts. Dodging reporters — who came around the next day because the British papers had picked up the story. We went to Spain for a week, and thus avoided most of the silly publicity. After this, we went back to Canada, where I avoided reporters from the local paper for a week or so and was visited by the police to make sure everything was okay.

Three years later we are still together. But the questions remain. What harm was done to the children by that experience? What might

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own property and hers the right to bear (children) or not to bear, as she saw fit" was absolutely untrue for slave-women, who could be forced to bear children and have them sold away from them. The education in the "classics . . . philosophy, rhetoric, history and logic," which she states was given equally to girls and boys, was available only in the small minority of well-to-do families. Her suggestion that Christian historians have exaggerated the extent of Roman persecution of Christians is probably correct in the sense that Christians were not the only ones "thrown to the lions;" captives in war and re-captured run-away slaves might receive the same treatment, or men might be forced to fight each other to death, or women subjected to staged rape, as spectacles for the crowds. Far from the utopia that Davis depicts, Imperial Rome was a debased and corrupt society that oppressed the great majority of its subjects.

The anti-feminism of the Christian church that Davis refers to was in fact an element of the patriarchal tradition in all the societies in which Christianity developed—Jewish Roman, Greek, Egyptian alike. Her attribution of it to "the Jewish disciples" whose "Semitic souls were outraged at the freedom and authority granted to Western women" has a strong flavor of anti-Semitism. She omits any discussion of the appeal of Christianity, both originally and in later centuries, to the poor in general and to women. The fundamental Christian doctrine of love and equality has not been well lived up to by the official churches, but it has come to life repeatedly in countless sects, often with women taking the leading roles the established churches deny them. It has had an influence on secular movements such as trade unions, and on campaigns for social reform, and was one of the inspirations for many women, like Nellie McClung, in their work for women's suffrage.

Tracing Davis' account through history has brought me up to modern times. Before leaving her work, however, one last example of what I am criticizing is necessary. Looking for support for theories in biology, she advances the propositions that maleness as such is "a degeneration and deformity of the female," that the first males were "mutants, freaks," and that "maleness remains a recessive genetic trait." Obviously she doesn't understand the integral role of mutation in evolution — no mutations, no human beings, male or female. Equally, she doesn't know that recessive genetic traits appear in individuals who bear a pair of *like* genes for that trait, whereas maleness in humans, as in numerous but not all other species, is determined by a pair of *unlike* genes, denoted by biologists as XY, which Davis herself discusses. She evidently doesn't know that blue eyes, common among her favorite Celts, appear in people who have like genes for that eye color — it's a recessive genetic trait, in fact. If women's claims for their potential rested on the evidence Davis produces, we could stop right now. What she says just isn't so; we have to look elsewhere.

* * * *

In *Woman's Consciousness, Man's World,* Sheila Rowbotham gives a personal account of her own coming to the consciousness out of which she writes. Born in England during World War II, she grew up in the "potitical feminist hiatus" of the fifties and early sixties, and lived through the liberation movement of the last fifteen years as it developed. Her book is a reflection of the feelings and attitudes of many women of her generation, particularly in England, but with an awareness of what was happening elsewhere, especially in the United States. She comments on women's work, clothing, sexuality, the media, books, pop culture, and politics. Her basic premise is that: ". . . the cultural and economic liberation of women is inseparable from the creation of a society in which all people no longer have their lives stolen from them, and in which the conditions of their production and reproduction will no longer be distorted or held back by subordination of sex, race, and class."

Woman's Consciousness, Man's World forms an introduction to *Women, Resistance and Revolution,* which traces the history of movements for the liberation of women in their various forms, and in relation to movements for better social conditions for all people, from seventeenth century England and New England to twentieth century countries around the world. In dealing with contemporary movements, her particular Marxist position is quite plain, but she also makes clear that her Marxism has the qualification that so far no Marxist theory has sufficiently examined or accounted for the particularities of women as an oppressed class, and that in all the countries when a Marxist revolution has succeeded, radical change is still needed to liberate women. Those women committed to revolutionary change, depending on their particular orientation, will probably fault Rowbotham for her treatment of one or all of the socialist countries. And women not convinced of the relevance of socialism will almost certainly find the final chapters obtuse, or opinionated, or both. The earlier sections of the book, however, are less controversial and almost uniformly illuminating. In a factual but lively fashion, she tells the stories of how women have joined men in movements for radical social change, and have in these situations become more equal with men,

more active, and more liberated. The end of these stories is less encouraging; in movements as different as the British Puritan revolution in the 1600s and the liberation struggles of contemporary Algeria, when the movement has succeeded in attaining the aims of the men, or at least of certain men, then the women have been again repressed and limited in their activities and in their participation in the whole life of society.

From such histories of revolutionary movements, many women have concluded that the liberation of women will not be achieved as part of a struggle in which men take part, but only as a result of a movement of women alone. Rowbotham belongs to those who believe that women and men together will become liberated in struggles in which the particular needs and aspirations of women are fully acknowledged and never subordinated to the needs of men. She belongs neither to those who dissociate themselves entirely from men, nor to those who envisage women's freedom as coming *after* — in time, as priority, and as consequence — the liberation of a class, a race, or a nation. She believes that, although many women do not explicitly endorse revolutionary change, they require changes in society that are so fundamental that they imply a revolution.

Whether or not one shares Rowbotham's socialist perspective, there is much in this book that makes it well worth reading. She is a conscientious and informed writer, whose statements of fact and quotations from other authors may be relied on as valid, as one expects in a serious published work. A random check turned up no errors of quoting, and there is no evidence of mis-statements of the kind that occur throughout Davis' work. Chapters One to Six cover historical developments, and can be read with confidence and interest by anyone who wants to know more about women of the past. She supplements her brief outlines of the radical movements of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries with references to novelists, poets, philosophers who reflected or influenced opinions about the nature and role of women. She sheds light on such phenomena as the tendency to exclude women from work outside their homes that began about three centuries ago, and that continues today to keep women in marginal roles in the world of work. She discusses how the Rousseauist identification of women with nature implies an inferior and passive character for women. She quotes Shelley and Morris as well as Marx and Engels. She gives numerousfascinating vignettes of women unknown, or too little known, to most of us: Flora Tristan, Louise Michel, Alexandra Kollontai, Olive Schreiner, and many others.

Throughout the book there are references to many of the customs that are part of liberation today, as occurring as part of earlier radical movements. The history of these movements suggests that there are many past events that could be profitably studied in greater depth from a feminist point of view. The role of housing communes and of "free" sexual unions in the past and present might be worth study, for example. The "new life" movement of the 1880s, with its New Woman, and its "sandals, Buddhism, cottages, market gardening, communal living, cooperative villages" suggests that the present is in some ways recapitulating attempts of a century ago to solve problems. Perhaps we could learn from their success, and perhaps even more from their failure. On the other hand, it is striking how very differently some groups think about some aspects of behavior; for example, "make-up for young Cuban women is often the symbol of defiant liberation from the traditional control of parents and the home," although its use is considered the reverse of liberating in most socialist countries, and by liberated women elsewhere. Similarly, there is a contradiction between the symbolic value attached to cutting of their long hair by newly liberated women in many countries and times, and the fact that liberated women in Canada today frequently wear their hair long.

Rowbotham tells us that women have a history of action as well as of suffering. She makes the successes and defeats of the past vivid and meaningful. She shows how women have played important roles in achieving better social conditions for themselves, and for men and children, too. She raises questions and describes what progress has been made. But she doesn't provide any critical look at the inadequacies of feminist Marxist theories, although she does refer to the shortcomings and reversals in their practice, especially in the Soviet Union. Even more significant, she does not give any information on the theory or program of her own party in her own country, Great Britain. That Chinese women are no longer sold as concubines, that Cuban women are now able to take jobs outside their own homes, are gratifying steps forward for them, but we are not in need of that kind of liberation. Nor is Rowbotham,yet she says nothing about the kind of changes still needed by women who vote, have jobs, practise contraception, write books, and do many other things barred to women in other parts of the world. But in spite of this serious omission, her writing is of the kind to spark a lot of reading and study. The bibliographies in both books list many titles from which topics of interest can be followed up, and the quotations that she uses to bring to life the history in *Women, Resistance and Revolution* will send many readers to the works of the writers quoted.

* * * *

Reading Rowbotham after Davis, as I did, was like waking up to daylight after a nightmare. Although Rowbotham's politics are not my politics, her world corresponds to reality as I, and I think most of us, know it. Man-hating fantasies are not taken for facts; women are human, not divine, and men are human, too. Whereas Davis never mentions the many day to day problems that concern most women, Rowbotham deals with work and family relations, housing and child care. Davis' thought and outlook exclude too many; contempt for men, contempt for the merely human, disregard for most of the people of the world, leaves her alone in a tiny world of her own. Rowbotham's view includes all. Knowledge of the efforts of others, reliance on what ordinary people can do for themselves, lead to her hopeful position that we can change how we live, and think, and feel. ***

BROWN cont. from page 17

Before the election she was ombudswoman for the B.C. Council on the Status of Women, and she has continued to work to better women's status through such proposals as 24-hour day care and marriage insurance for women so that a woman deserted by her husband could afford job training. She supports the concept of a Woman's Ministry, although Premier Barrett has refused to implement it. Setbacks like this don't undermine her determination, or her commitment to the party. In a speech on women and the party given a year ago, she referred to the unwillingness of women around the world to vote for a government indifferent to women's issues. Socialist women don't have this option, she says. "We cannot swing our vote. We have to swing our party."

I asked her how much work there was still to be done within the NDP in terms of educating the party about women and feminism. Her reply came with a good-natured laugh. "Oh, I think it all still has to be done." This relaxed acceptance of the work ahead struck me as typical of her style and her attitude towards politics. "One thing I won't let politics do," she said at one point, "is cut me off from the rest of life. I still do all the things that I enjoy doing. I still have tickets to the symphony, I go to the ballet, I'm addicted to the opera." She is not about to burn herself out after a few short years in public life. Nor will she give up and go home if she doesn't win the leadership, or a cabinet seat, or if her ideas aren't accepted first, second, or third time round. Her goals are long-term. She can look back on 150 years of tradition, and be assured that changes do take place, and that determined, capable women can make them happen.

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LEFT TO MEN TOO LONG cont. from page 19

lear family, the more oppressive it was to its members. Psychiatrists and psychologists have been saying this for generations. I think the fact of the matter is that it is still the unit that most of us seem to feel most comfortable and secure in. I'm not interested in challenging or destroying the nuclear family.

I go back to my original position, that women make the decision about what's best for them. If you are uncomfortable in the nuclear family, and find you cannot realize your potential in it, then it has got to be your decision to find some other kind of structure that you can flower and develop in. For those people who find the nuclear family works for them, that's fine.

I think that the nuclear family is very varied in terms of the people who are in it. I think that my nuclear family, for example, is quite different from someone else's. In my nuclear family, we all recognize that we're individuals. My husband doesn't limit me, or build fences around me, in terms of where I can go and what I can do, any more than I would dream of building fences around him. There isn't any question that (my husband and I) build fences around our children, we do. And certainly if my children were to say to me that they find the nuclear family repressive and restrictive, I'd be very sympathetic. Because I know that we have been (restrictive) in our own way . . . I believe that it is important that your children know where you stand on issues, then go out and make their decisions afterwards. . . . And so we are, both of us, very clear on where we stand on one thing or the other.

But there isn't any question about it, there have been a number of women down through the ages, who have not come to the point of realizing their potential and really developing and growing as people, until they have left the nuclear family. . . . In some instances it's been almost a transformation. For those women the nuclear family, when they were a part of it, was oppressive. . . .

Again, going back to the Swedish experience, this is what they're trying to work out there. (There is) the whole business of parenting being a dual responsibility, and their legislation now is changing. They haven't got maternity leave, they have parent leave. . . . Either parent can take this leave after the child is born. In some of their trade union contracts, when they negotiate for holidays and this kind of thing, it is done in terms of the parent, rather than the mother or the father needing special kinds of concessions. They demand that the father see himself as being equally responsible for the children. The result of this is that when they talk about shortening the work time in Sweden, they're not talking about a shorter work week, they're talking about shorter work days. They think it is important that the family as a unit be together for longer periods during the day. . . .

Compare that with the whole idea of the Victorian day, where the father came in to administer the punishment and hand down the directives. These were his sole roles. He earned the bread, and he bossed. Everything else was the mother's responsibility. Certainly if the nuclear family continues in that kind of mold, it's not going to survive. But as it becomes more democratic, it becomes less oppressive to all of its members, and it will have a chance.

I really like the nuclear family. I'm a very monogamous kind of animal, I'm afraid. And also, I have a tremendous need for privacy, which I find it very difficult to have in great big open living arrangements. Although certainly my growing-up experience has been with a huge extended family, with millions of aunts and uncles, unmarried aunts and all kinds of cousins and relatives continually around. Everyone was responsible for our upbringing, and I enjoyed that. But I still find that the need for some privacy is very important to me. . . . I'd find it very difficult to give that up.

What are your feelings about International Women's Year?

Certainly (the Liberals') concept of it we can do without. If it's a matter of using the year to get some real changes in education and legislation, and in institutions as they affect women's lives, fine. But in terms of running ads, and making buttons, and this kind of thing, it's a waste of not very much money. Obviously it's not a priority item with them. When we see the size of the

budget they've put into it, it's peanuts. So they've just decided to "Humour the little woman." . . .

We're really trying to see if we can change some things in B.C. this year, but even there we're not going far enough. And it can't be a year. We can't have, at the end of '75, a great big celebration and then say, "Whoo! That's over with! Let's get back to the real business." The whole idea of the feminist struggle being a peripheral kind of thing that you do in your spare time is something that has to be changed.

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SUPERSTAR — cont. from p. 41

women's liberation there. She is sceptical that progress in women's struggles will be anything but uneven; after the Great Leap Forward of 1958-9, for example, women were urged into the labour force, and motherhood as a feminine role was rejected. But when natural disasters struck and economic factors were unfavourable, women were again told to stay at home and look after their families. Birth control and abortion, although easily available, are not used to liberate women sexually, but rather as a strict form of population control. Advances women made as a result of the Marriage Act of 1950 do not include the freedom to determine one's sexuality, or to express it in any but approved forms.

It is clear that many problems remain for women in China. In education, politics and the labour force, they are more equal than we are, in my opinion, but like us still suffer inequality in all fields. As long as women's liberation on the issue of sexuality is ignored, Chinese women cannot become involved in revolutionary politics. They must, like their sisters in the West, work within the system, and like us they are often co-opted by a benevolent but still oppressive society. The full emancipation of women in China, as in the West,will come "only with the end of all authoritarian, hierarchal regimes that depend for their existence on relations of mastery and subordination," as one theorist states in *Feminism and Socialism* (Pathfinder Press, 1972).

The film on China was made in 1973 and has received little publicity or distribution. In this International Women's Year, Shirley MacLaine's film is a welcome and necessary reminder that in China at least, women do not have special years. Their struggle for equality is a continuing one.

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cont. from p. 15

The man now proudly discovers:
"I AM A MAN!
I too have hollows to be filled
I am the crystal cup, the eiderdown,
the riverbed
Deep and soft and open
I am a man!
I feel the joys within me dancing
All the mourners and the lovers
and the clowns
We're all the same
Weeping, loving, laughing
Laughing, weeping, loving
—FREED!!"

In the finale, the entire cast joins together in "Goodbye Adam, Good bye Eve, Hello Me!"

Straitjackets opened in London on April 15 to enthusiastic response from a wide variety ofviewers. The production crew, largely female – Billi Tyas, director, Olga Dimitrov, costume designer, Claire Piller, producer, Holly Holmes, stage manager – have lots of ideas about what to do with Straitjackets *now that its initial run is over. They have discussed the possibilities of a touring company, a production of a shortened version to school audiences, engagements at drama festivals, or a longer running commercial production.*

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cont. from p 43

happen, years from now, as a direct result of my actions? What of Don, whose rights were violated — as were the rights of the children? Who is ever right? Who can tell?

One thing is certain — there should be child custody laws which can be applied internationally. Until there are, no parent in a divorce/separation situation can ever be certain that such an experience will not happen to them.

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cont. from p. 31

ordination for women with the statement: "Women did not receive the call to the apostolate of the Twelve . . . we cannot change the behavior of Our Lord nor his call to women; but we must recognize and promote the role of women in the mission of evangelization and in the life of the Christian community."

Two news items appeared in the Catholic press a few days after the Pope made his declaration. In the first, priest-editor Father John Reedy, though acknowledging that the Pope sees ordination for women as theologically impossible, stated in his newsletter publication that "theologians have an obligation to examine this argument seriously and responsibly." The second item outlined the results of a survey of readers of *U.S. Catholic,* a national magazine published by the Claretian Fathers. In response to the survey, 57% of all readers agreed that the church should ordain qualified women to the priesthood.

"We are moving rather slowly," Ann Dea speculates. "But maybe, as committed Christians it has to be that way.

"Women aren't talking as much about wanting to participate anymore . . . they're just doing it."

She cites as just one example the 60 nuns in Africa, who have been asked by the bishops to take over parishes.

"They marry, baptize and hold services . . . do everything, in fact but hear confessions and celebrate mass."

"We women have been our own worst enemies," says theologian Mary Schaeffer, in her newsletter *Diakanos,* which concerns the deaconate for women.

"May we overcome the disabilities of 3000 years of history and custom," she continues. 'May we be granted the necessary courage and allotted an even more generous measure of patience. May we no longer be viewed as threats, either to chastity or to power, but as coworkers. When in desperation or discouragement we are tempted to give up the fight, may we remember that the cause is greater than ourselves."

Does the future look bright for Catholic women?

"It's an irresistible tide," says Ann Dea.

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people in this issue

DIANNE FESER

Dianne Feser is an adult student working towards her B.A. in Honours English at Windsor University. She started writing a year and a half ago and has recently had her work published in *Poetry Windsor Poesie*. Interests include psychic occurrences and women's acceptance of self. She is married and has two small sons.

ISABELLE FOORD

Isabelle Foord is an Edmonton writer and actress. Her work has appeared in *39 Below*, an anthology of Edmonton poets, and *White Pelican*. She has also had four children's plays published by Playwright's Co-op, Toronto. Last season she appeared in two mainstage productions at the Citadel Theatre, and two noon-hour poetry readings, most notably, "Who Is Sylvia?" a staged reading of the works of Sylvia Plath.

ALISON LINDSAY HOPWOOD

Alison Hopwood was born in Montreal and grew up there. Before moving to Vancouver, she lived briefly in Ottawa and Halifax, and for some time in Toronto, where she married. She attended McGill University, University of Toronto, and Sussex University (England). Jobs have included social worker, and researcher. She is now an instructor in English at Vancouver Community College. Her two children are now grown up.

GINNY STIKEMAN

Ginny Stikeman was born in Ottawa and raised in Montreal. She studied English and French at McGill, then lived in France for two years. She has worked for the National Film Board since 1968 and became a picture-documentary editor in 1971 — first with the Challenge for Change Program and then with Studio D headed by Kathleen Shannon. She enjoys painting and drawing and has a special interest in block printing techniques. One of her drawings was published in the fantasy series last issue.

SANDRA SEMCHUK

Sandra Semchuk is a Saskatoon photographer and a founding member of the Photographer's Gallery artist co-op. The photos printed here are part of a collection showing the people of Meadow Lake, her birthplace, and the people of Saskatoon. She recently received a Canada Council fellowship, and her work is included in the exhibition *Photography 75* at the NFB Photo Gallery in Ottawa.

SHIRLEY A. WISHART

Shirley Wishart is a registered record librarian by profession with 17 years experience. She has co-authored a book of medical abbreviations and symbols, and is presently taking evening courses towards a B.A. with an English major. Interests include writing, natural history and geneology. She was born in Haynes, Alberta and now lives in Coaldale, Alberta.

JOAN MCNERNEY

Joan McNerney was born in New York City and studied at the New School for Social Research. Her work has been published in numerous magazines and journals in the U.S.A. and Canada. A long narrative poem, "Crossing The River Rubicon" is to be published by Morgan Press, Wisconsin, in 1976. She is currently working on a new book about schizophrenia.

KAREN LAWRENCE

Karen Lawrence received her B.A. in English from the University of Western Ontario. She recently completed her Master's degree in English at the University of Alberta. Her poetry and reviews have been published in *White Pelican*, *America*, *Mainline* and *Black Moss*.

WINIFRED N. HULBERT

Winifred Hulbert lives in Hamiota, Manitoba. She has taught school and has had many poems and articles published. Her poems won first prize in a Manitoba Centennial contest. She and her husband have two daughters.

SHARON BATT

Sharon Batt grew up in Ottawa where she studied psychology at Carleton University. She received her Master's degree in psychology from the University of British Columbia, and later moved to Edmonton where she has been living for four years. As well as working on the staff of *Branching Out*, she has recently done free-lance radio work.

BRIGITTE KERWER

Brigitte has been interested in filmmaking and film criticism for several years. She graduated from the University of British Columbia in honours English and later lived in London, England where she wrote film reviews for a feminist publication. She recently made a short film in Edmonton on the subject of mothers of autistic children.

JUDY RITTER

Judy Ritter grew up in a small ocean town outside of Boston. She immigrated to Canada five years ago, and has spent the past year travelling in Europe and the U.S. She has taught at the University of Puerto Rico, Loyola (Montreal) and Dawson College. Her work has been published in *Folio Magazine*, *National Anthology of College Poetry*, *Pro Se* (a newsletter of women law students), and *Fiddlehead*.

LINDA ARMSTRONG

Linda Armstrong is at present living and working in Edmonton. She is currently employed in television work, and has aspirations to become a TV producer. Her interests include plants and fish. She is an artist in her spare time.

HELEN FITZPATRICK

Helen Fitzpatrick is both a committed Catholic and a committed feminist, a combination of roles which she says is not always easy. As a free-lance writer, she is a regular contributor to the *Western Catholic Reporter* and *Heritage* magazine. Her work has appeared on C.B.C., in the *Atlantic Advocate*, and in other periodicals. She is the mother of two teenagers and is currently working on an International Women's Year project for the separate schools in Edmonton.

the Third! $ 2,500 Search-for-a-new-Alberta-Novelist Competition

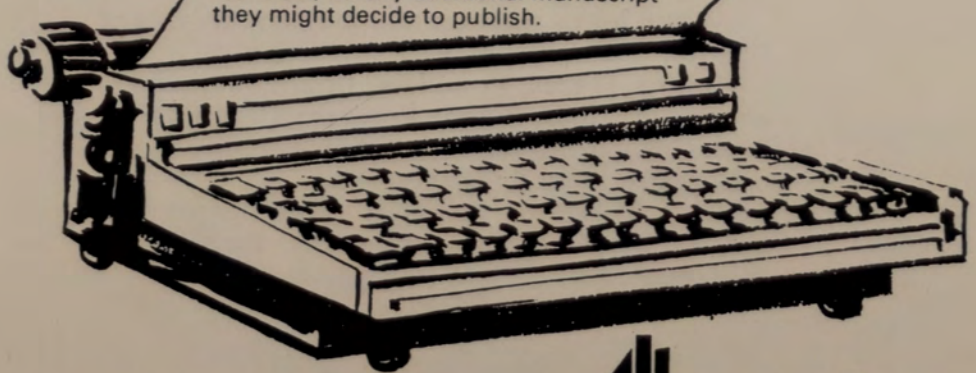
At a Regional Writers' Workshop at Lethbridge in 1972, Jan Truss decided to try a novel for the first Search-for-a-new-Alberta Novelist Competition. She not only won the Government of Alberta's prize of $1,000 cash, plus a publishing contract and $1,500 against royalties from The Macmillan Company of Canada — her novel has been purchased by **Redbook!** Says the Victoria Times Colonist, "Her novel has form, dimension, suspense, and a professionalism that many professional Canadian novelists might well envy."

The First and Second "Searches" uncovered a total of six such new Alberta novelists.

The conditions are simple. The Competition is open to bonafide Albertans only, and only to writers who have never had a novel published (a writer of published non-fiction is eligible).

Manuscripts may run 60,000 to 100,000 words. Deadline for entries is December 31, 1975.

The winning entry will receive a $1,000 cash prize from the Government of Alberta, plus a $1,500 advance royalty from the Macmillan Company of Canada. In addition, the Macmillan Company of Canada will offer an advance of $500 (along with standard contract) on any additional manuscript they might decide to publish.



For complete details, write:
Alberta Culture, Youth
and Recreation
Literary Arts Branch
11th Floor, CN Tower
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0K5

Alberta

CULTURE, YOUTH
AND RECREATION

IT'S INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR!

To help promote International Women's Year the Alberta Bureau will be represented at many fairs throughout the Province.

Watch for us this summer in major centres of Alberta.

Donna Fraser, Provincial Coordinator, IWY, along with the Federal Program Coordinator, Inger Gordon and various women's organizations, is organizing the display.

If you'd like us to come to your community either during the fair or at another time please contact:

Donna Fraser,
801 Sun Oil Bldg.,
500 - 4th Ave. S.W.
Calgary, Alberta

Phone: 261-6136

Hope to see you this summer.