Branching Out

CANADIAN MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN

MAY/JUNE 1975 $1.00

ABORTION: PAST AND PRESENT

DAISY DEBOLT

HOLLYWOOD'S FILMS ABOUT WOMEN

OUR PRISONS FOR WOMEN

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cover photo by Alice Baumann-Rondez

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letters

Perhaps you will permit me a few paragraphs of comment on the wrong-headed review of *Colombo's Canadian Quotations* written by Alison L. Hopwood and published in the March/April issue?

"Colombo seems to be concerned with writing a history of who said what, rather than with letting the words speak for themselves." Expressed positively rather than pejoratively, this translates: "The editor has supplied the context for those remarks of an historical nature that would not otherwise be understood by the contemporary reader."

"He seems to have made efforts to include every American entertainer who happened to have been born in Canada." In other words: "He took great pains to omit no entertainers with a Canadian connection."

"His practice of using others' prose as his verse may indicate an inability to appreciate poetry." (Then again his practice may indicate no such thing.) This is a red herring.

"The platitudes of governors-general, the trivia of movie stars," etc. Certainly "governor-generalities" have a place in a book of *Canadian* quotations; what could be more Canadian? One man's "trivia" is another man's "treasure"; most reviewers of the book have found Marilyn Monroe's comment on Canada (to name but one Hollywood contributor) worth its space.

"Colombo quotes from none of these" (i.e., the dozen or so names previously given). The easiest thing to review is the book the author or editor did not write or edit. There are, after all, 2,500 contributors to the book, not 25,000.

I would like to point out, too, that Ms. Hopwood has not found a single error in the book (although there are some). *Nor, for all her remonstrations to the contrary, has she quoted a single remark that should be in the book but is not to be found there.* "We expect something different and better," she concludes, giving not a shred of evidence that a "different and better" book could be compiled along the lines she suggests.

Finally, she has not adequately discussed the book at hand. I find it most revealing of her eagerness to list the shortcomings of my quote book that in a review of almost one thousand words she did *not even mention* the existence of an index. Now, an index can make or break a quote book. Mine is a topical and keyword index of 20,000 entries. But then again I can understand why Ms. Hopwood did not mention this — she is only interested in alleged shortcomings, not actual achievements.

John Robert Colombo, Toronto

There are a number of native women contributing to the native peoples' struggle who deserve recognition. They have not made the impact of, for example, Maria Campbell, with her book *Halfbreed,* but each of these women, in her own time and place, contributes to the overall pattern of progress. I think it fitting that a Canadian women's magazine dedicate at least one issue to these women, or include them in each issue, as a matter of course. Although I feel that there are contributions being made all over the province, the Alberta woman north of Edmonton appears at present to receive the least recognition for her efforts.

In the field of education, which is the area I personally am most familiar with, there exist teachers, teacher-aides, and counsellors helping in the struggle to make education meaningful and understandable to native children. Included among those I have met teaching in Metis areas are: Cora Weber, teacher at Caslan (Lac La Biche School Division). Cora is presently involved in a local native studies project and vitally concerned with education for and about native peoples. Violet Carlson is a counsellor-aide at Calling Lake, Alberta, able to assist the young people with their personal problems because of her own personal familiarity with them. There are a number of women in these capacities with school divisions in the northern areas. I have mentioned these two because I know them best.

There are native women in the field of journalism: Dorothy Daniels, Metis Association, Eleanor Brass, a fascinating older women who writes from Peace River for the Alberta Native Communications Society.

Many of the older women in the native communities can tell of a lively history of struggle in their personal lives. We hear much of Harold Cardinal, and yet his mother too is an admirable woman who remembers what the first mission schools were like, and knows what it is to raise a large family with little assistance and much hard work.

And within the communities themselves, native women are working against difficult obstacles (often men) to make their communities healthier and happier for their children. An example is Theresa Patinaude of Kikano Colony. Theresa presently teaches the pre-school program and is and has been actively involved in a number of community issues.

I believe that it is time that these women were recognized outside of their own communities. The battles they fight are difficult and recognition in my opinion helps to give moral support where progress sometimes appears slow to those right 'in the middle' of the muddle. Native women are truly Canadian women and share with non-native women the concerns for a better future of cooperation and justice for the coming generations.

Please let's see something, somewhere, recognizing them, particularly in this International Women's Year.

Gaye Abrey, Edmonton

Upon reading the editorial in the March/April issue, I feel that I can relate to the concepts in Ms. Jong's book and to how Ms. Antonelli applies them in a message to all the readers of *Branching Out*. This last editorial certainly lends some insight to where we are going via the liberation movement and what we will realize along the way.

We must make a choice between the passive-aggressive games and the freedom we profess to strive for. Alas, here is the rub! In relinquishing the security of our well-defined roles, the time comes when we have the freedom and with it, the responsibility to chart our own route and consequently face the pressures men have had to face all along in our competitive society. And this choice is up to the individual.

The final step towards liberation brings us into the existential realm where life's problems transcend the division between the sexes, where both sexes share in the quest for security, companionship, fulfillment, love and freedom.

In this light, the question of accepting male contributions for *Branching Out* comes not as a threat but as an enriching source of feedback to achieve a better awareness of ourselves as individuals. And certainly some foresight will maintain the magazine as an open avenue for women to express themselves without the risk of a power play for dominance on behalf of our male contributors.

Elaine Mailhot, Edmonton.

Marylu Antonelli's editorial for me was dead on and the article *Who is the New Eve* was stimulating. An informative, thought provoking and well-produced issue.

Ann Davis, Winnipeg.

I am a young woman from Montreal, living in New York temporarily. A close friend in Edmonton sent me your magazine. I've read it thoroughly and enjoyed it.

I was really interested in your poll of readers — it's really good that you reach rural people and that they are responsive. As a basically city person, I tend to think of relatively new movements in terms of the cities where they are most evident. A lot of city people are insensitive to smaller communities — or maybe I am just unaware myself.

I also wonder at your excluding men totally from the magazine. As a woman without a feminist philosophy to back her up, I think you may be excluding *people* who are good writers or reviewers.

Kathe Roth, New York

It would be interesting to make a comparison of a feminist book reviewed independently by a woman and a man. It would illuminate attitudes.

Gertrude Katz, Montreal

Sally Go 'Round the Roses (January/February 1975) was touching and lovely.
Susan E. Wadds, Winlaw, B.C.

I particularly enjoyed the article on Atwood, and the short story by Candas Dorsey (January/February, 1975). As a former Edmontonian, I am happy to see the west Branching Out.
Dianne Feser, Woodslee, Ontario

Since we really need a good women's magazine, I had great hopes for *Branching Out* when it first began.

For a long time, I have felt there weren't enough articles about working women, day care, or even women's liberation in general. Most of my feelings were covered by other people in the issue where you printed reader's comments and criticisms. I expected improvement after that; it didn't happen.

In your editorial in the latest issue (March/April), you explain why; you identify with those who have been "educated to the level of their choice; they have jobs which are not sex-oriented; they have freedom either within or without marriage or family. Yet they are discontent, restless, unfulfilled." Well that's very sad, but how many such women are there in Canada? 12? 50? 312? Men have exactly the same problems, and while I'm sure it's tough, it's not the kind of thing I can get very torn up about. Most women are concerned with the survival of themselves and their children.

"Sisterhood" died a long time ago; perhaps I'm the only one who still feels hurt at betrayal by middle-class "sisters." There are some issues (birth control, abortion, rape) which are common to all women but the cleavage along class lines has pretty well destroyed the sisterhood notion.

I read Erica Jong's book and kept looking for some redeeming feature. She says some cliches about women's liberation but apart from that, the story goes something like this: Isadora Wing, a spoiled, middle-class bitch who hates women and Germans, goes on a trip to Europe with her husband. She is rich, educated, but feels dissatisfied, and is obsessed with her genital organs. She is convinced that what she needs most is a good fuck. She thinks she has found it when a man grabs her ass at a conference. She leaves her husband and goes off with this man who appeals to her because he is sadistic and constantly insults her. He doesn't pro-

cont. on p. 43

here and there

A song for International Women's Year has been written and recorded by Jaqueline Lemay, of Montreal. *La Moitié du Monde est une Femme* has also been translated into English *(Half the World is Woman)*, by Angele Arsenault. The song was commissioned by the United Nations and its production was funded partly by the Quebec government. A 45 RPM record with English and French versions of the song is available for $1.50 from SPPS Disques, 2030 Crescent, Suite 6, Montreal, P.Q.

A pilot issue of a "Woman and Law" publication is in the planning stages in Ottawa. The planning committee feels there is a need for a journal which would provide a forum for the comprehensive discussion of subjects pertaining to women and the law, which would provide legal information, and which would be a clearinghouse for case documentation or bibliographic information. Information, suggestions and support are invited. Write to Christine Mitchell, Co-ordinator, Women and the Law Journal, The Canadian Council on Social Development, P.O. Box 3505, Station C, Ottawa K1Y 4G1.

ATLANTIS is a women's studies journal, to be published biannually, beginning in the fall. The journal will be published and edited by the instructors involved in the interdisciplinary women's studies course at Acadia University. An advisory board is being formed and will be made up of women from throughout Canada. Short stories, poetry, articles, interviews, book and film reviews, photography and graphic work are invited from women involved in creative and scholarly activities both inside and outside the universities. Subscriptions are $5.00 per year. Write to Donna E. Smyth, Co-ordinating Editor, c/o English Department, Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

The library of the University of Waterloo plans to mount a major IWY project which will involve cataloguing and sorting a collection of archival material relating to women's studies. Many of the papers, scrapbooks and clippings in the library's extensive collection are not usable because of the lack of a bibliography listing. The library is preparing a proposal to submit to various funding agencies. For further information write to Information Services, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario.

A publication about the never married woman is planned by a Winnipeg-based committee of women. Planned topics are the current social and economic position of women who have never married, and their contributions to Canadian society. Academic, statistical, and personal material will be considered. Women who want to write about their thoughts and experiences should emphasize, in particular, personal and career accomplishments that they attribute to the fact of being unmarried. Copies of published articles that appear relevant are also welcomed (give source and date). Write to Marianne Bossen, Co-ordinator, The Never Married Woman, 123 Home Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 1W8.

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editorial

Over the past few years many of the important reforms demanded by women have been realized.Some of us now have the convenience of daycare, better pay and more influential and creative jobs. We're pleased that this has been accomplished, but we shouldn't forget that there is still ample room left for change.

A case in point is the daycare system. Daycare has lost the stigmatic image of being a social service for disadvantaged children. In the past few years, the increase in the number of daycare centers has done a great deal to relieve women of the sole responsibility for caring for pre-school children. Yet, daycare is still an issue. The problem is two-fold. First, daycare facilities in Canada fall far short of meeting the demand. Second, the quality of existing services is uneven and, in some cases, questionable. Daycare programs have been operating long enough for us to know what improvements are needed. These changes should be made now, when programs are still basically flexible, rather than later, when they will be more resistant to change.

Consider the first problem: the need for more daycare facilities. Reporting on a survey of daycare needs taken by the Canadian Council on Social Development, Philip Hepworth stated that while there clearly is a need for before- and after-school services for children between the ages of six and fourteen, it seems more realistic to base calculations on the under-six age group, which accounted for 2¼to 2½ million children in 1973. That year there were only 26,500 children in full daycare and 50,000 more in half-day or part-day programs, even though there were 643,000 working mothers with children under six years of age. Assuming that each working mother has only one child and that certain other services such as babysitting are available, there is still an enormous discrepancy between the number of potential daycare users and the number of daycare places available. With more women entering the job market each year, the demand for daycare service will continue to be high.

Returning to the second question, society demands that children have adequate care whether it is given by parents or caretakers. In the daycare situation this means that there must be the proper physical and emotional environment and the qualified staff to ensure that care. Canada has no set standards which guarantee quality in all daycare facilites. Conditions vary, not only from province to province but from facility to facility within one city. In my own experience in Edmonton, I have seen a competent child-care worker responding to seven children and I have seen twenty to twenty-five children playing in a 12 by 15 foot room with one adult supervisor. In any group of children, as the numbers increase, so does the potential for aggression and frustration. What are the effects on the child who encounters this overcrowded situation day after day? Professional child care workers are insisting that a standard staff-child ratio be instituted. They recommend these ratios: for children three to four years old, the staff-child ratio should be 1:5; four to six years old, a ratio of 1:7; and six to fourteen years old, a ratio of 1:10. Keep in mind that a ratio of 2:10 in one room does not provide the same quality of care as a ratio of 1:5 in the same room.

And what about qualified staff? Is a sincere liking for children criterion enough to warrant a position as a senior child-care worker? It is in many provinces, where a simple subjective go-ahead from a pre-school program coordinator can put a person in charge of fifteen to twenty children in a daycare or playschool situation. Perhaps many years of training aren't necessary. But more compulsory in-service training programs or other growth programs which would help strengthen a potential child care worker's innate abilities should be instituted.

These points should remind us that there is still need for change. The concept of daycare is a good one but Canadian standards must be raised. The government has been reluctant to involve itself in the field because of the high cost of implementing quality daycare. Perhaps employers can take part in the economic function of daycare. Perhaps there can be some incentive for more community-sponsored centers. It is clear from past experience, however, that women will have to take the initiative.

by Barbara Hartmann

music

DAISY DEBOLT

by Beverley Ross

"She sings like a Spitfire," my friend said. I watched the stage even more intensely. Her motion is constant, sometimes in her voice, sometimes in her body but always diving, driving, drawing away. A Spitfire.

Fraser & DeBolt. A folk duo. Allan sings the lead, but Daisy tells the story. The minute subtleties and piercing extremes she wraps around the melody turn every song into a drama, recreate each song in a new dimension.

Like all music, theirs is impossible to describe. It seems equally impossible that an hour of conversation could describe a personality . . .

Daisy DeBolt grew up in Winnipeg in a family that made music: her grandfather was both a calligrapher and a professor of music; her mother taught music and played in an "all girl" vaudeville band. Daisy began singing and playing with her in a dance band, performing also in festival choruses and choirs.

Although at one point she considered her interest in art as a possible "out," Daisy had always planned to be a musician, despite the sacrifices that she knew by her mother's example the life would demand:

"She's not satisified with what she's done, and she sees her whole life through me. I'm doing everything she wanted to do. Because she never left Winnipeg, she's chained, so she lives my life . . . If she had not gotten married, I'm sure she would have gotten a lot farther . . .

"It depends on how serious you are about your career and what's more important to you: if a home is more important and a mate is more important to you, then your career is going to be second. So, you've got to put all that energy into it."

Daisy has been singing with Allan Fraser for six years:

"I met him at the Mariposa Folk Festival. I was singing with another group and so was he. We had done the "New Writer's Workshop," I came off the stage and he came running up to me and said, 'You have the most fantastic voice I've ever heard!' and I said, 'So do you, so do you!' So, it was instant joining. It took about a year before we got together . . . he just walked in the door and we just kept playing.

"There's a conversation there that's very fluid. We got out of our way to break it so we can go in different directions, so we make it fresh . . . but there's a definite, strict form to all of it . . . but that form is very rubbery, very elastic."

Fraser & DeBolt represented Canada at an international song festival in Poland last year. It was a somewhat overblown affair, replete with Las Vegas glitter and over-orchestrated songs — definitely not within the vocabulary of their style. They played their set, adding only a piano player and the harpist from the orchestra:

"There were just the four of us and you could drop a pin . . . When we finished our song, no one clapped. They just sat there and looked at us and there was this deathly silence for about a half a minute. All of a sudden, everyone started clapping like crazy. They didn't expect it. They'd been through so much pulp. Then here we came on, just bare like a skeleton, and did our really heavy numbers. That's what they'd been waiting for, something that was real."

For this they won the Critic's Award. It was later taken away, however, when they overstepped the bounds of protocol on "Polish Day" by singing a particularly revolutionary ballad. Although the audience identified with it, the authorities did not.

Daisy and Allan have recorded two albums for Columbia Records [listed below] but, tired of working for managers, agents, and "the War Lords" ("what's between you and the gigs out there"), tired of being mistaken for Americans by the press, the record companies and audiences on both sides of the border, they made a decision to work in Canada:

"Ever since we got together, we had worked in the States, for American companies and American clubs. Then we made this decision to work in Canada and give it a try. So, that's what we've done for the last year. We've worked in Canada . . . We've just about had it. We can't go any farther at the level that we're at right now without talking to the "Bernies" (Finkelstein & Fiedler — providers of

friendship and management to Canadian artists) or going to the States and recording with an American company, 'cause there's no way we can keep above water any longer working this circuit. Working in Canada can't support us . . . Take a look at all your concerts every year and see how many Americans are on the bill. It's insane trying to work here, just insane."

One result of this experiment is that Allan and Daisy have formed their own record company to produce their third album, "Aha!." recorded live last September at the Hovel, a club in Edmonton. Financed by subscription [see below] the album will be pressed as soon as sufficient funds are collected.

"We have a pretty mixed audience. Young people who come to see us will bring their parents and they'll bring their children and they'll bring their friends. I think the basic age is about twenty. You need a pretty good attention span. It's very intellectual .

"We work on a certain format where they get to hear the familiar songs, the songs they expect to hear and are disappointed if they don't. It breaks the ice and it makes it much easier for them to get into heavier songs. So, it might take a whole evening before we give them a song that is so complicated and so sophisticated that if they had gotten it in the beginning of the evening, they would have fallen asleep, they wouldn't have understood it. To take them through all these emotions first, before you get into anything heavier, is really important. I think you really have to educate your audience . . .

"Canadian audiences are more graceful [than American audiences]. I think an American audience will give a standing ovation for anything. It's sort of a cultish thing down there; everyone gets up en masse. Here, it's not like that; it's not 'show me what you can do' or 'let's discuss what you can do.' It's more of an intellectual thing. The audiences are calmer; they're not so demonstrative as American audiences. They're cooler . . . Canadians are so different from Americans . . . They have a kind of climatic temperament where they've gotta gather their nuts in fall; they get depressed around March 'cause winter's gone on too long . . .

"I really like performing and travelling. I would just like not to do it so much . . . I want to stop performing and just concentrate on study for a while and not move from one place . . ."

That one place would probably be the farm in Quebec, with three big gardens, goats and chickens which Daisy rents from a Dutch couple and returns to whenever she can.

"The farm is an idyllic harbour, but the only way I can stay there any length of time is to be very rich or get a government grant.

"I find it really hard to do what I'm doing right now, 'cause it's so lonely. I can't form any kind of permanent relationship with anybody because it gets to the point where they just can't cope with the trip . . . There's no way I can form a relationship by meeting and then taking off from an airport or a train station for the rest of my life . . . It's happened too many times. I just become hard and callous about it, or I just don't form any kind of permanent attachment to anybody except my home and my family. The only way you can ever keep it going is to have your old man on the road doing some kind of function — managing, sound, whatever it is he does . . .

"The person who's travelling has her own set of values as to how she lives. The person back home becomes like a monk, waiting for someone to come back. Everything is squeezed into a really short time, very unrealistic and bizarre; then she's gone again. You're grasping for every kind of emotion in an hour; then you're running off again."

Anyone who has to travel to make a living has to face a gaping loneliness. For the musician, there's the added stigma of the promiscuous star "on the road" — to which Daisy replies succinctly: "I'm not." Still, there are male groupies . . .

"Very energetic and adoring. Every once in a while, I'll strike up a friendship with someone who comes on like that just to find out what he's like . . . Their eyes are so glassed over, all they see is something of their dreams . . . then you talk to them and they realize you're a person and they transfer that into something else that's a little more human. They've watched you for so long and they know your

every movement, they think they really know you . . . you're theirs . . . they just assume you're going to know them just as well as they know you.

"Among the musicians that we work with, it's a total exchange. I'm treated as another instrument. There's not that much difference being female, I don't think, but I'm the only female, which is a little weird . . . There are not that many women in the business . . . I have a hard time finding women to work with . . . I'm doing a series of things for Women's Year this year . . ."

Daisy has written a ballet based on a song called "Dance Senorita Rita, Dance Until Your Feet Bleed."

"It's all about women . . . (Rita) will do something very, very beautiful you're almost crying. And then she'll do something so grotesque and so ludicrous that you can't do anything but laugh at her. But you're laughing at her pain too . . . No matter how beautiful or how graceful women are, they're laughed at so much too for their weaknesses and the pain that they go through. There's no sympathy there, at all; it's ridicule . . . She dances the humour but she also dances the pain of it. Rita's completely crushed regardless of how beautiful she is . . . Woman's death in society is symbolized by her getting killed by the bull. She runs through the streets and runs through the streets, until finally the bull gores her and she dies."

The ballet is one of the events scheduled for a festival that Daisy is helping Sylvia Tyson stage at Harbour Front, an open air concert area in downtown Toronto. For all women, it will include concerts and music and craft workshops. [It's tentatively scheduled for sometime in June. Hopefully, a later issue will give the details].

Daisy's other plans include a CBC radio special, a concert at Montreal's Centurion Theatre, as well as a video-tape she and Beverly Glenn-Copeland, a singer-songwriter from Montreal, will make for television or the National Film Board about themselves and their work, together and separately. Beverly Glenn-Copeland is one of the people who performs Daisy's songs:

"My songs are hard to do. For one thing, you've got to have a good range to do them and vocal control. Most of my music is the kind that you really have to interpret . . . interpret with a lot of emotion. If you don't, the song just falls flat. "For me to write a song takes about six months and I have to go through great traumatic change . . . At the end of it, it becomes prophetic and it helps me along through the next section. But it takes a long time . . . The music and the words are different. I'll work on a phrase and then that phrase will suggest something else . . . The words will probably come first; I'll probably get a chorus first, maybe even two or three lines, and then from there I'll work the music into the rhythm of the words. Then from that point, I don't have any more words left . . . What I have there will suggest the rest of the song musically. Then when I've developed it musically, I decide what I want to say. I usually know what I want to say; I just don't know how to put it into words. The rhythm of the music suggests the words . . .

"We don't do that many of my songs. For one thing, Allan doesn't know them that well. We haven't rehearsed them and I refuse to do them if they haven't been rehearsed, 'cause I just can't stand bungling along on my song. I get furious, just furious. I'll come to a point where I'll smash my guitar . . . I think also with me doing these things for women's year, it will give me a chance to do what I want to do, 'cause one reason we don't do my material is because it isn't that accessible to the kind of audience that comes to hear Fraser & DeBolt.

"I think it's important that I do (solo work) . . . I feel very suffocated. I've been with Allan for so long that it's come to a point where we've just become too familiar. The only way I can rationalize it is when we meet, it has to be something really special and when it comes to a point where it's too familiar, I've got to go away and do something else so that when we come back together, it's much more important than it is now."

Perhaps this interview should end by returning to the state where Daisy & Allan have a struck the dramatic last note of the evening. Or perhaps it should quote some appropriate lyrics. It isn't going to: unfortunately, the best way to support the music you like is to buy that music.

You should *see* her perform . . .
You should *hear* her lyrics . . .

"Fraser & DeBolt with Ian Guenther:" Columbia C 30381

"With Pleasure:" Columbia KC 32130

"Aha!" Send $5 to: Fraser & DeBolt Subscription Fund, R.R.1, Cookshire, Quebec.

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ABORTION:

Woman's body, Man's law

by The Abortion Action Committee
The Kingston Women's Centre

Opponents of choice in the question of abortion frequently imply that the demand for free, safe abortion is a late 20th Century phenomenon indicative of decadence and the decline of society. Often they argue that those of us who favor choice encourage the violation of a natural law which has prohibited abortion throughout history. These are gross generalizations which do not fit historical fact.

Western culture has been shaped largely by Christian teaching. So, to put the abortion question in perspective, we must examine the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the centuries. There have been periods when opinion in the Catholic Church on abortion was divided, mainly over the question as to whether there is a time when the fetus has no human soul. St. Augustine, an early church father, said, "There cannot yet be said to be a live soul in a body that lack sensation."

Some early Christian theologians believed, as had Aristotle, that animation or "coming alive" of the fetus occurs 40 days after conception for a boy and 80 days for a girl. Others thought that "quickening," when the woman first feels the fetus move, is the decisive sign. The only point on which everyone agreed was that once the fetus has a soul, to destroy it is a form of murder. To destroy it before that time was still sinful but less seriously so.

In 1955, anthropologist George Devereux published a major study of abortion among earlier peoples showing that abortion has been practiced in all known human communities. In 14th Century England the common law allowed abortion up until quickening, which usually occurs in the fifth month. Thus arose in 1327 the "Twinslayer's Case" involving a murder charge against a man who had severely beaten a pregnant woman and caused her to miscarry. One twin was born dead; the other died shortly after birth. The man pleaded not guilty and was acquitted because judges rules that the killing of the fetuses did not constitute murder.

Also significant was the "Abortionist's Case" of 1348 in which an abortionist was charged with murder. The accused was found not guilty for two reasons: the fetus had no baptismal name and it was not possible to determine whether the fetus had died naturally before the abortion.

These pre-reformation judges, who refused to define abortion as murder, were all Roman Catholics. They must have been aware that the Church disapproved of abortion, but they refused to make abortion an offence in the secular courts. In 1670 the English judge, Sir Matther Hale, decided that if a *woman* died as a result of an abortion then the abortionist was guilty of murder. No mention of the fetus was made in this case.

Laws were passed in early 19th Century England prohibiting abortion, but their aim was to protect the lives of *women* against the dangerous abortion techniques of the time. In 1803, the British Parliament passed Lord Ellenborough's Act which forbade the administering of any substance to "murder or cause to procure the miscarriage of any women then being *quick* with child." An article in the 1832 London *Legal Examiner* read:

> The reason assigned for the punishment of abortion is not that thereby an embryo human being is thereby destroyed, but that it rarely or never can be effected with drugs without the sacrifice of the mother's life.

Laws were passed in Britain and in North America later in the 19th century which further tightened up on abortion. In 1823 a law passed in New York outlawed abortion except to preserve the life of the mother. The same law said that a female who was sentenced to death could be executed if she was pregnant, provided that the fetus was not yet "quick." Several other states followed New York's example. The New Jersey Supreme Court, in 1858, pronouncing upon the state's 1848 law prohibiting abortion, stated:

> The design of the statute was not to prevent the procuring of abortions so much as to guard the health and life of the mother against the consequences of such attempts.

Not until the mid 19th Century did the Roman Catholic Church tighten up its official stand against abortion. In 1869, Pope Pius IX eliminated the distinction between an animated and a non-animated fetus. Commenting on this change

drawing by Barbara Hartmann

in church policy, the authors of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* state:

> As biologists in the nineteenth century began to understand conception, women began to practice more effective contraception. Catholic countries such as France began 'losing' the population race and the Church wanted to keep its mothers in the running. So the Church itself turned to biology and used the idea that 'life' and therefore, soul-infused human life, begins at fertilization.

And, referring to the anti-abortion laws passed in England and North America in the mid-19th Century, they say:

> At the time, English and American industries needed workers; the huge farmable territories of the new world needed farmers and the Civil War had depleted America's labour crop. Anti-abortion laws saw to it that woman took her place beside the other machines of a developing economy.

In 1865, the English surgeon Joseph Lister began using antiseptic surgery. This revolution spread slowly and did not affect North America until the turn of the Century. Before antiseptic surgery, an abortion in the first three months of pregnancy was 10 to 15 times as dangerous as a delivery at full term. Later, abortion became less dangerous and at some point less risky to the woman than childbirth. Today, doctor-performed abortions are one-eighth as dangerous as childbirth at full term.

In 20th Century Scandinavia movements were made toward repeal of laws prohibiting abortion. In 1934, Iceland changed its law in response to public pressure. In Denmark, in 1929, a delegation of working women petitioned Parliament to remove the severe penalties. A few years later, a Copenhagen doctor opened an abortion clinic, was tried and convicted, and served as an example of the injustice of a system where illegal abortions could be obtained only by the rich. In 1932 Denmark established a commission to study the issue and a 'liberal' law was passed in 1939.

In Sweden the National League for Sex Education lobbied both for legalized abortion and birth control until a law was passed in 1938 allowing abortion for specified reasons. This law was broadened in 1946. Abortion was gradually allowed in Norway, although the actual law was not passed until 1960.

Lawrence Lader points out that, technically, Scandinavian countries do not have abortion "on demand." The most common ground is medical: a serious threat to life or physical and mental health arising from disease, bodily defect, or exhaustion. In 1946, Swedish law extended "exhaustion" to "anticipated exhaustion," allowing the woman's total socio-economic environment to be taken into consideration. In Norway abortion is also allowed for socio-economic reasons. Another category in Scandinavia could be described as "eugenic," meaning that abortion is permitted if the fetus is potentially defective. A final category, "humanitarian," applies to cases of rape, incest or impregnation of a woman under sixteen.

Lader feels that in Scandinavia the number of abortions has been controlled too strongly. In Sweden in 1964, over 1200 of 4500 applications were refused. After reaching a peak of 6300 in 1951, Swedish abortions declined to about 3000 in 1965. Critics of the Scandinavian laws allege that illegal abortions have not been reduced, but Lader states that figures to support this contention are not reliable. He notes that in Sweden controls were so tight student organizations in 1965 began aiding to go to Poland where an abortion could be obtained at an early stage without lengthy bureaucratic procedures.

Eastern Bloc countries generally allow abortion on demand. Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland legalized abortion in 1956, Rumania in 1957. Czechoslovakia started with unrestricted abortions but tightened up in 1962. Yugoslavia established a system of moderate controls in 1960. Contraception has been encouraged by the State in recent years, resulting in an increase in production of contraceptives beginning in 1955. The Polish Government requires every applicant to attend clinic courses in contraception. A contraception campaign was extended to places of employment and to organizations such as trade unions. Lader, in the mid-1960's, noted that in Hungary and Poland, countries largely populated by Roman Catholics, the church initially opposed the legal change, but that this opposition had abated.

China since 1949 has had one of the most open abortion policies in the world. Abortion is free upon request. This policy reflects concern about the country's increasing population and also the official pos-

ition that women have the right to control their reproductive capacity. Interestingly, when an abortion is performed within 50 days of conception the women gets 10 days off work; in a case of later termination, the woman gets more time off. Emphasis is on woman's role as worker. Since day-care facilities are widespread, lack of adequate care for children is not a motive for abortion in China.

Russia's official policy on abortion has varied since the Revolution. Prior to 1917, abortion was forbidden under all circumstances, in line with the teaching of the Orthodox Church. In 1920, the Commissariats of Health and Justice permitted free abortions at all Soviet hospitals and prohibited anyone but doctors from performing them. This decree was a response to the belief in female equality expressed by the revolutionaries and illustrated by Lenin's statement that no woman should be forced to bear a child against her will. It was also a response to the grim economic conditions of the time. Shortly thereafter, the Health Commissariat claimed that illegal abortion had been stamped out. However, some Americans who visited Russia between 1920 and 1936 felt that the government was not doing enough to promote contraception.

In June 1936, under Stalin, abortion was forbidden except for organic reasons or when pregnancy threatened the life and health of the woman. At that time Russia was industrializing and needed workers. Lader considered this change as "only part of a larger crackdown on the revolutionary enthusiasm of the old Bolsheviks. For, in the same period, Stalin also abolished such previously glorified precepts of human rights as easy divorce laws, and stamped out flourishing experiments in progressive education and avant garde schools of music and literature." In 1944 the title of "Mother Heroine" was established for women who had raised more than 10 children; significantly, this happened near the end of World War II, in which Russia had suffered severe population losses.

In 1955, after Stalin's death, Russia returned to an emphasis on

cont. on p. 38

Summary of International Planned Parenthood Statistics (1972) on Abortion Law in Various Countries.

Illegal:

AFRICA:	Dahomey, Equatorial Guinea, Melagasy Republic, Mauritius, Reunion.
AMERICAS:	Bolivia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemalo, Haiti, Panama.
ASIA:	Burma, Hong Kong, Jordan, (South) Korea, Laos, Lebanon, Malaysia, Phillipines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand, Taiwan, South Vietnam.
EUROPE:	Belgium, Irish Republic, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Spain.

Allowed when necessary to save "life," but not "life and health" of women:

AFRICA:	Algeria, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Somali, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Upper Volta, Zaire, Zambia.
AMERICAS:	Chile (law may have changed due to change of government since 1972), Guadeloupe, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Venezuela.
ASIA:	Bahrain, Cambodia, Cyprus, Fiji, Iran, Kuwait, New Zealand, Pakistan, Yemen.
EUROPE:	Albania, Austria, Federal Republic of Germany (since 1972 law changed to permit abortion in 1st 3 months of pregnancy), Netherlands.

Allowed for "life and health" reasons: (Interpretation of the word "health" varies, in some cases meaning mental health. Countries marked with a * allow abortion for additional reasons. They do not necessarily have abortion on demand.)

AFRICA:	Ethiopia, Morocco, Nigeria, Sierre Leone, Tunisia*, Uganda.
AMERICAS:	Argentina, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba*, Ecuador*, El Salvador*, Honduras, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay*, U.S.A.*
ASIA:	Australia*, Ceylon, Chinese People's Republic*, India*, Japan*, Mongolia*, Singapore*, Turkey*, North Vietnam*, North Korea*.
EUROPE:	Bulgaria*, Czechoslovakia*, Denmark*, German Democratic Republic (East Germany)*, Greece*, Hungary*, Iceland*, Norway*, Poland*, Rumania*, Sweden*, Switzerland*, United Kingdom*, U.S.S.R.*, Yugoslavia*.

Note: Botswana, Malawi, Swaziland, Seychelles, Zambia and Montserrat allow abortions for "medical reasons," the exact nature of which are unspecified in the I.P.P. statistics.

LIVELIHOOD FROM POTS

photos and article

by Eunice Willar

Joan Shaw, a talented and enthusiastic potter from Fredericton, N.B., is one of those rare individuals who finds fulfillment in her work. Her attitude toward her craft is traditional: she creates pots for people — pots which at the same time are both attractive and functional.

"The medium of clay is very flexible and spontaneous; I like the feeling of carrying an idea I have in my head through various stages of development and ending in a finished product which pleases me."

Ms. Shaw expressed particular delight in the most fragile stage of clay, the freshly thrown pot, which is an object of great simplicity.

"I regard pottery as one of the most pure and uncluttered forms of art.In my mind, a freshly thrown pot, regardless of its complexity, is a single statement of art, and as valid a statement of art as that which might be conveyed on canvas with oils. Because clay is very flexible, it allows the artist working with it the advantage of depth, texture and motion."

Joan Shaw first became interested in pottery in 1967 when she married a potter. During the next five years, she glazed, made handbuilt pieces, stacked the kiln, and operated the sales end of the studio she and her husband ran. In 1972, she experienced childbirth and divorce in close succession and was faced with having to support herself and her infant son.

"I had to learn how to throw pots, formulate glazes and fire a gas kiln. After a few long, frustrating months of what had to be the mammoth learning experience of my life, I opened my pot-filled studio for business."

Although Ms. Shaw is fairly new as a worker in clay, her involvement with crafts is long-standing. She attended the N.B. Handcraft School and later taught silkscreen printing and textile painting for two years. In May 1974, she participated in a two-woman show at the Cassel Galleries, Fredericton. Her work can be found in the collection of the Department of Tourism, N.B. as well as in many private collections. Ms. Shaw is Executive Secretary of the N.B. Craftsman's Council and for the past two years has been Chairman of the Fundy Festival of Crafts. Last summer she attended the World Craft Conference at York University as a full-time potter.

"I exercise a great deal of self-discipline with regard to hours spent in the shop and feel that I *must* in order for the whole undertaking to work. I often become so hung up with the repetitive production side of my craft that sometimes

cont. on p. 39

DEMONSTRATION

The gull

having scrutinized
the winter's buttocks

self-detonates:

feathers
fall
like parachutists
demonstrating
the demarcation
of
their
pilot.

PRAYER

I want to forget

You
have given me
away.
I
will fetch you
back
in the evening
late.

I want to

With both
hands
watch how I climb
down
the path
of the enlarged pupil.

forget.

Outside
my eyes
I go for a long walk
into the stillness
of
flowers.

On this street I do not hear the morning burst of awnings I experience a pattern of day there is not any change within me to reflect my desire for more light and a color I am polished and transformed into this shape of a poem.

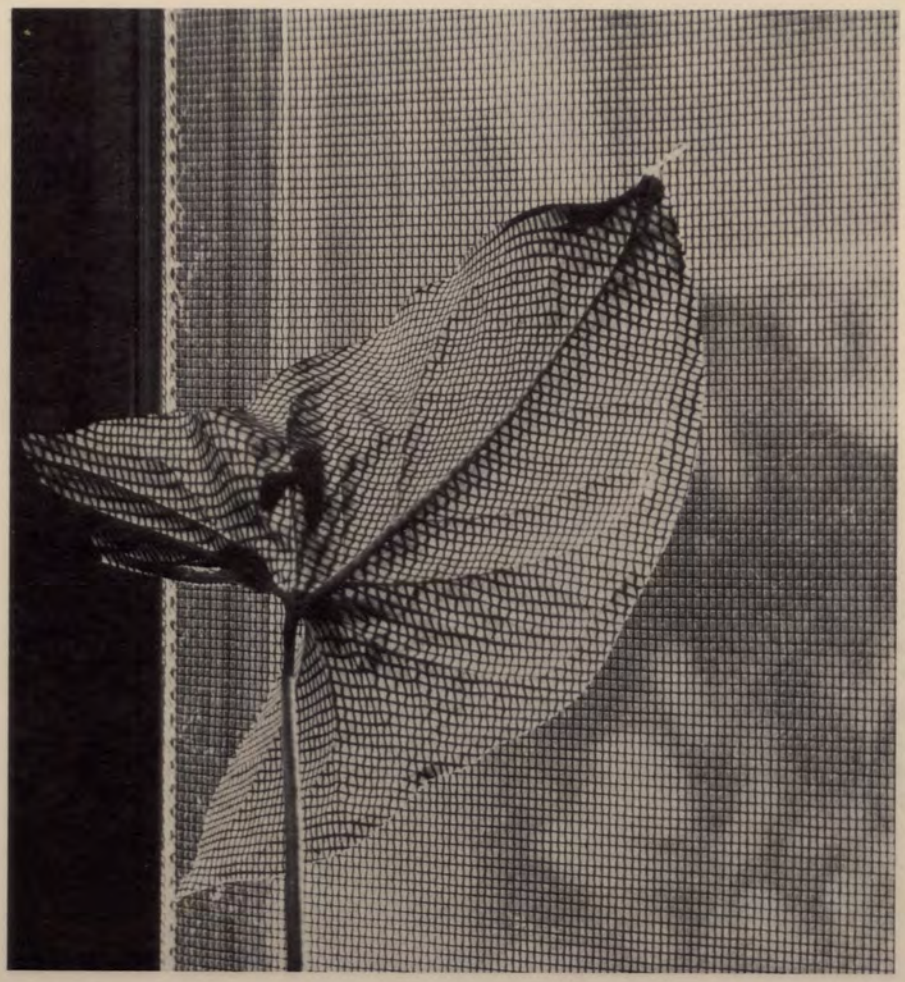
THE SEEDLING

I sleep, I dream, waking before the clerk of flowers, breathing from his mouth, more in than out. His finger points to my throat. I am surrounded and gathered in like sticks of kindling, without reason, pulling me down into the sediment. They are there, the rhododendron, the dogwood, laughing at my awkward arrival. Their curious eyes invading my privacy, a needle sewing my torn flesh into foliage. They have hung me between trees like a clothesline. They are there, leaving their gifts of petals as inheritance.

Rosalind MacPhee

FEMALE PRISONERS:

Are You Ready To Accept



by MaryEllen Gillan

photo by Terri Terni

Imprisonment is the ultimate form of social control. For the female offender, alternatives to incarceration, including fines, suspended sentences, and probation, are often employed. The use of these alternatives seems to stem from the attitude that women are pawns in the hands of men, that they have been misguided or misdirected. In many instances, women are not held responsible for their own actions. This lenient attitude may be humane, but the reasoning behind it contributes to the negative aspects of corrections for women. A woman is usually not incarcerated until after she has committed a number of offences, or a serious crime, perhaps one involving violence.

The lenient, paternal attitude of the courts has resulted in a small female inmate population. Less that 5 per cent of the total inmate population in Canada is female. Because this female population is so small, it is not given much attention; the larger population of male prisoners demands the administrative and policy-planning time and money. This is at variance with the recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women: "No matter how small the female jail population, adequate treatment programs and services should be organized for women. In fact, the small numbers provide an opportunity to try out new methods of correction."

Fortunately, there has been progress in corrections. It is not rapid, and there is little emphasis on the female offender, but the recent changes indicate a move toward more positive methods of rehabilitation. This article will concentrate on the female lawbreaker in prison; other aspects of the judicial procedure as it relates to women are deserving of separate discussion.

The public's desire to punish those who have sinned against society accounts in part for the insistence on bars and isolation of prison facilities. Western society has traditionally ostracized its deviants. The mental hospitals and the jails are situated outside the cities, out of sight. We do not want to be reminded of *them*.

Statistics, studies, and the people who work with inmates inform us that very few females offenders are dangerous to the public. Yet they are locked up, ostracized from society. It is said that a nation can be judged by ɔw its prisoners are treated. The treatment of the incarcerated female in Canada reflects a backward attitude toward corrections in general and women in particular.

Start with the corrections facility. Most provinces have only one facility for the female offender sentenced to a "deuce-less" (two years less a day). In many cases this facility must also serve as a remand centre; it must deal with minimum, medium and maximum security classifications. Prisons range from the stereotypes depicted in novels and old movies to modern buildings hardly recognizable as prisons.

Them In Your Community?

Cell blocks still exist. Individual cells are separated from each other, from the rest of the institution and from the outside world by steel bars. The front bars of the cell, whether painted in pastel tones or not, permit easy viewing of all activities within the cell, including the use of toilet facilities. These cells degrade the occupant by taking away all privacy. Private rooms within locked or guarded buildings are equally efficient at keeping the offender away from society, but they provide some privacy and do not destroy self-respect, thus lessening the harmful effects institutionalization has on the prisoner's self-esteem. The Canadian Congress of Corrections has noted "the importance of small, well-staffed living units in planning correction institutions for women." The same report recommended that institutions not be isolated from the community. With so few facilities for females this cannot be avoided.

While it is appreciated that certain inmates will require close supervision, if the facility is close to a major centre, the resources of the community can be used in the correctional process. Contact with people other than institution staff helps avoid the harmful effects of institutionalization. The inmate must return to society at the end of her term. If ongoing contact with the outside world is permitted, the culture shock will be less severe when the woman returns to her community. She will spend less time orienting herself to the outside community, so she may be able to manage more successfully, perhaps so well that she will not return to prison.

Closer geographic contact with the community also means more visits from family and friends. In *Society of Women*, Rose Giallombardo says: "except for interaction with other inmates, the only other human contact is with staff members. Although this lack of intrusion from the outside world facilitates an inmate's induction into the inmate social system, from a treatment standpoint, the social consequences may be quite costly."

Alberta and British Columbia have their correctional facilities in or near major urban centres. Alberta's Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Institute, while close to Edmonton, is described as being "badly designed and poorly constructed . . . difficult to maintain . . . uneconomical to operate, and does not provide adequately for good treatment facilities" (Annual Report). British Columbia's main facility for women is adequate as a physical structure, but is badly overcrowded. The number of people awaiting trial has forced the use of program space for accommodation, so it is difficult to run group programs for sentenced inmates. Last spring, British Columbia opened a co-educational correction centre in Prince George, but no official reports, good or bad, have been published.

Manitoba's institution is located at Portage La Prairie, about 50 miles from Winnipeg. The location prohibits frequent contact with the resources of the larger community and with friends and relatives of the inmates. The population is usually about 25; the building has space for 60. Prince Albert, a small city some distance from other major centres, is the location of Saskatchewan's correctional facility for women.

The Canadian Congress of Corrections has said a prison "should be considered part of the community it serves, not as something apart leading an existence of its own." Giallombardo notes that when a prison is located hundreds of miles from the families and friends of the inmates, the travel expense prevents many inmates from having visitors while in prison." It may be argued that prisoners are sent away to be punished, not to be provided with such amenities as visiting privileges. Does this mean they should lose all contact with their communities, the communities to which they will eventually return? Shall the prison become their community and the inmates their friends and family?

Ontario offers the most progressive facilities for female offenders. The Vanier Centre for Women in Brampton, less then 30 miles from Toronto, represents what can be done with corrections in Canada. The centre is located in an institutional complex, with other provincial facilities close by. The building was designed to function specifically as a therapeutic community for females, and was opened in 1969. Most of the institutions in Canada for female offenders are more than 50 years old.

Vanier offers a variety of programs based on reality therapy. The resident must take responsibility for her rehabilitation program, her treatment, and her behavior, just as in real life. Inmates are assigned to cottages within the complex depending on the program planned for them. The programs are varied, and are generally more sophisticated versions of programs offered by other provinces. The educational and vocational programs are run by six teachers; the administrative team consists of six members with education in social work or nursing.

The team approach to corrections is reflected in regular staff-resident meetings. Meetings are held at least weekly, and in some cottages meetings are held daily. The residents are involved in the decision-making process for their

"... watching television is learning how to use your leisure time properly ..."

cottages. They have their own newspaper, the only inmate publication in a provincial female institution that I am aware of, although most male institutions have inmate-run papers or magazines.

Vanier is the only institution for women involved in on-going research. Their first report on milieu therapy, while certainly not conclusive, indicates a significant reduction in the recidivism rate. Keys and head counts exist at Vanier, but custodial duties are not the main focus of the institution. Treatment is the most important orientation of the centre. Residents with behavioral problems are sent to the Don jail when necessary. The inmate is allowed to return to Vanier when she is willing to cooperate with and participate in its programs.

The alternative to Vanier is the Don jail in downtown Toronto. The Don jail is notorious for its old and crowded facilities, yet some prisoners choose to go there. The older, hardened criminal who can't or won't participate in reality therapy, or who is unable to change her behavior, chooses to do "hard time" rather than "play head games."

When the physical facilities are the main concern, the activities that take place in them are often overlooked. The ideal activities list includes intensive psychological testing and counselling, educational programs, and opportunities to learn marketable vocational skills. In reality, such programs are rare.

Writing in *Transition,* a magazine published by federal inmates, one inmate said: "Let's look at the new programs. Try to itemize the programs in any one institution and you'll run the list off the page. Everything a con does, from watching television to taking a crap, is a program aimed at making him a (better) citizen — watching television is learning how to use your leisure time properly and taking a crap is learning good health and hygiene habits.

A matron of a provincial institution included the following in a list of programs: "*Maintenance of Building:* while this on the surface merely could mean keeping the building clean, this also is a learning situation . . . the various proper equipment is used, and the residents are taught how to use them together with ways of keeping not only the residence clean, but also their rooms. *Laundry:* In this area we have commercial machines where the girls not only learn about care of clothing, but also learn how to operate the machines. They also learn which clothes should be ironed, which clothes should not be ironed, the proper temperatures for both washing and ironing, the proper type of soap, etc." Note the reference to "girls." These women are incarcerated as adult offenders in a provincial prison; they are not girls. They are women who will derive the benefits of such a program in one easy lesson. Detailed laundry instructions are available in laundromats, on detergent packages, et cetera. The only requirement is an ability to read.

Academic instruction is stressed in most institutions. A certain level of education is required for entrance into most vocational or trades training programs. In most institutions, academic instruction is provided by correspondence courses, so there is no teacher-student interaction. It is difficult to discern from provincial reports just what academic programs are being implemented and how readily available they are.

For women, trades training with certification invariably means hairdressing. Why not? In male prisons they train barbers. But hairdressing requires several hundred hours of instruction and practice. Although training hours in the beauty salon of a provincial institution are transferable to the outside, and this is the only program where this is possible, only the offender with a sentence of more than two years will be able to complete the course. Further, most of these programs only accommodate 6 to 8 people at a time. And what about those who don't want to be hairdressers?

Social services include drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs. Individual counselling is done on the basis of need due to a chronic shortage of professional staff. It should be pointed out that the social workers in these institutions have very large caseloads, and can find time only for the severely emotionally disturbed. Overworked staff members are expected to initiate, motivate and guide the individual's efforts at behavior modification.

Educational programs are hampered by short sentences to provincial institutions. Correspondence courses mean that an inmate can begin them at any time, but no follow-up studies have been done to show how many continue the courses after release. And with correspondence courses there is no teacher to provide help and encouragement.

Inmates take up mending, crocheting, stuffing animals, beadwork, busy work, all to pass the time inside. But why are these activities often listed under treatment or rehabilitation programs?

Several activities available in prisons can only be described as institutional maintenance. Like many education and vocational programs, these are oriented toward developing a woman in her traditional role as homemaker. Programs are overcrowded, inappropriate, or both. Very few programs can be considered directly rehabilitative or treatment-oriented. Too few programs prepare the inmate for her return to the community.

Imprisonment as punishment includes ostracization from society, the stigma of the label "criminal," the loss of civil and personal liberties, and the other debilitating results of confinement. Must it also include destruction of self-respect

and self-sufficiency? The Canadian Congress on Corrections says: "If the offender is to be encouraged in the hope and belief that . . . she can obtain an accepted status in the wider society . . . the many small repetitive procedures which carry the opposite message must be changed." Of what benefit to society is the imposition of punishment which negates or hinders rehabilitation?

One of the biggest improvement in female corrections has

One of the biggest hindrances to improvement in female corrections has been that male attitudes and policies have dominated; these have been applied to females as though they were the second-class citizens of corrections. It is only in the past few years that the provinces have begun to look at female corrections separately. Some task force reports are now in progress.

Except for the Vanier Centre for Women, corrections for females in Canada is such that improvement seems the only obvious direction. Currently there is a relabelling program; guards or jailors are now correctional officers, with the same job and the same low salary; convicts are no longer cons but inmates, residents, or even clients. But it is time to move beyond relabelling toward a reorientation of planning as it applies to females. To date policies have been based on research done on males; research on females dates from the mid-60's.

Positive aspects of corrections include the 1974 agreement between the federal government and the provinces that federally incarcerated females may serve their time in their own provinces. Full lems of overcrowding can overcome the difficulties. However, such integration of facilities indicates a promisingcoordination for the future.

There is also a move toward decentralization of facilities. Adoption of day parole programs, and the establishment of community residential centres and of more and smaller facilities will allow for individuation of treatment. These changes have been suggested by nearly all task force reports; it is the implementation of them that is yet to be reported.

Other signs of progress include significant changes in policy and administration which Alberta is presently implementing. Results to date include the establishment of formal program planning for female inmates as well as more co-educational activities. This province has the opportunity to be the forerunner in establishing innovative methods of treatment. This area of the provincial government should be followed by all those concerned with incarcerated females.

Community responsibility appears to be the key to successful treatment of offenders. The move is away from incarceration, and the prisons of the future will be in the community. Community residential centres, which will ideally provide facilities for court-committed women as well as those seeking guidance, will be located throughout the country. Cell blocks and isolation have not worked as correctional facilities. They have provided the public with protection from dangerous criminals, but most female offenders are not dangerous criminals.

The question is: Are you ready to accept the female offender in your community? It was there she committed her crime, and she will return to it after she has done her time. It is not logical that she be ostracized from it in the interim.

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Un Cri Lointain

par Erika Wanke

illustration par Iona MacAllister

La vie. Je me demande pourquoi je n'y ai jamais réussi. Qu' est-ce qui n'a pas marché? pourquoi suis-je fausse et les autres vrais? J'y pense souvent et je ne trouve pas de réponse.

La mort. Je meurs peut-être? Peut-être m'a-t-on tué et ce qui reste, c'est un cri d'un vol d'oiseau, un cri lointain. Je vis ma mort peut-être? Mon corps s'égoutte de tout son sang et toujours devant mes yeux, toujours je vois mes ailes brisées. Ce n'est pas la mort, l'odieux tyran, que j'ai toujours imaginé. C'est plutôt un engourdissement de tous mes sens, un engourdissement lent de toutes mes sensations. Sauf la peur. La peur m'est même plus réelle aujourd'hui.

J'en cherche des raisons dans mon passé. Ah oui, moi aussi je suis esclave de la raison. Je crois à des raisons pour tout. Enfant de mon passé, on m'a bien instruite: dépouiller le mythe de l'homme, chercher des raisons, tout analyser. C'était toujours si simple, cause et effet.

J'ai bien réussi à l'école. J'ai bien connu tous les signes, toutes les petites formules inventées pour sauver les mots, pour éviter notre vérité humaine, notre chair et notre sang. On m'a bombardée de chiffres, de formules, d'équations, de dates. Meme aujourd'hui je peux réciter par coeur toutes les absurdités de mon éducation, de la chimie, des maths, de l'histoire.

Tout était sur une ligne droite. On marchait toujours tout droit dans la salle de classe, on était encadré dans nos pupitres, l'histoire du monde encadrée dans nos livres. Chaque page du livre était soigneusement imprimée et numerotée, les événements et les dates imprimés sur les lignes droites des pages blanches. Chaque phrase à sa place. Blanc et noir.

Je n'ai jamais demandé pourquoi, pourquoi on n'a jamais décrit la réalité, pourquoi les gens dans les livres d'histoire n'avaient jamais aimé, jamais haï, et comment, comment ils s'étaient lavés sans eau courante, comment ils avaient fait l'amour au creux de la nuit. J'ai la tête pleine de questions que je n'ai jamais osé poser. Il faut du courage pour poser une question en classe et je n'ai jamais pu supporter tous les yeux de la classe convergeant sur moi ou leurs petits rires. J'ai reculé dans le livre, en essayant d'oublier ses distortions calculées. J'aurais préféré des mensonges. Mais les livres d'histoire ne mentent pas. Ils ne disent pas la vérité, mais ils ne mentent pas non plus. Voilà le dilemme.

Et la chimie. H_20, j'y ai beaucoup pensé. J'ai passé des heures à penser à H_20. L'eau, m'a dit le professeur. L'eau, j'ai écrit dans mes notes. Chaque mot à sa place. J'ai voulu oublier la sensation de l'eau, l'eau claire et froide qui me faisait claquer des dents quand je la buvais apres l'avoir pompee de notre puits près de la maison, l'eau épaisse et verte de la mare où mes frères et moi faisions flotter nos radeaux chaque printemps, ou l'eau solidifiée, la glace sur laquelle nous patinions chaque hiver. Le prof ne m'a jamais dit de quelle eau il parlait, H_20. La glace, la pluie, la neige, le grésil, la grêle, la rivière, le lac, le puits, tout était de l'eau.

J'ai pensé au dilemme des Esquimaux en parlant de la neige. Cinquante-deux mots pour la neige! Je n'ai même pas pu l'imaginer.

Je voudrais imaginer cinquante-deux mots pour l'amour. Ce n'est jamais pareil, l'amour, même avec la même personne au même endroit. Chaque jour, chaque fois, c'est différent. C'est le

cont. on p. 41.

fantasy

ART SERIES II

The drawings in this section were contributed by readers in response to our request for artwork on a fantasy theme. Artists whose work is shown here are Anna Hook of Calgary, Leola Smith of Warburg, Alberta and Ginny Stikeman of Montreal.

drawing by Anna Hook

the listener. A. Hook.

drawings by Anna Hook


The Chess Game
R. Hoot

drawings by Leola Smith


LEOLA SMITH

drawing by Ginny Stikeman

Shouldn't You Subscribe?

advertisement courtesy of the Alberta Women's Bureau. photo by Alice Baumann-Rondez

He said
You've been writing alot lately

Yeah I said
sunflowers
I've been writing alot about sunflowers

like this

"the sound of a sunflower growing"

he said
you put a sunflower
in a soundproof room
for a long time
you have the taperecorder going
you play it back
slow speed
you hear

"the sound of a sunflower growing"

GOT A POSTCARD

Got a postcard to-day
from Colette
Says she's left the party
committed political suicide
and is having a rest
with Grandma in Chicago
Got a phone call to-day
from New York
a man's voice
looking for Colette
Has she left you too
I asked him
Not exactly he replied
There may be a knock
on my door tomorrow
Colette will be standing there
dressed in army fatigues
a machine gun slung
over the shoulder
she keeps hunched
as if to protect her face
from the blow
she always seems to be expecting

KITTY

Kitty got
the woodpecker
this morning
That damn cat
would stalk
an eagle
Jody came in
holding the woodpecker
his tail
fanned out
stark
against her jeans
He looked enormous
in her arms
We put him
in the workshop
and after school
we let him free
All day
the image
of Jody holding
the woodpecker
came back to me
He's not a woodpecker
He's THE WOODPECKER
He's been returning
to our house for years
What if Kitty had eaten him
What if he'd died
Each year Joe says
Well the woodpecker's back
Jody holding the bird
me saying
My god it's THE WOODPECKER
as though he were a myth
and what was he doing
being real there in her arms
and wounded

Beth Jankola

perspectives

"It is not fantastic, shocking or mind-blowing. It's just another story, mine, and possibly there are women in similar situations that will somehow feel better for it."

by Mary-Lynn Burke

"Oh, I'm sorry dear, it must be very hard for you," many people reply when they find out that I am a single parent. I laugh, at last, because their sympathies are wasted on me. There was a time, not too long ago, when I really believed I was in a sad state. I felt lonely, unloved and very stuck! I was full of revenge toward my husband, resentful of my children and could barely tolerate other men. Most of them seemed generally insensitive (to my situation) and therefore stupid. I would play with them, sleep with them and tell them where to go when I was bored. I was a bitch, but there is a difference because I have started to deal with my wants a little more honestly.

How did I get there? I lived my first 8 years in a nice, stable, loving home in Burnaby, B.C., with my parents, two older sisters and one brother. My family was firstly "Family;" everything else came after, and I thank them for that. Being the last of four children, I got much more than the others. I ended up putting my parents through hell when I was in my teens. I attended a rowdy high school where most of my energies were directed toward boys and running the teen town dances every weekend.

My large breasts received lots of attention from the boys, which embarrassed and confused me because I knew they couldn't care less about me. But I must admit I enjoyed that popularity in those "American Graffiti" times. I became good at teasing and managed to retain an image of the "been around a bit, but still respectable" kid. It was a precarious existence. I was glad to get out of that school and community at 17 to attend art school in big, wicked downtown Vancouver.

I entered art school feeling pretty cocky, wise, beautiful and talented. Within a couple of months, I was madly in love with the man I was to marry three years later. He was very handsome, from a wealthy family, intelligent, and he seemed to like me, including my large breasts, which by this time I was ready to have removed. Note the order of the qualities listed in that last sentence. Looks and background, in that order, were not only the first, but very often the only qualities looked for in a mate. In art school, I became a beatnik, a fashionable thing to be in my new surroundings. I worked part time in a record department in one of the larger stores and moved into a damp downtown basement suite of an old, interesting house. There I painted the walls in gaudy designs and carried on for two years the kind of life expected of a serious beatnik art student.

My relationship with my future husband was going full tilt, but I had decided that "everybody" should go to either Europe or to art school, preferably both. I had talked him into going to Europe, and to my surprise he went and left me behind. When he had been gone six months and I was caught shoplifting, I decided to split and try to find him. My relationship with my parents was at an all-time low. I had enough money for a train ticket to Toronto, where I worked for two months in a music store to save my plane fare to London, plus $30.00.

In London I shared a large flat with five English girls and did secretarial work for about two months. Then my man finally appeared, having motorcycled non-stop from Spain after he received one of my many messages in an American Express Office. We moved into a hovel in the Portobello Road area with two crazy Scots and many cockroaches; there we worked, drank stout and lived on potatoes and sausages for six months. It sounds fairly romantic, but in reality it was awful.

Then my lover received a stern summons from his tyrant of a father demanding that he get his ass back to university where it belonged. Father said to son, "If you would like later to rest under the shade of a tree, you must first plant the seed." So my man left me once again. I stayed in London another two months and then spent four months in Greece with two English girls, before I decided to wing my way home in disgust at Greek and Italian men. All I really wanted to do was to get married and make babies. But my man was studying architecture and his father didn't want him involved with a girl from Burnaby. So I lived with a bunch of crazies, experimented with drugs, and attended every peace march in North America I could get to. Finally we got married on my 21st birthday. Two months later I was pregnant and very happy. We were poor and had converted a shed into a cottage, where I attempted to keep myself busy with domestic chores and dreams — so many dreams. The baby was big and beautiful and no trouble at all. When he was a year old, we adopted a girl, which meant we had two babies in a one-room cottage. We played the penny stock market with our student loan and our families each gave us a thousand dollars. With our three grand we managed to buy a big old house near the university. However, we couldn't afford to live in it for another year yet. During that difficult time our relationship took a turn for the worse.

My utopian bubble concerning domestic life with lots of babies had popped. I thought I was in a trap that would last at least twenty more years. I expected my man to "make me happy," and the more I complained the more he turned off. It was a traditional marriage; he worked on his hypothetical university projects while I attended to

household chores and child-rearing. Neither of us understood what was wrong. I was so entrenched in my own misery that blindness had taken over. I had no confidence; somehow I felt I had to compete with him but didn't stand a chance. So I did my best to make both our lives miserable though it was unintentional. Our fights became vicious; when he graduated and received a two-year contract in Jamaica, I decided not to go with him.

Now began the real learning experience. I was alone with two young children. That first six months was pure hell. I couldn't think of anything except how lonely I was and how cruel this world can be. I revelled in self-pity and had no patience with my children, who were also suffering from our new situation. I got on welfare and sat there. I was bitter and suicical, until I finally realized that if I didn't do something for myself I wouldn't make it. It was probably the children that forced me to move; I could seriously contemplate suicide but couldn't imagine someone else raising my kids. I had hit bottom and knew it.

My husband and I had been writing very long, sorrowful letters. We re-united in Jamaica, but it didn't work out. Upon leaving I knew I must get my head together and do something.

I got the kids into daycare and took a job as a secretary at the School of Architecture. I rented out part of my house, bought myself an old, wretched car and slowly began to attain some self-respect. It was a twelve hour day for me, delivering and picking up the children, working full-time, grocery shopping and washing. I was too exhausted for entertainment, nor could I afford it on only $400 a month. My husband didn't send any support payments until our third year of separation; there wasn't much I could do about that while he was in Jamaica. In spite of all this I felt pretty good; it was "my trip" and it was actually working. I was doing it alone and I patted myself on the back every night before I collapsed. I worked that job for a year and then flipped out. I desperately needed a holiday and some mental stimulation.

I applied for a grant for women in similar situations. My dearest friend worked with me on setting up a place where people could come to talk, relax, read, create, learn, or participate in group, while their children were entertained in a large playroom by a childcare worker. The place included men also, but it related mostly to women who were going out of their minds at home with their young children, and who had no confidence in dealing with the outside world. Much to our amazement and consternation, we got the grant. It scared the hell out of us; now we actually had to do it.

We did it and hired three other women to help. We conducted groups on marriage enrichment, coupling, un-coupling, post-partum depression, parent-effectiveness training, yoga, open marriage, confidence raising and journal writing, among others. It took us a while to become established because we were fighting the professionals who felt we had no right to be doing this. With the help of a few of the more enlightened professionals, "Family Place" has become popular and well-established and is now funded by the city of Vancouver.

I had been handling the funding and re-funding, the hiring, administration, supervision and bookkeeping, as well as getting involved with the people coming in. I decided I really wanted to work with people, so I took a job working with delinquents, at double my former salary. I like rowdy teenagers and it was good to know I need never be a secretary again. In fact, I began to believe I could do almost anything I wanted. I borrowed $1,000 and got myself a decent car. By this time my husband was working in Toronto and doing very well financially. I managed to convince him to send us a bit of money every month and to sign the house over to my name.

My work with delinquents was painful, rewarding and involving. I started to become comfortable with my life, but could never get rid of the feeling of being overworked. I found myself needing, or rather spending $1,000 per month just to survive. I had discovered how to make money and use it fairly well. But I wanted more. I wanted to feel

that my time was being spent in the best possible way; money began to take a back seat. I wanted to be with my children and to get back to a sense of family as I had once known. The children had by then spent three years in daycare. Time was flying by, and I realized I had to do better or they would be gone and I would have missed them.

It was time for a change. During the summer holidays I would head up country to visit my friends in the Kootenays. I always enjoyed those few days, and they would tell me what a fine way of life they had. I would reply, "I'm sure it is for you, but I'm just a city girl." Now I was wondering. I couldn't really make a big change in the city because I would have to carry heavy financial commitments that involved full-time work.

Then I heard of a piece of property in the mountains which had just come up for sale. The kids and I drove 450 miles to check it out. The next day I bought it. I fell in love with the land, 10.5 acres cradled in the lovely Slocan Valley, with 300 feet on the river, a mountain at my back, five acres of meadow and lots of birch, aspen and evergreen trees.

It all happened so fast that I almost backed down. I was mortgaging myself to the hilt, had no intention of living there for at least two years, and was wondering what strange spirit had taken over my seemingly stable mind. I decided to let it be and see what happened. I continued to work hard, long hours and spent too little time with my children.

Last summer, a year and a half ahead of schedule, I packed up the kids, dogs and house in four days, and left my friends, relatives and everything I knew, loved and hated without shedding a tear. I sang loud and clear for the 10 hour drive and, though plenty scared, I felt very fine indeed.

Four months later, we were in our new home — a two-room shack with a wood stove, one light bulb and cold running water. We have also a wood shed, chicken coop, goat barn, and the beginning of a large hexagonal structure. Sitting among the trees, with a dutch door looking out toward the river, is our outhouse.

This summer saw hot water, a shower, more electricity and a small room added onto the shack, now lovingly referred to as the "cottage." My city friends arrived thinking of fishing, swimming and lying in the field, but they found themselves with hammer in hand; I made sure I had enough to go around. The roof of the addition was completed by the time my guests departed.

I am working alone now, putting in stud walls and siding. It will take a long time; I work slowly, periodically checking my basic carpentry books. I have discovered that building a house takes simply common sense, time and physical work. The cottage is comfortable and warm enough for winter, but very crowded. We have 16 chickens, a very fierce rooster named Napoleon, two dogs and two kittens. I have met my children again over this most beautiful, prolific summer, and we love it here.

The city house is rented, paying for itself and this land. I need about $400 a month to live here while building the house, and will need less when it is finished. The soil is choice for gardening. I am living on Unemployment Insurance and have applied for a grant to reconstruct a 25 year-old Doukhobor suspension bridge which crosses the river directly in front of my land. This project could employ nine people for four months and could be a catalyst for the people on this back road.

After that, who knows? If I do have to go out to work again, it will only need to be part-time. Now I can get down to living, raising my family, creating, playing the piano, writing, building, planting, singing, cooking and loving this most unpredictable time on this planet.

My story still has many loose ends. One of those is my persistent desire for a man to share it with. It has been close to five years since my husband and I separated, I have seen him only six days over the past four and a half years. I think I could now have a genuine loving and sharing relationship with that man, I know I want that, but also know the chances of its happening are probably non-existent. By the time we separated we had hurt each other badly. He is the kind of man who doesn't stick around to prolong the suffering and has managed to keep himself far away from me and our children because of the pain it causes him. Because he is geographically distant, he can only think of me as I used to be and finds it safer to believe that nothing has changed. He admits he couldn't handle that kind of pain twice in one lifetime and will not allow himself to take the chance. I can understand that, and can only accept it as unfortunate. I am finally getting a divorce to help myself make it final.

Other men . . . yes. I have even lived with a couple, for two months at most, but I believe I did it more out of convenience than anything else. They had nowhere to live, so they lived with me. I am close with both of them but wouldn't want to commit myself to either of them. I had very few relationships with men those first two years on my own I was so depressed and full of self-pity. I found most young men very wary of me; they assumed I was looking for a husband and a father for my children. They were probably right, but I would become very angry with their seemingly paranoid attitudes. I became tired of playing mother to all the sad young men and slowly came to realize that no one was going to come along and rescue me. It was up to me to do my own rescuing. I knew I had to do that a long time ago and honestly believed I was doing it. But I realized now that I was still hoping and waiting for someone to come along.

Now, three years later, I feel I have grown considerably and have accomplished much of what I wanted for myself and my family. However, when it comes to falling in love, I'm damned if I do, and damned if I don't. I consider myself independent and strong with a healthy ego (probably too healthy). A man who might strike my fancy would probably find it difficult to step into my life at this point. If he has a strong sense of pride in himself he probably couldn't let himself do it. The chances of my going to live in his home would be pretty small; I love my place and would rather risk losing him than leaving all this behind. This may sound strange to people who hate to be alone, but that has changed for me. Being alone is not so awful; in fact it is most pleasant and often I prefer it to an evening of socializing. However, it was much more difficult to be alone in the city than here. It is easy to sit at home in the city and feel you are missing something. Those feelings have disappeared for me; any films, dances or parties usually involve a 60 mile round trip drive. Babysitters are virtually non-existent here, meaning the kids go everywhere. Evenings tend to end early, and the kids get to participate with adults in most things.

Getting back to the subject — mating — sometimes I feel like a coyote in the sense that they mate for life. This could be why I had such a hard time letting my husband go and also why I'm in no hurry to try it again. I want commitment of a sort, both toward and from a mate. Many men, and women too, are into what I call "non-involvement involve-

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film

WOMEN AND MACHISMO

by Brigitte Kerwer

The most recent women's movies to hit the screen have moved away from the depiction of near-pornographic explicit sex. Instead, they are concerned with a new psychological realism: the woman is working-class, a wife and mother bringing up her children. She has no time for glamour and spends her energy on the nitty gritty of everyday life. As a result, she is often thwarted, frustrated, and angry.

In structure these movies resemble soap operas: they are multiclimaxed fluid, and open-ended. Leslie Fiedler once siad that soap opera is a revolutionary form which allows oppressed females to watch women triumphing over men. Women are seen struggling against men and the limitations of their narrow lives to assert themselves in some way.

In "A Woman Under the Influence" Cassavetes has joined directors like Bergman ("Scenes from a Marriage") and Scorsese ("Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore"). interested, as Marjorie Rosen, author of *The Popcorn Venus*, says, "not in surfaces, but in depth; not in mystery, but in the torment and isolation beneath the pose. And in the unbearable investments couples make in relationships." These directors do not, however, speak for women's liberation. They show us their views of how women are kept down, but until there are female film directors, the suffering of women will continue to be that of female characters imagined by men. To say, as Pauline Kael has, that Mabel Longhetti is one more "victim-heroine" for women's liberation is to make condescending assumptions. We are, I suppose, fortunate to have men paying attention at all to women's plight, but to say theirs is a liberated view is far from the truth.

"A Woman Under the Influence" (of "love," one woman assured me) opens with Mabel Longhetti (Gena Rowlands) nervously preparing for a weekend alone with her husband Nick (Peter Falk). Later, we learn that her nervousness betrays a paralyzing lack of confidence; for example, the only food she dares serve is spaghetti. Back in her claustrophobic apartment, after giving her children over to her mother, she restlessly mutters, sings and dances to opera music. This behaviour recurs in the film, presumably to emphasize her emotional nature. The camera cuts to Nick phoning to say he must work overtime. We see that he is puzzled by Mabel, especially by her anger, while his buddies assure him she's a "sensitive, delicate woman." And this casual comment sets the scene for her downfall.

Mabel's descent into madness is not pleasant to watch. Out of boredom and revenge she picks up a stranger in a bar; after spending the night with him, she calls him "Nick," denying her guilt. Nick comes home, bringing his work crew with him, and an agonizing scene ensues. After they have finished eating Mabel's spaghetti, Mabel tries to ingratiate herself with the men until Nick, jealous and enraged, yells at her to cut it out. When the couple is alone, she says to him, "Don't be afraid to hurt my feelings. Tell me what you want me to be." The pathological interaction that is driving Mabel toward the edge is revealed. "Be yourself," Nick encourages whenever Mabel comes to him for advice. But, when he discovers her sitting innocently on a bed with a neighbour, who is trying to extricate his children from a birthday party thrown by Mabel, Nick flies into a rage. He hits her in the face and calls his mother and the family doctor for help. All three scream at Mabel until she agrees that she is unfit, that she must sign the papers that will admit her to a mental hospital. If anything, Nick is more disturbed by Mabel than she by him: he needs her to be clinging and dependent. When she is joyous and spontaneous, he feels threatened.

The second half of the movie deals with Nick trying to cope along with his children and buddies. He realizes he cannot take Mabel's place, or explain her to his friends. After six months Mabel comes home, subdued, with quiet resolve, but her repose is shattered as she breaks down once again at a family welcome-home party. Mabel is not allowed to be herself. "Shut up: be yourself," is Nick's familiar, double-bind command to her, and the relatives heighten her sense of unreality and ours. "Stand up for me," she begs her father, who takes her plea literally; her mother understands but is as helpless as the rest of the family. In despair, Mabel slashes her wrist; it's too hard to stand up for herself, alone, and she withdraws to her former bizarre state. When Nick hits her, she 'snaps' back to what she was, an obedient wife, a mother. "You know, I'm nuts," she confesses to Nick, "I don't know how this whole thing got started." As the movie ends, the whole cycle starts again.

"A Woman Under the Influence" is a pessimistic statement about human relationships, especially about couples. It shows the myth of the happy nuclear family and its crippling effect on a woman. The audience is part of a marathon encounter session, without benefit of therapy. The movie seems to exemplify the theories of radical therapists like R. D. Laing, who, in his book *Sanity, Madness, and the Family*, states that "sanity or psychosis is tested by the degree of conjunction or disjunction between two persons where the one is sane by common consent." In other words, Mabel gives in to Nick's bullying because he forces her, both physically and psychologically, to do so, and in the process she becomes mentally ill.

Unfortunately, Cassavetes gives no clues about the causes of their sinister interaction except the cultural one of machismo in Nick. Mabel is presented finally as sick, Nick as healthy, and this view is stressed in long close-up showing

Mabel's visible deterioration into madness, complete with rolling eyes. For feminists, the film raises a serious question: what was Mabel's childhood and adolescence like? What made her this way? As Juliet Mitchell says in *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, "Laing has isolated for us features of the family which, instead of being taken up as slogans for protest, should be analysed. If the predicament of woman..is just used as a battle-cry and its origin and function is society not comprehended, it will never be overcome." Cassavetes ignores the importance both of infancy and the unconscious mind. He is content to describe Mabel in the present; he leaves her past, her future, and her influence on her children as matters for speculation. He may be interested in depth, but surface is all that he finally offers.

In some ways less interesting and provocative than "A Woman Under the Influence," "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore" does, at least, make a more refreshingly optimistic comment about women in today's society. Alice Hyatt (Ellen Burstyn) and her twelve-year-old son, Tommy, try to start a new life together after her morose husband gets killed in a car crash. Once again the setting is commonplace, almost indifferently casual: Alice and Tommy leave her suburban house in New Mexico, and head for Monterey, California, where, before her marriage, she started a career as a singer. (The movie opens with a flashback of Alice as a girl, dreaming of being a singer). En route they stop at motels in Tucson and Phoenix. The movie is about Alice's experiences there including an encounter with a maniacal sadist, her efforts to get a job, and her attempts to settle down to an independent existence.

Ellen Burstyn and Kris Kristofferson in "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore."

Alice is angry a lot of the time, but her anger is healthy and directed at the stupidity and crassness of life around her. To a saloon owner who looks her over as a potential singer and asks her to turn around, she says, "Turn around? What for turn around? I've got my face. I don't sing with my ass." Her crude, colourful language gets her in and out of hilarious situations. Her talent as a singer is small, but she grieves when she has to give it up to become a waitress for more money.

Her rage at the exploitation in the overcrowded, understaffed restaurant is at first directed towards the insensitive head girl, but later, they become friends — in fact, friendship between Alice and women is a striking and original feature of this movie. Although most of their conversation is about getting and holding a man, they at least feel at ease with each other. "You need someone to talk to; you sure can get lonesome," Alice says, as she explains her marriage. "My idea of a man was that he should be strong and dominating, so I didn't mind when he told me to quit singing, that no wife of his was going to be a singer."

Later, however, when she falls in love with David (Kris Kristofferson), she becomes aware of her need to have a life of her own. In one of several embarrassing scenes in the movie, set in a crowded restaurant, she confronts her hippie boyfriend, who surely overplays the liberated, younger man. The tone is wrong. As lovers, however, they kiss and make up when David promises to help Alice to do anything she wants. His ranch, he says, doesn't mean that much to him, but why go to Monterey when she can sing in Phoenix? And the movie ends with her walking along the highway with Tommy, who agrees that David isn't bad, even though they don't share David's tastes in music.

The implicit assumption is that Alice will marry David and live on his ranch after all, and perhaps sing as a hobby. But in giving her options beyond being a waitress, director Martin Scorsese makes Alice credible: her anger has a specific focus

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(having passes made at her, not getting enough money, having men try to bring up her child): her small, melodic voice means that she can express herself, even create happiness around her. In her delightfully casual relationship with her son, she is honest and straight, never sentimental. Alice's outlook on life remains conventional. David is younger than she is, but she knows, and the audience knows, the temptation of the easy way out — a man and marriage. To the director's credit, he doesn't force the resolution on his characters, and the movie ends with both still trying to discover a pattern for their lives, either together or apart.

What implications have these films for women? Most strikingly in both films, glamourous sexploitation has given way to more honest accounts of human relationships. However, the women's lives are still oriented almost entirely toward men. Alice, at least, has supportive friendship with women, but Mabel remains isolated and, except for her relatives, alone. Then there is work. For Mabel that means housework, but Alice, again, is a little better off. She can work at whatever she is able to do, although for her that means being a waitress or a singer, both underpaid and exploited roles. In both films the women are approaching middle age, often a time of crisis, conflict, and challenge. Mabel's life reveals its perils, while Alice's suggests possibilities of freedom and fulfillment. It may not be great to be Alice, but clearly it's hell to be Mabel.

Both directors are men, and the underlying assumptions about society are male-dominated and patriarchal. And as Juliet Mitchell points out: "under patriarchal order women are oppressed in their very psychologies of femininity: once this order is retained only in a highly contradictory manner ... women have to organize themselves as a group to effect a change in the basic ideology of human society." She goes on to demonstrate how, in analyzing our own mental, social and political lives, revolutionary feminism evolves. To prevail, we must recognize that the laws of patriarchy confine us: we must struggle against them and bring about our own cultural revolution. We need female filmmakers to provide us with a counter-cinema that will raise our level of consciousness, and show us new structures for a society that will allow for truly feminist heroines and feminist solutions.

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by Susan Bordo

Movies have always been vehicles of conventional aspiration — and conventional wisdom. To win the hearts of a mass audience, it is not enough to pander to common dreams, but, also to popular notions of how to make the dreams come true. People enjoy seeing their personal and cultural values triumph. But they want the triumphs to make "sense," to square with what they "know" of life. The trouble is, our "knowledge" of life, our ideas of what makes "sense," are rarely the product of raw experience, but part of our cultural inheritance. And, often when moviegoers complain that a film is "unbelievable," they are not measuring the story or performances against their lives or the lives of those they know, but against myths and models from movies themselves. Many of those who were angered by the sympathetic portrayal of the Corleones in "The Godfather" were reacting to Coppola's betrayal, not of reality, but of *film* "truth". From where, but movies, do we learn that crime never pays and that gangsters are unequivocally bad people? For a generation weaned on "The Untouchables," Vito Corleone was a bitter pill to swallow.

Pauline Kael, in her excellent review of Sidney Furie's "Sheila Levine is Dead and Living in New York," is astonished to discover that young women friends of hers are outraged, not at the reactionary ending of the film (where Sheila finally gets life's prize package, the man she has been shamelessly pursuing throughout the film) but at the ridiculous idea that anyone as plain and unexciting as Sheila could manage to win the man of her dreams! These are women, I suspect, who, if they were actually to meet a man-hungry, self-deprecating woman like Sheila, would try their hardest to help her to realize that depth of cleavage does not equal depth of character and that a man's appreciative glance is not the only measure of value in life. Yet, in the darkened theatre, as the fantasy spins itself out yet another time, a curious regression takes place. If movies of the last thirty years have taught us anything, it's that life belongs to the quick and the beautiful; we don't know how to come to terms with films which try to deny it.

Admittedly, "Sheila Levine" is not very successful at denying it, because in his heart of hearts Furie doesn't really believe in what he's trying to do. True, inexperienced Sheila (Jeanie Berlin) triumphs over her sexy roommate. But it's a victory for precisely those qualities that women have rightly been trying to discourage in themselves — our pathetic eagerness for love, our willingness to expose ourselves completely in the pursuit of it. Self-exposure and humiliation are Sheila's fortes. After one night, she is ready to pledge herself body and soul to her bed partner, only to be told, of course, that for him it was a one-night fling. Later, when he begins an affair with Sheila's provocative roommate, she is doubly abashed. She comes back for more; dressed up like a lumbering copy of her roommate and looking more like a quarterback in drag than a sex kitten, she finds out that the roommate and the boyfriend are planning marriage. After months of rejecting her, the man Sheila is masochistically hooked on (Roy

Scheider) finally informs her that he realizes he is in love with her — *because* she is so open and defenceless. He may as well have told her he loves her *because* she's not a beauty queen.

Furie's method of disturbing the old cliches is to stand them on their heads. Perhaps Furie feels, like the white liberal of the 50's who invites every black he knows home to dinner and finds each lapse into patois charming, that, having isolated a source of unfairness in life, he can correct the situation through sheer personal good and magnanimity. For years, women have been trying to snare men by being cool and seductive. Now, Furie tells us, we can do it by being awkward and imploring. And, since "Sheila Levine" trades heavily on the audience's sense of identity with Sheila (there are a number of teary "men are such bastards, why, oh why, do I need them so badly?" speeches in the film which are obviously meant to establish instant sisterhood) Furie is also telling us we can do it by being "ourselves" — our own, sweet, hungering, insecure selves.

Furie's intentions are "honorable." He wants to show us that less-than-glamorous girls have appeal and something to offer. The trouble is, he doesn't really think so himself. When he strips away the glamour, he sees something pathetic, and, doggedly determined to make his point, forces himself to make something pathetic seem attractive. Would Sidney Furie date Sheila Levine? Not a chance, and who would blame him? As a character, Sheila Levine is not an alternative to the plastic, superficial vamp. She has neither intelligence nor vitality, and very little warmth (although she has an enormous capacity for suffering). She has a job, but her successful career seems a gratuitous offering of Furie's a cheap gimmick to establish Sheila as a "new woman" in our eyes.

"Sheila Levine" might have been a less objectionable film if Furie had acknowledged his own ambivalence, his own difficulties in getting beyond the phoney formulas, both personally and cinematically. The notions that "only-the-rich-and-beautiful-can-succeed" and that "happiness-is-being-in-the-arms-of-a-man" are not merely powerful film conventions; they are deeply-held social beliefs which people are only just now struggling to understand. If Furie were not so intent on resolving the dilema, the film might at least have expressed an authentic enough social confusion. But neither Sheila's confusion ("Why am I so dependent on the whims of a man?") nor Furie's own confusion ("Why is it so difficult for me and other men to see past superficial charm?") are contronted or explored. By having it all turn out right, Furie minimizes the power and extent of our social expectations and fantasies. Since they are his fantasies, too, he becomes their victim rather than their master by sweeping them under the rug.

"Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore" demonstrates how far a film can go when a director (Martin Scorsese) makes the simple yet rare decision not to triumph over his characters by gifting them with a false triumph over their social situations. Structurally, "Alice" and "Sheila Levine" have important things in common: both deal with the troubled dialectic, so familiar to women, of establishing an independent identity without giving up the desire and need for a man. Both films end with a curtsy to convention; just as Sheila, the New York Jewess, gets her cosmopolitan, yet basically wholesome doctor (he sleeps around, is "hip," yet worries over the ethics of abortion) to take home to mother, so Alice, (Ellen Burstyn) a southwestern waitress with dreams of a singing career, gets an equivalent dream package: a tender-stalwart, relaxed mountain-of-strength of a cowboy, (Kris Kristofferson) who loves her "as she is." But what Alice "is" is not what Sheila "is."

Alice is plagued by her need for men, both for security and for sex. Her ex-husband, accidentally killed early in the film, brutalized her, yet she stayed with him; later, she confesses to a girlfriend that she felt she was being taken care of, even though she wasn't. And, when her son asks her why she married his father, she tells him the man was a "good kisser." Later in the film, seduced by his boyish charm, she becomes involved with a near-psychopath. But Alice has other things on her mind besides finding a husband. For one thing, she has a young son whom she has to support both financially and emotionally — a real-life concern that denies her the luxury of self-despair over the absence of understanding men. And she has a dream — to make it as a singer. That dream may be unrealistic; Alice is not a particularly good singer, and is even somewhat regressive (the film opens with Alice as a little girl vowing to someday be as "big" as Alice Faye), but for Alice it functions as a pure, unassailable island of self, an independent project to which the men in her life must accommodate themselves, rather than the other way around. This independence is only tremulously articulated by Alice; she's not sure how far she dares to push it, or how far she *wants* to push it; she's not clear as to what is most important to her (toward end of the film she agrees to marry Kristofferson only if he will take her to Monterey to allow her to pursue her singing career; later, she cheerfully decides to stay and live at his ranch). But, this is only to say that Alice, like the rest of us, is confused and unsure. It is the simple and rare virtue of the film that Scorsese rides along with that confusion, allows Alice her half-baked dreams and half-baked consciousness, and does not impose a forced resolution to problems that so few of us have ever begun to resolve.

Alice is strong-willed, a fiercely protective and concerned mother and often an abrasive and upsetting woman. She is as hot-tempered and tenacious as a kid when things don't go her way. The charm and reality of her relationship with her son is that it maintains itself on the basis of both these sides of Alice. It's a crazy relationship, in constant disequilibrium, but a good one, because it allows the boy equality and sometimes even responsiblity for her, without setting him adrift. Her dissatisfactions, unlike Sheila Levine's, are diffuse. At the beginning of the film Alice is caught, not simply in a marriage with a redneck, but in a town full of rednecks. A hot, barren New Mexico suburb of stucco bungalows and hamburger stands, it's a desert where dreams like Alice's can flourish from sheer lack of water-

cont. on p. 42.

j'efface ton nom
de mon coeur
ton empreinte
de mes lèvres

j'efface tout
tes lettres
tes poèmes
écrits d'une île lointaine

j'efface ton image
de l'écran
devant moi
je t'efface

je m'efface
j'efface tout
tout le surface
où tu étais

défigurée
sans nom
sans face
je t'efface

c'est très efficace.

Erika Wanke

ABORTION cont. from p. 11

female emancipation. Prohibitions on abortion ended. The Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet said they wanted to end the dangers of non-hospital abortions and to restore to women the right to choose. Lader, writing in 1966, believed that Russia has one of the highest abortion rates in the world, although official statistics had not then been released. He feels that contraception is more accessible in Russia than it was 30 years ago, but says that the government refrains from committing itself to a determined birth control policy.

A favorite approach of Nazi Germany anti-abortion groups is to compare, however invalidly, abortion with the genocide practiced against the Jews by Nazi Germany. In his anti-abortion book, Germain Grisez alleges that abortions were readily available in Nazi Germany, and cites as evidence the 1933 Law for the Prevention of Hereditary Diseases. This law allowed abortions for women who were "selected for sterilization." Grisez seems unaware that actually this law illustrates the way abortion and sterilization could be used by a state against groups considered racially undesirable. It was the first in a series of racist laws that culminated in the death camps. "Aryan" women, however, were encouraged to increase the "master race" and were strongly socialized toward being solely wives and mothers. In *Volkischer Beobachter*, December 11, 1935, Englebert Huber wrote:

> There is no place for the political woman in the ideological world of National Socialism. The intellectual attitude of the movement on this score is opposed to the political woman. It refers the woman back to her nature-given sphere of the family and to her tasks as wife and mother.

Joseph Goebbels, propaganda minister for Hitler, stated:

> The mission of woman is to be beautiful and to bring children into the world. This is not at all as rude and unmodern as it sounds. The female bird pretties herself for her mate and hatches the eggs for him. In exchange the mate takes care of gathering the food and stands guard and wards off the enemy.

Hitler himself stated:

> The so-called granting of equal rights to women, which Marxism demands, in reality does not grant rights but constitutes a deprivation of rights since it draws the woman into an area in which she will necessarily be inferior. It places the woman in situations that cannot strengthen her position vis a vis both man and society but can only weaken it . . . The woman has her own battlefield. With every child she brings into the world she fights her battle for the nation. The man stands up for the Volk exactly as the woman stands up for the family.

Abortion and contraception facilities were closed under the Third Reich. Historian Franz Neumann contrasts the birth control and abortion situations before and after the Nazi takeover of Germany. Under the Weimar Republic, set up after World War I, birth control information was widely disseminated.

> Fifteen organizations were active in this field and many of the sick funds gave their members advice on contraception. Leniency by the courts, especially in the Protestant regions helped to bring the number of abortions to an estimated 800,000 to 1,000,000 yearly. In general, pro-natalism was very much on the defensive in Weimar.
>
> The Nazis lost little time in reversing the picture. Minister of the Interior Frick announced the change in a speech in June 1933. Birth control centres were closed; leniency to abortion was brought to a sharp halt, and the advertising of contraceptives stopped. The party took over the League of Large Families, making it a section of the race policy department . . . By a law of 1 June 1933, couples about to marry could obtain interest free loans up to 1,000 marks if they fulfilled certain conditions . . . She (the wife) must cease working and must pledge not to take another job unless the husband is unable to support the family . . . One quarter of the loan is cancelled at the birth of each child. The purposes of the law are clear from its provisions, reduction of unemployment by eliminating married women whose husbands are employed . . . and stimulation of the birth rate.

The removal of women from the labour force eased unemployment, but once the war began and manpower was short, the Hitler regime urged women to work outside their homes again.

A 1974 West German law permits abortion on demand in the first three months of pregnancy. Previously, the government had allowed abortion to save the life of the woman. In East Germany abortion is permitted for a wide variety of reasons including socio-economic ones.

In Britain a series of Britain mid-19th Century laws prohibited abortion. The law was not modified until the Bourne case of 1938. Alec

Bourne was a doctor who performed an abortion on a 14-year-old girl who had been raped by a group of soldiers. Bourne turned himself in to instigate a test case. He was acquitted. Justice McNaghten, in his instructions to the jury, stated that if Bourne believed that continuation of the pregnancy "would make the woman a physical or a *mental* wreck," then he operated only to preserve the life of the woman. The Bourne case was the culmination of the efforts of an Abortion Law Reform Association founded in 1936. In that year the British Medical Association asked for clarification of the existing law.

In retrospect, the Bourne case didn't go much beyond indicating that abortions could be performed when the woman's life is at stake. This ambiguous legal precedent was adopted by Canada and other Commonwealth nations. It was unclear whether mental health could also be taken into consideration.

The thalidomide disaster of 1962 resulted in almost 1,000 defective babies. Many of the mothers had sought abortions and had been refused. In 1967 an act was finally passed in Britain allowing abortion where pregnancy could be harmful to the woman's life, to her physical and mental health, to any existing children, and in cases where there was "substantial risk" of a defective fetus. National health (medicare) in Britain has made abortion free of charge.

In Japan a restrictive abortion law is interpreted permissively. Although in 1949 abortion was restricted to cases of rape, hereditary defect and potential damage to the woman's health, the law does not prevent actual abortion on demand. The woman merely states verbally that she fits one of the conditions and her doctor can perform the operation without consulting a medical board.

Contraception was introduced in Japan by Margaret Sanger in 1922. However, few supplies were available, and those that existed were highly priced and of poor quality. In 1950 a Birth Control Association invited Sanger back; but, Gen. MacArthur barred her entry until he was fired as chief of the occupying forces in Japan. Japan has a tradition of using abortion as an alternative to birth control, in contrast to China and Eastern Bloc nations, which give women alternatives to abortion such as birth control and day care.

In November 1974 *Ms.* printed an article "Eastern Europe, Programming the Population," by John Dornberg, a foreign correspondent specializing in Soviet and Communist affairs. Dornberg sees a definite trend towards a pro-natalist policy in Eastern Bloc countries and in the U.S.S.R. Rumania, for example, outlawed abortion in 1966 except under special circumstances, following a 92% drop in the number of live births over the previous six-year period. Until 1966, abortions could be obtained practically on demand in Rumania. Dornberg reports that in Rumania birth control information and devices are still scarce. Recently "new measures to stimulate the birth rate" were introduced including a tax on childless people over 26.

In Czechoslovakia the letter of the law was that "justifiable medical and social grounds" had to be presented to and evaluated by a committee. The most recent law strictly stipulates the social grounds and has resulted in a decline in the number of abortions. The government offers low-interest loans to young married couples to set up housekeeping; at the birth of each child, a couple may deduct a considerable sum from the amount to be repaid.

Of the U.S.S.R., Dornberg writes that abortion is still used as a substitute for contraception despite some increase in the availability of birth control. No steps have been taken to change the abortion law but there are "rumblings" among the Great Russians and other Slavic peoples, who fear that they may become a minority in their own country because the birthrate in the central Asian republics is considerably higher than that in the Russian republics.

In January 1974, Hungary abolished its 16 year old abortion-on-demand law and replaced it with one stipulating special requirements. Yet, the birth control situation is relatively good; the government has ordered increased production, import and distribution of oral contraceptives. A government-sponsored telephone service in Budapest gives advice on sexual matters. The Hungarian government also has increased family allowances and cash grants for children and has instituted three-year maternity leaves without loss of job seniority. In East Germany abortion on demand is permitted during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, and free oral contraceptives are distributed by the government on a prescription basis.

Dornberg concludes that East Germany has demonstrated the best balance among abortion, contraception and social welfare measures. However, he says that, in general, "the regressive trend elsewhere in Eastern Europe" promises fewer, not more, choices for Communist women. On the level of personal choice, it seems that Dornberg is painting too black a picture. Grants and allowances for children in certain Eastern Bloc countries make the choice between abortion and childbearing a real one.

A summary of abortion laws in various countries based on 1972 World Health Organization information does not tell the whole story. The letter of the law and the practice can vary a great deal, as in Japan. The statistics do not convey the plight of women in countries where abortion is forbidden or allowed on very limited grounds. Italy, for example, allows abortion to save the life of the woman, to prevent the birth of a deformed fetus, or to prevent birth as a result of rape or incest. In practice, however, the law seems quite restrictive. In the March 1971 issue of *Ms.*, an American woman named Eve Riisna describes her quest for an abortion in Italy. Ms. Riisna's doctor diagnosed "lumps in the uterus" and suspected an extra-uterine pregnancy. Eve Riisna hemorrhaged for six weeks, but the doctor refused to perform a dilation and curettage, preferring to wait and see if she had a tubal rupture. Ms. Riisna wrote:

> The life of the mother and that of the fetus are exactly equal under the law. In practice of course it doesn't work out that way. The mother is clearly not equal to the fetus since an abortion can be done only when the mother can be proved to be on the brink of death.

Eve Riisna flew back to New York where she finally had an abortion.

From historical and contemporary examples we can conclude that abortion is not a 20th Century idea. Also, nearly every nation which has passed abortion laws has considered the needs of the country as a whole rather than make freedom of choice of the individual woman the primary consideration. Even in countries where the letter of the law seems "liberal," it cannot be assumed that every woman has an equal chance of getting an early, safe abortion.

The American feminist Cisler, in her article Abortion Law Repeal (Sort Of): A Warning to Women," expresses her conviction that abortion law "reform" is the wrong approach. The word "reform" to her means that "abortion is grudgingly parcelled out by hospital committee fiat to the few women who can 'prove' they've been raped, or who are crazy or are in danger of bearing a defective baby." Ms. Cisler disagrees with stipulations that abortions must be performed in all cases only by doctors in licensed hospitals. She believes that D and C operations and vacuum aspirations could be done safely in clinics or doctor'soffices and that paramedical personnel could do vacuum aspirations. Emphasis on doctor-performed, hospital abortions in all cases, in her opinion, only increases abortion costs and delays. Also, bringing a case before a committee of doctors is too time consuming.

Not all pro choice people agree with Cisler on the need for clinic rather than hospital abortions, but it is hard to disagree with her statement that the fight for free abortions is far from won. In the United States, she says, "repeal" no longer means free abortion but is the term used by anti-abortion groups to mean the reversal of "liberal" laws and the prohibition of abortion. In Canada there is also cause for concern. Until 1969, all abortions were illegal in Canada. Abortion is still illegal except under the following conditions:

> —The abortion must be performed by a qualified physician in an accredited hospital.
>
> —The operation must be approved by a three-member therapeutic abortion committee of that hospital, which decides whether the continuation of the pregnancy "would or would not be likely to endanger her life and health."
>
> —The practitioner performing the abortion cannot be a member of the board.

Hospitals are not compelled by law to set up abortion committees. This means that Roman Catholic hospitals and small hospitals with less than four doctors on staff do not have committees. A strain is put on hospitals which do, causing delays and later terminations. The situation discriminates against women who are financially or geographically unable to travel to a centre which could provide an abortion.

In July 1974 Justice Minister Otto Lang promised never to bring in "abortion on demand" legislation, stating that he would look into cases where hospital committees interpret the word "health" broadly to mean "mental health." Major religious groups are veering to the right on the issue. The June 1974 edition of the *Observer*, the official publication of the United Church of Canada, printed a list of "Affirmations of the Faith" drawn up by an informal committee of ministers and theological professors. These were sent to all congregations. Item 13 reads:

> We believe that God wills that every human life grows up into the maturity of Jesus Christ. Although we recognize that there may be exceptional circumstances in which human life may be taken in order to preserve other human life, we affirm the sanctity of human life before birth and afterward. We therefore oppose abortion on demand and we think that our Church's official position to remove abortion from the criminal code puts the church in the abortion-on-demand camp.

The December 1973 edition carried an editorial implying that women seek abortions so that they will have the money to go on winter vacations to the Barbados. The May 1974 edition mentioned Dr. Henry Morgentaler, citing him as a social problem on a par with shady land speculation and the failure of the Toronto city council to interfere with the "body rub" business. The editor makes the following generalizations about Morgentaler:

> In Montreal Dr. Henry Morgentaler, who boasts he has performed over 6,000 abortions in recent years, has so far beaten the rap on that. These abortions are said to be a service to womankind. However, after the police raided his house to examine his books, they served him with a judgement for $354,799 in unpaid income taxes.

Those of us who are concerned that abortion be available at an early stage to women who want and need it, can familiarize ourselves with the arguments of the compulsory pregnancy lobby and be prepared to refute them. Medieval English common law cases set precedents for the idea that abortion is not murder. An anti-abortionist today might contend that, while in the past biology was not sufficiently advanced to show that life begins at conception, 20th Century scientists have determined this fact and that, in light of this knowledge, abortion is murder.

Garrett Hardin, in *Stalking the Wild Taboo*, says that murder is "killing that is disapproved of." Societies to varying degrees have permitted killing in war, killing by the state (capital punishment), killing in self-defence, or killing to save the life of the innocent victim of a murder attack. In our society opinions differ as to the acceptability of these various kinds of killing, but most people agree that killing is sometimes justified. When it is justified it is not called murder and the sixth commandment is inapplicable.

One favourite anti-abortion argument is the Beethoven one; we are asked if a certain hypothetical pregnancy should be terminated, given that the father was syphilitic, the mother tubercular, and that of her first four children, one was blind, one deaf, another a deaf mute, and a fourth had died. If we reply "yes," we are told, "Then you would have killed Beethoven." This story loses its effectiveness if we substitute different biographical details; we could insert an unwed mother and come up with a similar anecdote in which Hitler's name features in the punch line. Should all abortions be denied in the hope of producing another Beethoven? Garrett Hardin comments:

> Can we have a loss about which we are unaware? Beethoven's mother, like all women, no doubt started life with about 30,000 immature eggs in her ovaries. She produced only seven children. Therefore 29,993 eggs, all potential human beings, must have perished. Should we weep for the loss?

Hardin adds that 30% of all fetuses are spontaneously aborted, about 10% of these at an age late enough for the mother to know about it.

An article on "Debating the Opposition," from the National Association for Repeal of Abortion Laws, suggests that if we assume that a fertilized egg is a person, then we should consider replacing birth certificates with "conception certificates," holding funerals for all miscarriages, and issuing dual passports for pregnant woman. Anti-abortionists also suggest that the use of an intra-uterine device is the equivalent of abortion; this stems from evidence that the I.U.D. prevents implantation of fertilized eggs.

The NARAL article points out that at two weeks the conceptus is a small, jelly-like blood mass, about one inch long and weighing ¾ of an ounce. This description coincides with that given by anti-abortion groups. *Harper's Magazine*, March 1974, tells of a reporter's experience at a meeting of "pro-life" forces discussing the best techniques to achieve maximum emotional impact when showing pictures of fetuses to audiences. The instructor said that it is most effective to start with a picture of a nearly mature fetus and to work backward, because a newly conceived fetus would "look like a glob." The article also mentioned that anti-abortionists enlarge pictures of unviable fetuses to the size of six-month-old fetuses, making them more babylike in appearance.

Notably late terminations tend to be the result of restrictive laws and red tape. The NARAL article reports that Hawaii, after having had legal abortion for two years, found that 87% of women had their abortions within the first three months of pregnancy.

The majority of anti-abortionists are also opponents of birth control. Article III, Section II, of the Birthright Charter reads, "The policy of every Birthright Chapter and every one of its members and volunteers in all the Chapter's efforts shall be to refrain in every instance from offering or giving advice on the subjects of contraception or sterilization and to refrain from referring any person to another person, place or agency for this type of advice."

Opposition to abortion by official Catholicism is not shared by every Catholic. In January 1972 Gallup Poll, 54% of Catholics interviewed said that the abortion decision should be left to a woman and her doctor.

Some anti-abortion groups claim that they would permit abortion in the case of rape. This argument is interesting because it contradicts the premise that the fertilized egg is a person entitled to the same rights as a born person. It implies that it's all right to destroy a fetus if the woman did not enjoy sex (i.e. rape) but that, if her pregnancy is the result of sex she enjoyed, then she must be made to suffer the consequences.

Recent anti-abortion offensives have taken on the question of tight abortion laws and their relation, or lack of it, to child abuse. The anti-choice groups claim that there is no correlation. Obviously, it is hard to obtain statistics either way. One survey on the problems of unwanted children was published by Forssman and Thume in Sweden in 1966. Children of women who had been refused abortion were studied at age 21. These children were found to be in poorer health than the control group of wanted children. They had more incidence of alcoholism and psychiatric attention. The girls in the "unwanted" group were less likely to pursue careers than those in the "wanted" group.

The terminology used by anti-choice, compulsory pregnancy groups is worth challenging. Those of us who support a woman's right to safe, early abortion are pro-life and have every right to resent the opposition's claim to this title. We are not "pro-abortion," we are *pro-choice*. Our demand for safe and readily accessible birth control methods and our emphasis on day-care and more societal responsibility for children show that we want to make the choice a real one.

Terminology regarding the fertilized egg, conceptus, embryo and fetus should be used accurately, for the opposition wants to call all of these "the baby." The term "woman" rather than "mother" should be used when discussing a pregnant person in the context of the abortion issue; motherhood should mean more than the capacity to be pregnant.

In the women's movement the woman's "right to control her own body" is a well-known slogan. Opponents of abortion reply that the time for control is before conception. They manage to ignore the fact that adequate, safe birth control information and equipment is not yet readily available to women in highly developed countries, let alone to most of the world's population. Compulsory pregnancy advocates, who call every germination in the womb a "person" with a sacred "right to life," use these phrases to hide a hostility toward woman. If every fertilized egg is a person, then the woman becomes a non-person — a mere receptacle or womb for producing persons. In an article included in *Abortion and the Catholic Church*, Evelyn Reed wrote:

> This contempt for women stands out even more clearly when we consider the plight of impoverished and sick women . . . who are economically and physically wrecked by too many births. Nor do the multitude of unwanted neglected children fare any better. Robbed of adequate care, protection and education, what kind of right to life do they have? How sacred are the wasted lives of these progeny? Apart from those who happen to be born in well-to-do families, the "sacred unborn" are only promised the right to life — a promise that is not delivered. For the essence of *human* life is not to be wasted, not to be thrust into an animal-like existence.

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WANKE cont. from p. 20

temps qui change le verbe, m'a dit mon professeur de grammaire.

Cinquante-deux mots! je me perds dans les chiffres. Lorsque je vois un pont, une belle cathédrale, je ne pense pas aux formules magiques de l'ingénieur, de l'architecte. Quelle farce! Ce n'est pas ça qui compte. C'est le plaisir, l'amour, qui compte, l'amour et tous les autres mots qui n'existent pas.

Je pense à la vie et pourquoi j'ai failli réussir, pourquoi j'ai failli me trahir, pourquoi j'ai failli croire les mots que l'on m'a appris à mimer, à répéter dès mon enfance.

Moi, ma vie, c'est le cri d'un vol d'oiseau, d'un oiseau mourant qui traverse H_20 et toutes les eaux. Ma vie, ma mort, un cri lointain.

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PERSPECTIVES cont. from p. 33

ment" and I have no patience with that line of thinking. It is shallow, gutless and safe. Who needs that?

I want to be with someone, to have more children and to have a together family and home. Sometimes I get very low about this, but not often. I think I can accept that I may live alone for the rest of my life. When my kids leave in about twelve years, I know I will have friends and lovers and hope that will be enough. I know I couldn't go back to the kind of marriage I had. Perhaps I haven't met the right person, but that is not likely; I believe I am not looking anymore.

Events have taken an interesting turn since my change of attitude. I am meeting all kinds of good people in spite of the fact that I seldom leave my land. My relationships with women are improving immensely. It is more difficult to play the games expected of me. I talk less and don't need to justify myself to others, at least not consciously. I can express myself honestly with both anger and love. My sexuality is at an all-time high, and I am full of love for this life and for many people as they are.

Three months have passed since I wrote the last paragraph. The wood stove is crackling beside me and I should be getting lunch ready. I am still working on the big house, but it's too cold today. Just to keep things moving, it seems appropriate to finish this off with a giant contradiction: I have been living with a man for the past two months and he has committed himself to our family. He would like to get married and have children. He is the kind of man I believed was extinct. Now, it is my turn to respond. How do I feel about this? Well, I'm still in shock and very skeptical of this new happiness. He is younger than I and has never been married, which I'm sure is in his favour. Why do I hesitate? I must decide between making a commitment with this very wonderful man and continuing to live alone with the kids. I am used to being alone, making my own decisions and basically doing whatever I please when I please. To consider another person with as many desires, moods and quirks as myself is not easy. That must sound selfish.

But it seems I am going to try with him, or it wouldn't have gone this far. We are working on the house together and sharing the chores. He is a reasonable man and I like to be around him, even though we are not much alike. I would like to have another child. What bothers me most is I feel I am losing some control over my own life and I hesitate to give that up. Sometimes I miss being alone and there is the added responsibility involved in keeping the relationship together. My idea of marriage is not a pleasant one, and I have experience to insure that this one would be different. My mind tells me these things and my heart says, "Don't be a fool, you must try because it is what you want."

So I am about to jump in with both feet. The difference is that I don't feel weak in the knees, starry-eyed, or terribly vulnerable. I'm in love, happy, clear-headed and willing. I do think it ironic as hell my coming to accept being alone and then right away meeting someone. It must have some significance...

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BORDO cont. from p. 37

ing. After a fight with her husband, Alice screeches her bitterness at the town: "Socorro sucks!", she cries, and it's impossible to tell which she resents more, her husband or Socorro.

Young, affluent women, whose lives have been limited by the fact of their sex but not by the anachronistic fog of hick-town life, may find it easier to identify with Sheila Levine's big-city blues than with Alice's silly dreams and generalized anger. But, if the point of a creative film is to establish a sense of chumminess between the audience and the characters, then we may as well give up going to movies and spend our time reading each other's diaries. Alice is a character that one can respect, and it's clear that Scorsese respects her, too. He doesn't try to make Alice's less appealing qualities *seem* attractive, because he clearly believes that they *are* attractive, as expressions of a character who is honestly struggling. He seems genuinely to *like* women in a way that Furie doesn't. Perhaps this has something to do with the number of talented women, friends of Scorsese's, who worked on the film and who must have assisted in its conception.

Sheila Levine, in her out-of-style cowboy jacket and pig-tails, is a pathetic sight, and is clearly meant to appear so; but Alice, broad-hipped and plump-armed in her frowsy housedress, is womanly and appealing enough to, I suspect, inspire some men to revise their *Cosmopolitan*-encouraged notions of what is lovely in a woman. Scorsese doesn't need Kristofferson's appreciation of Alice to establish her attractiveness in our eyes; it is thoroughly obvious why he would fall for her.

Women may object to the ending of "Alice," seeing it as just as much a fairy-tale as the ending of "Sheila Levine." But Alice's hard-won happiness with a man functions very differently, in the film, from Sheila's dream-come-true. For Sheila, finding a man *is* life's central dream, and her approach to relationships is, accordingly, that of a sleepwalker. Agonized, benumbed, she waits for magic to happen. When magic, amazingly, does happen, it is like a validation of the sleep-walking state, a pat of encouragement on the back of every girl who spends her life waiting for the right man to come along. It *can* happen to you, Furie seems to be saying. Women who object to being encouraged in this way, are right since they know the dream is false. Moreover, they are right to feel outraged. Furie builds our identification with Sheila's previous misery and then invalidates it by injecting simple good fortune, a betrayal of women who have been forced to struggle out of the misery, past the dream, to, hopefully, something better.

Alice is such a struggler. While it is true that few women manage to meet men as willing to work on a relationship as Alice's rancher, it is that willingness, which Alice fights for, that makes the relationship more than a dream. Alice's happy ending doesn't come from the fact that the man she is in love with loves her back; Scorsese does not share Furie's simple delight at his heroine's finding love, probably because he assumes all along that

she's worthy of it. Besides, if there is a central male-female relationship in the film, it is between Alice and her son, not between Alice and her rancher. Alice finds love on *new* terms; she demands that her rancher acknowledge and support her dreams of being something other than his wife, silly dreams though they be, and more likely a test of him than a real plan for the future, and that he accept. Her special relationship is with her son over whom they fought their first real fight. When Kristofferson comes through, it is not a gift from the heavens; it could never have happened if Alice had not had the audacity to ask for it. That's no fairy-tale; that's one woman's personal triumph.

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LETTERS

cont. from page 3

vide a good fuck because he is impotent and can only perform before an audience. He drags her around Europe, humiliates her thoroughly, then dumps her. She doesn't object to any of this but decides her husband wasn't such a bad fuck after all and rushes off to find him. (God forbid she should live without a man.)

The book isn't even erotic because she uses male images almost entirely, even in her sexual fantasies. For example, "He is watching the large gold cross between the widow's breasts swing back and forth in her deep cleavage. Bump. Pause. Bump. It hits one moist breast and then the other." All the sexual descriptions in the book are written from the man's point of view and most are humiliating to the woman.

What is one to make of this? I have searched vainly for an explanation. The writer's name is Erica Mann Jong — so maybe it's a joke by a man who sets out to prove some women are stupid. Or more likely, some women are so brutalized and cynical they have no sexual feelings left, nor any capacity for love and are therefore willing to accept this kind of putrid, male chauvinistic crap as sex. Of course, she doesn't find it fulfilling. For a long time now, men have been unfulfilled by this kind of sad round of promiscuity and perversion.

If you are indeed concerned with the problems of as many as 312 women, then you should carry on as you have been and be a magazine for the middle-class. But remember that there are more of us others around and we need a magazine too.

Helen Potrebenko, Vancouver

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LIVELIHOOD

cont. from p. 13

I feel that the artist side of me becomes somewhat stifled. I guess it is every potter's dream to one day be able to make just what he or she wants, completely disregarding the public's demands. I experience a tremendous feeling of personal satisfaction as a potter and am elated when I overcome an obstacle in throwing technique. As I establish myself as a potter and my business as a self-supporting operation, I feel that the monetary pressure will diminish and be replaced by the love of making pots for potting's sake.

"Above all, I'm happy doing what I do. My life as a potter is a beautiful mixture of anticipation, joy, frustration, rewards, learning, and hard work."

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people in this issue

ABORTION ACTION COMMITTEE
The Abortion Action Committee is a Kingston based group that would like to have abortion removed from the Criminal Code. Members include Chris Buhr, Linda Buhr, Diane Mineau, Ruth Olsen, Janice McClelland, Sandra Chatterton, and Ron Peterson. Most of the research for this article was done by Ruth Olsen, but other members made additions and suggestions.

SUSAN BORDO
Susan Bordo lectures in the philosphy department at Carleton University. She has been interested in film for some time, particularly in the social and moral dimensions of film. Some of her reviews have been broadcast on CKCU. Last year she taught a course on the literature of the women's movement.

MARY-LYNN BURKE
Mary-Lynn Burke lives in Slocan Valley, British Columbia where she is now working to complete her house. She hopes to continue her writing, focussing on the people and situations in the area.

MARYELLEN GILLAN
Mary Ellen Gillan is a graduate student in the department of sociology at the University of Alberta, where she is the only woman in the MA (Corrections) program. Her thesis is on women in a Canadian correctional institute.

ANNA HOOK
Anna Hook was born in Italy and lived in Paris before coming to Canada eight years ago. She used to work in oils but now prefers ink because she finds it a more personal medium. She lives in Calgary with her two children.

BETH JANKOLA

Beth Jankola has had one volume of poetry published, THE WAY I SEE IT, and has given numerous poetry readings, including CBC's "Anthology". She lives in Burnaby, B.C. and her next collection of poetry, JODY SAID, will be published shortly.

ROSALIND MACPHEE
Rosalind MacPhee is a housewife with two young daughters. She writes on a daily basis and has two collections of poetry presently being considered for publication. Her work has been published in *The Canadian Forum, Prism International, Fiddlehead,* and numerous other magazines. She lives in Lions Bay, British Columbia.

LEOLA SMITH
A resident of Warburg, Alberta, Leola Smith is a self-taught artist. Since her children have grown up and left home, she has had more time to devote to her own interests, and has been able to sell several of her paintings. Mrs. Smith also writes poetry.

ERIKA WANKE
Erika Wanke was born in Germany but has lived in Edmonton most of her life. In November 1974, she received the Prix Jean Patoine, a literary award established by the Fonds Jean Patoine of Alberta. Ms. Wanke is a student of French literature at the University of Alberta. Her work has also appeared in the *Franco-Albertain*.

EUNICE WILLAR
Eunice Willar is a New Brunswick photographer who lives near Saint John with her husband and two children. This year she enrolled in Nursing School. Her work has appeared in earlier issues of *Branching Out*.

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