

Branching Out

CANADIAN MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1975 \$1.00



FOCUS ON IWY: WHO RAN THE SHOW?
the Montreal boycott
Kantaroff's *The Amazons*
legislation — a year of housekeeping
photos by Claire Beaugrand-Champagne

PLUS

thoughts on bad writing
Ukrainian pioneers
poetry, fiction, reviews

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letters



It is regrettable that Elizabeth Gould Davis' book, which has meant a great deal to so many women in the movement, should receive so insensitive a review in *Branching Out*, and also unfortunate that Alison Hopwood attempted to review books so different in intention as Rowbotham's and Davis' as though they were somehow about the same thing. In a sense, of course, they are — both deal, more or less, with "herstory," Rowbotham from a fairly conventional ideological framework which confines itself, reasonably enough, to the relatively recent past, Davis with an eye to a mythic past essentially unrecorded and recoverable only in terms of myth.

Why has *The First Sex* achieved such extraordinary importance, regardless of whatever errors of scholarship it may or may not make? A friend of mine summed it up when she said that after reading it, she was for the first time convinced in her soul that men were not, in fact, innately superior, a view which she had long held intellectually but had doubts about emotionally. In a book which attempts to present women with a usable myth of their own past, quibbles about the accuracy of a particular quotation are singularly beside the point. To begin with, no history is "factual" in the sense that Hopwood seems to believe — it is all the mythologized record of the dominant caste or class. The official history of European civilization is the record of the deeds of less than half its participants. With the exception of St. Joan and the occasional queen, women do not appear

to have existed until relatively recently, when they begin to show up in footnotes and appendices. Many women, confronted with the documented "historical" record, despair of effecting substantive change in their lives and situations, since in the face of "history" they are worse than irrelevant; they are non-existent. Even Rowbotham, at the end of *Woman's Consciousness*, shrinks from the possibility of establishing a revolutionary movement composed solely of women on the grounds that women are neither significant enough nor strong enough to oppose advanced capitalism successfully. The nagging suspicion that we are irrelevant is in no small part the direct result of the relentless hammering of a "history" in which we have no existence.

Davis' evocation of the matriarchal state, whether we accept it as factually accurate, or as a mythic reconstruction of a possibility, nevertheless remains profoundly important. The Christianity Hopwood defends against Davis' attack is not merely "anti-feminist" but anti-woman, and the manipulation of the cult of the Virgin by the Church as a prop to patriarchy in no way alters that fact. Nor has the Church merely wandered away from its fundamental doctrine of equality and love, as Hopwood suggests, but as Mary Daly and others have argued, it is founded on patriarchal principles which deny to women not merely our rights, but our very being. No religion which commands us to be born again "of the Father" is really reclaimable for women. Yet it is insufficient merely to write off religion altogether. Feminism has had, from the beginning, a profoundly spiritual dimension which has been the source for many of our most revolutionary actions. To deny this dimension in imitation of dominant masculine materialism is to cut ourselves off from a primary source of energy. In resurrecting a vision of the matriarchy, Davis provides us with a feminist model which calls to our imaginations across the centuries in which the barest trace of the matriarchal possibility has all but been suppressed.

In the end, Hopwood's review of both books is deeply unsatisfactory. It is not enough to say, as she does of Rowbotham, that her facts are sound but that she does not accept her politics; even less is it sufficient to say of Davis that her facts are unsound and ignore her politics. These two books are in fact

representative of two different political tendencies which are threatening to split the women's movement in the United States and which will unquestionably affect Canadian women as well. If *Branching Out* chooses to review these books (which are not exactly hot off the press) and chooses to review them together, it seems to me that the editors have the responsibility to see that the reviewer takes her task with sufficient seriousness to confront the politics of both books forthrightly and openly, rather than, as Hopwood has done, to resort to empty praise on the one hand and empty condemnation on the other.

Yvonne M. Klein, Montreal

This issue, most of the mail we received was in response to our request for comments on International Women's Year. The following letters are some of the more detailed evaluations that had come in by press time. More reader comments appear on pages 8 - 11.

"... one well-informed woman stated that the federal government was willing to fund artsy-craftsy, discussion type, personal development programmes but nothing that would encourage large numbers of women to enter the labour force."

I am writing in response to your request for reactions to International Women's Year, but am doing so under a pseudonym in order to keep some rather subjective criticisms as constructive as possible.

IWY coincided with my dropping out of active participation in my local women's centre and as a result, I know only vaguely that the centre failed to get funding for several projects. During a discussion, one well-informed woman stated her impression that the federal government was willing to fund artsy-craftsy, discussion type, personal development programmes but nothing that would encourage and facilitate large numbers of women to enter the labour force, due to the grimness of the unemployment picture. The local university had a week of films and discussions and the local community

college had a lecture-discussion series. I attended a lecture by Doris Anderson of *Chatelaine* and a film — found both interesting, but not a revelation; from reading and group discussion that preceded the establishment of the centre, I had heard it before. As a former graduate student, I resented the fact that the women's movement hadn't come into vogue at a time when its fashionableness might have helped me; this is not to imply that I think the university has become a more egalitarian place because of that week of women's issues; I don't think it had much immediate impact.

My easing away from the women's centre still makes me feel very badly because I have always considered myself a feminist. Unfortunately, I began to feel more and more like an outsider. The dominant group was composed of students who had more leisure time than I, and who tended to see the women's movement as a part of and a vehicle for the movement towards socialism. I, too, was interested in socialism and indeed have been considered socialist by my associates. I felt that women's issues, being related to my everyday life in very obvious ways, merited attention per se. I also believed that a lot of women, just beginning to awaken to the movement, were being put off or urged to conform to a jeans-and-boots atmosphere which really was just fashion and wasn't crucial to basic issues. I missed the supportiveness that had existed before the centre got project-oriented, and the consciousness-raising groups, rather than providing this spirit, seemed to be a means by which women were to learn how to be project-oriented, action-oriented, directly political, whether or not that was right for them at the time.

Right now I am plodding away on my own, fulfilling responsibilities to people near me and at the same time striving to maintain my integrity as a feminist. I am lucky enough to work in a place with an all-female staff and while I know that not many of the women would call themselves feminists, I really do feel a sense of sisterhood with them. When I want to discuss the movement I seek out a couple of women who have more consciousness of the movement but who have not been associated with the centre. I still feel very sad that the women's centre focused on a very small group of women but I don't have the time or knowledge to make it more open.

I think that IWY dignified and made

the women's movement socially acceptable, but I am not confident that much of the talk will be reflected in legislation. I have never been pregnant, but if I could have a wish granted for IWY it would be to have abortion removed from the criminal code and left as a private matter between a woman and her doctor. To me IWY was like a negligent parent giving a birthday party to a little girl who had been neglected for years. It remains to be seen if the parent will follow up with necessities in future. Meanwhile the child can only keep trying to make herself heard.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts.

A. Oldotter

"International Women's Year gave me the opportunity of meeting the government of Canada face to face. The experience was extremely insulting and generated a lot of anger."

International Women's year has been so much to me, such a mixture of feelings, activities and thoughts, that I have difficulty in deciding what was most important.

International Women's Year took me many miles away from home. It took me to Thunder Bay where I met women from all over Canada who shared, if not the same ideas, the same concerns. I realized through this trip that there are discrepancies between the various women's centres across Canada; that in some cities the centres are brand new, the women at the exhilarating yet trying stage of discovery, and that in other cities the casualty list of burnt-out feminists is very long. I meet many women, women I felt sympathy for, knowing what struggles and pains that were ahead of them, and women I truly admired for having gone through rough times and emerging sane and full of creativity, women who will always be leaders.

International Women's Year also gave me the opportunity of meeting the government of Canada face to face. The experience was extremely insulting and generated a lot of anger. The meeting was a consultation with various Canadian women's organizations to discuss Canada's position for the world conference on the International Women's Year that was held in Mexico in the

summer. The meeting was a farce, as the government's position had already been decided. It surprised me a little that the government did not have more ingenuity in hiding its obvious lack of interest in grass-roots participation in this matter.

I came back home feeling as if women all over this land had been slapped in the face. It was clear that the government had no intention of making the fundamental changes that are required to only begin to alleviate the oppression of women in Canada; changes such as equal pay for work of equal value, removal of abortion from the criminal code, universal access to quality child care. This meeting strengthened my belief that whatever we want from the government we are going to have to fight hard to get.

I also participated in a bitter and vicious struggle between our Minister of Justice Otto Lang and the Saskatoon Women's Centre. The fight was over whether or not the Centre should receive government funding because of its abortion counselling service. This is not directly related to IWY but it was interesting to notice that in this year dedicated to women a grant to a women's centre was blocked, and the centre was under investigation by the Department of Justice and by "real undercover agents". It certainly helped to clarify the government's attitude towards International Women's Year.

My activities through this last year have brought me to many understandings. Women do not need the movement anymore to go through the 'consciousness raising' process; articles in even the most conservative magazines have changed — they force women to ask themselves questions. Women everywhere are now talking with each other. I have met these women in high schools, meetings, community groups, in bars and they did not need the movement to become aware of the struggle ahead. The Women's Liberation movement is not a catalyst for consciousness raising anymore, it's happening independently.

Since its beginning, the women's liberation movement was the only body demanding change on the local and organizational levels affecting women. In the last few years, many bodies have sprung up to deal specifically with those issues. I have met many of these groups during IWY; they are well organized and are excellent pressure groups. Individual women, through writing letters

and making phone calls, are putting pressure on government and organizations to change. These women did not need directions from the movement. Women's centres also offered many services which are now being rendered by other groups. For example, birth control and abortion counselling, which were once the most important and necessary services offered by women's centres, is now being well taken care of by family planning agencies.

For me, International Women's Year has marked the end of women's liberation, as it was and the beginning of a search for a new goal. International Women's Year certainly gave me the opportunity for a lot of thinking about the whole issue of women's liberation, but I was in a somewhat privileged situation. My involvement with the movement, and being a paid staffer of a women's centre, allowed me to participate in programs that women who are not directly involved in the movement have never even heard about. The woman on the street has seen a few ads on T.V. and in the newspapers, ads that are oriented to a middle-class audience, urging women to become lawyers and doctors, avoiding the reality of what it means to be female and trying to make it on your own. She has heard the slogan 'Why Not' over and over again, probably looking around her and easily finding out why not. This is the level at which International Women's Year should be judged, and I believe it was a total failure.

Lucie De Blois, Saskatoon

"I seemed to meet a lot of 'tired feminists' on my travels and still wonder about this phenomenon. Many women who have maintained a high level of involvement for several years seem to be pulling back."

I spent the summer of International Women's Year on the road. I sought to learn about how women use information, what kind of information they are producing in groups, how this information might be applicable to other women's groups, and how women felt about the concept of a national resource centre for women's information.

I seemed to meet a lot of 'tired feminists' on my travels and still wonder about this phenomenon. Many women who have maintained a high level of involvement for several years seem to be pulling back. Perhaps they are back at school, or have taken positions in government. It is encouraging to see how they are applying the insight gained in the women's movement to

their individual lives in the 'outside world'. Perhaps, too, there is a saturation point for the need to work in and around women's centres. The inability to sustain long hours volunteering obviously exhausts many women. And that opens the question of funding for women's centres. Some consistent funding policy is needed, because the 'carrot and stick' approach which has motivated women has tended to waste much individual and collective effort.

Maritime women are relatively new to involvement in the women's movement. What they seek is to be able to benefit from the experience which women in other parts of the country have already consolidated. They are very hopeful, and in general have not yet become cynical. In spite of the difficulty of pressing for social change where there has been a hundred years of economic depression, Maritime women are dynamic.

Quebec women are divided along every imaginable variable: politics, religion, language, age, education and culture. Yet their curious strength comes from the fact that since suffrage was achieved in 1942, the feminists of that 'first wave' are still around. Often Quebec women look to France for inspiration and so their concept of feminism has a more intellectual tradition. Young women in Quebec are politicized to a greater degree than women in other provinces in Canada. This is related to the experience some have had in the Parti Québécois.

There is a belief that the 'East' is the centre where information is hoarded. My experience indicated that while the women of Ontario have the longest tradition of government co-operation, there is no guarantee that physical proximity makes people more informed. Networking studies have shown that it is more difficult to get a message through to a potential receiver where the 'nodes' of communication are very densely situated. Ontario women need communication with each other as well as with women in other regions.

The women of the prairies are bound by their geography into an isolation which gives them at times great discipline, self-sufficiency and productivity. Women in other parts of the country have much to gain from sharing what prairie women produce. Prairie women have a focus, and a simplicity which the urban centres need. In exchange, because development is proceeding at a rapid rate, women in cities like Edmonton and Saskatoon and Calgary can learn about how social change must be harnessed.

B.C. women are probably the most cohesive provincial group in Canada. This is due to a combination of factors, including geographical isolation, and a

supportive provincial government. So far, the B.C. Federation of Women is the only provincial attempt, outside of Quebec, to build a wide association of women's groups. While this federating process may not always proceed without conflict, it is important for women across the country to witness that it is indeed possible. In the areas of law reform and services involving advocacy, B.C. seems to lead other provinces.

In spite of the regional disparities which exist, I felt that all women were seeking to transcend local perspectives, and were reaching out for an identification with a wider community.

Pat Oliver, Director
Women's Communication Centre
Toronto

"The Canadian delegation to the Mexican conference was disorganized. It was not surprising that we did not make much of a contribution."

Prior to attending the IWY Tribune in Mexico City last summer, my expectations were that (1) the women attending would be able to cross cultural barriers to develop rapport and solidarity on common women's issues; (2) my knowledge of the status of women in other countries would be enhanced; and (3) there would be much literature available that I could bring back with me. Unfortunately, only the last of my expectations was fulfilled. (In fact, I wound up bringing back much more literature than I had thought would be possible.) Even though the Tribune was a valuable experience from a personal point of view, in my opinion it was definitely more of a disappointment than a success.

The first expectation, the development of rapport and solidarity, was probably unmet because of three factors: the lack of experience of most of the delegates with world conferences, lack of empathy with the situations of women in other countries, and the political overtones. Since the majority of the delegates appeared to be in the under-30 age group, it does not seem possible that they could have had much experience with conferences at the international level. Perhaps it was because of this lack of international experience that the women from the

various countries showed little empathy with the problems of those in other countries. On the other hand, it was difficult for the delegates from the developed countries to understand the scope of the problems women in developing and under-developed nations faced with respect to illiteracy, family and property laws, health, family planning, etc. On the other hand, it appeared to be even more difficult for the delegates from the developing and under-developed countries to acknowledge the mere existence of problems in the developed countries. For example, the facts that there are slums in Canadian cities, that many Canadians are poor, and that Canadian women are generally concentrated in low-paying occupations were unbelievable.

The political overtones were probably the most disruptive forces at the conference, creating more factions among the delegates than had originally existed. Much to my disappointment, most of the delegates — or at least the most vocal ones — were more concerned with solving the political and economic problems in their own countries than they were with solving the problems specific to women. There was a very strong "push" for the support of a new world economic order, which in my mind will not necessarily also automatically solve the problems facing women today in all countries. There have been several new world economic orders over the past few centuries, none of which have appreciably improved the status of women in the world. Concomitant with the drive for a new world economic order was what could almost have been called a "get the capitalists" movement. The capitalist countries, particularly the United States, were very vigorously attacked on several occasions for having created the problems of the developing and under-developed countries. The statement that the under-developed countries were not under-developed but were "super-exploited" was heard more than once. Furthermore, the capitalist countries were called upon almost as often to make amends for their wrongdoings. It sometimes made me wonder whether these countries were willing to accept even some of the responsibilities for their economic difficulties and for economic as well as social reforms. The Tribune was certainly a good lesson in international politics!

As to my second expectation, I cannot truthfully say that I did not learn anything. Most of the panelists were certainly very interesting, obviously experts in their fields with brains worth "picking". However, most of the presentations were general in nature and there was little opportunity for acquiring more

specific information. The question period at the end of each session would have been ideal for obtaining such information had not so many of the delegates taken advantage of the time allowed to speak on and ask support for their own particular causes. It is granted that they were all causes worthy of support (e.g. the political prisoners in Chile, nuclear disarmament), but it became questionable as to what they hoped to achieve by constantly raising their issues since the Tribune was not in a position to make a formal statement on any issue.

A common characteristic of the presentations was their positiveness, particularly those made by representatives from Communist countries where all inequalities have been theoretically eliminated. One person worth noting who deviated from this pattern was Milly Miller from Great Britain. She not only described the progressive aspects of Britain's equal pay legislation, but also went into great detail about its drawbacks and methods used by many employers to get around it (e.g. bonuses given to employers for lengthy employment and for willingness to work overtime.)

The most interesting sessions turned out to be those that were not part of the official agenda, many of them being small, informal seminars that allowed greater participation than was possible in the main sessions. One of those seminars was about men's consciousness raising, led by Warren Farrell who wrote the book *The Liberated Man* and also was a member of the panel for the session on Socialization. His openness about his personal conflicts as he went through the process of consciousness raising, as well as his guidelines for running consciousness raising groups provided valuable insights for both men and women attending the seminar. At another seminar called "Encounter for Journalists", Elizabeth Reid from Australia gave a fascinating presentation on the treatment of IWY by the Australian press. There is some consolation in the knowledge that the Canadian press has not been nearly as bad!

The purpose of the Tribune was to provide an exchange of information and opinions on the position of women, and to give consideration to the U.N. Conference; it was not to make any official statements or resolutions. Consequently, there were no plenary sessions as such. This was contrary to the desires of most of the delegates who presumably also felt that they were not having enough input into the U.N. Conference through the official delegates from their countries. As a result, the majority of the delegates at the Tribune attended

several meetings in addition to the regular sessions and prepared a lengthy brief in response to the U.N.'s background paper for a World Plan Of Action. This brief was presented to Helvi Sipilä at the U.N. Conference for their consideration. This action appeared to have been initiated by delegates from the United States, particularly Betty Friedan, and was probably the most notable product of the Tribune.

Considering that the Canadian delegation to the Tribune was quite disorganized, it was not surprising that we did not make much of a contribution. This lack of organization was not entirely the fault of the delegates themselves. Efforts were made to "get things together" through regular meetings, and by the end of the Tribune there was a semblance of organization among the Canadians. The lack of organization can probably be attributed to two factors:

(1) The delegates were not only not given the opportunity to meet prior to attending the Tribune, but were given such short notice that there was no time for any but preliminary communications by mail or telephone. Perhaps more communication or even a meeting would have been possible with the support of and speedier action on the part of the Department of the Secretary of State which partially funded many of the delegates.

(2) There was no leader named for the delegation of the National Action Committee On The Status Of Women. Had there been a leader of the delegation, certainly it would have been easier to organize the other Canadians, using the N.A.C.S.W. as a nucleus.

Not only would it have been nice to have been organized enough to make some contribution to the Tribune, but it would also have been nice to have had more communication with Canada's delegates to the U.N. Conference. There were some opportunities for sharing opinions and information, but certainly not enough. However, it is realized that this was because of the heavy demands placed on the official delegates which very much limited their free time, not because of their lack of interest or desire to meet.

Since returning from Mexico City, no communication network has been established among the delegates to tie things together and to determine future plans of action based on the information brought back. It is doubtful that this will happen without a meeting of the delegates for this purpose, or without the support of the Women's Program in the Department of the Secretary of State.

- Julie Bubnick, Research Officer
Manitoba Women's Bureau

by Jane Dick

Boycott.

The word makes me think of grapes, lettuce, and Kraft.

But boycott an idea? Well . . .

Montreal women's groups have chosen this method of expression once more. They're boycotting the Canadian government's policy on International Women's Year.

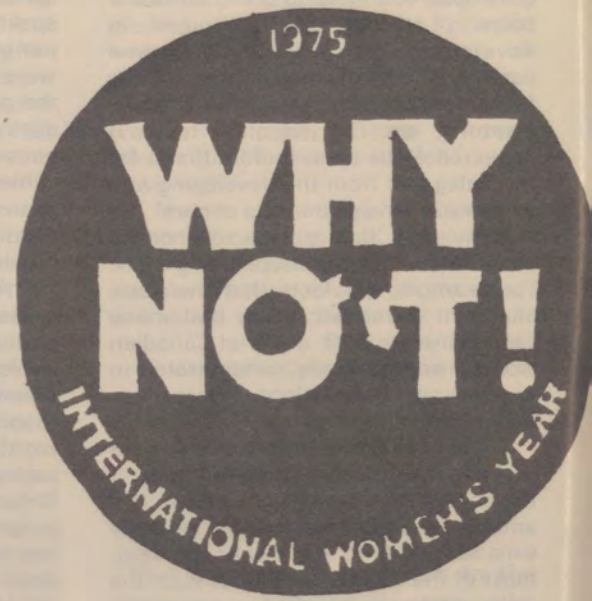
Invitations to government-sponsored conferences are refused — though the YWCA accepts. At least one women's group goes so far as to ignore invitations completely, but most groups accompany their refusals with explanations: the government is spending its money on cultural projects and fringe issues, still pussyfooting around the real issues concerning women.

"We went into it (IWY) with some cynicism," says Carla White of Montreal's YWCA. When you've given so much of your time to women's projects, there is naturally a feeling of resentment and frustration that a special year is now being declared for just that, she says. The YW has really done nothing specifically because of IWY. Their major IWY effort for the public was to hold a luncheon the end of September for 100 women of achievement — but this was also a celebration of their centennial in Montreal. The YWCA appears to be the only group not boycotting the government, but they share the negative sentiments towards it. "We have used IWY primarily as a stimulation to thought," says Carla White. "I think the main problem is that the government raised our hopes too high."

The government promised the women of Canada things it couldn't (wouldn't?) deliver.

A spokeswoman for the New Women's Centre, Sally Mittag, says that IWY is mainly involving independent women, and groups whose primary thrust is not feminism. Theatre groups and artists of all leanings are being funded. But as one woman pointed out, "Women have been doing arts and crafts for centuries, and will continue to do so. There are always funds for cultural projects. Do we need to spend IWY money on them?"

Can we afford to?



The purpose of the Canadian government's approach to International Women's Year, so I'm told, is to raise people's consciousness. What seems to be forgotten is that others are doing a better job of it, and that is why there is an IWY in the first place. The government is in a position to do so much more. In any case, if propaganda is to be successful — whether one likes the word or not, all this IWY ballyhoo *is* propaganda — it must combine action with ideas. Ideas mean nothing if the people behind them don't support them in a concrete way.

The government is supporting IWY by spending taxpayers' money on an advertising campaign, cocktail parties for politicians and businessmen (supposedly to raise their consciousness), conferences, and the occasional harmless (i.e. non-controversial, pro-government) project. Besides this, it is doing sweet nothing. IWY has about as much significance as National Brotherhood Week or any other ideology week. It causes people to design posters, make obligatory speeches — even the Queen thought it 'appropriate' to mention women in *her* speech to the Commonwealth.

Speeches and cocktail parties will never change the world. Action will. But the government is once again imposing passivity on women. A woman photographer was sponsored to take photos of women at work across Canada. The government ran out of money before she got to the Maritimes. Typical. That money could have been put to active use in daycare centres, for example.

This is not to say that women's

Why Not? Because ...

groups have been refused funds. They have been offered grants of \$2,000 to \$3,000. Peanuts. These sums mean that work done on any given project must be volunteer. This hardly puts bread on the table. And it makes it very difficult for groups to find women with that much extra time on their hands to give for free. The groups are refusing these 'token' grants and carrying on with their work as before.

The Montreal women are not opposed to IWY. They are opposed to what is being done about it by the powers that be. The consensus is that the government is trying to dissipate the efforts of the women's movement and to scatter its energies. Projects that can be considered socially worthwhile were given the cold shoulder by the office of the Secretary of State. A Single Mothers' centre was refused IWY funds on the grounds that the mothers could share facilities with the New Women's Centre, on a tight budget themselves. The Single Mothers got an OFY grant for the summer. The summer is long over, the grant has run out — now what?

The IWY 'Why Not?' campaign is considered a falsehood and a pretense. The government challenges everyone with Why Not? but refuses to take up the challenge itself.

'Why Not encourage your daughter to become a doctor/lawyer?'

Well then, why not alter the quota system in medical/law schools? For instance.

The Women's Information and Referral Centre urges all women to send their 'Why Not?' buttons back to the Secretary of State explaining that they can't support a campaign that is all talk

and no action, and restating the needs that are not being met.

Some women designed alternative Why Not? buttons. "Why Not Repeal 251?" (remove abortion from the criminal code). A collective from Halifax is circulating a Why Not? button on which the female symbol has been replaced by the male symbol, with the arrow broken in half. Some enterprising person designed a blue button with the male symbol; it reads "Because . . ." Which pretty much sums up the Canadian government's attitude.

What of the attitudes of other governments to IWY? Diplomatically, the women withhold comment on other countries' activities concerning IWY. That is, when they know of the activities. (Is it really true that delegates to the IWY conference in Mexico this past March were each given a straw basket and doll?) There is appallingly little communication between nations.

IWY is not a success, nor is it International. Sisterhood between Canadian and foreign women's groups has not been fostered.

But sisterhood in Canada does seem to be growing. Network Nellie (after Nellie McClung) is now in operation across the country. And when Canada neglected (again) to send a native woman as delegate to Mexico this year, a number of groups collected funds and sent Mary Two-Axe Early of Caughnawaga as an unofficial delegate. She and her supporters are giving the government no rest over its treatment of Indian women, particularly as presently concerns Caughnawaga.

Besides boycotting the Canadian government, are the women's groups

doing anything to counterattack the government's IWY campaign? Not exactly. They are continuing their work and services as before, apparently in the belief that engaging in such a battle would only further disperse their energies. Sally Mittag feels that the crunch will come at the end of the year when the government makes up its summation of IWY. It is inevitable that it will pat itself on the back and list all the wonderful things it did for women this year. But the women's groups in Montreal have their own lists — of all the important things that were not done — and they plan to compose their own summation of International Women's Year.

There is the possibility that this confrontation may be too late. No doubt there are government members who will construe this last-minute attack as a sign of apathy, i.e. why didn't you women fight back sooner? Because these women are out to do one thing — get their job done. Which is what they are doing again this year, as in the past, in spite of the government's efforts to sidetrack them.

The challenge is for the rest of the women of Canada to support the women boycotting the IWY campaign. And when the government blows its own horn, we women must shout back, "Not so! We know — we lived through it! IWY must go out with a bang. There must be a showdown. A showdown got us the vote and it is time again to rouse the people. For too many IWY has acted as a tranquilizer. It's time for an antidote. If you care.

Support your local showdown.

"What did you think of IWY?"

'IWY was a rather paternalistic gesture — like handing a woman \$50 to go have a good time with the girls because she's been such a good wife/mother. . . it would have made more sense to at least let her decide what she'd like to spend the money on.'

- Jean Jorgenson, Edmonton



Mrs. Vanderwood - Timekeeper, Spencerville, Ontario

'I think it's great. I don't think IWY will accomplish much as a special year, I don't think it'll make much difference. . . maybe the schools could push it a bit. But I think it's seeping in slowly — when the woman out west lost her farm when she got her divorce — the Irene Murdoch case — things like that really make women think.'



Myra Vanderwood - Student, Spencerville, Ontario

'A lot more people are aware — in school we sent for the information and everything. A lot of kids became more aware, but many people are still against it. I think a lot of women are against it for some weird reason.'

Branching Out wanted to find out how Canadian women felt about IWY. We invited readers to send us their comments; some of them are printed in this article. Sue McMaster interviewed women on the street in Ottawa, and Vivian Frankel photographed them as they responded to the question, "What did you think about IWY?"

'The real goal of women must be to continue their efforts past IWY and not accept the year as a token gesture.'

- Gloria Heller, Toronto

'This has been a year of participation. Countless festivals, conferences, and meetings have been attended by women on local, regional and national levels. This direct experience together with increased media coverage of women's issues has affected and expressed a permanent alteration in women's awareness. As 1967 had the cumulative effect of raising the level of our national consciousness, 1975 will be seen to have altered our identity as women. After IWY is over, its ongoing effects will continue, because every woman who has participated will remain as an agent of change in this society.'

- Pat Oliver, Toronto

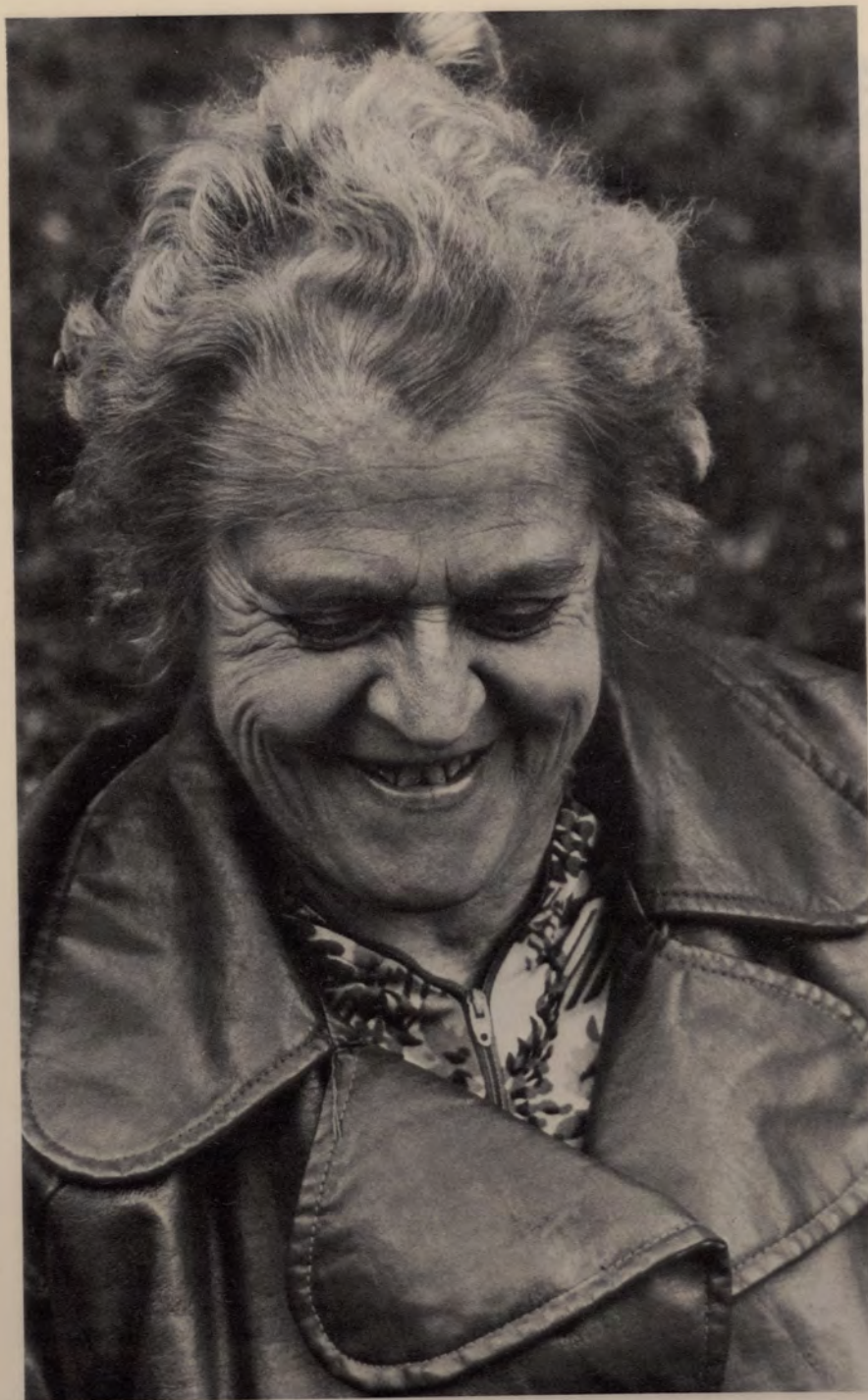
'A 'Career Explorations' course! Why not? I had no idea what I was looking for, but all the way through school I had wanted to find a career or interesting job. At first I felt like I was going through a late stage of adolescence. The one thing I learned was that I hardly knew myself. I had never tried to answer questions before like: Who am I? What are my values? What are my needs? What does security, independence or recognition mean to me? My interview lasted two minutes and I was to be given equal opportunity when being considered . . . however, the classes were filled, and anyhow someone else would have been accepted because they are only accepting people who are — etc., etc. I am back where I started from, only more confused and unsettled. After all those plans it is hard to face my household routine again . . . How do I feel about Women's Year? Right now very bitter and very frustrated. It all seems such a farce and I feel like a fool to have thought WhyNot? I'm also mad because I let myself become so disillusioned and let my aspirations run away with me. As I told my friend, I may not do anything right now, but maybe after Christmas, when I feel that I am back to normal, I may take an upholstery course or do some volunteer work. Women's Year might not have provided me with changes, but it has made me more aware of me.

- Jean Brown, Burnaby, B.C.



Penny Ray - Constable, Cumberland, Ontario

'I think it's fantastic. It's giving women an opportunity to look at themselves, and the job they're doing, to see themselves as a working force in our country rather than just housewives earning no money. I imagine IWY will have a long-term effect. It's the same as when women were granted voting powers — you know, our turnout in the Force is 60% women and 40% men. I think IWY will have this kind of effect, I really do.'



Laure Renfret - Filing Clerk, Ottawa

'There was a festival in Hull with about 800 women last summer — it was very good. They spoke about work and everything, the women should work outside and be independent, because we need money now, the cost of living is so high. Women are coming to know they're women, they have something now — not only to put the baby in wool and to do housework, no — they can do something else. Like the ex-Mayor, Whitton — she's something. Not too many women like that.'

'IWY should have made a greater impact, but then the women were not given the top jobs, so they at least were not to blame for the mediocre publicity, direction and planning.'

- Katherine Farstad, Vancouver

'Not because I think so, but because so many local women firmly believe that they won't forget IWY, that the money was well spent, that there is hope, I want to report that the year was a success.'

- Helen Hargrave, Creemore, Ontario

'IWY has been exhilarating, interesting, a little frustrating. . . most importantly, it has confirmed for most women something we have always felt but weren't too sure we should — we are strong and very much needed in the world.'

- Mary Tremblay, Timmins

'Looking back now, I am very grateful to the United Nations for dedicating this year to all women around the world. It is sad that more emphasis was not placed on rewriting discriminatory school texts and breaking the barriers that prevent women from working at 'men's jobs', but I'm sure that much has been accomplished.'

- Debbie Dittrick, Deadwood, Alberta

'From what I have read and researched, it seems a lot was expected of the year, but nothing of known value materialized for Canadian women. The \$5 million seems to have been frittered away on conferences, symposiums, information mobiles — none of which are lasting and can help women of today in their struggle. I feel, as do others I have spoken to, that the money could have been more productively spent on establishing day care centres, producing non-sexist literature, funding the existing women's centres and beginning new ones. Those would seem more true to the theme of IWY than producing conferences to educate those who are already educated, or those who really do not care. . . IWY did not reach me. I am a woman and a writer. Years from now, I will be a woman, and a writer. Just because 1975 was labelled 'International Women's Year' it has not changed anything.'

- Noelle Boughton, Winnipeg.

'On a personal level, IWY had no specific effect. I feel sad that a Women's Year should be necessary and I have mixed feelings on this whole business. . . we must get the message across, once and for all, that we are a serious group of this population, that we are not riding a 'bandwagon' during 1975, that most of our work began long before 1975 and will continue long after 1975.'

- Marian Atkinson, St. John's, Newfoundland

'En général, les conférences de l'A.I.F. ont été avantageuses, puisque ici, dans les provinces de l'Atlantique les centres de femmes n'en sont qu'à leur début d'existence. . . l'année aura mis la lumière sur certains points qui avaient toujours demeurés obscurs. Je pense que c'est un commencement. Il ne faut pas lâcher! Les années à venir nous permettront de réaliser des projets d'envergure, du moins nous l'espérons. Je ne crois pas que cette année soit une faillite. Des femmes ont pris conscience de leur corps, de leur vie comme individu, de leur rôle dans la société. Elles se sont aussi donné la main et cette solidarité demeurera au fond d'elles-mêmes pour toujours.'

- Les Femmes, Moncton, New Brunswick



Christine Gibbard - Cosmetician, Carlsbad Springs, Ontario

'Great. Fantastic. It will have a long-term effect if it's handled the right way. Women have just got to be more aggressive and accept that that's the way it's going to be, and that's how it can have an effect. I think IWY has affected women's awareness more than men's awareness of women.'

'It is up to us, as women, to accomplish for ourselves what we want to see happen. IWY has forced us once more to realize that we can't sit back and suppose that someone else will do anything for us. If we do, we will get, instead of satisfaction, campaigns to criticize, tokenism and words; and we have had enough of just words.'

- Eva Strom, Bawlf, Alberta

'Here in Moosomin, our Mayor declared March 8th as IWY Day and ran a proclamation in the local paper, the *World Spectator*. The Masonic Lodge #7 picked up the idea and sponsored a tea to honour all ladies of the community. The ladies were reported receiving the royal treatment from the Masonic Lodge. . . What 1976 and the future hold is up to all women, not just the 40-and-over group who are now enthusiastic, but the young women who must become more involved. They have not met the problems seen so clearly by older women and somehow they must be made aware of their positions. Only a few of them are striving very hard to change attitudes and legislation. The media and the public will drop IWY once the year is over unless we, as men and women together, unite to keep issues before the public and strive for peace, equality, and development.'

- Jean Smith, Moosomin, Saskatchewan

'L'A.I.F. ne doit pas se terminer à la fin de 1975, au contraire; les femmes doivent s'intéresser d'avantage à leurs problèmes si elles veulent atteindre leur but. De ma part je veux continuer d'en discuter dans les groupes des différentes organisations dont je fais partie puisque je me rend compte que la femme ne fait que commencer à chercher à s'épanouir, à sentir qu'elle est quelqu'un. Le monde ne changera que dans la mesure que chacune de nous fera un premier pas. Je suis d'accord avec Jacqueline Lemay du thème de son chant sur l'Année Internationale de la Femme, 'La Moitié du Monde est une Femme'.'

- Azade McGraw, Sheila, New Brunswick



June Bartman - Homemaker, mother, Winnipeg

'I think it's about time. I've heard men say it's nice to let women have a chance — but I don't know, it's going to take a long time, that's just the way life is. . . I think it's time to give women a chance, just like everybody else. I don't think it's going to happen in one year, but it's a start. My husband says I'm liberated, I can do what I please, but he's never been the kind of man who thinks because he's a man I must listen. For some women, especially career women, it's giving them a chance, which is really important.'

I believe seeds were planted this year. Not in a well-thought-out garden patch, unfortunately, but seeds were scattered. And those seeds that fell on fertile soil, during the right season. . . they will take root.

- Doreen Gingras, Fort McMurray

Programme Notes

It was Branching Out's intention to report as comprehensively as possible on the IWY projects which were funded by Secretary of State. Early in June, we contacted both the regional office and head office in Ottawa, requesting the addresses of contact persons. The information didn't come. In August and September we mailed hundreds of posters to women's centres and individuals seeking submissions

on project activities for our special issue; at this time, we again requested help from Secretary of State. No response. It was October 3 before we received the information we needed — four days before our submission deadline.

Following are reports on many different IWY projects which we received from readers across the country.

A Report on Some IWY Projects From Across the Country

Boards of directors, bureaus and commissions, both private and governmental, often share a common feature — they have no women members. The Canadian Federation of University Women's IWY project was the establishment of a Roster of Qualified Women, listing names of women from across Canada whose experience would make them suitable for appointment to government boards or commissions. The Roster, financed in part by a Secretary of State grant, now has over 350 names, and lists each woman's educational background, business and professional experience, language capabilities and service to the community and voluntary organizations. Though some federal departments have asked for names of qualified women, and others have indicated they would consult the Roster when vacancies occurred on their boards, no appointments have been made as yet from the Roster to a federal board or commission.

Though the idea of IWY was received with little enthusiasm in the small community of Deadwood, Alberta, *Debbie Ditrack* decided that something should be done to commemorate Women's Year. With the help of several friends, she decorated a float and entered it in the annual town parade. The women on the float costumed themselves to suggest that today's female doctors, foresters and carpenters have 'come a long way' from the housebound women of yesterday. The float won no prizes; but the women of this isolated community, far from the tours and festivals and conferences, were happy to have participated in IWY.

During the months of May, June and July, two field workers in *Newfoundland* travelled in a mobile van to rural communities, speaking with women on issues related to the status of women; this project was sponsored by the Secretary of State. A co-ordinator, whose head office was in St. John's, went into the communities first and made contact with women's organizations and community leaders.

WOMEN: a special issue of *Dimension*

To mark International Women's Year Canadian *Dimension* has published a special issue of the magazine. It features articles on the development of class and the oppression of women; the Women's Liberation Movement; the role of women in the liberation of Viet Nam; women and imperialism; working-class women; Cuban women; suffragettes; divorce and abortion. Featuring these writers: Margaret Benston, Pat Davitt, Marlene Dixon, Kay MacPherson, Claire Culhane, Joan Kuyek, Z. Farid, Anita Shilton Martin, Margaret Randall, Gwen Matheson, Sandra Henneman, Deborah Gorman, Roberta Buchanan, Margi Gordon and Shelley Gavigan. Send \$1.50 to **Canadian Dimension, Box 1413, Winnipeg, Man., Canada.**

The rural women of Newfoundland were interested in discussing job training programs, traditional and non-traditional careers, daycare, wages and pension benefits for the housewife, and the married women's property act. These women have been neglected, largely because of the isolation of their communities from larger centres, and were eager to learn about new legislation affecting women, and to make personal contact with the field workers.

The Alberta Women's Photography Exhibition originated with a desire on the part of Joyce Wiswell, a photographer from Pincher Creek, Alberta, to meet other women photographers in the province who were serious about their art. She approached the Secretary of State's Office with a proposal to put together a travelling exhibit during IWY. The designated theme was "Women of Alberta", and exhibitors were asked to submit photographs showing what women do in different phases of their lives — career, work, life-style, self-concept, etc. The proposal was submitted for the entire year of 1975, but due to government delays it had to be rewritten for a six-month period and began in April, 1975. The delays lessened the number of entries, as the deadline for submissions was June 31 and photographers were compelled to use what they had on hand, rather than executing new work specifically focused on the theme of the exhibit. Another problem was that talented, serious photographers were reluctant to submit photographs, not knowing how they would be handled and displayed, the quality of the other entries, nor who might be on the proposed selection committee.

The result was that only twenty-four women contributed photographs. It was necessary to use *all* contributions with no regard for quality. In addition, the design and quality of the display itself was poor. The photographs were hooked to burlap covering wobbly, roughly-fashioned dividers. These were placed haphazardly and with no thought to ease of viewing or continuity of display. It was difficult for viewers to see some of the works, and even more difficult to appreciate their quality (or

lack of same).

The idea was good — to have a wide variety of photographs showing what various women are doing as well as how they view themselves. Various artists were given a chance to have their work seen and shared by others. Ms. Wiswell, the co-ordinator of the Alberta Women's Photography Exhibition, worked very much on her own, gathering material for the exhibition and setting it up in the various centres for display. Hopefully she will not give up her idea, and next year will have more women willing to contribute ideas, work, and experience in putting together another, better, exhibit.

Recognizing that most professional art is both executed and exhibited in major urban areas, five women artists from Southern Ontario decided to mount a travelling exhibition of their sculpture, prints, watercolours and oils, to give residents of the northern part of the province visual and personal contact with art and artists. The Ontario Council for the Arts funded the *Artists — 5 — Tour* (composed of Anne Meredith Barry, Irene Blogg, Bev Katzin, May Marx and Ruth Tulving), and their

exhibition opened in Sudbury on October 9, 1975.

The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women in Brandon is attempting to help native women cope better with adjusting to urban settings. The Secretary of State funded an IWY project which involves interviewing native women who come to the city from reserves, and evaluating their needs and potential contributions.

From Scarborough, Ontario, Valerie Dunn reports on the activities of *Tomorrow's Eve*, a feminist theatre troupe of ten women, mostly drama students, which travelled to 39 centres in Ontario (a different one every day) last summer, and were funded by an OFY grant. Karen Englander, who organized the show, said "We wanted to hit small town audiences with a play where women would get together for a theatre event, identify with pieces of their life on stage, and discuss it afterwards." In addition to the adult show, they did 41 performances of *Debbie and the Monster*, a fantasy for children. Three of the women hope to obtain a grant and continue a feminist theatre, performing

HERSTORY 1976

Saskatoon Calendar Collective

The familiar and popular day book calendar has gone into its third edition and this year features all new attractive design and illustrations; a generous appointment calendar arrangement, complete with Canadian holidays and phases of the moon; plus articles on notable Canadian women, marriage contracts, Native women and birth control.

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in and around Metro Toronto.

Planning for IWY programs started in August, 1974 at the *Ottawa Public Library*. They decided to sponsor a series of films, panels and discussions; some of the themes covered were 'Women and Work: Changing Options', 'Growing Up Female', 'Women and Religion', 'Images of Women/Images des Femmes'. The librarians also prepared two annotated bibliographies (*Women and the Labour Force, Sexism in Education*) and set aside \$5,000 to establish a bilingual core collection on women's studies, which will be part of the main reference collection.

The IWY project for the *Northwest Territories* funded by the IWY Secretariat was initiated by sending questionnaires to nearly all communities in the N.W.T. in an attempt to ascertain the particular needs and interests of the people. Fieldworkers are now holding workshops, film discussion sessions, supplying information and visiting informally with residents; their work will help them advise various agencies of the needs and concerns of women in these widely-scattered communities.

Ongoing Projects

A Secretary of State grant to the Clearinghouse for Feminist Media has

provided the opportunity for a broad survey of the attitudes and activities of women across Canada in 1975. The Clearinghouse, established in 1972 and focused on the need for communications among women in the media, soon found itself responding to queries and pleas for help from women's groups, libraries, business groups and individuals across the country. This led to the development of their IWY project — *The Women's Communication Centre*. The aim of the project is to identify the specific resource needs of women's groups, find out who the potential users of the Centre might be, and test the feasibility of a national communications centre for women. A survey was distributed to over 500 women's groups in June, and the response to this has provided a detailed picture of the resources and services of a wide spectrum of groups. Until the completion of the project at the end of December, the Centre is inviting inquiries from groups and individuals — this will help workers test their ability to provide information and assistance. Their address is 392 Markham Street, Toronto M6G 2K9.

A guideline statement on how to set up a women's studies programme has been prepared by Pat Buckley and Jhwon Wentworth at the request of the B.C. Women's Studies Association. Write to Pat Buckley, Vancouver Com-

munity College, 100 West 49th Avenue, Vancouver.

Media News

The Visible Women is the title of a 30-minute film on the history of women's rights in Canada. It was produced and directed by Beryl Fox for the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario as their IWY contribution. The film portrays the lives of ordinary women and notable activists, and includes early footage of a Prohibition march, a suffrage demonstration, and the hanging of a woman that have probably not been viewed by a general audience in half a century.

Moira Armour produced, filmed and directed a 9-minute film for the Federation entitled *A Matter of Choice*, which illustrates the ways in which society treats girls and boys differently so that they grow up with different goals and aspirations. The film will be of interest to educators, parents and women's groups to help explain how we raise our daughters so that they see themselves with fewer choices in the world than their brothers have. For information on availability of these films write to FWTAO, 1260 Bay Street, Toronto.

A woman in Toronto has started a record company in order to service her own initial release. *Sara Ellen's Homemade Records* is the name of the label; the record is an extended play release with two cuts per side, featuring a song which Sara Ellen wrote to celebrate IWY, 'Working on a Strong Foundation'. It is being distributed first to radio stations and will be supplied to record stores in areas where it gets play-listed.

This Is Our Work: Some Newfoundland Women Talk About Their Careers is the title of an exciting new book compiled by the Education Group of the Newfoundland Status of Women Council, with the assistance of a grant from the Secretary of State, Citizenship Branch. Designed for use as a text in the primary grades, the book introduces readers to women working in a wide variety of occupations (weaver, garbage collector, fisherwoman, mayor) in order to give them some idea of the many career choices available. Each woman describes her work in a simple, engaging fashion; the text is accompanied by a portrait of her at work. For details about the availability of the text, contact Ms. Dell Texmo, c/o Department of English, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland A1C 5S7.

Beth Jankola

MYTHS

They thought
I was at
The Women's Festival
but I wasn't
Didn't like it
so I rushed home

Chemical toilets/rock stage
Brain Damage's tent
Men wielding chain saws

I had imagined
women
barebreasted
in the sun
erecting structures
to hold banners
proclaiming
their own culture

Spring/75

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Women Who Won The West

by Zonia Keywan

original photo and reproductions by Martin Coles

One of the concerns of the women's movement has been to rewrite history to include "herstory". In western Canada, one of the most interesting and significant untold stories is that of the countless pioneer women who contributed so much to the development of this country. Who were these women? Why did they come? How did they live?

My research for a book about Ukrainians, one of the immigrant groups, has provided some answers to these questions. The collective story of the lives of Ukrainian pioneer women is one of almost unbelievable hardship, met with equally unbelievable courage and tenacity.

Who were the Ukrainian pioneer women? They were certainly not the frail, delicate, elegantly clad ladies we often see in turn of the century photographs. These women were peasants, their clothing was homespun, their hands were roughened and their faces aged beyond their years by hard work and frequent childbearing. For the most part, they were people born and bred into a life of extreme poverty and oppression, from which there was no escape. In light of these conditions, it is not surprising that Canada's offer of wealth and liberty, 160 acres of land and political freedom, was taken up by so many desperate men. And the women came too, in large numbers; sometimes through their own choice, more often reluctantly, abiding by the decision of a husband or father.

For a peasant woman who had never been beyond her neighbouring village, being uprooted from the land

her family had lived on for centuries and travelling halfway around the world to a foreign country from which she knew she could never return, was a trauma we can hardly comprehend in this highly mobile age. For most women, the journey from the native village to the Canadian homestead was nothing short of a nightmare. The food provided by the shipping companies, whose sole motive was profit, was inedible. Seasickness was almost universal. At times, disease broke out on board ship; we will never know how many mothers suffered the heartbreak of seeing the body of a dead child thrown overboard, denied even the comfort of a Christian burial.

The arduous sea voyage was followed by a train journey across Canada — the vastness of this country staggered the newcomers. Finally, a trek, by ox-cart or on foot, through mud, swamp, and dense bush, to the homestead. The sight of the homestead was often the crowning point of several weeks of misery for the exhausted and disoriented women. This was the promised land which had been advertised in such glowing terms, this was the paradise for which the family had lost its possessions and left its native land, this great wild stretch of nothing but bush, slough and rock. Many a pioneer woman spend her first few days in Canada in tears, wondering why she had allowed herself and her children to be brought to this God-forsaken land.

But the worst was still to come. The first few years on the homestead presented most pioneer women with a staggering succession of trials and hardships: not only the psychological

strain of exchanging a well-ordered, familiar village existence for a life of loneliness and isolation in a vast and hostile new land, but also physical privation of every kind.

"During those first few years we were all miserable, barefoot and hungry," 87 year old Victoria Zaharia told me. "When we tell the young people today how we used to live, they laugh at us. They say we were stupid to put up with such a life. But what else could we do — not knowing anything, not having a penny in our pockets?"

Almost every pioneer family lived at first in a dugout, or sod hut. Up to ten or twelve people might have been crowded into this small, dingy shelter. Until they could clear enough land for a garden and a patch of wheat, their diet consisted of a bit of purchased flour, berries, and whatever game they could shoot or snare: rabbits, prairie chicken, fish. Only those who could afford a cow had the luxury of milk and butter. One elderly woman recalls drinking slough water strained through a piece of cloth until her father was able to dig a well.

The Ukrainian pioneer woman was not spared physical labour on account of her sex. Turning the desolate 160 acres of homestead land into a habitable and productive place required so much work that every able-bodied man, woman and child had to do his or her share. The slow, back-breaking toil of brushing the land with a grubhoe, that is, digging out trees and brush by the roots; hauling stones; breaking the soil, either with an ox-drawn plough or a spade; building a shelter — whatever the work, women worked at the side of their men, sharing



Three generations of Ukrainian women in Canada.

the load equally.

In fact, in many cases the women had to do much of this preliminary work alone. It was common practice for Ukrainian pioneer men to work away from home in the summer months, on railroads, in mines, or on wealthier farms, to earn a little cash for the family's basic necessities.

No matter how many times I hear similar stories of courageous women coping with the homestead on their own, I never cease to be impressed.

Irene Bozniak's husband regularly left her alone with the children while he went to work in Winnipeg. In his

absence, Mrs. Bozniak cleared a small patch of land, dug it with a spade, and seeded wheat by hand. When the crop was ripe, she cut it with a sickle, threshed it, and ground it into flour with a hand mill. One spring, while her husband was away, she decided it was time the family had a better house. She went off into the thick brush, cut logs and dragged them back. With the help of the older of her eight children, she constructed a home. They carried clay in buckets from a lake two miles away, plastered the walls, and whitewashed them with lime. Shortly afterwards, she gave birth to her ninth child. When her

husband sent money for a cow, Mrs. Bozniak went on foot with two children to find one — a round trip of forty miles. Later, when the family could afford to buy a horse, she regularly hauled grain to the nearest flour mill, a journey of three days.

Apart from the heavy work on the homestead, there was the more traditional women's work to be done: keeping the family fed, clothed and clean. During those hard times, very little was store-bought. Every woman had to be capable of providing most things for herself.

Before the pioneer woman could begin to feed her family, she had to find some way of cooking. Often she would build herself a traditional Ukrainian clay oven, a large structure that filled half a room and included an oven for baking, a metal plate for cooking, and a large flat top that served as a bed for the children. But even this was more than some women could manage at first. One woman describes her family's first stove: "My mother found an old piece of pipe, flattened it out, set it over a fire, and cooked on it outside. We cooked this way for a long time."

Clothing, household linen and blankets were all made by hand. Most pioneer women grew a little hemp, and either kept a few sheep, or got wool from those who did. The hemp and wool were spun into thread, then woven into cloth, blankets and colourful tapestries. Many women carried their spinning with them wherever they went. At any moment of free time, out would come the distaff and spindle. Their hands were never idle. Winter nights, when no work could be done outside, would find them sitting by a dim light, often no more than tallow burnt in a tin, weaving, sewing and embroidering.

Keeping the home-made clothes clean wasn't easy. Because soap was expensive, clothes were soaked overnight in water strained through poplar ashes, then hauled to a nearby stream or river, where they were repeatedly scrubbed, pounded and rinsed. Even in winter, a hole was cut in the ice, and the wash rinsed in the frigid water. Many old people still recall the sight of their mothers doing laundry on a winter day, the bottoms of their skirts frozen, standing out around them stiff as boards.

Early marriage and many children was the pattern of a pioneer woman's life. Families of fewer than eight or ten children were rare. At childbirth these women could not afford to be faint-hearted or helpless.

Anna Shandro was in her last month of pregnancy when she arrived in Alberta in May, 1899. Her family's first shelter was simply a stretched out blanket, held up by four posts. One rainy



Maria Harasem, died 1904 in childbirth at age 23.

June night, while her husband was away, Mrs. Shandro's labour pains began. Leaving her children in the shelter, she began to walk to the nearest neighbour for help, but in the chilling darkness she succeeded only in losing her way. For a long time she wandered through the bush, praying that she and the baby be spared. Finally, to her great relief, she stumbled back upon her home. There, under four posts and a blanket, in the pouring rain, with her small children beside her, she gave birth to her first Canadian-born son.

At a time when doctors were few and far between, an experienced midwife was a very valuable person. Irene Bozniak, that formidable homesteader and housebuilder, had learned midwifery before coming to Canada. Not surprisingly, she was constantly on call. Rarely a week would go by without a distraught husband coming to fetch her to attend to his wife, often at a homestead many miles away. Mrs. Bozniak prepared her own medicines and obstetrical aids, the principal ones being goosefat, to aid in delivery, and moonshine, which she rubbed on as a local anaesthetic when an incision had to be made.

In all her many years of practice, Mrs. Bozniak lost not a single mother or child, a remarkable record for the era. A look around any pioneer cemetery will confirm that the mortality rate of both mothers and children was high. The two earliest crosses in an old Smoky Lake, Alberta cemetery mark the graves of two young women who died in childbirth: Maria Harasem, 1904, and Elizabeth Rosichuk, 1905. Both died at the age of twenty-three.

Like most peasant women, Ukrainian pioneers accepted frequent childbearing as a natural part of life. Each new child was usually welcomed

as a blessing, another pair of hands to help with the work. But in conditions of extreme hardship, it was sometimes hard for a woman to look forward to the birth of yet another child with joy. An elderly woman told me of her grief at having another baby at a time when the family was in particularly desperate straits: "When my child was born, I cried and cried that I had to bring him into the world. I didn't even have anything to wrap him in."

The vast majority of these immigrant women were uneducated; many were completely illiterate. Those women who came to Canada as young girls, or who were born during the first year or two on the homestead, often suffered the same fate. It was not until an area had been settled for some time that the residents were able to organize a school. Girls who were already past the normal age for starting school by the time one was built were often kept at home to help their parents. I have met a number of women in their seventies and eighties who can neither read nor write. Most express their regret at never having had the opportunity of at least a minimal education.

The pioneer woman rarely had contact with the world outside the mainly Ukrainian area in which she lived, but when she did, she was often met with scorn and ridicule. Because of the Ukrainians' extreme poverty, the primitive conditions under which they had to live, and the strangeness, to the Anglo-Saxon eyes, of their dress, customs and language, they were held in contempt as lazy, slovenly and inferior people. One Ukrainian woman reported that she was replastering the interior of her clay oven when she heard voices and footsteps approaching. She

climbed out, dishevelled, her clothes covered with mud and clay, only to find two well-dressed gentlemen staring at her: the local school trustee and the new teacher. Ashamed of being seen in such a state, but not knowing enough English to explain what she was doing, she had no choice but to stand where she was, smiling at the strangers. The trustee looked at her with disapproval, then turned to the young teacher in his charge, and said: "You see, I told you the Galicians (as the Ukrainians were then called) are a dirty lot."

One might well ask what kept pioneer women going, through those years of hardship and deprivation. One answer can be found in the tremendous sense of community that existed at the time. Hospitality, helping one's neighbour, sharing in each other's joys and sorrows, were a vital part of pioneer life. No opportunity for social gatherings was missed — Sundays, weddings, baptisms, even funerals. People would talk, comfort each other, tell stories of their homeland. Someone would pull out a flute, the women would sing sad, sentimental songs that reminded them of what they had lost, lively songs that buoyed their spirits.

But the most important mainstay during this difficult time was the sense of building toward a better future. Every woman believed that, no matter how much she suffered now, her children and grandchildren would have an easier and freer life. The thought made her own trials seem worthwhile.

These were the Ukrainian pioneer women. What about the others? Very little has been said or written about them. Yet the history is recent; it is still retrievable. Let's give it the attention it deserves before it is lost forever. ***



Mrs. Anna Shandro and her daughters and daughters-in-law, 1930's.

"New" Legislation

from our sponsor,

by Lee Dombrowski

1975's major federal legislation concerning women was Bill C-16, The Omnibus Bill on the Status of Women. The title sounds impressive; in reality the act is a compilation of amendments to existing legislation; it is 'housekeeping legislation'. This act, now Chapter 66 of the federal statutes, provides for the following:

VOTING

The Canada Elections Act is amended to establish the same residency provisions for either the husband or wife of a temporary worker. In the past, a husband who followed his wife to a place other than their permanent residence because of her work was unable to vote in a federal election, unless he returned to their permanent polling area. Now he may vote from the area of temporary residence, if all other qualifications have been met, as can a wife of a temporary worker.

The amendment also provided that the same information be taken from men and women for purposes of enumeration under the Canada Elections Act. Previously women had to indicate their marital status and, if married, use their husband's surnames, before their names could be added to the voters' list. Now any woman, regardless of her marital status, may register under the name by which she is known in her polling area, be it her own or her husband's. The use of Miss or Mrs. is no longer required. This legislation applies only to federal elections.

PROVIDING THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE

The Criminal Code of Canada now requires that a woman provide the necessities of life to her spouse. This law affects married couples who are not separated, common-law couples, and their children. Women and men are now liable, under the Criminal Code, if they fail to provide the necessities of life to their spouses and dependants, although previously this law only obligated husbands. The complainant must prove "destitute or necessitous circumstances or that life or health is endangered" without the support. Provincial legislation, which varies, may provide civil liability in the same area, although for example in Alberta only a husband is responsible. Civil liability allows a creditor to sue the husband for compensation or settlement of a debt that has been incurred by the wife to provide the necessities of life for herself and the children, even if he never signed the original credit application. The definition of "necessary" depends on the people involved — in one case, it was stated that while a captain's wife was entitled to wear silk 'unmentionables', an ordinary seaman's wife was limited to cotton.

This civil liability for necessities is seldom relied upon by either wives or shopkeepers. Wives prefer to go directly to court and ask for monthly maintenance. Shopkeepers prefer to have the husband sign the credit application in order that he is liable not only for

'necessaries' but all items charged.

HELPING CRIMINALS TO EVADE THE LAW

A woman who aids a person who has committed a crime with her husband, or helps the third person evade the law, even at her husband's insistence, is now considered to be an accessory after the fact by the Criminal Code of Canada. Formerly she was not held responsible for such actions. Both husband and wife are still protected if they help their spouse escape justice.

EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

The Public Service Employment Act has been amended to prohibit discrimination on the basis of age or marital status. It is hoped these amendments will close the loopholes which allowed covert discrimination against women, and so provide new impetus to the advancement of women in the federal civil service. (Still not passed is the proposed Human Rights Act which would prohibit discrimination not only against women in the federal civil service, but any women under the federal jurisdiction.)

CADETS

The National Defence Act has been amended to allow girls to belong to cadet organizations.

PENSIONS

Amendments to the War Veterans' Allowance Act, the Civilian War Pensions Act, and the Pension Act equalize the treatment of male and female children of veterans, and liberalize the definition of common-law spouse eligible for the dependents' pension. The benefits will not be paid retroactively.

"Omnibus: covering many things at once." Well, covering many things at once does not make a bill a significant or far-reaching piece of legislation. Several other pieces of federal legislation were amended in 1975 to equalize the status of women. These changes will have greater impact on the spouses and children of women than on women themselves. Changes to the Civil Service Insurance Act, the Canada Pension Plan Act and the Old Age Security Act were as follows:

INSURANCE BENEFITS FOR HUSBANDS

The Civil Service Insurance Act was amended to allow a woman to list husbands, children, future husbands, and future children as possible beneficiaries. Formerly women were not allowed to name husbands as beneficiaries of policies issued under this act. It was not until after World War II that married women were allowed to hold permanent positions in the federal civil service, and the Act has since been administered on the assumption that women civil servants must be single. No policies have been issued under it since 1960 and, according to a departmental official, the amendment will affect

the government of Canada

perhaps 150 people.

PENSION BENEFITS

The Canadian Pension Plan Act has been amended to read "surviving spouse" where it once said "widow", and the same terms for benefits apply to men and women.

The Old Age Security Act now gives spouses between the ages of sixty and sixty-five old age security benefits if the other spouse is receiving a pension. Ostensibly, this will allow more couples to retire together.

IMMIGRATION

The Immigration Act has been amended to allow that a family may be supported by the husband, or wife; the phrase "head of the family" is no longer used. In one case, a couple immigrating to Canada was held up at the border. Only the wife qualified as an independent immigrant because the husband was a student whom she was supporting. It was assumed that he was the head of the family, (although the Immigration Act did not specify that only husbands could be head of the family) and since he didn't qualify as an independent immigrant, the family's immigration was in jeopardy. When dealing with immigration laws, the opinion of the immigration official is a decisive factor. In the above case, the official apparently couldn't see a woman as head of the family. Finally a supervisor said that the man's B.A. qualified him as an economist, and the family was allowed in, still on the basis that the husband was the head of the household! By removing this phrase from the Immigration Act, Parliament has indicated explicitly that either husband or wife may be the independent immigrant.

Another amendment to the Immigration Act allows a wife to stay in Canada even if her husband is deported. Previously, if a husband was under order of deportation, his family was automatically included. Now, if a woman can prove she is not dependent on her spouse for support, she may stay in the country.

MATERNITY LEAVE AND BENEFITS

The Canada Labour Code provides a maximum maternity leave of seventeen weeks for women working in the federal jurisdiction (interprovincial industries such as railways, shipping, radio and television broadcasting, air transport, banking, federal Crown Corporations and the federal civil service). These constitute about 10% of the work force. Under the new amendments, women have more freedom to choose when they will take their maternity leave. Previously a woman could take a maximum of six weeks after the birth of her child. Now if she wishes, she may take all seventeen weeks after the child's birth. Some provinces such as Ontario have also enacted maternity leave legislation

and labour union agreements provide for it. However, in a few provinces such as Alberta, women who become pregnant have no legal guarantee that they will be rehired after taking time off to have a baby.

Any woman who takes time off to have a baby can claim benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Act. This Act too was very rigid as to when a woman could claim benefits and for those women who wished to claim the full benefit of fourteen weeks' pay, accurate prediction of the date of birth was essential. (A woman who wished the benefit of the full fourteen weeks of pay had to take a full eight weeks off before the birth and could receive benefits for a maximum of six weeks after the birth. If she quit her job two months before the baby was expected, but the baby was two weeks early, she could still only claim for six weeks after the birth, thus receiving benefits for only twelve weeks.) Now, she may take some or all of the fourteen weeks of benefits after the birth of the child. There is no longer penalization of women who miscalculate the date of the expected birth.

- The government has yet to act to give back Canadian citizenship to women who married aliens before 1947 and thus lost their Canadian citizenship, or to amend other parts of the Citizenship Act which are blatantly sexist.
- Housewives still cannot contribute to the Canada Pension Plan.
- The abortion law has not been reevaluated.
- Despite the Murdoch and Rathwell cases, and the recommendations of the Law Reform Commission of Canada, the laws regarding matrimonial property and support after separation have not been changed, on either provincial or federal levels.
- While the nation deplores the rising crime rate, the law and practice governing rape trials is so oppressive to women that fewer than one sexual crime in ten is even reported, much less brought to trial. If Bill C-52 (Amendments to the Criminal Code) is passed in its present form, the previous sexual conduct of the victim will still be admissible as evidence in a trial for rape. Thus the only procedural change is that the victim must be given reasonable notice in writing before this evidence is presented in court.

These are emotional issues, the ones that challenge unspoken attitudes and beliefs. Another year has passed and they have been neglected by Parliament. How they are handled, in the form of new legislation, and how the laws are administered in the future will tell us as much about the status of women in Canada as checking down a list or counting recommendations passed. Bill C-72, the Canadian Human Rights Act, is due for second reading this year. Hopefully, it will provide a basis in federal law for women, as a group to actively protect their rights through the correction of individual injustices. Women should press for passage of this law, and for other needed reforms, rather than wait for piecemeal changes to existing laws. ***

(The author wishes to thank Edmonton lawyer Jean McBean for her assistance in the preparation of this article.)

Women Behind the Lens

by Barbara Hartmann

Photography an important art form? Many Canadians think it is. They are now purchasing photographic prints for home display and for investment, just as they would paintings or sculpture. Unfortunately, the work of women photographers is largely unnoticed. Because the field has been dominated by men for so long, it is difficult for women to gain the recognition and experience they need. First, the transition from the role of the model to artist has been hard; for too many years the female figure has been on the wrong side of the camera. Second, women have difficulty displaying their work. Many photography shows are run by male professionals; male juries and selection committees prevail. A year ago the Canadian survey exhibition, "Exposure", arranged by the Art Gallery of Ontario, was boycotted by women. Not only were the invitations printed with a sexist logo (a shy pink nude), but there were no women adjudicators.

An exhibition of work by women photographers organized by the National Film Board may help to change this situation. Held during the summer at the NFB gallery in Ottawa, this exhibition was produced by Lorraine Monk, the director of the Still Photography Division. The exhibition had its beginnings in early January when photography schools and regular Film Board contributors were notified. One hundred seventy-five women responded to the request for photographs. Eventually, 187 photographs representing the work of 84 photographers were selected to be displayed at the exhibition.

Public response to the exhibition was good. Martha Hanna, one of the assistant producers, told me that attendance had been fairly consistent all summer with a daily count of between 100 and 200 people. I viewed the exhibition in early September and it still seemed to be attracting a good number of people each day.

My immediate impression of the show was that the images emphasized people, mainly women, in familiar settings; there were few nature or social landscapes, abstractions or collages. The technical methods were

homogeneous, as well; the photography seemed straightforward with few double exposures, superimposed images or abstract experimentations with light or shape. Much of the work submitted was social commentary; I thought that the NFB had edited the work to achieve a unified show, but when I mentioned the apparent thematic and stylistic similarity to Martha Hanna, she indicated that no particular topic or technique had been specified by the NFB; this was the style of the work that they received. It is possible that this type of social commentary about women represents an initial stage in the development of women's photography. Or perhaps each photographer had edited her work to fit a preconceived concept of the show.

One of the problems of the exhibition was that with so many photographers displaying their work, each photographer could only show a limited number of her prints. Some photographers were represented by only one print, making it difficult to evaluate the scope of their talent; in some cases I wasn't sure if I had hit upon a "lucky shot" or a promising professional.

One of the photographers whose work attracted my attention was Claire Beaugrand-Champagne. I felt that her work was outstanding not only for its technical excellence, but for its depth of content. A number of her prints depict old age. She portrays the elderly in their habitual surroundings with considerable strength and insight; each print informs the viewer of both the person's life and the encompassing society. Lynne Murray, Reva Brooks, Pamela Harris, and Sandra Semchuk should be mentioned; most of their work, like that of Beaugrand-Champagne, was in a social documentary style and was of high quality.

There were other good artists whose work deviated from this genre. The prints of Lynne Cohen are an example. Her work can be described as social landscape or environmental documentary; some of the images featured were 'fiftyish' interiors: a bare living room with one chair and an artificial fireplace, an empty high school gym with band equipment installed for a

dance, and a restaurant, decorated with a garishly-patterned rug and Detroit skyline wall mural. I prefer social documentary to social landscape because of the inclusion of the human image, but several women I talked with feel that these photos make a forceful statement about the bleakness of contemporary life.

Clarke, Irwin and Company has just published a hardcover book, *The Feminine Eye*, to commemorate the exhibition. As in the catalogue which preceded it, the layout is not as effective as the actual gallery display. The size of the prints and the placement of dividers to separate the various categories were important in viewing the show. Nonetheless, it is a fine book. All the photographs displayed in the exhibition are included in the publication and the quality of the reproduction is excellent. I am not convinced that, as the publisher states, this is a selection of the best of this country's talent. This assertion implies that the material in the book is national in scope. It isn't. It is true that the Film Board staff made contact with a number of women who were unknown to them before; but the fact remains that of the eighty-four artists whose work was shown, twenty were from Quebec and fifty were from Ontario. The other eight provinces were represented by the work of fourteen photographers. The two works chosen from Alberta were both from Claresholm, a town of 1,306 people. I realize that many of the NFB contacts are in central Canada, but I feel that a greater effort should have been made to reach photographers in the other provinces.

This last criticism should not detract from the fact that the photographs from this exhibition are worth seeing. Many of the women were exhibiting their prints for the first time. Perhaps they will be encouraged by this exposure to continue to work in this field. It is also satisfying to know that the public has been made more aware of the presence and talent of women photographers in Canada.

Photographs by Claire Beaugrand-Champagne appear on the following pages.

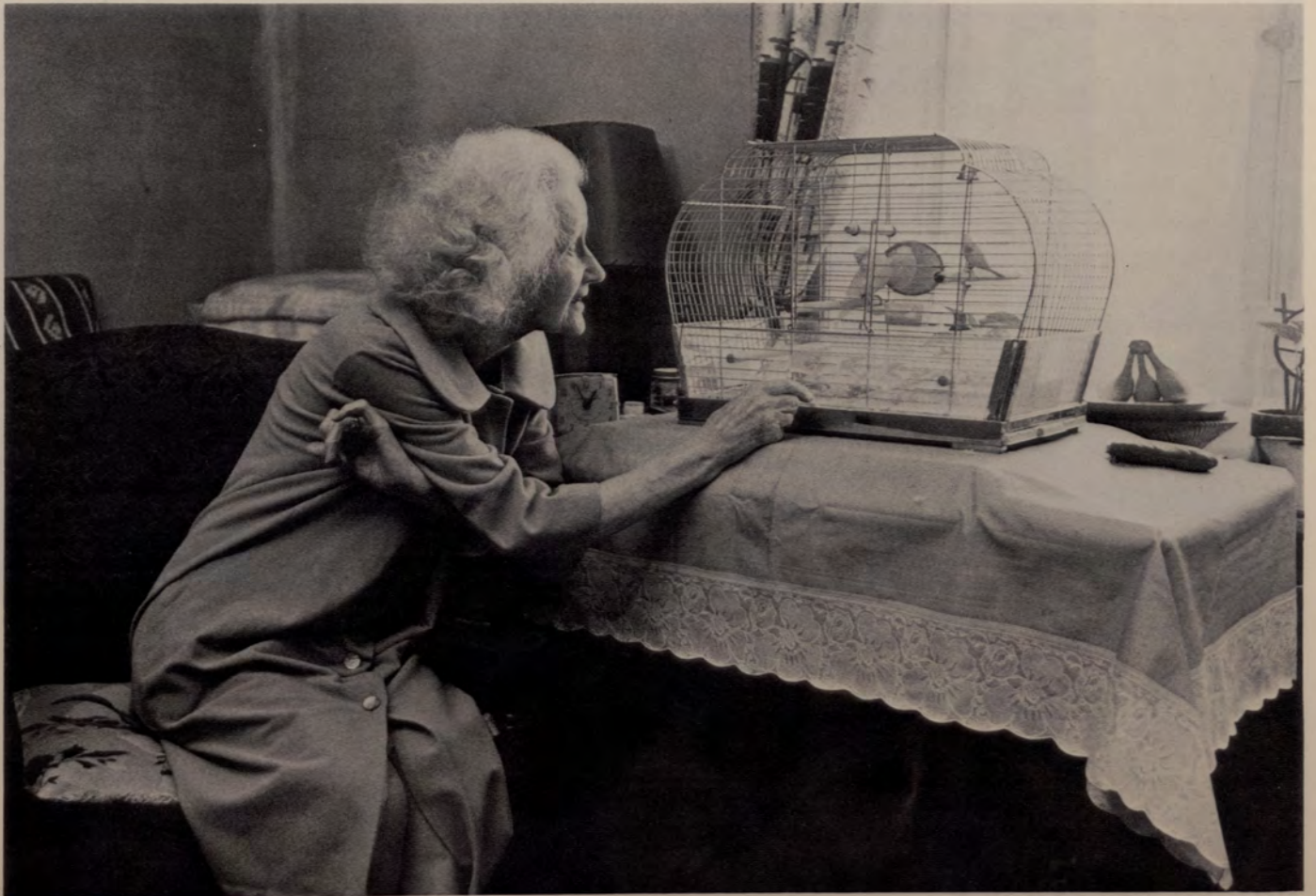


La Vieillesse

photoessay by Claire Beaugrand-Champagne

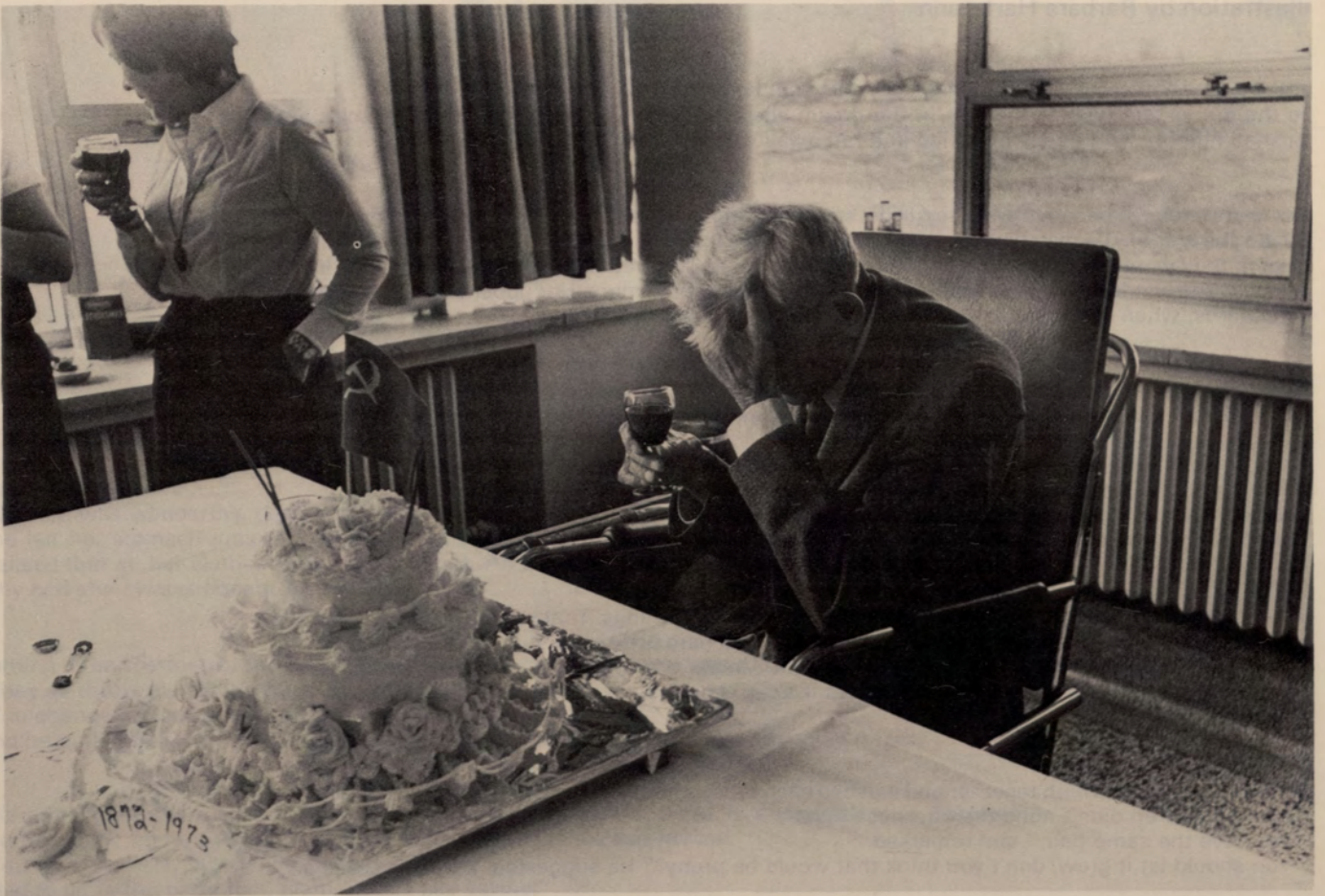






THE CURE

by Marlene M...



THE CURE

by Melanie Manion

illustration by Barbara Hartmann

"Hey please I'm sorry. Don't cry I'm sorry. Hey kid I'm sorry."

In the dream she pushed him off. In the dream she discovered amazing upper arm muscles and pushed him off. And he always cried and ran away without doing it in the dream.

*

Six years later she began to practise Aikido, still searching for those dream muscles. Every morning at seven she was on the mat. It was a small class. She was the only female. She pushed herself harder, hoping they wouldn't take notice. And at eight, her body was wetter than theirs. When they left to shower, she would pick up the wooden sabre and practise some more. Her upper arms looked bigger afterwards, when she stared at herself naked in the dress-room mirror.

*

When the man on the street put his arm around her, she hit him. Hard and across the head, but with her handbag. So she felt ashamed. Aikido didn't work in the streets.

*

"But Karen, aggression only breeds aggression," he was telling her.

Aymard is naive.

"Oh Aymard — Aikido doesn't work."

*

After they made love for the first time, she wanted to explain things. That she wasn't frigid; that she had been frightened; that she liked him, liked his perfect hard body even. But he kissed her and held her to him and said, "That's all right, that's all right." In the morning she stayed in his bed. He left to teach the seven o'clock class. At eleven she drank a cup of his instant coffee and bathed in his tub. She felt all right.

*

Saturday they took a bath together and washed each other's hair. Aymard rubbed her lightly with the towel and Karen didn't mind the afternoon light.

"We have the same hair," she remarked.

"You should let it grow, don't you think that would be pretty?" he suggested, Karen guessed so.

*

The night they had pleasure at the same time, he held her and kissed her eyes gently. After that night, they always found a harmony. Aymard was kind, and Karen knew she pleased him.

*

Twenty-five cents in the machine gave her four photos in three minutes. In two weeks she had lost fifteen pounds. She never ate meals now, but her mouth worked when Aymard ate and sometimes she had to invent excuses to leave. If she ate a pastry, she tried to make herself vomit. It didn't always work but it always turned her stomach. Aymard liked her thin.

*

Music really touched her. And she cried more often.

"Did you always cry this much?" But she couldn't remember.

*

He liked her smile but she hated it. "It's not a real smile," she explained, "I grin. Like a goon."

"Oh stop it. You're full of complexes."

She hadn't known that.



She began to feel ugly.

"Karen, I was wondering: don't you like dresses?"

She felt her stomach jump. When she went back to her little room, she looked in the closet and realised that all her clothes were boys' clothes. All those T-shirts.

Why had she always bought T-shirts?

Coming in on the metro, she told him that his seven o'clock class was too hard.

"They all throw me too hard."

"You change so fast. You've changed so much."

And he pulled her to him. That night he said, "My little Karen," and she snuggled closer.

She didn't feel embarrassed about going to the toilet when he was there. This astounded her. Before, she had come home early from dates, always too shy to excuse herself.

"You're home early, Karen. Party no good?"

"Had to go to the bathroom, mom. I don't like asking."

But it was all right with Aymard. Really all right.

They had another key made. And Karen moved her T-shirts in and the new dress.

Did they all sleep that much? It frightened her when he lay his arm heavy across her back in the morning, trapping her and keeping her in that cage of sleep. On one of their Sundays, he had stretched his body out on the bed while she massaged his neck and shoulders. When he finally awoke, the dishes had been washed and put away. She was beginning the sixth chapter of a book she had found.

"I'm starving."

She put the book down and made dinner.

She was sitting, drinking her coffee and thinking that at the age of twenty-three she shouldn't be so used up. "I shouldn't look so worn." She considered telephoning Elizabeth: "I am sitting in the cafe near Aikido and drinking coffee and I will be here for a long time." She cried and told herself it was her period. She looked in a mirror and hated her posture. How to fill this empty space of time?

On his advice, she dropped the seven o'clock class.
"This way you can sleep late in the mornings."

But Karen was always awake when the cuckoo sounded six in the apartment upstairs. She acquired the habit of spending hours in the bathtub, soaking, thinking, not thinking really, looking dumbly at her legs and belly under the suds. "Unwinding."

He told her about the girl at the bank he had almost married but never slept with. And the Vietnamese woman who had required hours of preparation before love.

"She drained me, that one. She was like a vampire."

Karen felt panic: how many others?

"You should sleep," he was saying, "on either your stomach or on your back. No pillow." (They had been discussing her posture.) "Definitely not on your side."

And Aymard slipped his arm under her neck, pulled the pillow out, let it drop. Nights later, Karen trained herself to reach across to her pillow without awakening Aymard. In the early mornings, a sixth sense made her abandon it again before the alarm rang. The small deception thrilled her; Aymard could be fooled.

He said he had quit but one night he came in late and she saw the light of the cigarette move to the bathroom in the dark. She wasn't asleep. It reminded her of the time she had come upon Daddy smoking in the basement. "Don't tell Mommy. She thinks I've quit."

The human shame.

Then one night she couldn't sleep or thought she couldn't.

"Go to sleep, Karen."

She dressed herself.

"Where are you going?"

"Out."

"It's two o'clock. Come to bed."

She ran out, waited on the stairs for him to follow, cried when she realised he wouldn't. Then why all the sharing? She went back and into his bed beside him. Puzzled about what she had done, why she had done it.

Karen scrubbed the bathtub with cleanser and rinsed it with cold water. Now it was clean. So was the kitchen. The entire apartment was clean. She smoothed over the bedspread and decided against writing a note. She shrugged, smiled big at herself in the mirror, flexed her upper arm for the joy of it. She picked up the suitcase and walked out of the apartment, leaving the key under the doormat. It had stopped raining. She could tell things were going to be all right.

Sparling Mills

Alligator Wrestling

I am surprised
they are so small,
not many purses
lying there.

Enter a young man
barefoot
with his jeans rolled up
but there's no mud
to sink into.
He prods
the pile of 'dragons'
with a club;
we watch him drag
his choice out
by the tail.

The wrestling so-called
begins.
The loud-speaker tells
how vicious
the alligator is. The alligator
closes his mouth several times
showing the soft white under-belly
of his throat.

Mother in the Hospital

My Mother's in the hospital.
She shouldn't be.
She's always been the strong one
who visits there
bringing books
that I can never focus on.

But there she is,
her face grey on the pillow,
the roots of hair, white
getting longer,
her nipples showing
and her not knowing.

She is so still
her eyes the only movement;
forget-me-nots
have never been that blue.
And from her middle part
fine long hair falls down
like a rainstorm.

Walking through the halls
is walking
through a white mixing-bowl.
I can hardly believe
I stand upright
as I come to her door.

Always her face is in
the same position
as when I left,
a dog
watching.

I will be happy
when I see
her hands bustle
as they used to:
stitching her needlepoint,
turning the pages of a book,
anything
except those quiet hands
lying one
on top
of the other,
and the stone
of hospital time
on top them both.



"It's important that a sculpture in an environmental situation and its relationship to architecture be a bridging point for the building. The human scale in relationship to the building leaves the person alienated from the building. When there's a bridge such as a sculpture that is built in some relationship to a building in terms of its size or its mass, but at the same time is accessible to the viewer, the person can relate the human, personal scale to what might be an alienating building. Environmental sculpture is an important way of reducing

alienation. And there's the social side of it — at the moment our art is still tied to one kind of class stratum, the moneyed class. The myth still exists that art is for wealthy people, so many people don't visit art galleries and aren't exposed to art. The next best way of bringing art to people is through environmental art. I'd like to see this piece on the CNE grounds, because that's where, especially once a year, you get vast numbers of everyday people who would see it."

(above photo shows 19" bronze model of *The Amazons* against landscaping)

'The Amazons' Politics In Bronze 1975 Maryon Kantaroff

by Karen Lawrence

"... the Amazons were warriors and that's principally what the piece is about — it's about a fighting stance. A great deal of my work is lyrical, gentle, sensual. This piece is sensual, luscious, but it's *firm*, and very threatening."

So Maryon Kantaroff describes *The Amazons*, a massive work she executed in her Toronto studio/foundry for International Women's Year. As soon as she heard about IWY (in June of 1974), she began organizing for the Women in the Arts Festival, to be held the following summer, and working on 'the big monster' which she hoped to exhibit when the festival opened.

During the last six years Kantaroff has been very active in the women's movement, and has become aware that women artists in this society have not — do not — receive the recognition they deserve, that the old myth persists that women just paint flowers and animals. She grew up in Toronto where there were several women sculptors (among them Wylie and Loring) living and

photos by T.E. Moore

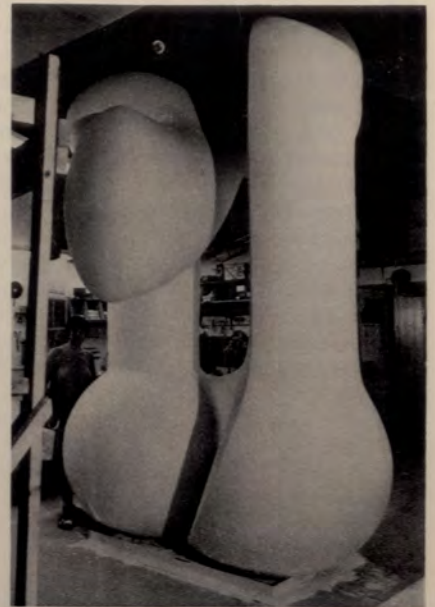
working on large stone pieces, yet she didn't know they existed. Now she is in a position herself to provide a role model for women artists. "They'll see that a woman who is normal, not a giant, has done an enormous piece of sculpture — and in their heads, that means 'It's possible for me to do it.'"

Kantaroff's politics are inextricably bound up with her art — "Every moment that is free of politics is full of sculpture" — and *The Amazons* is a deliberate political statement. "International Women's Year is an ideal year to be seen as a woman doing a monumental piece of sculpture. 1975 was proclaimed to promote equality between men and women. I wish to celebrate this proclamation with a special sculptural project. From my student days to the present, my work has shown a preoccupation with the theme of the unity of man and woman. My sculpture and reliefs have aimed at integrating the male and female archetypal forms, thus symbolically working towards that

mythical 'perfect' unity. In essence, what I do sculpturally is what I am doing politically in the women's movement."

The Canada Council turned down Kantaroff's application for funds to complete the work, casting it in bronze. A group from the CNE, headed by Laura Sabia, is currently organizing to raise enough capital to buy the bronze; Sabia feels that it's important that the work be completed and installed as a permanent monument to IWY. If the group can't raise the funds, the sculptor says she will cast it herself, in stages.

While the monster sits in the studio, Kantaroff is busy with speaking engagements and other artistic projects. Solveig Ryall, working with an all-female crew, has produced a film study of the artist. Her work has appeared in several special IWY shows; she will be exhibiting at the Scollard Gallery in Toronto with a number of women in a month-long show which closes on November 16.



"I've never done a piece that's as tall and wide as this one. It has a steel inner structure and the shaping was done in styrofoam — the photograph shows the way various sections

of foam were slotted into the shape. The whole thing was sprayed with plaster and smoothed down with various tools."

celebration!

1975 - Toronto Arts Festival

photos by Moira Armour

Text compiled from reports by project co-ordinators, Festival of Women and the Arts.

The 'Festival of Women and the Arts', held in Toronto last June, was planned within the context of IWY to promote women and the arts as essential forces in creating the climate necessary for social change. It celebrated the achievements and creativity of women, with special emphasis on the often ignored and undervalued 'grass roots' elements. Funding for the project was received from the federal, provincial and municipal governments; most of the two hundred women involved in planning and producing the Festival were paid, if only token sums. Organizers estimate that several thousand women and men attended one or more of the events during the month.

The structure of the organization was kept flexible in order to accommodate as many individuals and points of view as possible. A steering committee and sub-committees were established in all of the areas covered by the Festival: visual arts, music, film, writing, lectures, crafts, and the performing arts. There were exhibits of visual arts and crafts plus a 'fence show' for non-professional participants, six nights of events by performing artists, film showings, panel discussions on the history of women in the arts, lectures and seminars presented by writers, journalists, artists and performers and extensive shows of work done by women from all the cultural and native peoples' groups in the community. A film was made about the Festival itself and should be ready for release in late November.

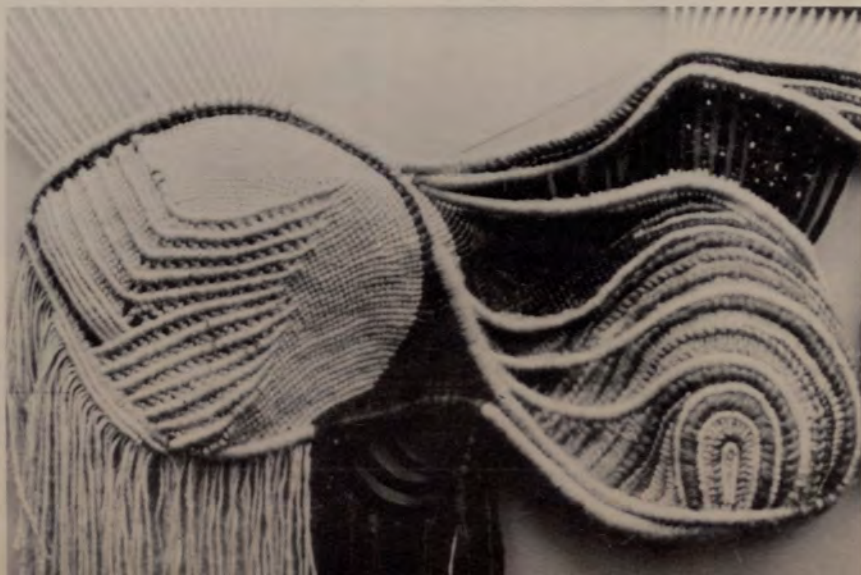
Several of the sub-committees reported on their activities to *Branching Out*; most of the workers concluded that women in these various fields of creative endeavour would not have had the opportunity to interact, both with each other and the public, had the Festival not taken place.

The *Environmental Design Group* mounted a three-part exhibit in an 'environmental design tent' at Harbourfront. A photographic history of women architects and environmentalists of the late 1800's and early 1900's gave the

public some indications of these women's contributions to society; a continuously-running film featured a futuristic, utopian approach to city living, and explored the alternatives available to people in planning their communities. The group designed a 'street game', which consisted of a scale-model version of a city block; people visiting the tent were asked to develop a scheme that they found viable and pleasing. Some were hesitant about their qualifications to 'design' their environment, but when encouraged they became interested and involved. This exhibit, which took approximately 700 hours to construct and assemble, was visited by an estimated 30,000 people.

The Multicultural Craft Exhibition, 'From Her Hands,' displayed over one hundred pieces of traditional craftwork made by women from twenty-five ethnic communities. These women gave demonstrations of their techniques throughout the nine-day exhibit, and encouraged visitors to try their hand at creating too. The project sought to involve as many women as possible from the ethnic minorities, who otherwise might not be involved or even aware that the Festival was taking place.

The exhibition raised some interesting questions. Why is it that so





much of the craftwork done by women has had so little status? Why has the needle always been regarded as a less important tool than the brush? Could it be that the work women have done has been tied somehow to the status women have enjoyed over the years? Could it be that women themselves have tended to downgrade the importance and the value of the work they have produced?

In their summary report on the project, Barbara Adams and Gloria Montero stress that the contacts made with individual craftswomen, the excitement many of them showed when they found out there was some interest in the work they did, and the enthusiasm many of them displayed in meeting and discussing and learning from each other was a great satisfaction

to all those involved in planning the project.

Organizers considered the Festival to be a success on several different levels. The exposure of the work of women was widespread in the community; the participation by so many women of different backgrounds and points of view was a learning experience for all; the extensive audiences increased community and women's awareness enormously; and finally, the ability of a disparate group of women to work together to achieve a common goal under difficult conditions made the Festival come together in an exciting way. Currently, the core group is trying to find an existing institution in the community committed to the idea of the Festival, so that the program may be continued in the future.



Enough!

by Karen Lawrence

Someone has to say it — women are writing too many poems and stories about blood and dissolving relationships, about lousy lovers and domestic depression. This criticism, I know, will not be taken kindly; but after reading a great deal of poetry and fiction written in Canada in the past few years, both good and bad, I have to admit to this nagging dissatisfaction.

As people who are experiencing frustration, pain, loneliness, possibly disintegration of former selves and lives; who are taking the initial stumbling steps towards the light switch and perhaps falling over our own bodies in the dark — we need tools. The word is one of the most useful tools we have to communicate ideas and emotions to others. The word can be a useful therapeutic tool — put into words, the fantasy, the obsession, the bad dream, the bitter thought may be encountered, worked through, understood. The word is also one of the components of art, of literature. Often it is helpful to write (in letters, poems, songs, diaries) about experiences; many of us reorganize some kind of experience in this fashion every day. But most of us do *not* create art when we do so. I am ready for the cries of 'Elitist' 'Reactionary' usually provoked by this criticism. It is not meant to be a rejection of any *kind* of poetry, for example — concrete, rhymed, found, sound — merely of *bad* poetry, which comes in all shapes, colours and sizes, which is never in short supply (or high demand).

During IWY we have seen several publications devoted to women's writing. Most of them emphasize the need for a special forum for women's work. While it is true that women must have more outlets for creative work, we must be aware of the fact that not all writing is art just because it comes from the soul. Too many women are limiting themselves to writing about being women — poems about menstruation have an appalling sameness after you've read twenty or so. In *Women and Their Writing, Vol. II* (Toronto, 1975), the editorial states: "We are exploring the fact that as writers, we write from a unique perspective — that of women... we are starting to respect our day to day experiences as powerful and significant writing material — and less compelled

to jazz it up or mystify ourselves to be worthy of a reader's attention." Well, okay — but those experiences have to be transformed somehow in order to make them compel a reader's interest and attention. I found very little in this collection that was compelling; for the most part the poetry was obscure, poorly written, the book itself full of spelling mistakes — a memento for the writers themselves but not worthy of attention otherwise. *Title Unknown: Writing by Ontario Women* was designed as a showcase publication for the *Festival of Women and the Arts* held in Toronto in June, 1975. There are a few interesting finds here — some fine graphics by Gail Geltner and Helen Lucas; Katherine Govier's playlet 'A Modest Proposal' the most carefully written, artful piece; Catherine Roberts' short article on Dr. Frederick Leboyer (*Birth Without Violence*) the most moving statement. The short fiction, which runs from ½ to 1 page is *too* short and sketchy; the poems, even those written by 'previously published poets' (no claim to greatness these days) disappoint. (Carolyn Bode deserves the 'Head Trip of the Year Award' for her article 'Hair', which gives us yet another example of a woman not doing something (shaving her legs) she really wants to do, making herself uncomfortable, because it's Women's Movement chic. In this little drama she is supported

by a husband who doesn't like it either, but who "sees it as a matter of principle for me, and he knows I'll be disappointed in myself if I fail." Yech.)

We do a disservice to promising writers by publishing first efforts which falter — seeing one's work printed in a well-respected publication will no longer be a carrot, a goal to work towards. There is a lot of good poetry and fiction being written in Canada by women today, by writers who can relate the particulars of 'being female' to a wider spectrum of human experience. We should not be afraid to reject writing that doesn't accomplish this.

Another big IWY disappointment were the special issues on women put out by several prominent publications — among them 'Canadian Dimension', 'Communique', 'The Canadian Forum'. The whole business of a special issue, containing articles of interest to women (on rape, abortion, oppression, sex roles, what else could we be interested in?), edited by a special staff of women, smacks of tokenism, and opportunism on the part of the media. Setting aside this basic objection, most of the issues were full of hackneyed, boring material that seemed incredibly familiar.

'Communique's' issue *Women In Arts in Canada* contained info on Margaret Atwood, Celia Franca, Emily Carr, Margaret Laurence, Kenojuak — big surprise, eh? Why couldn't they give

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some exposure to lesser-known, talented artists, performers, and writers? We have been reading the same facts about the same Canadian women for several years now. For the most part, the staff writers are optimistic about the situation of the female artist in Canadian society, and their articles were little more than expressions of congratulations. Sandra Gwyn's editorial fudges extensively on the creativity/genius question — she fails to resolve any of the questions raised by her (mostly male) sources.

'Canadian Dimension's' editorial decries the 'gross, meaningless extravaganza of IWY'. Several articles focus on the meaning of women's revolt in a society suffering in advanced stages of capitalism; Marlene Dixon concludes a lengthy article by noting that in this century "... the fundamental position of women has improved as a result of over-all improvements in the standard of living of the working class, but women's super-exploitation and subjugation have remained exactly where they were in 1863." Pretty depressing news. It seems that Marxist feminists always have good news to report about women's rights in other countries (especially Cuba and China), but the scene on the home front is grim. I reacted strongly to Sandra Hennman's suggestion ('Women's Impossible Dream?') that the first step for a woman in seizing control over her destiny is to say "NO. To say no to what exists." If we act from a negative stance, we are psychically defeated before we take that first step.

The *Women's Issue* of 'The Canadian Forum' is a somewhat tastier product. (What, is it — no, they wouldn't, can that be a woman SURFACING on the cover???) More of Geltner's excellent graphics here, some fine poetry and fiction. There are several interesting feature articles; the writers report conscientiously on rape, immigrant women, women's magazines, the female labour force. Included are a history of women's contributions to the 'Forum' and a reprint of Margaret Fairley's 'Domestic Discontent', first published in 1920, in which she suggests that women change their domestic customs so as to free more time for themselves — "Invitation cards might be printed with 'Please eat at home' in the corner". There is a short, lively interview with P.K. Page, and one with Dorothy Livesay which is somewhat less than sparkling.

The last five years have been a period of rich growth for women. We have had many opportunities for self-discovery; we have learned new skills; and most importantly, we have gradual-

ly built up the self-confidence which many of us needed in order to live and work happily. Now we seem to be in a rut. No one will challenge the validity of a woman's experience if she is writing about childbirth, wage discrimination, or rape. But women writers have explored these areas ceaselessly, to the exclusion of other topics of interest and importance. I think it is dangerous for women to confine themselves to writing about the details of the 'female experience' and to interviewing over and over again the same women who have 'made it'. Women have a unique perspective and the ability to treat

issues other than those we have heard so much about. But editors, publishers, and others who deal with creative women are finding that much of the material they see deals only with women's issues. As a staff member of a women's magazine, I am not sure if this is all that women are writing about, or whether women edit the material they submit because they assume certain material is of greater interest to women's publications. I *am* sure that I would like to see more work by women which covers topics of wider interest, and which approaches women's issues from a fresh, dynamic perspective. ***



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CBC RADIO



To My Friend in Love (for Gayla)

We knew this would happen.
"I'm ripe for it," you joke.
You are a fruit to be picked?
Or did you just fall
Into the right arms?

(My other friend
Was in love for three years.
Still is, probably.
We don't write to each other very much.
We saw each other frequently;
He worked late at night.
When he came home, I left.
It was worse when he didn't come home.
Patches of silence sewn into our talk;
She was wondering.)

We knew this would happen.
A disease. We don't have an antidote.
If we did, we wouldn't want it.
Who doesn't long for such ecstasy?
To be loved,
So exclusively,
A centre we pivot from.
The beacon of that special smile
Beckons through all the chaos.

Leslie Nutting

Lora Lippert

Western

Arm in arm,
we swing into the saloon,
a fade-out later
I come out,
noticeably fatter,
smiling and wiping my mouth.
You suspect I have swallowed him whole.
You've seen the type.

My eyes are glassy and intelligent.
My belly's warm.
I walk off into the sunset.
I have no pistol
but I could be dangerous.
There's not room in this town for both of us.

books

review by Julia Berry

The Three Marias: New Portuguese Letters, Doubleday & Co., 1975, \$10.00 cloth.

The Three Marias: New Portuguese Letters first attracted international attention when its authors, Maria Isabel Barreno, Maria Teresa Horta, and Maria Velho da Costa, were arrested and tried by Portuguese authorities. They were charged with "abuse of the freedom of the press" and "outrage to public decency". However, in 1974, two years after the original publication of the book, the charges were dropped, and in a complete about-face, the judge praised it for its literary merit.

The book grew out of weekly meetings of the three women, all writers in their early thirties, all married, and all interested in bringing about social change in Portugal. Every week they would discuss something each had written: an essay, a poem, a letter. These pieces, which make up the book, have been left in chronological order, unsigned by the authors. Thus we can follow the development of their cooperative project, and with close attention even detect the individual authors' styles.

A book like this might sound like the product of many a consciousness-raising group. But the fact that the authors used a seventeenth century classic, *The Letters of a Portuguese Nun*, around which to group their writing makes the book exceptional. The five original letters, included in the American edition of *The Three Marias*, were written about 1667 by a young Portuguese nun to a French officer with whom she had had an affair. He had abandoned her when their relationship threatened to cause a scandal. Sister Mariana's letters were a natural choice for the three modern women who had themselves been educated by nuns, and who saw Mariana as a symbol of all women. For them the cloister became a symbol of woman's repression, and the nun's habit a sign of her role, encompassing obedience, patience and service.

The three Marias, in their rework-

ing of the classic, have created fictitious letters between Mariana and the Seigneur de Chamilly which analyze the age-old idiosyncracies of male-female relationships, and the enriching and destructive elements of passion. They have also created letters to a friend, a cousin, and Mariana's mother. The authors have extended Sister Mariana's lineage to the present day, peopling the book with Marianas, Maria Anas, Ana Marias, and their male counterparts Jose Maria and Mariano, which at times can be quite confusing. There is an excerpt from the diary of Ana Maria, born in 1940, debating the problem of woman's identity. There are several letters from 1971 between a woman named Maria Ana and her husband Antonio "for twelve years an emigrant, residing in the town of Kitimat, on the East Coast of Canada (sic) opposite the Queen Charlotte Islands, Close to the Alaskan Border". There is a letter from a soldier in Africa, to Maria, a housemaid in Lisbon. These letters not only emphasize women's plight, but point out the recurring national themes of war, emigration, and repression which have played such a role in Portugal.

Interspersed with the letters are poems, word games on the name Mariana, essays on the condition of women through history, and prose sketches. It is easy to see how, in a tradition-bound country like Portugal, prose passages titled "The Body" or "Intimacy" could shock. They are lyrically powerful and attractively pornographic. The poetry is frequently erotic as it ranges from traditional ballad to free verse in a kaleidoscope of emotions.

There are several recurring themes. The love-hate tie that binds mother to daughter and daughter to mother is a preoccupation of Mariana and her descendants. The traditional prestige of producing male children and the expense of having a daughter send Mariana to the convent and cause the rift between her and her mother. This theme has pursued women through history: "Our mother . . . who was hoping for a boy-child through whom her ego might even the score and take

its vengeance, and who on seeing the girl-child that she had given birth to felt only grief and guilt for having brought into the world a creature like unto herself . . . guilt at this girl-child's being her vengeance and her curse". But as mothers of sons, the three Marias perceive their own dangers: "There are three of us: mothers of men . . . We have responsibilities and we realize this: the responsibility of not raising our sons to be either expert horsemeat or panderers, in this staid country that has made a name for itself in history: thanks to its sailors and seafarers." They will fight to break away from the traditional roles. "We will make our way back to the root/Of our own anguish, all by ourselves, until we can say/Our sons, they are people and not/Phalluses of our males."

There are other ways for women to assert themselves. One way the descendants and friends of Mariana try to regain their self-respect is suicide. By putting an end to herself, a woman ends her oppression. Death is scarcely worse than living "on the verge of life" and is sometimes easier than love. Another source of power over others, less drastic than suicide, is using someone for one's own purposes; thus the Chevalier de Chamilly accuses Mariana of having used their love affair as material for her writing.

Sister Mariana asserted herself by accepting an affair with the chevalier; other women assert themselves by refusing to be men's prey, as do the three Marias. The three women are intent on social change. They examine the "so-called improvements" in the condition of women throughout history. They ask: "How has the situation of women changed? Once an object that was a producer of children and so-called domestic labor, that is to say non-remunerated labor, she has now also become an object that consumes as well, and a consumer product."

The three women do not agree on how to bring about needed change. They question and criticize each other. One questions the power of words as a revolutionary weapon, while another wonders: "Can there possibly be any

reason for a woman to still believe in life?/To still trust a man? To still believe in her liberation if she continues to accept what has thus far been offered her?" The third emphasizes the importance of individual strength and the need not to take oneself too seriously. "Freedom today, sisters, consists of persistent laughter on the part of anyone who can bear to laugh . . .".

As readers we are given the opportunity to see the ups and downs of this group, their differences in opinion and approach despite the similarities of background. They are united temporarily around the theme of Mariana, the woman, but in the end they go on alone, feeling less forsaken because of their common experience.

As heterosexual women, the three Marias recognize men as "fragile creatures" attempting to conceal their impotence. They are outspoken in their need for the right kind of men "... Men will call us lesbians: only our bodies resemble those of their spouses, not our will or our disgust. We need men, but not that sort of man." They rejoice in the new acceptance of friendship between women, in the "new family" the three of them have formed. "Society sows confusion and fears which cause women to abstain from friendships with

each other, and at the same time it sustains such friendships once they are formed. Two men do not kiss each other, but two women may; . . . but let them only lightly and innocently touch each others lips, and perhaps also exchange confidences if they so choose, but let there be no further consequences, since in the eyes of society woman is an asexual creature."

review by Alison Hopwood

Lot's Wife, Monique Bosco. Translated by John Glassco. McClelland & Stewart, \$7.95 cloth.

The publisher's blurb on the jacket of *Lot's Wife* claims that Monique Bosco's writing focuses on "the condition of women in relation to contemporary society, especially with regard to sex." Although this is in a way true of *Lot's Wife*, it is not the aspect of the novel that struck me in reading it, nor is it central, I think, for the author herself. The first person narrative circles obsessively on self-punishing introspection rather than on the experiences of women in society. As a little girl, the narrator recalls, she played games in which she "deliberately sought the secondary role of the spurned or sacrificed woman. I was the poor princess on whose head calamities descended." As a mature woman contemplating suicide, she is conscious of her ambivalence towards the man whose love was a "*corrida*" and who has not deserted her: "I have always detested the sham 'literature' that sings a paen to female slavery . . . Yet I am just as mad as those atrocious masochistic heroines."

The life of Helene, the narrator, parallels to some extent the life of the novelist — born in Europe, educated at schools and universities in France and Canada, and finally a professor in Quebec. Helene's problems are not those of money and jobs, children and housework. To a considerable extent they are the product of her specific family background and childhood rather than her existence as a woman. Her feelings of inadequacy begin with her realization that she is a disappointment and a hindrance to her fashionable, pleasure-loving parents, who do not make the "mistake" of having more children. Her mother was disowned by her Jewish parents when she married Helene's Catholic father, but neither

parent is religious. Her father feels guilt at leaving France, his native land, to escape the coming war, but is persuaded by his wife to take the family to America. The parents are both killed in a car accident just before the war ends, leaving their daughter alone, a school-girl in a new country. At the university she associates with a group of outcasts, and after graduation works at a routine job, without friends or interests — "A little dead-alive girl of twenty-two."

The pattern of estrangement and rejection is repeated further in later experiences with men, in part at least through her own choice. She marries a man she knows to be homosexual, it is not clear why. Then she has a long love affair with a married man who she says made her "*toe the line* like some awkward recruit."

In general the novel has little to say about how society conditions and limits women, or about the contemporary changes in women's lives. The use of the word "liberated" at one point, and of "feminism" at another are rather unconvincing, as there are no details to substantiate them as realities in Helene's life. Equally, the last sentence of the book — "I'll go on living." — is unconvincing, as Helene refers throughout to her resolve to commit suicide. Hopelessness and self-pity are the dominant themes.

John Glassco, well known as a writer and translator, provides a graceful and highly literate English version of the original French. A perfect understanding of both languages would be necessary for discussing whether Glassco's translation is faithful to Monique Bosco's writing, but it is worth noting that in his own writing Glassco shows no understanding of the problems or needs of women. His recent book *The Fatal Woman* portrays a series of mysterious and threatening women who seduce and destroy men. I think it is fair to assume that he sees *Lot's Wife* as a study of the masochism that fascinates him, not as the story of a woman struggling to liberate herself from the repression of society.

Monique Bosco seems well aware of both the limitations society imposes on women, and of the limitations some people, like her Helene, impose on themselves. She depicts sensitively and poignantly the consciousness of a woman who lives only through the views that others have of her, and the despair many women feel about their relations with men. But the social causes are not explored, and the struggle to emerge is not presented. The title implies that looking backwards is death, that to live we must look to the future. The novel, however, gives us a long and melancholy backward look.



MAKARA?

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...and more books

This issue we've expanded our book review section to include a number of short reviews. Our former practice of publishing only in-depth reviews was too restrictive. We hope readers will enjoy the greater variety of this new format. Reviews that follow were written by Sarah Butler (age 9), Mary Alyce Heaton, Alison Hopwood, Karen Lawrence and Naomi Loeb.

The Sun and the Moon and Other Fictions, by P. K. Page, Anansi, \$3.50 paper; *Poems Selected and New*, by P. K. Page, Anansi, \$3.95 paper.

House of Anansi publishes a series of Found Books, "reprints of Canadian books . . . which have long been neglected but which deserve to be saved from the limbo of the 'out of print'". *The Sun and the Moon* is an embarrassing novel which should have remained in limbo. In her Introduction, Margaret Atwood admits that the novel is "incredible on the level of social realism", as it concerns a young woman, born during a lunar eclipse, who realizes that her ability to take on the identity of inanimate objects and people is destroying her relationship with her fiancée. I found the book unacceptable even as romance; the black-red-white symbolism is too obvious, the dialogue unbearably stilted ("I've hardly lived since you left." "Why didn't you write?" "I couldn't. I felt dead." "Oh my darling, I was a beast!" "No, no. I understood."), the metaphors incomprehensible ("The thought of seeing Kristin was like a whistle in his mouth."), and throughout the book Kristin is portrayed as a child who at first loses herself in submission to her lover ("He held her chin and kissed her. The whole world was alight. If it could always be so, she thought, Carl always dominant. . .") and ultimately becomes a zombie rather than sap his creative power. The rest of the stories in this collection work somewhat better; in many of them, Page concocts a

universe full of mythic terror, miracles and bizarre occurrences.

The poetry in *Poems Selected and New* is a testament to Page's aptitude for that genre. Included are some of her best known works as well as previously uncollected poems. Many of the poems are works of social realism, documenting the lives of stenographers, prisoners, junior clerks and social outcasts as Page saw them in the 40's and 50's; others are reminiscent of Leonard Cohen's highly visual fantasies about doomed lovers, freaks and misfits. Her images are stark, electrifying - "One apple only hung like a heart in the air". Her voice, even in the early poems, is sure, inimitable — many of our younger Canadian poets have learned much from her.

Is Anansi trying to save money by eliminating proofreading? Both of these books are replete with mistakes, which detract greatly from their otherwise attractive layout.

K.L.

Where to Eat in Canada, edited by Anne Hardy. Oberon, \$3.95 paper.

Anne Hardy has been publishing this gastro-guide since 1971, and

generally it has improved with age. Her listings of restaurants across the country are concise, helpful and humorous, and she includes evaluation sheets for guide-users to submit comments on the dining experiences they have. If you're reading it during those long stretches on the road, make sure you're within range of a decent restaurant - you'll get *really* hungry. It would be nice if she listed more places to have lunch — a boon for travellers, businesspeople, and those who enjoy dining well but can't afford the high prices many places charge for complete dinners. And perhaps she could double-check the hours she lists — we have primed ourselves for exquisite fare and driven miles out of our way, only to find the spot of our choice closed.

K.L.

Memories Are Made of This, by Melinda McCracken. James Lorimer & Company, \$8.95 cloth.

Memories Are Made of This is billed as a look at what it was like to grow up in the fifties. The book is cashing in on the current nostalgia craze; one sees in it the desire to be the *American Graffiti* of the publishing world. In truth, the author is concerned

cont. on next page

EXHIBITIONS

Harry Heini

October 27 - November 8, 1975

Carolyn Menu

November 3 - November 15, 1975

Peter Ewart

November 17 - November 29, 1975

The Art Mart Ltd.
**DOWNSTAIRS
GALLERY**
10154 - 103 St., Edmonton

about growing up in a small section of Winnipeg, which is described in great detail, and about the schools, church and girl guide troop she attended. It is divided into three sections, "After the War", "Teenage Life", and "Twenty Years Later". Within these sections are sketches titled "Authority", "Sex", "Church", and so on; they promise much but deliver little. The book abounds in descriptions like "His mother was a pretty, dark-haired woman", and the reader says "So what?"

The book is written partly in the first person, yet McCracken tries very hard to achieve detachment from her subject. Thus the book is neither personal memoir nor reportage; it is merely awkward in its point of view.

One has the impression of having read an overgrown school yearbook. Toward the end is a segment titled "Through the Years With the Grads" in which the reader discovers "Bill Watson is divorced and living in Texas." McCracken seems to think that a clue as to who Bill Watson is would be irrelevant. Similarly, the photographs are not labelled in any way, as if they were the definitive pictures of the age, no identification necessary.

If you went to Churchill High in Winnipeg in the middle fifties, you might look at the book to see if McCracken remembers you. Otherwise, forget it.

M.A.H.

The Candy Factory, Sylvia Fraser, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1975.

Trite thinking,
Trendy plotting,
Slick writing,
Nasty reading.

A.H.

Her Own Woman, by Myrna Kostash, Melinda McGracken, Valerie Miner, Erna Paris and Heather Robertson. MacMillan of Canada, 1975, \$10.00 cloth.

Her Own Woman is a collection of biographies of ten famous and not-so-famous Canadian women, by five female writers. It represents another publisher's attempt to capitalize on International Women's Year, without startling results or fresh insights. The women profiled include the inevitable LaMarsh, Frum and Atwood; more interesting are the encounters with Abby Hoffman, Kathleen, Madelein Parent. Most of the articles have already been published in magazines, heightening the sense of *deja vu*.

N.L.

BRIDE SERIES
by Isobel Dowler Gow

This is one of four postcards from a series dealing with the role of women. The black and white cards are reproductions of the originals which were shown this year at the Artfemme exhibition in Montreal. If you or your organization would like to have these postcards for sale, write to Isobel Dowler Gow, 258 Metcalfe Avenue, Montreal, P.Q.

Price for a package of 4:
wholesale: 45¢
retail: 75¢



She Shoots She Scores! Heather Kellerhals-Stewart, The Women's Press, \$.75.

She Shoots She Scores! is a story about a girl named Hilary and her best friend Sylvia who try to get a girls' hockey team going. It is pretty interesting to see. They have a hard time getting one because the other girls think it's sissy and tell Hilary to play on a boys' team. Their team list looks like this:


Girls' Hockey Team - 1975

1. Hilary Lachapelle
2. Sylvia Morrison
3. Somebody or other
4. Invisible
5. Nobody
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

They can't seem to get one going so Hilary joins up with the boys at a hockey school for one week. In the final game the score was 1 - 0 for the other team. Hilary was right at the net and she scored — the final score was one-all.

I think that some conversations in the book were stupid, others were pretty funny. The pictures were good. This is a good book for children like me who like sports.

S.B.



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Edmonton

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Dec. 8 - 20
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Gisela Felsberg
Esther Freeman
Lena Kostiuik
Isabel Levesque
Thelma Manarey
Jean Mihalcheon
Carol Reed
Adeline Rockett
Jane Sartorelli
Jane van Alderwegen

And now for the news . . .

by Mary Alyce Heaton

News stories about women reached an unusually high number in 1975. Part of the reason could be that International Women's Year has made women newsworthy; part of the reason could be the existence of the Feminist News Service.

Two Alberta women, Ann Harvey and Rita Moir, spent the summer of 1974 travelling across western Canada, and discovered the need for an information and news exchange for the women's press. They organized the first national women's press conference, which took place in Saskatoon in December 1974, to discuss the feasibility of such a news exchange. The conference was held in conjunction with the Canadian University Press and Canadian alternate press conferences, and the women were able to draw on these resources while planning their news service. Women from across Canada, except the Territories and the Maritimes, attended the conference, and returned home to discuss the need

for and operation of such a news service. Kate Middleton of Waterloo started organizing a library of women's publications and sent some stories over the CUP wire to test the response to the FNS.

At the second national women's press conference, held in Winnipeg March 28 - April 1, 1975, the women reported there was a need for such a project. Meetings were devoted to planning the organization and operations of the exchange, which had been named the Feminist News Service in Saskatoon. Mona Forrest, of the Feminist Communication Collective, Montreal, and Pat Leslie, of The Other Woman, Toronto, had organized the conference, and had arranged for delegates from the Maritime provinces to attend. The Winnipeg Women's Place, under the coordination of Pam Atnikov, was host to the conference, and funding was received from the Secretary of State.

The conference decided that the

news service would be run from two head offices, one in eastern and one in western Canada, so the major workload could be split between two groups of women. Women attending the conference volunteered to be regional representatives for the FNS; they would collect the news from the areas and send it to the appropriate head office, and they would do promotional work on the service. It was felt that with regional representatives, more comprehensive coverage of each region would be possible. The conference also established the principle that all news packets would be issued in both English and French.

To date, neither of these aims have been achieved. The FNS is being run from an office in Waterloo, as a western office has not yet been established. News packets are available in English only; the problem of finding translators, getting the extra typing done, and the

cont. on next page

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costs of a second press run have been prohibitive.

Kate Middleton, who runs the Waterloo office, says the aim of the FNS is "to distribute news, features, graphics, stories of interest to the feminist movement in Canada. The women's movement will be better informed of its growth and position in Canadian society." The FNS is attempting to cover, from a feminist perspective, those issues which are important to a Canadian woman's life: childcare, abortion, health, education, law reform, et cetera. While these issues are covered in the regular press, not often is the story told from the point of view of the women most directly affected by public action and policy on these matters. The news service also acts to circulate news about feminist organizations and women's centres across the country, and is building an archive of Canadian women's publications.

Judging by the first two news packets, the major problem of the FNS will be to get the news, and to get it out again. News goes stale quickly, and much of the information in these two packets was outdated by the time of publication. Presumably these problems will be ironed out as women become aware of the need to send in news quickly, so the necessary collation, sorting for duplicate stories, and preparation for production may be done. The problem of regional disparity also exists; in two recent issues the majority of stories were from Ontario and Quebec.

As well as news stories, FNS carries articles, poetry, photos and graphics suitable for reprinting. Plans are underway to publish resource packets, handbooks, and collections of poetry, but the emphasis is placed on getting the news service fully operational. All staff is volunteer, and many pay expenses themselves. Revenue comes from donations and subscriptions to the news service.

All women in Canada are invited to send news to the FNS. Write Kate Middleton, Feminist News Service, Box 906, Waterloo, Ontario. Subscription information is available from the same address. Subscriptions are available on an individual or group basis, and the rates are preferential to women's publications and centres.

Mary Alyce Heaton represented *Branching Out* at the Winnipeg conference.



Antonia Brico
photo by Phoenix Films

Antonia: A Portrait of the Woman
Directed by Judy Collins and Jill Godmilow
Produced by Judy Collins
Edited by Jill Godmilow
Distributed by Phoenix Films, 470 Park Ave. S., New York, N.Y. 10016

reviewed by N'eema Lakin-Dainow

As the number of films made by women increases, there is a need for new objectivity in the critical appraisal of this work. Until quite recently, less than total support of the artistic endeavors of women was regarded as betrayal of the women's movement. Attempts to apply critical standards were denigrated by accusations of succumbing to male supremacist criteria. However, it can be argued that praising a film without applying critical standards is a form of sexism practised

by both men and women. The criteria utilized in the critical analysis of cinema in general must also be applied to the films made by women filmmakers.

Antonia: A Portrait of the Woman concerns the life and work of Antonia Brico, an American symphony conductor, and her efforts to develop and practise her art over years of prejudice and indifference. The film was produced and co-directed by Judy Collins, the well-known singer-songwriter-composer, a former student of Brico's.

Critics of both sexes have praised *Antonia: A Portrait of the Woman* as a film about a woman of courage and determination; as a tragedy concerning talent unused because of prejudice and sexism. This is certainly true. However, the power of the film is due to Antonia Brico as a personality, not to the structure of the film itself.

Portraiture is prominent in the art of the women's movement. This genre can be traced from literature such as *Fear of*

Flying, Flying, Memoirs of an Ex-Prom Queen, and Bed/Time/Story to films such as Kate Millet's *Three Lives*, Bonnie Kreps' *Portrait of My Mother*, and *Antonia: A Portrait of the Woman*. This general trend is also evident in the films prevalent at women's festivals, which chronicle the lives of the protagonist/filmmakers in great detail.

While representing a valid orientation, this aspect of art in the women's movement unfortunately focuses solely on individual personal experience, to the exclusion of those aspects of the total environment which may be relevant to the personal situation. The film does not present facts in chronological order, and many facts are not presented at all. The personal emotional reality is overemphasized; there are many gaps in the chronology of Brico's career. Firmer direction could have elicited the influences that led to Brico's transition from pianist to conductor, the reasons for her choice of people with whom to study, and their influence on her musical style; all might have done much to flesh out the portrait of the artist. For instance, while the film says she studied with Albert Schweitzer, it is unclear whether she did so for five days or five years.

Due to the factual omissions, the film would seem to be difficult for those with little or no musical knowledge to follow. Through the course of the film, Brico mentions names of many musicians and conductors she admires

or who helped her career. However, she rarely specifies how they helped, and for those unfamiliar with the styles and musical accomplishments of the musicians mentioned, it is difficult to understand the developmental phases of her musical career. Since music is so important in her life, it is indirectly the focal point of the film, and should have been given more specific emphasis.

Brico's observations concerning her career are not properly investigated. For example, she comments that it was women much more than men who impeded her career, but the audience is left to ponder this statement and to wonder which women she refers to: musicians, society matrons, or others.

Glimpses of her personal life are also sketchy. Aside from the period of childhood, it is difficult to see where the pieces fit, as one does not get enough information that goes beyond atmospheric.

Film documentary is a primarily visual medium, and as such has certain limitations which can often lead to visual monotony. Collins and Godmilow did not attempt to redefine or supercede these, but attempted to mitigate them through the use of visual aids: dividing the screen into a montage of newspaper clippings and old photographs, a newsreel of Brico conducting the Boston Symphony, shots of her teaching, and conducting the Brico Orchestra. They also used a movietone newsreel depicting an imaginary con-

test between a male and female drummer. These sequences are generally effective in providing a visual counterpoint to the verbal information being presented. However, other stylized segments do not work as well.

Collins and Godmilow appear to have become fixated on particular shot angles and certain individuals. One student of Brico's is filmed repeatedly, both in tireless practice and during a performance. It is evident that with the exception of the few times she is able to conduct, Brico must achieve satisfaction through her offspring, i.e. her students. The camera angle often used in filming Brico's face is extremely static and uninteresting. The scene where Collins and the technical crew impinge on the film is awkward, and would better have been left on the cutting room floor. The directors have already made individual imprints on the film through the role of interviewer-listener, and through the use of a movietone style animated short. Also, if this film is a portrait, a glimpse of the artist is plausible but certainly not obligatory, as presumably the artist is reflected in her approach to her subject.

I felt that less emphasis on the politics of personality and a greater clarification of the chronological facts of Brico's life were necessary. Concurring with Collins and Godmilow that Brico is a fascinating woman, it was unfair to both audience and subject to leave the portrait in such an unfinished state.

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reader questionnaire

We have been publishing *Branching Out* for two years, and the support which we've received from readers has helped us tremendously. As you probably realize, revenue from advertisers helps us to cover costs of producing the magazine. We would like to increase the number of ads in the magazine, while keeping the content of ads appropriate to our readership. To do this we require a detailed reader profile. As well, we want to know what you think of the magazine and what direction you want it to take.

Please assist us by completing the following questionnaire. We will keep all responses anonymous and confidential. Thank you for your cooperation.

The Editors

1. I am _____ female _____ male.

2. What is your age?

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| _____ under 18 | _____ 30 - 40 |
| _____ 18 - 24 | _____ 40 - 50 |
| _____ 25 - 30 | _____ over 50 |

3. Where did you buy this copy of *Branching Out*?

- _____ subscription
- _____ newsstand
- _____ bookstore
- _____ other (please specify)

4. Where do you live?

- _____ city
- _____ town
- _____ rural area

Which province? _____

5. What is your occupation?

6. What is your income level?

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| _____ under \$3,000 | _____ \$11,000 - 15,000 |
| _____ \$3,000 - 5,000 | _____ \$15,000 - 20,000 |
| _____ \$5,000 - 8,000 | _____ \$20,000 - 26,000 |
| _____ \$8,000 - 11,000 | _____ \$26,000 and over |

7. Are you

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| _____ single | _____ divorced |
| _____ married | _____ separated |
| _____ widowed | _____ co-habiting |

8. Do you have children?

- _____ yes
- _____ no
- how many? _____ what ages? _____

9. Indicate the combined income of your household.

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| _____ under \$5,000 | _____ \$20,000 - 26,000 |
| _____ \$5,000 - 8,000 | _____ \$26,000 - 30,000 |
| _____ \$8,000 - 11,000 | _____ \$30,000 - 40,000 |
| _____ \$11,000 - 15,000 | _____ \$40,000 and over |
| _____ \$15,000 - 20,000 | |

10. Do you own your home?

11. Indicate your educational level. Check twice if still attending.

- _____ high school
- _____ community college
- _____ technological institute
- _____ university
- _____ graduate school

What is your field of study?

12. How often do you read *Branching Out*?

- _____ every issue
- _____ 1 - 2 issues/year
- _____ 3 - 4 issues/year
- _____ 5 - 6 issues/year

13. What other magazines do you read regularly?

14. How many people besides yourself read this copy of *Branching Out*?

15. Which article in this issue did you like most?

16. Which article did you like least?

17. What would you like to see in future issues of *Branching Out*?

18. Any other comments?

Please send all completed questionnaires to "Questionnaire", *Branching Out*, Box 4098, Edmonton, Alberta, T6E 4S8.

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Canadian Magazine by and for Women

people in this issue

CLAIRE BEAUGRAND-CHAMPAGNE

Claire Beaugrand-Champagne graduated from the CEGEP in Old Montreal. She has received two Canada Council grants to compile a series of photographs on senior citizens, and has had several exhibits at the National Film Board in Montreal. Currently Ms. Beaugrand-Champagne is a staff photographer for the Montreal daily *Le Jour*.

ALICE BAUMANN-RONDEZ

Alice Baumann-Rondez graduated from the School of Art in Zurich, Switzerland, and subsequently worked for fashion and advertising studios in Zurich. Since immigrating to Canada 15 years ago she has worked as a freelance photographer in Edmonton.

JANE DICK

Jane Dick graduated from the University of Winnipeg with a bachelor's degree in dramatic studies and has since taken film courses at Concordia University in Montreal. She is presently doing freelance work in films and journalism.

LEE DOMBROWSKI

Lee Dombrowski became interested in various media while at the Simon Fraser University Film Workshop run by Luke Bennett. Since then she has worked as a freelancer in media research and production. She lives in Edmonton.

ZONIA KEYWAN

For the last two years Zonia Keywan has been researching a book on Ukrainian pioneer life. She has an M.A. in comparative literature from the University of Alberta and works as a freelance writer and photographer.

SUSAN McMASTER

Susan McMaster was editor of *Branching Out* from the time of the magazine's inception until last April when she returned to Ottawa, her hometown. She is currently a graduate student in the school of journalism at Carleton University.

VIVIAN FRANKEL

Vivian Frankel is an Ottawa freelance photographer and a frequent contributor to *Branching Out*. She prepared a travelling slide show for International Women's Year, and is working on a book entitled *Status 75* for the International Women's Year Secretariat.

BARBARA HARTMANN

Barbara Hartmann studied art at the University of Alberta, and has been on the staff of *Branching Out* for the past year. She is particularly interested in children's literature and illustrations of children's books.

ALISON HOPWOOD

Alison Hopwood lives in Vancouver where she is teaching at Simon Fraser University.

N'EEMA LAKIN-DAINOW

N'eema Lakin Dainow is a graduate student in Communications at Simon Fraser University. She is specializing in the area of film and has organized several film series and seminars concerning the role of women in film.

JULIA BERRY

Julia Berry has been involved in the women's movement for a number of years, particularly on the Edmonton newspaper *On Our Way*. She has an M.A. in French literature.

LESLIE NUTTING

Leslie Nutting attended State school and Cambridge University in England before coming to Canada in 1974. Currently she is working on her M.A. at the University of Waterloo. Vehicule Press in Montreal is preparing a book called 'Manoeuvres' which contains some of her poetry.

KAREN LAWRENCE

Karen Lawrence is a fiction editor at *Branching Out*. Black Moss Press published a small collection of her poems, and her poetry, reviews and articles have appeared in several Canadian magazines. She has taught courses in Canadian Literature and modern poetry; currently she is working on a long series of poems and caring for some chickens on a farm near Onoway, Alberta.

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.

LORA LIPPERT

Lora Lippert is a poet and critic who lives in Vancouver. She is a member of the core group of the *Growing Room Collective*, and does typesetting, layout and reviews for *Room of One's Own*.

MELANIE MANION

Melanie Manion is a freelance writer and a student of history who recently returned from Paris, where she studied French and practised Aikido with Maitre Noro.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?



If you really want to know what the Women's Movement is all about . . .

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Many books and articles, expressing many different points of view, have been written. Why not become conversant with the issues. Consult your local library, bookstores, or women's resource centres for the latest reading material.

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Just a little over two years ago, Betty Wilson sat down to her fourth try at a novel. Her first three, which represented 10 years of labour and which she later dismissed as "beginner's efforts", had drawn encouraging but definite rejections. This one, however, she dared to hope, was a winner. So she entered it in the 2nd Search-for-a-new-Alberta Novelist Competition, and the rest is history. Last October, Betty Wilson was declared the winner of Alberta Culture's \$1,000 cash prize and a publishing contract with \$1,500 against royalties from the Macmillan Company of Canada. This October, her ANDRE TOM MACGREGOR will be between hard covers and in the stores.

Have you written a winner?

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

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

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DEADLINE:
DECEMBER 31st,
1975



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