

# Branching Out

canadian magazine for women

Volume V Number 4 1978 \$1.25

*could this woman bake a  
cherry pie?*



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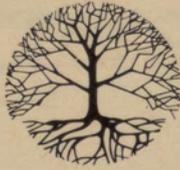


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# editorial

**masculine, adj.** 1. male: of men or boys  
2. having qualities regarding as characteristic of men and boys, as strength, vigour, etc.

**feminine, adj.** 1. female, of women or girls  
2. having qualities regarded as characteristic of women and girls, as gentleness, weakness, delicacy, modesty, etc.

Most feminists would vehemently reject these stereotypes of sexual identity. We have argued for acceptance of a full range of human qualities for both men and women. In the work force, for example, we have attempted to broaden the possibilities for women to include jobs that demand something other than modesty and compliance. Our relative neglect of the subject of sport seems a significant omission, for here the 'male' end of the character continuum is glorified while the 'female' end of the character continuum is ignored or denigrated. Perhaps, as Ann Hall says in the interview in this issue, most feminists are like the majority of non-athletes: we just don't take the subject of sport seriously.

When the *Branching Out* staff began to discuss publishing an issue on women in sport, the possibilities seemed unexciting to me. I thought of sport as simply a means of maintaining health. After many discussions with others on the staff, and with people who wanted to submit articles, I realized that my limited view of sport itself reflects an attitude typical of many women. I lost interest in sport early in high school, and aside from jogging and exercises for fitness, sport has played no part in my life. My

indifference to sport as an adult is shared by many women I know, but by few men. Once I recognized this, I saw that many basic feminist issues concern women in sport and, equally, those of us who are not athletic.

Sexist attitudes and discriminatory practices are as pervasive in sport as they are in areas that have been given higher priority by feminists. There are male and female sport ghettos just as there are male and female job ghettos. Just as there are male/female roles in the family there are sex-defined roles in sport (who's the player? who's the cheerleader?). There are vast differences between the allocation of resources to men's and women's sport programs and in the decision-making power of male and female sport administrators. There has, however, been little feminist analysis of these differences, nor have women acted collectively to bring about changes.

There has been token recognition that sport is an area in which change is needed. The 1970 Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women devotes two pages — out of 400 — to physical education and sports. The Report recommended that school programs be reviewed and, if need be, revised to provide girls with opportunities equal to those boys have to participate in athletic activities. It also recommends that the federal Department of Fitness and Amateur Sport undertake research to determine why fewer girls than boys take part in sport, to be followed by remedial action. According to Marion Lay of Sport Canada, the Department has not undertaken research

on this topic. The governments at both federal and provincial levels have not been willing to recognize women as a special group in sports, as they have in labour, health and other areas. Nor have the offices with a general mandate to act on behalf of women looked into problems affecting women in sports.

Yet in spite of government inaction and widespread discrimination, few feminist groups have rallied on behalf of women in sport. Recent human rights cases such as the ones discussed by Helen Greaves in this issue's law column, dramatically underscore the difficulties faced by girls who want to participate in hockey, soccer, and other team sports. These injustices involve young girls who cannot take remedial action on their own behalf. If girls are to be allowed full participation in school and community sport programs, feminists, teachers and parents must be prepared to act for them.

We must believe in the importance of *physical* strength and vigour for women if we are to take sport seriously. I know I resent society's view that women lack these qualities in mind or spirit. I am less certain I resent being called physically delicate or weak, which must have something to do with the 'feminine' body image as the ultimate measure of female attractiveness. Until we revise our notions of what is 'beautiful' to include the angular frame, the well-muscled body, the purposeful gait of the athlete, we will be denying athletic women full acceptance and perpetuating the limited vision of what a woman can be.

Sharon Batt

# letters

## Misogynous Message Missed

In a feminist magazine, I really do expect better. Joanne Hatton's review of the "noteworthy" film, *Outrageous* did not find it worth noting that the film promotes woman-hating.



*Russell as Channing: Derogatory?*

Look at it again. Liza, the only sympathetic female in the film gets her only close support from her male room-mate, Robin. (I don't even want to get into the derogatory aspects of his female impersonations!) Liza's mother is shown as a harridan. Of Liza's two

women friends, one is callous and hurtful; the other, prepared to offer only furtive help. Both are insensitive and unperceptive. Where is Liza eventually happy? When she's the only woman surrounded by men in a gay bar. End of film.

The radical therapeutic message of *Outrageous* — "use your crazy" — is a valuable and upbeat corrective to much psychiatric rubbish about normality. Feminists buying into the film because of this message must not, however, let that attractiveness blind us to the persistent horror of misogyny which only a feminist therapy can eliminate.

*Rosemary Billings,  
Ottawa*

## Self-Knowledge through Art

I was very excited to find a magazine which approaches feminism through the arts while providing lucid information about the realms of politics and economics. Political and economic changes can both generate and be generated by deeper understanding between people which must be based upon understanding of one's own self. A sensitive appreciation of art is the medium through which this crucial self-knowledge can emerge.

*Pamela Banting,  
Gimli, Manitoba*

## Censorship Deplored

I came to live in Canada from South Africa three years ago. Having discovered what a supportive and enlightening book "Our Bodies, Ourselves" is, I felt that my younger sister who is seventeen would appreciate a book such as this. When she went to pick up the book, however, she was told by South African officials it was a banned book.

She subsequently received a letter from Customs and Excise stating that the book had been ruled objectionable by the Publications Control Board and was required to give a full explanation as to why the book had been sent.

I feel angry at having the information I want to share with my sister censored. She is equally angry at the fact that there is a structure within the South African government that can intercept correspondence and information and decide what is undesirable for her. But then, the South African government has that special knack of being able to turn something fine and beautiful — such as "Our Bodies, Ourselves" or an interracial relationship — into something ugly and sinful in their eyes.

*V.J. Hearder,  
Labrador*

## Note to Readers

We on the staff hope that you've enjoyed the magazine this year. We want to bring readers the best quality possible but because we attempt to produce a magazine that meets professional standards of content and production, many people misunderstand the nature of our organization. We operate on a volunteer basis just as most other women's groups do. No one on staff gets paid for seeing that the magazine is put together every two months and kept running in between. Most of our income is spent on typesetting, printing and postage. We are able to pay writers, artists and photographers only nominal honoraria.

We mention this now because we are sending out letters for a fall fund drive. We need the support of readers to avoid facing

a financial crisis. Costs are increasing (this year saw a jump of 20% in postage and 15% in office rent). We appreciate every donation received, no matter how small, and donations are tax deductible. Every renewal, gift subscription, Society membership and button order helps our finances.

Money isn't the only way to lend support. If you live in Edmonton, consider volunteering your time and talents. If you live outside Edmonton you can help the magazine by encouraging friends to subscribe or by contacting potential advertisers and bookstores in your area. *Branching Out* isn't going to be saved by a sugar daddy. It needs a network of women's help and support to ensure it a long life.

So please, when the letter arrives, offer your help in the best way you can.

*Elaine Butler*

# PRINTED MATTER | PRINTED MATTER |

news about women

edited by Sharon K. Smith

## BROWN VICTIM OF SOCRD SHUFFLE

Three NDP legislative seats were wiped out June 28 when the Social Credit government passed legislation (vote 27-15) to redistribute electoral constituencies in B.C. The NDP constituencies of Revelstoke-Slocan, represented by House Leader Bill King, and dual-seat Vancouver-Burrard, held by Norm Levi and Rosemary Brown, were eliminated by the newly drawn electoral boundaries.

The Commissioner responsible for the redistribution report is Judge Lawrence S. Eckardt, former Social Credit candidate appointed by the Social Credit government as Commissioner on Electoral Reform. His first task was to present an interim report on the mandate "to secure, by whatever redefinition of electoral districts is required, proper and effective representation of the people in all parts of the province in the Legislative assembly." Eckardt's "interim report" was tabled in the legislature on June 20 near the end of the spring session. On June 21 the Social Credit government proposed legislation to make this interim report law. On June 28 a vote was taken and the report became the Constitution Amendment Act, 1978.

The Victoria Times commented that "the NDP hold all the eliminated ridings and the Socreds are traditionally strong in the areas where the new members would sit." Premier Bill Bennett, quoted in the Victoria Times, said the NDP is "talking nonsense" with accusations of gerrymandering. (Webster defines gerrymandering as dividing a voting area to give an unfair advantage to one political party.)

In an interview, Rosemary Brown expressed her ideas about gerrymandering, the Eckardt report, and the new law which eliminates her constituency. Under the law she will hold her seat until the next B.C. election at which time she is without a constituency. Her options

are to retire or, as she says, "to look around and see if there's another riding in the province somewhere" to run in. She has been urged by party membership, community groups, and women's groups to run in a new constituency.

Brown described Bill King, former NDP Minister of Labour, and Norm Levi, former NDP Minister of Human Resources, as "strong, effective members of the opposition." She stated that in her present role as critic on Human Resources "I've been very outspoken and very very critical of his (William Vander Zalm, Minister of Human Resources) statements, and the scapegoating that he's doing of young people, Indians, poor people, and senior citizens." Her criticism, she adds, has "made the government very unhappy."

Rosemary Brown has always included women as part of her special concern and this has also made her unpopular with the Social Credit government. She pointed out that the present government has cut funding to women's services like Rape Relief Centres and Transition Houses and that one of the first acts of Provincial Secretary Grace McCarthy was to wipe out the Women's Office.

The passing of this legislation by the present B.C. government contains valuable lessons, Brown asserts. She has learned about the risks involved in being outspoken and, as she says, "very straightforward about commitment to women's groups and community groups and in general to non-traditional groups." This kind of commitment can, according to Brown, make a person vulnerable. Despite the risks, she would not change her approach and says, "if I had to do it all over again that's precisely the way I'd do it."

As for people who wish to register an objection to the interim report and consequent law, she advises "if they are unhappy with this high-handed and arbitrary way in which this government has deprived so many voters of the representatives that they themselves elected then they can vote against the government next time around. That's the only thing that can be done."

Rosemary Brown seems hopeful about finding another constituency and looks back at her first 6 years in office, "I've tried. I like to think that some things have not happened, just because I was there. And some things have happened just because I was there. Of course, we're nowhere near the goals that we have. But we're moving."

Mary Anne Erickson

The United Way campaign in Ottawa is getting the message where it hurts — right in the pocket-book. Women in government offices are by-passing United Way and giving contributions to women's groups not represented in the campaign such as rape crises centres and shelters for battered women. Public service campaign organizers committed financial hari-kari when they invited male athletes and Ottawa Roughriders' cheerleaders to their campaign kick-off. The cheerleaders were blocked from attending after complaints from the Office of the Status of Women, and in the process women began looking at the list of organizations participating in the United Way.

## SUFFRAGETTES WANTED

Under present legislation in Alberta a married woman who registers to vote in her birth name is breaking the law. The Election Act calls for a married woman or widow to use her husband's or deceased husband's name.

There are no instances of a woman being fined under this law, according to Alberta's chief Electoral Officer, Ken Wark, but the possibility exists for anyone — including a candidate — to challenge a woman's right to vote if she doesn't obey the law.

A report will be presented to the Alberta Legislative Council asking that the wording of the law be changed to wording similar to the federal law, which states that a woman must be enumerated by the name that she commonly uses in her electoral division. The Alberta Human Rights Commission is presently studying the issue and will decide

whether to lodge a complaint.

Ontario, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island are presently undergoing revisions of their election acts. Women in these provinces should ensure that the revisions will allow them to vote in their birth names if they choose.

Helen Dundass

## Match on Target OTTAWA WOMEN FORM TALENT BANK

An organization of women based in Ottawa has built an aid and resources network matching the needs of Third World women with the information and experience of Canadian women.

MATCH International Centre, which began operation in November 1976 with donations, membership fees and a grant from UNESCO, grew from an idea taken to the International Women's Year conference in Mexico City in 1975.

A "CIDA watcher" (CIDA is the Canadian International Development Agency) and long-time participant in international aid organizations, 58 year old political science professor Norma Walmsley thought most international development programs were missing their mark. "Their target was wrong — they weren't meeting basic needs such as food or shelter. Why? Because women are at the centre of these basic needs, and they weren't being involved."

She and MATCH vice-president Suzanne Johnson paid their own way to the conference to find out what women from Third World countries thought about their country's development. "Women did not like the way development was taking place," says Walmsley. "But they had no access to resources to start their own projects. They couldn't get anyone in authority to listen to them or to give them credit."

With determination and the help of friends who owed her favours, Walmsley set out to change that.

The process goes something like this. Women in Third World countries write to MATCH, describing their project and requesting support of a financial or informational nature. If the project has been initiated and implemented by women indigenous to the country, MATCH searches its "talent bank" for a woman or group of women in Canada with the necessary skills, experience and interest.

Funds raised by the chosen group are matched on a three-to-one basis by CIDA. As of May, MATCH had received roughly \$10,000 from group and

individual memberships, \$20,000 from donations and \$86,000 from the non-governmental organization section of CIDA.

The address for MATCH International Centre is 204 - 151 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario.

Deb van der Gracht

Government is finally paying some attention to women's heritage. Following a designation in 1977 of the Emily Murphy house in Edmonton as a 'classified historic site,' the Alberta Ministry of Culture announced this June that the Nellie McClung house in Calgary will also have this protection. Being declared a classified historic site does not restrict the use of the houses so long as the use does not alter the site. Although the owner may sell, the province must be given first option to purchase. The home of another member of the 'Valiant Five' who brought about the legal recognition of women as persons is also being considered for this designation. The Irene Parlyby residence in Alix, Alberta is presently owned by her son. According to government notes, the McClung house has a sun room with a still-living ivy started by Nellie McClung.

## GOOD NEWS, AND BAD

● ● When Marilyn Toms was referred by Canada Manpower Nanaimo to a job as a landscaper with Van Deleur Contracting, she was told "I do not hire girls". Efforts by the B.C. Human Rights Branch to settle Ms. Toms' complaint were not successful and the case was referred to a Board of Enquiry. Prior to the date of the hearing, Van Deleur agreed to a consent order. This said in part that they would offer job opportunities to all persons, and would select on the basis of ability to perform the job. They were also ordered to pay \$150 to Marilyn Toms, who in the interim obtained work as a waitress.

● ● Twenty-two women recently won a settlement in an equal pay case brought to the B.C. Human Rights Branch in February. The complaint was made by six 'cleaning assistants' — a position held only by women — alleging they did essentially the same work as 'cleaners' — a position held only by men. Although two of the men in the 'cleaner' position did at times wash floors or bale garbage, all the men received the higher rate of pay.

A Human Rights Officer's investigation indicated the complaint was valid, and a settlement was reached. The company signed a written agreement to adhere to the Human Rights Code, and the 19 women in the cleaning assistant position were given equal pay with the male employees. The

women also received \$48,000 in back pay. As well, three female employees who had left their jobs were tracked down and paid \$2000. It was not possible to find a fourth employee.

● ● B.C. Human Rights Branch has received many complaints concerning city directories. These directories are published in B.C. and the western provinces by B.C. Directories, 100 East 4th Street, Vancouver. They are usually called Henderson Directories. The complaints alleged discrimination on the basis of sex and marital status, exploitation of widows, and invasion of privacy. Based on a male-only view of the world, married women in particular are treated as inferior and unimportant human beings. The name of a married woman is listed in brackets behind her husband's name. For example, "Parker John S. (Mary) Rtd. h 360 Gordon St." In the case of widows, B.C. Directories asks for and lists a deceased husband's name. People are listed even when they have given no information and do not wish to be listed.

An ad promoting the directory states that the directory will give you all kinds of useful information about an individual — provided that individual is a 'he'. If the individual is a woman however, the only information considered relevant is "is the woman single, married or a widow?"

B.C. Directories have agreed to amend their practices somewhat with regard to their treatment of a widow and their invasion of privacy. Next year, no request will be made for the deceased husband's name and this information will not be printed if given. They have also agreed not to obtain information from other parties.

Married women, however, are still being treated as appendages of their husbands. They must specifically request that information concerning them be listed. Even so, the woman will still be listed behind her husband's name. If she attempts to circumvent this by listing herself under "occupants 18 years and over", she is still treated as being of no importance with only her name and initial appended to the information concerning her husband.

Women offended by these discriminatory practices should refuse to provide any information or to be listed in the directories at all. If you have been listed in a city directory against your wishes, you must tell B.C. Directories/Henderson Directories in writing before you will be excluded.

Kathleen Ruff

If you wish to contribute news from your area, please write to Printed Matter for guidelines. We request that clippings from other publications be sent on the entire page on which they appear. Include the name and date of the publication, and your name and address.

## The Hare and the Tortoise

In a car next to mine  
at a traffic light  
a woman addresses  
an absent partner.

Her left hand gesticulates  
wards off an attack  
supplicates palm up  
then points a finger  
to convince a husband  
a lover a son

Then suddenly she shakes  
her hair back in anger  
slams her hand hard  
on the steering wheel, twice,  
underscoring her furious  
declaration of independence.

When the light changes  
her car jumps forward,  
a hare at the start,  
and I follow sedately  
already familiar  
with the dull finish.

I know her well.  
This rehearsal is futile.  
The actual performance  
will not take place.

Maria Jacobs

*Maria Jacobs lives in Willowdale, Ontario. Her poetry has recently appeared in Dalhousie Review, Canadian Forum, CV-II and other magazines and was broadcast on the CBC radio program Anthology this summer.*

# Fair Coverage

by Kris Purdy

One could say with considerable justification that good coverage of women's sports events and individual sportswomen is *not* a priority with the sports media. On the whole, the media give us a dutiful report of the results in certain acceptable female sports events like golfing or tennis, or, a cute joke about the sexy number livening up the playing field, or nothing at all. Things have been worse, yes, but they have also been better. They were better during a period many women called the Golden Age of women's sports.

It was a time when women broke loose . . . after World War I and before the onset of World War II. Skirts went up, allowing more freedom of movement; industrialization provided a certain amount of leisure time; improved transportation provided access to sports facilities; physical education was recognized as important for girls and women, and individual female athletes were proving that women could successfully take part in sports requiring skill, endurance and strength. Along with this, the media began recognizing the news value of women's sports and reported items more frequently. The peak was reached in 1924. In this same time period, more women sports reporters regularly covered events than ever before, or since. Five women wrote daily sports columns for three Toronto papers, one Montreal paper and one Edmonton paper.

Today, women are certainly involved in a greater variety of sports activities and at a greater level of achievement. So why haven't the media sat up and taken notice this time? One reason is that most sports reporters are men. In fact, in Canada, we're pretty close to saying *all* sports reporters are men. This in itself forces the coverage of all sports events and issues through a rather fine sieve. It's all part of the process of gathering and distributing information. From the moment an event takes place, all kinds of people are making decisions, consciously or unconsciously, about what will make good sports copy, from the wire service reporter to the person covering the local events. The wire service is most crucial in this chain of information distribution. Every newspaper, TV and radio station in the country receives a wire service from which at least 80% of their news and sports copy is gleaned; what happens in the sports world must first be chosen as 'newsworthy' by that wire reporter or copy writer. The next step in this fight for publicity is in the decision of the writer or broadcaster: which item from the wire copy will he pick to report on? And then, what is their order of importance: do they go on the front page of the sports section; are they lead material for a sportscast; and if time and space are tight, which stories get sacrificed? These are all daily decisions which filter out the sports stories which are *reported* from the stories that actually take place.

Then, of course, there are the decisions made on a local level — which events happening in town today should a sports reporter cover? They don't have the manpower to cover all of them, so some have to go. It's a long route from actually doing something to seeing a report of it in the paper or on the air. These decisions are not made blindly — there are criteria: the perceptions and expectations of male sports reporters, the needs and desires of the sports establishment and the demands of the

## The media give us a dutiful report of the results in certain acceptable female sports events like golfing or tennis, or a cute joke about the sexy number livening up the playing field, or nothing at all. Here's why.

public.

I am convinced that most male sports journalists don't even see women in sports. It's the syndrome that prevents a lot of men from recognizing a dirty oven. These blind spots were built-in long ago by a society which has neglected to recognize women as strong, tough and dynamic, physical human beings. From the time they were born, these future sportscasters started absorbing the fact that boys and men were the sportsmen and girls and women the spectators and, perhaps, the spoils of the game. Sports was the arena for men to reassert their manliness. The most interest that was taken in girls' or women's sports was in amusement or titillation. Any girls or women who took their involvement in sports seriously were not just mimicking men, but rejecting their very womanhood, to the point where it was fair game to label them 'butch' or 'dyke' (the ultimate of put-downs!). So men expect women's sports to be boring or a joke, and that's just what they see. Another element affecting male sports reporters' decisions is peer group pressure. One of the ways sports types reassert their manhood is by covering the guys battling it out on the playing field and not by reporting on 'ladies' softball. And inside the office, the subtle and not-so-subtle pressure in this regard is on. I'm afraid our sports reporters have learned their lessons well.

Intrinsically wrapped up in these societal definitions are the desires and needs of the sports establishment. In our capitalistic and profit-making society, it didn't take long for the emerging entrepreneurs of the late 1800's in Canada to grasp the potential significance of sports. Here were combined competition and emotional involvement to create a spectacle of 'our men' nobly doing battle with the opposing team and in the process reasserting masculinity while safeguarding the honour of whatever town or city they happen to represent. Great stuff! Let's buy it, then sell it on a continuing basis to a hooked public. In this scheme of things, women are naturals as spectators and cheer leaders, but just don't fill the bill as performers. From this money-making potential we see the results today: the business establishment buying and selling athletes to play in arenas financed by public money for the entertainment of thousands paying hefty ticket prices to get in.

Into all this falls the sports reporter. His role, if he wants locker room access, interviews and 'inside' stories, must be to drum up local support and pride in the home team. Which is, in effect, to use air time or paper space to support a private business venture. In this context, for example, the sports reporter hesitates or just downright refuses to miss out on one of the Edmonton Eskimos training sessions to cover the finals of the 'ladies' softball league. (This state of affairs also explains the resistance to covering 'amateur' events, as opposed to professional events — but that's another issue.) To get ahead, the sports reporter must play his part.

Women are not blameless bystanders in all of this for there is the third criterion: demand. If it didn't sell, it wouldn't be there. That's all there is to it, for the private and public media alike. When you argue a male sportscaster into the ground on every other defense of not reporting more women's events,

that's the hooker. Granted, it is a vicious circle . . . more and better reporting of women's sports would raise demand, but the circle has to be broken somewhere and the male sportscasters of this world aren't going to do it. They'll have to be pushed. Let's face it, we've been bought too. How many women will go to see a women's sport event rather than a professional football game? How many women are even getting out there on the playing field? We don't support our own, and if we don't, how can we expect men to? The sports reporter is no dummy . . . he knows what his public wants to read or hear. With newspapermen, it's sales that tell the tale; with broadcasters, it's the ratings. Even the CBC is quite concerned with ratings, directly and indirectly. There is someone else holding the purse strings — the government. If the people in Ottawa get no word that we're unhappy with the kind of coverage given women in sports, then they won't say a word.

The Commonwealth Games was a good example of what kind of sports could be covered with the right elements in motion. For starters, heavy government support; secondly,

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*At the Commonwealth Games in August, Elaine Butler interviewed three women who have worked as sports reporters. Mary Anne Heller is a sports feature writer for the Kitchener-Waterloo Record. Mary Peters of England is a Commonwealth gold medalist (shot put) and now works as a colour commentator for BBC radio. Christie Blatchford was a sport columnist for the Globe and Mail and is now a reporter for the Toronto Star.*

### Mary Ann Heller

A lot of newspapers still emphasize the big three sports — hockey, football and baseball, and women are not professionally participating in those sports although there are some very capable women softball players and hockey players. It's not primarily a problem of male versus female; it's the type of coverage which emphasizes popular professional sports and doesn't do much on amateur and off-beat sports that women would be more involved in.

Athletes and officials are a good deal more accessible than people in news. They still tend to be a little bit surprised when a woman answers the phone in the sports department or appears at an interview, but I think that's changing very rapidly.

If a woman gets involved in sports writing, she is going to encounter the most barriers from the men in the sports department, as opposed to the management or the athletes themselves. Initially there is a certain amount of resentment, especially in a newspaper that has been dominated in the sports department by men for many years. They are a little more accepting if your take on the Thursday night ladies' bowling league — they don't particularly want to do that anyway. But if you try to do stories on Junior A hockey, football, or major league baseball, they are going to question your knowledge, background and ability to talk to athletes. That can easily be dispelled in a few months if you stick with it.

money for suppliers, sponsors, air companies, hotels, and finally, a saleable product — the Games themselves. On the whole, there was good coverage of the women taking part in the Games, mainly because it doesn't matter what sex the goldwinners are, as long as they bring in gold. (There were some exceptions, like the CBC underwater cameraman covering the Games diving competitions. He was reported by the Edmonton Sun as really liking his job because so many of the women lost the tops of their bathing suits when they dove in.) However, if one glanced at the regular sports sections of the newspapers published during the Games, it was business as usual — men, men, men.

Into this scenario has come a new breed — the woman sports reporter. A breakthrough for the coverage of women's sports? Possibly. Tough going? Definitely. In Canada we are not exactly glutted with women in the sports field. As far as I can tell, the CBC has only one permanent female sportscaster — she's in Halifax. Interestingly enough, none of the boys in Edmonton know her name, although they generally know the names of other CBC sports types. Women do work sports on a casual or fill in basis — and usually only in dire emergencies. One woman who filled in locally on the CBC told me about her experiences after she was dropped into the department without notice. At first, they were stunned. Then, some were helpful, while others were 'hesitant' and 'skeptical' about just what kind of sports reports she could deliver. One reporter refused to talk to her for two days, but has since apologized. Gradually she felt they began respecting her work, even if as a novelty. During her stint in the sports department a representative of the Edmonton Eskimos Public Relations Office called to remind her that under no circumstances would she be allowed into the Eskimo dressing room. This comment came unsolicited . . . she hadn't even tried to gain access to the locker room! On other

radio and TV stations in Canada, you just never see women reporting the sports news. Newspapers aren't much better. Two notable exceptions are Christie Blatchford and Nora McCabe. Blatchford was a sports columnist for the *Globe and Mail* for some time. She has since left sports writing and is a reporter for the *Toronto Star*. McCabe is at present a sports reporter for the *Globe & Mail*.

In the United States, the situation is much better. Women are moving into the sports field far more quickly than they are here, and this is happening in all media on all levels. People like Jane Chastain, Phyllis George, Julie Anthony of CBS; Wyomia Tyus, Anne Henning and Cathy Rigby of ABC and Ginny Seipt and Julie Heldman of NBC have and are breaking ground in TV. So are newspaper reporters like Robin Herman of the *New York Times*, Cyndi Meagher of the *Detroit News*, Nancy Scannell and Joan Ryan of the *Washington Post* and Karol Stonger of *Associated Press*. These are female sports reporters of prominence, but women daring to take on the sports field as a career have been made to suffer. Women sports reporters are expected to be perfect . . . no mistakes allowed. Witness the uproar over Jane Chastain when, in her debut as an NFL commentator, she read the scores wrong. As one male reporter put it, "I'm wrong more than I am right, and careless, too, and they don't get on me, just her". Women sportscasters are fighting sentiments like this one spouted by satirist Art Buchwald: "How could a multibillion dollar network invade the homes of 30 million beer-drinking, potato chip-eating, red-blooded American football fans with the voice of a girl?" Chastain was subsequently removed from the booth. Women have to fight to gain access to the same information sources men covet so dearly. The inviolate locker room is a well known example. Women also have a big battle on their hands to be allowed into press boxes in stadia and arenas to watch the game

### Mary Peters

I think there will always be greater coverage of men in sport because of tradition, but when you have girls winning, it has to be covered because the public at home is interested.

When I was first invited to work with television, I found they weren't interested in the women's side of the sport. In radio I found a greater opportunity to talk about women, and I can give a woman's view more easily because I competed for such a long time.

We've been very fortunate in the Commonwealth Games that all our girls who have won so far are very pretty because they'll get more coverage when they get home. Perhaps they'll be invited onto talk shows and into fields where men normally dominate, and people will see that you can be pretty and very feminine and still participate in sports at a very high level.

### Christie Blatchford

When I started at the *Globe*, I was the first woman sports columnist in the country in fifty years. There had been one or two others before who had been former prominent Canadian athletes. I wasn't an athlete; I was just a writer.

Generally speaking, I don't think the media covers women's sports very fairly. For example, I read about the University of Toronto's football team and York University's basketball team, but I never see anything about intercollegiate women's sports. At an event like the Commonwealth Games, amateur women athletes get as much attention as men if they're good in their respective areas, but in general sports reporting they don't. Pictures of Debbie Brill going over the high jump always show her looking flawless; you never see any pictures of her grimacing because of the pain in her leg. In that sense, the pictures suggest that women don't work as hard in sports as men do. When they do write about women, most writers

present them fairly. The problem is they don't do it very often.

When the Commonwealth Games are over, Canadian amateur athletes generally will get very little coverage, and what they get will be in those sports that are also played at the professional level — hockey, football, basketball. This is true for both men and women, but is more true for women's sports. The sports associations themselves are partly to blame because they don't do any promotion. They don't sell their athletes to us as heroes. When reporters have made heroes of people like Diane Jones or Greg Joy, we've done it all on our own. There's no salesmanship in amateur sports.

below: Christie Blatchford interviews Charlie Turner



Edmonton Journal photo

and report on it in an atmosphere more conducive to work than general admissions seats. "Ladies are not allowed in the press box" is the typical attitude, although progress has been made in some arenas and stadia by going through legal channels on the strength of human rights legislation. Legislation isn't everything, however, as a representative of the San Francisco Giants demonstrated. He told a female reporter who dared enter the Candlestick Park press box in San Francisco, "We don't care what the Supreme Court says. Leave quietly or we'll bump you out on your ass." In some cases, women have been violently attacked. Sports photographer Beth Bagby went to cover a motorcycle race in Sacramento, despite rumours that she would not be allowed in. She wasn't, but an accident occurred on the track and during the commotion she slipped in and began taking pictures. Then, Bagby reports, "I was standing right on the edge of the track when suddenly behind me a voice shouted, 'Get that girl.' I was grabbed from behind and six men were pounding on me." Bagby was punched repeatedly about the shoulders, causing bruises. As well, her camera was damaged. She believes her assailants were a couple of fans, a couple of track officials and another photographer. She was going to press charges but gave up. "I didn't know my assailants' names and, naturally, no one would tell me." This incident is an extreme example but from it we can get an idea of the sort of thing women sports journalists have to contend with.

Another problem for the female sports reporter concerns her colleagues. Sports is a boys' club, and it's protected. An intruder will not be given good stories to cover; an intruder will have to fight a male cameraman to give her good shots of a game; an intruder will not be told of a breaking story. The odds are stacked against the woman in sports coverage.

There is yet another problem. Just as female athletes and educators are struggling with the question "Do we want to take part in the kinds of sports institutions which men have organized and which men control — institutions promoting spectator sport, profit-making and violence — or can we learn from men's experiences and avoid their pitfalls?", so too must female sports reporters answer the same question. Should she fight for a career to cover sports which have been defined in male terms? That's a tough question, because whether she agrees with it or not, to succeed right now, you have to play the game as men have defined it.

There is a key to all of these problems which women in sports face. This key affects male and female reporters, the sports establishment, the owners of newspapers, TV and radio stations, the government. The key is demand and demand is one thing that's in our power to affect. For example, there is no feeling worse than being a woman on the air and hearing some typical male sportscaster's comments on a sportswoman. You can complain all you want . . . but if the phone in that radio station doesn't start ringing off the hook with audience complaints, your efforts are worthless. Let's make them self-conscious of their unconscious biases. Phone the station manager, phone the sports desk, mention it on a phone-in show (whether it's the topic or not), write the editor, write the minister responsible for the CBC, phone the team's PR office, monitor stations and papers for adverse comments, boycott stadia where women reporters are not allowed into the press boxes, give support by your presence at women's sports events. Only then will they begin to think the unthinkable: maybe those listeners and readers out there do care, maybe we should take women's sports more seriously . . . *maybe there is a demand.* And if that doesn't work, then perhaps we should start thinking about forcing them to hire women sportscasters and cover women's events, using legislation and the courts.

The problem of women in sports and the media is obviously bigger than its own dimensions — it is symptomatic of our society as a whole. These actions will not be enough. Much deeper social change will be the only, final answer. But, we can

begin with these actions. It's time for the media in this country to be pressured for change. Let's give 'em hell and see what happens.

*Kris Purdy is a freelance broadcaster in Edmonton. She is also studying music at Grant MacEwan Community College.*

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# They Who Risked Their Delicate Organs

by Alison Griffiths

If your heart soars with excitement at unusual deeds and you are drawn to those who take life by the horns then you may lament the obscurity of physically strong women. The mental resilience of the so-called weaker sex has long been lauded as they have stood spiritually corsetted throughout many eras upholding the social and moral fibre. The female body, by contrast, has usually been regarded as an instrument of degeneracy when given a free rein, or as a subject of derision couched in admiring terms. Sport, epitomizing leisurely indulgence or physical commitment, has been shielded from women all through history.

Do not despair of the athletic woman yet: although the mind has been

inculcated with a belief that the female frame cannot deal with physical life, the desire for playful movement has been known to win out. In most of those cases, the spirit of play that grows into sport was tempered by the functional aspect of the activity.

The first glimpse we have of women in sport arises from the rich tapestry of classical civilizations. Information about women in this period is pathetically scarce, but there is enough to dispel the myth that they have always been inactive. The point of view perpetuated by the sour remarks of Xenophon and Aristotle suggests the unsuitability of women in an athletic existence. Legends and pictures, however, prove that the feminine reality was not nearly as



*"Woman's New-found Privilege": Ice Hockey in Wimbledon Park, Jan. 1893. "Ladies of the Wimbledon Skating Club," writes the "Graphic" correspondent, "can now take advantage of their new-found privilege of playing hockey, which game has today found its way into the ever-increasing category of manly sports in which ladies may take part. It is an artistic treat to see the loose, flowing skirts of these 'swift Camillas' waving gently from side to side in response to the gliding skates of their wearers; an air of animation is lent to the scene by the pretty dresses and graceful movements of the arm that wields the club - even if that club does not always strike the ball."*



restricted as those historians and philosophers would have us believe. During the Minoan civilization of Crete, for example, women performed an astonishing array of athletic feats. In the fresco from the Palace of Knossos, lithe female forms are depicted leaping with ease over the horns of a charging bull.

The Spartan woman was more typical of the active female for she was required to participate in sport to



develop physical independence, not for her own joy but for the healthy production of rugged warriors. The curtain dropped on physically active women when the Athenian Greeks rose in power and the Athenian influence is largely responsible for the attitude of repulsion toward women in sport that has developed throughout history.

The last hurrah for women of antiquity came with the disintegration of the Roman Empire. When the moral fabric sagged so did the rigid restriction of women but unfortunately they did not leap at the opportunity except to expand their sexual horizons. Hope for physical emancipation faded.

In Canada the story of women in sport is barely 100 years old. Prior to that time the early pioneers were busy carving out communities in the new world. The small rural towns, moreover, were notorious for their strict moral code. Frivolity in the guise of sport was often frowned upon for men, let alone for women. Leisure was rare and women's enjoyment of it rarer. There were a few heroines of those rough and ready days who shot straight as a die and could ride like the wind but they were the exception and their image has been romanticized by modern literature.

As the Canadian population gradually multiplied so did the leisured class but, within that exclusive little group, sport — outside of whist, carriage riding or riding — was out of the question. Propriety forbade it, not to mention the stylish clothes that kept women flounced, drawn in, upright and padded.

It was urbanization that provided the release for women in sport as rural and traditional values collapsed in the face of social and cultural change. The awkward contraption christened the



*Riding Habits and Costumes*

*Canadian Illustrated News, June 28, 1873*

**“The female is a female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities. We should regard the female as afflicted with a natural defectiveness.”**

**Aristotle**



bicycle became the tool which aided women in their quest for physical enjoyment. Clothing had to be altered to prevent tangling in the machinery and women were seen whizzing along without fainting or coming to grief as had been previously supposed. A women's bicycle club was organized in Montreal in 1870 much to the horror of the benevolent overseers of female safety.

Urban transportation suddenly mobilized large segments of the population and by 1875 bonnets among the spectators were a common sight at rowing or snowshoeing events. With this exposure women were slowly beginning to be encouraged to participate, if only in private. It was only the upper classes who could afford such leisure but, nonetheless, at the end of the 19th century, golf and tennis also became popular sports for women.

When the flow of interest in sport

“In the East women religiously conceal that they have faces, in the West that they have legs. In both cases they make it evident that they have but little brains.”

Henry David Thoreau



above: golf, German exercises  
left: RVC '06 basketball club  
below: bicycle club, 1890

could not be stemmed the only course was to include it in the school system. Once there, sport for women became justified as being therapeutic and prophylactic. Joy in movement was not a consideration. Women were clamouring to use their brains as well and many believed that “. . . the prolonged and laborious efforts of thought and memory create great feebleness of the muscular system and a marked deterioration of the generative organs.” The answer was to counteract such tendencies and push women gently into ladylike sport . . . for the good of their organs.

All over Canada in the early 20th



Archives of Saskatchewan photo

century girls clambered into unsightly exercise clothes and puffed their way through routines of Swedish and German gymnastics. The trend of activity continued and following inevitably on its heels was competition. Basketball drew a tremendous number of female enthusiasts in Canadian schools but it required competition which promoted excellence which in turn was linked to masculinity. In the years preceding World War I and immediately after it the danger signals increased; women were enjoying competition for its own sake. Dr. Dudley Sargent expressed the popular view that physical activity for a woman should reflect her gentler nature. "Let her know



Betty Taylor, 1934

was sent off with the condescending good wishes of government officials. To the surprise of everyone they returned armed with two gold, two silver and four bronze medals. At the first Commonwealth Games held in Hamilton, Ontario in 1930 women were only allowed to compete in swimming. They bowed to England which took all the women's titles. Fortunately Pearl Stoneham and Miss McCormack saved the day for Canada by capturing first and second in the "Ladies High Diving." Apparently, however, they were the only entrants.

The debate about the value of sport for women raged on and in the middle thirties the axe fell on competition for women as several Canadian physical educators succeeded in removing competition from the schools. They also attempted to ban women's events from the Olympics but were overthrown by a last minute rallying of the pro-competition forces.

The decline of women's sports may have continued had it not been for World

War II. Those years emphasized the need for physical fitness in the male population and when it became evident that women would be required to share the burden they were included also. Curiously, when the war ended and the traditional idea of femininity returned stronger than ever, athletic women increased in numbers until they could no longer be ignored.

The new age of science and technology laid to rest many of the myths about the deleterious effects of sport on women. Attitudes in the fifties were slow to change but certain groups of women were being freed from stifling domestic concerns and they were being educated at universities where sport programs were reinstated at the competitive level. There were also a few athletic heroines emerging and engaging the public eye such as Barbara Ann Scott and later Annie Heggteit.

While mass participation in sport by women is still unknown and women do not receive equal support in money, in the media or in the schools, there has rapidly developed a new ideal and at the center of it is the active woman. Female athletic talent, while resented by some, is admired more and more. Reinforcement, especially at higher levels of competition, is still dismally weak but the waves of participants keep getting bigger.

Who do we thank for the change in attitude and opportunity that has allowed women's sport to creep up to where it now is? It is probably a combination of the feminist movement, watered down though it has been, and the counter-culture generation who espoused a return to healthy living. Of course women's sports are becoming every bit as regimented as men's, but a glance at the past shows that this trend is historically unique. Out of it may come a genuine discovery of sport for its own sake and, for the first time, the ability of women to enjoy the full potential of their bodies.

*Alison Griffiths lives in Vancouver. Photos courtesy of Ann Hall and Ann Jones.*



enough about the rougher sport to be the sympathetic admirer of men and boys in their efforts to be strong, vigorous and heroic . . . A woman's heart naturally goes out to the competitor, and she looks to him instinctively for protection. So a man's heart will always respond to the trusting helplessness of women. . ."

Determined women across the country were not about to be dismissed by such banal remarks. A group of 'young ladies' in Edmonton formed themselves into a basketball team called the Edmonton Grads and became the most successful team in the history of the sport. Several others took the plunge and joined in the long distance craze that was sweeping the world. Two sisters in Halifax declared themselves the best rowing duo in the nation and proceeded to challenge any of their sex who wished to be beaten.

The first Olympic Games in which women were allowed to compete was Amsterdam in 1928. Under great difficulties a Canadian contingent of six women



# Morning — Afternoon — Infinity

fiction by Barbara Ann Brown

illustrations by Sylvia Luck Patterson

## Morning

She was moving with rhythmic grace along the open trail. Snow, skis and muscles coalesced in a sense of euphoria. This is quite extraordinary, Anne thought. I'm always cold skiing and yet I'm roasting. I can feel the sweat running down my back.

Suddenly, she stopped and unzipped her jacket. She wrenched off her mittens and jammed them in her small side pocket. She pulled off her tight ski cap and let her hair hang loose around her shoulders. In those motion-stopped seconds, the surrounding scene was snapshot imprinted on her mind. The golf fairway stretched for a hilly mile ahead. Steep cliffs rose on either side, darkly fir green and white.

And beyond, the others waited, the children, her own two, Clare and Rachel, and Ross and Elaine's, Robin and Colin. Without hesitating they surged down the final steep hill. For the children, the slopes were the essence of skiing. They hated the long cross-country runs. Then Elaine and Ross pushed off. Both at least remained standing. When her turn came, she knew she would not.

Finally, her husband — sharp, light blue. Down! Down! He did not stop; he did not turn. Directly ahead lay the frozen stream. He would crash! He would break his legs! He would damage his spine and never walk again! He would be impaled on an old log, end sharpened by natural forces! She was awash in liquid fear that warmed her skin. Motionless, her breathing ragged, she watched.

He fell, deliberately, heavily, to the left at the last possible moment before the universe collapsed. In a great atomic burst, millions of snow flakes shot high in the air, mushroom puffed by his tangled skis and his pillowing shoulders. Gently, the powdered snow floated past him, a harmless fallout. His echoing laughter bounced off her as he waved and lightheartedly upended himself. The children shrieked with appreciation at the daring show.

She moved one foot forward, then another. It was all right. He was moving. They should have come. They were all alive. No one dismembered by icy razor rocks; lock-jawed into perpetual silence by hidden rusty nails on wooden bridges.

It was extraordinary, she thought for the second time. For as Anne moved, she was aware how alone she was on her own trail. No one could violate the spot where she stood. Though the others were there also, in time, in space, these specific ruts were hers alone.

There was, though, no time to stop for further reflection. The others were waiting across the small river bridge. Reined in by their expectations, she turned to the precut, communal ruts. At last at the top of the hill, she surged forward. Wind brushed, she slowly curved away from the river as she glided to the bottom of the slope.

"You did it, Mom," Rachel called, laughing, clapping her hands. "You didn't fall."

"No, I made it," Anne said joyously. You made it; they made it; he made it; I made it.

## Afternoon

Anne was in the bathroom eagerly washing up for lunch when she heard Ross say through the adjoining door, "Listen, you two, take the kids and go down and get some food without us. Elaine isn't feeling too well." She could feel the frigid temperature of the white tiled floor against the soles of her feet.

Ross glanced quickly at the children before he continued. But they were securely wrapped in a card world of crazy eights. Protected by childhood, they squatted under the windows intently bargaining for winning cards. They neither turned to nor heard Ross speak. He carefully advanced a few steps into the room. In a tense and lowered tone, still directly addressing Bob, "I didn't say anything before because Elaine didn't want to upset you but twice last night she tried to get up and go to the bathroom and she almost fainted. Luckily, I heard her and got to her before she hit the floor. The kids didn't wake up."

Anne had finished dressing and as she stepped to the vanity to pick up her lipstick she could see his worried reflection in the bathroom mirror. She leaned around the door and said, "Don't worry. It'll be all right. We'll look after the kids. What do you think she's got? The flu?"

"Probably. Anyway, I think she'll be better if she rests. She was really exhausted with skiing this morning." Then he laughed and added, "She almost fell down as many times as you did."

Anne threw the towel she was holding in his direction and he ducked back into his own room. "Let's go now," she said to Bob. "You get the kids ready and I'll see Elaine's O.K." Then she turned back into the bathroom and stood before the mirror. Carefully she outlined her lips with lipstick, keeping to the preconceived line. That was the way. Contain everything. It'll be all right. Then she slipped quietly into the next room.

It was in a shocking state of disarray. The children's nightgowns were on the floor, flowered pillows were propped too close to the T.V. No one had noticed! Jackets and skis were urgently tossed in an emergency trail from the door to the far windows. An overturned bottle of scattered aspirins lay on the bureau. Some unnatural disorder hovered in the room. It was not just the messiness. There was less coping here than she had expected. She longed to return to her ordered room and avoid this personal chaos.

Anne turned to her right, towards the two disheveled double beds. Where was Elaine? And she saw Ross's head lift on the farthest side of the bed. Good God what had she interrupted? She was ready to back away in embarrassment when Ross said, "She's fainted. Help me get her up on the bed."

But even the two of them had had real difficulty, she later told Bob over lunch. They'd placed the four children at a separate but nearby table. That way they could talk in peace. Now, they sat almost elbow to elbow at the sanctuary table for two. What a beautiful place, Anne thought as she looked out the huge, brick arched windows. Beyond the fieldstone patio, the snow streaked lawns stretched down to the wide river.

"What are you going to eat?" he asked her. Anne abruptly turned to scan the menu again.

"Something light — nothing too heavy." *Yes, that was it. She had been too heavy to move — leave her behind then. Turn again and turn again from that burdening mortality to — "I'll have the ham quiche,"* she said.

Later, when the food had arrived, they both confronted the issue at hand. "I think she's really ill," Anne said. She began distractedly cutting her quiche into tiny pieces.

"Come on!" Irritation flowed through his words. "Cut the bullshit. You're the bloody voice of doom. She's probably got the flu. Lay off or you'll frighten the kids. Christ, you always suspect the worst. Can't we have one weekend away from your doomsday personality?"

And it was true. She was always fear ridden. Yet, undaunted this time, Anne persisted, "You should have seen her. She was so heavy and she seemed to lack muscle control. Her legs bent under her like one of those plasticine figures. I couldn't believe how saggy she was."

"You've never handled anybody unconscious before. They're always a dead weight." End of conversation as he began to cut into his steak.

*They're always a dead weight. They're always dead. She trembled visibly as she pushed away her half filled dinner plate. "I'm not hungry anymore,"* Anne said.

"Well, you'll have to wait until dessert comes. We've ordered it and I'm not staying here alone with four kids."

By the time the dessert tray arrived, the children, unaccustomed to the leisurely pace of formal dining, were restlessly drawing silverware circles on the linen and sucking ice cubes. The waiter reached around Rachel and placed a dark chocolate pudding on the table in front of her. *Dark brown coffin-covering earth. There was no relief from it.*

"Stop that," Anne said as Rachel began to stir the pudding into a lumpy mass. *Lumps of earth striking the coffin lid.*

Clare swirled the bright strawberry sundae. *One blood-streaked mass. Could she be hemorrhaging?*

"Eat it now or leave it alone," Anne said tersely. Robin cut into her white cake and vanilla ice cream. *Which of the whites was white colour-drained like her skin?*

A piece of ice cream liquidly slipped to the floor. Robin promptly got off her chair to find it. "For heaven's sake, get up!" Anne hissed. "You'll trip one of the waiters." Colin sat motionless staring at the scooped centre of his sherbert. *Ross stared at Elaine, Anne stared at Elaine, Anne stared —*

And by the time lunch was finished, they were all barely speaking, her fears, his indifference and the children's normalcy clashing like opposing armies.

Later in the afternoon, when Ross had gone down to get some lunch and Bob had reluctantly taken the children to the hotel games room, she sat, legs stretched on the bed beside Elaine's. The paper flicking of the turning magazine pages depressed her. The close, animal smell of the room enclosed her. She glanced at Elaine, fascinated by her slowly rising chest and the just visible beads of sweat along her dark hairline.

Suddenly, without turning her head, Elaine spoke. "It's all right. I'm not sleeping. You can talk to me." For a moment Anne

was shocked. She had thought Elaine asleep. But all that silent time she had been awake choosing to be alone. Then, relieved not to be alone herself, Anne shifted so she was sitting on the side of the bed. Close but not too close. Even old friends were not safe. You had to maintain a discreet distance so you could always claim, "See, I never really invested too much in you. Did I ever touch you?"

"How are you feeling? Better?" she asked. Supply the idea and civilized people give you back the right answer.

"Worse!" Elaine said failing to accommodate. She slowly drew the word out in pain.

"Are you having any bleeding now, any cramps?" Anne asked. At the back of her mind she suspected a miscarriage. That would be O.K. Elaine had had those before so nothing would be changed. They would all be on sure ground.

In slow motion, Elaine repositioned her arms and legs, one at a time like game pieces; then she heaved over her torso so she faced Anne. Her eyes were wide, deep, black and unfathomable. From a great distance, further than Anne could calculate, Elaine answered her. "No, it's not like cramps. It's pain constant throughout my body and it seems to burst upward at times."

What could it be? Anne, frozen in responsibility, half rose to her feet and reached out to touch but Elaine's rigid body was a warning of desired self-containment. Embarrassed, Anne sat down again. She drew further back on the bed in fear.

Deeply worried, Anne checked her watch. It was after two. Ross should be back. This was awful! What a way to end a skiing weekend. All this way into northern Quebec. All this money to stay at the Chateau and then this. Christ! Then ashamed of herself she controlled her rebelling thoughts by straight-jacketing her mind into scanning Redbook recipes.

Fifteen minutes later, Ross quietly tiptoed into the room. "How's she doing?"

"Not so good," Anne replied. "Listen, I think we've got to do something."

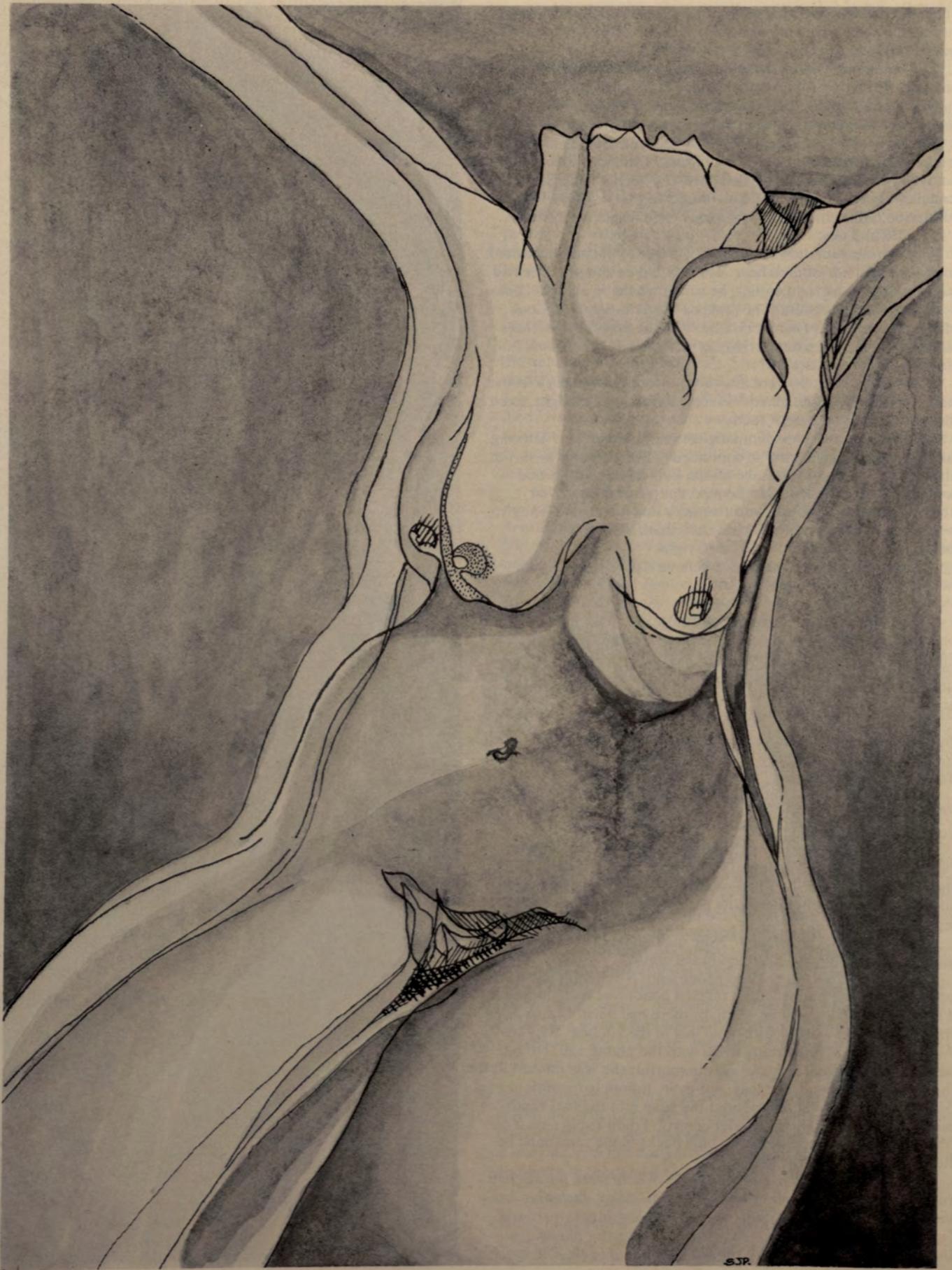
"I know," Ross said. "I just called the only doctor in town but he said he can't come out here. We'll have to take her there. The problem is I'm not sure just where his office is located."

"I have to go to the bathroom. You'll have to help me up." Elaine had spoken in a low pain-urgent tone. Her eyes had not opened. Immediately, Ross leaned over and supported her, placing a hand under each arm. Elaine interminably sat up. Anne hovered beside her, afraid to touch — afraid not to, wanting to be involved, hoping still to avoid commitment to this series of events rushing beyond her. But Ross could not manage without her so Anne supported under one arm and Ross the other. God, she's heavy, Anne thought. Her eyes are so fixed. What is she staring at?

And then, and then, they were down, all of them, or half down. When Elaine had started to fall, Ross had grabbed her about the waist but thrown off balance he was now half kneeling, half standing, supporting the directionless body. Anne shocked with the suddenness of the decaying control uselessly held one boneless arm. Belatedly she noticed that Ross in his efforts to raise Elaine had hitched her nightgown up — up over her hips. Exposed — layers of fat that were carefully hidden under conforming clothes.

Acting in response to need, Anne helped drag Elaine towards the bed. This was Elaine. This was not Elaine, for she could not be staring at Elaine's stomach, naked and pubic. Ross bearing most of the weight suddenly stopped and stared down at the foul spreading stain on the floor. Elaine had lost all body control. No control; Ross had no control; Anne had no control — uncontrolled universe.

Later when the ambulance arrived, she assured Ross that they would have the maid clean up immediately, speak to the manager, take care of the kids and bills, all of it. Bob was already packing their things and assuring the children everything would be O.K. from the next room. She could hear his measured voice as



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she helped Ross drag a clean nightgown on Elaine. "Your mom's just feeling a little ill," he said. "She'll be all right soon but we've got to send her to the doctor now."

How does he know that? she thought angrily. How dare he say that! He didn't feel how dead heavy she was. He didn't see how naked she was. Then they were gone, Ross, Elaine, ambulance. Anne went back to finish the packing in her own room.

Later with the children, crisis subdued, and sitting pristinely on the beds, Bob answered the call from the clinic. "Ross, Christ we were worried. Where the hell have you been? You said you'd call in an hour." Silence. "How much? My God. O.K. This afternoon. All right. What's the plan?" He listened carefully. "Fine." Hung up.

What interpretation for "fine"? Unable to decide she turned away. She did not want to hear. They would be all right. She had said it would be all right earlier; he said it would be all right later.

Ignoring the children, he grasped her arm tightly. "Look, she'd lost one third of her blood supply by the time they got there. She'd probably been hemorrhaging internally for the whole morning." He released her.

Anne immediately went into the bathroom and began to brush her hair in front of the mirror. I look all right, she thought, even though I haven't curled it today.

Quietly, with restrained impatience, he followed her. Turning her away from the mirror, he continued, "Ross is going to stay at the clinic. We're going to take all the kids home with us and keep them if we have to for the next couple of days. What they're going to do is put her in surgery this afternoon. They're not sure what the problem is but they think it's a tubal pregnancy that ruptured. It'll be all right."

I believe that, she thought. I believe that. I believe that.

### Infinity

The phone rang. Clumsy in her haste, she flipped up the corner of the green dining room rug. "Damn it!" she said as she automatically reached down to straighten it. "Neat even in the face of crisis."

There was, of course, no sound, not immediately and she could feel her throat muscles tense. The lump of terror cells made itself felt. She had difficulty breathing. She could hear him breathing, ragged, gasping.

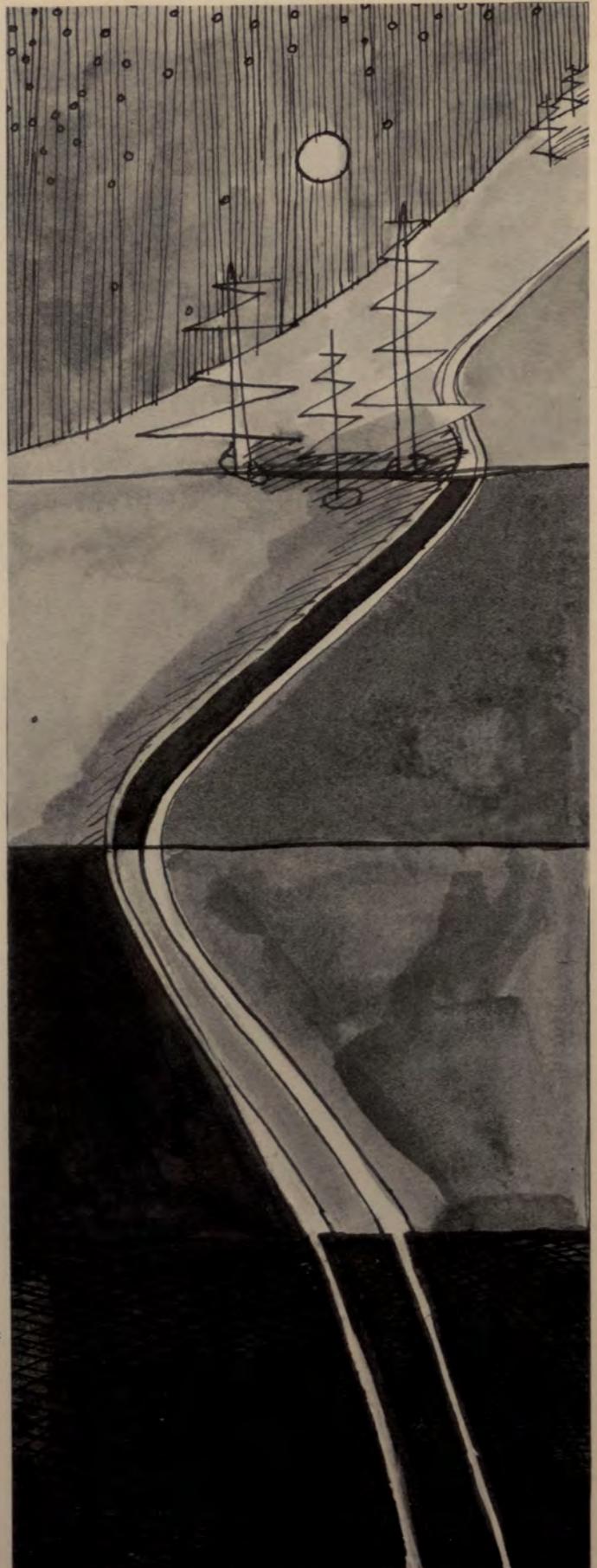
My God she would not accept it. "Ross is that you? What is it?" Normalize it. Words will alleviate the dark and give it a recognizable shape and form.

He began but it wasn't really him. It wasn't his voice. At first it was a message from a telephone service, curiously flat and alien. Then within the space of a few words the voice was so emotion laden she could barely tolerate its penetration of her ears and heart.

"She's dead," he grieved. "She died an hour ago. They're going to do an autopsy. She died in the clinic."

"Oh no! Oh no! Oh no!" someone said. Not her for she now sat aloof from the phone with a relaxed hand. She had hung up. Why? She didn't know why. Perhaps there had never been a call. She stood up and walked with blind feet to the kitchen. Why was she so distressed? Something to do with the phone call. No one died. Anyone she cared about was immortal; she was immortal; the children, her husband. No loss; not ever. Infinitely careful, she loaded the dishwasher and poured the soap into the two small containers. It's all right; it's under control; I didn't spill any. You only die if you're careless. Those blue flecks in the soap must be the spot remover for the glasses.

*She jerked around in sudden terror. Where were the kitchen walls? She was in the snowy open, bending down, fastening her blue and white skis. It was bitterly cold and her fingers were stiff. I've got to hurry she thought or Elaine will get too far ahead of me. She looked to her right where she felt Elaine had been. The space*



was empty and peculiarly alien. Yet, because she sensed the presence of others around her, she continued to peer into the thickening twilight. There was no other comforting human movement. Wind mounded in huge piles; the surrounding snow menaced her. Where was she? Where had Elaine gone? How had she gone so quickly? Anne snapped the binding into place, pulled on her mitts and struggled up. God she felt heavy. How dark it was!

The snow mounds seemed larger now, almost up to her shoulders. She hurried through the valleys between them to what she sensed was the beginning of the trail. She stopped, disoriented, for now the landscape configurations were floating, shifting. Behind her, instead of the piled snow, there was only flat, hard packed ice glitter. How strange it all was! When she looked ahead again there were large firs. Yet, should could have sworn they were not there previously. They frightened her. Their motionless needled arms suggested a sentinel's burying embrace for anyone who dared wander too close. But Elaine was not threatened. She was easily slipping past the trees. "I'm coming." Anne called, expecting a response. Elaine neither slowed nor turned.

A few yards farther along the narrow trail Anne discovered there was barely room for her passage. Sharp, vindictive branches scraped across her jacket. A violent gasp escaped her as the nature of the run beyond the curve became explicit. It was steep, hill laden, rock strewn, not at all suitable for cross country skis. Alarmingly there, far below, was Elaine. Anne started to hail her again, then stopped softly pliant with fear. Where was Elaine's red jacket? It was Elaine, though, she knew that. At that moment her ski struck a rock that had thrust malevolently through the snow. She smashed against the ground.

She moved forward and attached the hose of the dishwasher to the snow-cold water faucet. Then realizing her mistake she quickly reattached it to the hot water tap. There was some depressing urgency she had to attend to. She could not isolate it. Savagely, she turned the tap handle as far left as it would go. Valium will ward it off.

The laundry, that was it. Steadily, she moved downstairs through the finished recreation room to the old section of the cellar. She loathed this uncontrolled part of the house. The steel grey laundry tubs, the crack-veined concrete floor, the efflorescent laden bricks mocked her need for bright, clean safety. She methodically sorted the clothes, socks, whites, coloured, ski scarves.

Where were the clothes? Her hands were mitten covered. How could that be? Slowly, with a terrible urgency, she raised her buried face. Why hadn't she pulled her scarf up over her chin and mouth? The sharp snow grains had drilled into her cheeks and icily mascaraed her eyelashes. Moving one ski-weighted leg at a time, she rolled over on her back. Anne doubted momentarily she would have the energy to get to her feet. Yet, she could not stay here unprotected. The temperature was dropping. Drawing on all her strength she lunged on one knee using her poles for leverage. One more forward thrust and she was up. God it was frigid. Why had they come out in such weather? Suddenly, she was aware of how thickly shadowed her vision was. Why is it so black? Anne thought. She could barely perceive Elaine who, landscape-blended, was now merely a dark moving shape against the formless immobility of the trees. Angry and bewildered at being left behind, Anne could feel her eyes warm and salty.

"Elaine," she called, "Elaine wait! For God's sake wait!" Yet, she knew innately there would be no waiting. Elaine could not hesitate before the beckoning river Styx. The name had come naturally. Anne paused on the trail. Why had she thought of that name for the river?

To stay there alone was unthinkable. As much as Anne wanted to follow Elaine she was now consumed by a desperate need to turn around. She was paralyzed motion. Then, in a rush of defiance, she continued. The trail, two shadowed ruts twisting and

turning, was surrounded by eerily blazing snow. Where unexpected tree branches had fallen on it, she had to bend clumsily to remove them. In other places the tree line so constantly encroached on the trail, overhanging branches snowily unburdened themselves on her orange jacket.

Where was the trail? Inexplicably, she was holding Rachel's bright orange ski sweater in her hands thinking, This will probably shrink. I'd better use cold water with the load. She placed each item carefully. It was essential to balance the load in the machine; otherwise chaotic imbalance made the shaking washer smash off the cellar wall. Everything in its place; always avoid imbalance. There could be no chaos if you were neat; no death for controlled people. I'd better use cold water with the load. I'd better be careful. I'd better not make any mistakes, Anne thought. With a heightened sense of control, she adjusted the dials on the back of the washer.

Slowly, Anne made her way back upstairs to the den. She sat down at the piano, rifled through the waiting pile of music sheets on the side of the bench. That was her music book. Yes, she had the right one, not the children's. She began to play. "Etude." The notes were beyond her control. It was too difficult. What was — the music — the dark shadows on her mind? Who had died? No one young dies because I'm young. It is too difficult, she thought and began the music again. Two of the chords seemed to stretch her fingers unnaturally. She was certainly not going to master this piece for a long time.

As she glanced at her curved fingers she gasped. They were curved circles around ski poles. She couldn't master the trail. Breathless, she stood facing the river. There didn't seem to be a bridge. How was that possible? Elaine had crossed with ease. She knew with tight certainty she could not continue. In fear and anger she peered into the gloom. She had been abandoned. God damn Elaine. Where was she going with such determined eagerness? She could plainly see Elaine's lithe figure as it crossed the opposite flats beyond the riverbank. Then for one unexpected moment, as if aware of Anne's accusing eyes, Elaine paused, turned towards her. Both were time-frozen in unspoken awareness of the transcendent mortality of their bodies. With smooth strength Elaine pushed off onto the flats and into the metaphysical darkness. Anne could not follow.

She stopped skiing; she stopped playing. I can't follow her; I can't follow the music. She sat immobile. "Oh no! Oh no!" she crooned over and over. Her eyes opened wide. Her mouth yawned. Her hand tried to stifle the widening perceptions; but bones and flesh cannot restrain burgeoning knowledge.

Tears ran down her face filling all the fish bowls her father used to hold under her watery eyes. "You can buy a goldfish if you cry enough to fill the bowl," he'd said. "Come on; you can cry harder than that." She had never filled the bowl. Now she would. Anne lowered her head onto her folded arms and wept for Elaine, for her children, for her husband, for herself, for all things threatened with loss. She stood up. In her rush past the piano bench she crashed it to the floor.

When the operator had connected her, she said, "I'm so sorry; I'm so sorry." *We will bear the pain with you.* "It's all right." *We will endure the loss together.* "We'll be there this afternoon." *We will share the knowledge that we will all ski the dark trail alone.*

*Barbara Ann Brown lives in Toronto where she teaches part time in a high school and at York University. She studied English at the University of Toronto and has an M.A. from York University. She is married with two daughters and enjoys playing squash, tennis, golf and cross-country skiing.*

*Sylvia Luck Patterson studied fine arts at the University of Alberta for two years. She has been painting and drawing for as long as she can remember. She now lives in Kenora, Ontario.*

# On Track

## Interview with Ann Hall

by Mary Lou Creechan

*A sociologist, feminist and athlete, Dr. Ann Hall is uniquely qualified to comment on women in sport – the topic of a course she teaches at the University of Alberta – and on the reasons more women are not involved in sport – the subject of her Ph.D. research. She recently co-ordinated the Female in Sport sessions at the Commonwealth Conference on Sport and Recreation.*

*Always athletic and involved in some aspect of sport, teaching physical education seemed to Ann a natural career choice. She attended Queen's University for her undergraduate work, subsequently took teacher training in Ontario and taught for a year in Ottawa. She realized she wanted to know more about the academic and research side of sport, and enrolled in graduate studies at the University of Alberta. Her Master's thesis traced the history of women in sport in Canada up to the First World War. Two years of subsequent study in England resulted in a Ph.D., a growing interest in sociology, and an exposure to feminist ideas. She returned to Alberta, joined the Faculty of Physical Education at the University, and became a founding member of the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee. Since then, Ann's work in the Sociology of Sport has been influenced a great deal by her feminist ideas.*

Mary Lou Creechan

*Our society has always considered sport a healthy activity for men, because of its physical value, because it teaches you how to get along with people, how to work with others, and how to compete. Why have we never considered it of similar value for women?*

That's a very difficult question. It relates to the adage that the victories of war are won on the playgrounds of Eton. Boys and men learned leadership qualities, courage and excellence through sport. Boys were expected to become leaders and the sporting field was the training ground. As girls were never expected to become leaders in professions that required those qualities they were never encouraged to participate in athletics.



Ann Hall

photo by Diana S. Palting

*So participation in sport was related to a role in life?*

I see it very definitely that way. It was not considered a necessary part of a girl's upbringing or training.

*Some research indicates that girls do not have the same predisposition to play sports as boys do and that this difference starts from a very young age. Do we know why?*

There is some evidence to suggest that boys tend to be, on the average, more aggressive than girls and this is a quality we look for in athletes. There are hundreds of studies that have attempted to establish whether there are biological origins for the sex differences in aggression or whether the origins are strictly cultural. My own feeling as a researcher and as someone who has looked into this is that it's neither one nor the other. There is an interaction between the innate qualities inherited through one's genes and the environment or culture in which one lands. Even if a girl has all the natural qualities for sport — a good build, a more aggressive tendency, a competitive spirit — an environment that discourages these qualities in girls can undermine any potential she has. For a boy in our society, there's an expectation that he will be somewhat aggressive, partake in sports and become good at it because if he doesn't he's going to be labelled a sissy. Even though that kind of pressure can be very damaging for boys, it does encourage them to be athletic.

*But if a girl does have a tendency to be aggressive, are you saying this is because of her biological makeup?*

I think there is a possibility that the need to compete and the need to have physical contact could have some kind of genetic origin, or could have origins in prenatal development. It doesn't make sense to me to say that whatever we are is completely because of our environment.

*Have there been studies that show whether men and women who excel in sports are different hormonally?*

No. The male sex hormone, androgen, is a very tenuous substance to measure. A lot of work has been done with males who have been incarcerated, those who are very aggressive and violent, and the research has tried to determine if there is a relationship between the hormone levels and this violence. Similarly, there have been studies done on female homosexuals, trying to see if there is a relationship between hormone level and homosexuality. None of these studies, as far as I can understand the literature, have shown any kind of relationship, but part of the difficulty is in actually measuring that hormone level.

*What specific problems bother you about women in sport in our society?*

I think the main thing that bothers me is the constant tendency among both men and women to compare women's sporting endeavors with male sporting endeavors. It's as if there is only one ideal in sport and that's the male. Women athletes are never truly recognized as individuals pursuing something

that's worthwhile in its own right, the heck with what the male standard is. In many sports where both men and women play, at that highest level, the man is always going to win, the male performance is always going to be more exciting. But on the other hand there are a lot of sports, and I think tennis is probably a good example, where the women's match is much more exciting than the male's. Certainly, there may be some difference in skill, because the male at that level is generally faster, quicker and stronger, but in terms of the thrill and excitement produced by the match, the women's match is probably much more exciting because there are more variables and the opponents might be more uneven. They play a different kind of game. I think another good example is women's and men's volleyball. Men can jump higher, so when they do spike that ball there is usually very little chance of getting it back. Women can't jump as high, they can't get as much strength behind their spike,

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**“There is a tendency to compare women's sporting endeavors with men's. It's as if there is only one ideal in sport and that's the male.”**

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so they can't hit the ball down quite as hard. There is a better chance of getting the ball up so the game actually goes on longer. But we only use one standard, and that's the men's standard.

*How do you explain the fact that, despite all the influences discouraging girls from participating in sport, some still become excellent athletes?*

Probably the family is the most important factor for a young girl. It doesn't matter what kind of talent a young girl has, if she doesn't have a supportive family that believes in sport for girls and encourages her and provides her with funds, she will never become an athlete. If she has been completely put off by the family, the school won't reverse this. We don't have the kind of sport system that is removed from the family as they have in the East European countries.

*Do young girls who participate in sport tend to have mothers who have been athletes?*

There's a very strong relationship between the interest and activity of the mother. In our studies we're finding that active mothers tend to have active daughters. In other words, the daughters are following the mother's example and doing the same kinds of things. The mother may belong to some kind of sports club and thus provide the

daughter with opportunities. But, of course, there are some mothers who don't have any real interest in sport but who do encourage their daughters.

*What happens to a young girl who has an interest in sport and who is encouraged at home but is continually discouraged by the school and by her friends? Do most girls just give up?*

If she's very good then she'll probably survive the system. Most schools have teams for girls so she'll probably participate at that level. If she has a particular talent in a sport that's not taught to any great extent in the school system — gymnastics, for example — her talent would be identified fairly early on and she would probably receive special training at a clinic or club.

The problem lies with the whole group of young girls who enjoy physical activity for its own sake but who don't necessarily want to be on a team. They are the ones I feel concerned about. They enter the school system and get

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completely turned off. There's too much emphasis on competition for these girls and there's not enough variety in the kinds of activities they can choose from.

As they get older and go through puberty, everything that happens to girls is to the detriment of physical activity. They develop busts, they put on fat around the hips, they gain weight. As they get more weight down below they get weaker up top and activity in sport becomes increasingly difficult.

*So it's probably easier for these girls just to give up?*

They find all kinds of ways to get out of physical activity. Any physical education teacher will tell you about the girls who find ways to get out of physical education. I've talked to hundreds of women who aren't active now and, when it comes right down to it, they aren't active because somewhere in that adolescent stage they got completely turned off any form of activity.

*Do female physical educators feel any responsibility for what happens to these young girls?*

There are a great many physical educators who are really very good and who take enormous care and pay attention to that group of girls we're talking about. But, there are others, and I include myself in this category, for whom sport came very easily. It was

very hard for me to try to understand the girl who found it difficult to pick up the skills that just came naturally to me. There are a great many physical educators who got into the profession because they were good at sports. They never really had to learn anything. So it's difficult for them to appreciate and understand those who don't have the same talent. They end up teaching the ones who give them the most satisfaction — the girls who have talent.

*But isn't that the case in all sports? I'm sure male physical education teachers concentrate on the skilled athlete as well.*

Oh, there's no question about it. It's just that as far as boys are concerned the pool from which they can draw is that much bigger. As boys go through puberty, everything that happens to them, normally, is to the enhancement of their athletic ability. They gain bulk; they develop more muscles in their upper body; their hips remain narrow. Through the process of puberty there's more strength in relation to their body fat. But, while that's happening to boys, the complete opposite is happening to girls. A good many young boys enjoy sports because they come naturally to them. But there are boys also who get completely turned off — the classic fat kid in the class, for example.

I think from a very early age, and thankfully this is changing a bit, girls are taught there are certain activities that are suitable, ladylike, and there are certain activities that are not. It's ok for a girl to be a tomboy — every young girl these days is a tomboy — but once the young girl reaches a certain stage of development, all the kinds of stereotypic behaviours and the appropriate feminine demeanor, start to be reinforced.

I just can't conceive of a life-style that doesn't have an aspect of it related to physical activity and physical health and fitness. My own personal philosophy is that one feels infinitely better if one is active. I believe some kind of physical activity is *absolutely* necessary to a person's well being. It doesn't matter what it is, it could be organized sport, it could be something private. But somewhere along the line we teach that in order to be physically active you have to be good. We don't try to develop a liking or a need for physical activity that is within each individual's physical capabilities.

*With young girls trying out for little league teams now do you think it will ever be possible for girls and women to participate on an equal basis with boys and men?*

Yes, young girls should be competing on an equal basis. The division ought to be by skill level, weight classification

or whatever category would equalize the competition. The reason young girls are seeking to be on boys' teams is that now there's a growing appreciation among girls to develop in sports and young girls are being given the opportunity to become very, very good. But they find out that in order for them to play at a certain level they need to compete and play with boys. I don't see any problem or difficulty with that at all. The difficulty comes when the young women reach physical maturity. Although there are many good women athletes who could compete and put to test many mediocre male athletes, there are very few sports in which the top female athlete could compete on the same level with the top male athlete. I think the gap will close. We're seeing that already in sports where women have not been able to compete, for example, long distance running and long distance swimming. The gaps are closing very quickly but I still feel that there will always be a difference.

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**“Somewhere along the line we teach that in order to be physically active you have to be good. We don't try to develop a liking for physical activity that is within each individual's capabilities.”**

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*But there are girls now, in team sports, who are as good as boys. If they are given the same opportunities to develop as boys are don't you think it's possible for them to continue at the same level?*

No. There's going to come a point in time where the girl's performance will decline relative to the male's, simply because of what happens to males and females in their physical development. Of course it's possible to find ways and means to enhance a girl's physical development along the same lines as the male's with steroids for example. But I just can't approve of these techniques. They represent a very mechanistic approach to sport; all the natural elements are removed. I see that as a terrible prospect, but it could happen.

*You seem to be contradicting yourself. You say sport should not be divided on the basis of male and female but on the basis of weight and skill level, and then you're arguing for separate sports for men and women.*

I do argue on both sides of the coin for a very simple reason. First of all, I'm a strong believer in 'separate but equal'. I see this as the long term ideal. I'm talking about programs that are equal in all respects: funding, prestige, facilities, support, everything. On the other hand to say, right now, we should have

separate but equal programs in sports for boys and girls, men and women, would be ludicrous. It's going to take us 10, 20, 30 or 60 years to get those programs. What happens in the meantime to all the talented young girls who have nowhere to play — girls like Gail Cummings in Ontario who wanted to play boys' hockey because where she happened to be there was no girls' hockey? She *must* be allowed to play in a league of some kind.

If somehow the day comes that women's sport and girls' sport are given the same amount of prestige as men's and boys', I would still like to see young girls and young boys of equal talent able to compete together in those sports where that seemed logical. That would mean getting rid of all the inhibitions we have at the moment of young girls not being allowed to compete in sports that have some possibility of body contact. There are no physical arguments for young girls not to compete with young boys in sports of that nature. On the

whole, the young girl of that age group is ahead of the young boy physically, and is probably stronger. The arguments against them playing together are completely cultural. It just isn't acceptable in our society for young boys to toss around with young girls. If we can get rid of that attitude I think we've got it made, but changing that kind of attitude will just take forever.

*Many people are very concerned about what will happen to segregated teams for girls if the sports become integrated.*

It's beginning to happen already, particularly in the United States as a result of the legislation of Title IX. Title IX states that any educational institute receiving federal funds cannot discriminate on the basis of sex. This has had many ramifications in all the program areas of education and sport has been one of them. In some schools people are saying, if there is a team in soccer or football, it wouldn't entirely equal to have a separate team for the women and a team for the men. Therefore, they have only one team for which both men and women are eligible. What will happen to the women is that they will just be eliminated from participating. There isn't the pool of talent on which to draw nor the tradition for women in those sports.

*But aren't laws like Title IX necessary just to get people at least to*

look at the problems?

There's nothing wrong with the law. It just may be the interpretation.

*Girls and women have been discriminated against in sports for a long time. If certain racial groups were being denied access to equal opportunity in sports there might be more of an outcry. Why don't we hear more about it?*

There has been very little connection between that which has gone on in the women's movement and sport for young girls and women. There are virtually no women who are physical educators working in the field and teaching in the schools who have had any real experience with the women's movement and who would in any way describe themselves as feminists. If there's a voice in the wilderness trying to get girls a better deal in sports, I think it's coming from the women's movement rather than from women who are actually working in sports. Female physical educators have sat back and let the present situation develop. They've not taken stands, they've not sought retribution for past injustices. I'm talking here particularly of Canada. The American situation is different because of the very powerful piece of legislation that was passed. In Canada it's only now that we're beginning to get a few isolated cases of discrimination coming to Human Rights Commissions. Why haven't women in sport linked in with the women's movement? For one thing it's probably because people in sport tend to be really conservative.

*Why is that?*

I think sport itself involves a selecting out process. You don't get to be a member of the team unless you're prepared to accept authority. All this garbage we hear about sports building character and moral attributes, most of it is nonsense. People who have some predisposition to those characteristics in the first place aren't going to be selected. They're too much bother. A lot of people in sport are conformists and they're not really prepared to think about change. Also, they're doers, very task-oriented. They really don't have a lot of time for waffling around in ideas and emotions and feelings.

*But these are women who do not fit society's stereotypes themselves. Wouldn't they be more aware than anyone else of what it must be like for young girls who want to be athletes?*

No. Very few of them think about it in those terms. They are doing their thing and to hell with the rest of the world. If people can't accept them for what they are, that's the world's problem, not theirs. They are action-oriented.

*But there are a lot of people who are action-oriented who can analyze a*

*situation and make some assessment as to how it must affect other people.*

Well, there are other aspects to it.

The one issue which I think is a very sticky one for women involved in sports is the issue of sexual preference. I think that many women in sport are afraid that if they also become involved in the women's movement and become labelled feminists, their sexual preference is going to be called into question and they probably find that very difficult to handle. They're not equipped to handle it so have avoided the whole issue and that's a real problem.

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**“Many women in sport are afraid that if they also become involved in the women's movement their sexual preference is going to be called into question.”**

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*Perhaps there's also a risk involved in speaking out in a male dominated field.*

I think there is a real fear among a lot of women particularly in civil service jobs, in recreation departments, that if they become involved and become known as active liberationists that their jobs might be in jeopardy. The kind of men they're working with and for have absolutely no appreciation of the problem. We're dealing with a jock mentality, with people who are oriented to the status quo and a respect for authority. I think self-preservation is probably a factor. I don't think it's an excuse.

*No, but it makes it understandable.*

It is understandable. In Canada, I just wish we had some kind of rallying point — some piece of legislation or issue — that would bring women in sport and women in the movement together. That way there would be much more communication. Many women who have been involved in sport would begin to study aspects of feminism and study issues in the women's movement and come to a greater appreciation for sisterhood.

*Why do you think the women's movement hasn't dealt very much with women in sport?*

Sport is considered a trivial, frivolous aspect of society that many people denigrate because they've never been good at it. It's something they never participated in as a child and they see only the crassness, the commercialization. I don't know of a single feminist thinker who has thought about it, who has even looked at sport from a feminist perspective.

Most feminist theory emphasizes cultural influences that produce differences between the sexes. There is a little book by Coreen Hunt called *Males and*

*Females* in which she attempts to look at innate differences. She comes down in very much the same position that I'm in, that there are some differences between males and females which she believes must have a biological origin, the evidence is so strong — differences in aggression, for example. When that book was published, she got a lot of hate mail from feminists who were calling her the Aunt Tommasina of the women's movement. Feminists usually are arguing totally on the cultural side.

The one feminist who I think has dealt with the whole issue of physical differences, not from the perspective of sport, but from the perspective of reproduction, is Shulamith Firestone. She argues that the only way for true equality is to remove the biological differences between the sexes. Technology has to take over. She can see no other solution.

In the United States, because of Title IX and the Equal Rights Amendment, a lot more feminists have started looking at sport, at physical education in the schools, and perhaps at some of the deeper issues.

*What has to happen to bring about changes? Are laws the answer? Or education?*

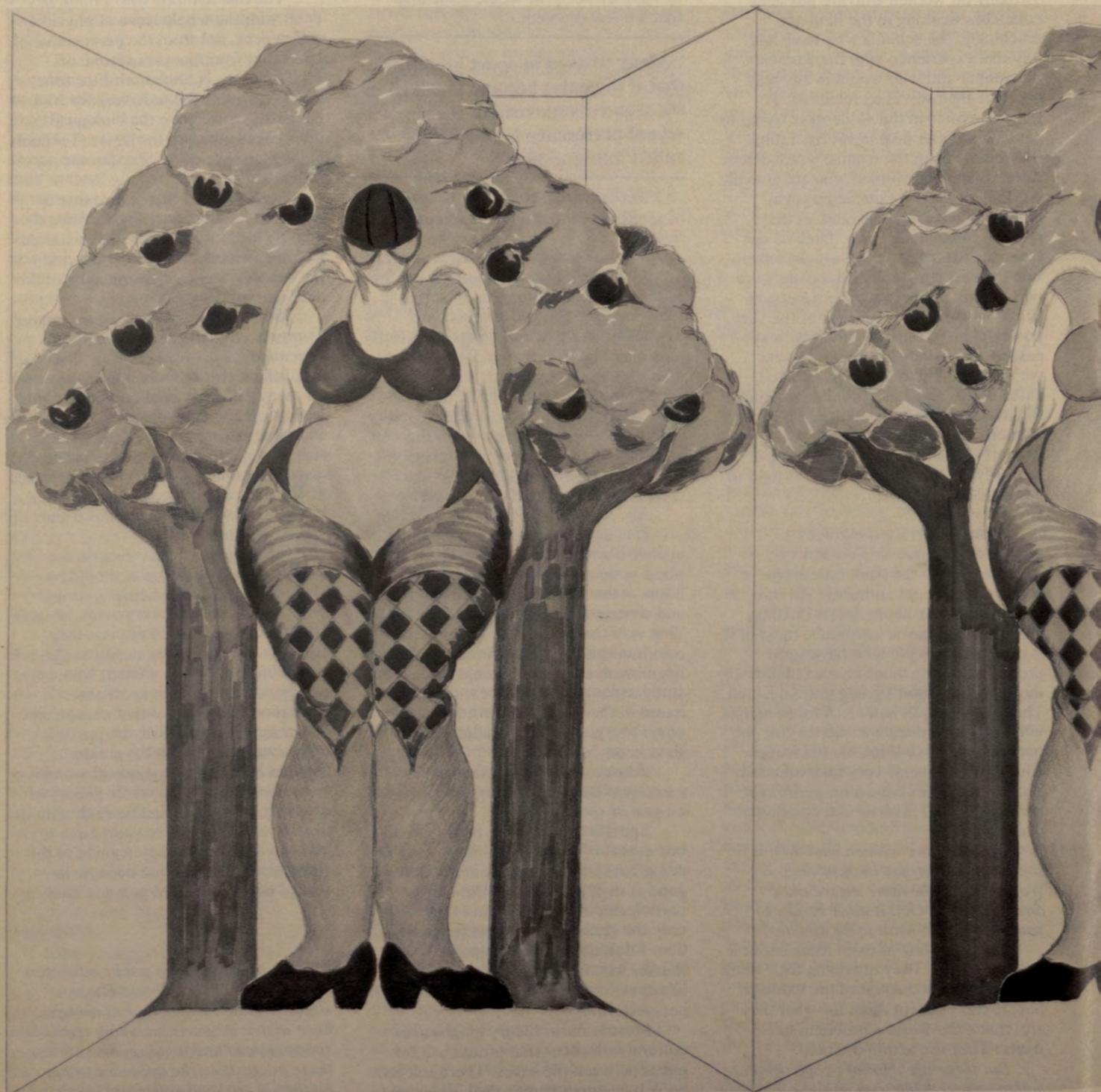
I think that the attack has to occur on many different fronts. Human rights legislation and education may make more and more people aware of the human rights laws as a mechanism to prevent discrimination. As more girls bring cases of discrimination to commissions we'll begin examining the issues more and setting precedents.

Once we start discussing such questions as whether girls should be playing hockey and whether girls and boys should share locker rooms, we will find that there are a lot of prevailing attitudes that are pretty negative. Also, I would make a plea to women who were or who are involved in sport and recreation to recognize that change and progress will never really be possible unless we link up with the greater changes in the role or status of women in our society. There's a whole history of discrimination that must be dealt with in that context. Women in sport have to begin to understand the meaning of the women's movement and become involved because it's not going to go away.

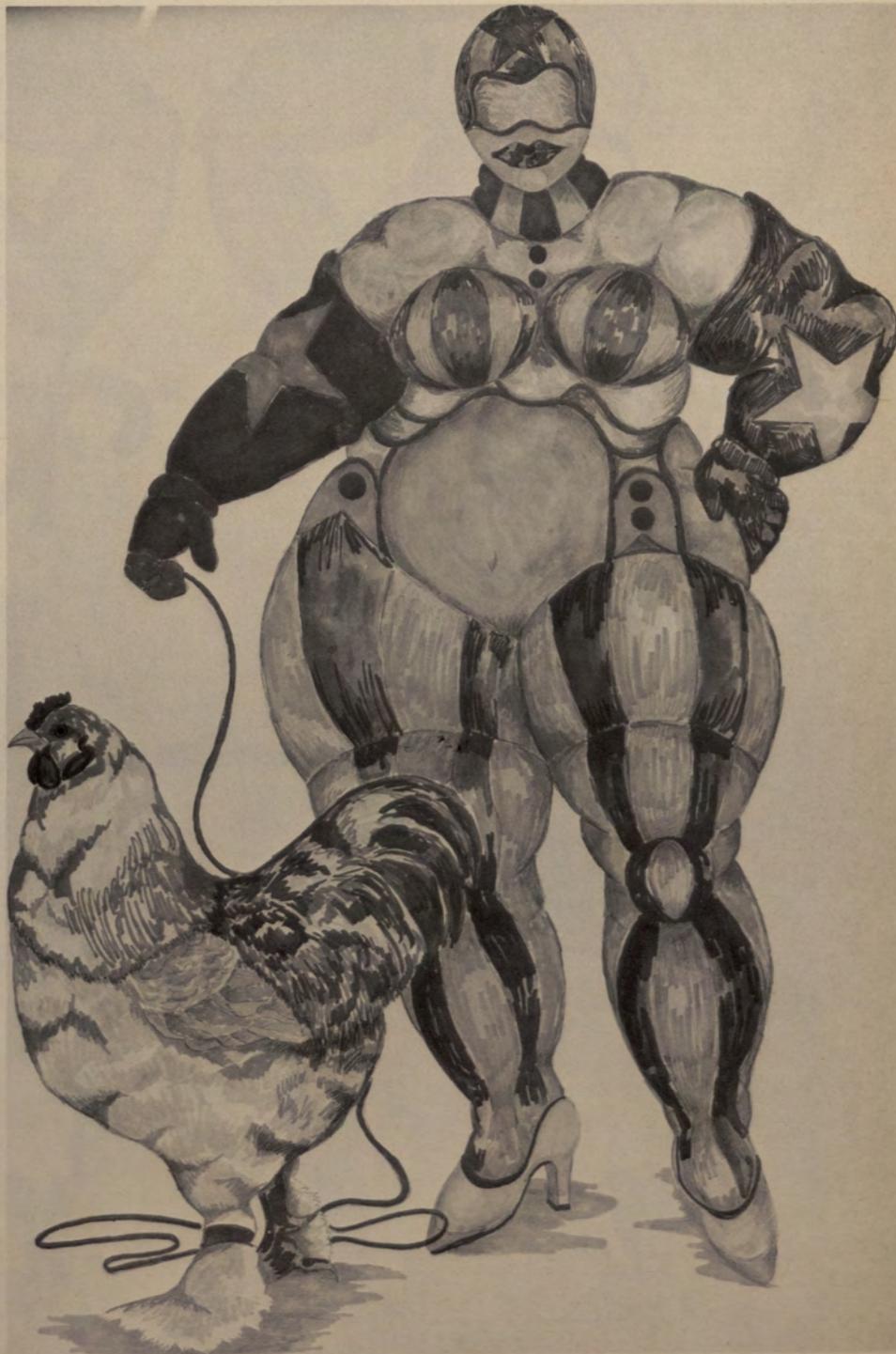
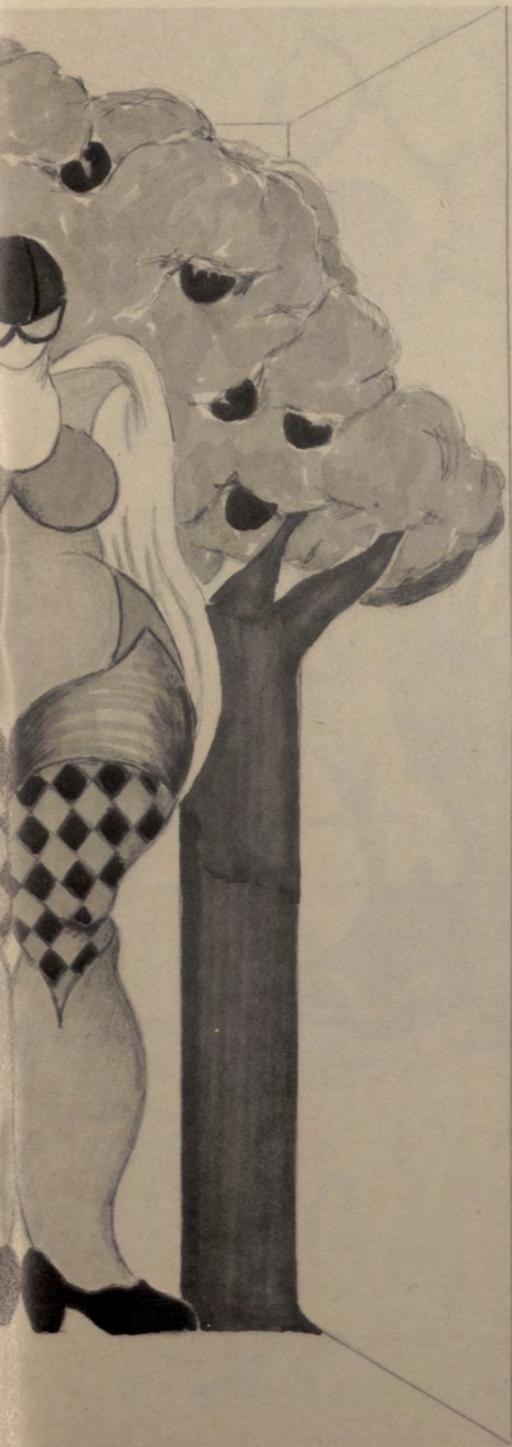
*Mary Lou Creechan is public education co-ordinator of the Alberta Human Rights Commission. She has always been active in sports including team sports, tennis and jogging. She attributes these interests to the influence of her mother, a physical education teacher.*

# Stepping Out

drawings by Rebecca Burke

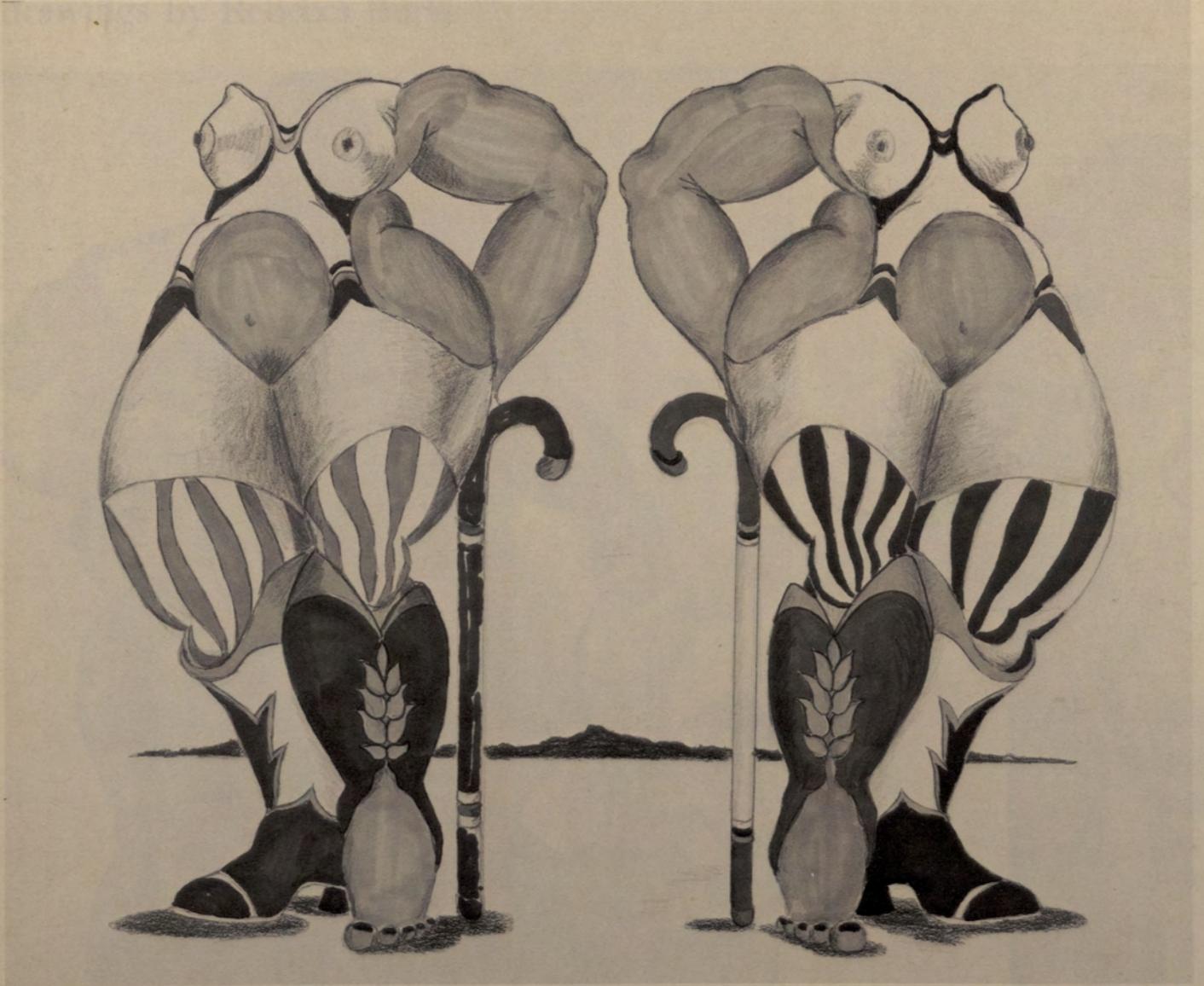


*Underneath Them Apple Trees*

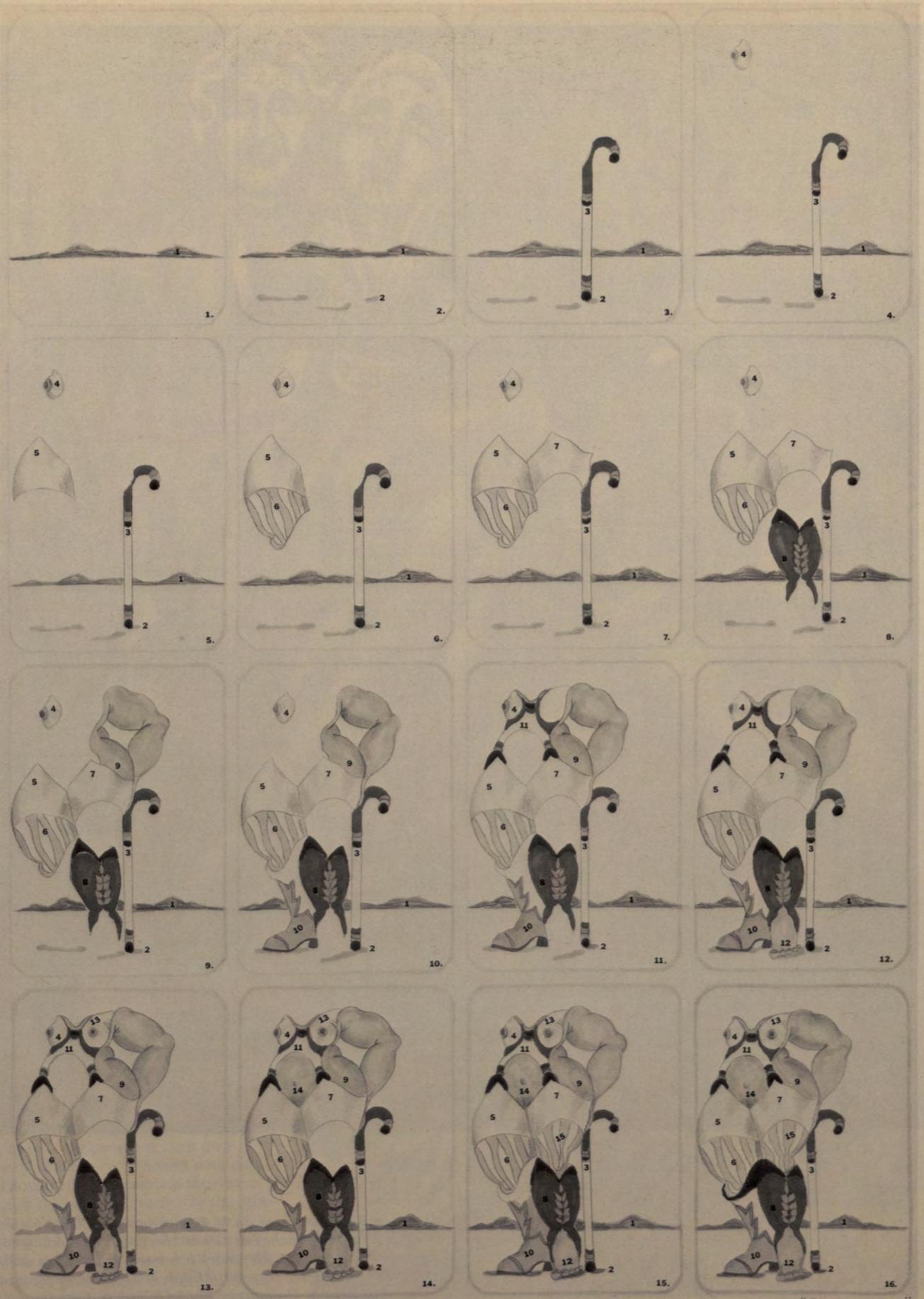


*Lady Walks the Cock*

# Stepping Out



*The Steppin' Out*



The Creation of *The Steppin' Out* in Living Colour



*Rebecca Burke received an M.F.A. from Ohio State University in 1972 and now teaches at Grant MacEwan Community College in Edmonton. Her work has been exhibited in galleries in London Ontario, Toronto, Montreal and Winnipeg, and is now on display at Galapagos Book Gallery in Edmonton.*

# The Sporting Life

## Shop Talk

interviews by Elaine Butler

*During the Commonwealth Games in Edmonton this August, I interviewed several of the women athletes in diving and track and field. We discussed the problems of being a woman athlete, how the press treats them, their relationships with their coaches, and whether they experienced a conflict between being feminine and being athletic. I didn't talk only to the winners, rather, I chose women who had been involved in international competition and could speak from a great deal of experience. Below are selected comments from these interviews.*

*Elaine Butler*

### Margaret Stride, Canada

The best way to improve athletic programs for women and men is to bring it into our public school system, making it mandatory five days a week, not just one or two as it is now, and making physical education and fitness as important as math or spelling.

In Europe they have classes of forty or fifty children out in a field doing gymnastics, flips, cartwheels, and other sports. It's instilled from day one that they'll do all kinds of sports, and they don't get segregated until they know what their body size is going to be.

Most girls are as interested in sports as boys are up until grade eight, and all of a sudden at nine and ten, sport is not feminine.

To a lot of people, track is a boring sport to watch. It's not a team sport; it's an individual sport; so unless you know the individuals, it's not as interesting to watch. The Canadian people don't know the athletes in track and field. Very few people turn out to watch meets except mothers and fathers. They do have special meets every year like the Toronto Star Indoor Games, but that doesn't include a lot of Canadians. A few Canadians do know some of the top track athletes in the world, but they don't know the people in their own country. Vancouver is a very poor city for knowing its athletes, and they have some of the best in Canada. On the other hand, we have athletes who can go to Europe and be recognized immediately.

Our outlook on sports is so different from European countries. In Europe you're a national hero if you win an

Olympic gold medal. In Canada you're patted on the back for one day, and the next you might not even be remembered.

### Lucette Moreau, Canada

Discus throwers and shot-putters don't get as much support as runners. The public's attitude is that a woman should not be big and strong. Obviously

the media and men are also influenced by that, and we can't get as much support because of it.

Women are scared to do sports because they don't want to have muscle, but I'd rather have muscle than fat.

Sometimes people put too much emphasis on colour and flags and superficial values. And there's the ideology of the strongest: the one who comes first is much better than the one who comes second or third, no matter how stupid she is. But the runner who comes last in the marathon is suffering just as much as the runner who comes first and she deserves as much respect for her effort.

I wouldn't like to see boxing or wrestling for women. Even for men, I find it's rough.

*photo by Elaine Butler*



### Abby Hoffman, Canada

Our cultural environment does not make sports attractive to many women. Even when sports programmes appear to be reasonably attractive to both males and females, a lot of women just don't show up. Part of it is that their basic upbringing does not include a very strong empathy or attraction to sports. But also there is clearly a lot of very overt discrimination directed at girls and women that simply prevents them from using facilities on a regular basis.

A lot of people have talked about providing amateur sport with its own promotional vehicle funded by the government, or by the amateur sport organizations. Personally, in a time of scarce resources, and resources in this country have always been scarce for amateur sport, I don't want to see money squandered on more copywriters and material promoting amateur athletics. We've got a participation problem more than a promotion one. It seems to be quite possible to promote sport and yet not increase participation. Professional sport is a very good example of that. There's no doubt that Canadians know a

photo by Elaine Butler



Allison Drake Jankowska

lot about sport if you're talking about football, hockey, baseball, golf or tennis, but I don't think that has necessarily led to greater participation. So I wouldn't want to see a lot more money spent on the promotion of sport and sport heroes because a lot of people end up relating to it on a vicarious basis and don't end up participating themselves.

Sure athletes would like a lot more recognition, but at this point what they need is better coaching, more facilities and more opportunities to train and compete.

### Janet Nutter, Canada

Coaches do treat women differently from men. A male diver wouldn't handle a coach's yelling and screaming at him as well as a woman would. If your coach gets mad, it's a little easier to get mad at a girl. It's really terrible saying something like that; but men tend to be coached a little differently. Also, a male coach isn't as close to his male divers as he is towards his female divers. That's a natural tendency that I think would occur in any situation.

I was coached by an excellent woman coach. But the problem was that we had been very good friends before she started to coach me, and she was only a couple of years older than I. It was hard for me to accept her telling me to do something. It's easier for me to take that from a man who's eight years older than I am, as opposed to a woman who's only two years older.

I don't think women are going to be able to compete directly against men in diving. There are a lot of women doing what we consider men's dives, dives that for years only men were doing. But I still think men are physically stronger than women.

Men can do more somersaults and finish them higher. Men aren't as pretty a diver, usually, as women, and so it would be hard for them, too, to compete against women in that aspect. I don't see it happening.

The media are great towards women in sports, maybe because it has more of an aesthetic quality. So far they're more impressed with women's diving. You know they wonder how those little girls are up there diving off that ten-metre platform. This is, if not quite a woman-oriented sport, definitely a sport where women do well.

### Carmen Ionesco, Canada

I competed for Rumania at the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972. In 1973, my husband and I defected from Rumania and came to Canada where we have received a lot of help from Sports Canada since the 1976 Olympics!

There are a lot of facilities for athletes in Canada, but we have to train and still earn our living. In Rumania we had facilities where we could study and practice sports together. The programs

and schedules were better than here in Canada. Track and field is still young here, and I think it will be better in a few years.

Canadian women are not so determined to be very good performers. They do sport as a pleasure; they practice only because they like a sport. In Rumania, sport is a necessity of life. If you practice over there, you have facilities, you get to travel to other countries, you get a salary and money. So they practice by obligation and for pleasure.

### Casey, United States

It used to be that girls ran for clubs in age groups when they were little. When they were in high school, they still ran for their club because high schools had boys' track; they didn't have girls' track. Then we got a law down there that they couldn't have boys' track if they didn't let girls run with them or separately. Immediately girls' high school track began to improve and college track began to follow. They didn't want to quit when they got out of high school. Before, any girl out of high school felt she was too old for the club. They were competing in age groups; so few women kept on. Now 700 colleges belong to the Association of Intercollegiate Women's Track. They just keep on running and throwing and jumping.

For a woman of my age, I have covered a lot of track. I have attended four Pan-American Games, three Commonwealth Games, three Olympics, one European Championship, one Canada Games, and for eleven years straight. I have covered senior and junior American championships. I have met close to 1000 athletes from all over the world.

One high school teacher in Oregon found a girl who could stand stock still on her two feet and with no turn, put the shot forty-five feet. The teacher wanted to enter her in the National Championships, but the girl's mother said 'no.' She loaded her whole family on the old truck and went back to the Ozarks and said, "Nobody's going to make a fool of my daughter in public." That was in 1971. Today girls built like that girl, and she was big and strong, can be champions and are doing it, and nobody's laughing at them.

### Marjorie Bailey, Canada

I don't like the pictures the media give of most of our athletes. And I don't like having interviews because they never say what you say to them, and they never have a praising word for you. They're always waiting for you to fall on your behind so they can criticize you.

We don't get enough coverage, and we don't get coverage that will help build us up, help us know what we're doing, how we're doing, and when we're doing it. We don't get enough of that at the right times. Overall it has a bad effect. All of the people on our teams feel it.

Sometimes people ask when are you going to settle down and stay home which means doing housework, cooking and working. I tried that in February this year, and I was bored; so I'm running some more just for the sake of doing it. I run because I feel I can do better than I'm doing, and it's something to do, but I don't love it.

Deborah M. Jones, Bermuda

In Bermuda people do not understand what an athlete has to go through. It's kind of hard coming to Canada with all these countries here. People at home expect us to win the gold, which is sometimes impossible. Even though I came fifth in my semi-final, and I'm probably ninth or tenth fastest in the Commonwealth, they're still looking for number one. They can't give us support if they expect us to be number one, so one of the main difficulties we have is support and money.

For years I've travelled as the only girl on the Bermuda athletic team. We've gone to many countries where I was the only girl. So I'm a liberated woman. I believe that women have got to have the upper hand, and I must put out an extra effort more than the guys on my team. Sometimes I'm lucky and win, and sometimes I don't. You can't win all the time. When you're the only girl on a team, there's something extra that makes you feel good within yourself.

Angela Cook, Australia

Men in athletics are more accepting of women athletes than the general public. They know what we go through, how hard we try, and how dedicated we are to our sport. A lot of them know that if they don't pull their socks up, they're likely to get beaten. Even if you're the top woman in your age group or your state, there are always a lot of guys who are better than you and in most cases enjoy having you in their group to train with.

The athletic association was combined with both men and women for many years, but the women split away because they were being told what they could do and weren't able to ask for what they needed. The year they broke away, there were 126 women's records broken in my own state alone which proves that having the events we wanted was definitely an advantage. The associations have combined again, and, unfortunately, I think there could be some problems. The men want to tell the women what to do, but the women have had their say for a few years now and don't want to give it up. There's a bit of friction.

Beverly Boys, Canada

There are times when you might feel yourself going, "Oh goodness, I'm not feeling real feminine right now." But you don't give it a lot of thought, I am what I am. I don't think I'm masculine; I don't think I'm anything. Just because I'm what I consider fit or trying to get fit, doesn't mean that you take away any part of beauty. People aren't just looking



Game Plan photo

for beauty queens and models anyway. It doesn't mean life can't go on.

I did dive for a while and I was probably stared at a lot because I looked very masculine, and I was very strong. Our shot putters and discus throwers are big girls — but they're girls. They're just what they're supposed to be. They're what they want to be. If they don't want to be that, then they shouldn't do it. Nobody makes you do anything.

Allison Drake Jankowska, England

In England you've still got quite a chauvinistic attitude towards sports. It's very male dominated. A lot of women drop out, particularly when they're about fifteen. On the whole, a lot of coaches don't push the women as hard as the men. They don't expect them to do as much or to do the same dives as the men. But the coach I have now pushes me as hard as his men.

My other coach expected me to quit when I got married. Two-and-a-half years later, he was still expecting me to quit. As soon as you get married, your life is not your own. A lot of people ask me what my husband thinks of my diving. They half expect him to be upset about it.

Women's participation in sports is actually increasing. It's not so unfeminine to be an athlete. You've still got a lot against you in England, particularly when you get boyfriends, but ideas are changing.

But I enjoy competing in athletics because you're treated as an individual. When you get married, everybody's attitudes change towards you. They talk to you differently; they don't try to know you anymore. But in sport, you're treated as an individual; you've got your prowess.

Patty Loverock, Canada

We don't have the same separation in sport in Canada as they do in the States. Our national championships have both men's and women's events and always have. Clubs are for men and women, not one or the other. We don't have a separate governing body for women, collegiately or on the national level. In the states, the women have an athletic association and the men have their own athletic association.

The sexuality of women involved in sports is in question. Is she really a woman if she can do athletics? These prejudices still exist, and they do prevent a lot of women from getting involved. I'm blaming women for this attitude because it's up to them to make the decision to get involved.

I grew up in a small community in Canada, and it was fine if you were on the basketball team. Maybe I was in an ideal situation, but I can't honestly say that I encountered difficulties. Now, the social norm of the sixteen-, seventeen- and eighteen-year-olds is to be much more passive. That old-fashioned attitude that women are supposed to sit around, look pretty and not sweat is coming into vogue which is making things more difficult. There's a swing to the right now because of the economic difficulties in the world, and that's reaching women as well.

*Elaine Butler has been business manager at Branching Out for the last two years.*

# Pink Bows and Sweat

**“In Canada we still consider runners and sweatsuits men’s clothing. It’s time we started to realize sport, fitness and strong bodies are for all people, including women.”**

by **Patty Loverock**

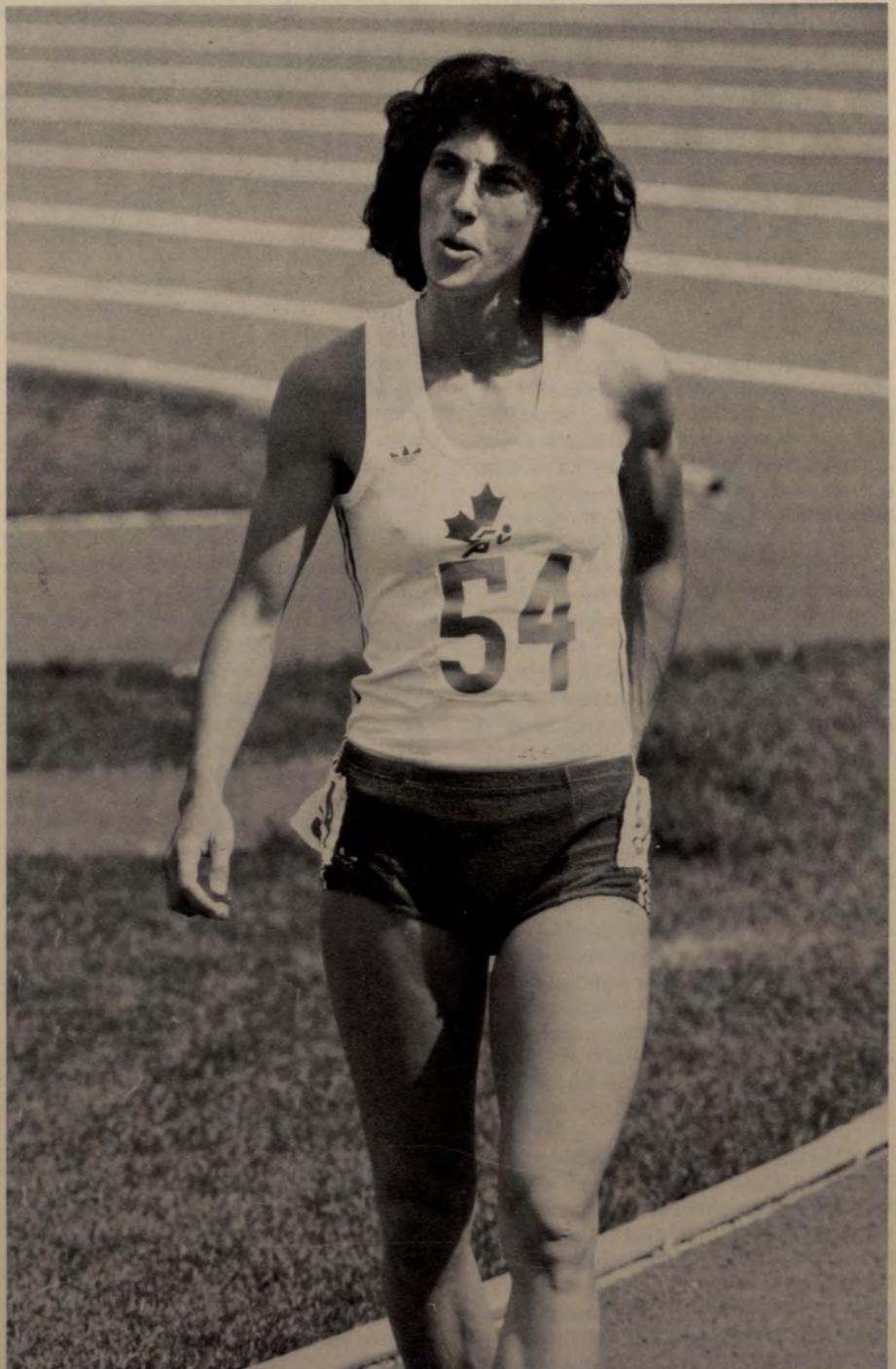
While in Budapest last June I won a 100 meter race. I quickly put on my sweat suit and moved to the awards area. This routine is much like the one at the race track when the victorious horse is lead to the winner’s circle. The women’s shot put awards were to be presented after our ceremony and three of the world’s largest and strongest women stood close by me deep in conversation. The winner, a Rumanian, was holding a book and sharing it with the other two place finishers, one a Czech and the other a Soviet. The three were laughing and chatting in Russian and as I passed by them I glanced at the contents of the book. It was a pattern magazine featuring page after page of intricate embroidery designs of the style found in Rumania. The three women were obviously discussing their planned sewing projects.

I caught myself looking at the three athletes in amazement. Less then an hour ago these three women had pitted their massive strength against a cold steel ball and with a powerful explosion of muscle and voice each had hurled the shot put an incredible 19 meters. Yet, here the three stood, relaxed and intent over an embroidery skill that requires fine and delicate hand movement.

Unfortunately, most Canadians would have seen some incongruity in the Budapest scene. Of course, there is no reason why three athletically talented women should not also participate in a classically feminine activity such as embroidery. In fact, my experience in Budapest made me question exactly what level of acceptance women’s participation in sport has in our country.

Time magazine, in its June 26 issue, announces that women have entered a new era in sport. “On athletic fields and playgrounds and in parks and gymnasiums across the country a new player has joined the grand game that is sporting competition and she’s a girl.” Indeed, a close friend of mine has a daughter who boasts proudly that she is the only girl in her school who made the baseball team.

Most certainly part of the new self-actualization process women are experiencing as a product of the feminist



*Patty Loverock* Game Plan photo

movement is touching girls and women in their attitudes towards sport. Just as it is becoming acceptable for women to excel in the business and professional world, so has she begun to excel as an athlete.

More encouraging facts about Canadian women and their role in sport can be found. Sport Canada, the main funding body of Canadian Amateur Sport has no sex discrimination in its allocation of monies. Women attending Canadian universities can participate in numerous sports and fitness activities and can shower in their own locker rooms when they have finished. Basic as this may seem, this situation does not exist on many U.S. campuses.

Yet, what degree of acceptance does sport have at a grassroots level? In Canada runners and sweat suits are still considered men's clothing. A woman with narrow feet finds it almost impossible to find a shoe to fit her foot. When she finally does get dressed the likelihood of her being addressed as "Sir" is great.

For many women this apparent maleness of sport makes them resist involvement. Consider the hundreds of teenage girls who have "skipped out" of P.E. class. When asked why, they answer, "I wouldn't be caught dead in those shorts, they look like guy's shorts." Others will avoid sport for fear of getting bulging muscles or somehow becoming less attractive by being physically active. Of course, the truth is that a healthy fit body, be it male or female is more efficient and usually more attractive.

There are still more examples of women and girls being confronted with the idea that their involvement in sport is anti-social. It starts with the parents who encourage their daughter to not throw the baseball farther than the boys in the class. As time goes on the female athlete discovers that boys won't date her because she can sink more baskets than they can. Grown women risk jogging on night time streets to avoid the apparent embarrassment of bouncing around the block by day. These individuals have learned that somehow women do not have a place in sport.

Almost every international caliber female athlete has been confronted at some point with the idea that her involvement in athletics is an anti-social activity. I recall a Washington track team called the Seattle Angels. The team members were among the most talented in their country, yet they seldom appeared in anything other than pale blue uniforms, pink sweat suits and large pink bows in their hair. At the time women were just making a move in U.S. track and field. The Angels found it necessary



**Debbie Brill: "I high jump because it is an expression of me . . . . It gives me a great sense of my body and mind. When I clear the bar I have a tremendous feeling of control and accomplishment."**

to dress in a way that would make them appear female in an all male world.

Unfortunately the media is guilty of defining a difference between male and female athletes. An example of this can be found again in track and field. In September of 1977 the first World Cup Competition for track and field was staged in Dusseldorf, Germany. Nine Canadian women earned a place on the Americas team. To become a member of the team each competitor had to win their event in a competition that included athletes from Canada, South America, and the West Indies. A reporter from Toronto joined the women for breakfast one morning at the athletes' residence in Dusseldorf. He talked with them briefly and went home to write his article.

When the piece appeared in print the author had described the athletes as lovely smiling "girls". He stated how surprised he was that they had managed to keep their feminine manner and pleasant girlishness. The author could say nothing about the tremendous athletic accomplishment of the women. Worse still, he denied his readers an understanding of this accomplishment.

It is important the media, parents, teachers, athletes — in fact, everyone — realize that women in sport are simply people in sport. A woman, like any athlete, male or female, enjoys sport because it enables her to experience a physically fit body, an alertness of mind, and a feeling of competence that

comes with doing sport. Consider the words of Canadian world class high jumper Debbie Brill: "I high jump because it is an expression of me. It is something that I am able to do the very best I can and it gives me a great sense of my body and mind. When I clear the bar I have a tremendous feeling of control and accomplishment."

How can we attain a grassroots acceptance of sport? I feel confident that Canadians are starting to realize that sport, fitness, healthy hearts, and strong bodies are for all people, including women.

I would encourage women to get involved in sport. Jog at noon instead of at midnight. Join that fitness class you always say you are going to but never quite get around to. Take the dog for a walk instead of having the kids do it. Most of all, be proud of yourself for your effort. Your energy and courage is helping make sport more accepted by everyone in the country.

*Patty Loverock lives in Vancouver where she works with Action B.C., a nonprofit company which promotes health and fitness in communities throughout British Columbia. She was on the Canadian national track team for eight years and retired from track after the Commonwealth Games in August.*

# law

## The View from the Bench

by Helen Greaves

"She shoots! She scores!"

The phrase has a strange sound to it. There are few females playing hockey, or for that matter most sports, because half of our population has been encouraged to watch and not participate. Years of training are not the only requirement for a girl who wants to play hockey. Gail Cummings of Huntsville, Ontario required a court order. The joy of participating in hockey seemed a distant possibility when the Ontario Human Rights Commission marched into Huntsville to investigate the alleged discrimination against this eleven year old hockey player.

Sex discrimination in sport is not new, but because there have been surprisingly few female athletes or sport enthusiasts involved in the women's movement, this area of discrimination has gone relatively unnoticed.

The early Olympic and Commonwealth Games excluded women from participation simply because they were female. In the contemporary Olympics, women are prevented from participation in track events longer than 1500 metres because of beliefs about women's stamina which are not supported by scientific data.

There are many examples of how certain expectations of females in sport are reinforced. A young girl who wants to play soccer may be told it is against the rules. A female golfer may be faced with restricted weekend hours so that her game does not interfere with that of the businessman who has 'worked all week.' Like women in the labour force, girls and women in sport can seek redress in the human rights legislation enacted by Canada's provincial legislatures and federal government. In order to use these legal remedies, however, women must be familiar with them.

The federal legislation prohibits discriminatory practices by employers or landlords under federal jurisdiction. The statutes enacted by Canada's provincial governments vary from province to province but are basically similar. The legislation prohibits discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodation, public services and facilities on

the basis of sex, colour, age, religious beliefs, ancestry or place of origin. For example, a woman could bring a complaint against a landlord who refused to rent her an apartment because of her sex, since she is a member of a "protected group" as defined by the statute, and housing is an area of discrimination covered by the legislation.

The legislation is easy to use. The person who has been discriminated against files a complaint with the Human Rights Commission in her province. The first step taken by the Commission is an investigation. If the complaint is found to be valid, the Commission has a discussion with the parties in the hope of effecting an acceptable arrangement between the parties to stop the discrimination. If no settlement can be reached,

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**Human rights legislation may be used by girls who have been discriminated against in sports. Unfortunately complaints have not always been filed when they are justified.**

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a Board of Inquiry is appointed. This Board gives the parties to the complaint an opportunity to be fully represented by counsel and to present evidence. If the Board finds a complaint to be justified, it reports its findings to the Commission and may recommend action to solve the problem. The Board has power to recommend any course of action. The Commission, now armed with the Board's report, again tries to settle the matter to the satisfaction of both parties. If this is unsuccessful, the matter is then reviewed by a court which is empowered to order that the breaching party stop the discrimination, refrain from such discriminatory practices in future, and make the appropriate compensation to the individual who has suffered a loss from the discrimination. The breaching party may also be fined by the court. The procedures utilized by the provinces' Human Rights Commissions are aimed at solving the problem at any stage and guaranteeing the most effective action.

In the United States, in addition to

civil rights legislation available to females in sport, there are remedies provided by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. This legislation may be a potential model for Canadian educators in physical education and sport. On the other hand, Canadians may want to question the desirability of such comprehensive legislation.

Title IX is modelled after other U.S. civil rights legislation and guarantees equal rights for women in education. It provides that no person may, on the basis of sex, be excluded from an education programme or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Since almost all American schools receive federal funds, the impact of Title IX has been enormous, and is nowhere more evident than in school athletics. Only four per cent of the equal education package concerns itself with athletics, but, this four per cent has sparked the greatest controversy. Equal opportunity in the academic area was one thing, but equal opportunity on the playing field proved to be quite a different matter. There have been debates, forums, attacks and counter-attacks to have athletics removed from the legislation, or at least to have the legislation modified. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (N.C.A.A.) went so far as to submit a legal memorandum to the President of the United States in an effort to have certain exemptions made in the legislation. Despite all the arguments, the legislation was passed without modifications.

The new law requires certain programming by educational institutions in contact and non-contact sports and by doing so it has provided increased opportunity for the female competitor. The girl who once practised at odd hours and in older facilities is now guaranteed equality in supplies, equipment, practice times, schedules, medical needs, publicity, and other areas. If there is a breach of the legislation registered with the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, an investigation will be held into the alleged discrimination. Non-compliance with the law may mean a withdrawal of federal assistance, which

constitutes a large part of any school's budget.

Dr. Peg Burke, Associate Professor of Physical Education at the University of Iowa, discussed the implications of Title IX in Edmonton at the Sixth Commonwealth Conference on Sport, Physical Education, and Recreation. Dr. Burke has been active in the pursuit of equal opportunities for women in university athletics in the United States. She discussed the advantages and disadvantages of Title IX and, although she applauded the changes, she expressed regret at the necessity of such legislation. She stated that, in a country founded on the principle of justice for all, it was sad that Title IX was required to guarantee justice for females. She also felt that such educational needs should be dealt with by educators not by law makers and judges. Title IX is useful to Canadians as a potential model. Problems arise, however, because it guarantees equality by requiring compliance to the present sport standards. Perhaps, as Dr. Burke indicated, women will not want to duplicate men's programmes.

There have been a growing number of cases of alleged sex discrimination in sport. The little league baseball cases in the United States have their counterpart in Canadian soccer and hockey disputes. A case of sex discrimination arises when a female is denied the opportunity to compete on an all boys team although she is qualified to make the team. If a female qualifies under the neutral criteria normally used to select a team, may she be excluded solely because she is female? There have been a number of reported cases involving girls wishing to compete in soccer, hockey and softball. The first Human Rights Board of Inquiry case involved a nine year old girl named Bannerman in Waterford, Ontario, who wished to play softball on the town's representative team. The result was that

the Board ordered integration of the league for girls eleven years and younger. In the fall of 1977 Gail Cummings' case received national publicity. She enlisted the support of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, alleging sex discrimination by the Ontario Minor Hockey Association (O.M.H.A.).

Gail Cummings played house-league hockey in Huntsville, Ontario, and like others in the house-league, she had an opportunity to play on the town's all-star team. She tried out and was one of the youngsters chosen. The members of this representative team were required to register with the O.M.H.A. Gail Cummings registered and was rejected because the O.M.H.A.'s constitution did not include females as potential members. Gail stopped playing on the representative team and a complaint was made to the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

The report of the Board of Inquiry clearly showed that the girl was an outstanding athlete who was prevented from playing because of her sex. In addition to having a membership category only for boys, the objective of the O.M.H.A. is to govern and promote hockey for boys in Ontario. The rules allowed Gail to play in the Huntsville integrated boys and girls' house-league but this was the highest level of competition available to her. She was talented enough to make the representative team but was ineligible to play because of her sex.

This issue was reviewed by a Human Rights Board of Inquiry. The difficulty in the case, as in the majority of human rights cases, was the interpretation of the law. The board had to determine whether Gail's complaint was an area of discrimination covered by the Ontario Human Rights Code. They found she was part of a protected group because the alleged discrimination was based on sex. It was also necessary to determine whether she had been discriminated against in an area included in the legislation. Section 2 of the Ontario Human Rights Code provides that no person shall "deny to any person or persons, the accommodation, services, or facilities available in any place to which the public is customarily admitted." What the Board of Inquiry needed to determine was whether the O.M.H.A. denied such services or facilities to Gail Cummings because she is female. It was found that there was such a denial because arenas, which are often built wholly or in part through public subscription are facilities to which the public is invited either as a spectator or a participant. The Board also decided that there was an element of public availabil-

ity to the O.M.H.A.'s services. Therefore, Gail was found to be discriminated against in an area covered by the Ontario Human Rights Code. The Board ordered the O.M.H.A. to accept the Cummings' registration if she met the relevant standards of competence to play on the team and further ordered the O.M.H.A. to register any female player who met the qualifying standards of a representative team. This decision goes further than the Bannerman case as the board's inquiry here ordered integration of the programme at all ages. Both decisions have been appealed by the sports organizations concerned.\*

These two cases show how human rights legislation may be used to assist individuals suffering discrimination in sports. Unfortunately, complaints are not always filed when they are justified. There have also been instances where board members of athletic organizations have resigned rather than allow females to participate. In 1974, little league baseball organizers in Ridgefield, New Jersey stated that they would quit rather than comply with a court order to integrate their programmes. Similarly, a member of an area soccer council resigned in Montreal when a ten year old girl was allowed to play in a tournament.

The Cummings' decision, the intensity with which the Human Rights Commission pursued the matter, and the national publicity the case received, are indicative that tolerance of sex discrimination is decreasing. The decision of the court demonstrated that outlandish conditions and backward thinking are no longer acceptable under the law.

It is unfortunate that youngsters must seek remedies in the courts to obtain their rightful place in sport. Although the Human Rights Legislation provides a legal solution, increased awareness as a result of these first cases may lessen the need for further legal involvement. Further legislation, like Title IX in the United States, may not be the solution. What is necessary is a level of consciousness and rationality so that sex discrimination ceases to be an issue in sport.

\* Since this article was written, a decision was made by the Ontario Court of Appeal in the Gail Cummings vs. OHMA case. The OMHA's appeal was accepted by the Court on the grounds that the OMHA was not a public service. This decision sets a precedent that is likely to affect similar cases now pending in Nova Scotia and Manitoba.

*Helen Greaves has been a sports consultant for the government of Alberta, was active in university basketball, and is presently president of the Alberta Basketball Association. She is a third year law student and is on the staff of the Alberta Law Review.*



She shoots! she scores!

## Legal Notes

*In this section of the Law Column we intend to provide a brief overview of existing and proposed legislation and cases of particular interest to women. We hope to provide insights into and interpretations of laws not readily available elsewhere. The material is meant to enable readers to become more aware of the state of the law in areas including property, labour, immigration, human rights, divorce and so on. The information, we hope, will help you to channel your energies where you see the need.*

*We welcome contributions or requests for information. Please address all correspondence to the Editor, Law Column, Branching Out.*

## LABOUR LAWS: LAWS FOR WORKERS?

With women forming at least 50% of the postal work force in Canada and a significant percentage of other unions we should be paying close attention to our labour laws. While there are some indications of progress in protective provisions for women employees, the general trend seems to be towards the protection of management rights not workers' rights. Of particular significance is recent legislation which prohibits strikes by postal workers.

Unions are organizations of working people with the legal right to bargain on behalf of the workers for changes in working conditions (hours, safety provisions), for salary increases and for other benefits. Unions also provide representation for workers in other contexts, for example, in removing discrimination in the work place. The right to form unions has a long history; it was first won by working people in England after the industrial revolution had resulted in economic inequality between employer and employees.

Unions were an attempt to give some power to employees to decide their terms of employment, including working conditions, wages, and job security. Employers held all the power to decide these things at the time of the industrial revolution; workers, after decades of concerted effort, convinced the government to pass legislation protecting the interests of workers and allowing the unionization of workers so that they could protect their own interests.

In Canada, the federal Parliament and each province has passed labour legislation of two types. The first is employee welfare legislation which regulates hours of work, safety provisions, minimum wage, and so forth. As well, each has a Labour Act which governs the collective bargaining process and union matters generally. Labour legislation has been based on three principles: employees are free to join the labour union of their choice; unions are free to bargain collectively with management; and, labour and management should be free to use economic sanctions (strikes, lockouts) without interference from the courts.

These three principles have been altered by other statutes and by the continuously larger role that the courts have begun to play (in granting injunctions and back-to-work orders).

However, in order to bargain most effectively, unions have always felt the need to be completely separate from management and government influence. Freedom from management interference has been a legal right, as the concept of "unfair labour practices" forces both union and management to avoid interfering with each other.

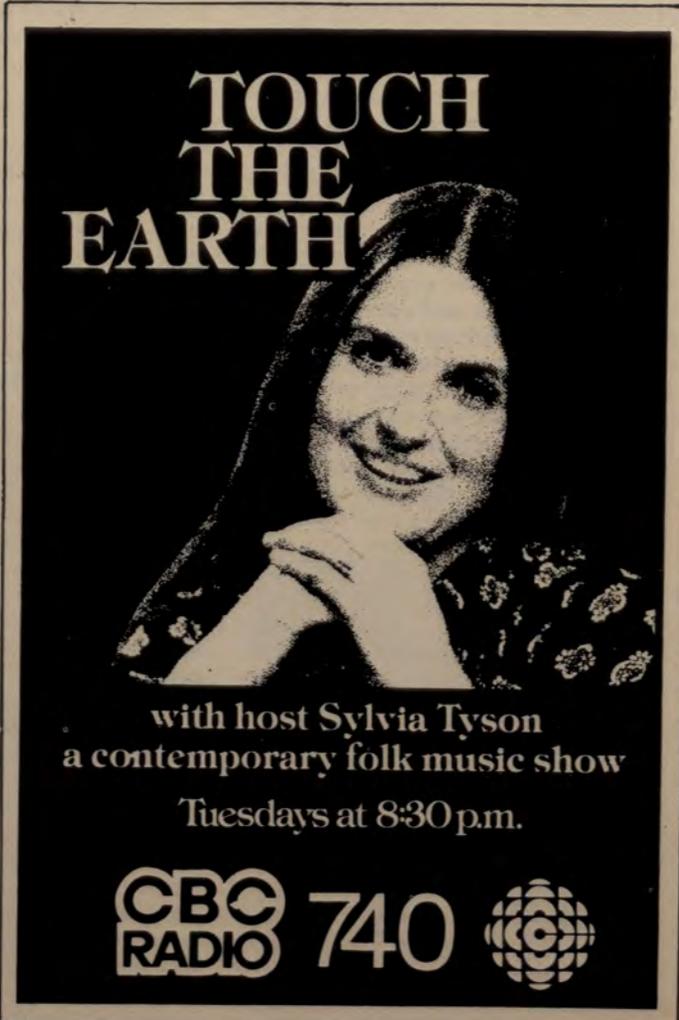
The idea of freedom from government influence has not gained as much acceptance, and is being further eroded by several new laws. In Quebec, Law 45 prohibits the striking of postal workers. It is popularly known as the "so-called anti-scab law", but it also attempts to cut down the unions'

independence from government influence (here the government also serves as management). The law allows the government to intervene in union elections in Quebec, and disallows strikes in "essential services".

Under consideration in the federal Parliament is Bill C-45 which would nationally prohibit the striking of postal workers "during the period of the dissolution of Parliament" (during an election). This would take away the democratic right of postal workers to help decide their working conditions by taking away their use of the economic sanction of striking. Law C-28, another federal law, allows strikes to be prohibited or deferred in the public service.

One bright spot in this picture of increasing government control has been the recent landmark decision in British Columbia which allowed the unionization of bank employees on a bank-by-bank basis. Many occupations employing women almost exclusively have not had the benefit of union representation; working conditions have remained poor and salaries low. With this decision, the last obstacle to the legal and comparatively easy unionization of restaurant workers, bank and office employees, and other employees in similar work situations has been removed, in British Columbia anyway. Women across Canada should work toward obtaining similar judgments in their provinces.

researched by Doris Wilson  
and Marlene Kadar



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# Can This Sport be Liberated?

by Jolanta Samler and Frankie Ford

What happens when women venture onto the turf of a traditionally male sport? When we, with some friends, formed a women's rugby team in Edmonton our experiences included the exhilaration of playing a vigorous game, but they also included humiliating treatment by male rugby players and misunderstandings with our female teammates.

Rugby is a game played by two teams of 15 players each. A full game runs an exhausting 90 minutes with a break at half-time. No substitutes are allowed. The object is to pass the ball down the field to the opponent's touch line which results in a score of two points and the opportunity to score an additional four points with a successful kick (convert).

When the game begins, the ball is passed by players called "forwards" to players called "backs" who move up the field in formation, passing the ball to each other. The ball may be passed to the side or backwards, but not forward. It may also be kicked. Members of the opposite team may only attempt to tackle the person who has the ball. When the play breaks down, the forwards regain possession of the ball and protect it by a series of techniques called "rucks", "malls" and "the scrum".

There are no stars in rugby. Cooperation with teammates is essential to the object of moving the ball as fast as possible down the field. Fitness is also a necessity, and teams practice once or twice a week at minimum. Shoes with cleats are worn, but there is no protective equipment.

Until recently, rugby has been played only by men, and post-game activities have typically included songs and other behavior that denigrates women. The game originated in the elite public schools of Victorian Britain in which male supremacy was taken for granted. While the game has spread to other countries and is played by grown men, the songs, the excessive drinking and the exhibitionistic antics of rugby players after the game still bear the



stamp of adolescence. The sexist attitudes are most clearly reflected in the words of traditional rugby songs, of which the following is a good example:

Bye, Bye, Blackbird  
Once a boy was no good  
took a girl into a wood  
Bye, bye, blackbird  
Laid her down upon the grass  
Pinched her tits and slapped her ass  
Bye, bye, blackbird  
Took her where nobody else could find  
her  
to a place where he could really grind  
her  
rolled her over on her front  
shoved his penis right up her cunt  
Black-bird bye, bye.  
But this girl was no sport  
took her story to a court  
Bye, bye, blackbird  
Told her story in the morn,  
All the jury had a horn  
Blackbird, Bye, bye.  
Then the judge came to his decision  
This poor sod got 18 months in prison,  
so next time, boy, do it right,  
stuff her cunt with dynamite  
Blackbird, bye, bye.

In Edmonton, the most notorious of the rugby "celebrations" are the beer fests held annually on the long weekend in May. Rugby teams from other provinces and from the United States come to the city to join in the "spirit of rugby". Each fest is remembered primarily for the rowdy drinking binges which often result in vulgar displays such as men stripping naked and brandishing their limp penises to beer-sodden appreciative crowds. Women present at the festival may suffer the indignity of being stripped, or they may be left to sit quietly in the corner until the men want to be driven home. Various other activities such as "boat races" — a type of drinking competition — are organized to see how much beer participants can drink in the shortest time. Prizes are usually cases of beer. Molson's and Labatt's are in keen competition to promote beer sales for these rugby events because the players constitute a large consumer group.

For a woman venturing into this scene, the obstacles to maintaining her own identity are obvious and formidable.



Women are included at rugby games and parties as wives and girlfriends of the rugby players, not as individuals in their own right. In the spring of 1977, however, some of us formed a women's rugby team because we wanted to experience team sport as participants, not as spectators. The team initially consisted of a group of enthusiasts who met weekly at a school yard to begin training and to learn the rudiments of the game. A few men who appreciated the game for the skill it involves supported our efforts and coached us. We became a skillful team of women rugby players. After practice, we met at a friend's apartment to socialize and share common feelings.

When we learned of another women's team in Missoula, Montana we had an incentive to create a woman's rugby club. A club charter was necessary so that we could hold raffles and other functions to raise travel money. Once we made the decision to create a club, events progressed quickly with the formation of an executive and the eventual incorporation of a club charter in 1978.

When the Rockers, as the team was called, played its first game, there were mixed reactions from the male spectators. Some men booed and jeered, making comments such as "This should be a good laugh", and "Who the hell do they think they are, trying to play rugby?" After the game, however, many of the men seemed impressed by what they had seen. We felt some satisfaction that we had gained their acceptance on the field as capable players.

The Rocker's executive made it a

priority to contact other women's teams throughout the west. Games were played against the Missoula team, a team in Red Deer, and the Happi Hookers from Saskatoon. The Rockers established a reputation as a winning team which played a skillful, nonaggressive game. Coming off the rugby field after having supported one another in a tiring game, we felt comradeship and warmth with our teammates.

Unfortunately we were not able to change the attitudes of the male players who continued to treat us as inferiors and sex objects. At social gatherings we overheard comments such as, "Don't bother with her, she's married", while during games and practices we were subjected to rude comments from the sidelines about our bodies. At a game we played in Red Deer, the men we thought had come to support us began cheering our opponents when they saw we were going to lose.

We also came to realize that our outlook was different from that of our teammates who didn't seem interested in having the close relationships which we considered important to the solidarity of the team. Other members of the

#### "Line Out"

When the ball leaves the field a "line out" is formed to get the ball back in play. The ball is thrown in by the team that did not knock it out and the teams form two lines. The team that catches the ball gains possession and play continues.

executive organized games between the Rockers and men's rugby clubs, a practice with which we disagreed since we were so obviously unequal to the men in strength. In our opinion, the men's clubs enjoyed playing against the women because they regarded the matches as a joke. Even in our games against other women's teams, we found several clubs extremely aggressive in their playing style. They seemed willing to adopt the violence and "dirty tackles" of male rugby games which the Rockers had deliberately avoided. When the teammates who did not share our views gradually began to ostracize us, we decided to resign rather than try to impose our ideas on the other players.

Perhaps we were naive to think we could play a sport like rugby without being the victim of attitudes which are traditionally part of the game. Perhaps if we had played our matches without male spectators, and if we had not socialized with male rugby players, the women's team could have developed a strong identity on its own. We did feel that the team succeeded in demonstrating the ability of women to play rugby. What remains is the need for better relationships between men and women who enjoy active team sports.

*Jo Samler and Frankie Ford immigrated to Canada from England and South Africa respectively. Both now live in Edmonton. As a result of their experiences described in this article they would like to form a CR group with other feminists. Interested women should contact Frankie Ford at 11933 - 92 Street, Edmonton.*



photos by Graham Ford

# books

## ABOUT "BOOKS"

by Aritha van Herk

As book review editor of *Branching Out*, I have become aware of a point of view which states that by reviewing only books written by women, or books of particular interest to women, we are guilty of that worst of all crimes, sexism! This accusation comes from the general public rather than our faithful readers, but as book review editor and a woman writer, I feel compelled to answer that charge. At the same time, it is perhaps useful to clarify the aims and objectives of this column.

First of all, I do not intend to diminish my male counterparts. Every writer of a serious book deserves to be given serious consideration by a good reviewer, whether that writer is a woman or a man. Every magazine, however, has the privilege of adopting a particular stance. As a feminist magazine, *Branching Out* has a policy of reviewing only books written by women, or books of particular interest to women (occasionally a male writer falls into this category). This is not policy merely for the sake of policy. There are some very good reasons for this approach.

A book review section that reviews only books by women is performing a particular and much-needed service. If you read book review columns regularly, by now you will have noticed that the majority of books reviewed are by men. Granted, men publish more books than women do, but even if one takes the statistics into account, there appears to be an imbalance. Column after column that I have read in Canadian newspapers and magazines review primarily books that are written by men, and I've seen plenty of sections where not a single female writer was reviewed. Well, perhaps there were no books by women published that week or that month, but I doubt it.

Of course, high profile books by women are generally given plenty of attention. I am sure every daily/weekly/monthly in Canada reviewed *A Casual Affair* and *Two Women*. So did we. I am concerned about the other books, the books that are interesting and important to women but not interesting and important enough to get the attention they deserve. We try to cover these books — as fairly and as honestly as possible. Even then, it is impossible for us to deal with all the books by women that do deserve attention. There simply isn't room, so it is necessary to be selective.

Given the fact that we can't even manage to review all the books by women that we would like to, should we be worried about not reviewing books by men? I don't think so. Why usurp precious space when we don't have enough space to do justice to women? And why usurp precious space to repeatedly protest the whole idea of woman as mother/saint/whore that is so prevalent in writing by men?

Our writings are said to be a reflection of our identity and, as women, it is certainly more useful for us to observe, measure, and judge ourselves than to rail against our image as projected through male eyes. We can learn and grow far more by studying our own writing. Again, I am not saying that writing

by men has nothing to say or nothing to teach, but male writers simply do not have much to offer women as feminists. For that particular image of ourselves, it is more illuminating to consult the writings of women. I am not advocating the particular brand of self-pitying narcissism ("poor me — sniffle, sniffle") that some female writers indulge in. Our writing must be honest but courageous, historically accurate but far-sighted, truthful but optimistic. If it is true that our writing defines our identity, it is extremely important that it serve as a guideline and a signpost for us.

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In our book review section we attempt to evaluate, from a feminist point of view and in an original and thought-provoking way, serious books that are relevant to women. We try to print reviews that are more than simply an opinion — intelligent, coherent reviews that possess some wit and point and entertain as well as inform. We review fiction and poetry books according to their literary merit and we evaluate other books according to how well they achieve their ostensible purpose. We certainly do not expect our readers to agree with every review we publish. Although we strive to print only well-expressed and informed opinions, book reviewers are individuals and their opinions are not absolute. We welcome your suggestions and reactions to our book reviews and the book review section in general.

Finally, I reiterate my feeling that, given the service we perform by reviewing only the writings of women, we need not apologize for excluding books by men. We are correcting an imbalance.

## A SEPARATE JUSTICE

review by Diana S. Palting

*The Life and Death of Anna Mae Aquash*, by Johanna Brand. Published by James Lorimer and Co., Toronto, 1978. Paper, \$6.95.



A woman's body was found at the bottom of a cliff on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota during an unseasonable thaw Feb. 24, 1976. The woman was Anna Mae Pictou Aquash — a Canadian Indian active in the American Indian Movement who had participated in the 1973 occupation of Wounded Knee. The FBI report listed the cause of death as exposure. Not satisfied with the official version of her death, friends and family requested that her body be exhumed and an independent autopsy be held.

Dr. Peterson, the St. Paul pathologist representing Anna Mae's family, found a very obvious bullet wound in the back of her head. The wound had been washed and powdered, but the bullet remained lodged in her left temple, causing a noticeable bulge. Dr. Peterson found it difficult to believe that anyone could overlook a wound of this magnitude. It was also difficult to understand why her hands had been severed at the wrists. The official explanation was that the hands were needed to obtain positive identification. However, the usual procedure is to slice only the ends of each fingertip and insert them into the appropriate finger of a rubber glove and forward this to a lab for analysis. It was unclear, too, why she had been hurriedly buried the first time without a positive identification, even though the identification would have been easy if a description of the body had been circulated. Anna Mae was widely known and had been missing for two months when her body was found. It

is also improbable that some of the FBI men who arrived immediately at the site of discovery were unable to identify Anna Mae. She had been a fugitive from the FBI since Nov. of 1975 (for failure to appear in court on a fabricated charge) and had been detained and interrogated by them on several occasions. The body had decomposed, but not sufficiently to deter identification, nor to prevent fingerprints from being taken in the usual way. The official record still lists death from exposure — but Anna Mae Aquash died from a bullet shot at close range into the back of her head. And the circumstances surrounding her death force the conclusion that the FBI was anxious to hide the truth.

Johanna Brand, the Canadian journalist who researched this book for more than a year, still does not know who murdered Anna Mae Aquash. But the illegal activities and the active complicity of the FBI, the CIA, the RCMP, and various government officials in the destruction of the American Indian Movement is well-documented. This book is necessary reading for those who wish to understand the tactics used by political police to stifle organized dissent and to discredit dissenters. It is also necessary reading for those who suffer delusions about freedom of speech and association.

All the facts are available to allow a very sensationalized, "yellow journalism" approach to the writing of this book. The situation is a perfect one for muckrakers. But Johanna Brand resists that temptation. Her writing style is spare and objective. Her sources are government papers, newspaper articles, extensive interviews both by herself and by Kevin McKiernan (who reported on AIM activities for four years for Minnesota Public Radio). The interviewers were with law and Bureau of Indian Affairs officials, lawyers, family members, friends, and residents of Pine Ridge reservation. Ms. Brand discusses the three theories about the murder: that Anna was murdered by the FBI for her activities in AIM and her refusal to cooperate with them in divulging information about other members of AIM, that Aquash was killed by AIM members themselves because they were suspicious of her involvement with the FBI (although this kind of action had no precedence in the organization), and that she was killed by a gang of thugs hired by the corrupt Pine Ridge tribal chairman, Richard Wilson. There were 54 violent deaths on the reservation in the two and one-half years following the Wounded Knee occupation. Most were members of AIM or their supporters. In late January, within days of Anna Mae's death, Wilson's "goon squad" had fired

into the homes of AIM supporters on the reservation, had firebombed one house while BIA police stood by watching, and had fatally shot Byron De Sersa, grandson of the famed Sioux spiritual leader, Black Elk.

Canadian government officials have been reluctant to press for a more complete investigation. A Canadian citizen was murdered in a foreign country. Ordinarily further action would be taken and a full investigation called for. Information brought together in *The Life and Death of Anna Mae Aquash* suggests that the mysterious involvement of the RCMP in events surrounding Aquash's death may account for government neglect of this case.

What emerges from this book is the realization that it doesn't matter who fired the actual shot that killed Anna Mae Aquash. Anna Mae, a Micmac from Nova Scotia and mother of two, died because she was close to the leadership in an organization committed to change. AIM is a civil rights organization and the FBI, in its self-appointed role as a political police force, has developed ways of dividing and destroying these organizations in an attempt to render them powerless. The tactics are often illegal, but extremely effective.

The issue Ms. Brand is writing about is that of a separate justice — one for whites and another for Indians; one for lawmen and another for those whom they are supposed to protect. What is at stake are the rights of any persons who dissent from the viewpoint of those in power.



Diana S. Palting is an Edmonton photographer and photography editor for *Branching Out*.

## COMPONENTS LEFT TO READER

review by Karen Lawrence

*Mermaids and Ikons: A Greek Summer*, by Gwendolyn MacEwan. House of Anansi Press Ltd., Toronto, 1978. Paper, \$5.95.

*Mermaids and Ikons* is a kind of literary mongrel — part diary, part poetry, part narrative; the publisher's blurb describes it as MacEwan's first 'non-fiction book.' It represents the writer's attempt to make order out of her experiences in Greece; and though it may satisfy her personal requirements for ordered experience, it is too much of a *mélange* to satisfy mine.

A large part of the problem is the book's form. Sections of it have been printed elsewhere, in other forms, and they simply do not cohere as a book. MacEwan shifts from political commentary to fantasy to anecdote to purely descriptive writing in a dizzying manner. Sometimes this technique works, giving us a sensual view of the people and country which is almost cinematic in scope and texture. But when it doesn't work, it thuds heavily; reading some parts of this book is like opening a crammed closet and having a heap of odds and ends spill out. Much of *Mermaids and Ikons* is essentially fragments of a travel diary, spruced up a bit; probably everyone has kept such a record while on a trip, and coming across it years later thought "I really should do something with this." What MacEwan does is tries to make everything magical. While doing things every tourist does, she has phenomenal insights — she "broods over the evils of Time", she has visions, she constantly recalls lines from certain poems which really intrude upon her narrative, and seem as though they must have been tacked on when she was re-creating the experience to give it more significance and depth. They do not seem *organic* (in terms of the story) as some of her own poems do; her poems fit her narrative much more authentically than the works of others.

In short, it is difficult to believe that the time she spent in Greece consisted of one epiphany after another. The tone of the book would have us believe that; darker mysteries are much hinted at. Her reactions seem exaggerated, her descriptions florid, sometimes downright embarrassing, as the following bit on the Hermes of Praxiteles (which she had to see "before I could even breathe"):

My previous conceptions of the male body went up in flame, smoke, or whatever. I saw the purest form of a man rejoicing in itself, totally at one with itself, almost sickeningly pleased



Gwendolyn MacEwan

with itself. The big toes drove me mad, until I got to the ankles, at which point I was on the verge of an epileptic fit. I proceeded to the calves, telling myself that I must take one day at a time. Wisely, I overlooked the knees, because I realized that I must save my strength for the thighs. Encountering the thighs, I gasped at the delicate veins insinuating their way through the marble flesh.

I walked slowly round and round, carefully avoiding the torso and its components. (The components are left to the reader, as they should be. Suffice it to say that they composed.) I proceeded to the ribs, then tried to ignore the shoulder-blades, which were exquisite wings.

I guess you had to be there . . .

I give MacEwan credit for attempting to enword in a unique way the experience of having been in a foreign country. Especially in Greece, one feels awe for history and the very *oldness* of things. Gwendolyn MacEwan has a real feeling for this. Parts of the book endeared themselves to me because they were about places I had been; I wonder, then, if the book's appeal would be limited for a reader who had never been to Greece. MacEwan dives deeply into the nature of history and the nature of (her) reality. But when she surfaces, it's hard to believe that's what she saw.

Karen Lawrence lives in Onoway, Alberta. She has a B.A. in English literature from the University of Windsor and a Master's in English from the University of Alberta.

## THE NECESSITY FOR INVOLVEMENT

review by Betty Mardiros

*Audacity To Believe*, An autobiography by Sheila Cassidy. Published by William Collins and World Publishing Co. Ltd., 1978. Cloth, \$8.95.

People who have been following the dramatic and traumatic events in Chile since 1970 will find this book a very valuable addition to the mass of material published before and since the military coup in that country in 1973. Its greatest value, however, will be for those many Canadians who have not been much aware of the significance of those events. In Sheila Cassidy's personal and honest recounting of her experiences before, during and after the coup, she tells the moving and often appalling story of the struggle to achieve a fairer distribution of the necessities of life by millions of Chilean people — and the destruction of all those achievements and hopes for a better life by those whose privileges were thus threatened.

Sheila Cassidy, a British doctor who specialized in plastic surgery, by her own admission knew little or nothing about Chile, spoke no Spanish and was so bored by politics that she had never, at the age of 35, bothered to vote. In December 1971 she moved to Santiago to join her friend, Consuela, a Chilean woman doctor with whom she had worked and lived in England.

Consuela had, like many medical students in Chile, been forced to face the reality of the bad housing and malnutrition of the majority of Chileans, and was acutely aware that this state of unfair distribution of wealth was tolerated by most middle-class Chileans and actively maintained by others. She returned to her country as a passionate supporter of the Popular Unity Government which was elected in 1971, with Dr. Salvador Allende — also a medical doctor — as its President.

However, Consuela's support for the Allende reforms and programs was largely passive, in terms of political activity, and her efforts were confined to medical work in the poorer sections of Santiago, where she worked happily in an emergency hospital treating the "rotos" — the broken ones. Here Sheila Cassidy also attained work, after many problems, including the necessity of learning the language and going through a long process of legitimizing her British medical status.

It was during this year, 1972-73, when Cassidy worked under the Allende Government that her identification with the reforms being instituted began to develop. She was appalled by the



woodcut by Diana Bain Brecker

callousness of many of her medical colleagues who supported the "Professionals' Strike" to protest against any further development of public health schemes, leaving their desperately ill patients, including many children, with no medical attention. Particularly disturbing to her too, were the nightly demonstrations of the "Pots & Pans" Brigade — middle class housewives who banded together and marched through the streets banging their kitchen utensils, because they said they had nothing to put in them.

As Cassidy points out, with some bitterness:

"The fact that they could have filled their saucepans with chicken, mutton or any of one of a dozen varieties of fish, was immaterial. They wanted beef and did not care that if there was no beef for them it was because other Chileans were buying it! Chileans who for generations had eaten so badly that they were shorter in stature . . . It is well documented that the heights and weights of the children of the upper class residential area of Santiago are the same age for age as those children in North America. The heights and weights of corresponding ages in the peripheral areas of Santiago fall progressively away from the average as the areas become poorer".

And so the polarization of Chilean society intensified. Although President Allende, in March 1973, had been democratically re-elected with a higher vote than at his first term, the discontent of the privileged, the anger of the multi-nationals over the nationalization of copper, the perfidy of the country's military generals, supported by CIA money, led to the bloody massacre of September 11th, 1973, the murder of

Allende, and the subsequent destruction of all human and civil rights in Chile.

Cassidy's account of the coup makes sickening reading, but the events are recounted by a perceptive observer. Her own arrest, while visiting a priest's house in 1975 for treating the wound of a revolutionary leader, and the detailed account of her tortures and her experiences in jail, are vividly and courageously described. She was released in December '75 and deported to Britain. Neither the book nor the biographical material on the cover tell what she is doing now — though most readers, in view of the deep religious feelings she expresses, will surmise that she has probably entered a religious order.

Whatever or wherever she is now, Sheila Cassidy has done a great service in telling us about the situation in Chile today. By writing her book she has increased our understanding of the massive problems of the people living in the Third World. The conditions in Chile and in the other countries of South America cannot continue for much longer, nor can they be ignored by the people of North America. The destruction of the Allende plan for "a peaceful road to socialism" raises very serious questions and, in all probability, bloody alternatives.

By reading books such as *Audacity to Believe*, we increase our understanding of those problems and the necessity to support the struggles that lie ahead.

*Betty Mardiros is the president of the Edmonton NDP Metro Council and has been a long time activist in the CCF and NDP. She is a member of the Edmonton Committee for Solidarity with Democratic Chile.*

## SYLLABLES OF PAIN, SYLLABLES OF STONE

review by Nancy Schelstraete

*Crow's Black Joy*, by Lorna Uher.  
Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1978. Cloth,  
\$10.95, paper \$5.95.

*Crow's Black Joy*, a second book of poetry by Lorna Uher of Saskatchewan, is not a pleasant or comforting book to read. After closing it for the first time, the images I remembered were shocking, even repulsive: a bed-ridden woman, "her burns yellowing blistered draining"; a mother of seven dead children, "all healthy babies/ that shrivelled smiling/ in my arms/ clutching my fingers/ with white salamander hands"; a woman who has been rejected by her lover and who now hides under his bed and uses "the throbbing tail of a dragonfly" as a dildo, whereupon she says "a veined double-winged insect/ will squeeze from my cunt". Uher tells us, usually in the first person and with uncompromising detail, what it is like to inhabit the skull of a person whose perception is often twisted or diseased.

In "Segmented", for instance, we are confronted with the image of a "fat milky worm" which lives behind the speaker's retina, devouring the warm and happy images — "the sweet sugar of gold finches/ the yellow of love" — and allowing only the negative ones to "filter past his mouth and seep into my brain". The worm is an effective symbol of the perception of a person consumed by fear. Unfortunately, however, Uher allows the image to deteriorate into the grotesque:

But I must hide his presence  
until that glaring morning  
as I sit on the bus and stare  
at the eyes across the aisle,  
the worm will slither from his shelter  
and poke his head  
out of my nose.

Shock value in poetry can easily be overdone and thereby lose its effectiveness and credibility; let it be muted and it can create a more subtle but far more powerful response. The difference can be illustrated by two poems which deal with a desire to merge and unite with the earth, one of Uher's preoccupations. In "Deep Well" she creates an elaborate but strained conceit in which a stiffened corpse becomes a "flesh drill":

When I die  
do not bury me  
Stretch my arms above my head  
Let my hands sound one silent clap  
Bind them with a leather thong  
Sharpen my nails to ten hard points . . .  
Screw a well bit into the soles of my feet  
Start the machinery

In contrast, the poem "Consummation" presents an almost mystical union between woman and earth. In three carefully balanced stanzas of six, seven, and eight lines, Uher quietly begins the process in the autumn — "The wind began the camouflage" — and continues it in winter and spring — "When snow smoothed the land/ she lay silent and shrouded". The complete fusion occurs in summer, and repeats the image of sharpened nails, but with far more eloquence and naturalness than in the previous poem:

Her nails sharpened to the points  
of Russian thistles.  
Her eyes were sky and water.  
No longer cold no longer quiet  
she was motion she was prairie.

*Crow's Black Joy* contains fifty poems, close to thirty of which deal with self-identity or the man-woman relationship, and about a dozen each with the prairie landscape and with the nature of art. Most of the "I" and "I-you" poems are negative: blackness obliterates joy. There is more maturity, however, both poetically and emotionally, in such poems as "Berry Picking", a narrative which describes the terrors of a prairie farm couple; "Camping", in which Uher evokes the frustration of love's failure by using the metaphor of a fire that refuses to start despite expert technique; and "Exiles", in which a lonely old woman recalls a past love.

Turning to art and landscape poems, two of the most sensitive are "Calligrapher" and "Western Calligraphy". In the former, Uher portrays the lover as artist, "a holy man arranging/ white sea-stones/ in a Japanese garden". She makes fine use of metaphor and rhythm here, showing simultaneously the coolness of the lover/artist and the beauty yet oppressiveness of his stone patterns, word patterns, and patterns of love. In "Western Calligraphy" the artist is faced with the problem of trying to capture prairie images; Uher solves it first by giving a series of short, descriptive word pictures — "CROW: jagged wing" and "EARTH: hawk's shadow" — and then by creating her own brush from the materials offered by the prairie itself: grasses, five coarse hairs from a badger's throat, butterfly wings.

Technically, Uher's poetry is tight and unyielding, with short lines and sharp images well-suited to her major purpose of delineating loneliness and pain. She sometimes finds it difficult to sustain a promising metaphor or an intense mood at length and at will. In some poems ("Skin Swallow", "Present", "Lala") a rather vague conceit becomes unmanageable, and in others ("Backcover Picture", "City Trip", "Commitment") she displays an embar-

assing self-consciousness. Yet on the whole she is already a poet with a good understanding of how to manipulate words. I would wish sometimes for a lighter touch, in fact: a more rhythmic approach, a playfulness with words for the sake of their sound, a little less obvious manipulation.

Uher's poetic voice is serious and almost humorless, emphatic in its assertions. It is a voice that commands rather than persuades: "I want to write/ a stone hammer poem// a poem to cave/ your buffalo skull// a totem poem . . . to bow your head/ snuffling to the ground// a poem that sucks you dry and weary/ into the reddening ball of the sky". And it does leave me dry and weary, all this ultimate longing, all this intensity: "i want you/ to swallow me/ to carry me/ inside deeper than the last memory/ of a mother whose earth-cracked/ fingers clutched your hand/ at the time of her dying".

There is a driven quality to most of Uher's poems that leaves the reader with no freedom, no room to breathe, and it is this as much as the dark and oppressive subject matter which makes her book discomfiting to read. She portrays the body as a "bone closet" and "a mound of flesh/ sweating on the sheets", and the body of a lover is weighty and smothering, leaving "bone prints on my arms" and "burning . . . between my thighs, between the bones of my head". Poetry itself finally becomes oppressive: "poems are peroxide are suicide are bluelips bitten".

At the end, I find myself in the position of the simple man described in the untitled poem "finally he said". He enjoys life but is the pragmatist who wears a rain hat. On the other hand he has the sensitivity to appreciate "Jupiter/ and his perfect moons/ flat and white as the host". He is the voice of sanity and normalcy, and it is to Uher's credit that she allows him his say without mocking his point of view. She thus counterbalances the bulk of her poetry with this matter-of-fact rejection of all its pain and loneliness:

i do not believe in  
suffering i won't scrape  
my wounds with the edges  
of your poems  
or allow your syllables of pain  
to tap on my forehead like water

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## BOOKS FOR MOTHER

review by Donna Rae

*My Mother/Myself*, by Nancy Friday. Delacorte Press, New York, 1977. Cloth, \$12.95.

*Daughters* (From Infancy to Independence), by Stella Chess, M.D., and Jane Whitbread. Doubleday & Company, Garden City, New York, 1978. Cloth, \$9.50.

*The Mother Book*, by Liz Smith. Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1978. Cloth, \$12.95.

"Sometimes I feel like a motherless child" and who is to blame — well, we all know and have known for fifty years. Nancy Friday, in her extensive study of the relationship between mother and daughter during each stage of the daughter's development, makes passing reference to the notion that to blame mother is to remain passive, is to avoid personal responsibility. However most of the energy of this energetic book focuses

**If one can be unflinchingly honest, a great source of potential strength could be found in this primal bond — mother and daughter who is again mother. If one could only eliminate the lies.**

on an analysis of mother's faults. Are we lousy sex partners? Have we low self-esteem? According to Friday, the majority of women should answer yes to these questions and this includes women who are seemingly successful — here she may be right. Then it follows that mother must not have convinced us that our vaginas are beautiful, nor could she have wished us to be assertive. And, Friday maintains, we are almost certainly doomed to repeat her patterns if we do not understand how pervasive and unconscious they are.

While I have opposed views to those expressed in *My Mother/Myself* in three major areas, I cannot quarrel with Friday about the profound effect of early experience. Nor can I fault her for the lack of provocative insights in any stage of maturation she might be considering from the birth of the baby to the death of the mother. By no means is this book your usual psychology text — it abounds with unusual ways of considering female development. While it is heavily psychoanalytical, Friday is ready to question any established conclusion. And it seems she has done so after long thought and many consultations with leading professionals; not superficially, but after what must have been an excruciating analysis of her own life and that of other women. One of the

pleasures of this book is to read her account of her own probings into repressions, sense of loss, frustrations, and anger at each of the stations. It is also encouraging to conclude with her that if one can be unflinchingly honest, a great source of potential strength could be found in this primal bond — mother and daughter, who is again mother. If one could only eliminate the lies.

One of the first lies, if not the Great Lie, concerns sex. This is not surprising as Friday is the author of the bestselling work on sexual fantasies, *My Secret Garden* and its sequel, *Forbidden Flowers*. It is a subject she has made her own. It seems that mothers are prone to present themselves to their daughters (and sons?) as nonsexual i.e. maternal beings, which inhibits and confuses the daughter in her own sexual development. Hence comes the feeling also that Mother is not authentic. Interesting what? Not only interesting but important ground-breaking probably. Throughout the book Friday's approach to sex is intriguing, if somewhat repetitive. Another observation: there is no exact correlation between sexual pleasure and orgasm. However, Friday's main emphasis is on women taking responsibility for their own sexual responses, for otherwise they do not mature nor really enjoy.

Much of her argument is enlightening; however, once again, there seems to be an assumption that women are deficient — that if they would only *change* there would be happiness. So little is known about women and sex that such studies as Friday's are valuable. I think it should be remembered, however, that we have 'miles to go'. For instance, if women did do the initiating of sexual activity, it might be found that they have periods of voracious, if not indiscriminate, sexual appetite and then long periods of indifference — like other female mammals — both of which periods would be intolerable to most men. In this case, the 'headache' to avoid sex Friday so deplors would be even more in evidence. However, the overriding fact is that humans are social beings responsive to their particular society, which brings me to my main criticism of Friday's work.

Friday lays heavy stress on the concept of symbiosis, normal during infancy between mother and baby, but which, she argues, females have more problems giving up than do males because of their more devious relationship with their mothers and because of mixed messages from their mothers — even from those who think they want their daughters to be forceful and independent. I am not doing justice to her argument which is complicated,

well worked through and well worth reading. But it does almost totally ignore social milieu. While not suggesting a state where one group is oppressed for the sake of stability (in fact, just the opposite because oppressed groups do not really belong anyway), it is true that a stable society, where there is a place for everyone, would absorb most of these yearnings for connection, for symbiosis; they do not just evaporate. But for too many young people, in a fragmented, disintegrating society, there is no place to go. Teen-age suicide is epidemic now as well as cults, violence and the rest. On the other hand, women as a whole are incredibly more self-directed, self-assured and courageous than they were even ten years ago. And Mother is not to blame — it is myopic to think so. Of course, one book cannot do everything and as it happens one of Friday's most exciting chapters concerns the importance of surrogate role models, but the work does give me a feeling of claustrophobia. It also suggests that if one has not been psychoanalyzed, one cannot hope to really understand. The book should be a boon to the psychoanalysis business and just when it has lost so much credibility too.

There are a few other minor areas where I do not feel Friday has been as meticulous as in the remainder of the book. For example, she seems to accept without question mothers' sexual jealousy of their growing daughters. She also says a couple of surprising things about fathers. One, daughters see fathers as *the* source of generosity; two, that unlike women and daughters, men are unthreatened by their sons' competition. She certainly must have known a different set of fathers than I have. I do not wish to detract from the real value I believe this book has, however. I am especially impressed with the section on marriage and the suggestion that women tend to substitute their husbands for their mothers with disastrous results, and I have this interest despite the fact that the word, symbiosis, is repeated here so often it amounts to reification. As you can see, I am ambivalent — a fine psychological term — about the book. But read for yourself and see what you think. *My Mother/Myself* is worth it.

*Daughters* is a baby book with a difference. Here the pronoun is 'she' not 'he' and the intent is to help parents of daughters understand and rear their girls from infancy to twenty-one in as relaxed a setting as the individual temperaments of the youngsters allow. Concurrently, methods are suggested to encourage initiative, assertiveness, and independence. At each stage, the authors are concerned with methods by which a

sense of self-worth can be developed in the individual. Dr. Stella Chase is Chief of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at New York University Medical Centre, and Jane Whitbread is a former editor of the parent/child page of the *New York Times*.

The authors offer practical advice in such matters as masturbation, menstruation, sex education and that painful 'letting go' of adolescence. The key word for this book is practical. For example, they believe young girls can be

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***Daughters* is a baby book with a difference. Here the pronoun is "she" not "he" and the intent is to help parents of daughters understand and rear their girls from infancy to twenty-one.**

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told that handling genitals in public isn't polite. This would allow them to explore that fun thing, their clitoris, without social stigma. Saying nothing would leave them vulnerable to disapprobation they would not understand, but which they would absorb in a more general way and thereby feel diminished. The importance of father's approval is stressed as "he is still the one of importance and substance" in the family, whether we like it or not. If he does not take his daughter and her aspirations seriously, it will be difficult for her to do so. The authors are especially astute in their discussion of high school students. At this age, the daughter is almost adult, knows it, and must be allowed to take responsibility for her own life. College, for example, must be her choice if it is to be of value. On the other hand if a serious problem is suspected it is better to be 'overprotective'. I suppose the authors have encountered too much depression, schizophrenia, etc., to insist on the 'hands off' policy Friday would advise.

While *Daughters* is a more superficial work than *My Mother/Myself* and has the weakness of its genre (which the authors acknowledge) in being schematized with anecdotes which seem to have too easy happy endings, it does deal with fast changing social attitudes and advances discerning ideas on how to cope.

*The Mother Book* purports to be no more than it is — a compendium of quotes on mothers in thirty categories by everyone of note from Nero to Elizabeth Taylor. Liz Taylor's witty and compas-

sionate introductions to the chapters amount to a kind of autobiography and provide continuity. Just one sample — Freud on his mother-in-law: "Because her charm and vitality have lasted so long, she still demands . . . her full share of life — not the share of old age — and expects to be the center, the ruler, an end in herself. Every *man* who has grown old honorably wants the same, only in a woman one is not used to it."

With these three books, we are finally getting perceptive examinations of that harrowing and paradoxical state, motherhood. It is about time.

*Donna Rae is a mother and teaches English at Grant MacEwan Community College. She is working on a book of short stories.*

## MORE BOOKS

review by Dallas Cullen

*The Double Ghetto: Canadian Women and Their Segregated Work*, by Pat Armstrong and Hugh Armstrong. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978. Paper, \$5.95.

*The Double Ghetto's* analysis of Canadian women's work in and out of the paid labour force is potentially useful to the general reader, but it will make for difficult reading.

The Armstrongs begin with a description of the jobs Canadian women hold. Women in the paid labour force have been, and continue to be, clustered into certain industries and occupations. Associated with this segregation are low pay, low status, limited power, and poor working conditions. Despite this, salesclerks, secretaries and other female workers tend to be better off than women in the dominant female occupation — that of housewife. This occupation has no wages, vague terms of employment and long hours.

Why does this segregation occur? The Armstrongs reject arguments based on biology (physical and mental differences) and ideas (attitudes about men and women). Instead, they argue that economic forces determine the nature of women's work. Because of growing economic pressures on the family unit, more and more women are required to enter the paid labour force. But because women are primarily responsible for household tasks (so that their paid job is a second job), they are unable to develop a level of labour force participation and commitment comparable to that of men. Women are thus forced into low paying

positions, a situation which benefits employers, but which further depresses women's aspirations and commitment to paid work.

In actuality, the economic argument encompasses both biology and ideas. The division of family responsibilities, for example, is in part based on biology, and the women's work situation influences both men's and women's perceptions and attitudes about women. Because of this, the Armstrongs' attempt to differentiate the economic approach from

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**The Armstrongs reject arguments that job segregation is based on biology and ideas. Instead, they argue that economic forces determine the nature of women's work.**

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biological determinism and idealism seems forced, and the extent to which they can develop an integrated analysis is somewhat limited.

*The Double Ghetto* appears to have been written primarily for the academic reader. For example, women's occupational segregation is documented by a wealth of statistics that may boggle or frighten off those who are not quantitatively oriented or trained. Similarly, those not familiar with social science techniques and analysis may be angered by the portrayal of the job of housewife. There *are* pleasures in the job, as many women can attest. Despite the problems, the Armstrongs are to be commended for treating the work women do in the home as productive work — and worthy of recognition and analysis in a social science framework.

*Never underestimate the selling power of a woman*, by Dottie Walters. Don Mills, Ont.: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1978. Paper, \$4.95.

Sure-fire tips on how to use your born again Christian power of positive thinking and natural feminine talents to sell anything to anybody. My sure-fire tip: Avoid this book.

Dallas Cullen

*Dallas Cullen teaches in the Faculty of Business Administration and Commerce at the University of Alberta. She has done extensive research of women in the work force in Canada.*

## MISLEADING SOURCE BOOK

review by Candace Savage

*Pioneer Women of Western Canada*, Edited by Margot Smith and Carol Pasternak. Women's Kit Project, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education; Research by Men and Women Unlimited, Calgary. Curriculum Studies 32/ Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

This book is not about the "pioneer women of western Canada." Most of the material deals only with Alberta, and more specifically yet, with Calgary, where the research was done. It focuses not on the "ordinary" women of the period, but on the stars — doctors, writers, politicians, many of them already familiar from other sources. Then too, it extends well beyond the pioneer era to spotlight political developments in the 20's and 30's.

It's a book which concentrates on outstanding women in Alberta from 1900 to 1940. The researchers have uncovered a good deal of interesting material, but unfortunately, their investigations seem to have been rather hasty and superficial (not surprising, perhaps, since the work was done on an OFY grant). Little attempt was made to follow personalities aside from the most obvious and "glamorous" ones, and even less has been done to elucidate trends or issues.

These shortcomings are magnified by the way in which the book is put together. Newspaper articles and documents culled from archive files have been grouped into chapters and reproduced without a word of explanation. The entries have not been edited to reduce repetition, and the order in which they have been placed is sometimes confusing. The section on politics is the worst, with articles on the suffrage campaign (pre-World War I) and the Persons' Case (late 20s), intermingled at random. To make things even more challenging for the neophyte, some of the items carry no dates. This and other imperfections — one article appears on page 88 and again on page 106 — suggest that the book was assembled in a rush.

*Pioneer Women of Western Canada* is designed to be a sourcebook for use in schools. Teachers and students will likely find it a source of frustration. They may use it anyway, *faute de mieux*.

*Candace Savage is co-author of A Harvest Yet to Reap: a history of prairie women. She is presently researching a book on Nellie McClung.*

# films

## Joe & Maxi/Father & Daughter

an interview with Maxi Cohen and Joel Gold

by Judith Mirus

*This unusual documentary by New Yorkers Cohen and Gold will premiere in Canada this November when it will be featured in a major autobiographical film series sponsored by the Art Gallery of Ontario. Called simply Joe & Maxi (Joe not to be confused with Joel), the film also played at this year's prestigious but non-competitive Forum of Young Films in West Berlin. It was there that this interview took place.*

*Joe & Maxi generated controversy in Berlin and will, I expect, be received similarly here. This is because story and style — a kind of participatory cinema verite — combine to demand that the viewer either empathize with the personae or be left squirming. What starts out to be a portrait of a much-respected father becomes a chronicle of a complex, unresolved father-daughter relationship. The intimacy is further compounded by the fact that midway through the shooting it was discovered that Joe, Maxi's father, had cancer. Despite contrary expectations, he died — though not on film — before the picture could be completed; inadvertently, it became a story about a man who is dying.*

*Joe & Maxi was shot almost 5 years ago over a period of many months. It took a long time between then and final production this year to find the money and the emotional distance to do the editing and printing.*

*Melanie Friesen, a former Vancouverite now working in London, participated with me in the interview.*

*Judith Mirus*

Maxi: Ever since I was about 17 I wanted to make a film about my father because I had great admiration for him and I thought he was an incredible character. During the time of the film he was owner of a commercial clam company. He used to be in a trucking company, and one day he decided he wasn't making any money — actually he was just tired of it — so he went into the fishing business. He bought three World War II mine sweepers and tankers, took the old truck parts and invented ways of making the boats into clamming vessels.



Then he bought some old bridges and built a dock all by himself. He had these boats going out catching clams, bringing them over the dock, and his trucks would take them away to be made into chowder.

That gives you an idea what kind of man he was: very inventive, very much into his work, in a sense analogous to an artist. There are very few individuals like that today. I wanted to be like that. My mother brought us up with the ethic that if you do things for other people, you get enjoyment out of life and that's what's important. My father did what he wanted and didn't really care what other people thought.

*How did you and Joel decide to make this film together?*

Maxi: In about 1970 I started working with video because, for a woman, there were not really a lot of opportunities in film unless you wanted to apprentice for years. Joel was also starting at the place where I started to work, the Alternate Media Center. It was the beginning of the movement in America using ½" video — porta pack — and cable television; we got very involved in discovering ways to use this equipment in the community, in making

intimate taped documentaries and participatory television.

One day we were sitting around in the country on Thanksgiving; around 3 in the morning I started telling stories about my family, my father! Then I said that I always wanted to make a movie about him. That's when Joel and I started talking about doing it together. He said, "You're not really making a movie about a character; how can you do that? It's really a film about 'this man is my father' . . ." And Joel began to detect that many of my reasons for wanting to make the movie had to do with the kind of relationship I did *not* have with him. Joel said, "It's really about your relationship, isn't it? You have to be in this movie."

A couple of days before we went down to shoot for the first time I freaked out. I thought: "Oh my god! maybe I should go with a woman." But then I thought, "I can't go with a woman because my father won't pay any attention to me; he'll act out for the other woman who comes down. I was freaked more than anything else not about exposing myself in front of the camera but in front of another human being, especially because I was going to shoot this movie after listening to my

father by myself for a couple of months since my mother's death and taking all kinds of crazy abuse in language. What was most important was that I felt I had to do the film with somebody I could feel comfortable with. I trusted Joel and I loved his work.

*Do you mean that the movie became a way for you to finally come to terms with your relationship to your father?*

Maxi: Yes, in a nutshell. When we began this movie, my idea of him was probably very adolescent.

*In the movie he's your hero. At the same time it's obvious he doesn't accept what you're doing in film and says more or less that it's all "a piece of shit." You don't get in a word to defend yourself.*

Maxi: I wanted him to love and respect me, and I was so anxious for him to pay any attention to me that I would listen to whatever he would tell me because it was my daddy talking. By making the movie I began to see him as a man with failures and complications. Through the process of getting to know him, it gave me a much different sense of myself. In that short period of time I got to see that he wasn't really a mythic hero, that certain things that I felt were my shortcomings were also his. I never would've been able to cope with the fact that he died, had I not had this chance to get to know him. I would still have an idea of him as some artist who created in this little world.

*Would you have tried so hard to get to know him if you weren't making a film about him?*

Maxi: I don't know . . . It feels weird to admit this; but when my mother died and I started spending time with my father alone, incredible things would happen. I'd say, "Let's go out to dinner," and he'd say, "I can't go out with you. You're my daughter." He meant it. He couldn't conceive of being seen out with me because he didn't think of me as a daughter; he couldn't cope with this responsibility of being a parent. When those kinds of things would happen, I was so overwhelmed that I had no objective perspective.

Joel: I think Joe had a difficult time dealing with his daughter; he would've felt really good if he'd thought she was going to get married and into an acceptable life style. For one thing it would take the heat off him, and then maybe whatever things he felt about her would be resolved because she would've fulfilled his idea of the "woman dimension."

Maxi: Before we ever started making this movie, I had this father who talked to me about sex, about women, who wouldn't go out to dinner with me. I was very much under his power, so to

speaking; I was willing to take it. With the camera there, I began to have some kind of perspective. The first time we shot things started to change. The whole idea in making the movie was to get a "daddy," to be able to communicate my feelings towards him.

*The camera became a mediator?*

Maxi: Well, it certainly became a catalyst and gave me a reason to hang around. It was like a witness.

*How did your father feel about being on camera? Towards the end there's a scene on the dock - the last one with him in the film - when he blows up and tells you to stop shooting.\* Is that typical of his attitude?*

Maxi: A couple of days before we finished editing we pulled that scene out just to see what would happen, and without it you don't get a feeling that the filmmaking is bothering him. That time on the dock was just as arbitrary as any other; in fact my father was ambivalent

*Throughout the film?*

Maxi: As he was getting sick. At the beginning it was fine with him. Yesterday in the discussion (after the screening) people talked about that point, and many people who saw the film felt that the shooting of the movie really helped my father, that it was a gift. People have asked us, "Did you shoot after that?" because they felt that the explosion on the dock was very arbitrary.

Joel: For us even to say that we took that scene out shows something about our own apprehensions. Look, it's a very intimate movie. Documentaries themselves present serious problems: when you go into a situation as an alien with a camera, you record what's going on and then you make something out of it for whatever use later. As much as I search my soul, I have no bad feelings about the fact that this movie was made, but I'm very aware of the kinds of issues it brings up as a filmmaking process. For that reason I think that scene in the movie is very important because the people who're making a movie take responsibility for its effect on the situation.

It's important for an audience to realize that Maxi's involvement was an emotional one, even though she was making the movie, and that my involvement was less emotional but the strength of the situation brought me "in-to" it. It would've been a terrible lie to say we weren't affecting nor were we affected by what was going on. In many ways it's the first time that Joe finally says to *anybody*, "Fuck off!" It's the first time that Maxi ever says, "Wait a

\*Shooting was discontinued from this point until after Joe's death.

minute, there's something here I'm fighting for." The filmmaking process separates them; daughter separates from father.

Maxi: My father telling me to stop shooting, *that's* the climax of the movie, not my father dying.

*Even though it was unexpected when you started, the fact that your father does get cancer and does die has to change the nature of the film. This is what a lot of people who didn't like the film simply couldn't handle. Maybe you can never justify this for them, but it seems to me that if the film can be defended then you have to be able to justify shooting in this kind of situation.*

Joel: That's very true. First of all, the doctors assured us that the chemotherapy was working; the man was going to make it, he was working, he was healthy. I mean, if they had told Maxi that Joe was going to die, there wouldn't have been a film. It says in the movie that, "We stopped shooting for a while and my father was ill, with cancer, the doctors operated on him and said that he was going to be all right."

Maxi: The point is most people know beforehand that he's going to die and probably have the same kind of idea my father had, which is, if you have cancer you're going to die. But I never could believe he was going to die.

*Even in the scene where he was having you feel his lumps and talking about it?*

Maxi: Well, on a very deep, gut level, maybe, yes. We called in an editor about a year after we finished shooting to look at the footage, and she said to me: "You never *ever* accepted that fact that your father was going to die." Through her eyes I really did begin to see how I acted.

*Did you have any problems wanting to continue with the film after his death?*

Maxi: It was different with the shooting than with the editing. In the shooting by that point I was ready to fall apart. I went down right after my father died and Joel came down the next day with the camera equipment. You see, when you shoot a documentary, you don't think about what you're going to use; you think about what you can get. I only knew that the most important thing to me was my family, to protect them. My brothers would, of course, not have been able to cope with filming the funeral, so it was not a question: it was *not* going to be shot. If you'll notice, the scene after his death is mainly of me. I was relating to Joel and I knew that I could take the risk because I trusted him and the fact that I'd be in the cutting room, that in the end it could be thrown out, it didn't have to be used.

*You said once that you didn't have*

the money to get to the editing until long after the shooting was finished. Given the period of time covered by the film, there must've been a lot of footage. How did you structure it, decide what to leave in or take out?

Joel: When we first looked at the film, it was very hard to get into the editing. But after we began to open up to it, we realized that the story it told was of a young woman wanting to get in touch with her father and using film as a bridge . . . Then came the problem of how to tell this in the most efficient way, in a way that will perhaps make someone feel what we felt when we were making the movie. That's how you start to structure. We realized after the filming was over and Joe had died that people were going to see this as a story about a man who may die. How do you balance the other characters against Joe? We realized that only the really pertinent material that could play against his dilemma would give the story a chance to be read the way it should be.

We shot 60,000 feet of film; we have a whole sense of a life there. You can't give all that to an audience. You can't show them four hours. Everybody in the film is not only "one quality." Each person lives on film in relationship to what else is going on and how much of that person you can see in perspective. In the beginning when we were trying all kinds of editing techniques, people would say, "You know, Maxi, I really liked you here and hated you there." I felt if they had had a chance to see the whole thing, they wouldn't have those feelings. The problem was also how to make her character as realistic as I saw it.

We began to see that the story that somehow came from Maxi's mind is actually what happened, and we had to find the best way, with the most integrity, to tell the story.

Maxi: The one aspect we toyed with for a long time was what should be put in of my thoughts or feelings. I really did change my perceptions during the process of making the movie, but I think there was a long time between the point of realization and of any external change of behavior. So even though I felt I had changed, my behavior with my father did not radically change; since it was so internal, you didn't see it. I was afraid, if I were to tell you more, that that would be self-indulgent.

The most difficult "character" was me, how much or how little to put in. I think that if I were a different person, that there would've been a way — because of either how I reacted to Joel on camera or how I may've interacted with the members of my family — for the audience to see my growth in light of my

father's death.

Let's talk about audience response. Showing it here at an international festival has given you a good cross-section. How are people reacting?

Joel: I don't think I've met anybody who's been in the middle. There are people who are really moved by it or people who are just outraged by the process and can't possibly understand why such a thing would be made. They say, "Why would you show it?" They're really befuddled by the intimacy; they don't know how to deal with it. People have approached me who are angry that we would bring a camera into that situation; they can't see why someone would take such a personal experience and put it in front of strangers.

Through the whole process of making this movie and when we were editing, we showed it many times because we were very close to it and needed to see how other people felt about it. Consistently, there were those who were very moved and those who were attracted to it but didn't understand why or couldn't open themselves up to it because they didn't feel they were allowed to.

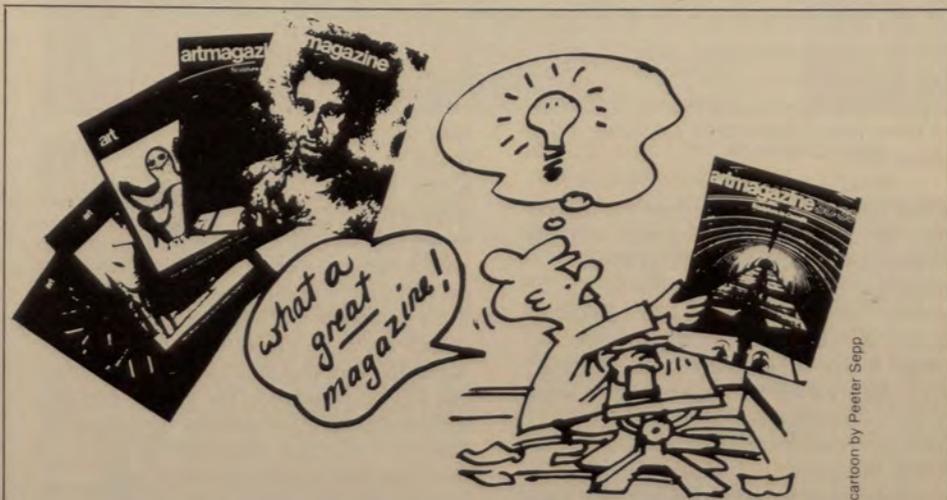
To me the movie is really about

communication: about the lack of it, the need for it and what happens to you if you don't have it. So I know there are always going to be people who are angered, who can never understand it; but I know there are also going to be people who are going to be terribly touched by it because the movie seems to answer to *their* need to explore whatever it is in themselves that has to be touched.

One thing that can't be explained is the fact of Maxi's overwhelming relationship to her father. Her decision to make the movie and then our conferring about how it should be done is on some level a kind of strange artistic decision, which I can't use as a defense; I can only say it is part of our temperament. I feel the movie is an honest depiction of a very difficult process . . .

Maxi: We were very naive; it was really an act of passion. Joe and Maxi will be screened at The Art Gallery of Ontario on November 1, 1978 and at Festival Cinema in Toronto on November 4, 1978.

Film editor for *Branching Out* in the winter and spring of 1977, Judith Mirus has spent the past year in Kenya and West Germany. She is now living in Edmonton.



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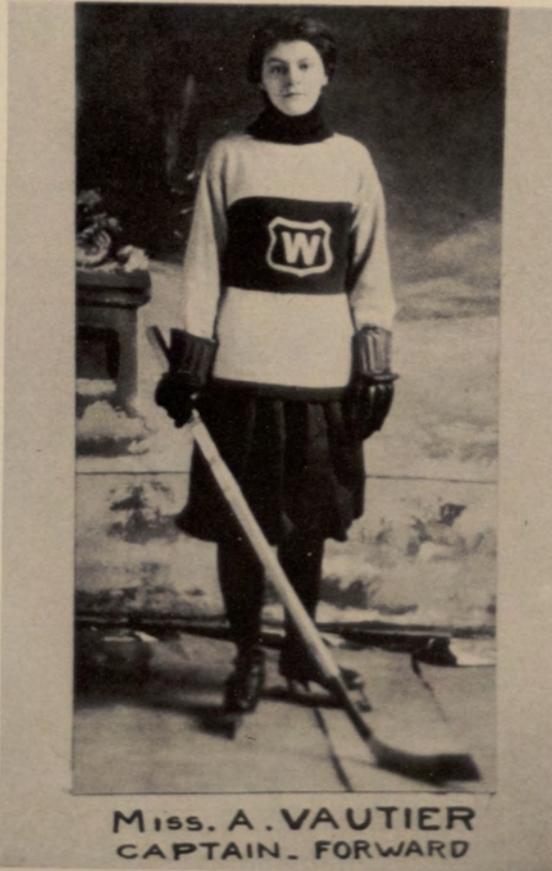
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