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EDITORIAL

October is Women's History month and we are being encouraged to celebrate the rich history of Canadian women. It is valuable to recognize the struggles and achievements of Canadian women pioneers, and to make visible the reality of women's contributions to the fabric of Canadian society.

However, it is more than ironic that at the same time that the federal government purports to honour and acknowledge Canadian women's history, it is also enacting legislation that will deprive some half a million Canadian mothers of their only source of income. Legislation has just been passed that abolishes the family allowance program. Modest though it was, the family allowance program did give recognition to the important role of mothering, and was the corner-stone of humane Canadian social policy for the past half-century. For many Canadian women the family allowance means the difference between dignity and despair.

The death of the family allowance program has largely been obscured as the media's preoccupation is with the accord/discord and the October

26th referendum. (The Charlottetown accord is another danger signal to Canadian women - see articles pgs. 3 and 4)

Analysis of the impact of the new "child benefit" legislation has been meagre. Political opposition has been muted. (Perhaps because this legislation is a "women's issue"?) In the longer run, this lack of public protest will encourage the Conservative government to charge ahead with its assault on all universal programs.

So in celebrating women's history month we must learn from our foremothers, and be strengthened to continue our feminist work in a climate of increasing repressiveness towards women. We must also insist that Women's History month honour not only the achievers, the exceptional women, the leaders (important as their contributions are) but also our celebrations must validate all women's experience, and honour the invisible work of mothers and caregivers.

COVER: by Donna Phoenix

SEE WOMEN'S HISTORY QUIZ, page 16

ANSWERS

1. d - Charlotte Whitton. She became Canada's first woman mayor when she was elected mayor of Ottawa in 1951.
2. a - Jeanne Sauvé became Canada's first woman Governor General May 14, 1984.
3. a - In more sexist times, Saskatoon Lily or Ethel Catherwood, "the world's champion girl high-jumper", was rated the most beautiful athlete at the 1928 Olympics.
4. b - On January 29, 1916, Manitoba women won the vote.
5. d - In 1928, Anna Dexter became Canada's first woman radio broadcaster.
6. a - After a lengthy legal and political battle, the British Privy Council declared women to be considered "persons" under the law, thus enabling them to be considered for appointment to the Senate.
7. b - Dr. Emily Howard Stowe was finally registered as a member of the Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario on July 16, 1880. She had originally set up practice in 1867 after graduating from medical school in New York, but was denied a licence in Canada until 1880.
8. c - The Edmonton Grads, an amateur women's basketball team, was formed in 1915 and disbanded in 1940. Canadian, American, and World champions, their records are unrivalled by any team in any other sport.
9. d - Emily Johnson was a world renowned poet. Two of her better known works were "The Song My Paddle Sings" and "Ojistoh".
10. c - Cairine MacKay Wilson was appointed to the Senate on February 15, 1930.
11. c - Molly Brant was a diplomat, negotiator, cultivator of crops and an expert in the medicinal qualities of herbs.
12. c - Elsie Gregory MacGill was the first woman to graduate from aeronautical engineering in the world and the first woman member elected to the Engineering Institute of Canada. As an engineer for Fairchild Aircraft Limited, she and her staff of 4500 designed and produced more than 100 HURRICANE aircraft per month in 1940.
13. b - Mary Ann Shadd Cary was a journalist and human rights advocate. At the age of 60, she was the first female law student to attend Howard University in Alabama.
14. b - Nellie McClung was a novelist, journalist, suffragist and temperance worker, who fought tirelessly for women's rights in Canada.
15. c - Bertha Wilson's appointment in 1982 ended 107 years of all-male membership on the Supreme Court of Canada.
16. c - Pauline McGibbon was Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario from 1974-1980.
17. b - It wasn't until 1952 in the province of Ontario, that a law finally recognized women's right to be paid the same wage as men for the same work.
18. b - Mary Two-Axe Early, a full-blooded Mohawk, was almost single-handedly responsible for the restoration of native rights to Indian women in Canada who had been disenfranchised through marriage to non-natives. In 1985, her years of work paid off - Bill C-31 amended the *Indian Act*, and Mary Two-Axe Early was the first native woman to be re-enfranchised.
19. c - Agnes Campbell Macphail was elected to the House of Commons from Grey County, Ontario in 1921. She went to Ottawa as Canada's first woman member of Parliament.
20. c - Thérèse Casgrain led the struggle for women's suffrage in Québec (obtained in 1940) as president of La Ligue des droits de la femme. Active in politics, she was also a dedicated pacifist, as exhibited by her 1961 founding of the Montréal branch of the Voice of Women, an international peace movement. She fought for the rights of married women, and in 1965 was elected honorary president of La Fédération des femmes du Québec, devoted to the promotion of women's rights.

WENDO

One in four women will be sexually assaulted at some time in her life. Every woman is vulnerable regardless of age. Men attack women to dominate and hurt them, not for sexual gratification. Men who rape seek a victim to yield to their desire to control; a refusal to submit can deter an attacker. A powerful response can prevent an assault.

Through Wendo women have been discovering their power. Wendo is a form of self defense designed especially for women. Derived from the Japanese, "Wen" refers to women and "Do" refers to the way or the path. Wendo is taught exclusively by women for women.

Wendo was developed from a variety of martial arts and street fighting techniques by the Paige family of Toronto during the early 1970's. It is being revised and updated continuously and it includes both psychological and physical exercises as well as special breathing. Wendo has been taught to women of all ages and abilities both in Canada and abroad.

Wendo combines the politics of self defence with the skills necessary to fend off a determined attacker. Wendo emphasizes the constraints of the social conditioning of women to be passive; recognizes that most women have to learn to be assertive.

Wendo teaches Awareness, Avoidance and Action. The philosophy of Wendo is comprised of four basic elements: Surprise, Smoothness, Circularity and Self-Trust. Surprise refers to speaking loudly, and attracting attention to harasser/ attacker. Smoothness refers

doing one thing after another, or following through a course of action, for example: getting out of a hold, 2. hitting and running. Circularity refers to the use of one's strength in a circle to generate momentum. Self-Trust refers to believing in what you feel and putting 100% into each thing you do.

Wendo recognizes that there are no hard and fast rules. It teaches women to do what works in a given situation, to take action to allow escape. Wendo empowers women, it nurtures their self confidence and helps them to take control of situations in which they might otherwise come to harm.

Unlike traditional martial arts, Wendo is not expensive and it takes relatively little time to learn. The basic course is fifty hours in length; the lower age limit is usually twelve years, there is no upper limit. Physically challenged women are encouraged to take Wendo.

The Parks and Recreation Department will be sponsoring a Wendo course in the near future. If you are interested in finding out more about taking a Wendo course call Sheila Lehmberg at 625-2-

N.A.C. SAYS NO!

by JOCELYN J. PAQUETTE

IT'S A BAD DEAL!

IS IT MEECH LAKE OR MEMOREX? No, it's the Charlottetown Accord. The Prime Minister and the First Ministers once again excluded 52% of the population from the process. In the early stages women were consulted with, however when it came time to sit down and hammer out a deal we were nowhere in sight. In December 1991 the National Action Committee on the Status of Women met in consultation with the First Ministers. In good faith we shared the views and concerns of women's groups across the country.

Now we ask, once again, how can a process that excluded 52% of the population representing a diverse range of beliefs, experiences, ... produce a constitutional deal that embodies this diversity. In other words if the process is flawed the end result is flawed.

THE SITUATION

Canadians are being asked to vote on a document few have read. The Accord was published in the newspaper the weekend of September 20, 1992. It is important to note that this document identified as FINAL TEXT is far from being finalized. In fact the legal wording may not be available until after October 26th referendum. So even if people bought the paper, read the document, and understood the text they could not fully realize the consequences it may have for the Country's and their future.

The Native Women's Association of Canada states that Canadians "are being asked to judge a national unity deal that is still being changed..."

"It's also shocking that Canadians are going to be asked to vote on whether to accept this or not before they have seen the (final) text and while that text is still being substantially changed." (G&M Sept. 19, 92) Anne Bayefsky, lawyer for NWAC said.

THE ISSUES

A) ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Aboriginal women, with the exception of the Inuit, have been excluded from these negotiations from the outset. Despite a Supreme Court decision stating that the exclusion of the Native Women's Association of Canada from the constitutional negotiations was discriminatory, the Prime Minister refused to invite them to the last meeting or to future meetings. There is not guarantee

of gender equality for aboriginal women in the text and NWAC and the National Metis Women of Canada believe that their rights will be threatened under this self-government agreement.

B) MARGINALIZATION OF DISABLED, LESBIANS & GAYS.

The Canada Clause, one of the most significant elements of the new agreement, has received little public debate. It is NAC's view that the Canada Clause establishes a hierarchy of rights that will undermine Section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. While the Supremacy of Parliament and the equality of the provinces are enshrined as fundamental characteristics of Canada, the Charter is not. The Canada Clause will be used to interpret the Constitution including the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This interpretive function means that its wording is crucial. We believe the absence of people with disabilities, and lesbians and gays within the identified groups in the text further marginalizes these groups.

C) DEVOLUTION OF POWERS AND THE THREAT TO SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Like the Meech Lake Agreement, this deal makes future shared-cost programs, like a national system of child care, a virtual impossibility. Provinces will be able to opt out of new shared-cost programs with compensation, resulting in a patchwork of programs across the country.

D) GENDER EQUALITY

NAC has argued for a system of proportional representation designed to guarantee gender equality and minority representation. This position was endorsed by the constitutional conferences, the Beaudoin-Dobbie Report, and was on the table throughout the multi-lateral meetings of ministers responsible for the constitution. When the First Ministers got into the act in August, proportional representation with guarantees for women and minorities vanished from the constitutional table. The First Ministers felt no obligation to the consensus that has emerged from the constitutional conferences.

Fair representation for women and minorities is now up to the discretion of provincial governments. While some provinces have promised gender equity, each government can decide how its senators can be elected or chosen. There are no guarantees of representation for women and minorities.

NAC SAYS NO TO THIS CONSTITUTIONAL DEAL

NAC SAYS YES TO:

* A Canada in which the rights of women and minorities are promoted and in which social programs can promote economic and social equality.

* A Canada in which Aboriginal women, the women of Quebec -- all women -- participate equally in democratic political institutions.

* A Canada in which there is recognition of the inherent right of self-government for aboriginal people, including protection of the rights of Aboriginal women.

* A Canada in which the right of self-determination for Quebec is guaranteed. This means the right of the people of Quebec to choose freely their path of political and economic development, without threat of coercion or force.

* A Canada in which the federal government has the constitutional authority to initiate national social inequality.

Jocelyn Paquette is the Northern Ontario representative to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

Judy Rebick
President
National Action Committee
on the Status of Women

Speaking on

-The Charlottetown Accord
(Constitution)
-The Future of Child Care

Friday, October 23, 1992
7:30 p.m.
Lakehead University
Nursing Building-SN1015

Co-Sponsored by:

Lakehead University
-Gender Issues Centre
-Student Union
-Political Studies
Northwestern Ontario Women's
Decade Council

ABORIGINAL WOMEN

AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEBATES

by THE NATIVE WOMEN'S
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

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Aboriginal women have been discriminated against on the basis of sex by governments of Canada for over 100 years. Aboriginal women's struggle to end the sexual discrimination began after the enactment of the Canadian Bill of Rights, and continues despite the advent of section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. With amendments to the Indian Act, Aboriginal women were among the first women to benefit legislatively from the Charter. Despite this, Aboriginal women still have not achieved sexual equality. The struggle continues, and has expanded today to involve a recognition of Aboriginal women's rights to represent ourselves in the ongoing constitutional discussions.

History of Sexual Discrimination

From the introduction of the Indian Act into federal law in 1869, Aboriginal women who married non-Indians were stripped of their legal rights, and their Indian status, banished from their communities, and barred from their families. While the Indian Act intruded on all aspects of Aboriginal life in Canada, Aboriginal women were most harshly restricted by the law. Not only did the Indian Act concern itself with whom an Indian woman married, it also allowed other Aboriginal community members to protest the paternity of any Aboriginal child suspected of having a white, or other non-Aboriginal father. This is still practised today in our communities. Such a child could be removed from the Indian registry and would not be allowed to be an Indian. This was in contrast to the treatment of men, as all offspring of Aboriginal men - legitimate or illegitimate - gained Indian status and a right to band membership.

The Indian Act also imposed a patriarchal system and patriarchal laws which favoured men, giving them the right to confer status and band membership, and at one time allowed only men the right to vote in band elections. By 1971, this patriarchal system was so ingrained within our communities, that "patriarchy" was seen as a "traditional trait." Even the memory of our matriarchal forms of government, and our matrilineal forms of descent were forgotten or unacknowledged.

The ongoing legal and political struggle by Aboriginal women is not only against an

insensitive federal government, it is also against the Aboriginal male establishment created under the Indian Act. Some legal writers argue that it was the federal government alone, and not Aboriginal governments, which discriminated against women. In fact, the Aboriginal male governments and organizations were part of the wall of resistance encountered by Aboriginal women in their struggle to end discrimination and they continue to ignore women's concerns and their rights.

Sexual discrimination against Aboriginal women did not end in 1985 with the passage of Bill C-31. While this Bill repealed the discriminatory 'marry-out' provision in the Indian Act, residual discrimination remains for those whose grandmothers and great-grandmothers lost their status by marrying non-Indians. Since Bill C-31, more than 70,000 women, men, girls and boys have been added to the federal Indian registry and band lists. But of these, only a few have been welcomed back into their communities.

Aboriginal women want to live within their communities, but the women are excluded because there is no land, and no housing. Aboriginal women have been shut out from their communities because the band governments do not wish to bear the costs of programs and services to which the women are entitled as Aboriginals.

Aboriginal women live in the slums. Aboriginal children prostitute themselves in Canadian cities. Our Aboriginal women, young people and children are killing themselves with drug and alcohol abuse on Indian lands and in Canadian cities.

The Constitutional Debates

This tragic situation will not change without our involvement in negotiating and defining self-government and without our participation in the Constitutional discussions. So far, Aboriginal men and male organizations have not represented our interest, and they are not taking the initiative to ensure that we are given a place at the table to do what they cannot.

Aboriginal women want to take their rightful place at the constitutional table. We are a "distinct and insular" minority belonging to another culture from which we have been separated. Our case is no different from that of Sandra Lovelace who successfully argued that she had suffered discrimination because she was separated from her Maliseet culture, Maliseet language, and from her people. We want to reiterate that the majority of women we represent also suffer under this

continuing discrimination. When our women are relegated to living in cities instead of among their own people, that is discrimination. It is a denial of fundamental rights guaranteed to us in international instruments signed by Canada.

It is our right as women to have a voice in deciding upon the definition of Aboriginal government powers. Governments cannot simply choose to recognize the patriarchal forms of government which now exist in our communities. The band councils and the Chiefs who reside over our lives are not our traditional forms of government. National, regional and band groups are not nations; and do not reflect a nationhood perspective.

The Chiefs have taken it upon themselves to decide that they will be the final rectifiers of the Aboriginal package of rights. Negotiating a right to self-government does not mean recognizing and blessing the patriarchy created in our communities by a foreign government. To Aboriginal women, this would mean chaos in our communities. We do not want this; we want the equality to which we are entitled as women.

Some Aboriginal women have said no to self-government. Some of our women do not want more power, money and control in the hands of men in our communities. It is asking a great deal to expect us, as women, to have confidence in the men in power in our communities. We do not want the creation of Aboriginal governments with white powers and white philosophies in our communities. We do not want the western hierarchical power structure which has been forced upon us. We do not want the Chieftain overlords which have been created by the Indian Act. Aboriginal women must be part of the constitutional negotiation process at all stages so that we can participate in the definition of the structures and powers of our government, and end the discrimination.



One of the major problems that currently exists is that the majority of First Nations citizens living off reserve are women. Many of these women have been reinstated under changes to the Indian Act, but have not been welcomed back into their communities. It is these women who are particularly excluded from the process as it currently exists. Indeed, it is often the Chiefs and councillors who supposedly represent them within the national Aboriginal organizations who are refusing to allow these women to return to their communities. This means that these women cannot get directly involved in any discussions on the reserves and do not even have a right to vote in elections on the reserves. They therefore have no direct or even indirect input in discussions whether on a national or local basis. Often, their only chance to be heard is through their provincial or national Aboriginal women's associations. But, the federal government has not funded or considered the women's associations as being at the same level as other Aboriginal (male) associations. As a result, the women's associations are being kept at the fringes of the process. This could lead to a situation in which reinstated women and others living off reserve are almost completely excluded from the process which will have a profound impact on their lives and their rights.

There are also many important issues affecting Native women living on reserve. We are living in chaos in our communities. We have a disproportionately high rate of child sexual abuse and incest. We have wife battering, gang rapes, suicides, and substance abuse as elements of our daily lives. The development of programs, services, and policies for handling domestic violence has been placed in the hands of men, and this has not resulted in a reduction in this kind of violence. Another issue specific to women on reserves is the need for family law and matrimonial property laws to be strengthened to provide substantive equality rights to women living on reserves.

Aboriginal Women and the Charter

Our Aboriginal leadership does not favour the application of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to self-government. That position has not changed since 1982, when the Assembly of First Nations stated the following to the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs:

As Indian people we cannot afford to have individual rights override collective rights...The Canadian Charter is in conflict with our philosophy and culture.

The opinion is widely held that the Charter is in conflict with our Aboriginal notions of sovereignty, and further that the rights of Aboriginal citizens within their communities must be determined at the community level.



The Charter is an individual rights based document recognizing and guaranteeing fundamental human rights to Canadians. Fundamental rights and freedoms are also outlined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. These international instruments of law celebrate the individual nature of fundamental rights and freedoms. These are the legal, political and constitutional rights which attach to human beings because they are human beings. The Native Women's Association of Canada supports individual rights. Aboriginal women are human beings whose rights cannot be denied or removed at the whim of any government. These views are in conflict with many Aboriginal leaders and legal theoreticians who advocate Canada's recognition of sovereignty, self-government and collective rights. It is the unwavering view of the male Aboriginal leadership that the 'collective' comes first, and that it will decide the rights of individuals.

As Aboriginal women, we can look at nations around the world which have placed collective and cultural rights ahead of women's sexual equality rights. Some nations have found sexual equality interferes with tradition, custom and history. Sexual equality rights have been guaranteed to women around the world. But, like Canada's Charter, the United Nations has allowed nations to "opt out" of these international instruments.

This is why the application of the Charter should not be left to Governments. The federal government has mistreated us as women for over 100 years. If there is a legacy we will leave for women in the future, it is to ensure women's enjoyment of all the rights granted to us by the United Nations. We want our First Nations to act within the spirit and intent of the United Nations, and not do as so many nations have done before them...opt out of sexual equality rights.

If the Charter does apply to Aboriginal governments, there is great concern that they will be given section 33 rights which grant a government the power to intentionally violate the rights protected by sections 2,7 and 15 of the Charter. The override powers in section 33 should not be allowed to federal and provincial governments, let alone to Aboriginal governments.

As elsewhere in Canada, the law of privacy generally protects homelife from close scrutiny by the State. Often that means women and children are subject to physical, psychological and sexual abuse within the home, including wife battering, incest and other crimes which usually go undetected and unpunished by the State. By their nature, these crimes are violations of a victim's section 7 rights to life, liberty and security of the person. We do not want to sanction the loss of these rights by allowing governments to pass laws which do not respect these rights.

While there are many groups who would like to see their Charter rights strengthened in this current round of Constitutional debates, as Aboriginal women, we are the only ones who actually risk the total loss of our Charter rights. This is not acceptable.

Conclusion

After 400 years of colonization, Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal families, and Aboriginal structures are devastated, and change of the systems must occur. But, there will not be self-government in our communities without the support of Aboriginal women. Our male Aboriginal leaders must realize that they cannot negotiate self-government without us, any more than they can leave out the elders, the young people and the people living in urban centres.

As women, we are the keepers of the culture. We want to raise healthy children. We want community decision making. We want consent powers. We want all people in the communities to decide upon their form of governments. We want those Aboriginal women who are still banished from their communities to have a vote, some land, and a house in their homeland, in the community in which they were born. There are those among the Chiefs who would deny us a voice, who would deny us a place and those who wish we would simply go away until they have settled this political business. We are not going to go away. Our male leaders must make a place for us at the bargaining table.

The fact that the existing power structure and process does not seem concerned with ensuring our full and constant participation leads many of us, living both on and off reserve, to believe that we will not be heard and our rights will not be protected in the negotiations for self-government. As Native women, we must be fully involved in negotiations on self-government. Our voices must be heard.



GLOBAL ENEMY - DIVIDED FEMINISTS - RACISM IN THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

by Nayyar Javed
NAC Regional Representative

Reprinted with permission of
NAC from Feminist Action, June
1992.

In her analysis of women's oppression all across the world, Nawal el-Sadawi, an Egyptian feminist comments, "The enemy is global, our struggle has to be global." Recognizing the commonalities of their own life experiences in male-dominated societies, women have to build alliances with one another at an international level.

It is urgent that feminists unite globally to counteract the "new conservative agenda". Left undeterred, the neo-conservatives will lead us into further destruction of our planet, exploitation of the underclass and oppression of women.

Structural adjustment and globalization have already taken a huge toll. Backlash against progressive movements including women's resistance movements, is a setback which humankind can no longer afford. The survival of the planet is threatened.

In recent years, women from all across the world have made some gains in building solidarity with each other. Feminists of the North have improved their ability and willingness to give space to their sisters from the South, to define their own reality and to construct feminism in the context of their lived experiences.

Similarly, women of colour living in the Northern hemisphere are now able to create a space for themselves in the women's movement, to put an end to the invisibility of their issues and their struggle to strengthen feminism. These transformations within the feminist movement are far from what is needed to develop a global strategy that will be effective in fighting "the global enemy" that Dr. Nawal has identified. The Eurocentric world view that our feminist sisters in the North have assimilated from the societies they live in, impedes our struggle to win the trust of the feminists of the Third World.

The Eurocentric world view is premised on racist assumptions and their ensuing constructions of the Third World. The assumed superiority of the "white race" is deeply ingrained in the consciousness of white feminists. In relating to

their sisters from the Third World, white feminists tend to dominate them and therefore impose their definition of women's oppression and feminism on them.

In the past two decades, feminist scholarship has provided a rude awakening for many of us with its many critiques of the "white feminists" by feminists of colour. We have learned to listen to our visible minority sisters without reacting negatively. We are showing signs of understanding the multiplicity of women's oppression. The contrast between the international women's forums in 1975 and the one in Nairobi in 1985 illustrates this change. However, the many instances of disrespectful behaviour by white feminists continue to support feminists-of-colour's mistrust.

At a recent Commonwealth Women's Conference in Toronto, one of our Canadian sisters was quite eager to show a video on bride burning in India. I asked her if she also intended to show one on incest in Canada. She was quite bewildered by my question. Her reaction is an example of how women fail to see the commonality of the cruelty that we, as women, are subjected to in any male-dominated society.

Women of colour resent us for defining their reality and then imposing our views of feminism on them in the same way patriarchy attempts to define our reality.

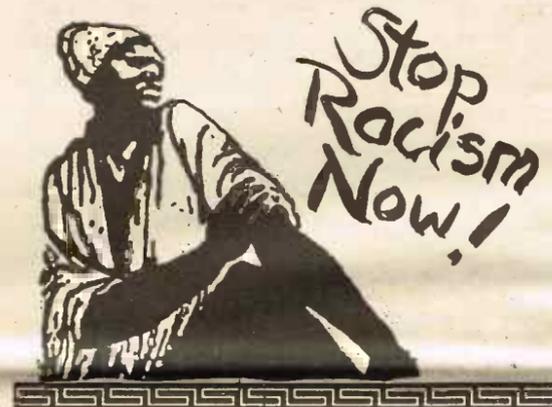
Eurocentric construction of the man of colour portrays him as violent, sexist and dangerous. This assumed dangerous nature of the man of colour is intended to provide a contrast with the gentleness of the "civilized white male". This assumption obscures the universality of sexism in all male-dominated societies.

Western media have played a dominant role in portraying this image of the man of colour as barbaric and dangerous. An acclaimed movie "Not Without My Daughter" stands out as a classic illustration of how "man of colour" is constructed and presented in the Eurocentric world view.

We put down other cultures and exaggerate women's oppression in "non-white" societies without making the connections with our own oppression. "Non-white" women, on the other hand, see that anorexia and women's anxieties around

their bodies are as insidious and mutilating as the veil in some Muslim countries or female circumcision in some African societies.

These women of colour can not comprehend why we in North America do not treat them as equals. They are very aware of the fact that in order to achieve equality we must not ignore that we are all oppressed, and that our oppression takes cultural-specific forms. We must recognize the common thread that runs through racist and sexist assumptions and actions. And we must unite globally to fight racism and sexism wherever we find these destructive ideologies - within ourselves, in other, and in the oppressive social structures.



UPDATE

The Supreme Court of Canada has recently granted gays and lesbians the right to file complaints with the Canadian Human Rights Commission. This decision will have significant effects in the areas of employment, benefits, services and in particular, the Canadian Armed Forces. The Ontario Human Rights Code has included protection on the basis of sexual orientation since 1986. Last year, a Supreme Court judge has given the Federal government six months to amend the existing law, which had been declared unconstitutional. However, the government did not meet this deadline. The Supreme Court then decided to include sexual orientation in the Canadian Human Rights Code, effectively by-passing the government's indecision.



DISCOVER - UPS

by Lorilee Wright

COLUMBUS - A CREATION MYTH

Every society has its creation myth. The Garden of Eden is but one. Each myth is a reflection of the society from which it grew. Each myth exacts its penalty. Modern North America, decaying in a cesspool of its own waste, venerates Christopher Columbus, a known slave trader and profiteer (to name but a few of his abuses), as the Creator in its Creation Myth.

To believe Creation, there must be Nothingness before it. The priests of Columbus' Creation (the teachers, historians, newspeople, public relations people, stockholders) have taught us that Columbus came to an empty land, without form and void, and with his Creation began dominion. All of everything was Created for our "discovery" and our "exploration". The myth of Christopher Columbus turned all the peoples of North, Central and South America into a subject people, and the whole territory into a subject hemisphere.

This Creator is the man who inaugurated the slave trade in North America. He introduced the double scourges of disease and religion that would decimate huge populations and repress millions more to pave the way for the missionaries of greed and greater exploitation. He brought the idea of "purity of blood" (limpieza de sangre) from the Spanish Inquisition. In America this was later transformed from a religious principle to a racial one to establish institutionalized racism. This Creator launched the strategy that saw indigenous technologies replaced by ones dependant on European resources in an attempt to make the "New World" like the Old, condemning the new societies to poverty and dependency. He codified the guiding principle that the "New (under-developed) World" is meant to feed the lusts of the Old (developed) World, and the poor to pay for the extravagances of the rich. This conceit can be named as the source for many of the problems faced by developing nations around the world as they are forced into their assigned role as reservoirs for the resource needs of the over-developed world.

Christopher Columbus is a myth built on the twin deceits of "discovery" and "exploration". His is a myth that reduces historical truth to folk tale and ancestral knowledge to fable. It's a myth that was invented to meet the needs of an over-populated and resource-depleted Europe, and is still celebrated as gospel. It's a myth that not only legitimized the plunder, but made it righteous.

For five hundred years, the would-be conquerors have worked to destroy the peoples and the cultures they have met. Today, when the

Guatemalan army passes through a Mayan village, it continues the systematic slaughter. Children and elders are killed, and with them go dreams for the future and the teachings of the past. The army boasts that they will "leave them no seed". They Create devastation on behalf of Texaco, and Hispanoil, and Getty Oil, who want to exploit the oilfields on which these people live - the largest oilfields in Central America.

The most profane of actions have been consecrated by Columbus, our Creator, in the name of dual commandments to explore and to discover. So murder for the sake of "discovery" is not sacrilege, but sacrament, and devastation in the wake of "exploration" has reached the status of orthodoxy. Planetary suicide and religious Rapture become one.

With this "Conquest" came alien systems that disrupted social and economic life on all levels. Traditional foods, traditional systems of cultivation, traditional beliefs, traditional ways of life; all were consumed in the fires of "progress". And with them went the natural environment that supported it all.

The myth of Christopher Columbus is highly revered. Millions cling to the mythologized Columbus with almost fanatical zeal, honouring this visionary who brought "superior" European culture to the "Indians". Our complicity in physical and cultural genocide is too, too shockingly brutal to confess.

Christopher Columbus is the Creation Myth of western society, and it reflects, as all Creation myths do, the values and principles, the ethics and morality of our society. Columbus was a man of greed who coveted wealth above all. He learned his seaman's trade as a slaver on the African coast and secured the money for his fateful trip as toady to a Queen. The reflection we see of ourselves in the Mirror of our Creator is not a flattering one. It shows the greed, the complacency, the ignorance and the arrogance of our culture.

Many of us see through the cracks. We are now beginning to comprehend the penalties we must pay and have been paying for our idolatry. We can see the arrogance of this Creation. The landing of Christopher Columbus is the basis for the myth - for the deception - that is used against all peoples for the benefit of those who invented it. Christopher Columbus was at best a false prophet for a cult of greed. We celebrate him at our peril.

This article first appeared in Remote Control in Spring 1992

NORTHERN WOMEN'S BOOKSTORE

WE MOON '93



GAIA RHYTHMS FOR WOMEN



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Calendars
for 1993



HERSTORY
1993

THE CANADIAN
WOMAN CALIFORNIA

SUCCESSFUL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

ON TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

Eagle Lake Lodge was the place to be on September 25th, 26th, 1992, for the STRIVING & THRIVING Conference, sponsored by the Northwestern Ontario Women's TTO Network, in partnership with Equay Wuk Women's Group, Sioux Lookout.

Eight-nine women attended the conference from places such as Toronto, Winnipeg, all Northwestern Ontario communities, including isolated communities such as Cat Lake. All women were either employed in or interested in trades, technology or non-designated trades work (TTO).

The conference was designed to bring women together to discuss training and employment opportunities in TTO work. We wanted to:

- * link Northwestern Ontario aboriginal and non-aboriginal women, working or interested in working in trades, technology, operations and blue-collar work;

- * put current economics of the region into perspective and explore future employment opportunities;

- * explore appropriate training models and support services for Northwestern Ontario trades, technology, operations and blue-collar workers;

- * establish a mechanism for on-going development and follow-up for Northwestern Trades, technology, operations and blue-collar women.

Opening ceremonies were carried out by Josephine King, followed by Key-note speaker, Marilyn Kenny, Western Vice President of Maritrain Ltd. Marilyn spoke on the "Women's Agenda on Training."

Workshops on increasing self-esteem, Assertiveness training and The Aboriginal woman's TTO work were the most popular of the ten workshops. Other topics included Skills Training, Access to Training Dollars, Employment Equality, Health and Safety, Sexual Harassment, and Be Your Own Boss.

The workshop on "Aboriginal Women", facilitated by Daisy Hoppe from Sioux Lookout was very well received. The main point in this particular workshop addressed the notion of women being a key to breaking the barriers to communications between the two cultures. As one participant stated, "It was good to see all the women, native and non-native, integrate all together".

The response was overwhelming when asked if women wanted another conference in

Northwestern Ontario, it was strongly recommended that more time be spent on Assertiveness Training, Self-Esteem Training, Job Search Skills/Training, Aboriginal Women On and Off the Reserves, Access to and Opportunities in Trade and Technology Occupations.

At the conclusion of the conference a Northwest Women In Trades and Technology (NWITT) Network of women for women was established with representatives from the majority of communities around Northwest Ontario such as Atikokan, Kenora, Dryden, Fort Frances, Ignace, Red Lake/Ear Falls, Sioux Lookout, Thunder Bay and Winnipeg.

Below are the contacts of the NWITT Network. Please contact the women in your area for more information on trade related work opportunities:

ATIKOKAN
Theresa Gouliquer
Box 1358
Atikokan, Ont.
POT 1C0
(807) 597-6355 (H)

DRYDEN
Katie Bissig
Grp 32, Box 5, RR # 2
Dryden, Ont.
P8N 2Y5
(807) 937-6531 (H)

Linda Paquin
RR # 3, Site 40, Box 21
Dryden, Ont.
P8N 3G2
(807) 937-6085 (H)
(807) 937-6612 (Mom)

FORT FRANCES
Anita Copenace
Box 297

Fort Frances, Ont.
P9A 3M6
1-800-668-6279 (W)
(807) 484-2254 (H)

IGNACE
Christiane Leroux
317 Garden P.O. Box 644
Ignace, Ont.
POT 1T0
(807) 934-6426 (W)
(807) 934-6282 (Fax)
(807) 934-6509 (H)

KENORA
Val Metall
334 Second Street S.
Kenora, Ont.
P9N 1G5
(807) 468-6555 (W)
(807) 543-3197 (H)

NORTHERN COMMUNITIES
yet to be determined

RED LAKE/EAR FALLS
Bonnie Satten
Box 194 Cochenour, Ont.
POV 1L0
(807) 662-2069

SIOUX LOOKOUT
Lorraine Vella
Box 43
Hudson, Ont.
POV 1X0
(807) 582-3576 (H)

THUNDER BAY
Juliet Woronkewych
372 Dawson Street
Thunder Bay, Ont.
P7A 3V2
(807) 345-5582 (W)
(807) 345-4093 (Fax)
(807) 344-9928 (H)

Mary Zoccole
240 W. Brock St.
Thunder Bay, Ont.
P7E 4S3
(807) 475-2683 (B)
(807) 475-4598 (H)



WE OLD ONES HAVE OUR OWN SMELL
 IT IS AN AURA OF A THOUSAND DISAPPOINTMENTS
 OUR PERSPIRATION REEKS OF FAILURE
 HEARTS AND NON FUNCTIONING KIDNEYS
 NO QUESTION OF COMING ANYMORE
 GOING EVERY DAY MAY BE THE DIFFERENCE
 BETWEEN HAPPINESS AND ANXIETY
 THE RELATIVES BRING US LAVISH SUPPLIES
 OF PERFUMED SOAP AND TOILET WATER
 AND PRETEND THEY DONT NOTICE THAT
 SWEET SMELL OF CREEPING DECAY
 UNLESS WE HAVE STORED WISDOM ABOVE
 THE NECK AND INTUITION IN THE GUT
 TO KEEP THE SPIRITUAL CENTRE AWAKE
 AND CAPABLE OF SEEING THE BEAUTY AROUND US
 WHILE WE MUMBLE, GRUMBLE AND DESPAIR
 OF THE WORST OF MAN'S FOOLISHNESS
 WE SHALL LOSE THE GIFT OF PERSPECTIVE.
 WE HAVE ESCAPED FROM CHAOS, WE SIT
 OR LAY OR STROLL THE STREET OR MALL
 WITH A HOUSE KEEPERS EYE, WE SMILE
 AND THE SMILE IS RETURNED, IT'S ENOUGH
 WE TALK TO OURSELVES IN THE MIDDLE OF
 TRAFFIC THEN MARVEL AT OUR ABILITY
 TO STOP ALL PROGRESS FOR OUR PLEASURE
 WE NOTE THE PUBLIC IS KIND, WE HAVE
 EARNED A PATIENCE BEYOND EVEN MANNERS
 THE RESPECT THAT SOME OF US MISSED
 ALONG THAT ROAD OF STRUGGLE
 ALL IN ALL IT'S A SWEET TIME OF LIFE
 IF YOU HAVE THE IMAGINATION TO
 WRITE ABOUT IT.

Gert Beadle

To My Grandmother

*I remember as a child
 how you wanted me
 for your own but
 you had only one son
 I like being your
 dressup doll
 it made me feel special
 The stories you told
 sometimes haunted me
 I dreamt of ghosts
 harboring at my bedside*

*As a young woman
 I confided in you
 We would sit down for tea
 then you'd tell my future
 Did you ever see
 yourself in me?
 Your mysticism intrigued me
 the aura of spiritual wisdom
 you so greatly adorned
 Your musical teapot and
 red ruby ring*

*The deepest pain
 I ever felt
 was the day I held you
 helpless to your fate
 I tried desperatly
 to contain you
 but with every breath
 you drifted further away
 from me and
 your heart ceased
 and your soul -
 with silver tipped wings
 escaped gleefully*

*Now
 the epitaph
 on your shrine
 is all the world
 can see
 and I am left with
 an aching emptiness as
 I live with your memory
 Pictures I treasure
 your red ruby ring
 and musical teapot
 your tea leaf notes
 symbolized in the palm
 of my hand
 Everytime my light flickers
 or my chimes sing
 I feel comforted once again
 by the special bond
 we shared*

Linda Ewashina

Poetry



REFLECTIONS

Following your path
 stepping diligently
 into each footprint
 Reflections
 of the unspoken
 times when I
 trailed behind
 you
 merely a toddler
 trusting and carefree
 framing your walls
 with my innocence
 Now
 branded and fertile
 my footprints
 encompass yours
 with a gentle
 unspoken gratitude

Linda Ewashina

LABOUR LAW AND WOMEN

by Sara Williamson

In August, the Ontario NDP government held their final round of hearings on amendments to the Ontario Labour Relations Act. This is the legislation which governs the relationship between employers and unions. In the previous hearings, labour and business reiterated their needs and the direction they wanted amendments to go. For this set of hearings, the Ontario Federation of Labour through the Thunder Bay & District Labour Council, and Port Arthur Member of Parliament, Shelley Wark-Martyn encouraged other community interest groups, especially women, to tell their stories of the effect of labour law change. Decade Council, the Women's Center, Faye Peterson House and other women's representatives did apply to make a presentation. No women's groups were scheduled for the Thunder Bay hearings. The impression for the public was that the discussion around the amendments was strictly a fight between corporate interests and labour interests. Why would the hearings committee deliberately mislead people into believing that this was a polarized issue where both "sides" would need to compromise? In fact, this legislation affects the living standards of all of us. In Thunder Bay, women's voices did get a bit of coverage thanks to the initiative of Cindy Edmonds the President of the Port Arthur NDP Riding Association and the Women's Centre, who held a media conference several hours before the hearings.

What difference will these amendments make for women?

In some cases, it will give women a chance to have an organized voice about their working conditions. It does offer the potential for a bit more security for part-time workers, mall retail workers, workers for cleaning services, for some food service workers, and for workers of nanny or homemaker agencies.

If you are a part-time worker, you and your part-time co-workers can have the same contract as the full-time workers. Until this amendment comes in, part-time workers in Ontario have had to organize separately and negotiate separately. It is harder to get together with co-workers who are only at the worksite part-time. It is also harder to negotiate for fairer working conditions when the employer considers you as merely supplementary to the core full-time staff. Since so many women can only work part-time, the possibility of gaining better working conditions and benefits would offer great peace of mind.

Domestic workers can now technically join a union. BUT... only where the employer has two or more employees. It will be a help for women working for house cleaning services, home care agencies and nanny agencies. Presentations from

women's and immigrant women's organizations last winter pointed out that the amendments do not include any organizing protection for the live-in house keeper or baby-sitter who is the sole employee. In Ontario, in order to unionize, there must be at least two employees on the employer's payroll.

When women and their co-workers do choose to join a union, the employer will not be able to stall for as long a time in negotiating the first contract. The amendment doesn't exactly light a fire under the boss's feet but it does set shorter time limits before a settlement must be reached (with the use of a private arbitrator if necessary).

Many women work in stores in shopping malls. Organizing and getting a collective agreement for a union there has extra obstacles. This is because the worksite is buried inside a complex that is privately owned. Standing at the store entrances and exits to give union organizing information to the workers was often forbidden by the mall owner. If the workers did join as union and negotiations broke down to the point where the workers' only recourse was to walk off the job, the mall owner would forbid the workers to picket in front of the store. Bad employers were taking advantage of this loop hole and would not try to work out a fair contract with the unionized workers. If there was no picket line, the employer could easily bring in scabs to take the workers' jobs and unsuspecting customers would make purchases with no idea that a strike was going on. Under the amendment, organizing and picketing will be allowed at entrances and exits of the worksite in the mall.

Women working for a cleaning contractor, food services contractor or contractor of other services for a particular building will, under the changes to the Act, be able to keep their jobs and working conditions if the building owner changes contractors. In other words, the new contractor must hire the workers who have been servicing the building.

Until now, employers could get police escorts to bring in strike breakers. Under the proposed amendment, when at least 60% of those voting in a woman's bargaining unit voted to strike, then no one from that bargaining unit can legally cross the picket line and no additional staff can be brought in to do the work. BUT... anyone not in the bargaining unit can do the work and the employer can move the work to another location with the blessing of the law enforcers! This is grossly unfair. Going on strike is a last resort for unionized workers. It is used when all efforts to negotiate a fair collective agreement fail. Workers want to keep working. Women do not readily give up their little earnings so stretched to care for themselves and their families. A strike costs the workers lost earnings and at least temporarily, the loss of a steady

job. If it is to be a fair playing field, the employer should lose income and Revenue from sales of products and services should cease. When someone else takes over a worker's job during a strike, expect the strike to drag out, become bitter and violent. To create a balanced negotiating climate there should be a law against the use of any strike breakers. The business lobby and the legislation refer to strike-breakers "replacement workers". Union people call them scabs!

Unionized workers under federal jurisdiction will not be protected by law when a business is sold or transferred to provincial jurisdiction. That proposal was quietly dropped. This confirms the suspicions of federal public service workers that they will be left out in the cold when the federal government dissolves more departments and turns responsibilities over to the province.

Unions asked for the legal right to bring union information to the lunch rooms and worksites. When else will working women have a moment to meet? Labour's needs were ignored in order to further appease the business lobby whom the Liberal leader, Lyn McLeod echoes.

So what do you think? I bet you are wondering what all the fuss and boo-hooing is about from the business lobby. They appear to have successfully badgered Bob Rae into producing the sort of milquetoast set of labour law amendments that a Liberal government might have produced. So they got more than their share of the cake and they are trying to see if they can get some more.

The amendments will speed up judgements on complaints about unfair labour practices. This is very important. Also, as I mentioned at the beginning, several more groups of workers will gain the same organizing rights as most workers. Useful reforms, but far too mild to deal effectively with the vicious profit before-people mentality being promoted globally by big business.

Sara Williamson is active in the labour movement and the women's community in Thunder Bay.



LABOUR LAW: ONE WOMAN'S VIEW

The following is a submission to the Labour Reform Committee written by Luisa Alfonso of Thunder Bay.

My name is Luisa Alfonso. My husband and I came to Canada in 1982 from Chile, as political refugees. Our only son was born in this country in September 1985.

My first working experience, like many other immigrant's, was really shocking. Working as a dishwasher, language barrier, no benefits, and no possibilities of getting any improvement were only a few of them. After our son was born our financial situation got even worse. My husband was unemployed, I was really sick (I had three operations in two years, one of them during my pregnancy), our son was chronically asthmatic, we were spending up to \$200 a month for medication, I was working, not as a dishwasher any more, but as a secretary. Working for \$6.00/hr., no benefits. Also at the same time I was supplying at night school almost every night from six to 11:00 for the same amount of money. Working up to 11 hours a day with a sick baby and an unemployed husband that I didn't even have the time to see during the day. I survived but I still am paying for that physically and economically.

My only hope was to find a decent job. A unionized job. In 1987, I got a job as a secretary for the Lakehead Board of Education and I became a member of the OPEIU. Soon after that my husband found a job and eventually he also started to work for the Lakehead Board in less than a year he organized his co-workers into a union, the OSSTF. Since then our situation improved 100% and our family quality life is also very good. We don't work any harder than we used to work, that is impossible, but we enjoy a better life only because we have the opportunity of being part of a union.

Unfortunately, not every immigrant has this opportunity and when they try to improve by getting organized, they face firings and intimidation by employers. It is very easy to get discouraged when one has a couple of children waiting for your pay cheque at home.

As an immigrant woman, I would like to thank the government of Ontario for the opportunity to speak up on such an important matter for working people as the reform of the Act that regulates our very ability to make a living.

Workers in Ontario like everywhere else in the world only have their labour to sell in order to survive. I truly believe that the Act's overhaul has been overdue for a long time and the changes are absolutely necessary if we are committed to offer decent conditions of living to the people of Ontario.

The NDP government in this province has been under attack by the powerful employer's organizations and their media because of the initiative to reform the OLRA, but they have always been opposed to changes in favour of the people, haven't they? What is almost surrealistic is that even the Globe and Mail (Nov. 11, 1991) recognized that the reforms are very modest and far from revolutionary like big capital in this province has suggested in the psychological terror campaign against the OLRA's reform. I want to strongly support the government on this initiative, they must know they have the backing of the people of this province, the people to whom they are ultimately accountable.

Immigrants and in particular, immigrant women, are at the very bottom of the cheap labour pool and a high percentage of the new immigrants are coming from the so-called 'non-traditional areas.' Many of them are war refugees, people with very little command of the English language and no knowledge of the laws of the land, therefore an easy prey for unscrupulous employers that, taking advantage of the big holes in the existing labour laws, are having a ball abusing the rights of workers to organize. They very well know that if they fire the 'trouble maker' that wants union on the shop it will take at least six months before an illegally discharged worker is reinstated by the Labour Board. In that period of time the rest of the workers will have become intimidated and the organization drive defeated. No wonder the manufacturers' association is opposed to the reform when one of the proposals is to ensure that workers illegally fired during an organizing drive will have a quick hearing with strict time limits, and for heaven's sake we need it.

As an immigrant woman I applaud the proposed expansion of the public education service to make sure that everyone knows his or her rights. I hope that some of the most vital information will be available in the most languages from the point of view of the immigrant composition of labour in Ontario.

As an organized worker, I am more than pleased to know that the changes will include anti-scab legislation that will prevent capital from annulling the effectiveness of a strike. Anti-scab legislation has been in place in Quebec since 1978 and has not caused a mass exodus of industries in that province. Industrialist paranoia in Ontario has no foundation whatsoever and this province will not lose a single plant because of anti-scab legislation: the Free Trade Agreement is doing that work very well indeed.

Part time workers compose over 15% of labour in Ontario. Women make up 75% of the part time labour force; recent surveys indicated that the huge majority

of them are working less than 40 hours a week, not because they are just working for pin money, but because they could not find full time jobs. In Ontario only 15% of part time workers are unionized therefore they receive lower wages, no benefits, less job security and almost no career opportunities. The reform to the OLRA will do justice to thousands of women like me in Ontario, it will give us the opportunity to really become part of the economic, political and social web of this province.



Women of Invention: Individuals who changed our Lives

- an extension exhibit from the National Museum of Science and Technology, Ottawa

Co-sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and Communications and Soroptimist International of Thunder Bay, the exhibit examines women's inventions from three points of view: Women as Agents of Change, By Women and for Women, and Inventions for Everyone.

Featured are the inventions of 37 women and a short biographical sketch of each inventor, as well as information on the process of inventing, and the marketing and protection of inventions.

The exhibit shows that women are practical inventors in solving problems that directly affect them. It displays and illustrates a wide variety of inventions for babies, the home, the office, for life saving and ecology.

There are items such as Liquid Paper, the Jolly Jumper, coffee filters, Scotchguard, Kevlar, and fuel substitutes. Northwestern Ontario is represented by an inventor from Dryden, Ontario.

The exhibit opened September 29th and continues till November 23rd at the Thunder Bay Museum, 219 May Street S. For more information call 622 - 0801.

CHRISTMAS IN THE WEST,

CHRISTMAS IN THE EAST

by Josie Wallenius

Esmerelda came through the door and went into her kitchen. She reached into a cupboard for the gin, found the bottle empty, and dropped it into her recycling box marked 'glass.'

She slumped into her rocking chair, and mused, "What is to be done?"

She wasn't musing about her gin, she was musing about Christmas, and it was only September.

"When you know something you can't not know it" muttered Esmerelda, and again she mused aloud, "What is to be done" as it was always and for ever, such a neat question and, she liked neat things.

The problem was, in a nutshell, that Esmerelda knew the economy she lived in made weapons, and thus wars, and she could not for the life of her imagine herself this Christmas trying to pretend she did not know this.

As she had done 'the year before and before that.

Everything was not right, not neat at all, and something had to be done.

Esmerelda pondered. She had a neat thought. At least, she thought it was neat at first.

Esmerelda thought she was very good at preaching to others. At least everybody got fed up with her, so she presumed it was so. But when it came to the people she loved the most, like her family, and the women at work, she used to get chicken. She used to take chances, and her loved ones got kind of upset, but Esmerelda liked being loved by everybody else and she never went too far, because she was afraid.

But this was Christmas coming up, and it was coming up everywhere, including Bethlehem, and Esmerelda knew it was time to take greater risks than ever.

"I'll send a card to all my family, and the women at work, and tell them I am going to send the money I would have spent on them to the children suffering from our bombs in Bethlehem and that will make everybody happy."

Esmerelda pondered. She wasn't so sure.

Christmas was Christmas, and as life would have it, nobody believed you loved them anymore if you didn't give them a present.

And Esmerelda had grandchildren who

she loved like anything, and she pondered if they would understand.

She began to imagine. Suppose she got a card of herself made out of a photo she had of herself at the medical clinic in Bethlehem, where she had gone in the summer with the Grandmothers For Peace.

Suppose she wrote in this card a message to her grandchildren that they did not need any more toys, that the children in Bethlehem needed medicine, and that she was sure they would be happy that they would have one less toy so that the children in Bethlehem would be a bit happier that day. Perhaps.

Esmerelda laughed to herself as she imagined her grandchildren's eyes lighting up with joy at the thought of it all.

Then Esmerelda thought of her son, and she thought of her daughter-in-law, and she pondered.

She wasn't too sure of their joy.

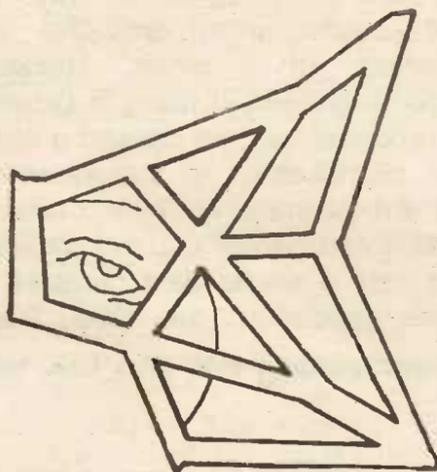
And she knew why.

She grew glum.

She thought of the women at work.

She knew some would understand, be even glad, because they were a bit sick too of not knowing what to do for children who had too much. But there were others who never seemed to be impressed with Esmerelda's bright ideas at all, and just seemed to be afraid of unusual experiments.

Esmerelda thought of the bombs, shook her head in a start, and realised that was their bad luck, but her son and daughter-in-law were different. She loved them so much that sometimes she just couldn't bear it. Not with all her other worries.



Suppose, Esmerelda pondered, she bought the grandchildren just one small toy to go along with the card.

Would that make it alright?

No, it wouldn't. It would mean Esmerelda was afraid, and fear was not love, and Christmas was about love, love for a children, not fear.

But she had seen these neat little jackets with a picture of a moose on them at Ryden's store, and she had planned to get those, and clothes were not toys.

But her grandchildren had enough clothes and the children of Bethlehem did not.

Suddenly Esmerelda was struck with thought.

Suppose she went without gin from September to the beginning of December, saved the money, bought the jackets, sent the jackets and the card about Bethlehem to her daughter-in-law and passed the problem on to her.

Her daughter-in-law was neat.

Her daughter-in-law could choose. Whether, or whether not, to give the children the jackets any old time, or keep them for Christmas Day to go with the card. Mother's know best, and her daughter-in-law was Esmerelda's grandchildren's mother, Esmerelda wasn't.

Esmerelda rocked in her chair. She was going to make a lovely card. It was going to be a collage of children's faces. Her own grandchildren and the children from Bethlehem.

And she would mention Jesus, and what Jesus was, and what he meant. And in her imagination she saw her grandchildren's eyes light up. Maybe they would take the card to school and show it off.

'Dear Brett and Simon. This is a present from Nan in Canada, and it is a card to show you I am sending a Christmas present to the children living in the place near where Jesus was born and that the children in Bethlehem will know it is coming from you, and they will be very happy today because you are thinking of them.'

Esmerelda wondered what her daughter-in-law would do. She remembered Christmas from days gone by when her children had been young, and she tried to work out what she would have thought

her mother-in-law had pulled a fast one like that.

And she could not imagine. Because it was days gone by, and times were changing, changing so fast that Esmerelda realized that her little letter had been so driven with her own fear it made her puke. Children in Bethlehem hopping about on one leg because of our economy, children going to bed on Christmas Eve in terror because they were afraid the soldiers would come for their mother or father again, because our weapons need their oil, and she imagined herself getting the children to sit on her knee and saying,

'Look kids. This is Christmas. It's supposed to be about this man called Jesus being born, and he was called "The Prince of Peace" and he was supposed to be the Son of God who said "Suffer all the little children to come unto me" so it's not RIGHT to have guns for Christmas, it's not RIGHT that you have all these toys when other children have nothing, so I'm going to send my Christmas money to other children, because there's a big shakedown coming and I love you, do you understand?'

Because Esmerelda realized she was going to have to jump one generation. The middle one was already lost to the Big Eye, and when you know something, you just can't not know it.

please send donations to

Greek Catholic Convent Clinic
Beit Sahour
P.O. Box 44
Via Israel

Photos and cards of children in Palestine available from:

Middle East Children's Alliance
2140 Shattuck Ave., Suite 207
Berkeley, CA 94704
USA

SUGGESTED READING: WOMEN'S HISTORY IN CANADA

CANADIAN WOMEN IN HISTORY: A Chronology, edited by Moira Armour and Pat Staton

DESPITE THE ODDS: Essays on Canadian Women and Science, edited by Marianne G. Ainley

QUEBEC WOMEN: A History edited by Micheline Dumont et al

GENDER CONFLICTS: New Essays in Women's History, edited by Franca Lacovetta and Mariana Valverde

continued pg 16

WOMEN TEACHERS FIGHT FAMILY VIOLENCE

Family violence affects everyone. An estimated 150,000 to 250,000 school aged children in Ontario are exposed to family violence. How do these children from violent homes cope at school?

The Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario (FWTAO) has become more vocal in their fight against family violence in recent years. In 1990, to commemorate the Montreal Massacre, the FWTAO published an award winning newsletter which is now one of the many resources available to their membership. By making such materials available to classroom teachers, the school system may be learning, at the ground level, how to understand and help children from violent homes.

This special issue of the FWTAO newsletter entitled Violence Against Women and Children contains articles pertaining to Board and school level strategies to educate children and teachers on family violence. The feature article Violence Against Women - An Epidemic and a National Disgrace examines the facts about violence and shows how sexism spawns violence. Other articles discuss creating a healing circle for children in the classroom to build self-esteem, conflict resolution for children, and curriculum development materials for units on conflict resolution. A selected resource list containing videos, fiction, educational kits and resource books on the topic of children and violence, child abuse, and family violence is included.

The Barbara Schlifer Commemorative Clinic in Toronto is profiled. This clinic provides free legal counselling to female victims of wife assault, sexual assault and survivors of childhood sexual abuse and incest. This article would be an introduction to those not familiar with the issues of women who are victims of violence.

There are several articles directed specifically at teachers, which deal with teacher awareness, sexual abuse and sex role stereotypes. As well, a model violence awareness week program which took place in London Ontario is detailed. Parents, teachers and students were actively involved in planning this special school week. As well as classroom activities on awareness, advocacy and alternatives, students and teachers received education from the staff of a women's shelter. Resource materials were collected and curriculum was developed for use in subsequent years.

The Canadian Women Teachers' Federation embarked on the project in 1990. This was a pilot project centring on student education and is now being reproduced in many locales. In the project, each division is targeted with a specific theme on violence education; primary (kindergarten - grade 3) People are Not for Hitting, junior (grades 4-6) We are Responsible for Our Own Actions, intermediate (grades 7 & 8) Gender Stereotyping and it's Effect on Behaviour. These themes were explored through a variety of activities, role playing exercises and classroom discussions. A teaching package was developed and is available to all schools. **Ask your child's teacher or principal about family violence education in your school.**

Similar projects are underway in many large Canadian cities. The Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation (OPSTF), representing male public school teachers, reports that an interdisciplinary approach was taken in the development of a family violence unit in a Hamilton Ontario school. A curriculum was written for grades Junior Kindergarten - OAC (grade 13) and in-service training was given to the school staff before the project began. The program was written by the Hamilton Board of Education and family violence professionals. Strategies were developed for classroom use and a procedure was put in place for those student who chose to disclose information about their own family situation. Crisis workers and counsellors were used as well as the staff from the local women's shelter. Students learned about the factors which contribute to violence - stereotyping, power and control - through activities appropriate to their grade level.

Knowledge of the issue of violence is necessary for students to help them develop an understanding of positive relationships. Information about community resources and counselling is also available. **Ask your child's teacher or principal about family violence education in your school.**

The FWTAO issue on Violence Against Women and Children is available to the public and is an excellent resource for all teachers, parents, social service and child care workers. You may obtain this issue by sending \$4.00 to:

Federation of Women Teachers'
Association of Ontario
1260 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5R 2B8



MOMENTS IN HISTORY

October is Women's History Month

It would be absurd to ask a woman today if she thought of herself as a person. But only 63 years ago women weren't considered persons - at least not in the eyes of the law.

What most history books don't mention is that October 18 1929 marks a landmark legal decision for Canadian women.

On that day a judgement was delivered on behalf of the Privy Council in London, England stating, "The exclusion of women from all public offices is a relic of days more barbarous than ours".

Since then other women have won individual cases for all women.

1937 Dorothea Palmer, an employee of the Parents' Information Bureau, who works in a poor Ottawa suburb, is acquitted of distributing birth-control information.

1967 Jeanette Lavell and Yvonne Bedard, two native women take their case before the Supreme Court of Canada. They allege that the Indian Act discriminates against them since, unlike native men, native women lose their Indian status, with all its rights and privileges, when they marry non-natives. Although the court rules against them, largely because of their efforts, the Indian Act is amended.

1980 The Federal Human Rights Commission awards a \$2.3 million settlement to women librarians in what is the first major case to establish the principle that different work can still be work of equal value.

1987 Justine Blainey, a 12 year old girl, wins the right to play on a boys' hockey team when Ontario Human Rights Commission rules that: "Discrimination on the basis of sex in athletic events is unlawful in Ontario."

1989 Two Winnipeg waitresses, Diana Janzen and Tracy Govereau, are fired after being sexually harassed by the cook. The Supreme Court rules that sexual harassment is a form of discrimination and that the employer is responsible for providing a harassment-free workplace.

1989 Susan Brooks, a cashier at Safeway, complains to the Manitoba Human Rights Commission that her employee benefits package discriminates against her by not covering her during a 17 week period around the birth of her baby. The Supreme Court of Canada rules that discrimination on the basis of pregnancy is sex discrimination.

CELEBRATE WOMEN'S HISTORY

RESOURCE CENTRE

New resources available to the public in the Northern Office Resource Centre are:

BATTERED WOMEN AS SURVIVORS by Lee Ann Hoff. It analyses and reveals the relationship between personal crisis and traditional attitudes toward women, marriage, the family, and violence.

HELPING YOUR CHILD RECOVER FROM SEXUAL ABUSE by Caren Adams and Jennifer Fay. This book offers guidance for parents who courageously face the days and months after a child's abuse.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON THE JOB by William Petrocelli and Barbara Kate Repa. It covers all aspects of the problem--from annoying behavior to physical abuse.

THE CANADIAN FAMILY IN CRISIS by John F. Conway. This book examines the drastic changes which have occurred in Canada in the past 20 years in family life.

RAPE IN MARRIAGE by Diana E. H. Russell. Updated listing of marital rape exemption laws and an invaluable bibliography on wife rape.

SEXUAL POLITICS by Kate Millet. A classic analysis of the interplay between men, women, and culture.

THE COMING OUT STORIES by Julia Penelope and Susan J. Wolfe. This second edition shows the processes for many lesbians, that coming out remains an intensely emotional and often painful experience, even in the 1980's.

New videos are:

FOUR STORIES produced by IBM and **EMPLOYMENT EQUITY FOR PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY** produced by Independent Living Centre, Thunder Bay. Two new educational tools for use in providing public awareness in the community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Workshop: Sexual Violence Against Women and Children
October 29 and 30, 1992 and December 3 and 4, 1992
Centre de Loisirs, Room Bélanger, Kapuskasing
Register by: October 23, 1992 FREE
Telephone: (705)335-8538
Fax: (705)3354217

Workshop: Mother & Daughter Relationships
November 6 and 7, 1992
Unitarian House, Thunder Bay
Register by: October 23, 1992 \$25.00
Telephone: 344-5980

GRANTS

WIFE ASSAULT PUBLIC EDUCATION

November is Wife Assault Prevention Month. The following northern groups have received funding from Ontario Women's Directorate to support community activities that promote the prevention of wife assault. Public education materials such as information sheets, brochures, buttons and posters are also available from OWD.

- > Canadian Mental Health Association Family Resource Centre, Matheson
- > Omushkegiskew House - Moosonee Family Resource Centre
- > Sudbury Coordinating Committee Against Wife Assault
- > Chadwic Home, Wawa
- > Pavilion Family Resource Centre
- > Hoshizaki House, Dryden
- > Manitoulin Haven House
- > New Starts for Women, Red Lake
- > Faye Peterson Transition House, Thunder Bay
- > Geraldton Family Resource Centre
- > Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre, Sioux Lookout
- > Les elles du Nord, Longlac
- > Sturgeon Falls Family Resource Centre
- > South Temiskaming Coordinating Committee
- > Fédération des Femmes Canadiennes Françaises Section Résurrection, Sturgeon Falls
- > Wabigoon Native Women's Group
- > Centre for International Cooperation (DOORS), Thunder Bay
- > Kenora Coalition Against Violence and Abuse
- > Parry Sound Indian Friendship Centre
- > Lakehead Women Teachers' Association Anti-Violence Committee
- > Tikinagan Child and Family Services Family Counselling Unit, Sandy Lake
- > Marjorie House, Marathon
- > Ojibways of Sucker Creek
- > Native and Northern Awareness Committee, North Bay
- > Centre de Counselling Familial de Timmins

SEXUAL ASSAULT PUBLIC EDUCATION

Applications for Sexual Assault Public Education Grants funding will be mailed to community groups next month.

COMMUNITY GRANTS

The deadline for the next OWD Community Grants is December 1, 1992. For information about grants criteria, contact either Thunder Bay or Toronto offices before the due date.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Reviewed by Michele Proulx



Boys Will Be Boys: breaking the link between masculinity and violence
Myriam Miedzian, Doubleday, 1991

Myriam Miedzian holds a PhD in Philosophy as well as a Masters in Clinical Social Work. In this book, she addresses the issue of solving the problem of endemic male violence in (North) American society. Her research is thorough, her voice articulate. Her results are to say the least - provoking.

Miedzian states her thesis: "... many of the values of the masculine mystique, such as toughness, dominance, repression of empathy, extreme competitiveness, play a role in criminal and domestic violence and underlie the thinking and policy decisions of our political leaders."

She begins by describing the status quo; the acceptance of violence as a way of life - when male behaviour is the norm - and proceeds to examine systematically both what it is that reinforces violent behaviour in boys and what can be done to change the socialization of boys in order to decrease violence.

Miedzian draws upon myriad interviews with people from many fields and integrates both academic and popular literature to examine the institutions that function, in concert, to socialize boys individually and collectively.

She explores the institution of the family and identifies the glaring lack of involved, nurturant male role models for boys. And for this reader, she quite offensively lays some of the blame at the feet of families headed by women.

She examines the institution of formal education and provides concrete examples of school programs that address the need to provide boys and girls with conflict resolution programs, parenting classes and social studies programs that demystify the "glories" of war.

Miedzian takes on mainstream, popular culture: television, film video, and music. She addresses the influence of professional sports on boys as spectators and amateur sport as participants. She proposes regulation to structure sports programs to really teach prosocial (non-violent/cooperative) values. And finally she examines the boys "violence toy" market: "The proper parallel to Victorian sexual prudery with respect to violence is not banning war toys and war play. It is forbidding children to express any feelings of anger or rage at all, and making them feel very guilty about any kind of aggressive play. Buying boys Transformers, GI Joes, and Nintendo games is not akin to buying them Judy Blume books, which deal in a sensitive healthy realistic way with the sexual and other concerns of children. It is akin to buying them pornographic magazines designed for children. During the Victorian era, young children who masturbated were often told this could lead to insanity. Today's enlightened parents would not dream of saying such a thing to their children. But on the other hand they don't go out and buy them toy dildos and sex magazines either..."

This book stands as a valuable addition to the studied examination of accepted violence in our society. Not only does the author explore the issues, she offers practical examples of solutions; not only for the socializing institutions, but also for concerned parents and for individual educators who endeavour to make "progress in the control of the social disease of violence."

A Woman's Odyssey in Africa: tracks across a life
Hanny Lightfoot-Klein
Harrington Park Press, 1992

Hanny Lightfoot-Klein tells us a story that is two stories, well enough woven to be compelling to the reader's curiosity until the last page is finished. In one she chronicles her solo backpacking travels in sub-Saharan Africa taken over four years; where among other adventures, she gathered material for her recently published work on female genital mutilation, *Prisoners of Ritual*. In the other story she recounts tales of her own origins. And the reader finds herself compelled by the weave of both stories.

The writer-traveller explores the Sudan on her own terms, searching for understanding of a rigidly enforced cultural practice that claims the external genitalia of all "respectable" women when they are little girls five to nine years old. And in sharing these travels, the author recounts stories of her own upbringing in a household that offers a strange reflection of the torment suffered by the African victims of overt physical mutilation.

Klein's parents were refugees from Nazi Germany and in her own words: "...hopelessly ill-matched...she [her mother] and Natan/Satan hated one another with a passion that bordered on dementia."

Klein recounts her estrangement from her mother: "The closest she came to touching me may be seen in a family portrait taken just before we left Germany." And she describes her emotional enslavement and near incestual relationship with her father.

It is the reflection-refraction between these two stories that compels the reader. As one learns more about this brave and articulate former highschool teacher, and mother, one is struck by her drive to come to terms with her own story as she explores the practice of female genital mutilation and ties to avoid western condescension: "Before we pass judgement on those who inflict the tortures of *The Barbaric Practice in Africa*, or on those who simply submit to them without rebellion, we might do well to first examine our own cultural practices and our own barbarities."

Lightfoot-Klein is a woman who, in process, leaves her old life and old roles behind at fifty-one years of age to pursue long held dreams of adventure and exploration. Her stories are empowering; she writes of overcoming physical, economic and social barriers in fulfillment of her own path. Her style of writing is humorous and pleasant to read. Her stories challenge the reader to reflect upon her own path and where it may lead if the imagination and the courage can be sufficiently tapped.



QUIZ ON WOMEN IN CANADIAN HISTORY

1. Who said, "Whatever women do, they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good. Luckily, this is not difficult." ?
(a) Sheila Copps (c) Margaret Laurence
(b) Margaret Atwood (d) Charlotte Whitton
2. Who was Canada's first woman Governor General?
(a) Jeanne Sauvé (c) Gabrielle Léger
(b) Pauline Vanier (d) Norah Mitchener
3. Saskatoon Lily was...
(a) A Canadian Olympic high jump champion
(b) A prairie wildflower
(c) The first woman on the Canadian Wheat Board
4. In which Canadian province did women first win the right to vote in 1916 ?
(a) Saskatchewan (c) Ontario
(b) Manitoba (d) Alberta
5. Who was Canada's first woman radio broadcaster?
(a) Ethel Cruise (c) Idola Saint-Jean
(b) Thérèse Casgrain (d) Anna Dexter
6. As of which date were women recognized as "persons" under Canada's Constitution?
(a) October 18, 1929 (c) July 1, 1867
(b) April 17, 1982 (d) December 11, 1931
7. Who was the first woman physician to practice medicine in Canada?
(a) Clara Brett Martin (c) Catherine Parr Traill
(b) Emily Howard Stowe (d) Martha Hamm Lewis
8. Who were the Edmonton Grads?
(a) the first all-women class to graduate from university
(b) a national champion women's ringette team
(c) an amateur women's basketball team
(d) a group of Alberta women scholars
9. Who was Emily Pauline Johnson? She was...
(a) Canada's first woman lawyer
(b) Canada's first woman M.P. from British Columbia
(c) an early leader in the struggle for native women's rights
(d) a native poet and entertainer
10. Who was Canada's first woman Senator?
(a) Solange Chaput-Rolland
(b) Margaret Carson
(c) Cairine Wilson
(d) Huguette Plamondon
11. This woman, a Mohawk, was born in 1736. She was the wife of Loyalist Sir William Johnson, and acted as a liaison between her tribe and the English settlers.
(a) Madelaine De Verchères (c) Molly Brant
(b) Elizabeth Couc (d) Mary Fubbester
12. Who was Elsie Gregory MacGill?
(a) Canada's first woman judge
(b) Canada's first woman journalist
(c) Canada's first woman aeronautical engineer
(d) Canada's first woman Dean
13. This woman founded the Anti-Slavery Society in Toronto in 1851, and is widely credited as North America's first black newspaperwoman.
(a) Susanna Moodie (c) Rose Fortune
(b) Mary Ann Shadd Cary (d) Mattie Hayes
14. Who said, "Never retract, never explain, never apologize - get the thing done and let them howl" ?
(a) Laura Sabia (c) Emily Murphy
(b) Nellie McClung (d) Gloria Steinem
15. In 1982, who was the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada?
(a) Sandra Day O'Connor (c) Bertha Wilson
(b) Rosalie Abella (d) Rose Lee
16. Pauline McGibbon was...
(a) Canada's first woman Senator
(b) The coach of the Canadian women's Olympic field hockey team
(c) The first woman lieutenant-governor in the British Commonwealth
17. In what year did the first equal pay for equal work legislation come into effect in Canada?
(a) 1899 (c) 1935
(b) 1952 (d) 1967
18. This woman was largely responsible for the restoration of native rights to native women who had married non-natives.
(a) Nellie Mildred-Carlson (c) Jane Manuel
(b) Mary Two-Axe Early (d) Nellie Cournoyea
19. Agnes Macphail was...
(a) The first woman to head a Royal Commission in Canada
(b) One time head of the Canadian Teachers Federation
(c) The first woman member of Canada's Parliament
20. This woman was one of the leading 20th-century reformers in this country. She led the struggle for women's suffrage in Quebec before World War II.
(a) Marie Gérin-Lajoie (c) Thérèse Casgrain
(b) Laure Gaudreault (d) Annie Buller

(For answers please see page 2)

SUGGESTED READING: WOMEN'S HISTORY IN CANADA

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|--|---|---|
| <p>A NOT UNREASONABLE CLAIM: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880-1920's, edited by Linda Kealey</p> <p>BEYOND THE VOTE: Canadian Women and Politics, eds. Linda Kealey and Joan Sangster</p> <p>CHANGING WOMEN, CHANGING HISTORY: A Bibliography of the History of Women in Canada, ed. Diana Pedersen</p> <p>THE NEGLECTED MAJORITY: Essays in Canadian Women's History, Vol. I & Vol. II, by Alison Prentice and Susan Mann Trofimenkoff</p> <p>RETHINKING CANADA: The Promise of Women's History, by Veronica Strong-Boag and Clair Fellman</p> | <p>BRITISH COLUMBIA REVISITED: Essays on Women edited by Gillian Cresse and Veronica Strong-Boag</p> <p>THE NATURE OF THEIR BODIES: Women and Their Doctors in Victorian Canada, by Wendy Mitchinson</p> <p>WOMEN WHO TAUGHT: edited by Alison Prentice and Marjorie R. Theobald</p> <p>NO BURDEN TO CARRY: Narratives of Black Working Women in Ontario 1920's to 1950's, by Dionne Brand</p> <p>SILENCED, by Makeda Silvera</p> <p>MORE THAN A LABOUR OF LOVE, by Meg Luxton</p> <p>NO PLACE LIKE HOME: Diaries and Letters of Nova Scotia Women 1771-1938</p> | <p>LIFE LIVED LIKE A STORY: Julie Crunkshank et al</p> <p>OUR GRANDMOTHERS LIVES as told in their own words edited and translated by Fred Ahenakew and H. C. Wolfort</p> <p>THE NEW DAY RECALLED: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939, by Veronica Strong-Boag</p> <p>THE WOMAN SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT IN CANADA, by Catherine L. Cleverdon</p> <p>THE UNFINISHED REVOLUTION The Status of Women in 19 Countries, by Doris Anderson</p> |
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