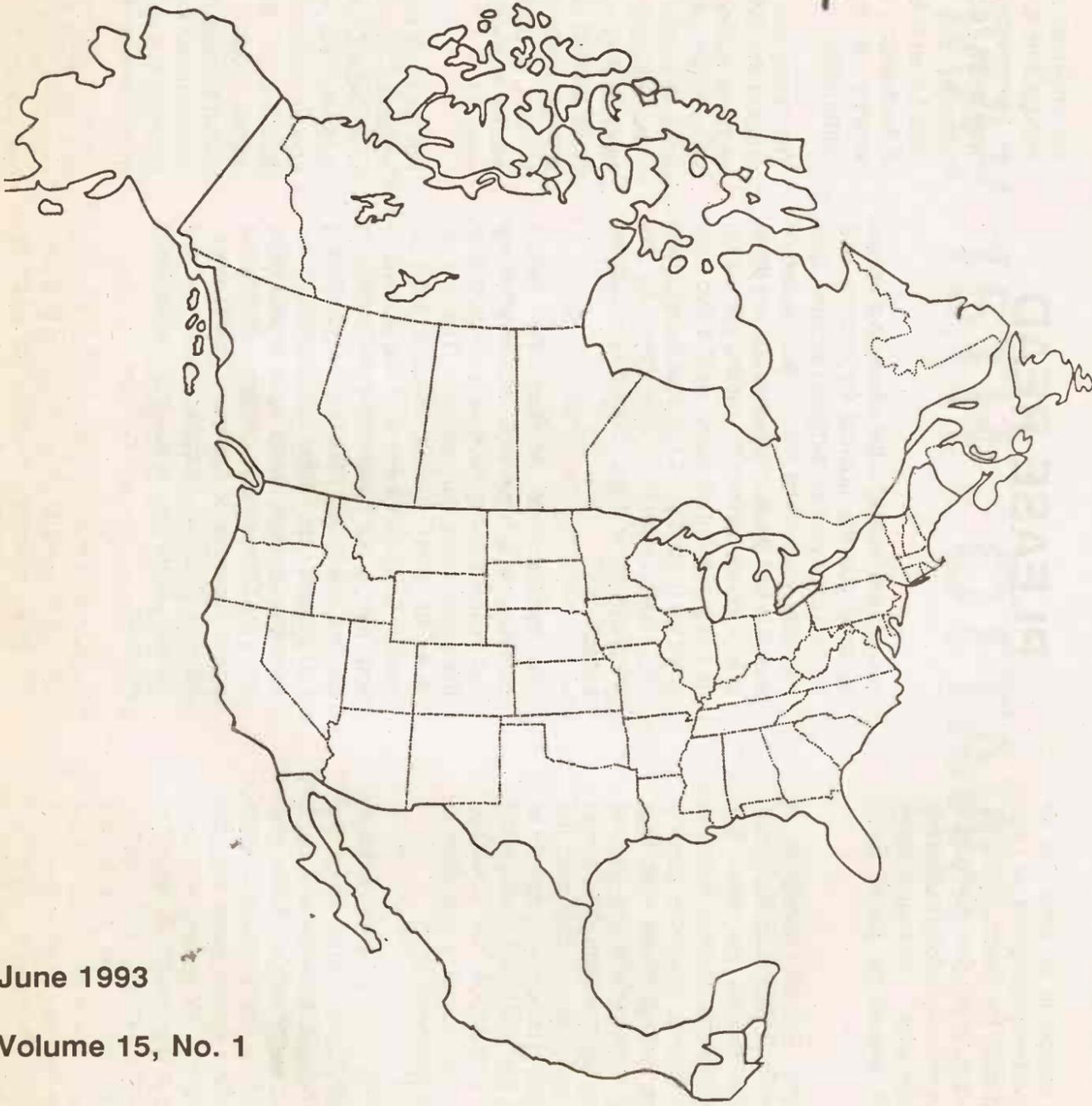


NORTHERN

\$2.00

WOMAN



June 1993

Volume 15, No. 1

JOURNAL

THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO

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by MARGARET PHILLIPS

"You know the trouble is we take you for granted" my friend Emily remarked, as I was musing about whether the Northern Woman Journal is important to anyone beyond the small group of us who plod along publishing the NWJ year after year. "We've just come to expect you'll always be there" Emily continued.

Perhaps, I thought. But still I pondered - is the NWJ relevant, or is it an exercise in self-indulgence? For despite the woes and irritations of writing copy; endless hours on the computer; finding graphics; pasting straight columns; writing labels - as they never come off the computer the way we want them; then the constant hassle with Canada Post - who keeps changing the rules but never letting us know .... despite all this .... we love the NWJ and treasure the friendship and nurturance the collective provides. Yes, the Journal is important to us... but does anyone else care?

Then a visitor, a woman from a small eastern Ontario town, came into the Bookstore and immediately picked up a Journal. She told me how much the Journal meant to her... how, as a young woman entering university a dozen years ago, the Journal was the first (of many) women's publications she avidly sought out from the University Women's Centre. The Journal, she told me, related to her and to her budding feminism. I was reminded of how many times over the years, when the NWJ hit a low point, we've received a note from a regional woman thanking the NWJ for the hope, the sustenance it gave. So again, yes, I believe the Journal is important.

Thus I came back to Emily's conclusion. Is it because you take the NWJ "for granted" that so many of you are lax about paying

## PLEASE READ

your subscriptions? After all we do continue to send you the Journal for months and months after your subscription expires. One \* beside your name means sub is due or was due last issue; \*\* means you are three or four issues behind; \*\*\* means you are up to two years out of date. At the two year point we probably will cut your subscription off... then invariably we're asked by the affected person if the Journal has stopped publishing!

The question of whether the NWJ's continuance is important, and whether we can increase our subscription revenue is, at this point in time, fundamental. The Journal faces its most serious financial crisis in years. To put this issue of the Journal in your hands, we have to borrow money to pay the publisher. The cost of producing the Journal has risen substantially... for example postage costs have quadrupled since the Conservative government reduced postal subsidies to Canadian publications. As well, financial restraint measures have caused us the loss of our major advertising revenue.

Recognizing that our financial dilemma was serious and would be an on-going problem, the NWJ collective recently set aside an evening to discuss our future. I approached the meeting with a heavy heart, fully expecting our decision would be to cease publication. Not for a moment was such a thought contemplated. We love the NWJ too much to let a little thing like debt get in our way.

So fund-raise we must. With her wonderful energy Jane is leading the fund-raising by organizing the first **SUPER WOMEN'S COFFEEHOUSE** to be held on Saturday, July 24th at the Unitarian Church (see full ad in this Journal). This is not only a fundraiser; it hopes to be an important addition to the Thunder Bay women's community.

We hope our Thunder Bay readers will support the Coffee Houses, and hope other regional women can occasionally visit and enjoy them too. There are several ways to support the Journal. While we are most reluctant to solicit donations, the reality is they would be appreciated. We are most grateful for the regular donations we receive from Journal cronies. (Genevieve, I believe, is psychic... a cheque from her seems to always arrive just when we need it.)

For an extra return for your dollar why not advertise - your organization, your business, your project, your conference, etc. in the Journal. We will be happy to negotiate special advertising rates for multiple ads, and for non-profit feminist organizations. The Journal collective doesn't have the resources to plan a comprehensive advertising and fundraising strategy, but we'd welcome volunteers who would take on this task.

Still the most effective way to ensure the financial stability of the Journal is to increase our subscription base. Please consider giving NWJ subs as presents to your friends and relatives. Encourage your colleagues to subscribe. Most importantly, please renew your subscription today, and help keep the Northern Woman Journal a vibrant alternative voice as we enter our 21st year of continuous publishing.

## STRIVING & THRIVING '93

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# MAY 15TH - OTTAWA

Jocelyn J. Paquette  
Northern Ontario Rep., N.A.C.

COALITION BUILDING WAS THE THEME. ORGANIZATIONS CAME FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE ORGANIZED BY ACTION CANADA NETWORK, NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN, CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS.

We came to have our voices heard, our objections read and our concerns adhered to. Government, absent from all the proceedings, showed their inability to face the issues and deal with people face to face. Instead we had six uniformed R.C.M.P. watching along the sidelines. As a person born and raised in Ottawa this was unusual, uniforms were seldom seen.

"A PICNIC ATMOSPHERE." That was the depth of the reporting from the Canadian Press. Funny how this did not reflect any of what I saw. There was not one wicker basket, no red and white checked table cloth to be seen. The R.C.M.P. stated that there were 60,000 people on the hill. People had come to stand UP for their rights in what IS STILL A DEMOCRACY! OR ?

Tony Clarke, of the Action Canada Network emphasized the need for coalition building between and amongst organizations in this country. Issues of social justice range from full employment to day care and everything in between. Our groups, beginning with ourselves, must make the effort to reach those who have traditionally been silenced because of the barriers: whether economic, racial, physical or cultural. Together we can create, define and orient a community towards whole and productive pursuits.

Judy Rebick's talk remains for me N.A.C.'s president's final swan song. Forceful and clear, expressive and humorous Judy gave a warming and stirring speech engaging the audience and making the issues of equality and equity front and centre. Women's issues are justice issues. When women are hurt by U.I. cuts and low employment men and children suffer from the limited access to programs and services related to child care and training.

100,00 people came together to have their voices heard. The media minimized the impact and diminished the importance. Government ignored the event and provided no response and opened no new lines of communication. We must not allow ourselves to be silenced by apathy or government.

Diane Mills  
Global Awareness Project

I used to think that NAFTA was one of those things that had nothing to do with me. I have enough stuff to deal with just trying to find a job, generate local awareness about environmental issues and locate natural fibres with which to knit.

Well I was wrong, NAFTA will effect me: The job search situation will only look more grim, the environment will be left open to degradation and growing cotton in Canadian soil will be disallowed. To be honest, I didn't even know there was Canadian cotton. I knew that I should do something but I really wasn't sure what. Signing a petition seemed too little, 20 hours one way on a bus seemed a lot. I opted for the 'lot' because I saw myself as part of a living, breathing, walking petition of faces that would surely have and impact and besides, I had the time.

I had never been involved in an event involving so many people and so much organization. I was one of 33 people on a bus. Our bus was one of over 800 others. Upon arrival in the parking lot we were greeted, given instructions, a large card with our assigned bus number and a sticker for each passenger with the corresponding number. There were buses packed into the parking lot like sardines and people everywhere. Our group agreed on the time to meet back at the bus and the last words before we departed were "Hey everybody, safety first" and I thought that was cool.

We all gathered in an open field for what seemed an eternity in the sun. There was garbled-sounding entertainment intermittently belting out renditions of "Solidarity Forever" among other tunes.

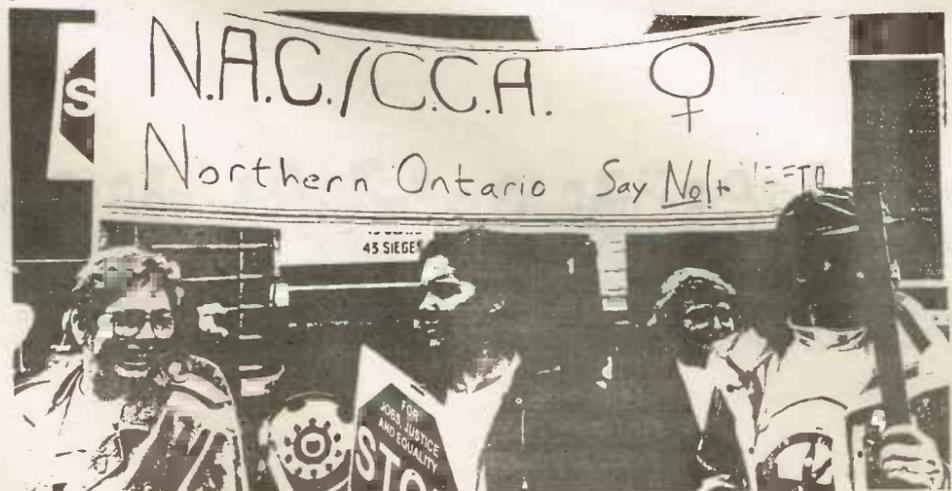
There were at least 8 Chip Wagons lined up along one side of the field and 15 to 20 people lined up at each in a steady stream. I was very glad to queue up and chatted with line mates over stomach grumbings. The media correspondents

who slept in beds and ate breakfast were oblivious to the physical state of the participants. They reported that demonstrators were more interested in a picnic, than the pending protest. We were hungry and tired after 20 sleepless hours on the road. Some semblance of food and a brief rest before the uphill walk were foremost on our minds, believe you me it was no picnic.

We were an eclectic crowd gathered in clusters around a variety of banners stating our affiliations. We waited patiently in a winding line of tired faces, supported by our placards, for the signal to start walking. We were entertained by roving political impersonators. A pseudo Kim Campbell turned and smiled as she walked by. Seeing our NAC banner she emphatically declared "I'm a feminist too!" which caused a wave of laughter to echo through our group.

The horn sounded and the march began. We marched in silence through the vehicle-less streets. Spectators stared in amazement at what must have seemed an endless stream of people, concerned people. As we neared the hill I could see the gigantic Caravan-delivered banner containing the names and thoughts of everyone who had taken the time and interest to write on it. It's material was secured to the fence all around the parliament grounds. I saw the section marked Thunder Bay and the design and words I had written. Even if I hadn't been there, my words would have been, and it brought a speck of familiarity to an otherwise unfamiliar place.

Upon arrival to the hill we sat and listened to the speakers as their words echoed off the stately, historic buildings. Inspired yet tired our spirits were lifted by a few a cappella songs by the politically in-tune band, Moxy Fruvous. When all was said and sung we made our way back to our bus and headed home leaving only a slightly trampled hill. I was very thankful that the phenomenon of the ride home always seeming shorter held true.



# FREE TRADE - I TOLD YOU SO

By LENI UNTINEN

Decade council research prior to the Free Trade Agreement introduced us to many words that were foreign at the time, but have become commonplace. We also discovered the following predictions about Free Trade:

The Canadian Union of Public Employees pointed out that "If following Free Trade, taxes remained higher in Canada, business corporations would simply transfer production to the United States". But Mr. Mulroney stated "Free Trade would bring jobs, jobs, jobs".

By 1991, 226,000 jobs had been lost to free trade by company transfers, concentration and consolidation in U.S. plants and closure of plants established to serve the Canadian Market. By 1992, we saw 627,000 full-time job losses along with the accompanying family break-downs; destroyed communities; broken dreams; poverty; loss of personal dignity; stress-related disease; family violence and death.

## JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

What about Mr. Mulroney's JOBS, JOBS, JOBS and promises of more opportunities for women in the workforce - there is some truth to that statement. As traditional male occupations decline, more women enter the workforce and become the primary income earner. Unfortunately, in Northwestern Ontario, more than 56% of women are having to contribute to family support on less than \$20,000 a year.

The Council of Canadians observed: "The pressure to undermine Canada's social programs would not come from the U.S. It would be the same Canadian conglomerates and U.S. multi-nationals in Canada who were leading advocates of bilateral Free Trade who would pressure the Federal government to reduce social spending". "Our social programs are not threatened" said Mr. Mulroney "They're a sacred trust".

Four years later, we no longer have family allowances; our unemployment insurance coverage has been sharply reduced to 57% and Ottawa has stopped funding it. Old age security payments are being "clawed back".

## PRIVATIZATION

In the United States, commercialization is more pronounced than in any other jurisdiction. Hospitals, prisons, nursing homes, home support services, day care centres and group homes for children are

provided by for-profit operators whose primary clientele generally are people with the ability to pay.

At the time of the Free Trade Agreement, the notion of non-profit services we took for granted becoming for-profit seemed hard to imagine. But a few years later, we see commercialized for-profit education and nursing services; commercial clinic referrals instead of in-clinic or in-hospital treatment and more and more user fees attached to medical and other services.

At the time of the Free Trade Agreement we heard that Ontario child care services were under severe threat due to Free Trade. If for-profit centres were seen as being unfairly treated re government subsidies, such firms could place demands on government for equal subsidization. But, Mr. Mulroney promised a national daycare program.

Instead, piece meal attempts to placate working families have been made. Tories and Liberals are pledging to support for-profit child care and now there are cuts to subsidized daycare spaces and child care programs attached to training programs.

## DEREGULATION

A paper put out by the transportation industry in 1988 stated that deregulation in the United States had resulted in the following:

AIRLINES	An increase in fares A loss of service Increased safety risks A loss of jobs
TRUCKING	Loss of services Loss of jobs
RAILWAYS	Loss of services Loss of jobs

## Since the 1989 Free Trade Agreement

- Thunder Bay to Toronto full air fare has risen from \$452.80 to \$644.14.
- There are steadily decreasing services to Northeastern Ontario and regional flights.
- Close to home, we had the Dryden air crash and other crashes and near misses across the country.
- Massive layoffs at Air Canada, Canadian and smaller airlines continue.
- Almost monthly, the trucking industry announces downsizing and layoffs; the latest, the closure of 3 regional terminals.
- Accidents involving large trucks are

becoming more and more frequent.

- Local and regional Via Rail service is now just a memory.

The government said the agreement was a boon to Canadian consumers.

The Free Trade Agreement necessitated the GST to increase trade and it would also improve prices for consumers.

I ask you if you are socking away or spending all that extra money you are saving on your purchases, your groceries your hydro bill? Have you seen the lower prices promised once the hidden manufacturers tax was replaced?

The Canadian Government said "of course we could compete". They said that those who opposed Free Trade were fear mongers and wimps. What do they have to say now to the 1/2 million discouraged workers not counted in the U.I. statistics, the 1 million children living in poverty and the social assistance administrators who cannot fulfil their welfare commitments. They say there was a recession, but it is now over. They say it will take a little while for those affected to recover. The Canadian Government promised the best adjustment programs in the world. Those programs have come to include volunteers working in services where once there was paid staff; food banks and soup kitchens. To the 11 % unemployed, they say, "they should be proud they can help pay off Canada's debt by taking lower U.I. benefits".

In 1988, we thought we had the language in hand. We learned and thought we understood:

- privatization
- deregulation
- right of establishment/right of equal treatment
- taxation and policy harmonization
- level playing field

In the material just reviewed, there was another word. A word that was neither capitalized or explained. The word is restructuring - the word that would prove the most to be the most devastating of all. What has restructuring come to mean to you? A job that isn't there for you and your children; bankruptcy; social assistance; a reduction in life styles?

I ask you to listen carefully to the words of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Advocates of NAFTA speak the words that will continue to reshape our lives.

Speak back. Speak out. Speak LOUDLY.



# WOMEN AND NAFTA

Jocelyn J. Paquette  
Northern Ontario Rep  
National Action Committee on the Status of Women

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women in its 21st year has grown to represent over 550 women's groups advocating on behalf of women's equality.

Experiencing the deteriorating working conditions and wages NAC is aware of the increasing vulnerability of women. The discussion is not new. NAC first responded to the Macdonald Commission's report It's Implication for Women in 1985. The predictions of opening job possibilities reflected a different reality. A reality that has been actualized.

In 1987, Marjorie Griffin Cohen, NAC's vice-president at the time published Free Trade and the Future of Women's Work, Manufacturing and Service Industries. It predicted that free trade was more likely to increase unemployment among women. We have now experienced four years of the FTA. This impact has affected the lives of families, communities, and the work place of millions of Canadian women and men.

What was detrimental to women in the FTA will be entrenched worsening the situation with NAFTA.

## THE ISSUES:

**UNEMPLOYMENT** is currently the third highest among the 24 industrialized countries; Canada's recession is the worst. Aspects include: the loss of jobs in manufacturing; the implications for data entry jobs, related to information processing.

**PART-TIME** employment is growing. Women are increasingly being pushed out of sectors where we once held secure jobs and into more "precarious" employment. This is what the Economic Council refers to as "bad jobs" in the 90's. In November 1992, 26.9 % of all women employed in the formal work force held part-time jobs, as compared to 9.6 % of men. Women are currently more than 70 % of the part-time workforce.

**HOMEWORK** continues to be of concern. No contracts, no benefits, no supervision of working conditions, no enforcement of minimum wage. In Toronto, some homeworkers were found to be earning as

little as \$1.00 per hour. Workers must provide their own equipment, pay hydro and operating costs. Out of 36,000 workers in the garment industry in Quebec, 26,000 are estimated by the industry to be "underground" workers. In Toronto, estimates vary between 2,000 to 4,000 homeworkers, only seventy-five of which are currently registered by employers.

**SOCIAL PROGRAMS** have been called our "safety net". We have relied on these programs to assist in making ends meet when times are hard. Now is not the time to cut these programs short. Government has compounded the situation by increased unemployment and declining working conditions. The threat to social programs like family allowance, unemployment insurance and medicare will only hurt those already at the edge. The move to privatization of social services and health is being accelerated. This move is well represented by BILL C-91. Extending patent protection from 4 years to 20 years on prescription drugs will mean an added 500 million dollars a year in prescription drug costs to Canadians who are already feeling high costs of medication. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives states that by 1998, several provinces will no longer be receiving federal funds for health care, depriving Ottawa of its only means of enforcing the Canada Health Act.

With the erosion of Canada's health care system comes **POVERTY**. It impacts directly on women who will take the brunt of care for sick family members and the care of children and seniors within the family.

## WE BELIEVE THIS GOVERNMENT HAS NO MANDATE TO IMPLEMENT THE NAFTA.

As with the Referendum NAC has offered **ALTERNATIVES**. Working in conjunction with women from the U.S., Mexico and Canada women are showing the way. In 1991 women met in Valle de Bravo, Mexico to discuss the impact. Shared results were job losses, decline in living and labour standards, cuts in social programs and increasing unemployment and poverty. The alternatives were derived from the work done in January of this year. NAC participated in a tri-national non-governmental meeting in Mexico to analyze the NAFTA and to develop alternatives. The final declaration once again puts forward the need for a different kind of agreement between our

three countries, a pact that rather than accelerate the deterioration of living conditions would promote continental development, including trade.

A trade and development agreement would assert a social agenda that is not included in the current agreement. This agenda would include measures to ensure employment and the increase of salaries to levels that guarantee a decent quality of life throughout the continent. Labour rights violations should be considered as unfair trade practices subject to trade sanctions. Workers and other affected citizens should have full access and satisfactory participation in trade conflict resolution mechanisms.

A trade and development agreement must be passed on the principles of sustainable development, resource conservation, and the protection of the environment. The people have a right to full access, information and participation in all procedures related to the resolution of environmental problems. It is necessary to include mechanisms and sufficient financing to improve laws, environmental dense institutions, and the transference of environmental technology.

A trade and development agreement should include compensatory funds to improve infrastructure, harmonize standards of living to the highest levels, and to alleviate the social costs of integration. They should be designed to ensure community control over funds and to reinforce local efforts to improve environment and labour standards. Such funds could be financed in several ways, including taxes on foreign investment and debt relief.

A trade and development agreement should include a commitment to the principles of democracy and full respect for integral human rights. Violations of such rights must be prohibited and linked to market success.

The future is our own. Only by demanding the abrogation of the Free Trade Agreement and standing united against the NAFTA can we begin to repair the damage done by the **CORPORATE AGENDA**. We have a voice. Let's hear it.



# BEING FEMALE IS . . .

by Sandy Wilson

Women often feel uncomfortable in their doctor's office. They may feel they won't be believed or heard. Perhaps they just plain can't understand medical jargon.

These feelings are not part of your imagination. Medical language, therapy and communication may be gender biased. This bias is covert and insidious. It may result in consequences not fully understood by the female patient.

For example, a female patient may feel depressed after the birth of her child. It is true that hormones play a part in this condition but so does the fact that, perhaps, her husband is working longer hours at the office and she misses the companionship of her colleagues at her old job. She may be diagnosed with 'post partum depression.' Socioeconomic details in her life are not really a part of this diagnosis. Perhaps labelling her with 'husband goes vacant' is more descriptive as a label, regardless, she is labelled as pathological. This problem now adds to her previous problems. Perhaps she is now placed on medication.

Now that this 'problematic' and medicated woman is labelled, society can dismiss the complex problem of women's inequality. Medication is expressive. Dulling one's abilities to learn and to use coping strategies effectively keeps this woman from being assertive, angry and heard in a patriarchal world. Better that women complain of feeling drowsy, dopey or depressed as history has described us than to make demands for equal child rearing practices. It is not just diagnoses that contribute to poor help

and bad feelings for women in health care, gender bias is reflected in medical language and communication as well.

In 1971, Ruth Cooperstock, a sociologist in Canada, interviewed doctors and had them explain the 'typical, complaining patient.' Of these physicians, 72% referred to the female patient. A more in depth analysis of this data revealed gender problems with communication. Men, it was found, tend to describe their symptoms, which women describe their symptoms, and "explain how they make her feel." This fact reflects subjective interpretation of the word 'complaining.' Perhaps a feminist reading would conclude that men withdraw while women open up when discussing health concerns. The point is if doctors think men are 'describing' when they are in fact suicidal and that women are 'complaining' when they are just describing, incorrect treatment will follow. Gender bias in diagnoses, language and communication make being female hazardous to your health.

Besides gender bias infiltrations in medicine, I suggest that women may be subjected to "paternalism" in the office visit. Medical paternalism may be an unconscious process for physicians. For example, women, particularly women in, or leaving, abusive relationships, will not find paternalism helpful....the developmental task these women are trying to achieve is a "reclaiming of autonomy." Feminists suggest a cooperative relationship between physician and patient. Words like "it will be okay, dear", or "I'll make your decisions" do not satisfy the developmental needs of these women. In fact the physician who is controlling

will signify the women's abuser whether this is or is not realistic. Past feelings of fear and helplessness will resurface in the victims. Physicians may write "on welfare", "sexually promiscuous" or "wearing no make-up" on the chart. These practices reflect sexist, classist values. They reinforce patriarchal agendas from out there in the rest of the world, rather than promote a woman's health.

These examples reflect gender bias in medicine. The media, your mother, father and female friends may be as guilty as the social construct of medicine, of using language that does not reflect a health self-concept for the female. Women, themselves, often use the phrase "on the rag" to describe menstruation. A mother who explains that "down there" is "Whatever" is not giving words to name her daughter's experience. A girl with no name for her clitoris can only relate to this part of her body through mystery and fear. Perhaps she will disassociate and not relate to it at all. A young girl who hears that some pharmacy company has a pill which will "cure" her of menstrual cramps, is set to feel badly about her body. With the advance of Aids, I suggest now, more than ever, young teenage girls need words to describe their body parts accurately. They need words to manage the imbalances between men and women when they negotiate sex. Words are important, like contraception! Words express, create and empower women. For example, women who believe the uterus is an integral part of their psychological and physical make-up feel less pain at birth than women who believe the uterus is an involuntary muscle.

Depo-Provera... legalized drug pushers unite in 1993, by Arja Lane

Depo-provera is rearing its controversial head in Canada again, and you'd think that after twenty years of saying NO to its use here we would be taken seriously.

But no... now that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration finally approved the use of depo-provera as a contraceptive for domestic use in 1991, it is being promoted and distributed to Canadian women as a contraceptive, despite the fact that this drug has not received government approval here.

This injectable contraceptive is attractive at first glance because it fits into the fast pace of today's life. You get one injection and you won't get pregnant for anywhere from three to six months. There is nothing to remember, there is nothing to fuss with during sex.

## DEPO-PROVERA

It's easy, for everybody, except maybe the body that absorbs the shock of the process which the injection begins as it stops you from ovulating.

Even though none of the side effects documented over the last twenty years have disappeared (headaches, nausea, weight gain, severe depression, and loss of sexual drive); and even though the drug's links to various sorts of cancers (mainly breast and cervical) is presently its major risk factor to women using it... the Upjohn Company of Canada has found a way to distribute depo-provera to women in Canada, alongside the 90 or so other countries whose women shoot depo-provera to prevent pregnancy.

Canada's Health and Welfare's Health Protection Branch doesn't approve depo-provera being marketed in Canada according to its February 1, 1993 briefing on the status of this drug, which states basically that the risks outweigh the benefits, so NO it cannot be advertised or sold here by the manufacturer. A notice of non-compliance was issued by the Upjohn Company of Canada, December 1992, which means that Upjohn can't sell it or advertise its use as a contraceptive in Canada.



# DANGEROUS TO

Alcoholics Anonymous has known the value of words. Alcoholic Anonymous clients begin their meetings stating "I am an alcoholic". The rhetoric transforms them. I say, "because I take up this present space with these words, I claim what I am, I end the denial of the past. I commit to something new."

The implications of this article are too immense for this paper. Women must believe themselves. If words and labels do not match their experience, in a health care setting, they must be retracted, resisted and reformed by herself. Take back those things, words and labels that do belong. The best indication of your health is you, not the x-ray machine, the doctor or the lab test.

A frustrated sixteen

year old post-anorexic

explains her past

complaints of male

therapists.

"I was, literally,

dying for existence

....every time I met

a male therapist he

began treatment by

saying....

"who is your boyfriend?"

# ONE'S HEALTH

Pretend all your life you have had no voice...pretend that you realized long ago that if you were nice to people they would like you and they would need you and then, even though you don't have a usual voice, at least you exist...but then pretend how it feels to have no voice and to have all these people needing you to the point that you feel awful so you run, run, run into the arms of someone else who needs but you still don't have a voice...and then one day he hurts you...badly... so you run, run, run to your physician but your physician needs you too...he needs you to tell him you're okay and to ingratiate him and give approval and you still don't have a voice and he tells you to do something...but you know you don't want to or don't need to but you do it...to please him but it doesn't seem to help yet he wants you to pretend it does so you run, run, run... and you meet a feminist doctor and she says nothing...and you sit there, stunned at first, at all this waste of time, and vastness and space but you say...I've been hurt...and she still says nothing...but she smiles gently...so you say I've been hurt many times...and more words keep coming...but she still says nothing...and there is quiet and peace and she smiles and says "tell me how I can help". And you've never heard anyone ask you this before...and suddenly you have a story, and suddenly it's complete, and suddenly you sense what you need and you say it...and suddenly it's like you are in the driver's seat and in control but not alone...and suddenly you want to talk and talk and talk and write essays about the subject and show videos and suddenly you start to feel joy, and space, and happiness...and you know she's always there and she demands nothing from you...and suddenly you find yourself being completely honest with this woman...and you wonder why...and you realize that she gave you all this vastness, and space and respect and she trusts you and this makes you want to be very, very honest and never deceive her and you say more and more...and you feel safe and suddenly you realize that this is how you should always feel...and it gets easier and easier to get to this safe place...and she shows you tricks on how to get there when you need to...and you meet other women just like you and you start to help them speak and you realize that women seldom lie, they can be trusted and should be trusted...and now you speak to family members and laugh at their responses...and friends and men and doctors... and it gets easier and easier...and now you're working with some passion...speaking through art or writing or making love and then...imagine what it feels to ever be silenced again.

## DEPO

But, this doesn't mean that depo-provera cannot be distributed in Canada to women. For one thing, depo-provera has been available for use as a treatment for endometriosis, a type of cancerous growth that accumulates around the uterus, since the early 1960s. (Ironical, since it is also linked to causing other types of cancers.)

And, apparently the Health Protection Branch's lack of approval for marketing depo-provera doesn't stop doctors from prescribing it to women because the Health Protection Branch's ruling don't rule how doctors execute the practice of medicine.

For example, twenty years ago, some doctors prescribed depo-provera to women in Ontario facilities for the mentally retarded, and some doctors thought it was okay to use on teenage girls in group homes in Winnipeg.

An inquiry into its use on the mentally retarded, in 1980, revealed higher than normal levels of breast tumours in the women taking depo-provera.

Regardless, during the fall of 1985, the manufacturer, Upjohn Company of Canada lobbied the Canadian government officials to approve depo-provera for use here as a contraceptive.

The NDP's Cyril Keeper asked the then Minister of Health and Welfare, Jake Epp, for public hearings about the controversial contraceptive "so that women can have their say."

## PROVERA

Public interest groups like the Ottawa Coalition of Depo-provera were still, in 1985, saying that "Its safety hasn't been well enough proven."

Canadian Health officials didn't approve it for public use as a contraceptive then, and they haven't since then.

Yet, because of a legal loophole, depo-provera can be obtained from any doctor who believes the benefit to a patient outweighs the risk . . . providing, of course, the 'consumer' has consented.

At quick glance this seems like the consumer is exercising choice, but in reality this scenario doesn't necessarily lead to informed decision-making.

continued pg 10

## INTRODUCTION

In September 1990, Ontario voters elected their first NDP government. Feminist reaction to the NDP's surprising victory ranged from ecstatic to guardedly optimistic. Certainly our hopes were raised, as the NDP was known to be supportive of feminist issues, and had developed policies that addressed, at least some, of our concerns. We were heartened as well, by the record number of women appointed to Cabinet. We were pleased that some of these women came with a background of grass roots activism which would introduce a feminist analysis into Cabinet discussions.

Now, two years later, we believe it is time to undertake an evaluation of just how our government has performed in respect to women's issues. Thus, we present this "report card".

We take as a basis for our evaluation the analysis and recommendations of the Northwestern Ontario Women's Issues report presented to the government by Decade Council immediately after the election.

## WOMEN AND DECISION MAKING

**That the Ontario government actively encourage policy to ensure gender parity on all appointed boards/commissions.**

We believe the government is moving towards achieving this recommendation. Steps have been taken to promote equity for all under-represented groups on government boards/commissions.

B+

**That the Ontario government take steps to promote women's participation and perspective in all public consultations.**

Indeed, the government has enthusiastically embraced the concept of public consultation. In fact, some of us are close to consultation burn-out.

On the surface it appears that the government should get top marks for their consultative initiatives. But while participation is encouraged, there is no assurance that the government will act on women's recommendations.

Listening doesn't necessarily translate into action. For example, consultations around Provincial Municipal Social Services Review (PMSSR) elicited serious criticism from women (and many Northern groups) and we believed that PMSSR was shelved. However, we find many of the concerns we had about PMSSR now re-emerging in the "Disentanglement" process that involves only the provincial government and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO). Community interests, including women, are excluded from the Disentanglement discussions.



# REPORT

A further example comes from the government's planning process regarding strategies to ending male violence, where the serious concerns identified by women's groups/survivors about batterers programs were ignored.

There appears to be an expectation that women's groups (with our inadequate resources) will "jump hoop" and participate in every consultation - often with little notice. We do extend ourselves to participate, and when our input is ignored the government risks our growing cynicism.

C

## EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

**That the Ontario government legislate full employment equity.**

A broad-based consultation process has occurred regarding employment, and the concerns of social development and human rights advocates appear to have been given fair consideration. We anticipate that employment equity legislation will be enacted in the near future.

B

**That the Ontario government amend pay equity legislation to include establishments of less than 10 employees and female dominated workplaces.**

Pay equity has long been a priority with the NDP and during the first year of their mandate progress was made to address inadequacies in pay equity legislation, thus establishing a firmer base on which a truly progressive pay equity program could proceed. Consequently, we are severely shocked by the recent government announcement that pay equity amendments will be delayed by one year. While we sympathize with the government's financial woes, we find it unacceptable that women are disproportionately penalized. The delay in pay equity also raises the question of the government succumbing to pressure by the business lobby, thus risking creating cynicism of communities that traditionally support NDP policies. As the business lobby is predictably opposed to employment equity, we will carefully analyse employment equity legislation and its implementation.



**That the Ontario government ensure that sufficient resources are available to the Pay Equity Commission so that it may properly enforce the legislation.**

While our data is limited we do know of one NDP employee group that have been waiting for more than one year to have their pay equity approval endorsed. This suggests that there are insufficient resources to enforce the legislation.

C

## TRAINING

**That the Ontario government support skill training for women, which would expand their job opportunities in non-traditional, high skilled occupations.**

**That the Ontario Government adopt a strategy for Northwestern Ontario to assist women's access to training and jobs in resource based employment.**

**That the Ontario government support a designated number of positions for women in all publicly funded training programs for non-traditional occupations (including apprenticeships and on-the-job training).**

The Canadian Job Strategies Program has established a partnership covering the federal, provincial and local levels. All training programs will be addressed through the Canadian Labour Force Development Board (FLFDB), the Ontario Training Adjustment Board (OTAB), and the Local Labour Force Development Board (LLFDB). Women's representation on these boards, while inadequate, has been assured. One of the major problems with the strategy is the targeting for training individuals who are eligible for Unemployment Insurance. This criteria will severely limit access to programs by northern women including the following groups: women re-entering the workforce, single parent mother collecting local assistance rather than U.I., immigrant women, virtually any woman not collecting UI. A training strategy which presents barriers for large numbers of women is contrary to recommendations to the Ontario government from Northwestern Ontario women.

D-

**That the Ontario government proceed with consultations with the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care and other specific geographical groups such as the Northwestern Ontario Regional Day Care Committee to develop a system of accessible, affordable, quality child care for children who require these services.**

# CARD



To achieve an accessible, affordable, high-quality child care system, the provincial government must undertake a fundamental restructuring of child care funding and management.

The most significant step the government has taken occurred in November, 1991, with the decision to support future expansion of child care in the non-profit sector **only**. This decision establishes a firm base for the development of a quality system, and is applauded by child care advocates. The decision has been vociferously opposed by the for-profit child care operators, their business lobby allies, and the opposition parties (despite the fact that this policy was part of the Liberals 1987 New Directions for Child Care). Marion Boyd, Minister of Community and Social Services, deserves praise for her unwavering commitment to this important policy direction.

During 1992 the government consulted broadly throughout the province concerning "child care reform". We looked forward to implementation of significant reforms in early 1993. We understand that the target date for reform implementation has been set back to January 1994. We are seriously frightened by this delay.

In Northwestern Ontario we are witnessing a rapid escalation of the day care crisis that has been with us for more than a decade. Centres have closed; municipal government support is eroding; and more and more families are forced to withdraw from licensed child care as fee increases make the cost of care exorbitant. If reform doesn't happen soon, there may be no child care left to reform.

The NDP's long established child care policies are supported by child care advocates. The government's good intentions about child care must be translated into action.



Suzanne Camu

## PROVINCIAL MUNICIPAL SOCIAL SERVICE REVIEW

**That the Ontario Government ensure that services for women and children are not further penalized by implementation of recommendations of the Report of the Provincial Municipal Social Service Review, in respect to community based support services and programs.**

**That the Ontario Government ensure that Northern Ontario communities do not suffer further regional disparity in social services due to the burden of additional costs being assessed to Northern Ontario municipalities.**

With the election of the Ontario NDP government, we hoped that the 1990 PMSSR report was a "dead document". At present, the Ontario government is negotiating a "disentanglement process" with municipalities. PMSSR remains a reference tool to that process. PMSSR recommends greater financial contribution to and greater discretionary powers over community support services. There is a need for vigilance as the government continues through the disentanglement process.

## VIOLENCE

**That the Ontario Government provide adequate, secure funding for quality services for battered women and their children and sexual assault survivors.**

**That the Ontario Government effect an in-depth consultation process between government and community based women's organizations advocating on behalf of victims of violence to ensure that local concerns and priorities are reflected in future policies, programs and legislation.**

**That the Ontario Government address the long-term needs of battered women and their children, including additional long-term affordable housing and training and employment programs.**

**That the Ontario Government ensure that family dispute resolution legislation and programs not place battered women and their children at risk.**

**That the Ontario Government become active partners with community based women's organizations working to eliminate violence against women in Ontario.**

The Ontario Government has maintained the issue of violence against women as a priority. They have attempted to work in concert with community women to ensure support programs are in place, realizing many shared achievements. Concerns remain where the government's accountability to women is tempered with their desire to please all segments of society. Initiatives responding to men's rights groups (the focus on batterers programs), professionals (the focus on mediation), the federal government (restricting training opportunities), and municipalities (PMSSR/ Disentanglement) continue to leave women and women's services at risk.

A-

## FAYE PETERSON TRANSITION HOUSE

**That the Ontario Government ensure that battered women from Northwestern Ontario who are unable to be served by other shelters, have access to safety and shelter through the provision of capital and operation funds to provide an adequate facility for the operation of Faye Peterson Transition House and support services.**

January 1992 saw the opening of the new facility for the operation of Faye Peterson Transition House. The new government came through on its promise of an adequate facility for regional battered women. Accolades to the Hon. Shelley Wark-Martyn and the Hon. Shelley Martel (responsible for the capital dollars) and the Hon. Marion Boyd (operational dollars) for translating their commitment to battered women into political will and action.

A+

## SEXUAL ASSAULT

**That the Ontario government ensure the stability of funding for community-based, grass roots sexual assault services and in particular, services in northern and isolated communities.**

There has been some stabilization of rape crisis centres although there are still too many hoops and hurdles to manoeuvre through in accessing funds from different sources.

There is concern that the merger of the wife assault and the sexual assault initiatives will affect centres funding.

Mainstream groups, many of whom were the strongest opponents of groups doing anti-violence work and who suddenly have a burning desire to do this work, need to have the support of community-based, grass roots groups, and a gender analysis of violence in order to access funds.

B

That the Ontario government, through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, implement specific training programs for professionals interfacing with victims/ survivors of sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse; in particular, the health, education and legal systems.

While funding has been provided for research, public education, and safety audits, we are not aware of any action to implement the necessary curriculum changes.

C-

That the Ontario government implement mandatory training on the issue of sexual assault for existing health and legal personnel including judges, police, lawyers, doctors, nurses.

While funding has been made available to groups willing to undertake training, implementation of mandatory training has not been forthcoming.

C

#### WOMEN'S CENTRES

That the Ontario Government recognize the valuable work of Women's centres in women's advancement to equality, by providing core funding to Ontario Women's Centres.

After many months of speculative waiting, Ontario's Women's Centres were rewarded in May, 1993 by the government announcement of \$50,000 per year core funding for two years to twenty centres. While applauding this government move a sceptic might question the timing- with government cutbacks to internal services and transfer agencies: will Women's Centres be expected to pick up the pieces?

A

Two areas not covered in Decade's "Issues" paper but that deserve our comment are:

#### ABORTION

The Ontario government has been consistent in its support for women's reproductive freedom. Strong representation was made by Hon. Anne Swarbeck and Hon. Evelyn Gigantes in opposition to the federal government's attempt to re-criminalize abortion. The Ontario government was the first in Canada to fully fund free-standing abortion clinics, is indicating increased support for free-standing clinics, and is undertaking measures to counteract harassment of clinics, their staff, and patients. As well the Northern Health Travel Grants Program has been expanded to help women in remote areas cover abortion-related costs.

A

#### LABOUR REFORM

This long-awaited reform of the Ontario Labour Relations Act, while providing some amendments that will be beneficial to women, was severely modified (to appease the business lobby) and falls far short of what is needed. The amendments provide a bit more security for part-time workers, mall retail workers, workers for cleaning services, some food service workers, and for workers of nanny or homemaker agencies. Judgments or complaints about unfair labour practices would be speeded up. However, there is no protection for the domestic worker or baby-sitter that is the sole employee. Strike-breaking laws are insufficient, and unionized workers under federal jurisdiction will not be protected if transferred to provincial jurisdiction. (See full article NWJ Vol. 14 #3.)

B-

#### CONCLUSION

Our evaluation of the NDP record at this half-way point in its first mandate is mixed. While the NDP are given top marks for certain positions and initiatives, there are too many areas where necessary progress has failed to occur. The barriers to women's equality have not come tumbling down- have not even been cracked. In a NWJ article (Dec. 1990) analyzing what the NDP victory might mean we asked "Is there hope for women in an NDP Ontario?" We are still asking that question. We can only restate what we said then: "What the election of the NDP means for feminists is that we have to work harder than we've ever worked before. We must keep the feminist agenda visible and vocal ... every hour of every day. Our advocacy must be brilliant, creative, practical and empowering. And it must be relentless."

#### AFTERWORD

Since first preparing this article we are faced with the recent Ontario budget and the government's proposed "social contract", which at this writing appears to be rejected by most unions and many groups. We make no attempt to analyze the social contract per se. We respect the government's need for financial control, but are not persuaded that an increased deficit would create the serious crisis that is portrayed. We support moves for greater government efficiency. We insist, however, that government cost saving must not impact front-line workers, nor restrict necessary government services. And we insist that progress on issues of justice and equality must not be delayed. We suggest that if the government stopped dragging their feet and just got on with programs and policies on justice and equality issues (e.g. child care, employment equity) that the support of community activists would be renewed and the criticism of the social contract thus mitigated. The failure to move on substantive social issues will only cause a further erosion of support.

## DEPO-PROVERA

Imagine a newcomer to Canada who doesn't speak english going to a doctor who doesn't speak anything but english, who then tries to explain to her, in english, the side effects of depo-provera. Even if she brings a translator with her, there will be some things lost in the translating process.

How can we then pretend that women will be making informed decisions about the drug when this is a reality?

Meanwhile, the Upjohn Company of Canada has put together a product monogram of Depo-Provera 150. This product monogram, or promotional info-kit, is available at the Resource Centre of the Bay Street Birth Control Clinic in Toronto, and the drug itself is presently being distributed through the same clinic.



Who has really created the need for this injectable contraceptive in Canada? Has the need for depo-provera been created by the women in Canada, or are we another market-target for Upjohn to manipulate into profits?

# BOOK REVIEW

## REVOLUTION FROM WITHIN

by Alice Sabourin

In my early years as a young woman, I unknowingly invested and over a ten year period lost incredible amounts of personal, mental and emotional energy and unmarked hours guessing at what the correct and desirable way to act, think and respond to life situations as they presented themselves. The underlying premise was to try and make my existence legitimate given the political, social and cultural terms I was faced with. With the passing of time and coming into my own, I am less inclined to try and outguess the other person and truthfully decide on what is right for me in that situation without fear of consequence or loss. This has caused others frustration, grief and surprise because as time passed, seemingly out of no where came a forceful energy which has been at times chaotic, and misdirected. To visualize this transition one could imagine a pool game where the pool player is determined to pocket the ball in one corner but instead, it develops a spin of its very own and ends up off the side into the opposite pocket! Changes within myself although internal have not always been planned nor have followed an agenda. Rather an emulation of a winter snow fall, indirect free flowing and followed by a time of calm and solitude. As the snow falls from the sky and covers the earth, changes within myself have involved and effected in some way or another every other single human and non human in my universe. This circular momentum has been referred to in the social science field as cybernetics, a futuristic concept as old as time itself.

The interest to read Gloria Steinem's Revolution from Within was timely having recognized that I am at a different place in my life than I was ten years ago and that I am also embarking on a new era of my future. Doing this review would provide an opportunity to think about her life then and now, and to gain some insight to Steinem's shift in perspective at this time of her life.

Secondly, I was interested in considering

the feminist perspective and how it compares and contrasts to Native philosophy and principles of living. The next several months will be spent stealing a few moments here and there to do this, as I am certain the author is worthy or observation and study.

Gloria Steinem provides a complimenting array of references from previous studies, academic as well as humanitarian commentary on various elements of her involvement with the feminist movement from the very beginning in the early 1950's to the present. Having read Revolution from Within, I made some wonderful discoveries and as the cover implies, Steinem's holds no bars in sharing her own experiences and life learning. In doing so answered some questions I had not yet put words to.

What I enjoyed about this book was the back and forth movement across the centuries, continents and cultures. Perspectives and insights by both men, women, young and old some serious, some sad, and others I would want to read again and again to understand.

Steinem doesn't talk outside of herself but rather delves into the seasons of her life and the significant connections to people, places and circumstances. Acceptance is heard throughout the narrative giving understanding and compassion to various times where her humanity in its fullness. This allowed for both mistakes, successes, vision and blindness, connection and openness amongst peers. I have left reading this book understanding the universality of life and the common search for love and acceptance, for friendship and ultimately to be at one with self. Steinem moved from my head to my heart in that she is no longer a "leader of the feminist movement" but rather a "fellow traveller" on this great journey of life.

Alice Sabourin is an Ojibwe woman from Heron Bay; she is currently working on a Master's degree on Native Women's Healing at Lakehead University.



Introducing the . . .

### SUPERIOR WOMEN'S COFFEEHOUSE

Saturday, July 24, 1993  
Unitarian House  
129 S. Algoma  
8:00 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT and  
REFRESHMENTS  
(non-alcoholic)

\$2.00 at the door  
(or more if you can)

"CELEBRATING THUNDER BAY WOMEN"



**1929** The Person's Case signalled a huge victory for the women of Canada. Those who wanted to enter politics could now be appointed to the Senate. But that didn't mean women would have an easy time finding their way into Parliament's Upper Chamber. For while laws had changed, attitudes hadn't.

**1992** Women make up 52% of the population — yet they continue to be underrepresented in Canada's decision-making institutions.

- \* Women hold 15 out of a total of 95 seats in the Canadian Senate.
- \* Women hold 40 seats out of a total of 200 in the House of Commons.
- \* Women hold two seats out of a total of nine on the Supreme Court of Canada.

# BOOK REVIEW

## A Chorus of Stones: The Private Life of War

"The hard surface of stone is impervious to nothing in the end. The heat of the sun leaves evidence of daylight. Each drop of rain changes the form; even the wind and the air itself, invisible to our eyes, etches its presence."

In the long awaited **A Chorus of Stones: The Private Life of War**, author Susan Griffin explores the collectively denied interconnections between our private lives and public events with emphasis on both the causes and the effects of war. Within this grand theme of the personal as political, Griffin shares her own family's stories as well as the stories of many well-known and not so well-known people of the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. This work invites the reader to participate in the processes of reflection and connection as the author explores the themes of denial and secrets, contradiction and connection.

"...Somehow I have always known this story, its essence, without ever having been told. For, on hearing it, I feel like the penitent must-have felt after rendering a confession. Suddenly the light itself by which I see was purified. A nameless grief now named hence lifted.

I am beginning to believe that we know everything, that all history, including the history of each family, is part of us, such that when we hear any secret revealed, a secret about a grandfather, or an uncle, or a secret about the battle of Dresden in 1945, our lives are made suddenly clearer to us, as the unnatural heaviness of unspoken truth is dispersed. For perhaps we are like stones; our own history and the history of the world embedded in us, we hold a sorrow deep within and cannot weep until that history is sung."

This book is presented in six overlapping sections, and Griffin uses several interweaving streams of writing to explore her themes. She narrates the development of projectile weaponry, strategic bombing, rocketry and nuclear weapons. She describes cellular and molecular biology and atomic structure. She explores the personal stories of people who were instrumental in the development and the deployment of our modern weapons as well as the stories of people who as workers and soldiers

were part of the process.

In describing early nuclear weapons testing, Griffin presents the reminiscence of soldiers deployed in trenches around the test sites: "Though their eyelids were shut, they could see the bones in their hands." Their horror and their ongoing attempts to seek acknowledgement of the effects of their exposure to the nuclear explosions, as well as compensation for damages suffered through exposure to radiation, have to date proven to be without reward. While describing the absence of thorough training for the operators of nuclear power plants, Griffin states:

"Yet perhaps it is the very extremity of the danger, bordering as it does on the continuity of life itself, the desire for safety as an ultimate state that seals away all fear as if into a foreign country, the wish for a miraculous, mysterious security won not so much by practical effort, or even through theoretical understanding, but by the determination to keep on in one direction despite every indication of trouble, hence vanquishing not only this danger but all catastrophe and every mortal mistake by a sheer act of will, a terrible fear of danger that causes this denial of danger."

Griffin examines the formative influences on men, and some women, who exerted influence on the course of history both for good and for bad: Heinrich Himmler (the bureaucrat behind the Final Solution), Enrico Fermi (the first scientist to produce a nuclear fission chain reaction), Sir Hugh Trenchard (the father of both the RAF and the practice of strategic bombing of civilians), Ghandi and Walt Whitman (who were both military nurses), Franz Kafka, Ernest Hemingway, Ernest Rutherford, Sigmund Freud and Daniel Paul Schreiber, Rita Hayworth, Ernest Hemingway, and Charlotte Solomon, to name a few.

In exploring the link between denial and destruction, Griffin examines her own past, her mother and father, grandparents and their family secrets. She places them in connected context and recognizes the influences of world events on the dynamic of her family:

"How is it that in the past I did not put together the two histories which I lived through to make one history? Now I can see clearly that my mother's alcoholism and the small

suicides of omission practised by my father are part of the history of the Second World War and the Cold war that followed. That terrible stunning violence and then the silencing pall which proceeded from it did not stop at the doorsteps of our homes. Everyone became less visible, less."

The final section of the book is comprised by Griffin's own diary entries dated from the periods preceding and encompassing the 1991 war in Iraq, and her reflections upon the lives of a painter and of a writer; Charlotte Solomon and Ernest Hemingway. The two artists are connected by intergenerational suicides whereby Charlotte "... created this work to save her life", in order to escape the cycle of destruction - a chain of suicides that included aunts, uncles, cousins, a grandmother and mother; and whereby Ernest Hemingway, like his father, succumbed to suicide after receiving electroshock therapy for depression. Griffin calls this final section 'Notes towards a sketch for a work in progress'. As she examines all of the stories in this work she concludes:

"At the end of this long book about many kinds of denial, I want to write about bearing witness to events in such a way that they become lucid, their inner life revealed. When light is shed in this way, can it not change the course of events? I find Charlotte's story especially pertinent now because she addresses the question of self-destruction. I have come to believe that our shared movement toward nuclear war is a movement toward mass suicide."



## Book Review continued

Susan Griffin's book is haunting and dream-disturbing, by its nature it invites the reader to participate and to reflect. Thus it is affirming of own's own connections/links made between seemingly disparate events. As well, it is a work that encourages the reader to consider both the need and the responsibility to speak up, to speak out, to tell one's story and to listen to the stories of others'. For as Griffin states:

"...all the lives that surround us are in us... it is all one story..."

During the time that I was musing over this book, I read an article in the most recent issue of MS. entitled "Paternal Legacy: How 'Normalized' Terror At Home Creates The Soldier". The article is written by a former U.S. Special Forces soldier who reflects on the origins of those men who revel in the military: "A lot of us who excel as soldiers were kicked around as kids and are mad as hell at the world..." , and in a larger context: "If you don't believe you're immortal, mistreat a child. Your demons will live on..."

Click.

Michele Proulx



Widows

I've discovered that widows are respectable, unlike deserted wives. Widows make people feel uncomfortable only until the formalities of sympathy are done.

So lonely again, at least this time I am respectable,  
Even respectable,  
'Though not, of course, socially a plus as a widower would be.

Never mind, I have my special friends and my children.  
They care. They comfort.  
It's me who hangs back  
Dreading to become a weight on their minds.

Anyway, it's Cory's birthday soon,  
Complete with party.  
A day to be anticipated with pure pleasure;  
A bright spot on a rather blank horizon.

Gerry Black

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## SLOW DANCE WITH WOMEN

Dance with me.  
It isn't done, you say,  
Women dancing together?  
But I assure you it is,  
And when it is done well  
Without fear  
Or guilt  
Or morbid self-searching  
(That is - naturally)  
It can change the shape of the world.  
There is nothing like  
The twofold softness  
Of women together  
To dull the cutting edges  
Of myriad oppressions  
And to soften  
The hard corners of life.

We will lead each other

We will dance  
Swaying in the jaws of the lion  
We will dance  
In the eye of the hurricane  
We will dance  
War into peace  
Hatred into love  
Death into life

We will dance  
In the glare  
Of patriarchy's searchlight  
And shatter it  
Into a million stars

And even if  
They  
Stop the music  
Our dance will go on.

Gerry Clarke

4/4/93



# BOOKS FOR SUMMER READING

By Margaret Phillips

It's hard to believe that a year has passed since I prepared last year's summer reading list. Hopefully this year we will get a nice enough summer that we can lie on the beach with a pile of novels.

I want to begin this column by extending our congratulations to Elizabeth Kouhi on the publication of her latest book, **ESCAPE TO WHITE OTTER CASTLE**. This new children's novel is a delightful story, set in the 1920's of 12 year old Harry and 9 year old Lucy and their adventures as they travel (escape) from Ignace to White Otter Castle. As always, Kouhi weaves an exciting tale and evokes wonderful northern images that will give pleasure to adult readers as well as a younger audience. **ESCAPE TO WHITE OTTER CASTLE** is a truly Northwestern Ontario endeavour. As well as its setting and historical value - the author, the illustrator, Marion Storm, and the publisher, Elinor Barr's Singing Shield Productions - are all Thunder Bay women. We're also pleased to note that Elizabeth Kouhi's **SARAH JANE OF SILVER ISLET** is back in print.

**KATHERINE AND THE GARBAGE DUMP** is another recent children's book from a Northwestern Ontario author, Martha Morris of Atikokan. Young readers will enjoy Katherine's determination as she solves her "garbage problem".

Other children's books to note include:

**DISCOVER THE WORLD: Empowering Children to Value Themselves, Others and the Earth**, edited by Susan Hopkins and Jeffrey Winters

**MADDIE IN GOAL** by Louise LeBlanc

**THE MOONLIGHT HIDE & SEEK CLUB IN THE POLLUTION SOLUTION** by Rosamund Elwin and Michele Paulse

**NAME CALLING** by Itah Sadv

**PEOPLE OF THE BUFFALO: How the Plains Indians Lived** by Maria Campbell

**A WALK IN THE RAINFOREST** by Kristin Joy Prait



## FICTION

Now on to adult fiction.

The top of the list is, of course, **THE FIFTH SACRED THING**, Starhawk's first published fiction. Every "burnt-out" activist must read this magnificent novel. This book has given me more hope than anything I've read in years. Marion Zimmer Bradley declares **THE FIFTH SACRED THING** is "slated to be one of the great visionary Utopian novels of the century" - high praise indeed. The book is

just out in cloth, thus is expensive - \$26.95. The Bookstore has a reading copy that may be borrowed - call to get on the list (which is quite long).

Fans of Rita Mae Brown will welcome her newest novel, **VENUS ENVY**, where "Frazier" who thinks she's dying tells all. But it is a mistake - she is very much alive and must deal with the consequences of her truth telling. "... (Frazier) is determined to make a new beginning - as a brash, brazen, and totally irresistible woman who will raise the act of coming out of the closet into a new art form." **VENUS ENVY** is toasted as Brown's best novel since **Rubyfruit Jungle**.

The abundance of wonderful Canadian women writers continues to be impressive. Recent releases include:

Sandra Birdsell's **THE CHROME SUITE; A WHOLE BRASS BAND** by Anne Cameron; **PAPER, SCISSORS, ROCK** by Ann Decter; Leona Gom's **THE Y CHROMOSOME; THE LAST MAGICIAN** by Janet Turner Hospital; **FRIENDS I NEVER KNEW** by Tanya Lester; and Sarah Murphy's **THE DECONSTRUCTION OF WESLEY SMITHSON**.

Also - several short fiction collections: **IMPERFECT MOMENTS: Stories** by Candis Graham; **LOVELY IN THE BONES** by J. Jill Robinson; and Sharon Drache's first collection, **GOLDEN GHETTO**. Newly out in paperback are Joy Kowaga's **ITSUKA**; and **THE REPUBLIC OF LOVE** by Carol Shields.

I particularly want to recommend new fiction by Lee Maracle, whose non-fiction (**I AM WOMAN, BOBBILEE: INDIAN REBEL**) many of you will be familiar with. Maracle, one of the strongest voices in Canadian literature, has two novels this year. **SUNDOGS** is a contemporary novel (influenced by the events of Kahnewache and Meech Lake) that traces Marianne's hopes and anxieties as she learns to deal with her own life within the larger external conflict. The more recent novel **RAVENSONG** just arrived in the Bookstore this week, and I'm looking forward to reading it. It is described... "Set along the Pacific Northwest Coast of the early 1950's, **RAVENSONG** unfolds in an urban Native community devastated by a flu epidemic. Stacey, seventeen and at the brink of adulthood, balances her family's traditional ways against white society's intrusive new values, knowing her future lies in both worlds... In this passionate novel about a young woman's search for answers to difficult questions, Lee Maracle speaks unflinchingly of the gulf between two cultures - a gulf that Raven knows must be bridged. By turns damning, inspirational and prophetic, **RAVENSONG** is a moving drama that sparkles with humour in the midst of tragedy."



Womansline Books

## MYSTERIES

For those of you who insist on escape reading for your summer pleasure we'll move to the mystery section and I'll tell you about a number of interesting Canadian mystery writers.

**ALISON GORDON** who, before turning to mystery writing, was a journalist and broadcaster, and covered the Toronto Blue Jays for the Toronto Star, was the first woman on the American League beat. In the **KATE HENRY MYSTERY SERIES**, Kate is a baseball reporter for the Toronto Planet, who keeps finding herself involved in murder investigations - three of them so far: **THE DEAD PULL HITTER, SAFE AT HOME**, and just out in paperback, **NIGHT GAME**.

**MEDORA SALE**'s series, also based in Toronto, features Detective Inspector John Sanders and photographer Harriet Jeffries. Fast-paced, well-plotted novels, the series includes: **MURDER IN FOCUS, MURDER ON THE RUN**, and **MURDER IN A GOOD CAUSE**.

One of my favourite mystery writers is L.R. WRIGHT. The setting is B.C.'s Sunshine Coast and RCMP Staff Sergeant Karl Alberg is called upon to solve the varying murders in **FALL FROM GRACE, A CHILL RAIN IN JANUARY, SLEEP WHILE I SING**, and **THE SUSPECT**. In several of the mysteries, librarian Cassandra Mitchell has a dominant role, and it is nice to see the portrayal of a strong middle-aged woman. Wright was recipient of the Elgar Award for **THE SUSPECT**.

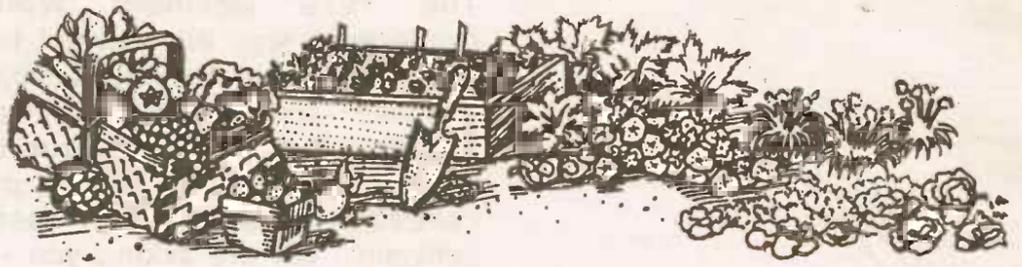
**ELLEN GODFREY** is also a British Columbia writer; she founded Press Porcepic and currently, owns a computer software company. Computer business, technology and intrigue are found in several of her Jane Tregar Mysteries. The most recent, **GEORGIA DISAPPEARED** would have benefited from tighter editing, but I enjoyed **MURDER BEHIND LOCKED DOORS**. I haven't read her earlier books **THE CASE OF THE COLD MURDERER** and **MURDER AMONG THE WELL-TO-DO**.

Still from the West Coast we have **ELIZABETH BOWERS**. Her only novel that I'm aware of is **LADIES NIGHT** featuring private investigator Meg Lacey. I read this a long time ago so I'm hazy about it, but the Toronto Star called it a "superb first novel".

**MARIAN FOSTER** gives us strong lesbian mysteries featuring Toronto lawyer Harriet Fordhaur Croft. **LEGAL TENDER**, published in 1992 is Foster's second novel - preceded by **THE MONARCHS ARE FLYING**.

**GAIL BOWEN** is the Saskatchewan author of the Joanne Kilbourn Mystery series which begins with **DEADLY APPEARANCES. MURDER AT THE MENDEL** (the second in the series) is being adapted as a made for TV film. Personally, I found this novel too filled with ugly characters for my liking - but other mystery fans thought it was wonderful. Haven't yet read **THE WANDERING SOUL MURDERS** which is still in hard cover.

**SWANN:** A literary mystery by CAROL SHIELDS is a superb story and my favourite. Shields, a Winnipeg-based novelist is one of Canada's most highly acclaimed fiction writers.



#### BIOGRAPHIES

There is much high praise for Blanche Wiesser Cook's biography **ELANOR ROOSEVELT Volume 1 1884-1993** (Volume 2 is to follow). Cook's biography is considered to be a more human and accurate portrayal of the life of this interesting brave woman.

**WEDDED TO THE CAUSE:** Ukranian-Canadian Women and Ethnic Identity 1891-1991 is a new book by Frances Swyripa that analyses the images and myths that have grown up around Ukranian-Canadian women, why they arose and how they were used.

For all our francophone readers I want to tell you about a biography by a friend of mine, Lucie Brunet. "Cette biographie brosse non seulement le portrait d'une Franco-Ontarienne de stature nationale - **ALMANDA WALKER-MARCHAND** a fonde la Federation des femmes canadiennes-francaises et en a ete la presidente de 1914 a 1946 - elle a aussi le merite de dresser un parallele entre les visions feministes d'hier et aujourd'hui, grace a une trame fictive qui entre coupe le recit historique et qui l'enrichit sur le plan ideologique. On y decouvre une femme soucieuse de corriger les inegalites sociales de son epoque et determinee a ameliorer les conditions de vie de ses compatriotes, meme si cela exige parfois d'etre politiquement en avance sur son temps."

**JIN GUO:** Voices of Chinese Canadian Women is "a moving and profoundly educational exercise in women recovering our history. The rich contribution of women of Chinese origin to the history of Canada's peoples comes alive in the voices of the women themselves. JIN GUO is a model of feminist herstory." (Judy Rebick, NAC)

Please note that **GERTRUDE AND ALICE** by Diana Souhami is now out in paperback... And then there is - **k.d. lang: Carrying the Torch** by William Robertson.

#### NON-FICTION

High on the non-fiction list are new books by respected writers.

**THE CREATION OF FEMINIST CONSCIOUSNESS:** From The Middle Ages to Eighteen-Seventy is Gerda Lerner's second volume in the Women & History Series (following **THE CREATION OF PATRIARCHY**). "Everyone who thinks about women's thinking should read this book, discover our heritage, and contemplate its interruptions."

**THE WORD OF A WOMAN:** Feminist Dispatches 1968-1992 is Robin Morgan's most recent collection. "Whether you are a twenty-five year veteran of this current wave of feminism or a newcomer, this global journey of a courageous feminist at the cutting edge of the women's movement will inspire, provoke, anger and educate you. This book is destined to be a feminist classic from which we can all learn."

One of the NWB's best-selling books year after year is Harriet Goldhor Lerner's **THE DANCE OF ANGER**. Now Lerner gives us **THE DANCE OF DECEPTION:** Pretending and Truth-Telling in Women's Lives, which explores how and why women "hide the real" and the challenge for women to "live her own truth, to cease living a life dictated and defined by others."

**UNCOILING THE SNAKE** is described as "a brilliant multicultural collection of essays, stories, pictures and poems that illuminate and celebrate women's power to heal." This collection is edited by Vicki Noble, author of **MOTHERPEACE** and **SHAKTI WOMEN**.

Every person who works in an academic institution (or any patriarchal institution for that matter) must read Paula J. Caplan's **LIFTING A TON OF FEATHERS:** A Woman's Guide to Surviving in the Academic World.

Ellen Bass and Laura Davis have done us a tremendous service with **BEGINNING TO HEAL:** A First Book for Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse. Based on **THE COURAGE**

**TO HEAL,** this easy-to-read, easy-to-carry book takes you through key stages of the healing process and will be an invaluable resource to survivors and to everyone working with violence issues. Lots of praise is forthcoming for Aphrodite Matsakis' handbook for trauma survivors, **I CAN'T GET OVER IT**. Perhaps the most important violence issue book to come out of this year is **FEMICIDE: The Politics of Woman Killing** edited by Jill Radford and Diana E.H. Russell.

Other new non-fiction titles include:

**CHALLENGING TIMES:** The Women's Movement in Canada and the United States edited by Constance Backhouse and David H. Flaherty

**WOMEN IN MOVEMENT:** Feminism and Social Action by Sheila Rowbotham

**GODDESS IN THE OFFICE:** A personal energy guide for the spiritual warrior at work by Z. Budapest

**THE POLITICS OF ABORTION** by Janine Brodie, Shelley A.M. Gavigan and Jane Jenson

**THE GAY AND LESBIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT** by Margatet Cruikshank

**WILLFUL VIRGIN,** Essays in Feminism by Marilyn Frye

**IN FULL FLOWER:** Aging Women, Power and Sexuality by Lois W. Banner

**RECONSTRUCTING BABYLON:** Essays on Women and Technology edited by H. Patricia Hynes

**RACE-ing JUSTICE, En-GENDERing POWER:** Essays on Anita Hill, Clarence Thomas, and the Construction of Social Reality edited by Toni Morrison

**CALL ME LESBIAN:** Lesbian Lives, Lesbian Theory by Julia Penelope

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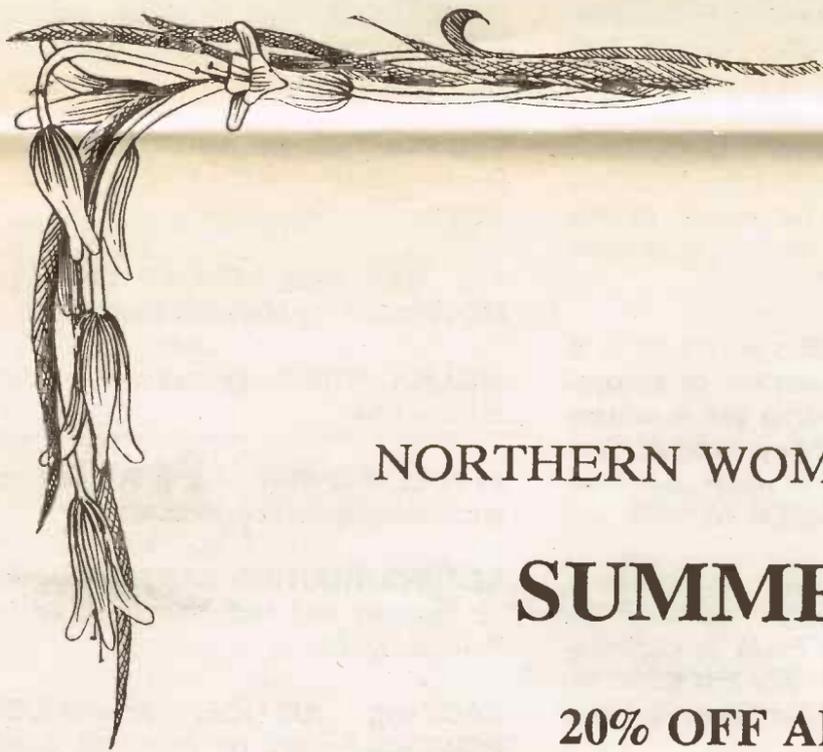
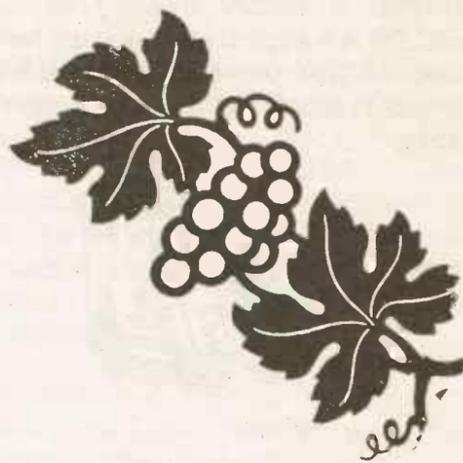
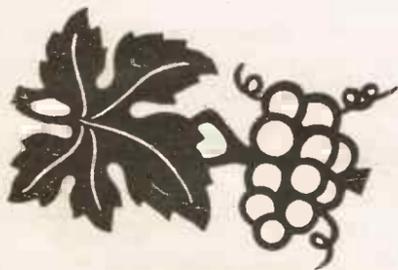
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10 am to 2 pm

Northern Woman's Bookstore parking lot

Bring donations to the store August 27th

The 1973 Northern Women's Conference was the catalyst for the two decades of feminist action that followed throughout Northwestern Ontario. In the Fall '93 issue of the Northern Woman Journal, we plan to celebrate these twenty years of activism. We are asking you - NWJ readers - to share with us your memories of the highlights (a particular conference, the development of a service, a demonstration, a conference, etc.) and the women (those presently active as well as those involved twenty years ago). We particularly want memories of the outrageous, the risk-taking, the fun - the events and the people that empowered us (yes, we'll tell the Sudbury Conference story). We're not asking you to write the copy (although articles, poems and testimonies will be most welcome). We're asking for ideas. Please write us at NWJ, Box 144, Thunder Bay, Ontario, P7C 4V5 with your memories and your suggestions for the content of this special Journal celebration. We'd like to have your ideas by mid-July - target date for copy is August 20th. Thanks for your help.



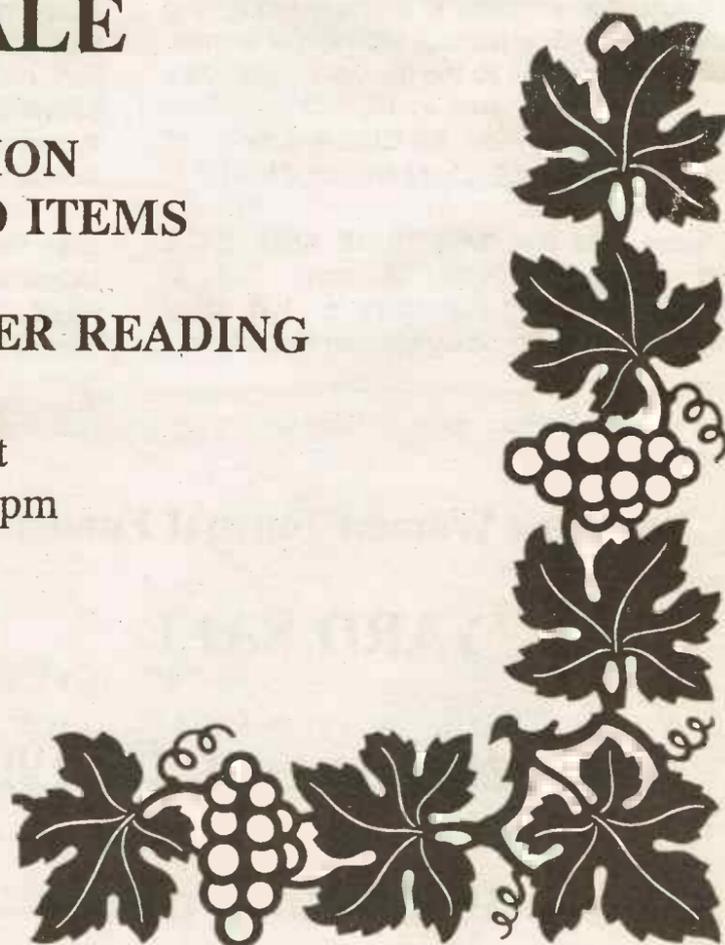
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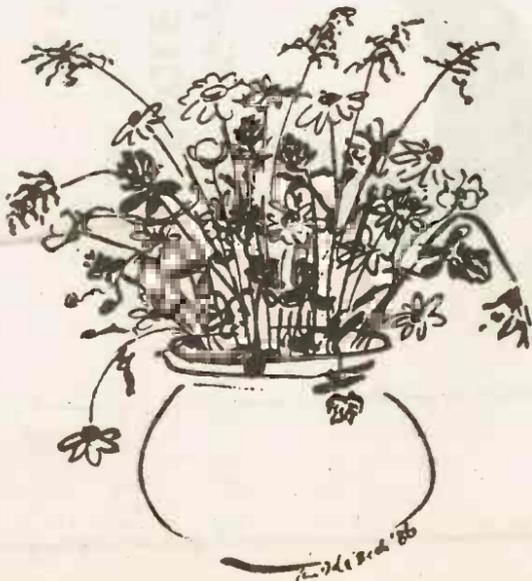
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