



AWARE



NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY ANTI-GONISH WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

RESOURCE CENTER 863-6221 winter 94

FEB

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



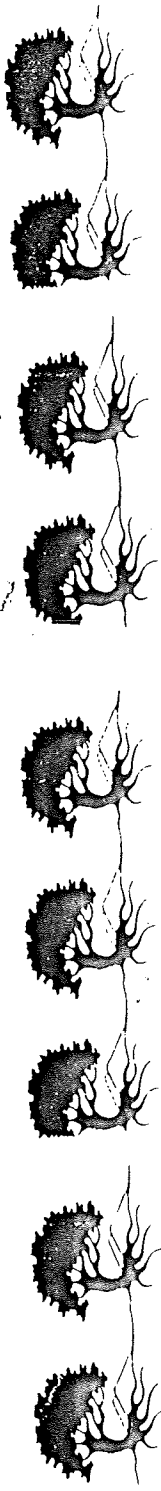
FOUR THE MOMENT

Mama and Me and Family

I am most passionate in my relationship with Mama. is with her that I feel loved and sometimes accepted. She is the one person who looks into my heart, sees its needs, and tries to satisfy them. ... I want her to love me totally as I am. I love her totally without wanting her to change anything, not even the things about her that I cannot stand.

Bell Hooks

Bell Hooks says it so beautifully; I always knew I was loved but I worked so hard to be accepted. At least, that is what I believed as a teen and as a young woman I needed to do. I was so sure that I had to behave in a "certain" way in order to be accepted by Mama. And I did so much want to be accepted by Mama. You see my goal was to be like Mama. She was a beautiful woman: both in spirit and physical stature.



2.
Even day I would watch a strong Black woman, Mama, "live".

Rearing a family in times when the socially accepted role of Black women was to bear burdens: physical and emotional care of her own family and home, physical care of the homes of her employers, living a life that is respecting of human life and dignity in the face of unjust hardships and attacks on her personhood, and so much more. Each day I would falter and disappoint Mama (or so I believed). For to my eyes, I could not do as Mama did.

At the age of seventeen (17) my Mama left me. My Mama died. I felt at that time that she and deserted me. I wept not for her but for myself. I was so young. I had spent my life focused on her. I tried to please her, be like her. I knew she had gone to the hospital. I knew that she had been very sick. I knew too that she was coming back to me. She was my Mama. I believed she would always be there. She was a spirit, a soul, a life that was inextinguishable. How dare she leave me? There were so many lessons yet untaught.

Mama's were supposed to teach their children. She had not given me any formal lessons. What did I now know for life? We had not had those "mother - daughter" talks of which I had read about in stories of far - off places. I had not wept in her arms over lost loves. She would not be here to see me graduate. Didn't she know all the study and hard work I did was for her. How dare she not stay with me to the end?

Yet after my Mama's death, life went on for me. There was another to care for, to support fully and wholeheartedly. There was no time for self-pity. For me, there was part-time work, university study and a role play at motherhood.

I recall the eve of my twenty-fifth (25th) birthday and the 7th anniversary of Mama's passing as my time of revelation. I asked myself how? How had I managed? How did I learn "living"? How did I come to know the value of service and the importance of a spirit of being? The answer was Mama.

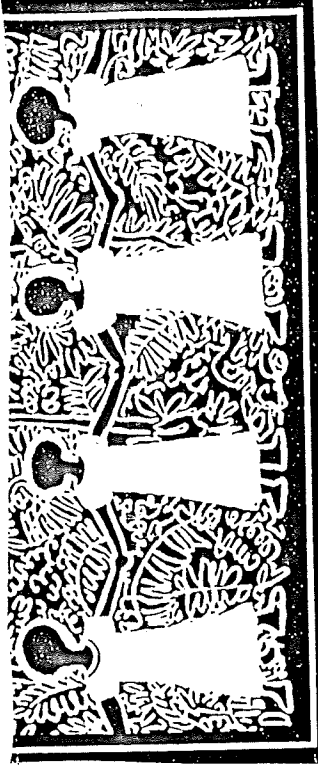
Mama allowed me to watch her everyday. She encouraged me to mimic what she modelled. She modelled the strength and inherent self assuredness of Black women. She modelled a life steeped in faith and cocooned in an understanding that the value of service to others is in itself a reward to ourselves. She insisted that I know how to do for myself. She encouraged me to "try" by not making the suggestion of what to do by always being there at completion of my attempts - no matter what..

I am sorry that Mama had to leave and I did not tell her to her "face to face" what I know now but then was too young to know not alone understand. I have since then told Mama often; in late night prayers and early morning strolls. Thank you, Mama, for teaching me. Thank you, Mama, for knowing that I needed to see to truly learn. Thank you, Mama, for seeing my strengths and using your wisdom to develop them.

Many people who have known my Mama say I am just like her. They tell me I have her smile, her voice in song, her sense of humour and her physical beauty. I am proud to be likened to my Mama. I know whatever truth there is in our similarities, the reality is this - I am only a dim shadow of my Mama.

I try each and every day to model for my children. In those days when I feel challenged by what takes place in my home and indeed in my life, I recall the best lesson Mama taught me - Live your life to be the best model you can be. I must trust for my children, as it did for me, it will come out alright.

Sylvia Parris



BLACK WOMEN IN NOVA SCOTIA

By: Pat Skinner

I was born in the all black rural community of Upper Big Tracadie in Guysborough County. I was raised by my grandparents. My grandmother died before I was six years old, and I was left with my grandfather and five of his children. He never remarried.

Growing up in Upper Big Tracadie was not easy, but with my Dad's good care, love and devotion I was able to survive. I was raised in a very Christian home.

Because we lived such a distance from the school, I did not go to school until I was nearly nine years old. I attended a one-room segregated school from grades primary to 9. The teacher's education was barely more than that of the students. In all my years there I cannot remember a qualified licensed teacher. There were times when school did not start till late in the year because we did not have a teacher.

I later attended High School in Truro and Antigonish. There my formal education ended. I got married and raised three children. I am now a grandmother of 4.

After my children were school age I decided to continue my education. I did so through night classes and adult education courses. I graduated from the Coady International Institute with a Diploma in Social Leadership. I later studied a sociology course from St.F.X. as a mature student.

I grew up in a system that was prejudiced. My

schools did not encourage the students to excel. We learned nothing about Black History. We knew no professional role models. The only role model I knew of in my early years were Black Baptist Ministers. My grandfather was a Baptist Clergyman. I spent my childhood in church, Sunday school and youth groups. The church played a large role in the life of the people. I guess it was the institution that gave people faith and hope.

My community was poor. Most of the families made their living from, domestic and hard unskilled labour. A few fathers worked away as porters on the trains.

Most parents could not afford to send their children on to higher learning; in fact they would encourage them to quit. Some parents could not see the necessity of an education. Saying "All you're going to do is work in some White persons kitchen."

I have been the victim of acts of discrimination. I have been denied a job because of the color of my skin. I remember applying for summer job and being told I could not be hired because the White staff would refuse to work alongside me. I remember an incident of going into a local department store and looking at some dresses I was told by the saleslady if I tried the dress on I would have to buy it. But before I left the store several young White customers entered took clothes from the rack and proceeded to the dressing room. The



OVER →

saleslady did not say anything to them. Can you imagine my embarrassment? When I got home I told my grandfather what happened. He said "You know you should not have been in the store". I guess that was his way of telling me "I must keep my place". In any case I did not question it. I thought it was the way it is supposed to be. At that point in time we accepted the hardship and indignity because there was no recourse; nobody to speak up for us.

During the late 1960's the marches and sit-ins for equality in the United States began to trickle down to Canada and Nova Scotia. Thus was born The Black United Front Of Nova Scotia. This organization's purpose was to act as a model and catalyst for self determination as a ways and means for Blacks to affect their own destiny. It created a rebirth of consciousness, pride, dignity and self-worth. But taught us that all people are equal.

Later The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission was established to prohibit discrimination because of race, religion, creed, colour or ethnic or national origin, etc.

Both organizations reminded us that we were somebody, that we did have rights, that we should be proud of ourselves and our heritage. They thought us that we do have A History- A History to be proud of- A History that was stolen. It told us we women have a lot of catching up to do. We are still catching up.

Black women have been in Nova Scotia for more than 300 years. We were cut off from

our culture, our history and our roots; yet we survived. We survived because we are a vibrant people. We are survivors. We have come a long way but we still have further to go.

Despite the frustrations and sometimes intolerable conditions, we are witnessing some changes Black women have fought long and hard for these changes. We cannot stop now. We still have to prove ourselves. We still have to be twice as good. We are still the last hired and the first fired.

Black women have played a significant role in all phases of life, along with running a household and raising a family.

Nova Scotia have produced many influential, intellectual and professional Black women. To name a few: Dr. Carrie Best, a teacher and writer; Daureen Lewis, the first black female mayor, Annapolis Royal; Jean Whalen, first black female crown prosecutor; Connie Sparks, first family court judge; many educators, lawyers, clergy, the list goes on.

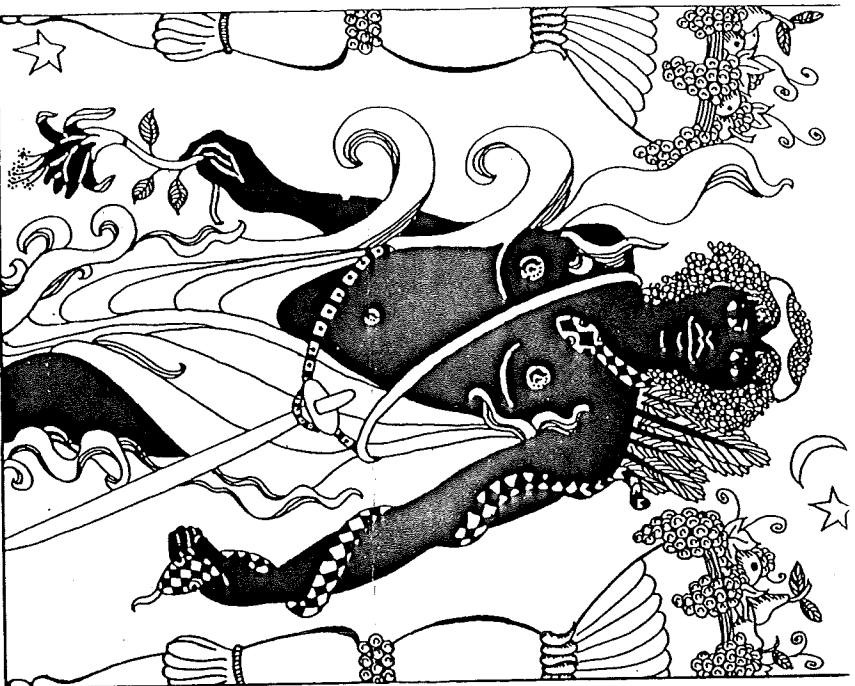
Many Black women have pioneered the course of black women in Nova Scotia and have been an advocate of Social Justice. They have pursued these objectives with a sense of dedication, integrity and perseverance. I am encouraged to see that more of our young blacks are graduating from High School going on to University, and are taking an interest in the affairs of their community. We must encourage them and show our support.

As we approach the end of the 20th century we have not

yet achieved economic equality and for us it is a double wammy. We are Black, we are women. A great deal of work on the status of women in Nova Scotia have been carried out by various women groups. I believe the concerns of Black women are lacking. We still do not have the same dignity and courtesy that others take for granted. We must not let our guard down. We must continue the struggle. We must demand our rights!!

Black women must speak out we must let the suppressors know what we feel, and how we function as Black women. We must take pride in ourselves, our accomplishments and in each other.

Somewhere I read "When pride has been developed in knowing where we came from, who we are and where we must go, then perhaps we can talk about the rights of all women."



A BRIEF HISTORY OF LOCAL BLACK COMMUNITIES

There are four Black communities in the Antigonish-Guysborough area: Upper Big Tracadie, Liconville, Sunnyville, and Antigonish. The story of these communities begins in June 1784 when two Loyalist ships arrived in Country Harbour and Chedabucto Harbour (Guysborough) from the Carolinas. Among the passengers were both free Black Loyalists and slaves travelling with their masters. Many of these were obliged to work for their masters for several years in Nova Scotia before being granted freedom.

In return for their services to the Crown, all Loyalists were offered land in N.S., and supplies for the first years. The white officers got the best land, followed by the ordinary whites. The Black settlers were the last on the pecking order. Fewer than 1/3 of Black Loyalists coming to the Maritimes got land, and what they did get was on poor, shallow soil, segregated from the white communities.

In "Little Tracadie", what is now Upper Big Tracadie, 74 families were settled on 40 acres of land. In 1787 they were granted 3000 acres because of the initiative of Thomas Brownspriggs, minister, teacher, and community leader.

Because of the poor quality of the land, Black communities were not founded on a solid economic base. In addition, despite the fact that many Black Loyalists were skilled trades people, they were always paid less than their white counterparts.

Combined with the cold climate

and otherwise) by the community and the church. Education improved but still left much to be desired. Most teachers had only "permissive licenses," and many parents were not interested in sending their children to school. Often children would be out working by the age of 13.

Religion played an important role in the survival of the communities. It provided spirituality, strength, social functions, escape from hardships, and support for the schools. The Baptist Church was important to the Upper Big Tracadie community since 1801 when people turned to it after being treated with hostility by whites in the local Catholic Church.

Medical care was the job of midwives, who were paid with food or household goods, sometimes a few pennies. Few had the money to travel to or stay at St. Martha's hospital, 20 miles away.

and the prejudice of the whites, these conditions made life very difficult for the early Black settlers. Some lived in huts while others had more comfortable homes. Clothing and furniture were all handmade, and crops eventually produced food. The supplies promised by the British were often scant, or never arrived. One shipment, in 1785, which was hijacked by mutineers was never replaced. A number of Blacks died that winter; as they did not own guns for hunting as the Whites did.

The Black population in Guysborough grew, despite these obstacles, reaching 918 in the late 1800's. (It has since decreased as people moved to larger towns such as Antigonish and New Glasgow, and to the industrial and mining centers in Cape Breton.)

By the mid 1800's, the communities had improved in condition. People were self-employed as farmers or loggers, or had jobs as labourers or servants.

Schools had been running since the 1780's, often in homes or log schoolhouses, but with poor attendance. In 1872 schools were built in Tracadie and Manchester (Guysborough). Up until 1930, however, few Blacks were formally educated even at an elementary level.

In 1932 a new school was built, and by 1936 the children of Upper Big Tracadie were being educated.

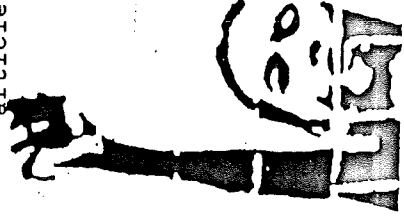
Liconville had to wait until 1937 for a gravel road, and until 1941 for the first school of its own. Schools were supported (financially

Today the populations of Upper Big Tracadie,

Liconville, and Sunnyville are lower than they once were, and the Black community in Antigonish has grown.

Progress is being made in the older communities, however, a tribute to the Black Loyalists and their decedents.

It is awesome to consider the strength of the women who raised families and worked in and out of the home all those years under the conditions described in "Search for an Identity", by Leonard Ashe Jr., Sonja Crawford, and Nancy MacLean, from which this article was condensed.



Janette

Some Important "First" Women and Events in Nova Scotia

- 1793 Rose Fortune, Nova Scotia's first black businesswoman, operated a baggage handling business in Annapolis Royal.
- 1879 Sarah Maude Doane was awarded a B.A. by the University of Kings College, but refused to attend the convocation ceremony "because of all those men".
- 1884 Acadia University conferred its first degree (a B.A.) to a woman, Clara Bell Marshall.
- 1884 The federal government introduced the Married Women's Property Act recognizing the rights of married women to hold property.
- 1885 Margaret Newcombe became the first woman to receive a degree (a B.A.) from Dalhousie University.
- 1887 The municipal franchise was granted to widows and spinsters in Nova Scotia.
- 1890 Annie Isabelle Hamilton of Brookfield became the first female graduate of Dalhousie Medical School and for several years practiced in Halifax's North End.
- 1895 Emilie Carrier LeBlanc ("Marichette"), an activist who worked for women's education and suffrage, began writing a series of articles for L'Evangeline on the lives and aspirations of Acadian women.
- 1897 Selena Jefferson began a 50-year teaching career as a pioneer in educating Black Nova Scotians.
- 1917 The passage of Equal Guardianship of Infants Act granted women equal powers, rights and obligations for the care, custody, education and control of their children.
- 1918 Most women were granted the right to vote in federal elections across Canada. Nova Scotian women were permitted to participate in provincial elections; Asian and native women were denied suffrage until 1948 and 1960 respectively.
- 1928 The Supreme Court of Canada decided that women are not persons under the terms of the British North America Act.
- 1929 After the famous "Persons" Case was heard before the British Privy Council, Canadian women were granted full political freedom.
- 1946 A female teacher who married was no longer required to leave the profession.
- 1969 Rachel Marshall of Millbrook was the first woman to be a band chief on a Canadian Indian reserve.
- 1971 Canada Labour Code Amendments included protection from discrimination based on sex and marital status.
- 1974 Coline Campbell became the first woman to represent a Nova Scotia riding in Parliament.
- 1980 New Democrat Alexa McDonough became Canada's first female party leader.
- 1981 Halifax Transit Commission hired its first permanent female bus driver.
- 1984 Daurene Lewis of Annapolis Royal became Canada's first black woman mayor.
- 1986 Connie Sparks became the first Black woman appointed as a judge in Nova Scotia Family Court.
- 1989 Marie Dechman was the first Deputy Speaker of the House.



1897 Selena Jefferson
Photo courtesy of the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia

WORKSHOP

OLD PATTERNS NEW BEHAVIOURS

"What blocks our energies?"
"What holds us back?"

A workshop for women to explore and examine negative patterns in our lives. How can we change these patterns, and choose new behaviours to better access joy and empowerment?

WHEN: April 9th and 10th
COST: \$60.00
Limited enrollment

For more information and registration call

BARBARA HAYES
863-2344 office
863-5361 Home

Human Rights

The Women's Action Network is a group of women working within Amnesty International to focus attention on human rights violations against women. The following case appeared in the W.A.N. winter newsletter. If you want to write letters, here are some suggestions from Amnesty:

- introduce yourself
- briefly state the facts in the case(who, what when etc.)
- be polite, do not express hostility and avoid sarcastic, judgemental, or offensive statements
- impartiality is important. Do not make allegations against the government or group other than the facts in the case

Sara Cristina Chan Chan Medina - El Salvador

When Sara Cristina Chan Chan Medina was 20 years of age, she disappeared. On 18 August 1989 she was walking home after work with a friend, Juan Francisco Massi Chavez, who was a trade union official at a factory in San Salvador. Sara Cristina Chan Chan was a photographer working for FENESTRAS, the National Trade Union Federation of Salvadorian Workers.

Just on the outskirts of San Salvador, not far from their homes, the couple were detained by six uniformed members of the Air Force. Passengers on a passing bus saw the pair being interrogated with their hands up against a wall. They were taken away and have not been seen since.

In June 1980 when Sara Cristina was 10 years of age, armed men burst into her family home and killed her father, a trade union leader. The killers identified themselves as members of the National Guard. Her mother, Maria Juana Medina has been arrested twice and tortured, including rape, in custody.

Sara Cristina Chan Chan's "disappearance" is among thirty cases that were investigated in depth by the Truth Commission (a group appointed by the UN to investigate certain cases of grave human rights abuses during the war in El Salvador). The commission report did conclude that Air Force personnel were responsible for the "disappearances".

PLEASE WRITE LETTERS IN SPANISH OR ENGLISH INCLUDING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

PLEASE NOTE: Individually written letters are preferable to "form" or "mass-produced" ones.

- Use Sara Cristina as an illustration of the injustice of the amnesty law and the devastating effects of impunity, giving brief details of her case.
- Express concern that the government appears to have ignored the Truth Commission's recommendations that a special investigation should be opened by the Judiciary and police to clarify the circumstances of her arrest and subsequent "disappearance" and that those responsible be brought to justice and the relatives compensated.
- State concern that thousands of cases of "disappearances" and political killings remain unresolved.
- Make the point that the Judiciary has failed to investigate cases of this kind and failed to punish the perpetrators of these serious violations which continue up to the present.
- Urge that immediate steps be taken to repeal the Amnesty Law, *Ley de Amnistía General para la Consolidación de la Paz*, on the grounds that it is unacceptable such a law should be passed prior to investigations into gross human rights violations.
- Urge that the government clarify the fate of Sara Cristina Chan Chan Medina and thousands of victims of "disappearances" and political killings denounced by the Truth Commission and that those identified as responsible should be brought before the courts removing them from office pending the outcome of investigations.

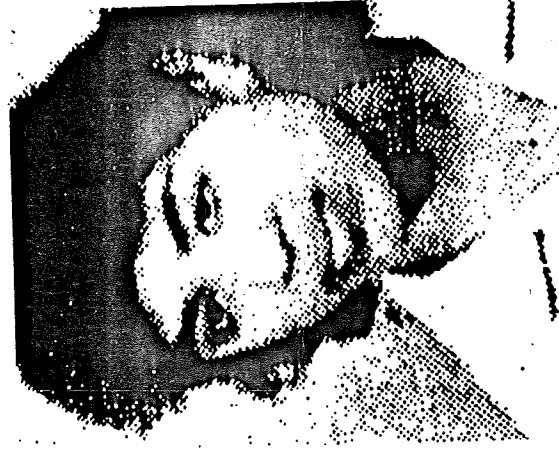
PLEASE SEND LETTERS TO:

S.E. Alfredo Cristiani Burkard
Presidente de la República de El Salvador
Casa Presidencial
San Salvador, El Salvador
Salutation: *Excelencia*
Tele. Presidente Cristiani
San Salvador, El Salvador
Fax: (503) 71-0950/22-9109/22-8514

Dr. René Hernández Valiente
Ministro de Justicia
Ministerio de Justicia
Av. Masferrer N° 612-b
San Salvador, El Salvador
Salutation: *Sr. Ministro*

Dr. Mauricio Gutiérrez Castro
Presidente de Corte Suprema de Justicia
Centro de Gobierno "José Simeón Cañas"
San Salvador, El Salvador
Salutation: *Sr. Presidente*
Fax: (503) 71-3379/71-4932

Cnel. Juan A. Martínez Valera
Comandante de la Fuerza Aérea Salvadoreña
Boulevard del Ejército
Aeropuerto de Ilopango
San Salvador, El Salvador
Salutation: *Sr. Coronel*



Sara Cristina Chan Chan Medina



WINTER

A time to warm your heart by the hearth.

It is in the act of building the fire and maintaining it that we grow. Grow in wisdom. Grow in inner strength. It is what winter, the cold times/seasons of our lives, is for. For going inside. To re-kindle our inner fire, vitality, wisdom, creativity and strength or "power". To re-new.

When we take time out from the world, and winter requires and demands this, as we get shut in by the cold and storms, we are driven inward. To look inward to our own inner needs. To feed off the "fat", the warmth of the fuel we put in store by our "last summer's" accomplishments. By our recent past creative activities. Inward to reflect, to reseed from this harvest what we want to grow again in the Spring. In the warmth that sometimes seems so long in coming. The slower the coming, the stronger the seed. Don't rush it. Spring will come.

Relaxing into retreat is not easily done, encouraged or supported, in our current time and culture. We struggle against retreating. Our minds, and the world say, "get out here", "push against nature, against the instinct to hibernate." It is the wise woman who takes notice and awaits herself, and teaches her children, her family, the necessity and subtle joy of quiet times. Of winter. Of writing stories, poems. Reading. Being. Watching the fire, tending the hearth, feeling the warmth on face, hands and heart. Listening. Hearing the sound of silence. Go inward for as long a moment as you can create. See and seek the joy of self renewed. Be in the Winter. Warm Your Heart by the Hearth.

Marilyn D.C. Beers



Last in Line

Who am I? Girl? Women?
Black Girl? Black Women?
Who must I serve?
Who must I protect?

The Family.
We must not allow them to destroy the Family.
Our children need this man to call daddy.
My needs, my needs must come at the end.

The Community.
We must not let them destroy our community.
If I call and they take my man away, he may not bac
They'll blame me. They'll say I'm one of them.
We must protect our community.
My needs, my needs must come at the end.

Black girl, Black women.
Shudder in the shadows of your home.
Your house, your community.
Don't cry out loud.
Your needs come last.

Your needs come last.
Family, Community, and so on and so on.
Your needs come last.
What's real! What's important!
Then your needs at the end.

It's all for the Family.
It's all for the Community
That's what they tell you.
I know the verse well.
My needs, my needs come last.

Let us rewrite the poem and have it end as so:
It's all for Family.
It's all for Community.
My needs, Family needs, Community needs.
They are in line. They are together.
None shall be first. None shall be last.

Sylvia Paris

Contributors. HERMANE
KEATING.

MAY GERING
KESLEY BUCKLAND NICKS.

BARBARA HANCOCK

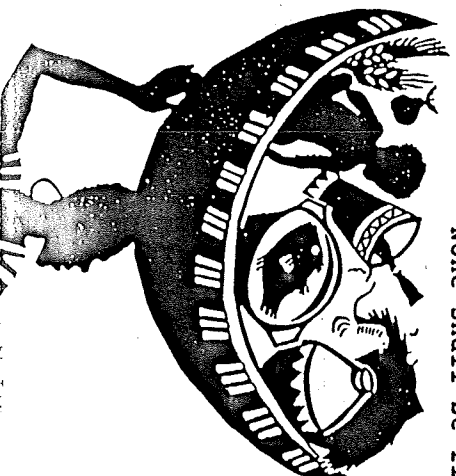
VANGIE.

MAE LYN BEERS.

JEANETTE FEJTEAU.

SYLVIA PARIS

PAT SKINNER.



Winter is catch up time for all those "I'll do it later" projects. But it seems to take a while to get up to speed, almost like going through a semi-hibernation first. It is so easy to vegetate when it gets dark at this time of year! I find I have to force myself to get going on things. Oh well, maybe it's okay to be a little bit lazy after those busy summers.

We've only really had winter since about Christmas, with two thaws already. Those were beach walk days! I was wondering where I was going to put all that snow.

The storms are always inspiring in terms of the strenght and force of nature, one thing that humans haven't conquered yet!

One of the things I find a bit frustrating about winter is all that shoveling, considering that if you could only wait it would all melt away! The idea of shoveling will certainly have an effect on any future house and yard design. Anything to minimize it. And the same goes for moving firewood!

I dream of a snowblower for the back of the tractor, faster than a blade and no worry about where to pile up the snow. I also found out how lousy little pickups are in snow without weight in the back!

I find winter easier to take when I have a warm house and clothes. A woodstove too, nothing beats that heat. One final necessity--a big south facing window where you can lie comfortably in the sun, it just soaks in!

M. Gering

HOW TO HOLD YOUR MAN:

PART II: Those Little Loving Attentions

1. Dye your hair to match his favorite shirt.
2. Give him a long, loving massage in a tub full of his favorite wine.
3. Keep his clothes sweet-smelling; put parsley in his jockey shorts.

"sulk"

"I beat the winter blahs by going to England for a visit and not driving on the horrid icy roads and staying home and watching Air Farce on tv...Some people go to parties"

"I bake bread."

—Mary Ellen Clancy

— Anon E.Mouse

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



COME TO THE CABARET

TUES. MARCH 8th 7^{PM}
SOMERS HALL, ST. F. X. CAMPUS

Featuring:

EMMY ALcorn

MUSIC! LAUGHTER! FRIENDS!



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\$3 waged

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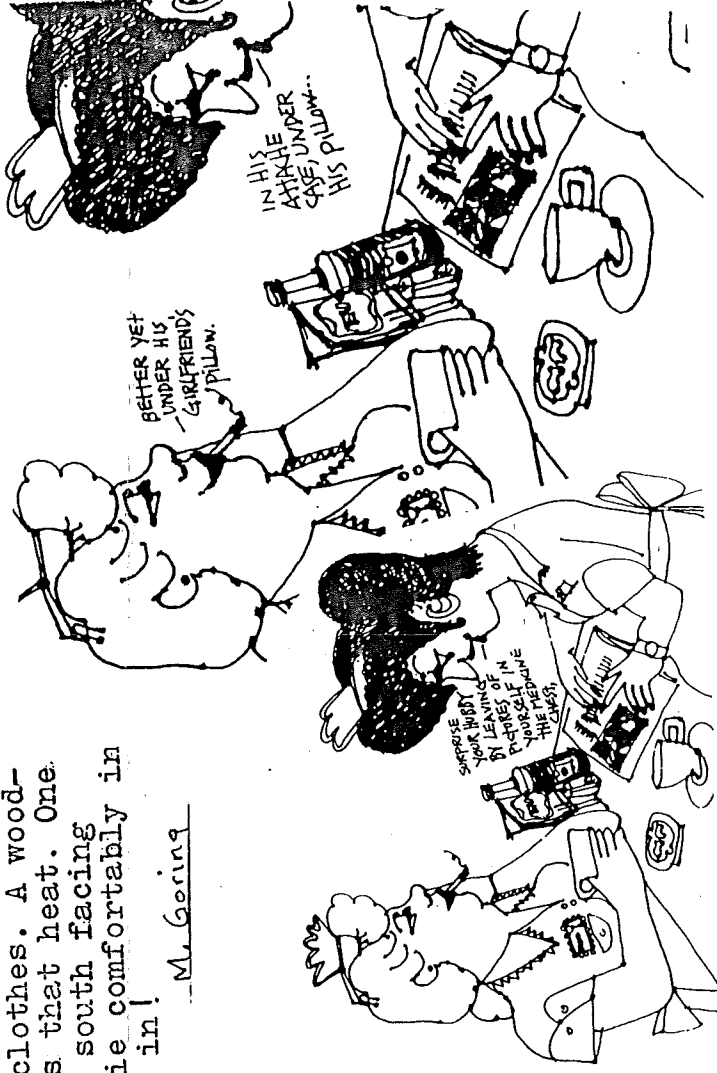
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Bring your daughter/sister/mother

sponsored by AWA 863-6221



How do *YOU* survive the
Winter Blahs?

-MEC

How quaint the British are in coping with the cold

IN BRITAIN this week, they have been recording the coldest temperatures since the London Weather Office began keeping records in 1940. As thermometer dials dipped to lows of minus 15 degrees Celsius, the very cockles of British hearts have been warmed to learn that Calgary, Alta., is having its warmest weather since 1881.

This handy climatic conjunction suggests that Canadians could learn a lot from the British about coping with the cold, should their own country ever experience similar frigid blasts. Every year this island deals with its icy spells in precisely the same way, clear evidence that some sort of handbook — possibly entitled *A Royal Ordinance: On Snow Showers* — exists. To wit, the following items:

Drainpipe construction. All drain and water pipes, especially in new edifices, shall be constructed on the exteriors of domiciles

and left uninsulated. This will allow the home-dweller easy access to frozen water and sewerage conduits, at which he or she should fling buckets of scalding water.

General hot water usage. Hot water is extremely useful in a number of other cold-weather emergencies and can be poured over icy front door stoops and upon frozen automobile windshields. In a matter of minutes, such action produces a fine, sheer glaze and you should be wary of foreigners who tell you that you are worse off than before. They do not understand the British way of dealing with cold.

Cold weather dress. For men, shoes with water-thin leather soles are best, as they absorb moisture more quickly than imported rubber-covered boots. Gloves, lined overcoats and hats which cover the ears are effeminate and immediately identify you as a foreigner or an eccentric. For

BRITAIN

JOHN FRASER



in LONDON

women, icy sidewalks provide an excellent opportunity to wear those dainty slitted heels they have been saving for that special occasion. Thin woollen gloves, which have the tops of the fingers cut off ensure that parts of your hands remain in touch with the elements, thus preventing an ill-sory sense of comfort which bulky, fleece-lined leather mits inevitably induce.

Driving. Icy streets can be treacherous. When approaching an intersection or pedestrian crossing, speed up so that when you apply the brakes you have maximum "swerve potential." If you are going fast enough and brake sufficiently hard, you can actually swerve your vehicle completely around, thus providing a useful opportunity to decide if you are going in the right direction.

Home heating. If you were foolish enough to install central heating, avoid thermostats which regulate interior temperature. It is far better to have a furnace which simply comes on at a set time but can be shut down entirely for most of the day and all of the night. This is especially important for the elderly who have come to look forward to 4 p.m., not only for the traditional cup of tea (providing the water pipes are still unfrozen, in which case see above), but also as the time when "the boiler" is allowed on for an hour. One warning to custodians of pensioners: turn heat off sharply at 5 p.m., since many of the aged get

Chloe + HAH

14.1.87



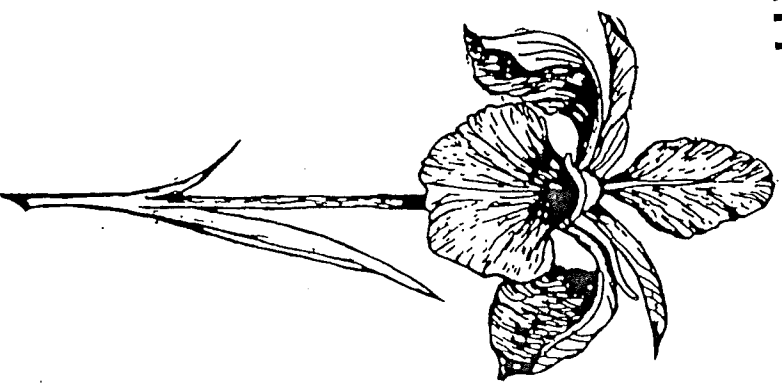
Winter, winter everywhere....

I used to really like winter - in those days B.C. (Before Children). Of course, it had its downers - waiting at Edmonton bus stops in the *frigid* cold; slippery roads, and white-outs on the highway. But now I came to the plus side of winter - a snow storm when you're cozy inside with a book and popcorn, the silent, muffled sound of snowflakes landing by the trillions, and the somehow surprising blanket of sparkling white first thing next morning. What I used to enjoy most of all was outdoor winter sports. Nothing could beat an afternoon cross country skiing, or clicking and gliding on skates across Mayfair Lake. I particularly enjoyed spending a weekend at a hostel cross country skiing with friends or skiing down hill at one of the big mountain resorts.

Now, as a parent of two pre-schoolers, winter brings a new set of associations to mind: a lengthy preparation time for any outdoor expedition (I always seem to lose my temper); the cost of snow suits, (will Michael look OK in Amy's old pink one?), the lack of mobility of toddlers in boots and moon suits, and the extra worry about car travel (what would we do if....?). To be fair, those trillions of snowflakes still sound just as beautiful (when I have time to listen), and I do love tobogganing down the hill by our house. But I really miss my own brand of outdoor winter fun. When I have to hire a babysitter, or bargain for time with my husband, I find I don't make the effort (and, hey, in Nova Scotia if you blink you've missed the opportunity for good ski conditions).

But, you know, tomorrow I think I'll just - DO IT!

Leslie Hart Buckland-Nicks



alarmed if they don't see their own breath for sustained periods.

Public heating. In churches and public halls, flimsy electrical heating units should be placed as close to the ceilings as possible. This is because heat falls to the ground (just like the sun's rays). It is best to let a building go cold overnight, and by the same token you should eschew slick salespeople (i.e. foreigners) who try to tell you double glazing, or "storm windows," would lower heating costs: everyone knows a heated, undrafty building is an affront to nature and contrary to the will of God.

Item from the 8 a.m. BBC Radio Four newscast for Jan. 13, 1987: "The London Weather Office has been temporarily closed following a breakdown in the central heating system and the freezing of its main water pipes. Repairmen are now working on the problem, which a spokesman said should be fixed by mid-morning."

News From The Centre

You know, I consider myself a fledgling in all of this, and yet I've been offered the space to voice all that has gone on at the centre these past months. I hoped my haggish muse might provide the right palate, the right textures, the right volumes, to communicate all that we have lived.

I swell with it.

As I began thinking about this report, it seemed as though the tip of my sternum bulged and metamorphosized into a firm Fist. It seemed to pressure its way up, and guided by the track of my spine, settled facing the front plate of my skull. Coolness and Detachment hung opposite, ready to instruct this round of "News from the Centre." Undaunted, uncompromising, Fist struck out and dragged them, Reason's cousins, grating and resisting, down past my cervical vertebrae, down past my first and second ribs, and tossed them into my heart chambers. And so, I dare to begin with a reflection of some weeks ago, one that will give you the part of this work that gets me in the guts, and keeps me in this work.

Reflections after peer counselling, January, 1994:

There didn't seem to be room for any more. And yet, it continued to come: a thick mucous of her-stories -- violent, violated. My throat thickened with it. I felt malignancy in my spine.

This is insane.

The words retched up.

A bitter bile.

Our direct service work continues....

It has not all been so gripping. I know because I don't have to do situps any longer. I figure three good belly laughs a week at the centre is doing the trick!

Now for the past months... Let's see....

Take the directorship of a Women's centre and divide it into two positions. Take one of those positions, and divide it, again, into two sets of four, five and six hour shifts worked on alternate weekdays. Now, subtract the first part of the originally split directorship for a seven week period. Add a full-time staff support person to the first two weeks of this equation. After two weeks, subtract that staff person. Add one new support staff for twenty weeks. Add original support staff to first Monday of each week. Subtract after three weeks....

The fall of 1993 saw some nifty staffing gymnastics at the AWRC. Lucille Harper moved on to begin the Sexual Assault project with Ellen King, and Martha McGinn and I stepped to job-share Lucille's portion of the AWRC directorship. In December, Katherine Reed, who carries the full-time component of the new director triad, underwent extensive jaw surgery that required a seven week convalescence period. Katherine was technically off for the seven week period, but supported and continued the centre's work through daily telephone contact (that sounded, by the way, something like this--"oo 'll fine tha' foams in tha tawp dough-ah uv tha faw-in cab knit," which in translation from wired-jaw language meant, "You will find the foms in the top drawer of the filing cabinet." Katherine kept up the administrative duties of the centre by working at home. By the third week of January, she was back at the centre in more-than-ful' swing.

Vangie Babin was a patient and tireless resource for Martha and I while we became oriented to our new workplace. Her work program complete, Vangie was replaced by Yvonne Myatt who dug in vigorously with Martha and I to learn the ropes at 204B.

In the midst of this, and pressured by an intimidating deadline, Martha, essentially singlehandedly, devised and refined the 1994-1995 grant proposal and lobbied for its support. She also spearheaded a meeting with Francis LeBlanc, and our staff, in concert with representatives from the Naomi Society, the Sexual Assault Project, The Adolescent Health Project and AWA Board members met with Mr. LeBlanc to express concerns salient to our specific projects and to women's issues. Mr. LeBlanc has since provided our centre with a letter of support for the 1994-1995 grant proposal. Our staff team also published a fundraising letter, ran a women's reading group and, of course, participated in the preparation of the AWA ten year anniversary celebration. We plugged away at telephone interviews and agency questionnaires, and conducted focus groups that constituted part of the 1993-1994 programming.

After Christmas, feeling not so wet-behind-the-ears, we continued with the year's programming and invited several groups of women to share their perceptions of the centre, their needs, and their suggestions with us. We made some exciting links with the Afton community, Senior Women at Club Sixty, and heard both the painful and joyous herstories of many other women in our community. One group exchanged names and phone numbers, a hopeful promise of future story swapping, workshop planning, support and friendship. Again, in line with the year's programming, we conducted an internal reflection group with women who have a history with the AWA/AWRC. We unearthed challenging and invigorating questions around our organization and our vision. An evaluation committee of staff and Board members is presently addressing these questions.

It has been zany, its been stressful, its been humorous and it has been a privilege. We look forward to rich months ahead.

HARRIENE KEATING

Lorraine Keating

Announcements

Anyone interested in acting or providing costumes providing costumes for International Women's Day call Barb Hayes, Brenda Silver, Martha McGinn, or Janette Fecteau.

Kathryn Anderson will be speaking about her recent visit with Guatemalan indigenous refugees on March 13. Sponsored by St.F.X. Development and Peace, Alumni Lounge, 7pm.

In April the position of N.S. rep to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) will be open for nominations. It is a 2 year volunteer position with a \$2000 budget for travel and expenses.

The NAC annual general meeting will be held in Ottawa in June. There is a need for N.S. delegates. If interested call NAC rep Sheila Richardson (457-0873).

The Women's Action Coalition of Nova Scotia (WACNS) will have its AGM in April. Details T.B.A., but they are hoping to hear Sunera Thobani speak about South Africa, and Marion Matheson about Croatia and Zagreb.

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO SHARE ABOUT CHANGING RELATIONS BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN?

As an activist or development worker trying to build a more just world, can you write a case study, from your programming experience, that shows how relations between women and men are changing? Are men taking more responsibility for domestic work? Are decisions about spending being made jointly between women and men? Are women and men negotiating a fairer division of productive work? Are women's voices being heard in public decision-making? Are women and men making new kinds of decisions about allocating property or opportunities for education to their daughters and their sons? Are the standards about sexual harassment in the workplace changing?

The Coady International Institute hopes to celebrate the 1995 assessment of women's progress in Beijing, China, by publishing a book that tells the stories of how our work is changing relations between women and men for a fairer world. In telling your story, please address the following questions:

- * how did your project or program get started? What were the dynamics that led to its initiation?
- * what happened during the process? Where did it take place? Who were the main actors? What was your organization's role? (don't forget to include a brief description of your organization)
- * how have gender relations changed during the life of the project or program? Please provide supporting data and illustrative anecdotes.
- * what benefits have accrued to women and to men from the project or program? Please provide supporting data.
- * what lessons have you learned from this process that you would like to share with others?

Your submission should be no more than 6,000 words long. The final selection of stories will be made by regional panels. Please send a double-spaced typed copy and, if possible, a Wordperfect diskette copy to:

Rieky Stuart
Coady International Institute
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish Nova Scotia
Canada B2G 1C0

If you have any pictures of your project or program, please include them, clearly identifying people and organizations. Authors of each story accepted for publication will be paid an honorarium of \$250. Please let us know as soon as possible if you plan to submit an article. Deadline for submissions is July 31, 1994.