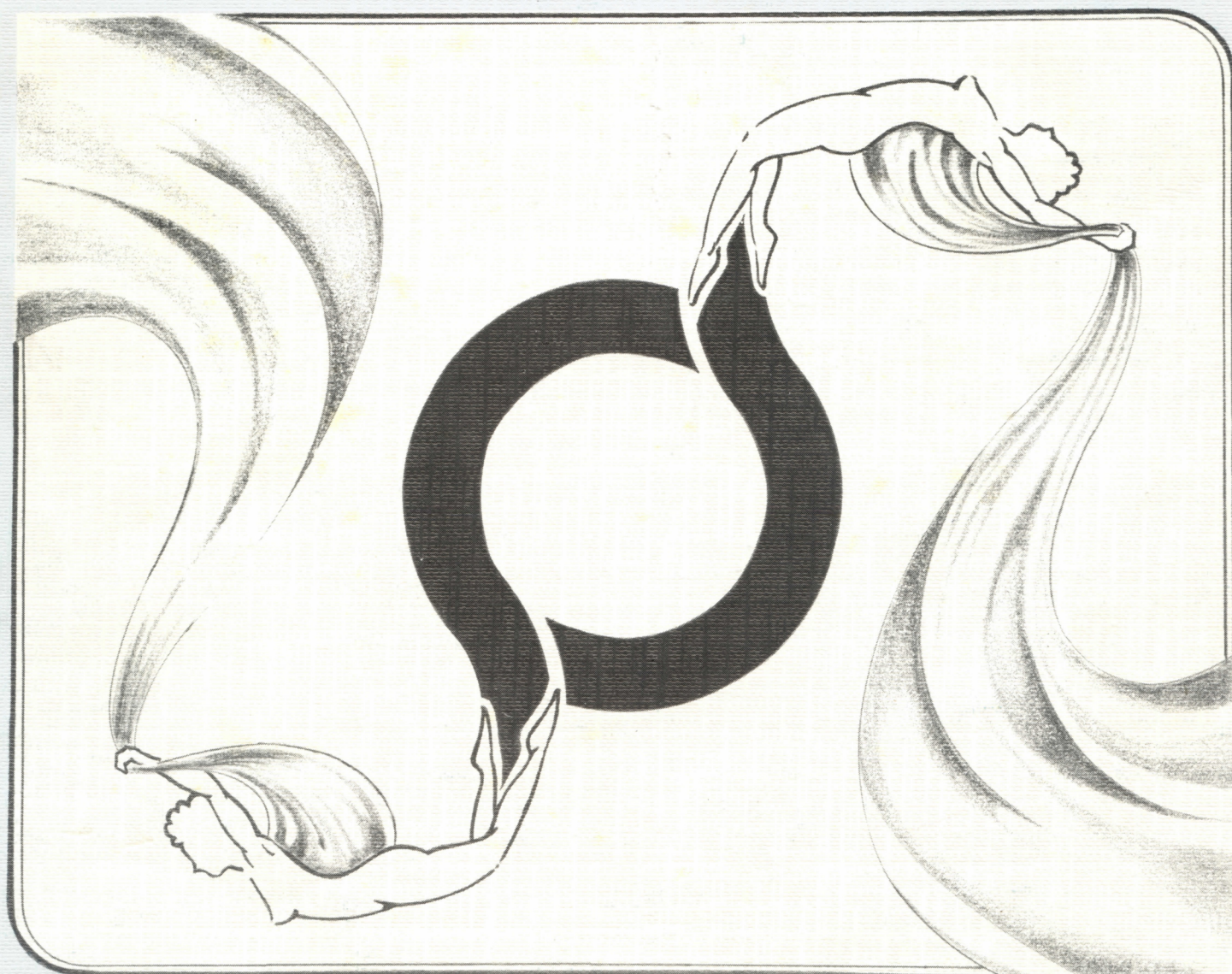


CAFRA NEWS



NEWSLETTER OF THE CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH AND ACTION
VOL. 8 NOS. 1 and 2 · JANUARY TO JUNE 1994





CAFRA News is the quarterly newsletter and primary networking tool of the *Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA)*.

Its main purposes are to:

- *Inform members and other interested persons about the activities and programmes of the association.*
- *Provide a forum for discussion and debate on key issues of concern to women in the region;*
- *Promote the sharing of experiences and foster links among individual feminists, activists and women's organisations;*
- *Assist in breaking down language barriers in the region;*
- *Stimulate women's creative expression; and*
- *Contribute to the development of the women's movement regionally and internationally.*

We welcome letters, articles, poems, reviews, opinions and artwork for editorial evaluation and selection. The newsletter committee has a final right to edit content and to reject material not appropriate for publication, e.g. that does not further the aims and objectives of CAFRA and promote a spirit of sisterhood; or that is racist, sexist or "maternalist." Individual authors and reviewers are solely responsible for views and opinions expressed in published articles.

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NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE A.J. Joseph (Editor) Allison Apparicio Rawwida Baksh - Soodeen Rowena Kalloo Cathy Shepherd Gemma Tang Nain <i>Graphics:</i> Winston Cumberbatch <i>Layout and Design:</i> p Super Graphics Ph: 622-3022	<i>CAFRA News is published by the:</i> Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA) P.O. Bag 442, Tunapuna, Trinidad and Tobago. West Indies. Tel: (809) 663-8670, 662-1231 Fax: (809) 663-6482 ISSN 1016 - 9741	SUBSCRIPTION: CARIBBEAN: • Individuals- 50 units of local currency • Organisations- 55 units of local currency ELSEWHERE: • Individuals- US \$20. • Organisations- US \$25 (Payable in local currency or US\$)
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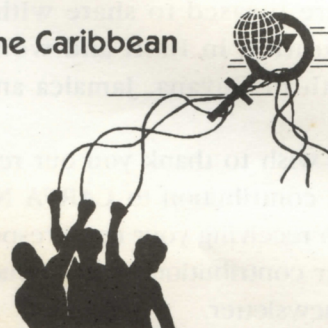
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EDITORIAL

Last September, we issued a call for submissions on the theme of sexuality, an issue we felt was not adequately addressed by the regional women's movement. We solicited some articles, culled others from previously published material and hoped for an out-pouring of expressions and viewpoints from you, our readers (we received two). This double issue, represents the culmination of these efforts.

So here you have it! A mix of theoretical analysis, research, opinions and poetic expressions, all centered on the theme "Women and Sexuality." Some of the articles you should find very thought provoking such as the article by The Women and Health Collective, Dominican Republic, which looks at the whole question of sexuality in as down-to-earth a manner as you could get.

We feature two articles on the sexuality of mid-life women, one of which reveals the findings of a survey of a group of female workers at the St. Augustine Campus, University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago.

Also, we are pleased to share with you analyses of prostitution in Haiti and women's reproductive health in Guyana, Jamaica and St. Lucia.

Finally, we wish to thank you our readers for your invaluable contribution to **CAFRA NEWS** and look forward to receiving your usual responses and especially, your contribution to this issue, for publication in the newsletter.

In sisterhood
Newsletter Team



LETTERS

• TO EDITOR •

Dear Sistren,

I'm writing a belated but very sincere thank you for my bright CAFRA badge of gold. It reached me at Christmas and was a warming gift in this most dreadful of winters. It's affirming to think that work done some 15 years ago is having results; that new blood is throbbing through the veins of the association and that there exists at the same time a memory of times past. Since I am a vain person I'm also gratified for all the wrong reasons: that as I become ageable, I am remembered, not forgotten and/or discussed (at least not to my face!).

I look forward to my CAFRA NEWS, especially since there seem to be so few publications on women of the region which come out regularly. For me, it's important less for its reports of international conferences than for its representations of what women are doing, thinking and feeling in the region and for what Caribbean women abroad are also up to.

Issues like the continued struggle against economic crisis, the way women are affected by this supposed bastion of economic development - tourism as well as racism, immigration, health and sexual orientation and sexuality. These are issues I eagerly look for when I get it. Please pass my comments to the editor.

Many thanks again.

Big Hugs.

Honor Ford-Smith

(Editor's note: Honor is a Founding Member of CAFRA)

Dear CAFRA,

I've suddenly realised that it's been ages since I've written to you all (or heard from you, for that matter). I ended up doing what I'd sworn not to do: apply for English teaching. I went for an interview at one of the schools, and they tried to give me an English test which I started to take then told them it was a farce. ...but as soon as they realised that I could speak the language they hired me on spot and asked if I could start the next day.

Apart from teaching, I'm also doing the newsletter for (my daughter) Katie's school and the odd flyer, here and there.

Then I'm still (permanently, it seems) a student of Spanish. I have a class one hour a week at the house, plus I've just started another class two hours

LETTERS

• TO EDITOR •

Letters to Editor
cont'd from page 1

a week with two friends ... plus I do a course in Mexican literature in Spanish. I keep plugging away, but don't seem to improve. Too old, I guess!

I continue to enjoy receiving CAFRA NEWS - it's looking really good. I suppose the next one will be on the bi- (or is it tri- now) annual meeting, which will be interesting to read about. Don't forget (any/all of you) to drop me a line when you have a chance.

Love
 Tina

(Excerpts of a letter from Tina Johnson, former newsletter editor, CAFRA NEWS, now residing in Lomas de Chapultepec, Mexico).

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed reading the last issue of CAFRA News (October to December 1993), which I received recently ...that is, I was enjoying it until I got to the last page and read the item entitled "The Penis Insurance Plan."

I find it sad that you failed to see that there is nothing amusing in violence of any kind - be it directed against men or against women. All our talk about a violence-free society is just so much lip service if we continue the cycle of abuse, thinly disguised as humour. This, in spite of the fact that women resent being called humourless when they refuse to laugh at men's sexist jokes.

This is just one more example of the truism that violence and abuse dehumanise both perpetrator and victim. We still have a long way to go.

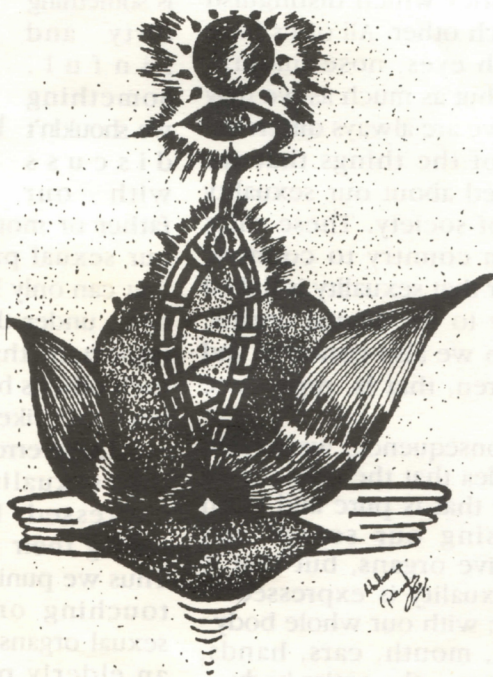
Vilma Dubé
 Nanaimo, B.C.
 CANADA

this poem cries out for your touch
 heaves in delight from just looking at you
 hopes this night will not die
 that the dawn will creep
 that we will make love again as the sun rises
 this poem being female
 has nipples erect as palm trees
 waiting for you
 this poem being female
 reaches into herself and feels juices
 like an over ripe mango

this poem cries out from your touch
 heaves in delight from just looking at you
 likes the feel of your sweat-coated stomach
 against her back
 afterwards
 holding her
 just gently holding her
 - it is 2 am
 and this poem will want to turn
 and reach for you
 kiss you
 feel your tongue deep in her
 and tell you how she can't get enough of you
 this poem being me wrapped in your heat
 invites you to disturb the night.

MY POEM

by Paula Obe Thomas



What is Female Sexuality

by Women and Health Collective, Dominican Republic, May 1987.

By nature, all human beings are capable of experiencing pleasurable sensations throughout our bodies and arousing such feelings in others; sensations that match our feelings and our thoughts.

A scent, a look, a caress, a hug, or a kiss, are ways of expressing or recognizing pleasure and delight which others arouse in us or which we arouse in others. This we call sexuality.

Sexuality is part of our lives and it is part of our health. It is with us throughout our lives, although we perceive it differently at different times. It is not dependent on age, sex, skin colour, or the size of any organ of the body. Anyone can enjoy it - a man or a woman, a white, black or yellow person, a child or an elderly person.

However, everyone has her or his own, particular, unique sexuality, in the same way that we have physical and behavioural characteristics which distinguish us from each other. All of us have a face with eyes, nose, mouth, eyebrows, but as much as we may look alike we are always different.

Many of the things that we have learned about our sexuality are rules of society. These rules differ from country to country, but all infer that sexuality is linked exclusively to the sexual organs, with which we also conceive and bear children, that is, reproduce ourselves.

As a consequence, we remain with the idea that the only sexual expression that is pure and clean is that using our sexual and reproductive organs, but that is not so. Sexuality is expressed in everything; with our whole body - eyes, hair, mouth, ears, hands, sexual organs ... the entire body.

On the other hand, we need our genital organs exclusively for reproduction.

We have been conditioned to think that the only healthy sex is that in which a man's penis or sexual organ penetrates the vagina. But

touching, kissing and caressing those parts of the body which turn us on, are also forms of sexual expression because they make sex more enjoyable.

These social rules which define our sexuality make us think that it is something dirty and sinful. Something we shouldn't discuss with our

father or mother, not even with our sexual partners. Something that can only be expressed, in the dark, under the sheets. It is very important that couples explore each other's bodies and talk about what they like and don't like.

These erroneous rules also say that sexuality should only be expressed between persons during their reproductive years. Thus we punish girls and boys for touching or examining their sexual organs, or we laugh when an elderly person shows any

interest in sex.

They also make us believe that sexuality is only moral when expressed between persons who live together in a union recognized by society. Of course

this rule is only applied to women.

Another restriction placed on our sexuality is that it can only be shared between persons of the opposite sex. We condemn and even ridicule those who are attracted to and love people of the same sex.

Another thing that is said is that we shouldn't have sex while menstruating.

They say that it is unclean, that we could get pregnant and have deformed, monstrous children. Neither of the above is true. A woman cannot get pregnant while menstruating and the decision to have sex or not during menstruation depends entirely on the couple. During this time, sex can even be more enjoyable for the woman because the vagina will be softer and more moist.



cont'd on page 4

What is Female SexualityCont'd from page 3

There is also the false notion that a woman who has been sterilized, or who has had a hysterectomy, no longer feels any desire for sex. On the contrary, under these conditions a woman is able to enjoy intercourse more because she no longer runs the risk of getting pregnant.

Up to now we have considered some of the restrictions placed on human sexuality. But male-dominated ideas pervading our society, that women are inferior, that we have to cater to men, further condition and even repress our sexuality as women.

In the same way that we consider it our duty to wash, iron and cook for men, we think that it is our obligation to respond to the interest of the man, as far as sex is concerned. We forget that we have a right to seek our own satisfaction.

We women have to begin changing that reality for all women. We have to let our sexuality flow freely, to express and live it as it is and not how men define it for us. Sharing our sexuality with them should enrich our lives, not impoverish it by making sacrifices.

In order to tear down the cobweb restricting the expression of our sexuality, we have to learn how our body reacts during sexual arousal. When aroused, our body starts to feel full of pleasure, an enjoyable tickling gently nibbles our insides. Let's learn about it and talk about it with other women.

We mustn't forget that sexuality is always with us, quiet at times and passionate at others, but always there. We can become aroused by mental stimulation, that is by thinking about something or someone we like a lot; or by physical

stimulation, if we touch ourselves or somebody who we like touches us on any part of our body.

Besides feeling it, there are some physical signs of sexual excitement. In many of us, the vagina becomes moist, the lips of the vulva become firmer, the nipples get hard, we get goose bumps, breathe more quickly and our heart beats faster.

Getting aroused may take a short or long time. It depends on the woman and on the particular moment. During sexual excitement, it is important to forget about our problems at home, at work,

etc. If we are with another person, we must put aside our hang-ups and take charge of our stimulation. When we are alone, we can touch the parts of our body that give us the most pleasure, think about something enjoyable and apply the necessary movement and pressure to increase our excitement.

The clitoris, located where the inner lips join, plays a very important role in all of this. The single function of this organ is to give us pleasure. By touching it, we can reach orgasm. Orgasm is a very pleasant sensation which we enjoy for a few seconds, at the peak of sexual excitement. It can be perceived differently from woman to woman and by the same woman. At times it can seem very intense, at other times, mild; or we can have several orgasms, one after the other; or at times we can enjoy ourselves very much without reaching an orgasm. After orgasm, our body returns to the way it was and we remain with a pleasant and peaceful feeling of satisfaction. **WOMEN, LET US DISCOVER AND LIVE OUR SEXUALITY!**

(Translated from the Spanish by Sabine Friedel and Cathy Shepherd)

**We mustn't
forget that
sexuality is
always with us,
quiet at times and
passionate at
others, but
always there.**

Ruminations on Sexuality

by Patricia Mohammed

It occurred to me recently that one of the earliest and most important concerns raised by the contemporary feminist movement was the issue of female sexuality. This was raised in two different, but related ways. First, was the attempt to increase women's knowledge of their bodies, sexual organs and sexual capacity, and to make them more comfortable with themselves and with a subject, which, despite wide regional or cultural differences, was, on the whole, considered taboo.

Thus, in the early consciousness-raising groups which proliferated throughout the United States and the West in general, self-examination, open discussions about sexuality, etc., were considered part of the group-building process.

Secondly, the contemporary feminist movement attempted to give women greater rights and control over their bodies and their sexuality, demanding, for instance, the legalization of abortion; greater availability of contraception; sexual freedom (freedom to move from one partner to the next or to have more than one at the same time if one wished); and, linked to this, the right to have lesbian relations if one was so inclined.

The issues pertaining to sexual liberation were fundamentally about women's control over their

own sexuality. This emerged as an important issue for the feminist agenda because of women's experiences in the Western, developed world. Thus far, they had achieved reasonable advancement in society, especially among particular classes or groups of women. Yet the strange and perplexing hierarchical imbalance still persisted in society: male superordination, female subordination. And it appeared that the one way in which this hierarchy was kept intact was due to the primacy of sexual difference between men and women. The essential binary nature of the gender system could not be tampered with unless the source of this difference could be understood and acted upon, hence the focuses on sexuality, sexual violence, pornography and control over one's body. (My use of the term gender accepts the original meaning which incorporates biological sex.)

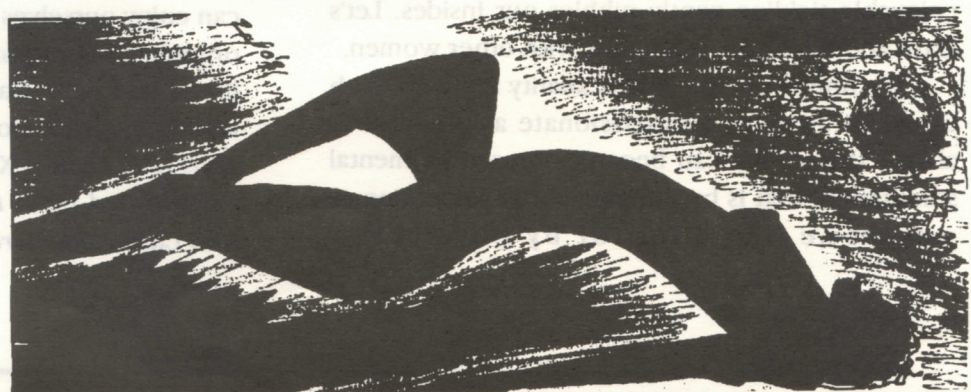
Sex is not just about sexual intercourse - heterosexual or homosexual coupling - it's about sexual desire, sexual fantasy, sexual imagery, and now feminism has added gender identity. Sex has fulfilled a number of purposes in human society - procreation and

generation of the species, pleasure, communication, power, division of labour, love, in the generally accepted sense of the word, and perhaps many others.

The issue which baffled women was why there was general acceptance in most societies, of a vibrant male sexuality, supported and condoned by economic and cultural factors, while female sexuality was controlled in some form of fashion.

Human sexuality, gender identity, reproduction and procreation have changed considerably over the history of civilization. Gender identity - the cultural definition of masculinity and femininity, which includes the acceptable or unacceptable sexual roles and practices expected of men and women in society - has clearly shifted considerably over the centuries. Similarly, reproduction and procreation are obviously not viewed as the main purpose of sexual encounters in most societies now, and in this area, technological and medical advances have no doubt assisted in creating a safer distance between sex as procreation and sex as recreation.

cont'd on page 6



Ruminations on Sexuality

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However, many of the expectations of female sexuality are determined by real or imagined sexual differences between the male and female. Some of these differences have their roots in biology, others in psychoanalysis, but all are influenced by the social and material realities of every culture.

My hypothesis is that in societies in which the gender system regulates and organizes both sex and procreation, we find different and sometimes more rigid kinds of control over female sexuality and perhaps different notions of sexuality, than in societies where there is a greater separation between sex as procreation and sex as recreation.

For example, in India, sex is regarded as a private matter, kept behind closed doors and not even discussed among friends. Sexuality, male or female, is not openly acknowledged. Women are expected to be passive sexual objects, virgins at marriage, modest, pleasing, obedient and sexually serving to their husbands, and most importantly, monogamous.

Despite these stereotypes of the passive, obedient Indian woman whose sexual knowledge and sexuality is jealously guarded by her family, there exists another notion of female sexuality which emerged, perhaps more in myth, song and dance ritual, etc. This is the notion that Indian women possess an uncontrolled libidinous drive and will seduce unsuspecting men because of their insatiable desire. Interestingly, the onus is put on women to control their sexuality so that men will not fall victim to their lust.

What is significant about the discussion on female sexuality in

the African continent is the variation that exists within the continent. While the general rule seems to be that female sexuality is geared to male pleasure, the satisfaction of female pleasure is also promoted. Thus, in some areas, women are supposed to be submissive to their husbands, fertile, not frigid in bed, pleasing but not showing desire for sexual pleasure. Virginity before marriage is expected, and motherhood is imperative.

However, among some tribes, there are rites and rituals regarding the sexual initiation of women (for example, rites to enhance skills to give pleasure, elongation of the clitoris). Extra marital affairs are condoned for the woman if she is not satisfied in bed by her chosen husband, as long as she is discreet about it.

Notable here, is the extreme taboo associated with homosexuality among men or women, to the extent that there is no direct word for this in the languages of many of these societies. Where words do exist, they describe largely negative states such as lesbianism being referred to as "madness" in India.

In the West, sex is clearly not restricted to the marriage bed. Sex is related to intimacy, relationships, love, emotions, passion, procreation, orgasm, penetration, power, promiscuity, and sexual imagery. There are no clear and distinct rites and rituals associated with the sexual initiation of the young. Both female and male sexuality are allowed degrees of licence depending on the particular context, with perhaps those societies in which women have the highest economic status allowing the greatest flexibility in

the expression of female sexuality

Having said that, however, it is not always the case that development brings with it greater satisfaction in this respect. What may happen is that the control of female sexuality where the kin rules do not dictate, is ensured by different and possibly more barbaric means - as for instance increased sexual violence at a social level - rape, mass murders of women and so on.

Strictly speaking, various forms of sexual initiation, sex education, sexual imagery are transferred in all cultures - the openness of how this is done is determined by the cultural forms which are indigenous to that society and the liberalism which that society manifests.

In the USA, for instance, the norm is to have a television and video in every bedroom and every manner of sex education material is available to children, in one form or the other, ranging from light boy/girl romances to hard core pornography.

Contrast this with India, where, until recently, films were very careful about any kind of sensual touching between the sexes on the screen, kissing was taboo, and sexuality and sexual imagery, especially that expected of females, was transmitted through dance and the expressiveness of hands and eyes.

In the Caribbean, song, music and dance are important sources through which sexuality and sexual boundaries are defined. The calypso, the indigenous oral song tradition of Trinidad and Tobago has been most crucial in perpetuating sex-role stereotypes and ensuring that women are kept in their place.

The stretching of the boundaries of what is allowed as sexually possible also makes more evident the dimensions which

cont'd on page 7

Feeling's From the Heart

by Ife

She kissed her sweetheart at the door wishing her a great workday. Unknowing to them in the house across the street, a remark is made "nasty sodomite girls."

Is this the general feeling in the Caribbean heterosexual community? Do modern day heterosexuals have a tolerance for sexual preferences? Because of homophobia in the Caribbean, the majority of lesbians are invisible. Most of them who announce their feelings do so to certain family members and close friends. A lot of these women lose the love and respect of cherished ones. There has been a lot of media coverage in America, Europe.

Right here in the Caribbean, the scientists and preachers have all had their say on the medical and moral viewpoint, but what about the women who know their sexual



identities from early childhood; others realize at different stages of their lives, some because of society's ideology,

have set up homes and try raising a heterosexual family, only to realize after many years that the feelings do not go away, and wouldn't go away, but must be dealt with.

In the Caribbean, there are no visible lesbian families, no social life except in small groups, no gay night clubs, gay dances, shows nor

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Ruminations on Sexuality

cont'd from page 6

human sexuality has always possessed but which somehow we choose to ignore. Homosexuality among men and women is not a new phenomenon and references to it can be found as far back as one would choose to go. However, the way in which each society understands, or accepts a degree of homosexuality is determined by that particular society and by the cultural influences which allow the degree of acceptance or rejection. The understanding of male homosexuality and lesbianism can only come from a less judgemental and more analytical understanding of the nature of human sexuality itself, which changes with time and place, but is perhaps equally influenced by biological and psychoanalytic components.

Clearly, the more open manifestation or marginalization of homosexuality in any society is determined by the extent to which that society allows for more liberal sexual practices, incorporates more ideas in the map of sexual imagery which describes that society and, I would argue, depends on the extent to which heterosexual men and women are comfortable with their own sexuality and not threatened by the polymorphous perversity of sexuality which human society seems to be subject to.

In general though, it appears that the norm which has existed throughout many societies is that male desire has to be satisfied at the expense of the female. The only real assurance of paternity and medium through which property and one's name is carried on is by the control of female sexuality. There is no question of who is the mother of a child when it is delivered of a woman, but fatherhood is not so easily discernible. So the mechanisms which we find expressed in different ways in different cultures to control female sexuality go back to a basic procreative urge. Hence the notions of what represents a good and bad woman seem to prevail despite radical shifts which have taken place in other gender norms and in the position of women relative to men in many societies.

**Homosexuality
among men and
women is not a
new
phenomenon ...**

Finally, my conjecture is that the root and object of sexual desire - although this desire itself is manifested differently between the sexes, and shaped and accommodated differently in each cultural setting while still giving precedence to male desire, are fundamentally very similar or rather have a coincidental base. Procreation certainly, even more fundamental and more material -but modern man and woman are complex creatures and this complexity is reflected at the unconscious level as well. Perhaps it has to do with the the real purpose of sex which both aspire to - the need to escape from our individual condition of isolation and solitude and somewhere in the dark recesses of our early conscious and preconscious, these needs are intertwined, and optimistically, are not sexually differentiated or hierarchical. Perhaps there is hope yet for the feminist struggle.

AGEING AND SEXUALITY

by Ana Maria Ocaña, Information
Center for Sex Education, Mexico
City.

The changes that come with ageing are a part of our lives and human beings are no exception to this process. In adult women over age 60, some normal signs of ageing are hardening of the arteries, diminished muscular elasticity, osteoporosis and other changes linked to quality of food, amount of exercise, prior health history and other external factors. Women over 60 are post-menopausal, which means they have had their last menstrual period and ended their reproductive - but not their sexual - function. Many women mistakenly believe that loss of the capacity to produce ova means the loss of their sexuality, as well.

In fact, sexuality remains relatively unchanged. Physical sexual response to stimulation is maintained despite the hormonal changes of menopause. Normal vaginal lubrication and the elasticity of the vaginal walls may be affected by a significant deficiency of female hormones (estrogens). Researchers like Masters and Johnson have observed that sexually active post-menopausal women suffer less vaginal shrinkage and produce a greater quantity of androgen and other hormones than sexually inactive women of the same age. This suggests that periodic sexual activity may facilitate at least some protection against the physiological alterations of the female sexual anatomy caused by ageing.

Women may also experience a new wave of sexual desire as a



consequence of not having to worry about pregnancy or caring for small children. This may confuse or create problems with their partners. Widows, particularly if they engaged in frequent sexual activity with their husbands, often experience feelings of guilt or shame regarding this increased eroticism.

On the other hand, the depression that often accompanies this period of life may have an important effect on sexual functioning. Women usually start their menopausal syndrome (the symptoms - hot flashes, insomnia, headaches, behaviour changes, anxiety, etc - surrounding the onset of menopause) at a time in their lives when their children are grown and living independently. The husband of women of this age are often at the height of their profession or close to retirement. For women experiencing the "empty nest" syndrome, both situations may generate anxiety.

A widow or divorced woman has few alternatives for

satisfying her basic sexual needs. It must be stressed that masturbation is not an unhealthy practice. As at other times in their lives, it provides women with basic satisfaction.

Prevailing concepts of sexuality in older women have more to do with social prejudice than with formal knowledge. We have always been led to believe that old men and women are "sexless." Older people who find new partners, fall in love or remarry are frequently frowned upon. Though they are often treated as if their accumulated life experiences no longer mattered, nothing could be further from the truth. Basic sexual needs persist through the last years of life. Older people have the same need for affection, communication and intimacy as younger people, though they may trade quantity for quality. Older people are likely to engage in fewer acrobatics than young adults, but they continue to be able to enjoy and share. The virility of older men and the femininity of older women are doubted as if their essence disappears with age.

"Ageism" is the term that was coined to denote the social prejudices characterised by cultural stereotypes. In the area of sexuality, ageism stigmatizes, rejects or outright denies older people's sensual capacities and sexual needs. Ageism is a derogatory set of attitudes similar to such prejudices as racism or machismo (male supremacy).

There is no justification for the absence of intimate relations among older people, except poor health or the lack of a partner. But these are reason enough to make sexual functioning more complicated.

(Excerpted from Women's Health Journal 2/91).

MIDLIFE WOMEN SAY YES TO SEX "INDEFINITELY"

A recent survey among a small group of "midlife" women in Trinidad and Tobago revealed that the majority found their lives were as sexually satisfying as before. Almost all of the women felt sexual intercourse could go on "indefinitely." One person said her sex life was now "better than ever."

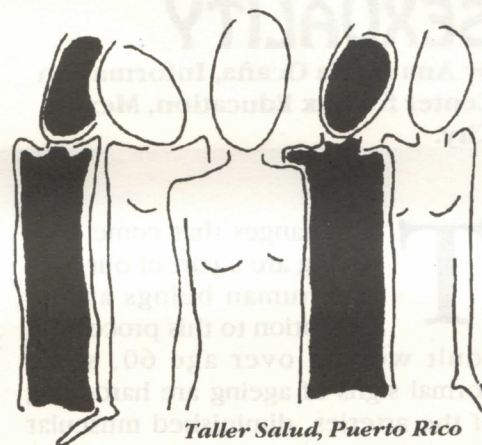
The pilot study was conducted recently among female workers at the St Augustine Campus, UWI, by the Women and Development Studies Group (WDSG). All the women surveyed were midlife women - between the ages of 40 - 65. All the respondents had secondary education and 70 per cent had moved on to the tertiary level. The detailed questionnaire covered areas of physical health, reproductive health, sexuality and attitudes to HIV disease.

Although many of the women felt that loss of physical attractiveness might be a deterrent to continued sexual activity, 75 per cent felt sex was important to their lives.

One respondent expressed her enthusiasm for sex every day but the majority wished to have sexual intercourse only once weekly. Only a small percentage of the women felt they ever had any problems of a sexual nature and in any event, 75 per cent of those who may have had a problem had had discussions with their doctors.

The commonest form of sexual encounter is vaginal intercourse followed closely by oral sex. Only 35 per cent fantasized about sex.

With regard to attitudes to HIV, only 35 per cent of the women had actually changed their behaviour by cutting back on casual sex, having fewer partners and making sure that their partners used condoms. Forty-three per cent of those who had actually changed their sexual behaviour admitted to having had "outside" partners during their ongoing long term relationship and 29 per cent of these had the HIV virus test. None of the respondents had asked about their partners sexual history nor was there any correlation between the fear of risk for HIV infection and the actual HIV test.



Taller Salud, Puerto Rico

On the question of health, only a very small percentage suffered from chronic diseases and in all cases it was hypertension. Twenty-five per cent had major surgery - hysterectomy. Almost half of the women exercised regularly, one smoked and most of them drank socially or occasionally.

Ninety-five per cent had at least one pap smear and 25 per cent had annual pap smears. The most frequent age for initiation to sex was 20 - 25 followed closely by 15 - 20 years. Thirty per cent of the women had used contraceptives at their first sexual encounter with the condom and oral contraceptive as the most commonly used.

Analysis of the survey findings showed that the group of mature female workers were comfortable with themselves and that their apparent contentedness was contrary to our cultural concept of ageing. It would seem for the most part that long term relationships continued to be satisfying to most of the midlife women. However, in the area of HIV infection, the women were too complacent.

From: "Pilot survey done on the health and sexuality of a group of mature female employees on the staff of the University of the West Indies" by D Wilson, A Myers and R Gopaul. St Augustine, Women and Development Studies Group, 1992.

Almost all of the women felt sexual intercourse could go on "indefinitely."

WOMEN'S SUSCEPTIBILITY TO HIV/AIDS

Although education programmes on HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean have been widespread and preliminary surveys have identified a high level of awareness, the information shared has been so general that many women are unaware of personal risks.

This was stated by Janey Parris, Senior Project Officer, Health Sector Development, CARICOM Secretariat, based on her research work in several islands of the Caribbean.

Janey said many subgroups of women - those with low levels of education and women in high socio-economic brackets who saw AIDS as being related to something of the lower classes - required specially targetted messages and a variety of strategies and approaches to help them understand HIV/AIDS messages.

According to the World Health Organisation, five million women worldwide have been infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Of the 5,090 cases reported to the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre from its 19 Member Countries, 1,555 were females.

In addition to inadequate information flows, Janey identified limited response to information received and unavailability of a prevention method over which women had control as factors that influenced contracting the disease.

Reduction of sexual partners and faithfulness within relationships were also factors over which women had little or no control. Many women with HIV have had no sexual partners other than their husbands or regular partners. Even if women chose to be faithful in a relationship, fidelity from the partner is not enforceable. In fact, Caribbean society has, perhaps until the advent of AIDS, condoned multiple partners and infidelity within relationships.

Some women experience a "sense of powerlessness" in sexual relationships and simply hope that they will not become infected. Others, because of economic dependence on males, tolerate circumstances which put them at risk. For example, in the Caribbean, "safer sex" means using a condom. "Unfortunately, it is the male who controls or

dominates decision-making within sexual relationships and may choose, for various reasons, not to use a condom even when the women is brave enough to identify the risks and ask that a condom be used," Janey said.

The available mechanical protective methods over which women have control are the diaphragm with spermicides and the female condom. Little or no research has been done on the first method and the second is not affordable or accessible to the majority of women. And then, how many Caribbean women have heard of or seen a female condom?

What can women do to protect themselves? The most important protective strategy used by women is talking to their partners and attempting to help them see the importance of protecting themselves and their families. This is more effective if undertaken by women collectively as support is provided for each other.



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Feelings From the Heart

(cont'd from page 7)

organizations. If there is so much isolation, why do women persist in living this lifestyle? Can it be that the scientists are right that lesbians were born that way? Why would a woman risk being alienated from her children and loved ones, risk discrimination from all levels of society; in severe cases, on one of the islands, risked being stoned, unless this was their true self.

Lesbians should not be judged on their sexual preferences, just as women in general should not be judged based on religious differences, race or class. Lesbians like everyone else need freedom of expression, need to be able to put voice to their feelings, need to be able to walk the street without fear of physical or verbal victimisation. Heterosexuality is one way of life, living as a lesbian is another. Lesbians are mothers, sisters, daughters, friends and lovers.

Women's Reproductive Health Guyana, St. Lucia, Jamaica.

by Nesha Haniff

On completion of work among men and women in Guyana, St Lucia and Jamaica concerning their reproductive health, Nesha Haniff has concluded that women have been making contraceptive choices in situations that have not given them the best scenarios. "What the women in these countries are telling us is that they may still be poor and barefoot, but they will not be pregnant."

GUYANA

The population has been around 800,000 for many years although it experienced a slight decline, not attributable to migration alone. In Guyana, health care is very poor and where available, it is costly. Although no official statistics were available, the rate of abortion is considered to be extremely high.

Abortion still remains illegal in Guyana although the new Cheddi Jagan government has proposed a Draft Bill on the decriminalisation of abortion. Abortions cost between G\$900 - G\$2,000 (US\$1=G\$135).

Women interviewed before their abortions said the health system had failed them and this was being used as a contraceptive device. They preferred a more long-term, uncomplicated contraceptive with low maintenance. They had difficulty accepting abortion as an alternative but wanted to exert control over the pregnancy. Condom use was intermittent and differentiated by partner. Some men would use condoms only outside of stable relationships and some only within stable relationships. Haniff describes abortion as the "silent method" and alludes to the tacit compliance by the State. In addition, the illegality of abortions leaves many women on their own, relying on cultural and historic remedies for unwanted pregnancies. And women, knowing that they are dangerous, use them in the hope that they might work.

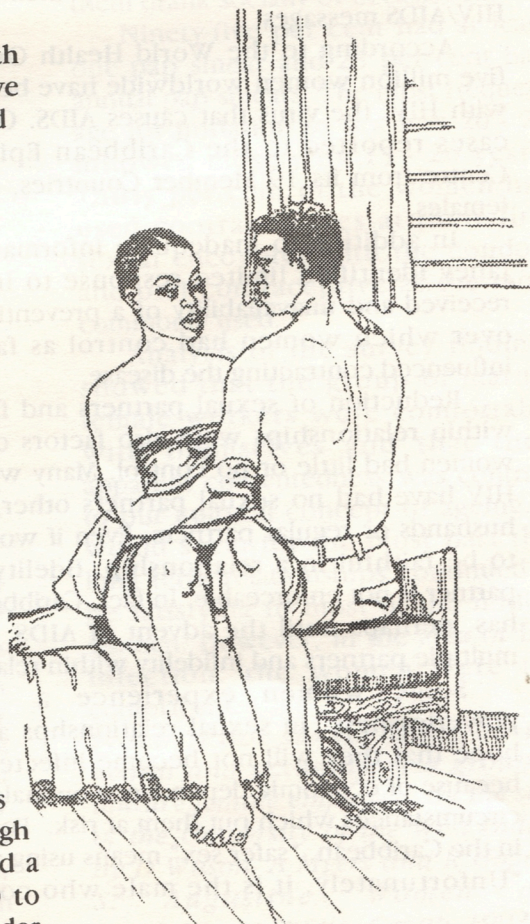
ST LUCIA

Abortion is also illegal in St Lucia. Unlike Guyana, however, there is not the same tacit acceptance. The Catholic religion is very influential here, advocating natural contraceptive methods only, and has been problematic for the St Lucia Planned Parenthood Association.

In 1983, the crude birth rate was 30 per thousand and its population was growing at the rate of 2 per cent per annum. High unemployment, compounded by rapid population growth and a mounting dependency burden led the government in 1990 to establish the National Population Unit, Ministry of Planning, under the control of the Prime Minister.

In 1986, Nesha Haniff selected 50 men from Castries for her study on male attitudes to family planning. At that time, it was felt that the country's resources could not sustain the people particularly as the teenage population had doubled between 1970 and 1980. The men selected were at peak child bearing years - 20 to 40 - and were drawn from every strata of society. Fourteen women who were wives or girlfriends of a similar number of men in the study were also interviewed.

When asked about contraceptive use, 11 men of the 50 said "regularly." The others used contraceptives sometimes or never while there were still others who claimed their partners' use as theirs. Among the men who used contraceptives and those who did not, very few expressed any idea of the central responsibility being their own; it was always the woman. None of the men in the study had a vasectomy and



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Women's Reproductive Health

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very few knew of the procedure but many of them asked about a "male pill."

A popular method among the men was withdrawal. They feel this method depends entirely on the man and his sense of control within the sexual act. However, there is a total lack of education about withdrawal as a method. The men felt that orgasm produced sperm which caused a pregnancy but that was not linked to the fact that sperm can be emitted before orgasm. Ninety-four per cent of the men never went to a family planning clinic and 68 per cent said they would not go.

Both men and women felt they were incomplete without children. "If somebody don't have kids they're just a waste of time." Many men in the study were very affected by the absence of fathers in their lives and swore they would be different but even the most conscientious could not break the pattern. Only 20 of the men were raised by both parents, 28 were raised by their mothers or grandmothers, two by relatives. Sixty-two per cent of the men who had children lived with only some or none of their children.

On the question of infidelity, most of the women felt they were equal to men but accepted the unfair reality of male infidelity. Women see men as unable to control themselves sexually and expect men to have other women. Men however expected women to be disciplined and faithful. Of the 14 couples interviewed, 79 per cent of the men said a man should have more than one woman and a woman, one man. Women either knew or preferred not to know of their partners' other women. Sixty-five per cent said it was not fair for

men to have more than one woman, but that was part of life. Twenty-one per cent said it was wrong and 14 per cent said it was fair.

Interestingly, farming and blue collar women tended to see themselves as equal to men while the women from the white collar grouping were more inclined to feel women were not equal to men.

JAMAICA

Here, the focus is on population planning and a programme for teenage mothers. In 1967, the National Family Board was formed and family planning services were being offered in all health clinics.

Included among the main goals of the Family Board are:

- reduce the crude birth rate from approximately 24 per 100 in 1990 to 20 per 100 by the year 2000.
- achieve replacement level fertility - two children per woman - by the year 2000.

According to Nesha Haniff, the programme in Jamaica has been so successful that it has been held up as a model worldwide.

The Woman's Centre:

This programme aims to help adolescent mothers, between the ages of 12 to 18, by giving child care, counselling, opportunities to complete their education and job placement. Since its inception in 1978, the centre has had a total of 3,315 participants and a success rate of 98 per cent.

The majority of pregnant teenagers at the centre are in the 14 to 16 age group. The girls cited their main problems: economic situation (43 per cent), molestation at home by men (12 per cent), no knowledge of sexual matters (20 per cent) and difficulty communicating with parents (25 per cent).

Based on its 1992 report, all participants at the centre were returned to school on a family planning method. Seventy two per cent chose the IUD, 16 per cent the injection and 12 per cent the pill.

Although academic instruction remains a priority, equal emphasis is placed on group and individual counselling resulting in an improved self-image, a conscious commitment to education and good parenting habits.

Teenage pregnancy is now responsible for 22 per cent of the current births in Jamaica, as opposed to 27 per cent in 1989. The second pregnancy rate of 1.4 per cent is a world record among similar programs.

Women's Susceptibility to HIV/AIDS

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Prevention of HIV also requires a partnership between men and women involving honest communication with a view to preventing sexually transmitted disease including AIDS from entering the relationship.

As another preventative measure, Janey suggested training of women in open discussion on sexuality, a topic not easily broached, traditionally. She recommends that the socialisation of boys and girls should emphasize love and respect for self and others, equality of the sexes, care of the body and human sexuality.

Haitian and Dominican Women in the Sex Trade

The sex industry is very much alive in Haiti.

Despite the lingering political crisis, the economic morass and the threat of AIDS which has infected 7-8 per cent of the population and 77 per cent of the prostitutes, "private establishments" flourish in Haiti.

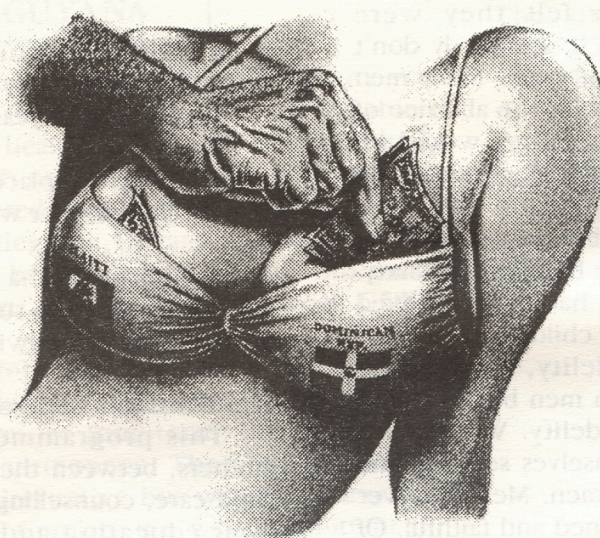
In Port-au-Prince alone, these business places stretch some three kilometres, along Jean Jacques Dessalines Boulevard, spanning the commercial centre from north to south.

There is no legislation regulating the practice of prostitution and five inspectors from the Institute of Social Welfare and Research (ISWR) are responsible for monitoring prostitution.

They will tell you that approximately 40 of the brothels in the heart of Port-au-Prince and its suburbs are officially registered. In Port-au-Prince and environs, you will find close to 500 prostitutes, 90 per cent of them from the Dominican Republic. This figure does not include countless "street walkers" nor the women who engage in part-time or clandestine prostitution.

In 1984, the Prostitution Supervisory Unit reported that 30 per cent of Haitian and Dominican prostitutes were between 15-20 years of age. Forty per cent were between 20-25 and 30 per cent, 25 and over. Illiteracy was 60 per cent among Haitian women and 11 per cent among Dominicans.

The majority of Haitian prostitutes come from the western part of the country while most of the Dominicans are recruited from the provinces of Joaquin Balguer's county by pimps from Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The vast majority of the Dominican come



westward, believing promises of employment and a better life.

Port-au-Prince by night sells everything in the skin trade: under-age females wrapped around lampposts and prostitutes strolling under shopping galleries. Peeping Toms and nudists can indulge themselves with some "fat mamas" on the road to the South. Clients who decide to go for the public show can either do it "dry" - on the grass, below the lemon trees; or "wet" - in the swimming pool or the sea.

At the corner of Carbonne Street (in the commercial centre of Port-au-Prince), children in prostitution work for between 15 and 150 gourdes per day. Their clients are mainly taxi and bus

drivers, workmen and tradesmen.

Leaning against a parked car, a bowl of rice in her hand, Beatrice (17 years old) agreed to speak to us: "I started when I was 16. Another friend introduced me to this ...the one you see over there. She is also a lesbian. She used to take me with her to the "hotels" every evening; she showed me how to do a 'quickie' and one day my mother kicked me out ..."

Juvenile prostitution is best explained by the difficult economic circumstances. Caseus Edwine, head of the Prostitution Supervisory Service, Port-au-Prince, says often the underlying reasons include family conflicts, deceased parents, abandonment and economic problems.

There is also some element of "love." It takes the form of an attachment (not to be confused with fidelity) where priority is given by Haitian and Dominican prostitutes to one they refer to as the "best friend." He is given certain "favours." He shows no jealousy, has the right to make love without using a condom but pays the rent and/or medical expenses in return.

An imaginary border divides Haiti's commercial centre; to the North, the majority of 'hotels and guest houses' accommodate the Haitian prostitutes; to the South and including the district of Carrefour, the 'panyols' (from the Dominican Republic) can be found in the 'bars and cafes.' Further south, along the Dessalines Boulevard, it gets more expensive. Here, the 'bouzen'

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or prostitutes from the Dominican Republic rule the roost.

Prices vary too. A 'quickie' (max. of 20 mins) with a Haitian 'good times girl' in downtown Port-au-Prince, costs between 15 and 25 gourdes. A Haitian prostitute from Petion-Ville costs 50-150 and a quickie with a Dominican may cost between 25-300 gourdes. For hotel stay and a Haitian woman, you'll pay 100-250 gourdes while the Dominican woman at the Roxy or Casino will charge 100 gourdes at the cashdesk for an 'exit and will make you pay a deposit of up to 1,000 gourdes before agreeing to leave the premises.

From the prices quoted, it is clear that there's a marked preference on the part of Haitian men for Dominican women.

Joseph Julien, Director of the Celeste Casimir Medico-Social Centre, the main institution in the capital issuing health certificates to prostitutes, attributes the preference to the "racism" of Haitian men and the "professionalism" of the Dominicans.

Julien says the majority of Haitian prostitutes are in the business part-time, out of necessity, because of their economic situation. They do not know how to look after their appearance, unlike the Dominicans who go all out to look attractive. In addition, Haitians prefer the "exotic."

Clorindre Zephir, Coordinator of Enfofanm (National and International Documentation and Information Centre for Haitian Women), elaborates further on the Haitian preference. She says it is tied to racism; unfamiliarity with the language and a bias towards Spanish, believed to be the 'language of love'; and the significantly lower HIV ratio among Dominican women.

The myths of Haitian racism (skin colour, silky hair) and the "culture of eroticism" may also explain the attitudes of Haitian men who claim Dominican women satisfy them more. Dominican

Haitian and Dominican Women in the Sex Trade

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prostitution in Haiti is also transient and feeds "the fantasy of Haitian men for a new face, new pleasure and desire," Clorindre adds.

For Jacques, a pimp, Haitian men prefer the Dominicans because they owe them nothing. Less strings attached. He also thinks that Dominicans more closely approximate to Western standards of beauty.

Experts all agree that the vast majority of Dominican women accumulate money, return home six or nine months later, or leave for other Caribbean islands such as Aruba, Curacao, Guadeloupe, Martinique and St Thomas. Some of them commute between Haiti and the Dominican Republic for several years, have children with Haitians, or, give up prostitution for other more 'respectable' activities such as hairdressing or the restaurant business.

But for both Haitian and Dominican prostitutes, life is hard. Often, they are victims of abuse; gang rapes by soldiers; and are regularly subjected to police raids.

One prostitute complained: "They want to screw us in the ass for 100 gourdes ... Sometimes the 'little mulattoes' threaten us with their guns or throw acid in our faces. They prefer the Dominican women because they do the 'works' (normal and anal sex)." *(Excerpted from an article on "Prostitution, Racism and Repression" by Ives Marie Chanel. Translated by Cathy Shepherd)*

"But for both Haitian and Dominican prostitutes, life is hard. Often, they are victims of abuse; gang rapes by soldiers; and are regularly subjected to police raids. "

Sex-work (otherwise known as prostitution) is an integral part of many working women's lives in the Caribbean. However, it remains an activity fraught with exploitation, coercion and violence, surrounded by stigmas and misunderstandings. While it is difficult to compile very exact information on sex-work, since it is most commonly linked to the informal labour market sector and underground trafficking networks, recent research and NGO activities indicate several dimensions relevant to women's lives.

Prostitution has been documented in the region since the 17th century, structured by Western European colonialism. Women involved in domestic or household work in particular, were identified as sexual servants for the European male elite. Historically, sex-work has also come to be seen as an avenue through which women could improve their economic situations and establish some form of autonomy from slavery, plantation labour and poverty. Caribbean prostitution, as an exchange for material goods and benefits, has been traditionally constituted by elements of both voluntary participation and coercion. Despite the concentration of women as the providers of sexual services, many male prostitutes are also known in the region.

Prostitution in the Caribbean is characterised by several main features, underpinned by a general premise of unconditional masculine access to, and control over, feminine bodies, labour and sexuality. Territories with large deep water harbours and a constant flow of international ships such as Barbados and Curaçao, have long been

Prostitution and International Migration

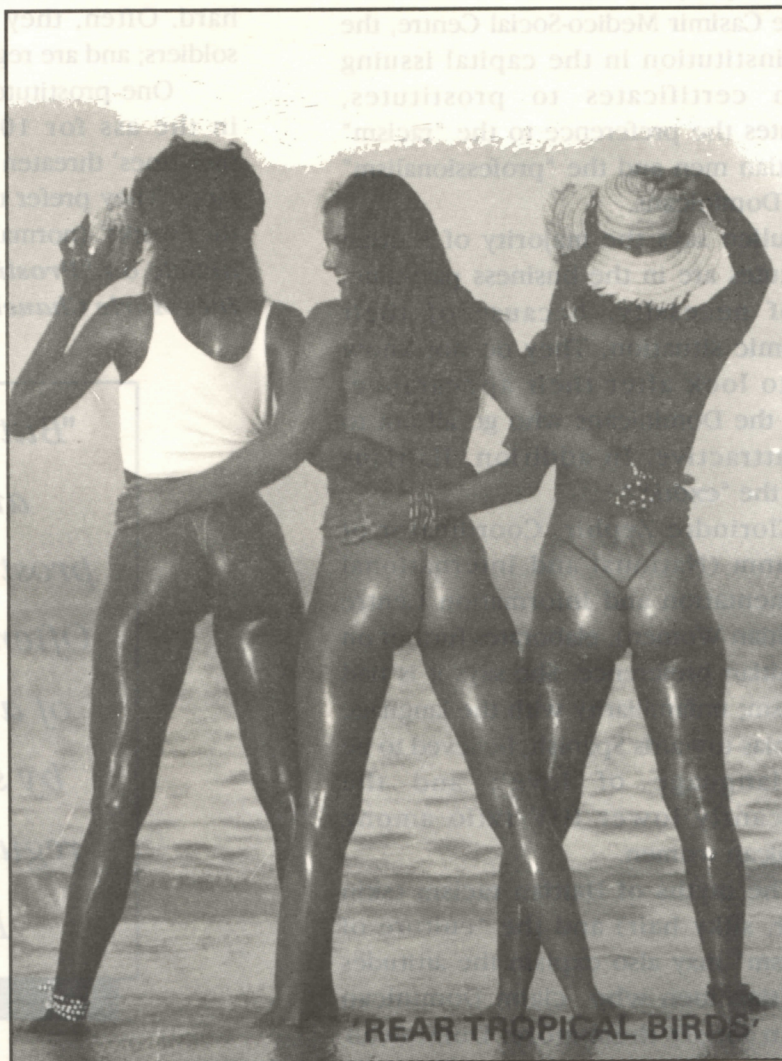
by Kamala Kempadoo

established as prostitution centres where the sailors expect to find erotic entertainment and female companionship. European and US military and naval bases at various periods during this century in, for example, Curaçao, Trinidad or present day Belize have also exacerbated the situation, whereby

sexual services by Caribbean women have come to be seen as vital and necessary to the maintenance of the health and well being of the foreign troops.

Sex-work in the region has, since the 1950s, also been encouraged through the tourist industry. Young, 'exotic,' slender, 'brown' women are often promoted as part of the tourist attractions in Jamaica, Barbados, St Maarten and Curaçao. Even socialist Cuba is currently witnessing a resurgence of sex-work in connection to its new tourist industry. Many of the Caribbean islands are therefore seen to embody the western holiday ideal of 'sun, sea and sex.'

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Prostitution and International Migration

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Source: Women in Action

The development of free trade zones in, for example, Panama and Curaçao, has furthermore established sex-work as a supplement to trading activities for women who buy and sell goods throughout the region. Finally, the trafficking and increased use of drugs, particularly Colombian cocaine and its derivatives, supports sex-work in various ways. The organizations which deal in drugs also press-gang women into prostitution. Alternatively, men and women sell sex to support a drug habit.

Sex-work is often related to migration, both inter-regionally and internationally. In Curacao, where the State has regulated and legitimized prostitution for the past 50 years, and operates the largest brothel in the Latin American/Caribbean area, non-Dutch Antillian women are specifically permitted to work on the island as prostitutes. The central 'brothel' is run exclusively on the sexual labour of women from other territories, predominantly from the Dominican Republic and Colombia. Similar patterns of employing 'foreign' women in the sex-trade have been documented in Aruba, Suriname, Haiti, Cuba, Trinidad and Belize, at different periods during this century. Migration appears then as an important condition for the existence of prostitution relations in the region.

Migration for sex-work has two very specific dimensions. On the one hand, movement away from a familiar setting to another country provides a certain anonymity and discretion. She can escape societal condemnation by friends, family or husband and the stigma attached to sex-work, while

earning money to support the family or household. On the other hand, many women are coerced into prostitution through promises and false pretenses of well-paid domestic, health care or night club work or even marriage. Migration on this basis isolates her from family and community assistance and serves to entrap her in an activity not of her own choosing.

Both scenarios place the prostitute in a very vulnerable position. She may be undocumented, or reliant on false papers and passports, leaving her very susceptible to bribes and corrupt practices by immigration middle-men and officials. She is often subject to physical abuse, rape and sexual violence by her recruiters or others who manage the sex-trade. In most cases, she is a non-national and therefore has few legal rights to undergird demands for decent working conditions or wages.

The secrecy of her work and having to leave family and friends also produces psychological stress, anxiety and loneliness. The very nature of her work continually exposes her to unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases (including AIDS) and other health risks. She is often rejected by local women for the work she does and may be attacked for "corrupting" the dominant morality and sense of female respectability and decency. Her clients often take advantage of her position: they may steal her earnings, coerce or bribe her into having "unsafe" sexual intercourse or beat her into submission to sexual acts she will not voluntarily perform. Substance abuse to relieve the strain and pressures of the work is common among the women.

While prostitutes in the region appear to work "independently," that is, pimps who directly control and manage their lives are not the most common feature, they are still subjected to paying exorbitant rates for hotel rooms, airline tickets, travel documents, staying or work permits, marriage papers, taxis, health-care or even food. Invariably, men are the ones who control the larger business and profit from women's sexual work. Thus, even though sex-work remains a lucrative business and form of self-employment for many women, their labour and activities are in many ways dominated and exploited by male interests.

The sex-trade in the Caribbean was given greater impetus during the 1970s with the expansion of the sex industry in western Europe and the construction of a demand for "exotic" women. Territories such as the Dutch Antilles, which maintain direct colonial ties to the Netherlands, and particularly Curaçao with its well-regulated and large-scale prostitution operation, enabled the islands to become centres for migration into Europe.

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*Prostitution and International Migration**cont'd from page 16*

Many women from the Dominican Republic and Colombia have been able to use loose marriage laws to arrive and live in the Netherlands as Dutch citizens. Changes in Dutch marriage law in 1986 have sought to prevent the number of 'bogus marriages' but this has barely deterred the movement of young women from the Caribbean into prostitution.

New avenues and routes have been found to recruit women from the region into the European industries. The vulnerable position and poor conditions in the Caribbean, including both coercive and voluntary dimensions of their participation, are also evident in Europe. The high costs that are exacted from the women for transportation and entrance into Europe however, serve to maintain a situation comparable to that of an indentured labourer, which can lock her into prostitution for many years.

The situation for formal and informal sex-workers and prostitutes in the Caribbean has not received much attention other than from men who have mangled, economically profited from and enjoyed the activities. Coercion in the sex-industry, the entrapment of progressively younger women in prostitution, or the violence to which sex-workers are subjected, have not been the topic of much inquiry, research or social action.

In 1978, a regional women's conference was held in Bonaire to discuss prostitution and several recommendations were made for its abolition. There has been little follow-up on a regional basis. In the Dominican Republic, inroads have been made by women's organizations to address the inequalities and exploitations that are occurring within the country and attempts are being made to curb and arrest the recruitment of women under false pretenses for the European sex-industry.

Likewise, in the Netherlands, organizations both against the trafficking of women as well as those for prostitutes rights are learning about the realities for sex-workers from Latin America and the Caribbean, and seeking to empower Third World women involved in sex-work. In June 1993, a first meeting of Latin American sex-workers was held in Ecuador which too is part of an empowerment project.

The situation for Caribbean women differs somewhat from their counterparts in South and South East Asia, of which more is known and documented. However, their migration patterns to Europe may not be dissimilar given that the same gangs operate in both the East and West to acquire new bodies for Europe's sex industry.

Nevertheless, the situation for Caribbean women requires more attention. The particular history of the region demands that we develop a nuanced approach to sex-work which will support

voluntary participation yet seek to end coercion and forced prostitution.

We need to start listening to prostitutes' experiences and to identify strategies for the empowerment of Caribbean women in sex-work. We must build dialogue and coalitions between other working women's groups and sex-workers in the region. The

perspectives of prostitutes must be included in our broader efforts to transform gender relations at local, regional and

international levels. Perhaps, most importantly, we must begin to recognize and respect women in sex-work.



CONFERENCE REPORTS

The Thailand Experience

by Avian Joseph

The five-day conference, entitled "Women Empowering Communication," was held at the Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, just about half-hour outside main city Bangkok, Thailand.

The conference itself was a whirlwind of activity which saw more than 400 women representing at least 80 countries of the world assembled in one place. Talk about culture shock. But it was much, much more than that. It was a tremendous learning experience which empowered each participant in very unique ways.

Each day began with keynote addresses which focussed on different aspects of communication and how women could use this powerful medium to impact major decision-making bodies.

Following these power-packed addresses that often saw standing ovations from the audience, we had the opportunity to hear from other women who were actually involved in communication including the use of alternative media.

One of the most impressive was a presentation by the Tanzania Media Women's Association which showed how the "kanga" (African cloth) had been used by women in Africa to communicate, to send a clear message to the colonial authorities. Not only is it wrapped a particular way and worn by both men and women, but it is draped in such a way that what is written is

clearly visible to the persons who need to get the message. The kanga can convey any message. Some of the messages tell off a meddling mother-in-law while others invite a lover to bed, and so on.

The Sistren Theatre Company of Jamaica, although only four in number, left a lasting impression on participants as they used drama to the accompaniment of drums to explain how Jamaican women and by extension, Caribbean women, have survived sexual harassment on the job, poverty and illiteracy.

The Caribbean contingent was a mere ten - one each from St Lucia, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, a Jamaican resident in England, two Belizeans and the Sistren group. While the Caribbean had the fewest number of participants, we had the entire audience lapping up our calypso "Die With My Dignity," by Singing Sandra of Trinidad and Tobago, on the final night of the conference.

During the afternoon sessions, we had the opportunity to actually work at improving as well as learning new communication skills. There was batik, setting up a radio broadcast station, video production, advertising, magazine production and drama. Unfortunately, some participants, like myself, wanted to benefit from each one and were forced to make a choice as all workshops ran simultaneously. In every corner, there were books, magazines, a plethora of literature on display. During the night, from about 8 - 10 pm, we

had "Video Showcase." This highlighted the work of various women's organizations to improve the lot of women.

On the whole, the conference was well organized despite the never-ending registration lines at the beginning. At the end of sessions, speeches were readily available, in English and Spanish. Accommodation was also very pleasant and the surroundings were just right though I did not care much for the food.

There was a daily newsletter in which my room mate, Thecla Fontenard from the St Lucia Folk Research Centre, and I wrote a story on the thriving market that sprung up on the compound, selling from shoes to fabric to jewellery. We had also done interviews with mothers who brought along nursing babies but did not get a chance to have that one published. The newsletter also featured events of the preceding day and other conference activities.

The visit to Pat Pong: I didn't go but I heard enough to know I would only venture if I had a dedicated Thai guide from the conference. It is this red light city about one and a half hours away from the conference centre, where women, or rather girls, move about like sex zombies, mindless, aimless. It was also the best place to shop for bargains, I was told. On her return from Pat Pong, my room mate had a rough time coming to terms with what she had witnessed. She said she had seen a girl who couldn't be more than

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WOMEN, COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

by Noeleen Heyzer



Excerpts of Noeleen's presentation at the Bangkok conference on "Women, Communication and Development." Noeleen is coordinator of Gender and Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Iwould like to focus on women's own analysis of our place in the world of communication and development.

The influence of Western, especially American, pop culture is easy to see. It is visible on any TV screen in the world, audible on almost any radio, and expressed in the appearance of teenagers. The global domination of communication is in general Western in news, popular culture, technology and language.

Equally of concern is the male-centeredness of information. The definitions of problems, their analysis and their solutions are still in the control of men. There is no doubt that cultural images reflect and promote the values of the powerful. Satellite transmissions which cross national boundaries mean that in many countries control over information and programmes is in the hands of a small number of male-controlled multinationals. This means that the globalization of news and the shaping of world opinion and behaviour are in the hands of Western male-dominated business and banks, especially in America.

DIRECTIONS OF VALUES, IDEAS AND ACTION

For women, media generally reinforce existing attitudes and role expectations which can be a barrier to their advancement, weaken women's position and limit their participation in the development of society. Media as powerful shapers of behaviour, however, also have the potential for setting new standards of action which can be used by women to their advantage.

Studies on the portrayal of women in print and electronic media have shown that women are usually portrayed in traditional roles, as wives and mothers, emphasizing characteristics of passivity, dependence and subservience in images that focus on physical

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The Thailand Experience

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15 or 16, shooting darts from her vagina. Another was pulling out a long string of razor blades from the same place. And to show you that the blades were really sharp, she would cut up some pieces of cardboard from time to time. Later on, I was to learn that prostitution is rampant in Thailand. It is so bad, that one women's group has composed a song, now taught in schools, about a 12-year old girl named Kamla who had been burnt to death in a brothel fire in the 1980s. The song begs parents not to sell their children into prostitution.

Some parents knowingly "sell" their daughters for about 5,000 bahts (US \$1 = 25bahts). Some of the sex workers are rural, illiterate girls from North Thailand who are kidnapped and brought to the city. These girls are like choice meat since they are supposedly free of the HIV virus and other sexually transmitted diseases.

The issue of prostitution and its link to tourism is obviously one of grave concern to the women's movement in Thailand but, surprisingly, it never really came up for any lengthy discussion at the conference sessions.

Finally, the strength of the "lesbian lobby" must be noted as the team specially selected to put the "Bangkok Declaration" together was mandated to return to the drawing board and include lesbians among the group of "marginalized" women whose concerns needed to be noted. The final declaration said: "... women have a right to control their sexuality and that in our role as communicators we should not perpetuate the invisibility of lesbians, nor assume that all persons are heterosexuals."

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WOMEN, COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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attractiveness or sexuality.

The reality of most women's lives, particularly the problems of poor women who work in partnership with men to support their families, is not presented. The strength and capability of these women through their own stories is missing, as media focus more on urban women and women who are better off. Media stories and reports of women which de-emphasize the actual contribution of women's work, reinforce dramatically the constant underplaying of women's roles in society. Inaccurate images of women influence societal consciousness and public opinion, which in turn affecting government policy makers.

THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

We are currently in the midst of a communication revolution with the development of satellite broadcasting, cable distribution and new communication technology. One of the first things to bear in mind about this new communication revolution is that satellite broadcasting, which spans all nations, escapes national control.

This technological development in media is part of a wider revolution in information technology which is seen as the key to industrial growth. What has happened is the conversion of information into a commodity and a very expensive one at that. Given the already existing imbalances in the generation and control of information and knowledge, the gaps between the information "haves" (mainly men) and the information "have nots" (mainly women) will increase.

CONTEXT FOR INTERVENTIONS

We also know that the relationship between women and the media is one that is deeply resistant to fundamental change while on the other hand, almost paradoxically, its superficial characteristics are always changing. In other words, the images may change but the basic message does not.

In terms of content, it is not simply what the media say, or how they say it, that create stereotypical perceptions of women. Equally important is what they do not say. There are at

least two ways in which "absences" in media content affect our understanding of the world, and women's place in it.

One kind of absence is the entire "blanking out" of vast areas of experience and life which never find their way into mainstream media output. Where are the stories of the rural or urban poor women? Of the women who face problems such as sexual harassment at work, or the difficulty of combining family life with paid employment? Of the women faced with more dramatic problems such as violence in marriage, enforced abortion, or infertility? Where is the information which would help to empower women, telling them about their legal rights, about their bodies, about their potential for economic independence? Why do so many programmes directed specifically at women stay within the tired old formats, offering nothing more innovative than a new way of cooking chicken, or a new way of applying makeup?

Another kind of absence in media output is the unasked question, the unexplored line of investigation, the unchallenged assumption. Almost any issue taken up in the media could be approached from at least several starting points, any of which would leave the audience with a different set of impressions. The way in which the issue is tackled - how it is researched, which aspects are singled out, which people are consulted as experts, what questions are asked, how they are framed - all these result in the 'story' which is finally packaged for us.

KEY INTERVENTIONS

The last decade has seen the rapid growth of women's networks at local, national, regional and international levels. While all the above social changes have occurred, mainstream media tends to lag behind rather than keep pace with it, especially in the ways women are portrayed by the mass media.

There is plenty of evidence that the mass media under-represent women in terms of proportion of workforce, in various age and class categories in all parts of the world; they also tend to misrepresent women in terms of characteristics, attitudes and behaviour. Women are shown occupying less central roles than they do; marriage and parenthood are considered more important to women than to men; the traditional division of labour is shown as typical in marriage; employed women are shown in traditionally female occupations, as subordinates to men, with little status and more passive than men; media, until

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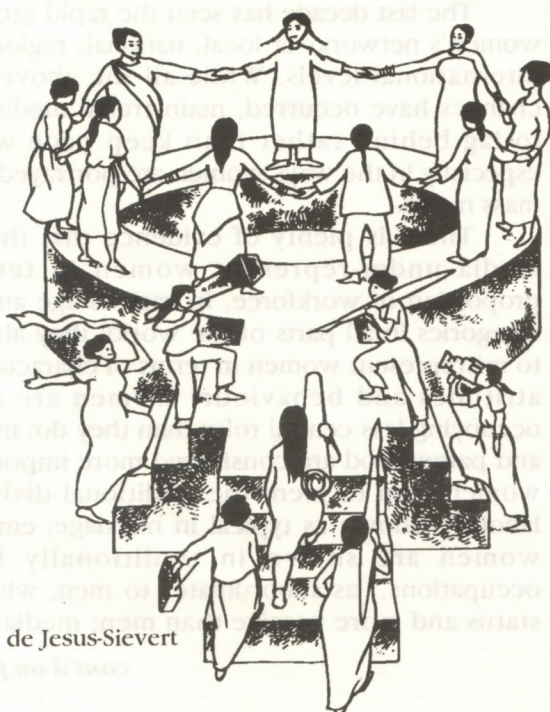
WOMEN, COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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recently ignored or distorted the women's movement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- refrain from reinforcing stereotypes
- sexuality should not be exploited nor sensationalized
- present men and women of different ages, appearances, opinions and interests in variety/diversity of activities and roles, including non-traditional ones, in an equitable manner.
- ensure that language respects the principle of equality between women and men.
- strive to reach a balance in the use of resources for women and men, and seek the opinion of both women and men on the full range of public issues.
- portray women and men as equal partners in sharing responsibilities and in family formation and family life.
- address obstacles in the recruitment, employment and promotion of women and the professional development of women in the media.



Grace de Jesus-Sievert

TEEN WORKSHOP ON REDUCING NUMBER OF PREGNANCIES

A

CAFRA member has called for a new approach to teenage

pregnancy in the region by placing the issue into the broader context of gender, sexual politics and development.

Denise Noel-De Bique, Trinidad and Tobago CAFRA member, made the call during a "Teenplanning Workshop" for Under Twenty Clubs (UTCs), held in Grenada, from February 7 - 11, under the auspices of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). The workshop aimed to equip representatives of UTCs with skills for planning and implementing supportive activities for reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancies in the region.

A woman-centered perspective, Denise said, would recognize there were alternate paradigms on adolescent pregnancy based on the experience of women. It recognizes the position of women and that of teenage women in relation to men; and re-evaluates approaches to services for women in a society that accords ultimate power and authority to men.

Denise said a woman-centered perspective would re-evaluate the institution of the family in an effort to understand how women have been measured, understood and controlled. Ultimately, it would help to remove barriers such as paternalism which undermined women's ability to gain self determination in institutions vested with the responsibility for their care and support.

"While one recognizes the significance of the family in the context of adolescent development and in fertility, the dynamics within these relationships were very intricate, contradictory and disempowering to the sexuality of adolescent girls, Denise said.

Denise noted the need for re-education on reproduction and production and a concurrent change in methodology. She said the concept of "sexuality" needed to go beyond the boundaries of sexual development, reproductive health, gender roles and identity formation to encompass the social processes currently at work in the region.

Preparing for Beijing....



CSW MEETINGS

CAFRA NAMED AS FOCAL POINT FOR THE CARIBBEAN

At recent preparatory meetings of NGOs in New York, Virginia Vargas, Coordinator of the NGO process for Latin America and the Caribbean, pointed out that six subregions had been established within the region - the Southern Cone, Brazil, the Andean Region, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, and formally invited **CAFRA to be the 'focal point' for the Caribbean sub-region.** Commenting on the invitation, Acting Coordinator Gemma Tang Nain, who was at the meetings with CAFRA member Roberta Clarke, said it was very significant for CAFRA's image in the region and maximum use should be made of the opportunity.

Focal point strategies have been identified as: outreach, linkage and feedback. This approach is expected to facilitate the effective participation of NGOs in preparation for Beijing. CAFRA will seek to facilitate the establishment of national focal points to feed into the subregional and regional process. Throughout the three days of NGO meetings, the need

to devise a strategy to ensure significant representation by "grassroots" women at the Beijing conference kept recurring. Other marginalised groups (like lesbians) were also mentioned.

On possible NGO strategies for intervention in the UN process, it was agreed that the focus should be on specific recommendations and suggestions for alternative wording rather than on long philosophical statements.

The channels of intervention identified were: lobbying delegates; submitting recommendations for changes; and impacting the drafting committee.

The following Mission Statement, formulated by the NGO Planning Committee, is expected to guide preparation towards Beijing:

"To bring together women to challenge, transform and create global structures and processes at all levels through the empowerment and celebration of women. We are committed to equality, peace, justice, inclusiveness and full participation of all."

Presentations were made by the official delegates in the rather impressive though somewhat intimidating setting of the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations. Of significance was a call for "education" to be treated as a separate issue given its critical role in assisting women to understand and demand their rights as full human beings. CAFRA, too, had decided to treat it independently (not to include it with health) in terms of our own position paper to be prepared.

Other interesting presentations highlighted the need for special attention to be given to the "girlchild"; denounced violence generally and violence against women specifically, and abhorred its promotion as entertainment; and acknowledged that there was no respect for women's reproductive work (including their responsibility for children).

The most exciting part of this period, however, was the women's caucus sessions which preceded the CSW meetings. During the first day's session, NGO representatives were asked to participate in various work groups to discuss the critical areas and strategic objectives which had been identified by the UN.

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ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR THE CARIBBEAN

The Fourth Latin American and Caribbean Meeting held in Cuba, in January this year, has agreed that new economic policies for the region must focus on development for the majority, must be ecologically sustainable and must favour the integration of all peoples.

The meeting proposed a special occasion in February for the expression of solidarity with the Haitian people and a meeting in July for a campaign of solidarity with Cuba on the US blockade of that country. The Women's Commission (formed during the meeting) also proposed that International Women's Day (March 8) be used to denounce the blockade against Cuba, to condemn the World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies of unequal exchange and to struggle with other organizations for the full participation of women.

CAFRA was represented at the meeting by Trinidad and Tobago member Daphne Phillips and several copies of CAFRA NEWS were distributed to organizations thought to be useful in helping to achieve CAFRA's objectives.

Preparing for Beijing.....

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Other groups were established by the caucus to address: the statement of mission and global framework; the financial arrangements; the institutional arrangements; and to monitor the proceedings of the CSW meeting.

ANTIGUA MEETING

All the countries of the English-speaking Caribbean, with the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, were represented at the meeting of women's national machineries within CARICOM, which took place in Antigua in March. Of the critical areas which had been identified by the UN, countries had been asked to identify the three most critical issues. Those which emerged were: Poverty; Inequality in Power Sharing; and Violence Against Women. Also identified as important were Health and Insufficient Mechanisms to Promote the Advancement of Women. Migration too emerged as an issue for some of the territories, notably Guyana, in terms of out-migration and Belize and the Bahamas, in terms of in-migration.

Tang Nain noted that the session in Antigua, having highlighted the issues of critical concern to women in the English-speaking Caribbean, confirmed the relevance of CAFRA's new programme areas of: Women's Health and Reproductive Rights; Women and Politics; Violence against Women; and Women, Development and Sustainable Livelihood.

She also noted that the international call, as expressed in New York, for special attention to be given to the girlchild has to be viewed in sharp contrast to what is emerging in the English speaking Caribbean regarding concern for the boy child and the whole "male marginalization" issue.

CAFRA PREPARES BEIJING PAPER

In addition to CAFRA's involvement at the various national levels in terms of impacting national reports, a decision has been taken to produce a separate CAFRA paper.

Expanding on the critical areas identified by the UN, CAFRA members have been invited to make submissions on the following topics using a feminist/women's perspective or actual experiences in addressing these issues by the women's movement:

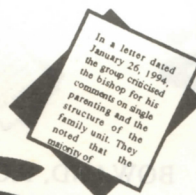
- Inequality in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels.
- Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women.
- Lack of awareness of, and commitment to, internationally and nationally recognized women's rights.
- Poverty, and inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of the economic structures and policies and the productive process itself.
- Health and Reproductive Rights.
- Sexuality.
- Prostitution and International Migration.
- Inequality in women's access to education, employment, and other means of maximising awareness to rights and the use of their capacities.
- Violence against Women.
- Effects on women of continuing national and international armed or other kinds of conflicts.
- Sustainable Development.
- Race/Culture.

• PLEASE TAKE NOTE •

***The CARIBBEAN SUB-REGIONAL
PREPARATORY MEETING for NGOs
will be held in Curacao from June 27th-29th, 1994***

News News News

compiled by Cathy Shepherd



Antigua: Woman Speaker Appointed

Antigua's first female Speaker of the House of Representatives Bridgette Harris was appointed in March. She joins Dominica's Neva Edwards and Trinidad and Tobago's Occah Seapaul. (Caribbean News Agency)

Barbados: Bleak Situation of Young Women

The National Commission on Youth report has painted a bleak picture of young women in Barbados. According to the report, young women are most affected by attempted suicides and sexual harassment in the workplace. They are the lowest income earners and are more likely to be unemployed than men.

Commissioned in 1991 and submitted to the Minister of Labour and Community Development in February 1994, the document has to be ratified by Cabinet before the contents are made public. (Source: Advocate (newspaper), submitted by Diane Cummins)

GUYANESE WOMEN TO TAKE THE REINS?

Guyana's President Cheddi Jagan has challenged the women of Guyana to "take

the helm of the social and economic reconstruction process." He also called on women, especially young women, to advance themselves through higher education and specialised training so they could play a leading role at all levels.

Jagan was speaking at the 12th Triennial Congress of the Women's Progressive Organisation (WPO) which opened on March 5 with over 500 delegates and observers at Queens College, Georgetown. "Women: Organise and Unite to Rebuild Guyana" was the theme of the meeting.

A national forum on domestic violence to determine a common position for introduction of a Domestic Violence Bill was one of several recommendations coming out of the two-day meeting.

Over 25 WPO stalwarts received the Kowsillia award for their longstanding contribution to the struggle for women's and children's rights.

BOOK ON CHANGING GENDER RELATIONS

Peggy Antrobus of the Women in Development Unit, Extra-Mural Department, UWI, has been invited to submit a case study for a book on approaches to more equitable relations between women and men.

The Coady International Institute plans 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.

Other interested individuals or groups are also invited to send their submissions by July 31, 1994, to Ricky Stuart, Coady International Institute, St Francis Xavier University, Antigonish Nova Scotia, Canada B2G 1C0. Submissions should be no more than 6,000 words. An honorarium of \$250 will be given for stories chosen for publication.

WOMEN'S FORUM WRITES BARBADOS BISHOP

The members of the Barbados Women's Forum recently commended Bishop Brome for his "strong support" for the ordination of women as it reflected a "progressive" position by the church. But the group also had some things against the bishop.

In a letter dated January 26, 1994, the group criticised the bishop for his comments on single parenting and the structure of the family unit. They noted that the majority of single parents had not chosen to raise children alone but were often left with the responsibility.

On the issue of the stability of families, the Forum said stability did not rest on the form or structure but on the quality of relationships that existed in the particular household. They also called on the church to take a lead role on the question of men's role in family life by bringing men together to discuss these issues.

Belize: Women's Issues Network AGM

The Women's Issues Network of Belize (WIN Belize) held its first Annual General Meeting on January 22-23. Formed in March 1993, the Network

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News



Women's Issues Network AGM *cont'd from page 24*

agreed to keep Domestic Violence as its priority focus and to develop a strategy to monitor the Domestic Violence Act which was passed in March 1993. (Source: Spearnotes, no. 8, January-February 1994)

BOWAND'S Women and Work Campaign

Since 1992, the Belize Organization for Women and Development (BOWAND) has sponsored the Women and Work Campaign with the aim of improving wages and working conditions for women in the lowest paid sectors of the labour force.

In 1993, the campaign was successful in getting a better minimum wage for domestic workers, although there is still a long way to go before reaching the goal of an equal minimum wage for all workers, male and female. A made-for-television, public service announcement, entitled "Dora Domestic's Revenge" informed domestic workers of their basic rights. The video was screened at CAFRA's Third General Meeting, in Guyana, last November.

A number of activities have been planned for this year including a 10-week Certificate Course for Domestic Workers; a survey of domestic workers in Belize City; a booklet and public service video for garment workers; and a radio series entitled "Daughters of the Revolution: BOWAND salutes our sisters from the past." For more information on the Women and Work Campaign, write to:

BOWAND, P.O. Box 1243, Belize City, Belize, C.A. (Source: Spearnotes, no. 9, March 1994)

Bermuda: Parliament discusses Gay Rights

Debate on a private member's Bill which sought to make gay sex legal in Bermuda, postponed in early March, is now likely to be discussed in May. The Criminal Code Amendment Bill has been proposed by government backbencher Dr. John Stubbs, one of Bermuda's top surgeons. A possible reason for the hold-up was concern that the Bill could have made gay sex legal without giving protection to boys. At present, sections 177 and 179 of Bermuda's Criminal Code make it a criminal offence for homosexual men to express their sexual orientation. The offence carries a 10-year jail sentence.

The controversial Bill sparked marches and petitions from churches and other groups, against any move to legalize homosexuality in the British colony. The Bermuda Human Rights Alliance (BHRA), a gay rights group, launched its own petition in support of Dr. Stubbs' Bill. (Caribbean News Agency)

Dominican Republic: Violations of Women Workers' Rights

Seventy percent of the 173,000 workers employed in the Dominican Republic's 31 free trade zones are young women. According to the Free Labour World, a newsletter of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), violations of

trade union rights are common. Freedom of association is not respected, despite being guaranteed by the country's 1992 Labour Code. Employers deduct social security from workers' wages but do not pay into the system; life insurance and occupational accidents are not covered, often because contributions are not recorded. The working day in the free trade zones is up to 18 hours long, although workers usually receive a subsistence minimum wage.

In September 1992, the National Confederation of Dominican Workers created a national federation for workers in the free trade zones, which has 98 member unions, but so far none of these unions has succeeded in signing a collective agreement. Unionized workers in several companies are being harassed and dismissed, and the general secretary of one union was beaten recently while being unlawfully held in detention for several days. (Women's Watch, January 1994)

St. Vincent: Celebrating the life of Nora Peacocke

The National Council of Women lost a strong supporter with the death of Nora Peacocke on December 23, 1993. A member of the Council since its inception, Nora, as her close associates fondly called her, recognised the oppression of women and worked actively for change.

A strong woman, with very strong convictions, Nora helped cement freedom of the press in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. She was Editor of the Vincentian newspaper for 15 years. She was honoured by the women's movement in 1986 for her work in the media, as well as for bringing a feminist perspective to issues affecting the social, economic and cultural well-being of women and their families. *cont'd on page 26*

News

Nora Peacocke

cont'd from page 25

According to colleague Anthony Williams, Nora was "committed to regional integration, democracy, women's equality and young people's development."

The CAFRA National Committee of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, organised a Public Tribute on 30 January 1994, to celebrate the life and achievements of Nora Peacocke. It took the form of a candle-light procession, followed by a vigil/service outside the offices of the Vincentian Newspaper.

Nora Peacocke is survived by her husband Max, and children Nan and Trevor. (Source: The Vincentian 31 December 1993)

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 1994

Barbados

March 8, 1994, saw several women's groups and organisations in Barbados celebrating in different ways. The Women's Forum arranged to air a segment of the series "Caribbean Eye," which discussed women's issues on national television. It also sponsored the launching of a video of the poem "Woman" by rhythm poet Adisa Andwele.

The Centre for Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, launched the book *Woman version: theoretical approaches to West Indian fiction by women*, written by Evelyn O'Callaghan, lecturer in English Literature. The Barbados Union of Teachers hosted a seminar dealing

with the issue of balancing career and family.

The Women's Entrepreneurial Marketing Group held a five-day exhibition based on the theme "Women Supporting Economic Measures for Resurgence for the Family." Another exhibition, organized by the Women's Division of the National Union of Public Workers, highlighted the role of women in the trade union movement since the 1930s and was inspired by the Trinidad and Tobago exhibit, *Bravé Dangé*.

Media contributions featured a series of discussions on women, on the weekly television show, *Meridian 60*. On March 8, nine radio spots on women's rights, written and produced by Daria Cave, were broadcast. (Submitted by Diane Cummins, CAFRA National Representative)

Cuba

This year, special recognition was given to the day-to-day resistance of women who brave the hard times the country is going through. The theme was "With Your Love, Hope Blossoms."

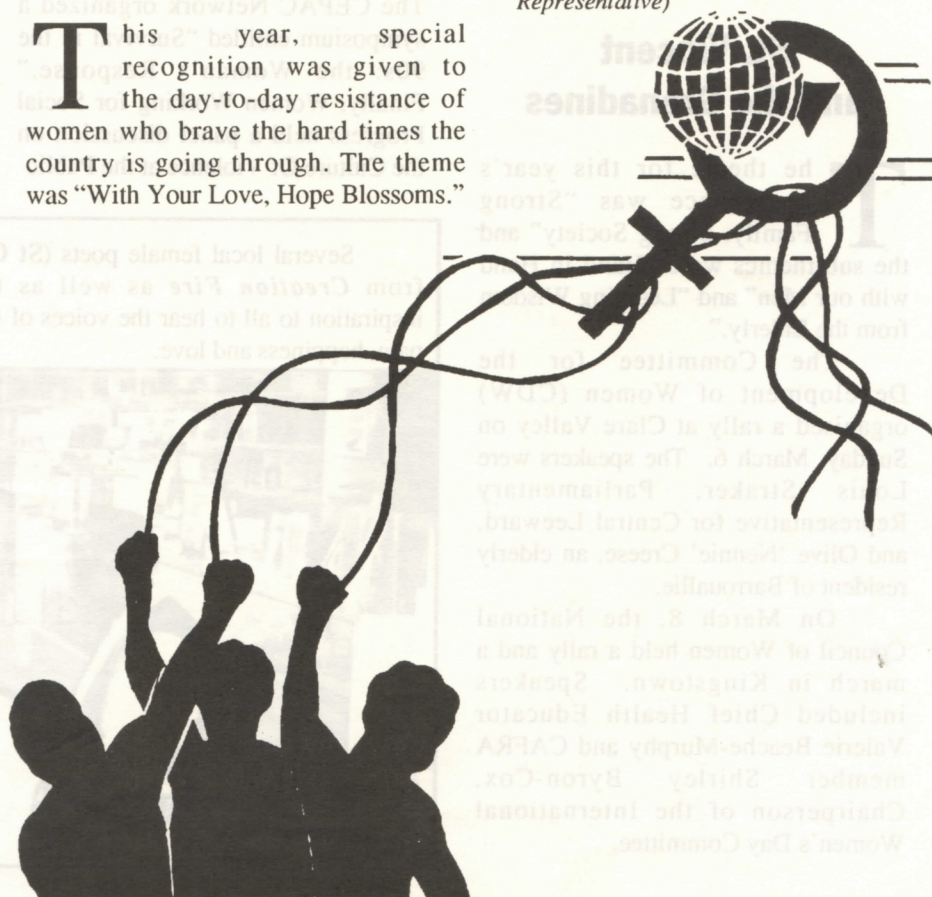
The Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) supported initiatives from each management structure so that women of every district could receive the recognition of their women's organization.

The FMC honoured the contribution of women cane cutters and agricultural workers.

On March 5, eight outstanding women received the Ana Betancourt Award from the Cuban State Council. Named for the Cuban patriot who pioneered the struggle for women's full equality, this honour is given to outstanding personalities at national and international level.

On March 8 itself, the FMC announced the Call to its Sixth Congress, which will be held just after March '8, 1995. The congress is expected to encourage discussion on the importance of the FMC and approaches to its work for women under the present conditions.

(Submitted by Rebeca Cutié, FMC Representative)



Source: Broadside

News

**INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S DAY 1994**



Curaçao

The newspaper, *Amigoe*, featured a centre spread of International Women's Day greetings from private sector companies, the Government, and non-governmental organizations.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The theme for this year's observance was "Strong Family, Strong Society" and the sub-themes were "Hand in Hand with our Men" and "Learning Wisdom from the Elderly."

The Committee for the Development of Women (CDW) organised a rally at Clare Valley on Sunday, March 6. The speakers were Louis Straker, Parliamentary Representative for Central Leeward, and Olive 'Nennie' Creese, an elderly resident of Barrouallie.

On March 8, the National Council of Women held a rally and a march in Kingstown. Speakers included Chief Health Educator Valerie Beache-Murphy and CAFRA member Shirley Byron-Cox, Chairperson of the International Women's Day Committee.

Trinidad and Tobago

According to one female journalist, "this year, as in previous years, there were no activities to whet the appetite."

The Women and Development Studies Group, University of the West Indies, hosted a discussion for secondary school students on the theme "The Father in the Family."

The Women's Affairs Division, Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women's Affairs, marked the occasion with a series of plenary discussions for secondary and tertiary students at venues in Port of Spain, San Fernando, Sangre Grande, Chaguanas and Tobago.

The CEPAC Network organized a symposium entitled "Survival in the 90s: the Woman's Response." Finally, Women Working for Social Progress held a panel discussion on the Culture Of Violence at the Public

Library.

As Express journalist Omatie Lyder noted, almost all (but thankfully, not all) "women's day lecturers concentrated on chiding women for their failures and laying before them the full responsibility of creating good societies."

Ten organizations participated in an exhibition hosted by the Network of NGOs for the Advancement of Women, in Woodford Square, Port of Spain. (Cathy Shepherd)

Membership Milestones

Bahamian CAFRA member, Marion Bethel, has been named one of the winners of Cuba's prestigious Latin America Literature prizes. Bethel won the Caribbean Literature Award for her collection of poems, "Guanahani, My Love." Awards will also go to writers from Cuba, Chile, Panama, Mexico and Brazil. The winners were picked from a total of 762 works from 26 countries. A lawyer and women's rights activist, Bethel

cont'd on page 28

Several local female poets (St Croix) were invited to read selections from *Creation Fire* as well as their own poetry. It was a great inspiration to all to hear the voices of Caribbean women expressing their joy, pain, happiness and love.



News

Membership Milestones

cont'd from page 27

served as CAFRA National Representative from 1990 to 1993.

- Trinidadian Pat Mohammed, has been appointed Lecturer with the Centre for Gender and Development Studies at the Mona, Jamaica Campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI). Another CAFRA member, Eudine Barriteau Foster, heads the Centre at the Cave Hill, Barbados Campus of UWI.

- CAFRA founding member, Honor Ford-Smith, got married in December, 1993.

- Congratulations to Elsie Doñe Molina and Alejandro Abreu on the birth of their second child and first daughter, in Santo Domingo, in March.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

SOUTH AFRICA: *what the election means for women*

The historic South African elections have ended and Nelson Mandela, former leader of the African National Congress, after 27 years on Robben Island, has moved from prison to power, having been democratically elected as the new President of South Africa. Mandela's dream became reality after some 300 years of white domination. Of the 18 million Blacks who voted for the first time in the historic April elections, over nine million were women who worked hard for that moment.

The majority of women live in

rural areas where unemployment, illiteracy and poverty are even worse.



One initiative women have taken is the campaign for a Women's Charter which outlines women's rights to be included in the new constitution. The charter was launched March 1993 by a broad-based alliance of women, the Women's National Coalition (WNC). According to Pregs Govender, "this is about South African women taking the opportunity to begin changing society and their lives." WNC members believe that a Women's Charter will ensure that not only men benefit from the transition to a new government.

The women have forwarded several demands including:

- *more participation of men in domestic duties*
- *equal pay for equal work*
- *inclusion in the political process*
- *easier access to health facilities*
- *equal property rights; and more schools*

(From: Speak, April 1994)

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT APPROVES USE OF NORPLANT

Canada's Women's Health Clinic has issued a press statement denouncing the use of Norplant as a contraceptive agent for Canadian women.

Norplant is the most popularly used brand of contraceptive implants in the world today. Implants are long-acting hormonal contraceptives inserted under the skin, usually in a woman's upper arm. Norplant consists of six silicone tubes filled with a synthetic hormone called levonorgestrel.

As a long acting contraceptive (approx. five years), Norplant has often been viewed as an easy "technological fix" for complicated social problems such as poverty or teen pregnancy. Since the removal of Norplant requires a minor surgical procedure, women do not have direct control over discontinuing its use.

Norplant does not offer protection against sexually transmitted diseases and is known to cause a large number of side effects such as headaches, weight gain/loss, disturbances in menstrual cycle and a higher incidence of ectopic pregnancies.

How effective is it? The overall pregnancy rate for the entire five-year period of its effectiveness indicates that between three and four per cent of every 100 women will become pregnant.

WOMEN IN 20TH CENTURY CARIBBEAN

Contributions for an interdisciplinary text (excluding literary analysis) on *Women in the 20th Century Caribbean* (and "exile communities"). Essays on culture studies, the social sciences, law, criminal justice and feminist politics are of particular interest. Interested individuals should contact Consuelo Lopez Springfield, Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Indiana University, 313 N. Jordan, Bloomington, In. 47405. Fax 812-855-5345 Tel 812-855-9097.

LEWISHAM ARTS FESTIVAL

As part of the Lewisham Arts festival, Caribbean writers are invited to present academic papers and literary readings on the following areas:

- Gender and Genre in Caribbean Women's Writing.
- Role of Caribbean Women Writers, including critics in the field of the "New Literature/Modern literature."
- International demonstration of Caribbean Women Writing.
- Teaching Caribbean Women Literature at University level.
- Caribbean Women Literature at Community Education level.

WOMEN TRAVELLERS TO THE CARIBBEAN

Interested individuals are invited to send submissions for a collection of essays on *Women Travellers to the Caribbean*. Of particular interest are studies focusing on issues of race, gender, culture and national identity. Manuscripts should not exceed 12,000 words and are due by September 1, 1994. They should be sent to: *Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert, Department of Hispanic Studies, Box 541, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601.*

VOUDOU, SANTERIA AND OBEAH IN THE LITERATURES AND CULTURES OF THE CARIBBEAN

Manuscripts are requested for a collection of essays exploring Afro-American areligious syncretism in the region's literatures and cultures. Multidisciplinary and comparative studies as well as articles that examine issues of race, gender and class. Papers should be no longer than 25 pages and should be in by October 1, 1994 and addressed to Margarite Fernandez Olmos, Department of Modern Languages and Literature, Brooklyn College, Bedford Avenue and Avenue H, Brooklyn, New York 11210 or Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert, Department of Hispanic Studies, Box 541, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601.

CALL FOR PAPERS

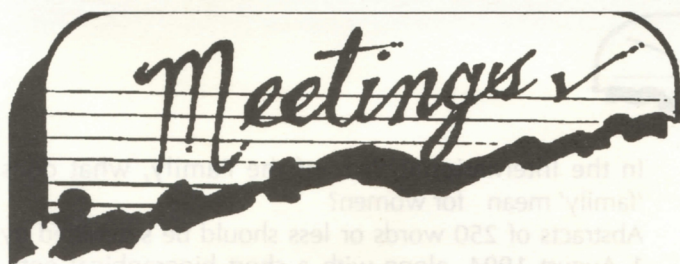
Children's Environments, an international journal published by Chapman and Hall in London, has requested a number of papers from individuals interested in child environment research. Papers requested are as follows:

CHILDREN IN ENVIRONMENTS OF STRESS for a special Summer 1995 issue. Deadline October 1, 1994.

CHILDREN, POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH for a special Fall 1995 issue. Deadline January 1995.

THE ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENT OF CHILDHOOD for a Winter 1995 issue. Deadline March 1, 1995.

Individuals interested should write for Authors Guidelines to Children's Environments Research Group, City University of New York, Graduate School and University Center, 33 West 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036. Tel (212) 642-2970 Fax (212) 642-2971.



June 1-4

National Council for Black Studies, Inc. 18th Annual and 2nd International Conference, Georgetown, Guyana.

The theme of the conference is "Future Perspectives on African World Development and Social Responsibility" and it is dedicated to the memory of Walter Rodney, the highly acclaimed Guyanese intellectual and scholar. Among the preliminary pre-conference workshops and conference plenary topics are: Third World political economy; Caribbean and African-American linkages; African world women; the life and work of Walter Rodney; Guyana and the Caribbean; and race and race relations in the African Diaspora. For further information contact:

In Guyana - Dr. Doris Rogers, faculty of Arts, University of Guyana. Tel: (592) 2-23588

In the US: National Council for Black Studies, 208 Mount Hall, 1050 Carmack Rd., Columbus, OH 43210. Fax: (614) 292-7363

June 20-22

Workshop on Strategies for Influencing Public Policy, St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

Organized by the Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC), Caribbean People's Development Agency (CARIPEDA) and Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD). For further information, contact: CPDC, P.O. Box 35, Britton's Hill, St. Michael, Barbados. Fax: (809) 437-3381.

June 21-14

First Conference on Community Work and Family Orientation, Havana, Cuba.

The Federation of Cuban Women and the Association of Teachers of Cuba are organizing this conference to mark the International Year of the Family. The aim is to promote an exchange of experiences with regard to developments, concepts, methodologies, successes and possibilities of community work.

For further information, contact: Apartado 16046, Havana, Cuba. Fax: (537)22-8382; 33-1657.

June 24-July 3

16 Annual International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA), World Conference, New York.

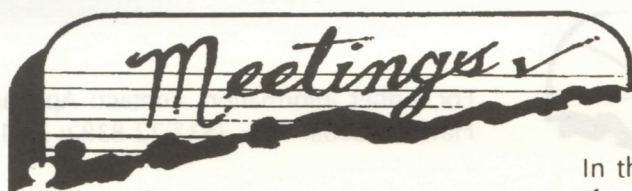
Founded in 1978, ILGA is a federation of national and local organizations dedicated to achieving lesbian and gay rights around the globe, with over 300 group members representing over 60 countries and every continent.

16th Annual ILGA World Conference



This conference will take place during Stonewall 25, an international celebration to affirm the human rights of lesbian and gay people, the largest gathering of its kind.

The Conference will cover issues ranging from discrimination, AIDS, and lesbian visibility to computer communications and sexuality; and will set the agenda for the struggle to end discrimination worldwide. For the first time, there will be 4 day-long pre-conferences for Disabled People, Women, People of Colour and Diversity Awareness. On Sunday June 26, 1994, there will be an International March on the United Nations to Affirm the Human Rights of Lesbian and Gay People. For a copy of the registration form, contact the CAFRA Office or write to: Center ILGA Committee, c/o Lesbian & Gay Community Services Center, 208 W. 13th Street, New York, NY 10011. Tel: (212) 620-7310; Fax: (212) 924-2657.



July 1-2

Framing the Word: Gender and Genre in Caribbean Women's Writing, Goldsmiths College, London.

The Conference, part of the Lewisham Arts Festival, will take the form of academic papers and literary readings. Papers are invited on the following topics: Gender and genre in Caribbean women's writing; Role of Caribbean women writers, including critics in the field of "New Literature"; International nature of Caribbean women's writing; Teaching Caribbean women's literature at university level; the language of Caribbean women writers; Caribbean women's literature at community education level. Write to: Joan Anim-Addo, Caribbean Centre, Goldsmiths College, University of London, New Cross, London SE14 6NW. Fax: (44-81) 694-8911.

November 14-18

7th Latin American Congress of Sexology and Sex Education; 1st Cuban Congress of Sex Education, Orientation and Therapy, Havana, Cuba.

To promote scientific exchange with an integral and multi-disciplinary focus on human sexuality. General themes: sex education, sex therapy, family planning, sexually transmitted diseases, sexuality and ethics, socio-cultural aspects of human sexuality. For further information, contact: Lic. Lourdes Flórez Madam, Vice President of the Organizing Committee, VII CLASES, C.P. 10400, Havana, Cuba. Fax: (537) 333019; 332454.

December 4-6

Australian Women's Studies Association Annual Conference: Women and the Politics of Change, Geelong Campus, Australia.

Papers are invited which address the issue of change: how women deal with it, generate it, cope with it, resist it. Has our scholarship changed and if so, what are the directions? Which theories generate change? How are women dealing with technological change? Historically, were women part of the process of change and are they now part of that process?

In the International Year of the Family, what does 'family' mean for women?

Abstracts of 250 words or less should be submitted by 1 August 1994, along with a short biographical note. Registration forms available from: Prof. Robyn Rowland, Australian Women's Research Centre, Faculty of Arts, Deakin University, Geelong VIC 3217, Australia. Tel: (61) 52-272597; Fax: (61) 52-2720018.

1995

March 6-12

UN World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, Denmark.

The Summit will bring together heads of State and Government from around the world to agree on joint action for alleviating and reducing poverty, expanding productive employment and enhancing social integration. These three interrelated issues affect all societies in industrial and developing countries and require coordinated action by Governments, private and non-governmental institutions and international organizations.

This is the 4th of a series of 5 landmark conferences organized by the UN in the 1990s, the others being: UNCED (Rio de Janeiro, June 1992); the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, June 1993); and the forthcoming International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 5-13 September 1994); and 4th World Conference on Women (Beijing, 4-15 September 1995).

The Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) will be organizing a women's caucus before each preparatory committee meeting of the Summit, and will collaborate closely with DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era), which will provide expertise on the substantive issues related to the Summit. Preparatory Committee meetings for the Summit will be held in New York on the following dates:

PrepCom I:	January 31-February 11, 1994
PrepCom II:	August 22-September 2, 1994
PrepCom III:	January 16-27, 1995.

COURSES

July 4 - August 5

Certificate Course in Gender and Development Studies, Centre for Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados.

The course is designed to introduce participants to theoretical and practical issues of gender relations and how these impact on women and to empower participants to improve their social situations and to develop their capacities to contribute to the process of change.

Duration: 3 months. Participants will spend 5 weeks at the Cave Hill Campus attending field trips, lectures and other learning activities and 7 weeks in their home territories completing a research project. At the end of this period, the students return to Barbados for 5 days to report on their projects and hand in assignments. Limited to 25 participants. Some funding is available and will be awarded on a competitive basis. Students who are able to meet part of their cost will be given favourable consideration. Contact: Eudine Barriteau Foster, Head/Lecturer, Centre for Gender and Development Studies, Cave Hill Campus, P.O. Box 64, Bridgetown, Barbados. Fax: (809) 424-3822.

July 18-29 (St. Lucia)

November 7-18 (Trinidad)

2nd Annual Regional Training Programme in Co-management for Sustainable Development.

Organised by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), this two-part programme is highly participatory, and relies heavily on practical case studies as well as on the experiences of the participants. Course 1 covers an introduction to co-management; skills for environmental management and sustainable development at the community level; selection of a project for individual field testing and implementation by participants during and after the programme. Course 2 addresses policy analysis, organisational change and institutional arrangements for participatory planning and co-management. Participants must attend both courses in order to graduate. A limited number of scholarships are available and additional information can be obtained from CANARI St. Lucia, Tel: (809) 454-6060, Fax: (809) 454-5188; or, CANARI St. Croix, Tel: (809) 773-9854, Fax: (809) 773-5770.

GRANTS/ FELLOWSHIPS/ FUNDING

The Kovalevskaja Fund aims to encourage women in science and technology in developing countries through a small grant programme. Contact: Dr. Ann Hibner Koblitz, Director, Kovalevskaja Fund, 6547 17th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98115, USA.

The American Council of Learned Societies is offering a programme of travel grants, awarded on a competitive basis, to enable scholars in all fields of the humanities and humanities-related social sciences to participate in meetings held outside the United States and its dependencies. Priority is given to attendance at well-planned international meetings and infrequently held international congresses. Contact: SCLS Fellowship Office, 228 East 45th Street, New York, NY 10017-3398, USA.



International Peace Scholarship Fund (PEO), provides grants covering all academic or personal expenses for graduate study in the United States or Canada. Applicants must be qualified for admission toward full-time graduate study, promise to return to their home countries and have a sponsor who is a citizen of the US or Canada, who will act as her non-academic adviser. Contact: PEO International Peace Scholarship Fund, PEO Executive Office, 3700 Grand Avenue, Des Moines IA 50312, USA.

The Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund aids foreign students studying in the United States who plan to work for social justice in their own countries after finishing their studies. Applicants, including science students, must have a strong commitment to social activism. For information, contact: Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund, 1454 W. Hollywood (2E), Chicago, IL 60660-9653, USA.

ON THE

BOOK SHELF

- Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development. Developing the rural network: a directory of rural development resources in the Caribbean. 2. ed. St. Augustine: CNIRD, 1993. xviii, 224 p.

Provides information on 100 organisations working on rural development in the Caribbean: 68 national organizations in Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago; 19 sub-regional and regional organisations; and 13 international organisations.

- Centro Dominicano de Asesoría e Investigaciones Legales (Dominican Centre for Legal Advice and Research). Conoce tus derechos (Know your rights). Santo Domingo: CEDAIL, 1993.

Information kit comprising 9 cartoon booklets. Contains information on the 30 rights of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Articles 8 and 9 of the Constitution of the Dominican Republic, which deals with Rights and Duties.

- Harding, Jacky; Louise Dow and Stephanie Dowrick. Violence at home: the big secret. Canberra: Office of the Status of Women, 1993. <18 p.>

Educational booklet on domestic violence for teenage readers.

- Hunke, Heinz, ed. Basic documentation skills: IDOC's documentation handbook. Rome: International Documentation and Communication Centre, 1993. iv, 101 p.



Outlines basic documentation techniques for action groups who would like to set up a well functioning information / documentation unit, with staff who have had no formal introduction to documentation skills, let alone a formal course in professional librarianship.

Topics covered include: establishing a documentation unit; the information system; acquisitions policy; document description and content analysis; indexing; and data manipulation, retrieval and dissemination.

- Internet: International Human Rights and Documentation Network, comp. and ed. Funding human rights: an international directory of funding organisations and human rights awards. Ottawa: Internet: International Human Rights and Documentation Network, 1993. 180 p.

Provides NGOs working on human rights with information on funding sources, including foundations and charitable trusts; governmental development agencies; non-governmental development organisations which fund NGOs; and inter-governmental organisations. Also provides information on approximately 60 human rights awards which support or honour the work of human rights activists and organisations.

- Internet: International Human Rights and Documentation Network. Trinidad and Tobago: women's human rights. Ottawa: Internet: International Human Rights and Documentation Network, 1993. ii, 20 p. (Human Rights Internet Occasional Papers)

Prepared for the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board, the paper discusses the prevalence of violence against women in Trinidad and Tobago, legislation relating to women's rights, judicial concerns, the police response and alternatives for women fleeing violence.

- Isis International. Women's perspectives on population issues: information kit. Quezon City: Isis International, 1993. 38 p.

Compilation of views and positions of women's groups on population issues.

- Ladin, Sharon; International Women's Rights Action Watch. 1994 IRAW to CEDAW country reports on Barbados, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Japan, Libya, Madagascar, New Zealand, Norway, Senegal, Zambia: independent information for the thirteenth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. Minneapolis: IRAW, 1993. 63 p.

Contains summaries of independent reports submitted to the 13th Session of CEDAW, by women's coalitions in the countries under review.

- Nacidit Perdomo, Ylonca. Hilma Contreras: una vida en imagenes, 1913-1993 (Hilma Contreras: a life in pictures, 1913-1993). Santo Domingo: The Author, 1993. <63 p.>

Photographic memoir and chronology of the life of one of the Dominican Republic's most important writers, described by the author as "the George Sand of Dominican literature."

BOOK SHELF

- Rudder, Joy. Small island developing states: the case for international action. London: Panos, 1994. 17 p. (Panos Media Briefing no. 10).

Outlines issues to be addressed at the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which will be held in Barbados from 25 April to 6 May 1994.

- Schlacter, Gail Ann. Directory of financial aids for women, 1993-1995. San Carlos, Calif.: Reference Service Press, 1993. xiii, 504 p.

Describes 1,901 scholarships, fellowships, loans, grants, awards, internships, and [US] state sources of educational benefits designed primarily or exclusively for women. Includes an annotated bibliography of directories listing general financial aid programmes, and a set of five indexes.

- Valdes Echenique, Teresa; Enrique Gomariz Moraga, Gisela Quiterio Benítez and Elizabeth Ferreras Blanco. Mujeres Latinoamericanas en cifras: República Dominicana (Latin American women in statistics: Dominican Republic). Santiago: Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, 1993. 115 p.

Collection of statistics on women's status in the Dominican Republic. Aspects covered are demography, employment, education, health, legislation, socio-political participation, and women's organizations (state, non-governmental, social and international).

The following titles are available from the Centro de Apoyo Aquelarre, Apartado Postal 3003, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic:

Quiterio Benítez, Gisela, comp. Violencia contra la mujer a través de múltiples miradas (Different perspectives on violence against women). Santo Domingo: Centro de Apoyo Aquelarre, 1994. 64 p.

Collection of papers presented at an International Seminar on Domestic Violence, Health and Legislation, which was held by the Centro de Apoyo Aquelarre on 18 November, 1993. Subjects covered include: points for an interdisciplinary debate; violence in health services; self-esteem and violence; the Domestic Violence Law in Puerto Rico; feeling, thinking and confronting violence; and depression in women. Tapia, Margot, comp. Memorias: Primer Seminario sobre Género y Vejez en República Dominicana (Proceedings:



First Seminar on Gender and Aging in the Dominican Republic). Santo Domingo: Centro de Apoyo Aquelarre, 1994. 48 p.

Consists of papers presented at the first Seminar on Gender and Aging, organized jointly by the Centro de Apoyo Aquelarre and the National Association of Help for the Aged, on 8 October 1993. Topics covered are: points for a revision of aging from a gender perspective; women and the third age; the integration of the elderly into society; an alternative project for university education in the third age; the role of the family in relation to the elderly; the image of old women in the mass media; and psychotherapy and aging.



The following publications are available from CIPAF, the Centro de Investigación para la Acción Femenina, Apartado de Correos 1744, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic:

Centro de Investigación para la Acción Femenina; Red entre Mujeres. 500 años de patriarcado en el nuevo mundo (500 years of patriarchy in the New World). Santo Domingo: CIPAF, 1993. xxviii, 151 p. Collection of 9 papers presented at an academic seminar on 500 years of Patriarchy in the New World, which was held in Santo Domingo on 13 November 1992, under the auspices of CIPAF and the Network Among Women. Includes papers on the following themes: Women in indigenous societies and the impact of the Conquest; women in colonization and slavery; and, constructing identities.

Quiterio Benítez, Gisela. Indicadores sobre mujeres y familias urbanas en República Dominicana: encuesta nacional de hogares y mujeres urbanas 1989 (Indicators on urban women and families in the Dominican Republic: 1989 national survey of urban households and women). Santo Domingo: CIPAF, 1993. 129 p. (Colección Teoría)

Contains 52 statistical tables and charts depicting demographic, economic and sociocultural indicators pertaining to urban women and households in the Dominican Republic.

ANNOUNCING THE EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF WOMEN'S STUDIES

(First issue - June 1994)

The Journal will appear in June and October 1994 and will be published quarterly from 1995. The subscription price is £15/\$23 for individuals for one year (2 issues only) and £38/\$57 for institutions. Further subscription details are available from Jane Makoff, SAGE Publications, 6 Bonhill Street, London, EC2A 4PU, UK.

BEHIND THE IMAGES

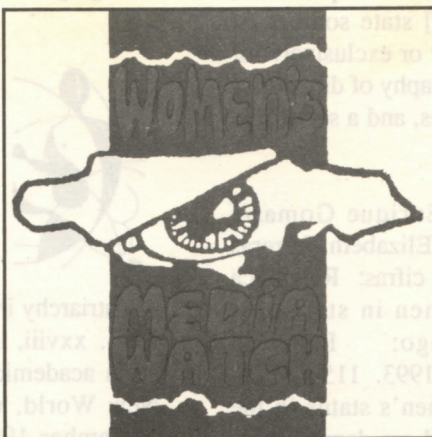
New video produced by Women's Media Watch (WMW)

The ten-minute video centres around a teenage, Winsome, her mother Marcia, and her stepfather, among whom tension is at a high point. Their expectations of one another, influenced by television, radio, magazine, advertisements, simply do not match up to reality so family conflict explodes.

The video illustrates how we are both consumers of products advertised in the media, and consumers of values upheld by the media, values which may not be in our own interest. Women's bodies, dismembered in ads so that legs and hips, buttocks or lips appear without a face, are de-humanized. Overt juxtaposition on the screen, of sex and violence, defines sexual relations in terms of domination, power and ABUSE with women as the violated, often mutilated victim.

The video was launched on International Day Against Violence to Women, as part of Women's Media Watch's outreach programme, to encourage members of the public to develop media critiquing skills.

The video is available from: WMW, P.O. Box 344, Kingston 9, Jamaica. Tel: (809) 978-5957 (Mon/Tue/Fri); Fax: (809) 927-9363.



FOCUS ON ORGANIZATIONS

Women and Environments Education and Development Foundation (WEED) received non-profit incorporation and charitable status in 1987. It began as a small newsletter linking participants in the 1976 UN conference on Human Settlements. WEED provides a forum for communication, conducts research and action on issues related to women in their environments such as health, ecology and workplace design. One of its projects is a campaign entitled "stop the whitewash and the waste." The focus is to get chlorine out of all paper products starting with sanitary products and disposable diapers.



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Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA)

We are a network of individual researchers and activists and women's organisations who define feminist politics as a matter of both consciousness and action. We are committed to understanding the relationship between the oppression of women and other forms of oppression in the society, and are working actively for change.

Membership spans the Dutch, English, French and Spanish-speaking countries of the region as well as the diaspora. It is open to women living in the Caribbean and Caribbean women living abroad who support CAFRA's general aims and objectives.

A brochure outlining the aims and objectives of the association is available on request.

Structure of the Association

The decision-making bodies of CAFRA are:

- (i) The General Meeting of the membership of the association;
- (ii) The Regional Committee of elected national representatives and members;
- (iii) The Continuation Committee, a sub-committee of the Regional Committee; and
- (iv) The Secretariat, comprising programme and administrative staff headed by the Coordinator.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

Individuals: 40 units in currency of residence and not exceeding US \$20
Organisations: 50 units in currency of residence and not exceeding US \$25

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Individual: US\$20.

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