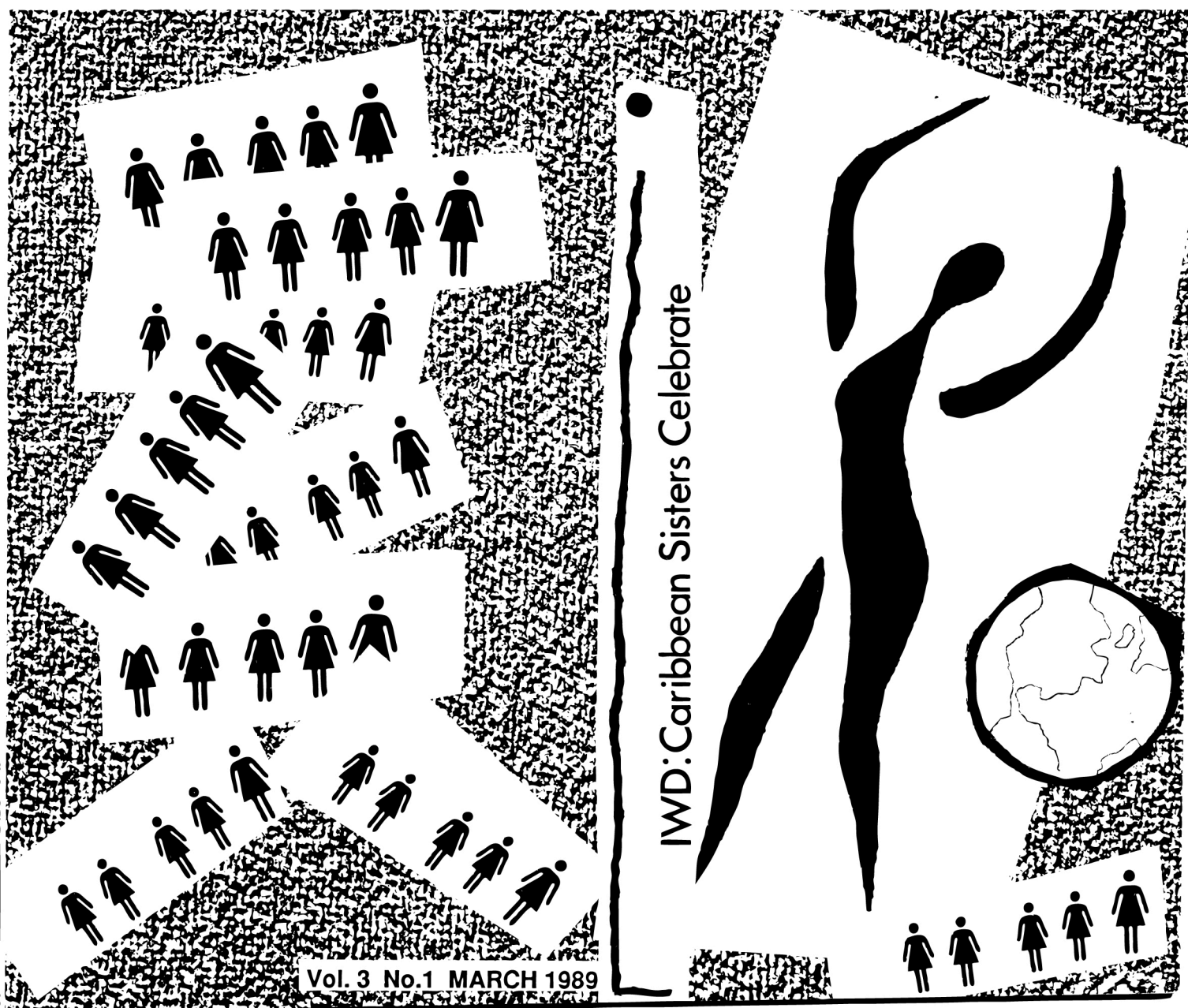
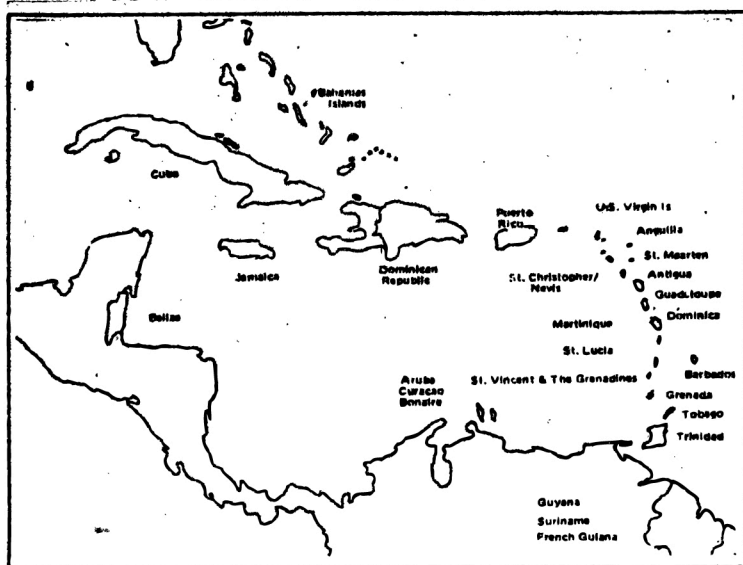


CARRA NEWS.

NEWSLETTER OF THE CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH AND ACTION



Vol. 3 No.1 MARCH 1989



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

General Aims:-
To

1. (i) develop an approach to women's problems from the perspectives of race, class and sex, specifically to show how the exploitative relationship between men and women facilitates the continuation, maintenance and reproduction of exploitative capitalist relations, and how the capitalist system benefits from this situation;

(ii) develop an approach to the analysis of relations between men and women in non-capitalist and socialist societies;

2. develop the feminist movement in the entire Caribbean region; and

3. promote the inter-relationship between research and action.

Objectives:-
To

1. develop research priorities based on the needs of the women's movement in the region;

2. provide a supportive atmosphere for individual feminists;

3. bring a feminist perspective to bear on the work of existing progressive organisations and shatter the myth that "feminism divides the struggle";

4. provide a focal point for bringing together feminist organisations in the entire region;

5. foster greater communication and collaboration on events and issues relevant to the feminist movement;

6. develop a base of documentation on the women's movement in the Caribbean and issues relevant to it;

7. develop access to available sources of documentation which could be put at the service of women's organisations and struggles in the region; and

8. promote a continuous analysis of language in order to identify and correct the sexist assumptions embedded in its structure which are detrimental to women's expression and development at every level.

CAFRA News is published quarterly by the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA), P.O. Bag 442, Tunapuna Post Office, Tunapuna, Trinidad and Tobago. Tel: (1-809) 663-8670

Subscription: US \$15.00
Caribbean or local equivalent
US \$20.00 Outside

FOUNDING MEMBERS

Peggy Antrobus
Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen
Sonia Cuales
Honor Ford-Smith
Joan French
Rhoda Reddock

Newsletter Team

Tina Johnson
Cathy Shepherd
Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen
Cover Design: Tracey Johnson

C CONTENTS



NEWSLETTER OF THE CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH AND ACTION

Editorial	2
Project Updates:	2 - 3
Women in Caribbean Agriculture: From Research to Action	
Women's History: For Book Lovers	4 - 5
Creative Writers Get Together	
Poetry: Terracotta Woman by Amryl Johnson	6
Caribbean Sisters Celebrate!	7 - 10
Barbados: Women, Land and Food	
Grenada: Personal Development for Women	
Guyana: Demonstrations outside Parliament	
Jamaica: "The fact that the washing up has to be done is quite beyond him"	
Puerto Rico: The Image of Women in the Mass Media	
St. Vincent and the Grenadines: Remembering Our Heroines	
Trinidad and Tobago: Threat to Women's Health	
Kowsillia: A Bare-foot Working-class Heroine	10 - 11
A Remarkable Woman: Review of R. Reddock's <u>Elma Francois</u> by Bridget Brereton	12 - 13
Unity in Diversity: Review of P. Mohammed and C. Shepherd (eds.) <u>Gender in Caribbean Development</u> by Maureen Cain	13 - 14
Sistren to Tour	15
"But who would want to read it? It's so boring!": Report of ADA/CARIPEDA Regional Publishing Course in Jamaica	16
NGOs Look at Structural Adjustment: Report of CARIPEDA/OXFAM Regional Meeting in Grenada	17
Meetings, Conferences, Courses, etc.	18 - 19
Women in Solidarity with South Africa	19
Arrivals on the Bookshelf	20 - 21
CARIFEM Update	22 - 23
"We all have to come together" - AWOJA, Jamaica	
Supporting Self-Help - BRWA, Belize	
Formation of SWAP, Dominica	
Task Force for Women, Trinidad and Tobago	
News, News, News	23
Last Words	24

E ditorial

Participation in a regional publishing course (see p. 16) has opened our eyes to ways in which CAFRA News needs to develop, so look out for changes over the next few issues.

One of them may be the name. CAFRA News was christened when publication day arrived for the first issue and we still hadn't thought of something catchy. That issue, in fact, launched a 'Name the Newsletter' contest, but obviously the book prize did not stimulate readers' imaginations as

we got no entries. We're open to suggestion (and the prize is still to be awarded!).

We are also looking at content and design. As a first step, the newsletter committee has decided to focus on a particular theme for each issue, at least for the rest of this year. These are 'Creativity' (June), 'Agriculture' (September) and 'Health and Sexuality' (December). In the current issue, we focus on some of the ways International Women's Day was celebrated in the region this year,

as well as featuring reviews of two recent publications.

Feedback is vital to any change or development; we hope that you will let us know how you feel about the way the newsletter is developing.



Development Forum

project updates

W omen in caribbean agriculture : from research to action

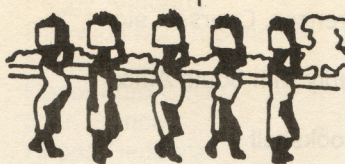
Researchers, Co-ordinators and CAFRA Secretariat personnel from the Women in Caribbean Agriculture project met in February to review Phase I of the project and to discuss plans for follow-up activity.

Booklets and videos are at present being prepared from the research findings and experience. Rough versions of these were shared and discussed. The booklets are mainly in dialect or creole, and are to be used primarily in popular education work at the local level. The videos reflect both the process and findings of the research, and are to be made

available to interested persons and organisations.

Follow-up activities to address the issues identified in the research are to be undertaken by a broad range of agencies, both governmental and non-governmental. These follow-up activities are based on recommendations from women in the communities studied, from the facilitating agencies, and from national agencies and NGOs.

Concrete projects



Development Forum

The proposed follow-up activities include concrete projects such as a women's farming collective, to be established on land to be acquired through a government land distribution programme; a livestock collective; and special support to women involved in vegetable production. Organisation-building among women farmers will be part of all concrete projects, and the organisation of women already started in the

project updates

communities will be consolidated and advanced. There will be an ongoing education and consciousness-raising programme as part of this process. Attempts are to be made to organise more effective information-sharing with women farmers, for the improvement of their farming activities. In addition, there is to be a programme of advocacy aimed at influencing the national and regional agencies and institutions to make them more responsive to the needs of women in agriculture and women in general.

Regional meeting

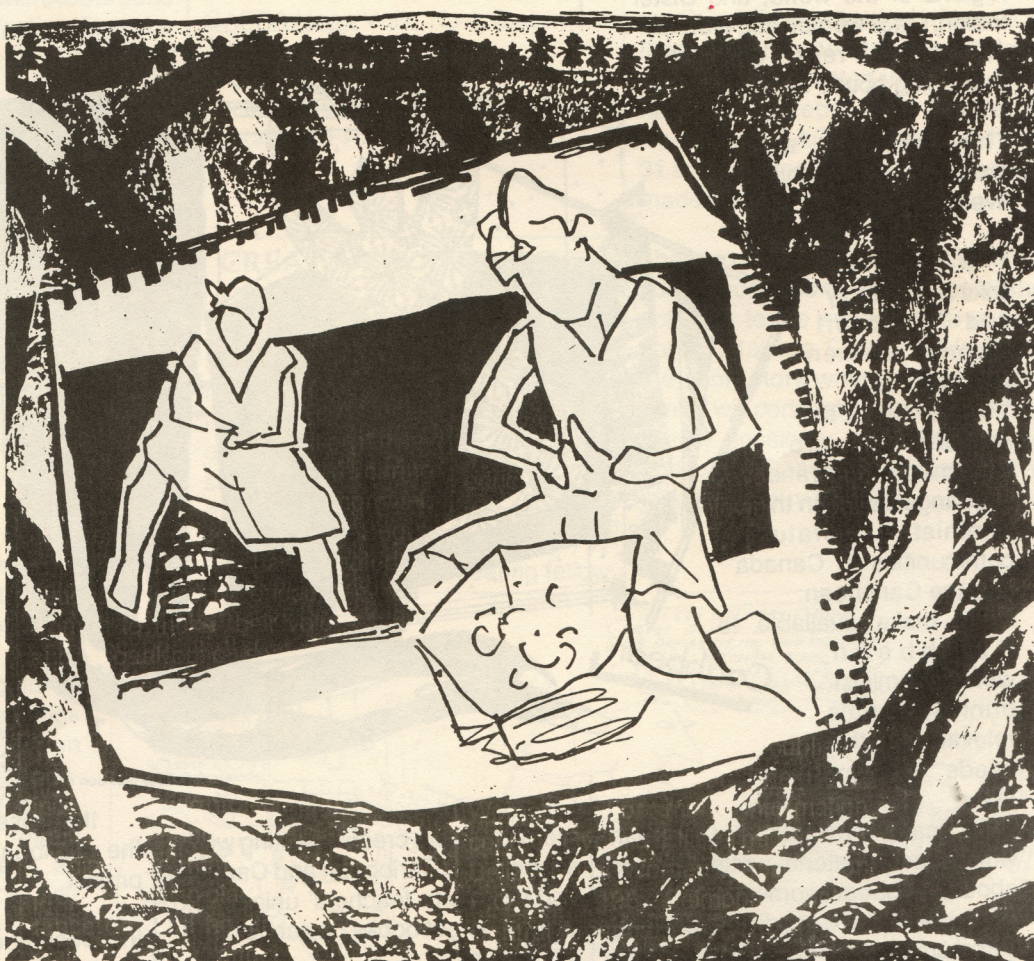
Over the next two months, the process of concretising plans for follow-up at the national levels is to be completed. At the end of this period, these plans along with the research findings will be presented to regional agencies at a meeting to be held in Barbados. These regional agencies will be asked to define what actions they can take in response to the findings, and these will be integrated into

the follow-up programme. The summary report on the research findings and the videos prepared by the research teams will be presented at this meeting.

Phase I of the WICA project is now drawing to a close. Phase II will consist of the monitoring of follow-up action arising from the research carried out in St. Vincent and the

Grenadines and the Commonwealth of Dominica, as well as assistance to Belize in the design and implementation of a similar project, at the request of the Belize Rural Women's Association.

Joan French, Project Co-ordinator



Tracey Johnson



Women's history: for book lovers

project updates

CAFRA's newest project is called 'Words of Women' (WOW). Basically a Canadian-Caribbean women's literature exchange, it was originated by women who enjoy books, especially women's books and women's writing. It involves collaboration between CAFRA; MATCH International Centre, an Ottawa-based women's organisation/development agency that focuses on women's programmes in Canada and different regions of the world; and Sister Vision, Black women and Women of Colour Press, a small publishing house in Toronto.

The following are the project's overall objectives:

- * To forge new links of solidarity and support among women internationally;
- * To develop a self-sustaining programme of contact and exchange between the feminist literature communities in Canada and the Caribbean;
- * To make available to Caribbean women feminist print materials relevant to their needs and experience;
- * To make available to Canadian women print material written by and about Caribbean women;
- * To provide the Canadian publishing community with an opportunity to bring

a global perspective to their work; and

* To provide to Canadian and Caribbean women the opportunity to explore our common experiences and our diverse cultural roots.

In general terms, WOW is expected to include exchanges of publications (books, periodicals, etc.); visits/exchanges by writers/poets from

How it all got started

Last year at the Canadian end, MATCH undertook co-ordination of the project and raised a small amount of funding. They contacted a number of presses, bookstores and resource centres about their interest in the project. A number of periodicals indicated their interest in publishing material from the Caribbean.

In June, Nan Peacocke of the Women and

Development Unit (WAND), Barbados, feminist poet and editor of Womanspeak,

toured Ontario after the Feminist Bookfair and participated in a number of readings. Beth

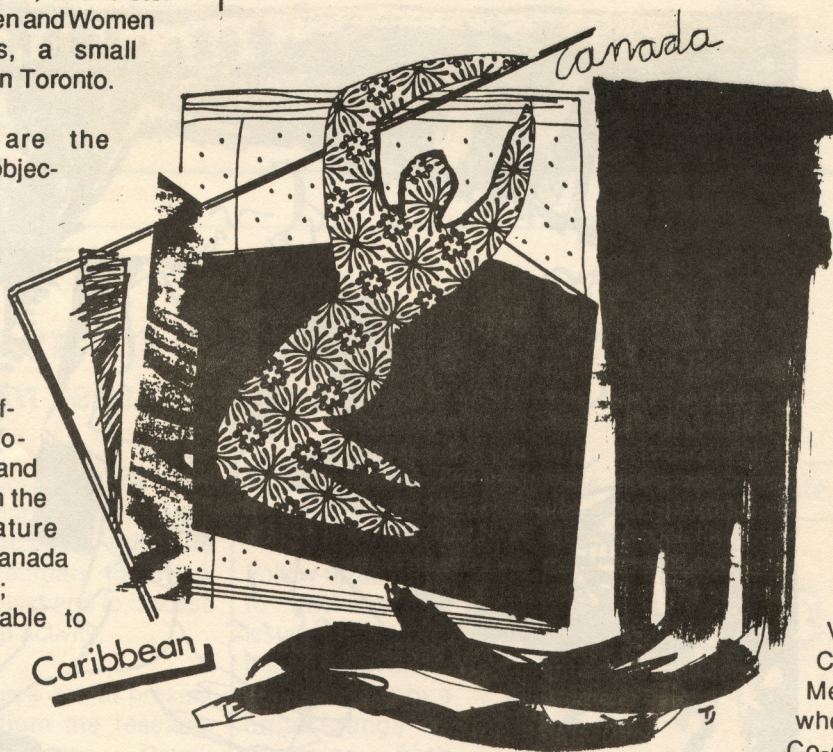
Woroniuk of MATCH toured the Caribbean in November and distributed kits of books and magazines that had been assembled by WOW in Canada.

Both she and Makeda Silvera (a CAFRA member) of Sister

Vision Press attended CAFRA's General Meeting in Barbados, where they met with Co-ordinator Rawwida

Baksh-Soodeen to discuss the possibility of CAFRA being the Caribbean collaborator in the project.

In December, a consultation of participating Canadian groups was held in Toronto. This brought



Canada and the Caribbean; creative writing workshops in the Caribbean and Canada; and work with teachers' unions and schools to get books on school reading lists, etc.

project updates

together about 20 women from publishing companies with a commitment to women's writing and to Caribbean writing; feminist bookstores; and cultural resource centres supporting third world women and Canadian black women and women of colour.

Plans for 1989

They agreed that the Canadian end of the project in 1989 will focus around the publication of Creation Fire, the CAFRA anthology of Caribbean women poets, and its promotion through a series of readings, workshops and other activities throughout Canada. Plans for the mid-September Canadian launching, which are still to be finalised, include the possibility of ten or more women poets coming from the Caribbean, including in particular women from the non-English speaking territories and lesser-known poets. After the Toronto launching, some women would travel to a number of Canadian cities to do readings, together with a Canadian/Caribbean woman. There are also plans for a two-day event in Toronto, to include workshops on the politics of poetry, different styles of writing poetry, the politics of writing poetry in the Caribbean, etc. There would be blocks of poetry readings throughout the days, and on the second night a gala poetry reading. There is expected to be a lot of media coverage of the event, as well as posters, cards, calendars, tote-bags and T-shirts.

Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen will be in Canada in March/April to establish contacts with the groups involved and to discuss the Canadian and Caribbean launchings of the anthology. She will also be giving talks on the Caribbean feminist movement and current issues of particular concern, such as Free Trade Zones. Her visit coincides with the Canadian launching of Blaze a Fire by Nesha Haniff, published by Sister Vision Press (see CAFRA News Vol 2, No 4; December 1988).

For further information on this project, contact CAFRA office.

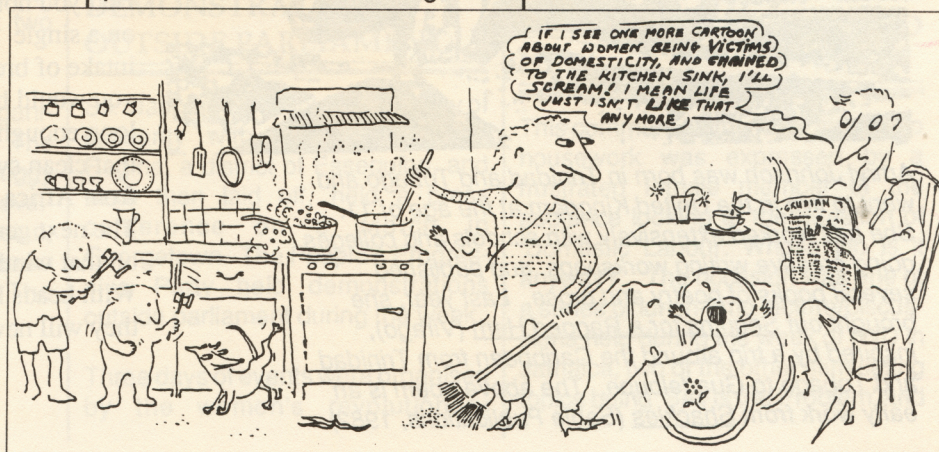
CREATIVE WRITERS TO GET TOGETHER

Plans for the Creative Writing Seminar to be held in Trinidad and Tobago in May are well underway. The aims of the seminar are: (i) to enhance the skills of women writers; (ii) to promote the development of a feminist literature within the Caribbean; (iii) to promote an arena for meeting fellow

creative writers (poetry, short story and testimony/oral history) in the feminist struggle; and (iv) to facilitate the sharing of experiences, skills and ideas among women writers. Dates have been tentatively set for 15-26 May.

The seminar will cater to women engaged in creative writing, but who need help and guidance to nourish their work. It is expected that this seminar will be of particular benefit to those writers who are unpublished. All women interested in participating have been asked to send samples of work to the CAFRA office by March 31 so that a final participant list can be made up.

The seminar will be conducted by published authors, who will tailor the activities to the needs of the participants. Makeda Silvera will facilitate the short story writers; Honor Ford-Smith will conduct the testimony/oral history sessions; and Audre Lorde and Lorna Goodison have agreed to take the poetry sessions.



Ros Asquith - Womandraw '84

Terracotta woman



Amryl Johnson was born in Trinidad and Tobago and went to live in the United Kingdom at the age of 11. She has worked extensively with schools and colleges doing creative writing workshops, and published several books of poetry and prose. Last year, she brought out *Sequins for a Ragged Hem* (Virago), inspired by a trip around the Caribbean from Trinidad and Tobago to Guadeloupe. The above poem is an early work from *Shackles* (Sable Publications, 1982).

by Amryl Johnson

I agree
 It could not always have been easy
 to hold yourself with pride
 But had you been more perceptive
 and less of an egotist
 you would have seen the way
 a shaft of sunlight
 glistened
 on your perfect
 terracotta skin
 Instead
 all you saw were the piths
 and wrinkles
 where the question
 I am - ?
 folded back on itself
 "Prisoner of my skin"
 There were no bars to shut you
 in or keep you out
 You built your own cell
 Afflicted with self-pity
 you took to your bed
 and it seems as if your
 dying
 was just an easy
 way out
 Had you not lived your life
 on a single
 intake of breath
 you would have exhaled
 long enough to sniff
 that clean sweet breeze
 from Africa
 The next generation came in
 on that wind
 With heads held high
 they will never look back

C aribbean sisters celebrate

IWD feature

Women across the world celebrated International Women's Day on March 8. Reports from the Caribbean region show that the day is becoming increasingly recognised as an important focal point, bringing together increasing numbers of women of different classes and races to express their common concerns and interests. In most territories, the day is stretching into a week or longer and the following are just some of the events that took place. Thanks to Suzanne Francis-Hinds of the Women's Feature Service, Jamaica, for leads on what was planned where.

BARBADOS - WOMEN, LAND AND FOOD

The main event on the IWD programme in Barbados was a film presentation and lecture discussion organised by the Bureau of Women's Affairs, together with the Women's Studies Programme of the University of the West Indies. The focus was on 'Women, Land and Food: Small Farming in Barbados'. Women from overseas were invited to wear the national costume of their native country; this has been a feature of IWD celebrations in Barbados for the past two years.

The Women's Forum also organised a symposium and lecture on 'The Future Agenda for Women' by Peggy Antrobus of the Women and Development Unit (WAND). On television, a three-part documentary was shown on 'Women Who Work: The Challenge of the 90s'.

GRENADA - PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR WOMEN

Some of the highlights here were two rural workshops in personal development for women; a series of midday radio talk shows on incest, violence and women's development; an exhibition and sale of crafts and goods by women's groups; and a pictorial display at the public library.

Activities were jointly planned by the Agency for Rural Transformation (ART), the Grenada Save the Children organisation, the YWCA and the Grenada Community Development Agency (GRENCODA).

GUYANA - DEMONSTRATIONS OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT

Six teachers who took part in a day of solidarity with workers in Anna Regina, a district of Essequibo, and were then laid off, held a press conference on 8 March in Georgetown. The People's Progressive Party held demonstrations outside parliament during the week.

Three days of events were organised by the women's revolutionary

socialist movement. The programme included social and cultural events featuring international and local dishes; a symposium on current issues affecting women; and a band concert for senior citizens.

There was also a special production of the feminist play, 'For Coloured Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf'.

March 6 marked the 25th anniversary of Kowsillia, a heroine of work-

ing-class Guyanese women in general and the Women's Progressive Organisation in particular (see p. 10).

JAMAICA - 'THE FACT THAT THE WASHING UP HAS TO BE DONE IS QUITE BEYOND HIM'

This comment on the male attitude to housework was expressed by a frustrated female member of the audience looking at the question of 'Domestic Labour: Whose job is it anyway?'. The occasion was one of a series of lunch-time lecture/discussions held during the week of IWD in Jamaica, two of the other stimulating topics being 'Sex is the Problem' and



Credit: Sojourner Sisters Inc., USVI

IWD feature

'The Woman is Taking Over'. This particular lunch-time, those attending were treated to a presentation by the Graduate Theatre Company, who also involved the audience in portrayals of the male/female roles in the home. This was followed by a lively discussion.

IWD is now firmly established on the calendar here. This year it was celebrated with a packed programme spaced over an 8-day period. The recently formed Association of Women's Organisations of Jamaica (AWOJA) and the Bureau of Women's Affairs spear-headed the organisation of events, while individual groups such as Mada Wadada and the Women and Development Studies group of the University of the West Indies also hosted functions.

Officially launched with a church service on Sunday 5, the celebrations really started a few days before when Sistren premiered their new play 'Buss Out' (see p. 15). Then over the week itself there were TV and radio talk shows and a fund-raising lunch at which the keynote address was given by Dr. Lucille Mair, Consultant Regional Co-ordinator of the UWI Women and Development Studies Programme and now Senator and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in the new government.

March 8 itself was marked by the 'Sisters Celebrate' concert, an annual event for the last 5 years organised by Sistren and Friends. Unfortunately, showers that began to fall from early morning turned into a downpour by evening and the show

had to be moved from the open air auditorium where it is usually held to a much smaller indoor venue. This meant that many of those who wanted to see the show were disappointed. Those that did manage to get in, however, had the usual bubbling time being entertained by some of Jamaica's top performers.

Another well-attended event was an 'African Brunch and Fashion Show' put on by Mada Wadada, an organisation of Rastafarian women. There was also music and dub poetry on the programme.

The press gave the events quite a lot of coverage, and even the cinemas seemed to take notice of the celebration with showings of 'The Accused', a powerful film about rape, and 'Clara's



'Whose work is it anyway' - participants act out male/female roles in the house

Heart' starring Whoopi Goldberg. All in all, the week provided a lift to the spirits of Jamaican women which should last for quite a while.

PUERTO RICO - THE IMAGE OF WOMEN IN THE MASS MEDIA

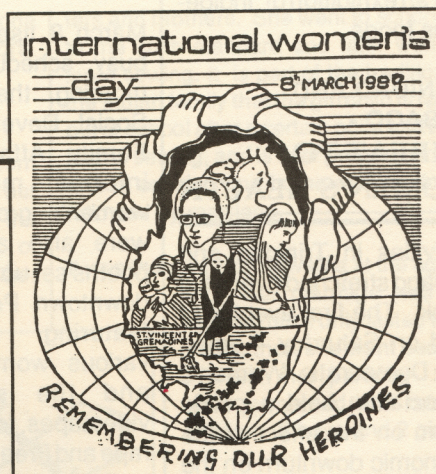
This year the Cayey Women's Studies Project dedicated Women's Week to the issue of the image of women in the mass media. A conference was held on this topic, as well as a special production on women, love and the communications media, 'Love in Our Days'. It was noted that the TV, radio and press are universal media which have become very powerful instruments which mould our tastes, attitudes, feelings and view of the world. Particular concern was expressed about the number of soap operas being shown on TV in the mornings, afternoons and evenings which are seen by all ages and all social groups. The question asked was how sexual harassment and domestic violence can be combated when most of the televised serials project these messages uncritically. Advertising also came under attack for its distortion of reality which delays the real development of a country.

Other activities included various health clinics, for example, in 'Weight, Measurement and Hypertension' and in 'Detection of Breast and Cervical Cancer'. The Fourth Women's Marathon also took place, and there was an evening of jazz.

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES - REMEMBERING OUR HEROINES

One of the main features of IWD this year was the honouring of 3 of the country's heroines, Elma Francois, Bertha Mutt and Sarah Baptiste, by the Committee for the Development of Women. The programme of events included the launching of Rhoda Reddock's book on Francois who was Vincentian-born and became an important political figure in Trinidad and Tobago (see review on page 12). Bertha Mutt was a leading female activist in the 1935 riots, while Sarah Baptiste (who is still alive and active in her community) is a pioneer Carib woman who for years has delivered babies and health care to the people in the rural areas in the North of St. Vincent. Mother Baptiste, as she is known, was presented with a carving depicting a pregnant woman in a rural community and a specially composed song, "You are a woman of the soil" was sung in her honour. A scholarship in her name is to be awarded by CDW through the Carib Development Council to a young girl from the Carib community.

A leaflet issued by CDW notes the particular significance of IWD this year since, by remembering these 3 women, attention was focussed on the contribution of women to the social, economic and political development of the country. The day was also seen as an opportunity to celebrate the completion of CAFRA's 'Women



in Caribbean Agriculture' project which, CDW says, "has exposed the conditions of exploitation and under-development of women while at the same time showing the vast contribution that female farmers make to the economic development of the country" (see p. 2). Further, CDW points to the increasing number of incest cases being revealed and the need for relevant law enforcement.

Other events were organised by the National Council of Women in collaboration with the Women's Affairs Department of the government, under the theme, 'Towards Effective Participation of Women in National Development'. These included a radio call-in programme; symposia on laws affecting women (particularly sick and maternity benefits);



HECATE, Australia

and an exhibition of indigenous foods.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO - THREAT TO WOMEN'S HEALTH

Activities in Trinidad and Tobago stretched over a full week. The first event was held on Saturday 4 when the Democratic Women's Association held a public forum on the effect of the economic downturn on the health and nutrition of women and children. Speaker P.I. Gomes pointed to the crisis occurring in all the institutions governing people's lives, reflected in the increasing degeneration of health, education and other social services. Women were urged to organise themselves, and the meeting passed a resolution in support of the National Day of Resistance (organised by the Trade Union movement for March 6).

Several TV and radio programmes took women's issues as their focus during the period. These included a panel discussion on whether or not the country should have a separate Ministry of Women's Affairs, (See News, News, News, pg. 23) and a talk show on the history of IWD and its relevance today.

March 8 itself involved a busy schedule. In the morning, the Minister of Social Development and Family Affairs had an informal meeting with women's groups. There were also a number of booths set up in a square in downtown Port of Spain, featuring displays by various women's groups and the showing of videotapes, for example on rape and Free Trade Zones. In the afternoon, a march and rally took place at the same venue. These activities were organised by the IWD Committee, which was made up of representatives of several women's groups co-ordinated by Working-women. Unfortunately, permission was not given for the march to be held at the planned time and it had to take place earlier, so that many people who may have wanted to attend were unable to. The small group walked around a downtown block watched with some curiosity by bystanders. At the rally, messages from different women's organisations were delivered.

The evening saw a public lecture on "Structural Adjustment: Recent Economic Policy in the Caribbean and its Impact on Women" organised by the UWI Women and Development Studies Group.

Kowsillia - the barefoot working class heroine

The following article was sent to CAFRA News by Indra Chandarpal.

March 6, 1989 was the 25th anniversary of the death of Kowsillia, the national heroine of the Women's Progressive Organisation and oppressed

Kowsillia was prepared to fight exploitation and injustice, even with her own life. She died during the general strike by sugar workers in estates all over the country. Many 'black legs' or strike-breakers were sent to work on the estates to break the strike.

I am a woman
and I live
I fight and
if I fight
I contribute to
the Liberation
of all women
and so victory
is born even in
the darkest hours



cpl/Women: A Journal of Liberation

women in Guyana who died in the struggle of sugar workers at Plantation Leonora in 1964. Her heroic sacrifice for the cause of workers is an example for all women struggling for a better life in Guyana.

To prevent the strike-breakers from carrying out their dirty work, there were picket lines on all the estates. The police were called in at many estates to break up the lines. Men, women and even children in mile-long picket lines kept vigil

at the factory gates. Even the tear gassing of the demonstrations did not daunt their courage. At Leonora as well as other estates the women guarded the bridges and other points leading to the canefields and factories to prevent the strike-breakers from entering the compounds to work.

The workers had been notified that if they failed to return to work within 72 hours, their services would be terminated. They ignored the ultimatum. Scabs were encouraged to work and led to believe that they would be permanently employed.

Kowsillia, along with other women, went to a meeting on March 5 to find out what was happening in the other estates. There they learned that the other workers were holding out in their demands. They went home late to their homes that night and found their children sleeping. Little did Kowsillia know that it would be the last night in her house. She left early the next morning while her children were still sleeping to join the other women in guarding the bridge.

The women adhered to their slogan: "They shall not pass". Along came an estate tractor driven by a scab. The women stood fast at the entrance to the bridge. The tractor moved forward, smashing through the women stalwarts and killing Kowsillia on the spot. Fourteen other brave women suffered back injuries and two were disabled permanently.

To those who knew and loved Kowsillia, the news was unbearable. Thousands of people went to share the sorrows of her parents, her children and her husband.

She was buried in a simple grave at Anna Catherina, a village adjacent to Leonora.

Who was Kowsillia?

Kowsillia, also known as Alice, was born in 1919 and was the eldest child of her family. Her father was a butler on the estate, which was considered a job of good standing in those days. Her mother

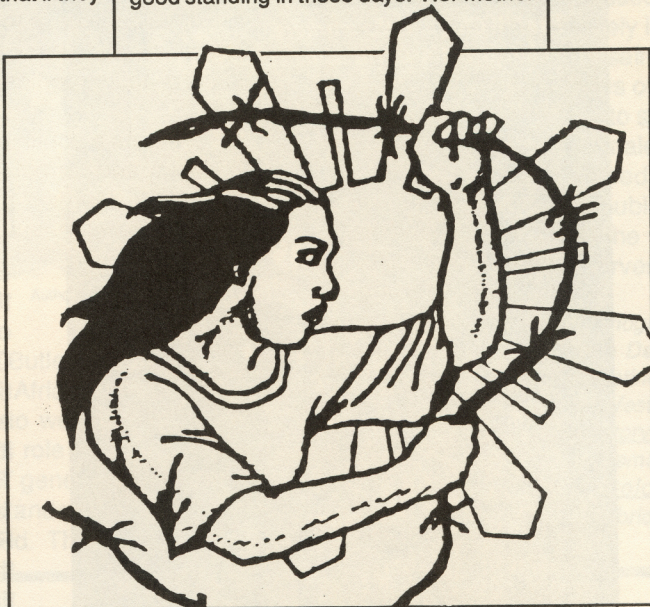
ters and brothers. She went to school up to the sixth standard and later went to learn sewing. It is part of the tradition of the Indian family that the girl child is taken out of school after a certain point and then learns sewing, and is later prepared in the arts of cooking and home-making, to be followed by marriage.

It was the same for Kowsillia at the age of 14. Her marriage was arranged, but it only lasted for 2 years, then she went back to live with her parents. She later re-married and bore 4 children, 2 boys and 2 girls.

At the age of 17 she started to work in the Leonora weeding gang. Her husband was a mule driver and worked on the same estate. She was a very intelligent woman and a good organiser. Her experiences and hardships in the fields made her very conscious about her position as a worker and she became actively involved in the GAWU. She also recognised the importance of women's involvement in politics and trade unionism and became active in the Women's Progressive Organisation.

25 years have passed since Kowsillia was killed. For the WPO and working women she has become a symbol of struggle and hope for the future. Since her death and up till today, women from Leonora and other places go to her graveside to pay homage to her.

To these women Kowsillia has become a symbol of the barefoot woman, standing with clenched fist, defying the oppressors, standing up for the rights of her people.



Inang Malaya, Philippines

used to work in the weeding gang on the estate.

As the eldest child, she had to shoulder a lot of responsibilities in the home. She had 8 sisters and 2 brothers who were younger than herself. In those days, workers had to get up as early as 3.00 a.m. to go to work. She had to get up from sleep to help her mother prepare meals for the family.

However, because she was a very intelligent child who wanted to learn, she took advantage of the little time she had to go to school. Of course, she had to stay home many days to take care of her sis-

A remarkable woman

Review of R. Reddock, *Elma Francois* (New Beacon Books, Port of Spain: 1988) by Bridget Brereton.

The recent appearance of Reddock's short but meaty biography of Elma Francois is welcome for several reasons. Firstly, Caribbean historiography is rather weak in biography and this is a gap which scholars of the region need to address. While a few serious studies of male politicians such as Manley, Bustamante and Adams have appeared, biographies of Caribbean women hardly exist. There is an excellent work on Edna Manley by Wayne Brown, though unfortunately the second volume of what was projected as a two-part study has not materialised; and a rather disorganised, though valuable, book on Claudia Jones, the Trinidad and Tobago born socialist feminist who was active in the USA and Britain in the 1930s-60s. But nothing else, apart from the fascinating autobiographical writings of Mary Seacole, the 19th century Jamaican personality, and Yseult Guppy Bridges, who has written about her childhood in Victorian Trinidad. So Reddock's book helps to fill a gap in the scholarly literature and will, I hope, be followed by other bibliographies of Caribbean women - by Reddock herself and by others (Tony Martin is researching the life of Audrey Jeffers, for example).

Rescued from oblivion

Secondly, this book is, of course, an important contribution to the writing of women's history in the region by one of the acknowledged pioneers in the

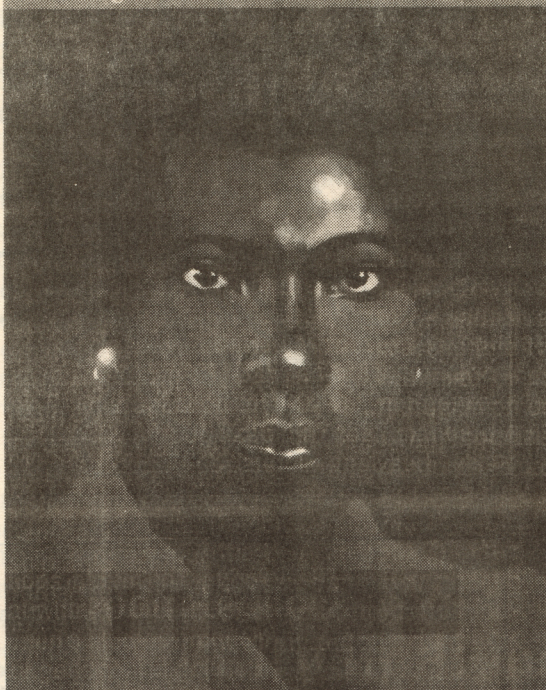
welcome the book: Elma Francois was a significant figure in Trinidad and Tobago's modern history and a fascinating personality. Her life and work are brought out skillfully in Reddock's book, which is short (60 pages), very readable and illustrated. This is popular history, but it is based on solid research in the primary documents of the 1930s-40s and oral history interviews, and if the language used is fairly simple the analysis is far from simplistic.

Story of the NWCSA

Reddock carefully explains the origins and development of the Negro Welfare, Cultural and Social Association - of which Francois was a key leader - and analyses its role in Trinidad and Tobago between 1934 and 1944, the year of her death. Reddock makes it clear that the NWCSA from start to finish has an authentically proletarian leadership and that it developed a remarkably egalitarian stance on female roles within the organisation. Francois and Christina King (whose oral testimony, along with that of her husband, Jim Barrett, was an important source for the book) both occupied key positions; there was no marginalisation into women's auxiliaries or the like. In this respect, the NWCSA appears to have been ahead of virtually every other political organisation from the 1930s to the present, in Trinidad and Tobago if not

Elma Francois

The NWCSA and the workers struggle for change in the Caribbean in the 1930's



field. It is thanks to Reddock's work on Francois that she was named one of the 25 officially recognised Heroes/Heroines of Trinidad and Tobago in 1987; Reddock has almost single-handedly rescued Francois from undeserved oblivion in the minds of modern Trinidadians and Tobagonians.

And this is the third reason to

in the whole region.

The book is particularly interesting in its analysis of NWCSA's involvement in the events of 1937-1939 and its relationship to Butler and his movement. Reddock makes it clear that the style of leadership exemplified by Francois was miles apart from that of the Chief Servant; nevertheless, NWCSA recognised Butler's far superior appeal to the African masses and tried earnestly to work with him. The organisation's role in the agitation of 1937-39, not generally recognized in the standard accounts, is carefully analysed. This



Author Rhoda Reddock at the launching of her book in St. Vincent

is important, but I would have liked Reddock to have probed more closely into the reasons for the relative failure of the NWCSA to develop a broad mass base in the 1930s and for the eclipse of the proletarian Marxists after 1940.

Fiery personality

Perhaps this is unfair, since Reddock set out to

write a biography of Elma Francois rather than a full-scale study of the NWCSA. From the rather sketchy materials at her disposal, Reddock does succeed in capturing Francois' fiery personality and her profound commitment to her causes (memora-

bly described by Jim Barrett last year at the book's launching). Her speech in her own defence at the sedition trial in 1938 (she was the first woman in Trinidad and Tobago to be charged with sedition) is reproduced so that we can get a sense of her style. This was a remarkable woman - no secondary education, dirt-poor, constantly harassed by the police - a woman actively involved in the politics of her day, self-educated on the great world issues of the 1930s, confident of her right to stand on platforms along with her male comrades. Reddock has restored Elma Francois to the reading public of her adopted country - and the region as a whole - and she deserves our gratitude.

Dr. Bridget Brereton is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of History on the St. Augustine campus of the University of The West Indies. Her publications include A History of Modern Trinidad, 1783-1962 (Heinemann; 1981) and Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad, 1870-1900 (Cambridge University Press; 1979).

Unity in diversity

Review of P. Mohammed and C. Shepherd (eds.), Gender in Caribbean Development (Women and Development Studies Project, The University of the West Indies, 1988) by Maureen Cain.

"Unity in Diversity" is the phrase which best characterises this excellent collection of 23 original essays arising from the Inaugural Seminar of the Women and Development Studies Programme on the three UWI campuses. The seminar was held in October 1986.

The eight sections into which the book is divided deal with the international context of women's studies: models and theories of gender and development; feminism; social science research; gender in ideology and culture; women's literature and literary criticism; alternative methodology; and women's organisations. Determinedly feminist and practical, the book discusses what women have achieved so far by organisation and by feminist scholarship, and how these achievements can be built upon organisationally and academically. Indeed, the book itself is evidence of

book review

how far women's drive to identify alternative modes of organisation has reached. Rather than dealing with each contribution in turn, therefore, it is as well to examine this unity in diversity.

Diversity is apparent in the range of topics considered, the range of backgrounds of the contributors, and the range of disciplinary approaches. Pioneers of social work rub shoulders with academics, the three male contributors share the general direction of the predominantly female volume; a powerful paper on images of men and women in calypso does not seem out of place beside a discussion of how best to get people talking positively in a seminar; history, social science, economics and literary criticism produce discontinuous but compatible insights.

These feminists then, both male and female, have moved to a new conception of interdisciplinary, a conception which is not merely additive, a conception which does not reduce the whole to bhagi. The separate skills and insights are retained. What unites them, at a more abstract level, is a shared set of concerns about the ways in which current gendering processes are not only oppressive of their victims - mainly women - but also reduce the development potential of the whole society. Seeing the issue in this way demands a re-conceptualisation of development as well as gender, and where it is necessary the authors do not shy away from it. It is, of course, with a volume of this quality, invidious

to select contributions: but as a relative newcomer to the field I found Anne Bolles' presentation of the debates about women in development particularly informative.

Joycelin Massiah, Ralph Henry and Elaine Savory Fido all seem to imply that more careful analytical (and political) attention to gender could change our thinking, and perhaps our practice, in relation to class and race.

Invaluable for students

Moving on then from unity in diversity, my second point is that the volume will be invaluable as an undergraduate text. Both the academic debates and the histories of women's movements are brought right up to date with Peggy Antrobus, Christine Barrow, Pat Mohammed and Rhoda Reddock contributing here. And students will find it particularly valuable to have their own women's history written for them "live", as it were, by two formidable sisters in earlier as well as present struggles, Gema Ramkissoon and Nesta Patrick.

Here too it is interesting that Patrick unwittingly picks up one of the calypso themes: the fact that men are using other men as an audience when they 'choose' a sexual partner. "... they felt uneasy with a wife whom the men knew as articulate and other men felt was too involved" (p. 539).

In sum, then, this is a book which readers of *CAFRA News* should surely buy, and recommend to all women concerned with women and the development of the region.

Dr. Maureen Cain is Professor of Sociology at the St. Augustine campus of the University of the West Indies.



This is not, of course, to argue that there are no disagreements among the contributors, although these are not explicit. It seems clear, for example, that Rosina Brodber's argument that in Caribbean history class and race have been more determinative of social position than gender connects with Gordon Rohlehr's discussion of women as both providers and dependents (and abused in either role) in the 1930s calypsoes. On the other hand,

Sistren on tour

on tour

Is there anyone connected with the regional women's movement who hasn't heard of Sistren Theatre Collective of Jamaica? In the 12 years since it was founded, Sistren has become a theatrical forum for the voices of poor women, and achieved international acclaim in the process. The only working class popular theatre company in the Caribbean, one of its main aims is to help build grass-roots cultural forms and get them recognised.



Sistren in rehearsal

The news, then, that Sistren will be making a Caribbean tour in May/June is exciting women and men all around the region. The tour will involve performances of their new play, 'Buss Out', based on their book, Lionheart Gal, as well as workshops. Topics for these are based on specific requests from individual territories and include "popular theatre", "women in agriculture", "domestic violence", and "women in free trade zones".

'Buss Out' opened in Jamaica on 1 March to very favourable reviews. The Jamaica Record called it "refreshingly different" and "thoroughly entertaining", while the Gleaner (in an article headed "Sistren Does It Again") noted that "nothing else seen in the

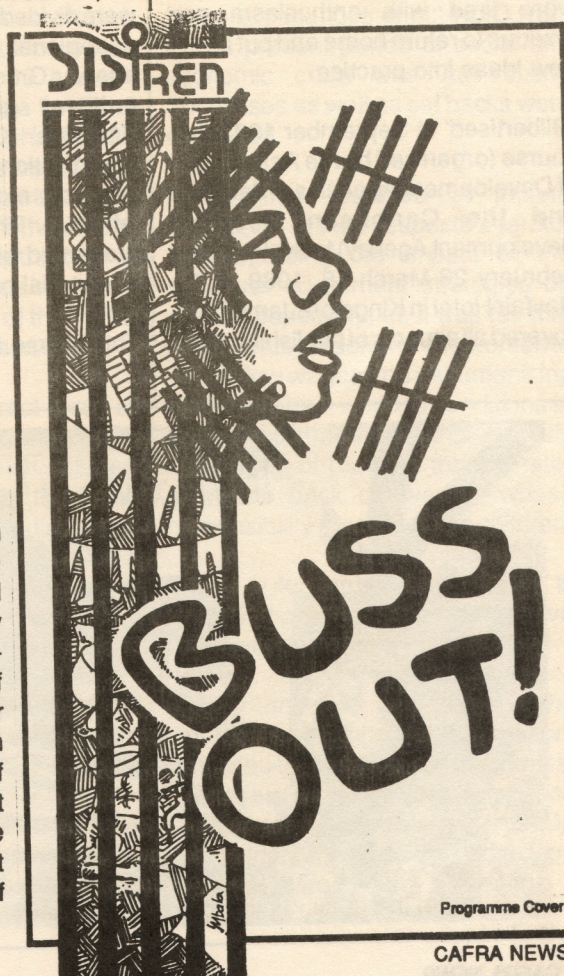
last year matches for theatricality".

Set in a depressed area called Chiggerfoot Lane, the play tells the story of the attempts of a group of squatters to resist eviction by their landlord. Auntie Bev, the warrior in the community, wants to fight, but Miss G., a

the restraints of class, race and circumstances to new possibilities".

Sistren will visit 10 territories between May and June, and small coordinating committees have been working feverishly in each place to facilitate the local leg of the tour. For further information about dates and venues, contact Sistren, 20 Kensington Crescent, Kingston 5, Jamaica. Tel: (809) 929-2457.

middle class lawyer, recommends a public campaign. Flashbacks to the two women's childhoods show the experiences that shaped their characters and made them want to change the status quo. "The central characters journey towards an understanding through stories of their lives," says director Earl Warner. "Both women carry a past of rebelling against convention, and this rite of passage is about attempting to buss out of



Programme Cover

"B"ut it's so boring, who would want to read it?" — publishing course —

It was day one of the ADA/CARIPEDA Regional Publishing Course, and Course Co-ordinator Joan Ross-Frankson was busily tearing our 'worthy' publications to shreds. Names like *Doing Social Work for Change*, *Volser*, *Spearhead* and (yes, I'm afraid so) *CAFRA News* left her cold, as did most of the contents and lay-outs. Fortunately, her criticisms and those of the other resource persons were also very constructive, and by the end of the 2 1/2 week course we were only too ready to agree with them. In fact, we were fired with enthusiasm and anxious to return home and put all the new ideas into practice.

'Gilbertised' in September 1988, the course (organised by the Association of Development Agencies of Jamaica and the Caribbean People's Development Agency) took place from February 26-March 16, 1989 at the Mayfair Hotel in Kingston, Jamaica. It covered all aspects of publishing, from

the vital question of 'Why publish?', through budgeting and fundraising, distribution and marketing, editorial policy and planning, basic writing and editing, and the application of design principles. There were also field trips to various printeries, a desktop publishing company and a design house (this last a real eye-opener for most of us).

Heads full of this new information, we were divided into 3 groups (CARIDEV, a regional umbrella development agency; Groots, a grassroots women's cultural group; and Callaloo Farmers' Co-operative, a rural organisation) and given 3 days to produce mock-ups of their newsletters. These then had to be presented with detailed explanations of editorial policy, budget, etc.

The course had advertised itself as

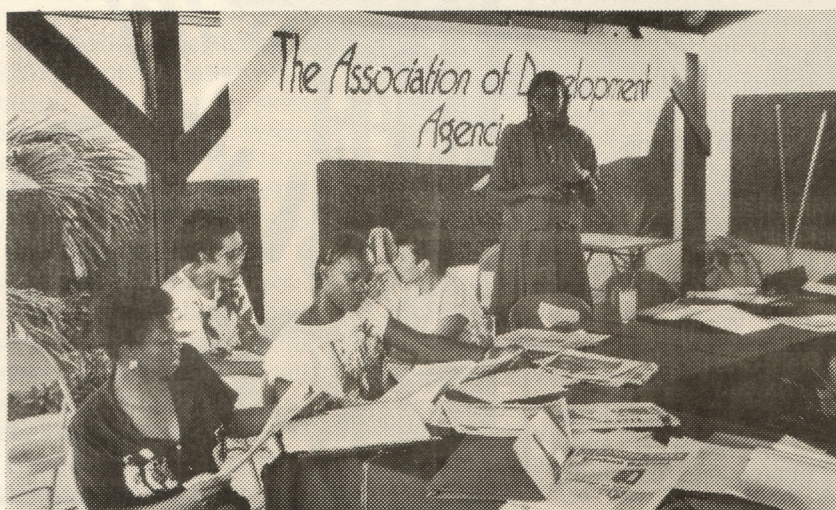


Joan Ross-Frankson

intensive, and it certainly was that. We worked very hard, but we also had a lot of fun. The 10 participants came from Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago, and all got on extremely well from the start. Although of mixed ages, sexes and publishing experience, we found that we faced similar problems in producing newsletters. These included lack of time and personnel (most of us do several other jobs), lack of business and technical skills, and a general feeling in our agencies that bringing out a newsletter is 'no problem'.

ADA plans to produce a manual out of the course, and participants have also requested follow-up courses, particularly in writing and editing, and in design. In the meantime, get ready for changes in several of the region's newsletters. Let's hope that the new look leads to wider appeal for the development ideas with which we are all concerned.

Tina Johnson



Some of the participants take a break

N Grenada meeting

GOS look at structural adjustment

by Asha Kambon

Hunger, malnutrition and deprivation are fast becoming common features of the region as the IMF, World Bank and other international financial institutions have their way.

Some 28 participants from the region's non-governmental organisations who met in Grenada from March 15 to 17, under the auspices of the Caribbean Peoples' Development Agency (CARIPEDA) and OXFAM, USA, found the commonality of suffering and despair too pervasive to be coincidental in the region.

While reviewing a book that was being written by Kathy McAfee on the implications of development strategies and North-South relations, sponsored by OXFAM, USA, participants turned their attention to the economic and resultant social crisis. The so-called structural adjustment strategies came in for special attention.

As the components of the structural adjustment package prescribed for the region were examined, it became evident that the same components which were being implemented in various territories were having similarly devastating effects.

All participants could relate to the Jamaica experience. Before the inception of the structural adjustment programme in Jamaica, the external debt stood at some US\$1.7 billion in 1980. However, after Jamaica had undergone eight years of structural adjustment, the external debt was US\$4.3 billion. At fiscal year end 87/88, Jamaica's external debt repre-

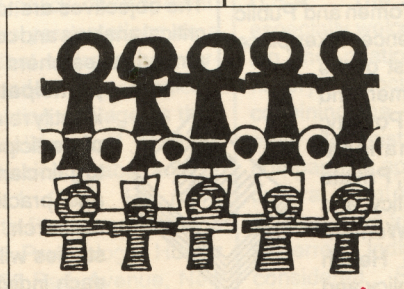
sented 120% of its GDP.

What this meant in terms of human suffering was frightening. A study conducted in May of 1985 by OXFAM, USA, indicated that 30% of Jamaica's labour force was unemployed and 66% of the female labour force aged 14-24 was unemployed; that one third of the labour force was earning less than J\$30.00 a week while the cost of feeding a family of five was J\$143.21 a week; that 50,000 children under three years of age were suffering from malnutrition; that one third of all pregnant mothers were found to be anaemic; that the cost of basic drugs had increased since 1982 by 50% to 300%, and all of this in the face of declining health services.

Much of this was as a direct result of the implementation of structural adjustment strategies which included devaluation of the currency to reduce local consumption; higher direct and indirect taxation on the poor and middle classes; decreasing public spending on social services; reduction of the number of government employees and ownership of enterprises; reduced wages; and the opening of the domestic market to foreign investors.

Another issue under discussion at the meeting was the new and emerging role for NGOs. As the social chaos created by the implementation of

these structural adjustment strategies became more and more evident, governments/international agencies seemed to feel that NGOs could be used to mop up the mess and by so doing douse the flames of social unrest.



Development Forum

There is little doubt that the opportunity

afforded by the three-day meeting to share experiences about NGO work in this present period of social and economic crisis was well spent. Successes as well as set backs were examined.

Participants resolved to initiate discussion in their respective territories regarding the impact of the structural adjustment strategies on women especially, as it was felt that these strategies often force women to accept low wages and dehumanising and dangerous working conditions in EPZs, and that in the final analysis the burden of many of these strategies falls back on women whose responsibility it is to feed the children.

The way forward, it was agreed, is through the exploration of alternative strategies for development.

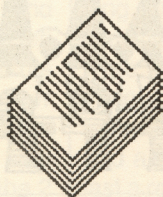
Asha Kambon is a member of the Trinidad and Tobago organisation, Women Against Free Trade Zones, as well as Researchers for Education Action and Development (READ). She works with the Health Education Division of the Ministry of Health.

M meetings, etc.

Meetings, Conferences, Fellowships, etc.

April, 1989

The Barnard Centennial Scholar and Feminist Conference - Women and Public Policy: Making the Difference - takes place on 1 April. It will consist of the following sessions: Women and Children at Risk and in Poverty; National and International Perspectives on Racism; Private Foundations, Public Policy and Advocacy; Mother and Woman-blaming in the Mental Health Establishment; Public Policy and Education; Feminism and Aids; Making the Public Private: Black Women and Self-recovery; and Policy Prospects for a "Kinder, Gentler Nation for Women"? Transformation of the Workplace, Welfare Reform, Family Supports, Education, Reproductive Rights and Health in the Bush Administration. The Conference is sponsored by the Barnard Centre for Research on Women, Barnard College, 3009 Broadway, Room 101 Barnard Hall, New York, NY 10027, U.S.A.



International Development and by The Faculty of Continuing Education, The University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. The objectives are to provide a forum for critical analysis and constructive exchange among researchers and practitioners of participatory research; to identify relevant methodologies of participatory research; and to gain clarification of the theory and practice of participatory research. Thirteen case studies will be presented, and each individual will participate in three of these. Concurrent presentations of the case studies will be followed by highly participatory small group discussions on such themes as gender roles, community health and socio-political-economic issues. For more information, contact Madeleine Aldridge, Conference Office, Faculty of Continuing Education, The University of Calgary, 2500 University Drive NW, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2N 1N4.

September - December 1989

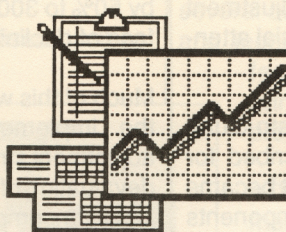
Women, Men and Development: A course for all those interested in gender equality within social change, 11 September-8 December, 1989, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Sussex, England. Aims to provide a theoretical and conceptual approach to gender issues and a set of practical tools for those working in integrating women's concerns into development. Requirements: knowledge of the development literature, lay person's working knowledge of economics. Funding sources include British Government Technical Co-operation Awards, UNDP, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the European Development Fund. Brochures available on request from: The Chairperson, Teaching Area, IDS at the University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9RE, England.

November 9-10, 1989

The First Puerto Rican Congress of Women and Health will be held at the Convention Rooms of the Caribbean Hilton Hotel. Among the objectives are: the dissemination of information to health professionals about service, education and research projects which

have been carried out in Puerto Rico on women and health; to promote dialogue and the interchange of ideas about the issue; and to establish plans and strategies to increase the development of innovative services, treatment programmes and research as well as in the development of new approaches in public policy.

All of the 600 participants will be provided with the most recent information on the state of women's health in Puerto Rico,



April 1989

The findings of CAFRA's 'Women in Caribbean Agriculture' project, carried out in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the Commonwealth of Dominica, will be presented at a regional meeting to be held at the Dover Convention Centre, Barbados on April 24 and 25. Representatives of national and regional organisations involved in agriculture will be attending, and it is expected that decisions will be taken as to how the findings can be integrated into their programmes.

July 12-15, 1989

'A Celebration of People's Knowledge', a Participatory Research Conference, is being co-sponsored by The Division of

August 1989

1989 Cross Cultural Black Women's Summer Institute, August 7-26, Bulawayo and Harare, Zimbabwe. Focus: 'Women and the Politics of Food'. Activities consist of a three week seminar, workshops, public forums, visits and participation in an ongoing rural women's project. The institute fee is US\$200. Prospective participants are encouraged to seek their own funding. Write to: Dr. Andree N. McLaughlin, Institute Co-ordinator, Black Women's Studies Institute, Information Headquarters, Medgar Evers College, 1150 Carroll St., Brooklyn, NY 11225, USA.

as well as on women's impact as an agent and promoter of health services. Some workshop topics are Women and Mental Health, Birth Control and Reproductive Rights, Women and AIDS, and Women and Occupational Health.

For further information, contact Proyecto de Estudios de la Mujer, Colegio Universitario de Cayey, Cayey, Puerto Rico 00633.

June 1990

Fourth International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women: Women's Realities, Women's Choices. This congress, held from June 3-7, will explore women's realities and choices as they intersect with analysis, research, theory

and action. The congress invites work on women in all fields. There will be an emphasis on theory and action in education, research and policy development. The congress seeks presentations on a list of sub-themes that address the inter-relationships of gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual inclination and age as they affect women's realities and choices. Deadline for submission of abstracts or proposals is June 1, 1989. For more information, write to Professor Florence Denmark, Dept. of Psychology, Hunter College, CUNY, 695 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10024, U.S.A.

June 1990

The 8th Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, 'Crossing Boundaries

in Feminist History', will be held on June 7-10, 1990 at Douglass College, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, U.S.A. The Programme Committee especially welcomes proposals addressing the relationship between feminist history and social and political practice, or co-joining the discipline of history with other feminist studies, or taking a comparative approach crossing national, cultural, racial or ethnic lines. Submission of proposals for panels or round-tables preferred. Individual papers will also be considered. Send proposals on other than US topics to Jane Caplan, Dept. of History, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010; on US topics to Nancy Cott, American Studies Programme, 1504A Yale Station, New Haven, CT 06520. Comparative US/non-US proposals may be sent to either.

W omen in solidarity

A call for action has come from the International Council for Adult Education in support of Women Detainees in South Africa:

Women in prison in South Africa are in need of our support. The problems that women detainees and convicted prisoners face vary from prison to prison, but many women prisoners have reported:

- * lack of sanitary conditions and little or no provision of proper supplies while they are menstruating;
- * poor quality and not enough food;
- * inadequate medical attention during pregnancy and in the event of a miscarriage while in prison;

- * sexual assault as a form of harassment;
- * rape and torture;
- * lack of adequate facilities or time for exercise;
- * no access to books, newspapers, letters, study;
- * no contact with the 'outside world'.

Groups in South Africa are organising campaigns to support women in prisons. The aim is increasing public awareness in order to demand the

improvement of conditions in prisons and, ultimately, to end the detention and imprisonment of women educators and activists.

Please send statements of protest by letter, telegram and/or telex to the State President and Minister of Justice: President P.W. Botha, State President's Office, Private Bag x213, Pretoria 0001, South Africa, Telex: 3-21695SA; Mr. H.J. Coetsee, Minister of Justice, Department of Justice, Private Bag x81, Pretoria 0001, South Africa, Telex: 3-20678SA. Also, forward this information to any local or regional organisation which could take up this solidarity action.



O n the bookshelf

publications received

This section is rather long this time as we did not include it in the last issue of the newsletter. We feel, however, that it is an important feature and that it deserves the space.

PERIODICALS

Asian Women Workers' Newsletter 7.3&4 (December 1988). Committee for Asian Women, 57 Peking Rd., 4/F, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Feature: Experiences of women workers organising.

Black/Out: The Magazine of the National Coalition for Black Lesbians and Gays 2.1 (Fall 1988). Tenth anniversary edition. NCBLG, 19641 West Seven Mile, Detroit, MI 48219, USA (Bi-annual).

Brasa: Brad voor de Vrouw 6 (October 1988). Nationale Vrouwen-Bewing Sommelskijckstr. 8, Paramaribo, Suriname.

Breaking the Silence: A Feminist Quarterly 6.4 (June 1988): "The changing family - part 2"; 7.1 (September 1988): "The joy of sweat: Women and physical activity"; 7.2 (December 1988). P.O. Box 4857, Station E, Ottawa, Ont., Canada K1S 5J1.

Broadside: A Feminist Review 10.2 (November 1988); 10.3 (December 1988-January 1989). P.O. Box 494, Station P, Toronto, Ont., Canada M5S 2T1 (Monthly).

CD: Consumers and Development 2 (December 1988); 3 (January-February 1989). International Organisation of Consumers Unions, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, Casilla de Correo 10993, Suc. 2, Montevideo, Uruguay.

Cayenne: A Socialist Feminist Bulletin 15 (Fall 1988). 394 Euclid Avenue, Suite 308, Toronto, Ont., Canada M6G 2S9 (Quarterly).

DAWN Informs 3 (April/June 1988); 4 (July/September 1988). Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), Rua Fernandes 32, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 22.270 Botafogo, Brazil.

Everywoman: The current affairs magazine for women 39 (June 1988); 46 (January 1989); 47 (February 1989). Everywoman Publishing Ltd., 34 Islington Green, London N1 8DU, UK (Monthly).

Healthsharing: A Canadian Women's Health Quarterly 9.3 (June 1988). 511 King St. W., Toronto, Ont., Canada M5V 2Z4.

Kinesis: News about Women that's Not in the Dailies (July/August 1988). Vancouver Status of Women, 301-1720 Grant St., Vancouver, B.C., Canada V5L 2V6.

Mujer/Fempres 85 (October 1988). Unidad de Comunicacion Alternativa de la mujer, Casilla 16-637, Santiago 9, Chile.

The New Internationalist (February 1989): "Mozambique: The right to survive." 120-126 Lavender Avenue, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3HP, UK (Monthly).

News and Letters 33.9 (November 1988); 33.10 (December 1988); 34.1 (January-February 1989). 59 E. Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, IL 60605, USA. Newspaper of News and Letters Committee, an organisation of Marxist-Humanists.

Outwrite Women's Newspaper 70 (November 1988); 71 (December 1988).

Ceased publication in December 1988.

Quehaceres 8.12 (January 1989). CIPAF, Luis F. Thomen no. 358, Ensancha Quisqueya, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic (Monthly).

Voices Rising: A Bulletin about Women and Popular Education (April/May 1988); (January 1989). ICAE Women's Programme, Suite 308, 394 Euclid Avenue, Toronto, Ont., Canada M6G 2S9

WIN News 14.4 (Autumn 1988). Fran P. Hosken, ed. 187 Grant St., Lexington, MA 02173, USA (Quarterly).

Women in Action 3 (October 1988). Isis International, Via San Saba 5, 00153 Rome, Italy

Women's Education/Education des femmes 6.2 (Spring 1988). Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women, 47 Main St., Toronto, Ont., Canada M4E 2V6 (Quarterly).

Women's Health Journal 6-7 (March-June 1988). Isis International, Via San Saba 5, 00153 Rome, Italy.

BOOKS

Federación de Mujeres Cubanas. Que es la FMC? [Havana, Cuba: FMC, 198?].

Dumas, Regina. Report on Inaugural Assembly of the Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD). St. Augustine; Trinidad: CNIRD, 1987.

From bonding wires to banding women: Proceedings of the International Consultation on Micro-chips Technology, Manila, Philippines, 1986. Quezon City: Centre for Women's

publications received

Resources; Toronto: Participatory Research Group, 1988.

The future United Nations Convention on the rights of the child. 2nd ed. Geneva: Defence for Children International; New York: UNICEF, 1988. Briefing kit available in English, French and Spanish.

Haniff, Nesha. **Blaze a fire: Significant contributions of Caribbean women.** Toronto: Sister Vision, 1988. Consists of profiles of 28 'visible' and 'invisible' women from the English-speaking Caribbean, grouped by their contribution to the fields of agriculture, the arts, business, the Church, health, organisations, politics and public services.

Heyzer, Noeleen, ed. **Daughters in Industry: Work, skills and consciousness of women workers in Asia.** Kuala Lumpur: Asian and Pacific Development Centre, 1988. Covering 10 Asian countries, the book focuses on issues such as the factors affecting productivity and income levels of women, the way their work is organised in order to assess realistically the type of work concepts, work organisation and training which could be encouraged to support the development of women workers' potential in the context of rapid global changes and economic and social advancement.

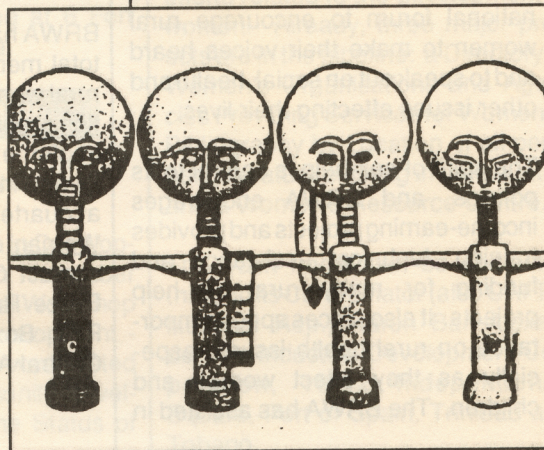
Kamel, Rachael, ed. and trans. **Growing together: Women, feminism and popular education.** Produced by Isis International and Network for Women and Popular Education of the Latin American Council on Adult Education. Rome: Isis International, 1988. Collection of articles which reflects the expression of

Latin American women's groups in developing a vision and practice of popular education. Countries covered are Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Dominican Republic and Venezuela.

Labour Research Department. **Bargaining for equality: A positive action guide.** London: Labour Research Department, 1988. (An LRD Booklet). Deals with all aspects of working women's lives from applying for jobs through to conditions in the workplace, and shows how unions can achieve a fair deal for women workers.

The other side of US policy towards the Caribbean: Recolonisation and militarisation. Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico: Caribbean Project for Justice and Peace, 1988. (Dossier Series, no. 7). Contents: United States Caribbean policy and regional militarisation/Jorge Rodriguez Beruff; The Caribbean Basin Initiative and the economic restructuring of the region/Emilio Pantojas Garcia.

Suriname. National Women's Movement. **Report on the workshop evaluation of the pilot project "women and health: detection of cervical cancer".** Geyersvljht, Suriname: National Women's Movement, 1987



Off our backs, June 1981

FROM PACCA

Policy Alternatives for the Caribbean and Central America (PACCA) is an association of scholars and policy makers dedicated to promoting humane and democratic alternatives to present US policies towards the region. Of particular interest to the regional women's movement is PACCA's project entitled "Alternative Visions of Development in the Caribbean", in which PACCA is preparing a development policy alternative informed by the experience and analysis of women in the Caribbean.

CAFRA has received the following PACCA publications:

Cantor, Daniel and Juliet Schor. **Tunnel vision: labour, the world economy and Central America.** Boston: South End Press, 1987. (PACCA Series on the Domestic roots of US Foreign Policy).

Fagen, Richard R. **Forging Peace: The challenge of Central America.** Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987. (A PACCA Book).

Hamilton, Nora, et al., eds. **Crisis in Central America: Regional dynamics and US policy in the 1980s.** Boulder: Westview Press, 1988. (A PACCA Book).

PACCA. **Changing course: Blueprint for peace in Central America and the Caribbean.** Washington, D.C.: Institute for Policy Studies, 1984.

Carifem update

Carifem update

Jamaica

"We all have to come together to define and create our own reality and our own truth".



The date is 3 December, 1988 and Dorianne Wilson-Smillie is addressing the formal launching of the Association of Women's Organisations of Jamaica (AWOJA). The association has been many months in the making, and over 50 groups have taken part in the process of developing an umbrella organisation aimed at strengthening the voices of Jamaican women around issues of concern to them.

Although most of these groupings are specifically for women, some are not and all of them are different in relation to their own specific goals. They include church organisations; organisations of professional and working class women; women's cultural and related organisations; political groupings of women; voluntary and government groups; as well as groups with an active interest in women's issues.

These groups talked through and agreed on broad aims and objectives: to develop a common voice and create a lobby/pressure group; to improve

the conditions of Jamaican women and implement a programme of public education and consciousness-raising; and to focus on data collection and identify resource persons.

The process was overseen at first by a steering committee of 6 volunteers, then by a 12 woman working committee, and finally by an elected Executive Committee, with Dr. Alafia Samuels as Co-ordinator. AWOJA now operates from a converted bus on the compound of the Women's Centre at 42 Trafalgar Road in Kingston and produces a quarterly newsletter. It aims, as Ms. Wilson-Smillie put it, "to be a continuing witness to our vision of society as it might be and as indeed we will make it".

Belize

Supporting self-help

The Belize Rural Women's Association (BRWA) is a non-profit organisation of rural women, as well as caring men, who are committed to improving the lives of their communities. Begun in 1979, BRWA has created a national forum to encourage rural women to make their voices heard and to speak out on social, health and other issues affecting their lives.

The spirit of self-help is central to its policies, and BRWA encourages income-earning projects and provides training, technical assistance and funding for many rural self-help projects. It also places special importance on rural health issues, especially as they affect women and children. The BRWA has assisted in



the implementation of a number of rural water and sanitation projects. Additionally, this organisation conducts regular seminars, workshops and other training sessions on a wide range of topics from primary health care and traditional healing to rural development projects, marketing, oral history and crafts.

BRWA is involved in encouraging cultural promotion and retrieval, and has established exchange programmes with similar organisations in the Caribbean. Involved as it is in popular education, BRWA also works along with other NGOs in achieving its goals and objectives.

BRWA has 26 member groups with a total membership of more than 400 rural women and men. The Association's policies and programmes are implemented from its Resource Centre in Belmopan, and it publishes a quarterly newsletter, The Belize Woman. For more information, contact Cynthia Ellis, The Director, Belize Rural Women's Association, P.O. Box 196, Belmopan, Belize, Central America.

Dominica

Formation of SWAP

The December 1988 issue of *Koudmen* announced that the Women's Core Committee of the Small Projects' Assistance Team (SPAT) has now become an autonomous body. This has led to its reorganisation and renaming as SPAT's Women in Association for Progress (SWAP).

SWAP's plans for 1989 include the hosting of a women's rally for International Women's Day (March 8); a booklet entitled "Women: 10 Years of Nation Building"; overseeing CAFRA's 'Women in Caribbean Agriculture' research/action project; and documentation of women's experiences, involvement, qualifications and interests primarily for use when opportunities for training and other meetings come up. The association is chaired by Marcia Dublin and works closely with SPAT's Project Officer responsible for women's affairs, Noreen John.

SWAP can be contacted at 6 Fort Lane, Roseau, Dominica.

Trinidad and Tobago

Task Force for Women

A Task Force for Women in Development was established in November 1988 following a National Workshop in "Management for Development - Effecting Change". This was hosted by the Ministry of Community Development, Welfare and the Status of

Women together with the CARICOM Secretariat, UN/ECLAC, the Management Development Centre and PAHO/WHO.

Women attending the workshop, who came from both governmental and non-governmental organisations, were convinced of the need to give new direction to the process of integrating all women into the country's development. The result was the formation of a Task Force to achieve the following goals: to integrate the work of all women's organisations in T & T by establishing a network; to sensitize the public to gender issues for the purpose of development; to recommend and influence the formulation of policies relevant to women; to establish a centralised data base on women-in-development issues; to disseminate information specific to the support systems available to women; and to promote and advise on projects concerning women; and to access funding for selected projects.

It is hoped that the formation of the Task Force will create a much-needed bridge between government and NGO efforts related to the development of women. Already, three major projects are in the pipeline: a Directory of Women's Organisations and Agencies Providing Services for Women; a Bibliography by Location of all pertinent literature existing in the country; and a Women's Resource Centre.

The Task Force can be contacted through its Co-ordinator (also CAFRA National Rep.) Karen Bart-Alexander, c/o Industrial Development Corporation, 10-12 Independence Square, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

N ews News News

CALLING UNPUBLISHED POETS

Panrun Collective is looking for unpublished poems by young people of Caribbean origin for a forthcoming publication. If you are of Caribbean origin, aged 25 years of under and write poetry, contact Panrun Collective, 46A Trent Road, Brixton, London SW2 5BC, England.

NOMORE STATUS FOR WOMEN

A recent Cabinet reshuffle in Trinidad and Tobago led to the disappearance of 'Status of Women' as part of a Ministry. The Ministry of Community Development, Welfare and Status of Women was renamed Ministry of Social Development and Family Services.

DOCUMENTATION IN PARAGUAY

The Documentation and Studies Centre (CDE) of Paraguay, a non-profit NGO for research and information in the social sciences, has established links with CAFRA. It has a "women's area" which aims to offer documentary support to women's groups, researchers in this field, and generally to anyone who wants information. It sees its principal task as setting up a data base on Women and Discrimination, both in the legal and cultural sense. CDE can be contacted through Margarita Elias or Line Bareiro, Centro de Documentacion y Estudios, C.C. 2558, Asuncion, Paraguay.

L ast words

We need your help in bringing out the next three issues of **CAFRA News** so that the newsletter can be truly representative of the region. The June issue will focus on "Women's cultural expression as an instrument for the building of power", specifically on creative writing. September, which we hope will be the first issue produced in Spanish as well as English, will deal mainly with "Women in Caribbean Agriculture", while December will take "Women's Health and Sexuality" as its theme.

We would like to have an input from as many different individuals and organisations as possible, from all the member territories -

news of events, activities planned, musings on the movement, etc. Photos and illustrations are also most welcome, whether accompanying an article or not.

Deadlines for the three issues are: June - 12 May, 1989; September - 28 July, 1989; and December - 13 October, 1989.



From Link, CAFOD Newsletter No. 16, 1986

**RECEIVE CAFRA NEWS REGULARLY
BY TAKING OUT A SUBSCRIPTION!**

**CAFRA
NEWS.**

U.S. \$15. CARIBBEAN
U.S. \$20. ELSEWHERE
(PAYABLE IN U.S. CURRENCY OR LOCAL EQUIVALENT)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

RETURN TO: **CAFRA**, P.O.BAG 442, TUNAPUNA POST OFFICE,
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

CAFRA NEWS.

NEWSLETTER OF THE CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH AND ACTION

CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH AND ACTION

We are an organisation of feminist researchers and activists who are committed to understanding the relationship between the oppression of women and other forms of exploitation in the society, and who are working actively to change this situation.

Members of CAFRA define feminist politics as both a matter of both consciousness and action.

PRIORITY RESEARCH/ACTION AREAS

PRIORITY

- (i) The Caribbean Basin Initiative.
- (ii) Population Control Policies in the Caribbean.
- (iii) Peace in the Caribbean.
- (iv) History of women's labour and struggle in the region.
- (v) Women's cultural expression as an instrument for the building of power.
- (vi) Sexual violence.
- (vii) Women and trade.
- (viii) Social and economic conditions of women.
- (ix) Women in Caribbean Agriculture.
- (x) Caribbean family forms:- history, present trends and future directions.
- (xi) Women in Caribbean Literature.
- (xii) A directory of feminists and female professionals in the Caribbean region.

STRUCTURE OF CAFRA

1. The Secretariat
 - (a) The Executive

Co-ordinator - Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen
Admin. Assistant - Tina Johnson

- (b) The Committee
 - Patricia Mohammed
 - Gaietry Pargass
 - Stephanie Pile
 - Rhoda Reddock
 - Cathy Shepherd

2. The National Representatives

Belize - Diane Haylock
 Dominica - Noreen John
 Guyana - Indra Chandarpal
 Jamaica - Joan French
 Martinique - Liliane Marchal
 St. Vincent and the Grenadines - Nelcia Robinson
 Suriname - Marja Naarendorp
 Trinidad and Tobago - Karen Bart-Alexander

In the following countries, CAFRA has members but no appointed National Representatives: Anguilla, Bahamas, Barbados, Canada, Curacao, Dominican Republic, England, Guadeloupe, Puerto Rico, St. Croix, The Netherlands and U.S.A.

MEMBERSHIP

Open to women living in the Caribbean and Caribbean women living abroad who support CAFRA's general aims and objectives.

Annual Membership Fee

Individuals: 25 units in currency of residence
 Organisations: 35 units in currency of residence
 (Payable by cheque, money order or cash in currency of residence or US\$)