

WOMAN

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Struggle

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TO DRINK OR PERHAPS NOT

Two recent studies released in the United States in August 1988, indicate that drinking moderate amounts of alcohol protects against heart attacks and strokes but raises the risk of breast cancer.

According to the Washington Post researchers admit these results pose a dilemma for women who look to the evidence with regard to decisions about their drinking habits. "There's no universal recommendation that can be given that would apply to every woman", one researcher stated.

Rather women can make the best decision about drinking alcohol based on personal and family health history and her risk for breast cancer and heart disease.

In one study a woman who drank one ounce of alcohol per day - about two shots of whiskey, two twelve-ounce beers or two five-ounce glasses of wine had a 40 to 70% higher risk of breast cancer than a non-drinker.

The second study showed that women who drank between three and fourteen drinks per week had heart disease rates of 40% lower than non-drinkers.

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CANADIAN WOMEN VERSES FREE TRADE

Canadian feminists have been opposing the institution of "free trade" between Canada and the United States. Conservative Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and President Reagan reached an agreement on "free trade".

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women argues that establishment of free trade with the United States would

cost Canadians jobs and increase prices. Women's jobs are concentrated in industries where jobs could most be at risk: textiles, clothing, food-processing, and electronics products. Many women in those jobs are older, immigrant women, who would have difficulty finding other jobs. Moreover, many clerical jobs might be lost because the laws that data collected in Canada be processed and stored in Canada would be nullified. Also, the governments' agreement says that standards will be "harmonized"; the women's group fears this will mean that higher Canadian standards governing the use of pesticides and hormones in food growing may be lowered to the United States' level.

Also, feminists fear that Canadian firms will respond to free trade by cutting salaries, ignoring health and safety, and fighting legislative protection for equal rights for women, because they will have to compete with those U.S. States that have lower wages.

Social services also may be threatened as U.S. for-profit hospital and nursing care firms move to Canada, the group warns. One section of the free trade agreement curtails any provincial or federal initiative to make public a service that was previously in the private sector, which would limit the ability of both governments to initiative universal public childcare.

PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT TAKES OVER OPERATIONS OF NESTLE MILK SUBSIDIARY

The Peruvian Government has taken over supervision of a local milk-processing operation owned by the Swiss-based food company Nestle SA, which has been charged with speculative hoarding of evaporated milk.

A decree in the official gazette created a commission of five Government functionaries to supervise the affairs of the Nestle subsidiary Perulac. The commission will also try to help local farmers become part owners of the milk company in an effort to improve its efficiency.

The company ... denied that the three million cans of evaporated milk found in its Lima warehouse amounted to speculative hoarding

and said Perulac had for ten years kept a month's worth of stock to ensure a constant supply to the market.

In a full-page advertisement in Lima newspapers, Perulac rejected accusations of speculation, made by President Alan Garcia, and denied that it was manipulating the market.

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INCEST SUIT

In a landmark case, a superior court in Massachusetts has ruled that a 34-year-old incest survivor may sue her father despite the fact that the incidents occurred more than fourteen years ago. The statute of limitations bars actions based on assaults three years after the event or after the victim reaches the age of eighteen. However, Judge Herbert Abrams held that the statute of limitations in this case did not begin to run until the woman discovered the link between her psychological problems and the sex abuse.

In his opinion, the court stated that: "Often it is not until adulthood that a child victim of incest abuse will begin to exhibit signs of incest trauma. Although the victim may know that she is injured, until such time as she is able to place the blame upon her abuser, it will be impossible for her to realize that her abuser's behaviour caused her psychological disorders. Often it is only through a triggering event, such as psychotherapy, that the victim is able to recognize the causal link between her abuser's incestuous conduct and her damages from incest trauma. Typically, such an awareness occurs long after the wrongful acts were committed".

The woman who brought the lawsuit was sexually abused by her father for ten years, beginning in 1973. As an adult, she has suffered anxiety attacks and a nervous breakdown. Her petition alleges negligence, incest, infliction of emotional distress, and breach of trust by a parent.

Fathers United, a father's rights group, condemned the decision, saying that incest victims should not use the court to resolve their anger because the perpetrators are victims, too.

The Incest Survivors Network in Cambridge felt the ruling would help women devastated by incest. "We want restitution, not necessarily revenge. Many survivors sue to get money for therapy, which is very costly and lasts for many years, and many survivors have trouble getting a good paying job or getting a job at all."

Massachusetts is currently considering two bills that would extend the statute of limitations in incest cases from three to ten or twenty years.

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PARENTS CAPTURE RAPIST

When police in Columbus, Ohio, USA failed to find a young woman's rapist, her parents decided that they would.

They staked out the bus stop where she was attacked with the mother acting as a decoy and the father hiding in the bushes with a gun. After a year, their night vigils finally paid off. A man who grabbed the mother one night was captured by police and identified as the "handcuff rapist".

The man, Robert Biddings, is believed to have committed more than sixty rapes over a period of four years.

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