

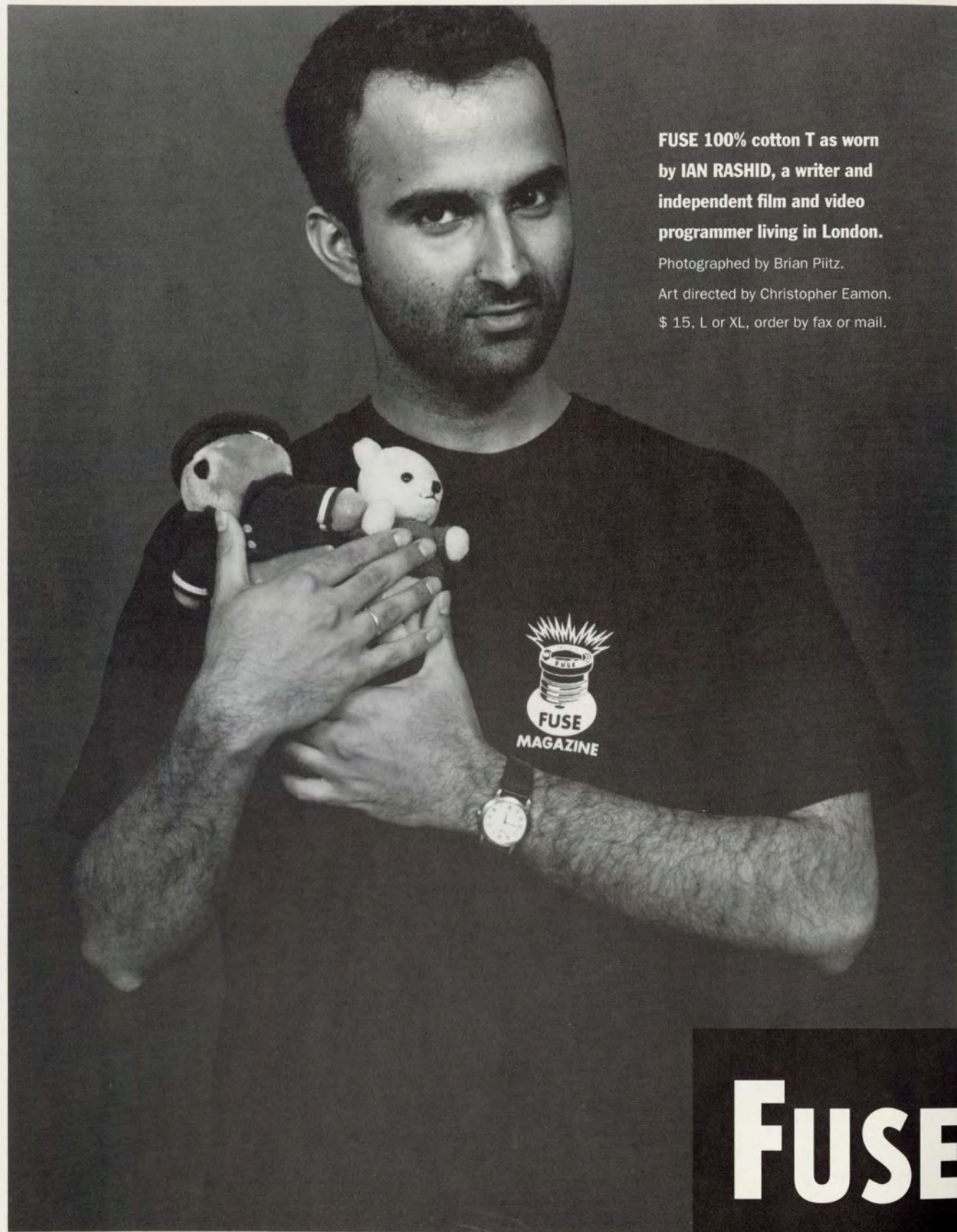
Volume 18 Number 2 \$4.50

# FUSE

MAGAZINE

THE RACIST RIGHT IN CANADA  
ANTI-RACIST ACTION FIGHTS BACK





**FUSE 100% cotton T as worn  
by IAN RASHID, a writer and  
independent film and video  
programmer living in London.**

Photographed by Brian Piitz.

Art directed by Christopher Eamon.

\$ 15, L or XL, order by fax or mail.

**FUSE**

JAN 08 - FEB 10  
**'NON SEQUITUR'**  
FAROUK KASPAULES

FEB 03, 9:00 PM  
SHAWNA DEMPSEY +  
LORRI MILLAN  
IN PERFORMANCE

FEB 17 - MAR 24  
**'SPECIOLOGY'**  
ANNE MARIE BENETEAU +  
SUSAN McEACHERN

**GALERIE SAW VIDEO**

67 NICHOLAS STREET  
OTTAWA, ONTARIO  
CANADA K1N 7B9  
(613) 236-6181

**retouch:**  
art  
gender  
technology

March 1995

**A Public Access Symposium**  
phone 416.868.1161 for information

**Heather Nicol**  
installation  
January 11 - February 4

**Steve Reinke**  
*The Hundred Videos*  
February 8 - March 11

**Ho Tam**  
painting  
February 15 - March 11

**Picture Theory**  
curated by Carol Laing  
March 22- April 15

**Millie Chen**  
*Cook and Crave*  
April 26 - May 20

Time based submissions are accepted on an ongoing basis  
Visual arts submission deadline is April 1, 1995

**YYZ Artists' Outlet**  
1087 Queen St. West  
Toronto, Canada. M6J 1H3  
tel. 416-531-7869 | fax 416-531-6839

YYZ acknowledges the support of The Canada Council; the Ontario Arts Council; the Province of Ontario, through the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation; the City of Toronto, through the Toronto Arts Council; and the Municipality of Metro Toronto, Cultural Affairs Division.

**YYZ**

Volume 18 Number 2

**Editorial Board**

Christopher Eamon, Karlene Mootoo,  
Clara Sacchetti, Marilyn Jung,  
Suzanne Methot

**Contributing Editors**

Joane Cardinal-Schubert (Calgary)  
Andrea Fatona (Vancouver)  
Clive Robertson (Montreal)  
Andrea Ward (Halifax)

**Contributors**

Yashar Essop, Jane Farrow, John Forrest,  
Min-Sook Lee, Kyo Maclear,  
John Miller, Miriam Patel, Jim Russell,  
Dionne Stephens, Karen Tisch

**Staff**

Diana Bryden (Administration),  
Petra Chevrier  
(Production and Image Research),  
Suzanne Methot (Editorial Coordination)  
Karlene Mootoo  
(Advertising and Promotion)

Thanks to Sue Young for her creative  
input and image searching,  
and to Shawn Syms for copy proofing.

**Board of Directors**

Catherine Crowston, Susan Kealey,  
Francine Perinet, Clive Robertson,  
Elizabeth Schroder, Dot Tuer

**Design**

Greg Van Alstyne & Kathleen Oginski

FUSE is published five times a year (includes one double issue) by Arton's Cultural Affairs Society and Publishing Inc., a non-profit artist's organization. Our offices are located at 183 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 2R7, tel: (416) 367-0159, fax: (416) 360-0781. All newsstand inquiries should be sent to this address. Publication mail registration No. 4455. Copyright © 1994 Arton's Publishing Inc. All rights reserved under International Copyright Union. Any reproduction without permission is prohibited. Arton's Publishing assumes no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts. Manuscripts not accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope will not be returned. Publication of an advertisement in FUSE does not include endorsement of the advertiser by the magazine. Opinions expressed outside of specifically marked editorials are not necessarily held by members of the editorial board.

FUSE acknowledges financial assistance from the Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council and the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture and Communications, and the many hours of volunteer and partially paid labour that are provided by everyone listed on our masthead.

Subscription rates: \$20 per year, Institutions \$32 per year (in Canada only). Outside Canada \$24 per year, Institutions \$47. Decisions regarding who qualifies as an individual subscriber remain the right of the publisher.

Printed in Canada on recycled, acid-free paper with vegetable-based inks by The Rewco Printing Group.

ISSN 0838-603X

FUSE is indexed in the Alternative Press Index and is a member of the Canadian Magazine Publisher's Association.

Cover: Demonstration against the Heritage Front telephone hate line, January 25, 1993.  
Photo: Left Eye.

# FUSE

MAGAZINE

# Contents

5 **Film and Video News**  
KAREN TISCH

## Columns

7 **A Gaze Blank and Pitiless as the Sun**  
JIM RUSSELL

13 **Embodying Shame and Fear**  
The Effects of Misogyny and Homophobia  
on Gay Men's Bodies  
JOHN L. MILLER

34 **Artist's Project**  
MIN-SOOK LEE

## Book Reviews

38 **Culture and Imperialism**  
Edward W. Said  
YASHAR ESSOP

40 **'We're Rooted Here and They Can't Pull Us Up'**  
**Essays in African Canadian Women's History**  
Peggy Bristow, Dionne Brand, Linda Carty, Afua Cooper,  
Sylvia Hamilton, Adrienne Shadd  
DIONNE STEPHENS

## Visual Art Reviews

42 **Yoshiko Kanai**  
Moir  
KYO MACLEAR

44 **G.B. Jones' Feminist Home Invasion**  
JANE FARROW

45 **Index**  
Volume 17

CENTRE DE DOCUMENTATION  
**ARTEXTE**  
DOCUMENTATION CENTRE



## Feature

20 **"Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold"**  
Prospects for the Racist Right in Canada  
JOHN FORREST

25 **Agitative Propaganda**  
MIRIAM PATEL

# Film and Video News



BY KAREN TISCH

## Media Colours

This fall, following a hiatus in public activities, Full Screen Coalition mounted one of its largest and most ambitious projects to date: a four day conference "addressing critical media issues faced by Aboriginal peoples and people of colour." *Media Colours*, as the event was titled, brought together a diverse group of filmmakers, video makers and specialists in a series of panel discussions, workshops and screenings. Conference highlights included *The Changing Face of Colour*, a panel that looked back to *Shooting the System* (the 1990 event that launched Full Screen) and traced the changes that have occurred in the media arts landscape since then; *Casting Blues*, a panel on improving actors' accessibility to employment; and *Colour Coordination*, a round-table discussion featuring representatives from various media arts organizations serving the Aboriginal community and communities of colour. Hands-on workshops, led by Keith Lock, Karen Tyrell and the team of Clement Virgo and Damon D'Oliveira took participants through various aspects of production management, publicity and promotion and directing and acting. The screening component of the conference included a two-part Media Colours showcase featuring a series of hot new works from Canada and the United States; *Reclaiming Our Cultural Ground*, a celebration of Aboriginal film and video; and a programme of works exploring border conflicts, partially funded by the Racial Equity Fund. Promotional screenings for *Fresh Looks* (V/Tape's anti-racist video package) and presentations by keynote speakers Anthony Sherwood, Claire Prieto and Ali Kazimi rounded out this lively event. For a copy of the Media Colours programme catalogue and/or information on Full Screen membership, please write Full Screen at 183 Bathurst Street, Suite 301, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 2R7.

## Les 5 Jours

Main Film is a Montreal-based film co-op that provides production facilities to independent filmmakers and promotes Canadian cinema through film screenings and programmes. In 1988, in recognition of the limited exhibition venues for independent films in this country, Main Film established *Les 5 Jours de Cinéma*, a bi-annual noncompetitive event that "showcases the originality, energy and variety of independent film production" in Canada. This November, Main Film presented the fourth edition of *Les 5 Jours* with an opening night screening at the Cinémathèque Québécoise and five evening programmes at the Cinéma Parallèle. As in previous years, the main component of the festival consisted of short Canadian films selected through an open call. Approximately forty artists from across the country were represented in an eclectic programme combining dramas, documentaries, animation and, most significantly, works of an experimental nature. In addition to the Canadian component, *Les 5 Jours* presented a special two-part programme of works from Light Cone, one of Europe's leading distributors of independent film. Québécoise filmmaker Paule Baillargeon (*Le sexe des étoiles*) was the guest of honour. For all those who missed this noteworthy event a catalogue containing festival listings and critical writings is still available through Main Film at 4067 boul Saint-Laurent, #303, Montreal, Quebec, H2W 1Y7.

## D Is For Dare

In 1974, following the successful release of Kathleen Shannon's eleven part *Challenge For Change* series, *Working Mothers*, the National Film Board established a three-woman unit entitled Studio D with a mandate to "bring women's perspectives to film and provide opportunities for Canadian women to work in traditionally male-dominated filmmaking positions." Since then, the studio — under the direction of founder Kathleen Shannon, her successor, Rina Fraticelli and, most recently, executive producer Ginny Stikeman — has grown immensely, working with independent filmmakers from across the country to produce over one hundred feminist films. Today, Studio D continues to thrive. In any given year, an average of nine films work their way through various stages of production, with three to four new releases hitting the screen annually. In 1994, in celebration of its twentieth anniversary, the studio adopted the motto "D Is For Dare," in commemoration of the outstanding contributions it has made in creating works that "challenge stereotypes and assumptions about women's lives." As Studio D quickly enters its third decade, *Fuse* film enthusiasts are urged to take a second glance at its impressive list of productions, including such feminist classics as *If You Love This Planet*, *Five Feminist Minutes*, *Older, Stronger, Wiser*, *Wisecracks*, *Forbidden Love: The Unashamed Story of Lesbian Lives*, *Sisters In the Struggle* and *Hands of History*.

Still from *Thick Lips Thin Lips*, Paul Lee, 16mm, 1994. Photo: Edie Steiner. Distributor: Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre.

an installation by  
**TERESA MARSHALL**  
March 3 - April 15

Opening Friday March 3, 8pm  
with performance by  
Warren R. Arcan

**DEPORTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

183 Bathurst St  
Ste 301  
Toronto, ON,  
M5T 2R7  
Tel. 416-364 3227

**A space**

Hours: Tue - Fri: 11 am - 6 pm Saturday: 12 - 5 pm  
A Space regrets that the gallery is not wheelchair accessible

**TRINITY SQUARE VIDEO**

WORKSHOPS START IN JANUARY

TOP VIDEO/FILM PROFESSIONALS WILL BE TEACHING YOU THEIR EXPERTISE AT ALL LEVELS IN STORYBOARD, SCRIPTWRITING, CAMERA, DIRECTING, SOUND AND LIGHT, EDITING AND MORE...

CALL: 593-1332  
OR COME IN AND VISIT: 772 JOHN ST., 4TH FLR. (AT QUEEN ST. W.)

WE HAVE WHAT YOU NEED FOR YOUR PROJECT

TVF IS A NON-PROFIT ARTIST-RUN CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION PROVIDING PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE TOOLS OF VIDEO PRODUCTION. WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE SUPPORT OF OUR MEMBERS, THE CANADA COUNCIL, THE ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL, THE MUNICIPALITY OF METRO TORONTO AND THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE

"Journalism that doesn't flinch."  
— Timothy Findley

For more than 28 years, *This Magazine* has been Canada's leading alternative magazine. *This* explores culture and politics, issues and ideas. Read personal essays, investigative articles, fiction and poetry by writers like Margaret Atwood, Lynn Crosbie, Linda McQuaig and Rick Salutin.

Get 1 year (eight issues) for \$23 including GST.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

Please include a cheque with the order form and mail to *This Magazine* 16 Skey Lane Toronto Ontario M6J 3S4. XFU1294

Dear reader

... thank you

for filling out our reader surveys —for taking time to give us your feedback. Your comments help us to assess our content. We really appreciate them.

If you haven't as yet filled out a survey, it's not too late!

## ARTISTS' FILM & VIDEO

ON APRIL 1, 1995, OAC'S SEPARATE FILM AND VIDEO PROGRAMS WILL EVOLVE INTO ONE — ARTISTS' FILM AND VIDEO.

■ Maintaining our commitment to providing production grants to film and video artists.

■ A broad forum that considers all forms of artistic expression: Animation, Documentary, Drama, Experimental and Installation.

■ Aimed at film and/or video artists who have completed at least one independent self-assigned film or video.

■ Three application deadlines per year: April 1, August 1, December 1.

Note: The April 1, 1995 deadline for Artists' Film and Video replaces the February 1 deadline for Video Production.

New application forms available in January 1995.

For further information, call the OAC Film, Photography, Video Office: (416) 969-7428; toll free in Ontario: 1-800-387-0058.

ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL  
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

### Where does it hurt?

Varieties of mediated and industrialized pain  
Curated by Cathy Busby

February 9 - March 26, 1995

### nanâtawihitowin – âcimowina

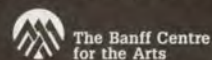
Three collaborative First Nations performances on notions of healing

Organized with Circle Vision – a First Nations Artists Service Organization and publisher of Talking Stick Magazine

March 1995

### WALTER PHILLIPS GALLERY

Box 1020-14, Banff, Alberta, Canada T0L 0C0 (403) 762-6281



Financial Support provided by the Canada Council, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts – a beneficiary of the Alberta Lotteries, Saskatchewan Lotteries and the Canadian Native Arts Foundation

## Oliphant + White

Management consultants  
Chartered accountants

Personal tax and financial planning.  
Auditing and accounting.  
Organization and feasibility studies.

With a special interest in individuals, unincorporated businesses and charitable ventures in the arts and creative fields, social services and advocacy.

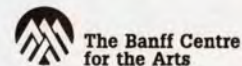
37 Amelia Street, Toronto, Ontario M4X 1E3  
Telephone (416) 968-1718  
Fax (416) 925-8269

## BANFF

The Banff Centre for the Arts invites media and visual artists, television and film producers, technicians, researchers, critics/writers/curators and other cultural sector workers to apply for:

- ◆ creative residencies
- ◆ co-productions and new works projects
- ◆ work study opportunities

Facilities: ceramics, mixed media, multimedia and computer arts, network art, paper media, textiles, performance art, photography, print media, sculpture, 16mm film editing, 2D, 3D.



For further information contact:  
Office of the Registrar  
The Banff Centre  
Box 1020-28  
Banff, Alta  
Canada T0L 0C0

Tel: (403) 762-6180  
Fax: (403) 762-6345

Application Deadlines for 95/96 in Media and Visual Arts: February 1995

## A Gaze Blank and Pitiless as the Sun

by Jim Russell

Regular readers of *Fuse Magazine* will be familiar with the continuing and far from concluded saga of Christopher Lefler, the fine arts student in Saskatchewan who has been ostracized by both the provincial government and the mainstream media.

The range and severity of the punishments meted out to Mr. Lefler by some of the province's most powerful institutions are frightening by any standard: he has had art work confiscated and removed from exhibition by authorities at the University of Saskatchewan; he has been expelled from the university and has been denied access to university property; and, perhaps most surprisingly, he has been stripped of a provincial Arts Board scholarship. Succumbing to political and public pressures aligned against Mr. Lefler, the Arts Board has made provincial history by reversing, for the first time ever, the decision of its own peer jury to award him a grant.

But the outpouring of righteous indignation does not stop here. The local media have raised barely a whimper in his defence and have, for all intents and purposes, accepted the official assessment that he has behaved in a manner that is "offensive and reprehensible." The *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, for instance, in a June 23, 1994, editorial, expressed concern over

**The local media have accepted the official assessment that he has behaved in a manner that is "offensive and reprehensible."**

the Arts Board's decision to rescind Mr. Lefler's grant as a "worrying precedent," but then went on to endorse the decision as appropriate in the circumstances. By July 23, 1994, the paper was reporting the information given in Arts Board communiqués as irrefutable fact and was assuring an incredulous public that the Lefler debacle "could make the 45-year-old arts board [sic] stronger."

Within the province's arts and gay communities (Mr. Lefler is a gay activist as well as an artist), the Lefler fracas has been divisive and he has incurred the obloquy of many of his peers who fear widespread reprisals for his actions. As subsequent events have shown, these fears are not groundless. But

Mr. Lefler persists and, at the time of writing, his case against the university and the Arts Board is being considered by the provincial Human Rights Commission.

This general condemnation of Christopher Lefler would be incomprehensible to anyone unfamiliar with the pervasive pall of parochial conservatism and homophobic superstition that still hangs over much of Saskatchewan. For the main complaint against this young student is that, as part of his artistic exploration of public and private dimensions, he exhibited an exchange of correspondence which drew attention to the sexual orientation of Sylvia Fedoruk, the province's then lieutenant governor.

Those who have dealt so severely with Mr. Lefler have been careful to ensure that the public does not receive the information it needs to make up its own mind about his art and his gay activism. Instead the public information that has been made available suggests both misplaced good intentions and a blatant act of collective censorship aimed at enforcing anachronistic values and networks. Mr. Lefler's personal fate and the suspension of democratic principles by those dealing with him have had a discouraging effect upon the academic and artistic communities within the province.

In order to justify their actions, the university, the Arts Board and the government have raised two arguments: the first alleges that what Christopher Lefler intended to do by drawing attention to the sexual orientation of a prominent public figure was illegal; the other says that, even if it was not illegal, it was offensive and should not be done with public money. The media have been derelict in their duty by failing to examine these assertions closely and have thereby occluded public debate on important matters of principle.

On May 17, 1994, *Hansard* shows that the issue of the Lefler Arts Board grant came up in the provincial legislature. In response to a question from Tory MLA Rick Swenson, Carol Carson (the minister responsible for the Arts Board) asserted that "the Government does not interfere, it has never interfered, in the application of the funds for the Arts Board grants; we don't intend to do it now." Yet, a mere two days later, in a letter to Wayne Schmaltz, the then chairman of the Arts Board, she asked that the Board "review and reconsider the grant to



Christopher Lefler performing *The Wedding: Closet* on the way into his disciplinary hearing at the University of Saskatchewan. Lefler is "in the closet," in which he says the university forces gays and lesbians to stay. Courtesy of The Star Phoenix.

Mr. Lefler." In her letter to Mr. Schmalz, she concluded with the following:

Does Mr. Lefler, under the name of art, have the right to exploit someone else's personal life, without his or her consent, in order to advance his own particular cause or crusade? Furthermore, should this person receive public funds to do this?... I ask the Board to seriously consider the legal implications and the public consequences of Mr. Lefler's application for public funds.

It was these vague "legal implications" that the Arts Board eventually cited as its pretext for reversing the peer jury decision to award a grant to Mr. Lefler. The Board opted to go for breach of privacy and, in a letter to the board of directors of CARFAC Saskatchewan (Canadian Artists' Representation/ *Le front des artistes canadiens*) dated July 6, 1994, Wayne Schmalz confirmed that "the Board was *more than satisfied* [emphasis added] with the artistic merit of Mr. Lefler's work," but that following a "careful review of The Privacy Act of Saskatchewan, the Board had reasonable grounds for believing Mr. Lefler's work may be unlawful."

The university, earlier in the year, had also used the spectre of legal liability to justify its actions against Mr. Lefler. Besides announcing that his "offensive" exhibit at the Snelgrove Gallery on campus did not "constitute art in any sense of the word," the University claimed that it was "potentially libelous."<sup>1</sup>

Despite requests for further elaboration, neither the government, the university nor the Arts Board has offered any explanation or authority for the proposition that drawing attention to the sexual orientation of a prominent public figure poses a legal risk. No one has dared to say that Mr. Lefler's art is definitely unlawful. Each institution has hidden behind the ruse that his work is "possibly" or "potentially" illegal. Suspicious also is the fact that the Arts Board was not troubled by possible libel issues, and the university emphasized libel rather than breach of privacy to justify its actions. The legal talent at the disposal of the government, the university and the board would be unlikely to overlook alternative legal grounds, particularly when the credibility of each institution was at stake. The suggested legal justifications appear to be entirely spurious.

At the time the Arts Board decided to revoke Mr. Lefler's grant in the spring of 1994, privacy was not an issue. Allegations of lesbianism against Sylvia Fedoruk were circulating widely within the province and references to them had already appeared in print.<sup>2</sup> But even if the accusations had not been so widely known, the "outing" of a prominent public figure is not a breach of privacy under either Canadian or U.S. law. In the United States, First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech protect the dissemination

of such information. In Canada, where constitutional protections for freedom of expression have less pre-eminence in the public mind, so that privacy arguments have more credence, there is no common law right to privacy as such and, in the four provinces where legislation has been enacted to create a statutory tort known as breach of privacy,<sup>3</sup>

## The "outing" of a prominent public figure is not a breach of privacy under either Canadian or U.S. law

the statutes have remained, for all intents and purposes, dead letters.

The reasons for this are both simple and appropriate in a democratic society, particularly when a public figure is involved. As a general concept, privacy is impossible to delineate with the certainty required to make laws dealing with it both workable and just. Canadian judges are well aware of how nebulous prohibitions can be used to stifle public debate and frustrate accountability, and their decisions in the few breach of privacy actions that have been undertaken in our courts reflect their distaste for the inadequacies of the legislation. All reported attempts to use the privacy acts appear to have failed.

The suggestion of possible "libelous" implications is equally bogus. To be libelous, or defamatory, under Canadian law, a published statement must be false and must bring someone into "hatred, ridicule or contempt, or tend to lower the plaintiff in the estimation of right-minded members of society generally."<sup>4</sup> It is easy enough to dredge up historical cases where allegations of lesbianism have been held to be defamatory. For instance, in the old English decision of *Kerr v. Kennedy* (1942),<sup>5</sup> Asquith J. asserted that an accusation of "unnatural relations with other women" was even more abhorrent than an imputation of adultery or fornication. But, as the antiquated language of this case suggests, our courts are always alive to changes in community standards and have insisted that we must consider "the temper of the times" in determining whether a statement is likely to be taken as defamatory by "right-thinking people." In 1977, a U.S. court refused to treat an imputation of homosexuality against a male as being slanderous<sup>6</sup> and, as Raymond Brown has claimed in a leading Canadian text on the law of defamation, "with the dramatic changes in attitudes regarding homosexuality during the past decade, it is difficult to envision any proliferation of decisions in favour of the Asquith view."<sup>7</sup> The absence of recent cases alleging that imputations of homosexuality are libelous attests to this position. Moreover, in a day and age

when "right-thinking" members of society support legislation that outlaws discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, it is difficult to see how they could, at the same time, hate or feel contempt or ridicule for someone who happens to be lesbian. And there is certainly no case law to support such a far-fetched notion.

As long ago as 1964, U.S. courts refused altogether to entertain libel suits in cases involving public officials unless the libel was published with knowledge of its falsity, or with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity.<sup>8</sup> The justification for this is based on the idea that debate on public issues should remain uninhibited. Canadian courts have yet to go this far in stated policy, but a concern for the preservation of open debate on public issues is nevertheless rigorously supported.

There is a recurring tendency by those in power to label the merely embarrassing and inconvenient as illegal for purposes of ensuring it never sees the light of day. Mr. Lefler may well have offended establishment sensibilities, including those of many of the provincial arts community, but to suggest that he was intent on breaking the law is a travesty of logic and legal authority.

Attempts to excuse the punishments imposed upon Christopher Lefler as being justifiable because his actions were "offensive and reprehensible," are equally difficult to reconcile with democratic principles and generally accepted notions of social comity. First of all, Mr. Lefler's focus upon Sylvia Fedoruk was neither arbitrary nor pernicious. She first aroused his interest in December 1992 when, in her capacity as lieutenant governor, she accepted an invitation to speak at a "Day Without Art" ceremony on the University campus. Mr. Lefler took offence at this and wished to make his concerns known to the public; he alleged that she had benefited from her closeted status and had thereby increased the suffering of gay PWAs by demonstrating, at least tacitly, support for the homophobic political and social biases of those who controlled their destiny.

Whatever one thinks of the merits of this argument as applied to Sylvia Fedoruk, it cannot be dismissed out of hand and is a matter of public interest that deserves to be heard and debated in a forthright manner. Yet few people raised any objection to the official line, the one taken by the minister when she said that Mr. Lefler had "no right to exploit someone's personal life, without his or her consent, in order to advance his own particular cause or crusade."<sup>9</sup> This statement not only begs a host of questions about whether a reference to the sexual orientation of a public figure exploits that person's "personal life," or whether Mr. Lefler, in seeking to remove prejudice against gays and to alleviate the suffering of those

smitten with AIDS, is thereby engaged on a "personal crusade..."; it is also patently absurd when measured against current social practices and norms.

Quite apart from the plausible arguments that have been made time and again to the effect that sexual identity is not a private matter, a public figure's homosexuality will remain both material and newsworthy as long as sexual orientation matters politically. In fact, in our society there really is no such thing as a public disclosure of private facts for public officials and figures. This is why the acceptance of public office necessarily brings with it "the risk of less privacy as part of the bargain for fame and influence."<sup>10</sup>

We are fed a constant daily diet of personal — even intimate — details from the lives of royalty, public dignitaries, politicians and the merely rich and famous for no better reason than to satisfy public prurience and boost media profits. How can Mr. Lefler, then, be said to have offended against accepted social norms when, in his case, he was certainly intent upon a much more worthy objective than merely pandering to the public's chronic voyeurism?

Those Saskatchewan institutions that have dealt so severely with Mr. Lefler do not seem to have exercised much consideration for prevailing social practices; the end result of their actions has been to encourage the preservation of an outmoded view of who is fit for public office. No matter how well-intentioned, their actions have left the impression that, for the University, the Arts Board, the media, and the Government of Saskatchewan, homosexual orientation remains a matter for personal shame that reflects badly upon public dignitaries who happen to be inclined that way. This, of course, is precisely Mr. Lefler's point. These institutions have no right to leave the public with this impression and they can hardly discharge their publicly funded obligations to all groups within the community as long as they encourage such antiquated assumptions.

In the context of arts funding, there is general acceptance of the principle that the "power that government has to control the speech it funds is never less than the power it would already have to control that same speech in the general market place."<sup>11</sup> All this amounts to is an acceptance of the rule of law as part of the granting process. But the rule of law also demands recognition of the necessary corollary that government power should never be more than it is in the open market.

There is something profoundly disturbing in a government seeking to abrogate constitutionally guaranteed freedoms in ways not proscribed by law for the ostensible purpose of upholding ill-defined and dubious community standards. Quite apart from the issue of what standards should be applied, governments are necessarily partisan and favour

political expediency over principle, thus ensuring that only self-serving prohibitions will be applied. The democratic process necessitates the encouragement of minority (even unpopular) opinions, quite apart from those that merely offend anachronistic political biases, as in the Christopher Lefler case.

Carol Carson knew this when, in her May 17 letter to the Arts Board, she felt the need to pay lip service to the principle that "a major tenet of democracy is that any person has the right to express him/herself to the extent that it does not cause harm to another's life and personal well-being." No explanation has ever been offered as to how Christopher Lefler was, through his art, causing or even attempting to cause harm to another's life and personal well-being. Hence, the decision to seek the revocation of a grant for work that, by the Arts Board's own admission, had merit of which "it was more than satisfied," looks like an act of political expediency and partisan interference committed at the public's expense. In short it is an attempt to do indirectly what the law does not allow the government to do directly: curtail speech and open debate that is perfectly legal. It was an exercise in what North American jurisprudence has come to call "viewpoint discrimination," or discrimination based upon the message of the speaker.

Because our society recognizes that government largesse must be insulated from political influence, decisions on arts funding are routinely left to the discretion of professionals in the field. The peer jury system set up under the Saskatchewan Arts Board Act and Regulations is a typical legislative embodiment of the principle that, in judging what should receive public money, professional experience and common sense are far better gauges of political and social tolerance than politicians and their Arts Board lackeys. The peer jury system may not be perfect or entirely neutral, even in a political sense, but it is the only way to ensure that the government of the day remains impartial on arts funding and that public money is not administered in a manner that discriminates against particular groups within the community. The decision of the Government of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Arts Board to depart from this principle in the case of Christopher Lefler does not augur well for the province. And, the draconian treatment of Mr. Lefler has not only dramatized starkly some of the narrow affiliations of the Saskatchewan government and the other provincial institutions involved, it has also had a depressing effect upon those groups in the province most concerned with freedom of expression and minority rights.

The gay and academic communities have maintained a studied silence throughout this ordeal.

Private misgivings have not translated into public action and debate. These groups fear what might be "vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle." Meanwhile, the local media continues its intermittent and desultory reportage, ignoring fundamental issues, and portraying Christopher Lefler as some kind of curious gay gadfly doing the rounds in the provincial farmyard.

The artist's organizations, on the other hand, have demonstrated a much deeper awareness of what is at stake and have been vociferous in their complaints. Upon hearing of Carol Carson's request for a review of the Lefler grant, the Saskatchewan Writers Guild issued an immediate news release<sup>12</sup> condemning the government's interference and any attempt by a "government-appointed Board" to revoke a peer jury's decision. The guild pointed out that this would "set a dangerous precedent." The warning fell on deaf ears, but the guild has continued to express its disapproval.

Both CARFAC Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Arts Alliance have badgered the Arts Board and the minister with their concerns. This action culminated in open letters from both organizations to the minister and the Board requesting a reaffirmation of the "arm's length" principle and information that would shed light on the Lefler affair. Needless to say, these requests have elicited little more than pat answers and platitudinous reassurances that have convinced no one. The Arts Board has continued to insist that it acted out of

## The gay and academic communities have maintained a studied silence throughout this ordeal

concern for the legality of Mr. Lefler's work. This is hard to reconcile with the actions of some of its own members.

In particular, soon after the revocation of Mr. Lefler's grant, George Glenn, a trusted member of the provincial arts community, resigned his position on the Board. In his letter of resignation (addressed to the minister but made available, on request, to clients of the Arts Board), he made it quite clear that "power is at the heart of this crisis":

I believe that your responses to the Lefler grant application have intensified a serious issue to the point of crisis. You have publicly undermined the credibility of this Board with what I believe to be unfounded comments.

As regards the legal issues cited by the Board, Glenn had this to say:

It was also my opinion that citing legal reasons for

withdrawing the grant silenced discussion of the issue and in combination with events leading up to the review would raise questions about the Board's arm's length relationship to government.

He should know; he was there.

Besides engendering a climate of fear and mistrust in the arts community, the treatment of Mr. Lefler has given rise to jubilation and hope in other circles. PC MLA Dan d'Autremont (Souris-Cannington) and the Progressive Conservative caucus — self-professed "fiscally responsible Philistines" and political scions of the most fiscally profligate government in the history of the province (they see no irony in this) — have called for an end to government funding for individual artists. An August 31, 1994 press release from the Tory caucus cited various examples of objectionable recent awards, including a \$9,000 grant for a "an installation called 'Gaynada' about a fictitious nation where all citizens are gay."

The I'm-a-redneck-and-proud-of-it movement sweeping Alberta with its bumper-sticker jingoism has a growing number of adherents in Saskatchewan who now feel encouraged by the Lefler case to attack both gays and artists in the name of "community standards" and "fiscal responsibility": "And what rough beast, its hour come around at last...?"

*Jim Russell practices law in Saskatoon and lectures at the College of Law, University of Saskatchewan. He specializes in arts and media issues.*

### Notes

1. See: "Fear and Loathing on the Prairie," Brett Joseph Grubisic and Bryan K. Young, *Fuse Magazine* (Spring 1994), vol. 17, no. 3, p. 10.

2. See, for instance, the University of Victoria's *The Marlatt* (20 January 1994), p. 8.

3. Privacy Acts presently exist in British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Saskatchewan.

4. This is the definition derived from *MacKay v. Southam Co. Ltd.* (1955), 1 D.L.R. (2d), 1 at 9 (D.C.C.A.), per Davey J.A. and approved and quoted extensively in subsequent case law.

5. [1942] 1 K.B. 409.

6. *Maricoll v. Schwartz*, 46 111 App. 3d 481.

7. Raymond E. Brown, *The Law of Defamation in Canada*, vol. 1 (Carswell, 1987), p. 346.

8. *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan*, 376 U.S.A. 254 (1964).

9. Letter from Carol Carson, Minister of Government, to Wayne Schmaltz, Chairman of Saskatchewan Arts Board (9 May 1994).

10. Rodney A. Smolla, *Free Speech in an Open Society* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), p. 135.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 178.

12. See: "Writers Support Arts Board Jury System," *News Release of Saskatchewan Writers Guild* (31 May 1994).

# Embodying Shame and Fear

## The Effects of Misogyny and Homophobia on Gay Men's Bodies

by John L. Miller

I can remember when I first started to look at my body and wish it were different — it was about the same time I realized I was attracted to men. Before puberty, before I came out and before I became sexually active, there was an awareness that my body was not what I wanted it to be, and that I wanted to change it. I did not think I was an ugly child. Nor did

I hear those messages from my parents. But for reasons I did not understand then, I was unhappy with my thin and wiry body. Although I look different now, partly due to age, and partly due to conscious effort, the image of myself as a skinny child still haunts me when I look in the mirror.

I have noticed a change in the gay communities over the last fifteen years. Clothes, aesthetics and image are still important, but the body itself is becoming the focal point for gay men's efforts to improve our self-esteem. The implications are disturbing. They raise complex issues for us as a community trying to fight oppression while trying to expand sexual boundaries.

Interviewing gay men has been crucial to my understanding of the complexity of the issues involved, and has provided the basis from which I have developed this analysis.<sup>1</sup> In conducting them, I was surprised to discover how much gay men think about these issues, yet how seldom we discuss them amongst ourselves.<sup>2</sup>

Misogyny and homophobia are deeply affecting gay men. These problems are societal, and are complicated by oppression based on race, class, ability, religion and age. We in the gay community unfortunately also play our part in perpetuating the anxieties about how we look. Even when we struggle against oppression in personal, collective, and public ways, it can hit us on the most intimate level — at the level of the body.<sup>3</sup>

### Misogyny, Homophobia and the Body

Gay men are striving to change their bodies in greater numbers than ever before. The method — lifting weights, dieting and exercising — seems straightforward and healthy. All around us there are examples of men who seem to have approached the ideal. They are muscular and fit-looking, and most of them are considered very attractive. What few have remarked is that our motivation to pursue this ideal is a massive cultural response to the sexual and physical feminization of gay men's bodies by a misogynist and homophobic society.

The messages of our childhood were loud and clear. They were negative messages about gay men and lesbians, and about women and femininity. As Suzanne Pharr writes, homophobia comes from misogyny; it takes social prescriptions of feminine behaviour and characteristics and ascribes negative value to femininity by associating it with weakness.<sup>3</sup> It then punishes men who sleep with men or men who don't conform. It does so by connecting their behaviour (sexual and physical) to femininity, and, by association, to weakness. In addition, homophobia packages the message with shame. It tells those people: not only are you behaving like a woman (weak), but by doing so, you are also behaving abnormally.

Lesbians, feminists and any women who behave assertively are similarly threatened through homophobia. It is used as a weapon against those women who challenge notions of feminine behaviour by their choice of sexual partners, their politics or their very appearance.

The threat of severe social sanctions is deeply embedded in the psyches of all men and women. Gay people are told that we embody the negative attributes and thus the shame associated with this type of non-conformity. Everyone can see how those of us who dare to claim our identities as gay men or lesbians are singled out and held up as examples.

Misogynist and homophobic mechanisms in our society, sometimes subtle and sometimes blatant, are sexually and physically feminizing gay men. Whenever it is intimated that our sexual behaviour and desires are like those of women, gay men are sexually feminized. Whenever it is intimated that gay men's bodies, by virtue of our physical and/or sexual behaviour, are like women's,



Dying Slave, Michelangelo, Louvre, Paris.



we are physically feminized.

Although the ways in which gay men are feminized are separated in this article, our physical and sexual beings are closely connected. This becomes obvious when we see how gay men view their bodies in response to these forces, and how many of us are responding by trying to change them.

Sexual feminization affects us because it is through

sex that we are differentiated from straight people. Sexually, gay men are associated with women because they are closely associated with anal intercourse. Supposedly using our bodies like women, we physically cross the gender line.

The same bias normally used against women's bodies is now used against gay men's. We are not just acting sexually unlike men, we are doing something even worse. We are acting sexually *like women*. The negative, male-defined attributes associated with femininity, and exemplified by receptive intercourse, are transferred to gay men's bodies.

The effects can be seen in the fears gay men have about sexual attractiveness, in the ways we react to what kind of men society eroticizes, in the kind of men the gay community is in turn eroticizing, and in the way gay men are reacting to the stigmatization of AIDS and HIV.

Physical feminization affects us because it challenges the invisibility of homosexuality. Gay men's bodies are said to be innately at risk of being "feminine." In response, many have taken this as a challenge to disprove a stereotype by trying to change our bodies. The effects of physical feminization can be seen in the anxieties gay men have of being either too fat or too thin, in the fear of homophobic violence, and in the ways that we are responding to these fears by refocusing them inwards on our own bodies.

We are attempting to achieve an ideal which will disprove what others have said about us. We are not weak, and we are not ashamed, despite what we do in bed and in public. But is that ideal achievable? Can personal, political and cultural emancipation come from changing our physical bodies? Or are we entrenching sexism and homophobia by trying to liberate ourselves?

### Proving That We Are Still Men

Gay men are subtly being told, in the media and in the workplace, that we need to assert our masculinity. The connection between establishment self-interest and the physical appearance of women is made quite clear in Naomi Wolf's *The Beauty Myth*.<sup>4</sup> She explains how society is reinforcing female subordination even as women enter new fields of achievement. As a reaction to these achievements, society tries to entrench the status quo by placing more and more emphasis on traditional notions of feminine beauty.

In Western cultures, gay men have also gained more rights. The world is now saying to us: if you want to make it, and you insist on proclaiming your sexual identity, then you had better prove to us that you are really men. It is no accident that the virility of physical strength associated with working class labourers is being flaunted by the straight-identified media in advertising targeted at the gay community. A stereotyping of a sexuality based on race and class serves a real materialist purpose.

Mainstream homoerotic marketing (aimed at the gay middle class) influences us to focus on physical characteristics at the expense of other personal and political battles which might help "out" gays to break into arenas held by straight white men. Many gay men are working twice as hard as their straight-identified counterparts to prove that they are bigger, better, and stronger (less feminine). Gay men are running on a hamster wheel. The effort expended is exhausting, and not without significant cost.

### Reacting to Physical Feminization

In European and Anglo-Saxon-influenced societies, thin men are emasculated and feminized. Thinness is associated either with bookishness or with sickness, and these are not qualities generally associated with masculine virility. As this ideal of masculine virility requires some demonstration of physical strength, thin men are under tremendous pressure to prove they are not weak.

Men who are seen as fat suffer a similar fate. A homophobic society feminizes large men by associating their weight with weakness and sloth. Carla Rice, a counsellor and academic specializing in women and body image, believes that large boys experience their weight as the focus of homophobic comments. This often drives them to view fat as something they have to exorcise from their bodies later in life.



Sculpture models, Michelangelo.



Don is a white gay activist and academic in his early thirties. He told me that when he was a child he had a thin body, but had rolls of fat around his belly. He remembers bunching up the fat, looking at it, and feeling disgusted with himself. Paradoxically, Don felt he was both too fat and too thin at the same time. Now that he has lost his baby fat, he wants to put on muscle because he thinks he is too thin.

Mike is a tall, muscular, white man in his twenties. He was motivated to put on muscle mass as soon as he came out as a gay man:

I started working out to gain weight. The bigger I got, the more positive reinforcement I got from the gay community. It reached a

point where I wondered — who was I doing it for?

Mike was exercising for hours every day, but was fighting his naturally slim body size and an extremely high metabolism. To keep up, he had to eat an enormous amount of food. Eventually he had to cut back on his exercise because his grocery bills became so high he could no longer afford it.

As gay-bashing is on the rise, some gay men are responding to the threat of violence by trying to change their bodies. Women have always had to worry about physical and sexual violence on the streets and in the home. Gay men are now identifying with this fear.

"This is why I go to the gym," David Drake explains to us during a monologue in his hit New York play *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me*. Drake talked about the fears that gay men have, not only about emotional security, but about real physical safety. As Josh put it:

There is an element of that in why I exercise. I like to feel as though I could fight back, or that I could run away. I know that feeling "in" my body makes me feel like I can be more confident walking down the street, and that maybe I won't be bashed.

Only half of the men in this article felt that fears of violence affected their body image, and none had thought of it consciously until I suggested it. Interestingly, these five were the men who most regularly wear gay-identified clothing or accessories in public. This may suggest that wanting to look bigger has less to do with trying to pass as straight than it does with trying to look more physically imposing *because they are identifiably gay*. We know that stepping outside of our gender roles can provoke a violent response. So we try to balance the visual cues with a visual threat.

### Reacting to Sexual Feminization

Socialization clearly influences what kind of men we are attracted to. It is a process which begins in childhood and is reinforced by complex media images. The issue of to whom we are attracted, and how we relate this to what we think will make us attractive to others, is a difficult one for gay men to resolve.

Most of the men that I interviewed indicated that sex and sexual attractiveness play key roles in influencing a gay man's view of his own body. The gay ideal of virility in North America is a play on straight, working class English and American culture. Gay butch is distinguishable from straight butch in that gay butch is not only sexually provocative, but also politically provocative. Nevertheless, its origins in a straight aesthetic, and what the straight world eroticizes, are obvious.

The male body that the straight world eroticizes is becoming more and more important to gay men. Clothing can hide whether or not one actually has the body of a physical labourer but since we usually undress for sex, achieving this image ultimately requires more than shopping at Mark's Work Warehouse.

To much of the world, being gay equals receptive anal intercourse. As out, proud, gay men, we can reclaim the joys of anal sex, but if we look big, we disprove the accompanying image of feminine passivity. In this respect, the connection between physical and sexual feminization is clear. Gay men across North America are now teasing the world with their bodies. We are saying: Sure, I might be a bottom, but I look like a top, don't I?

Brett is a white gay man working as an AIDS counsellor. He told me candidly that preoccupation about his looks was the major unresolved issue in his life. Brett started lifting weights when he came back to Toronto after spending several years in England. He was attracted by the roughness of British working class masculinity, objectified and glorified by the straight-identified media. When he came back to Toronto, the men who turned him on not only adopted those images, but were all more muscular than he was:

I started working out purely for sexual reasons. I wanted to be able to sleep with those men, and those men seemed to be also looking for bigger guys.

Mike also recognizes that there were sexual incentives to working out. In retrospect, he can see that he began working out to fit in, and to disprove the stereotype of "wimpy" gay men. However, he was also trying to achieve what the gay community prizes sexually.

Both Brett's and Mike's observations raise an interesting issue: not all the sexual socialization is being done by others. Gay men also play a part in



the equation, through our social interactions and through the erotic images produced by and for the gay community.

**Who "We" Eroticize and How It Affects Us**

"Open up Toronto's XTRA! The message is: 'If you look like this, you'll get laid,'" says Jonathan. And many of the men whom I interviewed said that this is simply a reality.

Jonathan is a white, twenty-three year-old student who has a slim, boyish build. He believes that some people change their bodies to throw off a painful past, and to reclaim their sexuality. What they see as an improvement on their bodies actually allows them to feel more sexual. He says he does not feel the same pressures on his body that many of his friends do. He attributes this partly to having a lower sex drive, but also to the fact that he fits a certain "type" (looking boyish) desired in the gay community, even if it happens not to be the most prevalent one.

This sentiment is echoed by Martin, a blond, fair-

skinned twenty-six-year-old who also looks boyish. We spoke about sex and how it affects our self-esteem. He told me that his own self-esteem and body image have been reinforced by often having had men pursue him. However, now that he is losing his hair, he worries that this will change, and wonders if he will feel more pressure to lift weights.

The idea that there are different eroticized "types" in the gay community may seem simplistic. Sexual attraction is obviously complex, and not confined to strict characteristics. However, there are at least four body types in North American gay communities which are eroticized:

- 1) the "hard-body" (with Tom of Finland's exaggerated drawings held up as the ideal)
- 2) the "boy" (young-looking and generally hairless)
- 3) the "daddy" (older, tough-looking father figures)
- 4) the "bear" (mostly heavier, with body hair)

Peter is an AIDS counsellor in his mid-thirties, of British descent, and has a husky build. He told me that when he came out fifteen years ago he looked very boyish. Putting on some weight has not affected how much sexual attention he gets. He agreed that being classified as a "bear" helps. Even so, he still feels the tremendous social pressures against heavier men.

Men who fit any one of these categories find that the sexual rewards positively affect their self-esteem. For many of us, how often we have sex affects the extent to which we are preoccupied with changing or maintaining our weight or appearance.

Josh did not begin trying to gain a more muscular build for sexual reasons, but noticed that there were sexual rewards which motivated him to continue:

I didn't fit into any type — I never looked boyish, but I also wasn't built. I never considered myself unattractive per se, but I know that men I was attracted to used to look right past me. They don't any more. I enjoy the sex life I have because of the body I now have.

He finds it difficult to discount working out as superficial because he links his change in body to a discovery of important parts of his sexuality.

Brett admits that he is absolutely "terrified" of losing the body he now has, and is not sure where that feeling comes from. He says it has reached the point where he has found himself thinking about the length of his vacation in terms of how long it will be before his body starts to lose its muscle mass.

The pressure to conform to one of these types, but primarily to be muscular and forever young, can be extremely oppressive. It taps into our fears about masculinity and sexual desirability. Preoccupation of this type may appear superficial, but it can be related to a deep-seated insecurity.

The media images of these types have one thing

in common. They are mostly of white men. Robert is a lawyer whose family moved to Vancouver from Africa when he was a child. When he first came out in Vancouver, the thought of sleeping with someone who wasn't white was foreign to him. He was constantly afraid that his sexual partners would be racist. As a result, he worried about the colour of his skin and the shape of his nose. It has taken him a long time to work through his discomfort.

Gary is a gay activist of South Asian origin whose family moved to Toronto when he was a baby. When Gary came out in high school, his concerns about his body were different from what they are now:

When I came out, I was getting sex constantly because I fit the boyish type. People commented on how great my body was, but I wasn't working out. I was thinner and had a very smooth complexion...

Now he works out for health reasons, but wonders whether it is also because of internalized racism. Gary remembers that as a child, he wished he were white:

Culturally, most South Asian men have round bellies, but I can't seem to get that image of [Michelangelo's] David out of my mind.

The question of who we are attracted to, and how we make ourselves attractive to others is obviously complex. Some of the men I spoke with do not believe it is a problem. They refuse to attach politics to what is personal choice. Most agree that they wish the erotic images available to us were more diverse, and that more imagination were put into producing them. But they also confess that they would not necessarily want to see the *Colt* models disappear.

**Hiding, Denying or Disproving Illness**

Health and sexuality are inextricably linked. Unfortunately, the homophobic backlash surrounding AIDS has made this very clear to the gay and lesbian communities. In *Illness as Metaphor* and *AIDS and its Metaphors*, Susan Sontag discusses the ways in which AIDS and other illnesses become the focus for societal insecurities and fears. In Western countries, AIDS has been transformed symbolically into a punishment for the sins of anal intercourse between men.

Perceived as having behaved sexually like women, gay men's bodies have been depicted as carriers of the disease. As such, we are once again being viewed as vessels of weakness, and of course, of sickness — in both its physical and moral sense. Thinness, when associated with identifiably gay men, suddenly has taken on an entirely new meaning.

Brett, Peter, Gary and Don, all AIDS counsellors or activists, linked HIV to preoccupation with body weight, shape and size for both HIV-negative and HIV-positive gay men. "The day he tested positive was the day he started lifting weights," said Brett of one gay man he knows. Looking bigger, in addition to the very real health benefits of moderate physical exercise, gives many HIV-positive men a sense of security and confidence. And it sends people a message that they are both healthy and sexual.

All four men recognize that the immune system can be strengthened by building positive self-esteem. Lifting weights is one way to achieve this feeling. But they are concerned about the danger of

overemphasizing this. Focusing primarily on building bulk will not provide the physiological benefits of cross-training.

Peter worries that some of his clients have a false sense of security from being physically more "built" — that this alone will somehow protect them from acquiring opportunistic infections or other STDs. And as Brett points out, if you lift weights to appear healthy to others, the pressure to continue is enormous. If you stop lifting, you will lose the weight and people might interpret the weight loss as Wasting Syndrome.

**Complex Challenges**

The issues I have raised introduce a new twist to the long-standing pursuit of masculinity in the gay community. By the late '60s, dominant North-American gay culture had already

begun to exhibit its own expression of masculinity which it derived from straight men. Eroticizing the "Castro clone," the jock and the leatherman has a history in our community which pre-dates the last fifteen years.

Gay butch should not be dismissed simplistically as a manifestation of internalized homophobia. To do so does not give enough credit to the complexity of gay role-playing. But one cannot ignore the significance of the real shift, over the last fifteen years, in the kind of images which are eroticized in gay publications and porn.

If one judged the sexuality of gay men today from looking at gay media, one could conclude that a hard, white, young body is the only thing which is desirable. Gay porn has always promoted a narrow and racist expression of masculinity. But never before have the images been so "hard-body" focused, as if that body were the only conveyor of the erotic. It is now rare to see images of older men, or sexual images which convey complex erotic cues.

Clearly, there are trends discussed in this article which have their positive side. The real physical benefits of moderate exercise have an impact on our mental health. Health clubs offer gay men an alternative to the bars and this has brought a lot of people out of social isolation. Nonetheless, the anxieties expressed by the men in this article are real and destructive.

Gay men seem to be caught in a trap between oppressor and oppressed. We are unfortunately both subjects and objects in a process which we did not start, and which is also not entirely within our control. Because we are gay, we may be trapped by the connection between misogyny and homophobia, but as men, we continue to benefit from these systems of oppression.

There is a hierarchy of power in our society. People have more or less of it depending on their sex, race, class, sexual identity, religion, ability, age, and body type. As men, gay males should not be absolved from addressing oppression by challenging our own biases. If there is any hope of our escaping the effects of these systems on our bodies and our lives, it will be first through our acknowledgment of our privilege as men.

The challenges facing gay men of the '90s are personal *and* political. At the personal level, what turns us on does not have to make us feel guilty. Challenging ourselves about these issues does not mean stifling sexuality. However, one step in a complex process can be achieved quite easily. Although comments by friends and others can seem trivial, they are critical mechanisms of oppression in our community. It is a problem when we express *disgust* for those whom we are not attracted to. When we

criticize people's bodies because they don't look like *GQ* or *Vogue* models, we contribute to the climate of fear that subjugates us all.

We need to ask ourselves why we are *disgusted*, and not just ambivalent, about some people's bodies (including our own). Disgust is usually an emotion which is influenced by socialization, not biology. It is rooted in values we learn, values that are related to gender, sexual orientation, race, class, age and ability.

At the political level, it is important to challenge straight and gay sexual mores and conventions. We can do so by celebrating healthy sexuality in its many forms; by cultivating diversity. Celebrating gay butch is still one way to do this.

In choosing our heroes, however, we also need to celebrate those gay men who not only parody gender roles but *subvert* them. These are the men who regularly use "gender fuck," and their very appearance challenges people every day of their lives. They do so by celebrating, not denying the feminine. They hold it up to the straight world and proclaim that they can be strong *because* they are like women.

Gay men can act on the connection between misogyny and homophobia in part by building alliances with feminists. Obviously, our oppression has common roots, and similar results. Anti-racist and anti-oppression work (including work related to disability) also challenges the narrowing definition of what defines beauty.

Clarissa Chandler, a feminist counsellor and activist, says that oppression occurs when the physical body is co-opted to be a resource for domination.<sup>5</sup> With this in mind, our work must recognize the many ways that we can subtly be co-opted. And, working inside and outside our communities, we must challenge traditional power structures according to how they are co-opting us. Finally, as consumers and producers of media, we need to demand and produce images which free our imagination about what is desirable, what is erotic and what is strong.

*John Miller is a counsellor, educator, and gay activist who lives in Toronto.*

**Acknowledgments**

I want to thank Brett, Jonathan, Mike, Gary, Peter, Robert, Martin, Frank, Don and Josh (not their real names), the ten men whom I interviewed for this article. I want also to acknowledge the invaluable help of Carla Rice, Coordinator of the Women and Body Image Project at the Women's Regional Health Centre in Toronto, for her encouragement to write on an issue that is surprisingly under-researched. Finally, I want to thank my friend and colleague Vanessa Russell, without whose personal challenges I might not have begun this research at all.

**Notes**

1. I have not examined all of the issues that relate to gay men's body image. Extreme eating disorders in gay men and the effects of extreme childhood physical and sexual abuse on gay male "survivors" are two that I have left out. It is not that they are not relevant; I am trying to make a broad analysis of the effects of misogyny and homophobia on all gay men.

2. Through personal connections in the Toronto gay community, I conducted interviews with ten men. Six were white of European descent (of Christian background), two were white Jewish men, and two were men of colour. They were men in their twenties and thirties, two of them from working-class, the rest from middle-class families. They are men of various body sizes and "types." Although they do not by any means represent all gay men, this research is a beginning. Their voices echo concerns that I believe affect us all.

As I did not disconnect myself from my interview sub-

jects, I asked them to tell me about how they felt about their bodies, and shared with them my own issues. We discussed topics such as sex, violence, illness and body type, and how these issues have influenced their body image. In most cases, I shared some working theories, and asked them to comment on them.

3. Suzanne Pharr, *Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism* (Little Rock: Chardon Press, 1988).

4. It must be noted that although Wolf's book provokes important reflection, her analysis is glaring in its omission of any discussion of the connection between homophobia and sexism, of the fear of lesbianism that contributes to the "beauty myth," and of any materialist critique of the concept of upward mobility for marginalized groups. Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women* (New York: William Morrow, 1991).

5. From her speech at a YMCA forum on women and body image, Toronto, 20 May 1993.

**Shhhhhh.**



m. Jesse Helms, Jr.

**Please don't tell Jesse that he can get a subscription to Plazm by contacting us at: 503-234-8289. Thank you.**



# THINGS FALL APART;

# THE CENTRE CANNOT HOLD



**Prospects for the Racist Right in Canada** By John Forrest

At the end of September 1994, twenty-five neo-Nazis and white supremacists, draped in Confederate flags and shouting "the east end belongs to us!" attacked a small group of socialists and anti-racists handing out anti-Reform Party literature at the corner of Pape and Danforth in Toronto.

Protest in response to racist attacks against Tamil Canadians, including the killing of Gunalam Muthulingam and the beating of Sivarajah Vinasithamby; Toronto, June 28, 1993. Photo: Left Eye.

Fighting spilled out across the busy intersection; the attack was over in seconds. One person needed hospital attention and another was punched in the face with an Xacto knife. The neo-Nazis bolted for the subway, leaving the detritus of the assault: anti-Reform Party literature fluttering everywhere, discarded six-inch nails lying in the gutters, along with stunned and angry activists. Another anti-Nazi organization was about to be formed. A week later a 200-strong demonstration demanded "Nazis out of our neighbourhood," and the Riverdale Against the Nazis group was established.

The response of many Canadians to the existence of a small but vocal and violent extreme right in Canada is either to deny its presence or to deny its significance. This article addresses these issues by dealing with three important sections. The first section provides a brief sketch of the recent history of the Canadian far right up to the present. Next, I consider the connection between mainstream or systemic manifestations of racism and the far right movement with which it is parasitical. In this section I will not be dealing with systematic inequities in employment and education but shall concentrate on the "public" elements of discrimination as revealed in the judicial system, the

police and the security services' openness to the racist right, the politicization of immigration, and finally, the role of the media. The third section will conclude with a comparative assessment of the European and the Canadian extreme right. While stressing the gulf between the significant popular support that European neo-fascist parties enjoy, and the political marginality of similar groups in Canada, this section will suggest that knowledge of the European extreme right's historical growth is not cause for complacency here in Canada.

#### The Rise of the Racist Right in Canada

Canada's far right made its mark with the formation of the Toronto-based Western Guard in 1972. Don Andrews, the Western Guard's leader, believed it was time for a more virulent and violent racist movement in Canada. The group set up Canada's first telephone hate-line in 1973; they desecrated synagogues, daubed swastikas on progressive bookstores, and occasionally attacked people physically. This is a period that Andrews, looking back, describes as the "heyday" of the racist right in Canada. The effective end of the Western Guard came in 1977 with the conviction of Don Andrews for possession of explosives and conspiring to commit arson (he was plotting a bomb attack on the Israeli soccer team). With Andrews locked up it gave an opportunity for two of his young recruits, Wolfgang Droege and James Alexander McQuirter, to make an impact on the disoriented white supremacist groups. After spending time talking to U.S. white supremacists, Droege and McQuirter sought to revive the moribund Canadian Ku Klux Klan under the aegis of David Duke's Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. The Canadian Klan went public in June 1980 with the opening of a national office in Toronto. For the next eighteen months, with McQuirter as the spokesperson and Droege the organizer, the Klan would garner media coverage unlike anything the modern racist movement had received previously.

Within six months of opening their office in Toronto, the Klan claimed membership across Canada, with particularly strong support in B.C. and Ontario. This growing public presence of the Klan was not countered by the media or by politicians. In Ontario and B.C. there were no official government actions taken against the Klan; and in B.C. the *Socreds* refused to allow a motion on to the floor of parliament condemning the Klan. Furthermore, the Klan's rapid growth was, to some degree, based on "neutral" media reporting. Julian Sher in his excellent *White Hoods: Canada's Ku Klux Klan* makes the even stronger claim that "perhaps no single factor helped the Klan more in its first year than the widespread, usually uncritical and at times flattering, coverage it received in the media."<sup>1</sup> However, not everything was running in the Klan's favour: in B.C. the anti-Klan group, British Columbia Organization to Fight Racism (BCOFR), effectively mobilized anti-racists and various ethnic and national communities, as did the Toronto group, the Riverdale Action Committee Against Racism (RACAR). RACAR had forced the Klan to shut down its national office by organizing a 1,000 strong demonstration which marched past the Klan's headquarters. When the Klan sought to reopen in another area of Toronto it was immediately opposed by the residents and prevented from opening. With this growing negative attention, the Klan's leaders began to direct their energies away from proselytizing in the schoolyards and towards fantastic escapades worthy of *Boy's Own* adventure comics. With the loss of a public profile, increasing internal dissension, active and organized opposition, and growing financial difficulties, the Klan turned inwards. The Klan was effectively to collapse with the convictions of McQuirter and Droege for plotting to invade the island of Dominica in the West Indies at the end of 1982.

In the wake of the Dominica fiasco, the extreme right's fortunes were to be championed primarily by individuals instead of organizations. Moreover, rather than the



Taking a break during a demonstration against the Heritage Front telephone hate line, Toronto, January 25, 1993. Photo: Left Eye.

courts undermining the neo-Nazis' ability to organize, they provided them with a platform from which they hoped to get their message out to a wider audience. An Alberta teacher, Jim Keegstra, and the fascist publisher, Ernst Zundel, would maintain the racist movement's profile through their malicious denial of the Holocaust. By the end of the '80s a new constellation of forces was coalescing. The elder statesmen (the extreme right is a heavily male preserve) were looking for new blood. They believed they had found it in the shape of the skinhead youth culture: a youth culture which had evolved over the years into a movement with a penchant for vicious racism. As Warren Kinsella remarks, the convergence of aging Nazis with young skinheads gave both sides what they wanted: for the veterans a much needed boost of dynamism and for the skins a legitimizing philosophy — "it was a match made in racist heaven."<sup>2</sup> The three organizations which hoped to utilize this reservoir of alienation and hate included: the Aryan Nations, an organization with its roots initially in the United States; Don Andrews' Nationalist Party of Canada; and finally, the new players, Droeg's Heritage Front, which was formed in November 1989 but only emerged publicly in September 1991.

From the mid-'80s there has been a growing number of racist skinhead groups in North America, operating under names such as Confederate Hammerskins and the Fourth Reich Skinheads in the United States, and the Northern Hammerskins and the Final Solution Skins in Canada. The New York-based Anti-Defamation League of B'Nai Brith estimated that skinheads were responsible for twenty-two murders in the three years between 1991 and 1993. In Canada, skinheads have been implicated in the beating deaths of a number of gay men in Montreal and Toronto, as well as attacks on visible minorities. In the last eighteen months one Tamil man was brutally killed and another viciously beaten, and more recently, a school student in the east end of Toronto was mercilessly clubbed with a lead pipe on his way home from an anti-racist rally — the student's injuries required reconstructive facial surgery. Metro Toronto police recorded over 300 instances of hate crimes in 1993 and the trend is on the increase (these are particularly suspect figures for a number of reasons — fear of further reprisals, lack of confidence in the police and the police's notoriously down-playing of any wider context to attacks, particularly if racially motivated). However, the skinheads' activities span beyond nauseating brutality, as foot, or more aptly, boot soldiers for the far right groups they are also central to distributing propaganda, organizing at schools and creating a general air of unease in the community; as one police officer notes, "what makes them [skinheads] real dangerous is that it doesn't take many to terrorize a community."<sup>3</sup>

Sadly, many commentators fail to grasp the full significance of this turbid confluence of aging hatemongers and racist rebellious skinheads. For most observers it is an unpleasant development, one which should be monitored and hopefully contained — and one that if left unchecked may have longterm implications. However, the usual explanation for the emergence of skinhead culture and the persistence and growth of overtly racist organizations is one of social deviance and dysfunctionality. There appears to be a conflation of youthful rebellion, of alienation and the like, which is currently discussed under the rubric of Generation X. This raises the more general question of racist attitudes in society that provide a wider framework within which to assess the potential of an extreme right wing movement in Canada. This becomes obvious when reading through the numerous media reports on Nazi skinheads. In these reports the public is continually presented with the family backgrounds of these troubled youths, the words "single parent," "abusive," "low income," "unstable," etc., are invoked as a mantra to provide a pseudo-explanation of these youths' dismal vocation. Along with this, the reporter normally registers "surprise," "shock," and the like when dealing with skinheads who emerged from stable, loving, and financially secure environments. But what tends to be even more disturbing is that the skinheads do not necessarily

conform to the stereotype of ill-educated and inarticulate louts. A word of caution: there are certainly a significant number of skinheads who do fit this pattern, but it does not help us to understand the skinhead or Nazi movement and, moreover, it prematurely forecloses the discussion of the far right movement. In turn, prevents us from considering the possibility of the Canadian far right having as powerful an influence on Canadian society as their compatriots in Europe.

Therefore, care must be taken before erecting a model based on societal health versus morbidity or one based on disenchanting youth versus an older, saner population. The popular liberal view of racism, and the far right that espouses racism, as a "cancer" or "disease" of the body politic which with skilful surgery can be excised, has to be balanced against the stubborn history of racism. Many would have thought that the history of the Early Modern period to the present, with the slave trade, slavery and Jim Crow in the United States, and the Holocaust in Europe, would have revealed the horror of racist intolerance. Still, its spectre has not yet been exorcised, as only a cursory glance at contemporary Europe amply demonstrates. Thus the unpalatable question arises: is racism integral to modern society? And will Canada witness the rise of politically organized racism à la Europe?

### Systemic Manifestations of Racism and the Far Right Movement

In the wake of the riots in L.A. and, on a smaller scale, Toronto, there have been a number of reports published to explain the sudden explosion of anger. As one of the specific Toronto responses, the Ontario NDP sponsored *The Stephen Lewis Report*. *The Lewis Report* addresses the structured nature of racism in Ontario, describes it as "pervasive," and notes that "it is obviously true that every visible minority community experiences the indignities and wounds of systemic discrimination," but it is particularly "the black community which is the focus."<sup>4</sup>

It is at this juncture that we must consider the way in which systemic racism nurtures anti-system parties and movements. As Stanley Barrett notes in his pathbreaking study on the right wing in Canada, "it is plausible to suggest that the racism embedded in the wider society has provided an environment in which the radical right has been able to take root. Organized racism, in other words, would appear to represent a more overt and extreme version of weaker impulses beating within the heart of the larger social organism."<sup>5</sup>

Thus we must consider the forms in which these "weaker impulses" manifest themselves and what can be meant by systemic racism. In effect this requires an examination of governmental and non-governmental institutions.

In assessing some of the forms of institutional racism I begin with a discussion of the Canadian judicial system. The primary source of constitutional evasion for white supremacists and neo-Nazis lies in the legal right to the "freedom of expression" which is enshrined in section 2(b) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It was on the basis of this right that Zundel's conviction under section 181 of the Criminal Code, the "false news" provision, was quashed and the section declared unconstitutional. As the majority decision declared, "there is thus a danger that section 181 may have a chilling effect on minority groups or individuals, restraining them from saying what they would like for fear that they might be prosecuted."<sup>6</sup> There is a constitutional anti-hate law in Canada, but there have only been four charges laid in twenty-five years, with two successful convictions. Indeed, the strength of the law at present seems very questionable in the wake of the Keegstra case, where the conviction was upheld on a four-three split decision.

Moreover, the legislation itself is cumbersome, requiring the charges to be brought by an attorney general, an eventuality most of them seek to avoid because of the

## Agitative Propaganda

by Miriam Patel

**Look closely at the streets of Toronto. Art is scattered about — not on roads or sidewalks but on buildings and telephone poles. Some call this art "public art" and others would term it "agitative propaganda (agitprop)." Although represented through different forms — spray-painted stencils, free style or even just graffitied words — all the forms share a common element and basis for expression: resistance.**

### ANTI-RACIST ACTION



**Agitative propaganda is by no means a new phenomenon. The Muralists of Mexico and artists in the United States have been using it as a tool of social critique for decades. And artists have been decorating Toronto streets with public art for years.**

**Some of the first agitprop artists were students coming out of art colleges, discontented with the gallery scene. These artists transferred previously completed pieces of art to the streets in an attempt to tackle a wide variety of social ills. The pieces were very general, targeting monolithic problems and not necessarily identifying or attacking concrete sources. In more recent years, public art as agitative propaganda has become more focused.**

**With the rise of fascism in Canada, new goals have been developed for agitprop. Agitprop has now become distinctly anti-fascist and anti-racist. Much of the agitprop currently found on Toronto streets can be attributed to members of the Toronto-based activist group Anti-Racist Action (ARA). ARA formed in 1992 in response to the increasing escalation of attacks by white supremacists and other racist organizations against communities of colour, First Nations people, the Jewish community, gays and lesbians and anti-racist activists themselves.**

controversial nature of the prosecution. This was the prime motivation for Sabina Citron, as an individual citizen, to invoke the section 181 provision, because the Attorney General was reluctant to prosecute Zundel. Other avenues for prosecution lie with invoking provincial human rights codes. This route has been used more frequently and with more success, but its impact is more of a nuisance to far right organizing than a permanent blockage. For example, in February 1992 an Alberta human rights tribunal ordered Terry Long and other members of the white supremacist Aryan Nations to refrain from cross-burnings, publicly displaying swastikas and "white power" regalia, after an investigation into a cross-burning incident at Provost, Alberta. This was only a minor impediment to their ability to organize. Still more striking, serious criminal charges were not laid even though there were instances of uttering threats, assault, possession and use of weapons, and conspiracy to promote hatred.

The desire to maintain Canadians' freedom of expression is surely admirable; however, there is more than a hint of hypocrisy and double standard in its application. Canadian censorship laws are some of the toughest in the world and they are enforced with particular zeal in cases, for instance, of gay and lesbian porn.<sup>7</sup> The tolerance of freedom of expression does not extend to cover certain forms of artistic production, as has been made clear in the charges laid against Eli Langer, under the "kiddie porn law," for painting minors in sexual positions. It is hard to credit that the potential damage to society from viewing these artistic works is comparable to white supremacist or neo-Nazi hate literature which denies that the Holocaust ever happened and targets minorities for verbal and physical attack.

The police and the courts also downplay the racial or homophobic motivation of most attacks. In the prosecution of Carney Nerland (a member of Aryan Nations) in the shooting and subsequent death of Leo LaChance (a Cree man), Nerland's bigoted politics were not regarded as a factor. This was all the more surprising considering that the court was aware of Nerland's statement to the police: "If I am convicted of killing that Indian, they should give me a medal, and you should pin it on me."<sup>8</sup> Nerland was sentenced to four years' imprisonment, but was released after serving only two and a half years into an RCMP witness protection programme. The lenience of the judicial system can take truly amazing proportions: three young men in Ottawa, on a "wild night out," shot up a boat and later fired into the living room of a non-white immigrant. The bullet struck her in the face; fortunately she survived. The three youths were neo-Nazi skinheads connected to groups noted for violence in the Ottawa area. Their lawyer declared this "an unfortunate peer group" and the court gave them two-year suspended sentences, while prohibiting them from associating with each other.<sup>9</sup> And finally, the police in Toronto have discovered two significant arms caches, including automatic weapons and special armour piercing ammunition, in little more than a year. Yet the fact that the men arrested were white supremacists attached to the Church of the Creator was deemed unimportant to the prosecution.

Also, with the recent revelations about the Canadian Secret Intelligence Service (CSIS) and its involvement with the neo-Nazi Heritage Front, concerns about that agency and the political sympathies of the police have surfaced. The role of the security services has been brought further into disrepute by the brutal torture and murder of Shidane Arone, a sixteen-year-old



Somali boy, and the so-called "turkey shoot" of other Somalis by the Canadian Airborne Regiment — a Regiment where known neo-Nazis and Heritage Front members had been organizing.

One of the areas where racist considerations have traditionally been prominent is in the application of immigration laws and the treatment of recently arrived immigrants. There are no shortages of examples from Canada's past to highlight these, from the treatment of Chinese workers at the turn of the century, to the prevention of Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi persecution landing in Canada, to the internment of Canadians of Japanese descent during the Second World War. Thus the politicization of immigration and the scapegoating of immigrants is not a new feature of Canadian politics. Yet the Reform Party has to take some credit for consciously and consistently pushing an anti-immigration agenda that targets people of colour on an unprecedented scale. The Reform Party has slandered refugees, blamed Blacks and Jamaicans as responsible for crime, and accused immigrants of being both a drain on the economy and fraudulent abusers of welfare.

Consequently, it is no surprise that a number of Heritage Front members have joined the Reform Party and have achieved positions of note within their respective ward and riding associations. Even though Manning has denounced racists who have had the media spotlight shone upon them, it is still hard to believe that these people never made their white supremacist views known to the local Reform Party members. Therefore even though individuals have been removed from the Reform Party, it is still cause for concern that the rest of the local membership remains after allowing these racists to rise through their local constituencies.

There are a number of problems that flow from the media's coverage, and although my comments will be aimed primarily at the print media, there is probably a certain validity of these remarks with respect to the TV media. Firstly, the media has a tendency to treat white supremacists as an oddity and to suspend their critical faculties — a weakness that was particularly prevalent in the first days of the resurrected Klan in the early '80s. Secondly, and of more importance, the current trend in media reporting works on the assumption that if you allow the white supremacists to speak for themselves they will reveal their vacuity. A position that Pierre Berton explained, in relation to David Irving's Holocaust denial activities, under the headline "Why muzzle the wackos?"<sup>10</sup> It was this sentiment that seemed to motivate a University of Toronto professor to invite Wolfgang Droege and other Heritage Front members into his classroom, and which also allowed Droege to speak unchallenged on U of T's campus radio in 1993.

In general, the majority of editorials applauded the acquittal of Zundel under the false news provision of the Criminal Code — "victory for free speech," "No victory for Hate," "the right ruling on false news,"<sup>11</sup> — whilst also acknowledging that as a by-product Zundel was also a victor. Unfortunately, these editorials were not simply expressing joy at the maintenance of freedom of speech, they were also implicitly rejecting any form of prosecution which would limit an absolute freedom of speech. *The Globe and Mail* remarked: "To put him on trial for another offense (using the hate law has been suggested) would only give his views a few more years in front of the bright lights"; and *The Toronto Star* declared: "No victory for Zundel's ideas, this mature verdict upholds free expression, including the freedom of the most twisted minds to be themselves."<sup>12</sup> One of the few exceptions to this sanctifying of freedom of expression was the editorial in *The Montreal Gazette* after the police decided not to lay charges against Zundel under the hate law. The *Gazette* editorial clearly connected words to deeds: "the object of hate propaganda law is to ensure that groups of people will not be the victims of racist propaganda which incites hatred and violence against them. Few people in the whole world spew out so much of that kind of propaganda as Ernst Zundel; the German government attests to that."<sup>13</sup>

**ARA's primary purpose is to fight white supremacists on the street level.**

**ARA has been, from its inception, unique as an activist group. There is a militant characteristic to its street-level actions, aspects of which appear in its agitprop campaigns. New, creative and unapologetically direct methods of agitprop protest have made ARA a force of anti-fascist/anti-racist counter-protest the likes of which have never before been seen in Canada. Public art has become a weapon in the war against white supremacist, fascist and neo-Nazi hate organizations.**

**Agitprop is a necessary part of street-level anti-fascist work. Public**



**expressions of counterprotest have allowed anti-fascists to create "Nazi-free zones" around Toronto — in a parallel to Hitler's Juden-free zones in Nazi Germany during the 1930s and '40s — and have created a more direct anti-racist presence on the streets. The militancy of the public art pieces has played a big part in this accomplishment. It has also sent a message to neo-Nazis: that militant opposition to them and what they stand for does exist.**

**Anti-fascist agitprop campaigns have also attempted to discredit and ridicule the white supremacist movement. (One of the things neo-Nazi organizers rely on is an image of toughness and invincibility. They need to retain this illusion in order to recruit new members, primarily disaffected youth. Anti-fascist groups like ARA hope that youth will be less attracted to fascist groups if the neo-Nazi image is trashed through highly visible public art on the street level.) ARA has been successful in creating an anti-fascist counterculture. Agitprop plays a useful role in this movement by disseminating counterprotest through street-level**

However, the media's strategy of "give them enough rope and they will strangle themselves" has two fundamental weaknesses. It works, first of all, on the assumption of neo-Nazi imbecility. Whether or not this is the case for the current Canadian leadership, as a general approach it will run into difficulties with individuals such as Giancarlo Fini in Italy, Jorg Haider in Austria, or Jean Marie Le Pen in France — whatever else they may be they are not idiots. Furthermore, the notion of an informed public generates problems. If we take the Holocaust as an example, what level of awareness about historical events exists? Even after Spielberg's *Schindler's List* we should not complacently assume that the historical facts and sense of tragedy are transparent to most people and that the public is somehow inoculated from the effects of Holocaust denial arguments. We have to appreciate the dangers of denial arguments which play on individuals' general ignorance of the historical sources, that, in turn, enable deniers to distort and warp the evidence while pandering to popular prejudices. With the passing of time leaving fewer and fewer eyewitnesses to the Holocaust, these "assassins of memory" believe their position can get only stronger. This seems evident by Doug Collins' Holocaust denial activities in Vancouver's *Long Shore News*. After Collins made his views known on the Holocaust, *The Province* asked the scandalous hotline question: "Do you agree with Doug Collins that the Nazi Holocaust is exaggerated?"<sup>14</sup>

Along with the complexity of issues there is also the media's own role in perpetuating disinformation. Although not necessarily calculated, disinformation is usually a product of the desire to sell newspapers. This phenomenon is highlighted in the media's coverage of anti-racist events and in its portrayal of crime as a problem stemming from the African Canadian population and immigrants of colour.

The press's favourite formula for dealing with clashes between anti-racists and white supremacists is to stress the symmetry of violent thugs from both the left and right. What is less clear about this well-worn formula is that instances of physical confrontation with neo-Nazis and white supremacists would be an acceptable tactic. After all, it was Hitler who claimed his success could in large part be explained by the failure of the opposition to stop him in his tracks, on the streets. Even in situations where violent confrontation might not have been the best avenue, the media invariably fails to recognize the general scale and diversity of anti-racist mobilization. Demonstrations normally embrace individuals and groups with varying perspectives on how to deal with Nazis in their neighbourhoods and on their streets, but this fact is usually neglected. *The Ottawa Citizen*, after a demonstration that turned violent, declared that "street thuggery only marginalises anti-racism" and suggested "there are ways to confront racism — in education, through media scrutiny, and, not least, around the family dinner table."<sup>15</sup> However, these remarks leave one with the impression that the dominant tone of the event was violent, even though, as a letter to the editor explained: "my three year old and my two year old weren't throwing rocks.... Nor were the senior citizens marching beside me, the public servants... nor the majority of the hundreds of youths and young adults I walked with."<sup>16</sup>

In the case of the neo-Nazi attack on anti-racists with which this article began, there was no print media coverage of the incident, and more importantly, there was sparse coverage of the demonstration held the following week. That demonstration, held in poor weather, was lively, vibrant, and significantly peaceful — even though Nazis taunted the demonstration from a safe distance. This event received laughable coverage in *The Toronto Star* under the heading of "bomb scare at anti-racist demo." The article focused on a bomb scare that most were oblivious to, whilst failing to address the general problem of neo-Nazi violence in the area and attempts to organize in the local schools. The message seems clear: for fuller media coverage organize a demonstration that turns violent.



Dudley Laws speaking May 7, 1992, during a rally at Queen's Park to protest the acquittal of two Peel Region police officers in the 1988 shooting death of Wade Lawson.

If we shift our focus to crime, the Black community, and immigration, one begins to understand the problem of the media's appeal to an informed public. This may seem impressionistic, but there appears to have been an increase in both crime reporting and the way it is reported. Along with the increase in frequency of crime-related items, these stories are more and more presented as lead items while traditional "hard news" stories are left in the background. There is not much basis for this shift in emphasis. Homicide rates in Canada are significantly below the mid 1970s level, the increase in violent crime is related to a growing number of people reporting domestic disputes, and violent crime is still only 10% of all crimes reported to the police. The perception of a crisis of law and order has had political effects, primarily in the search for scapegoats for these perceived public threats to order and safety. Along with this it has been estimated that over the ten years 1983–1992 there has been a 14% increase in the number of police, which has been matched by a higher level of incarceration, and has placed Canada in second place in the lock-up stakes.<sup>17</sup>

However, the media reporting of crime has a more sinister aspect — its obsession with the "Black criminal." This can be seen in *The Toronto Sun's* splattering of Black faces on its front covers, the general hysteria around the tragic murder of "ViVi" Leimonis in the "Just Desserts" shooting, and the death of a Toronto police officer. Finally, at a more subtle level *The Globe & Mail's* front page headline: "Reform releases refugee crime data."<sup>18</sup> As the article goes on to explain, the Reform Party had misrepresented RCMP crime figures. Therefore, one is left to wonder why the story was deemed worthy of front page coverage; and, in addition, why such a neutral headline was used, which once again, in bold print, associates refugees and crime in the same sentence.

Against this, there was very little media outrage over the shooting of Leo LaChance, nor any agonized commentaries on the failure of the justice system when the Ottawa skinheads involved were awarded a judicial rap on the knuckles. Nor has there been a generally orchestrated concern for white supremacists with arms caches. Even more striking was the lack of media coverage of the murder of Chris Bego in a coffee shop on Pape Ave in Toronto. Chris Bego was white, but, significantly, so were his murderers; there was no "Just Desserts" furore and there was no condemnation of the white community in the same way the Black community was pilloried.

Along with this criminalization of the Black community, there is the media's consistent denigration of leading members of that community, such as Zanana Akande, Carl Masters and Dudley Laws. This attitude is clearly revealed through its assault on Arnold Minors, a member of the Metropolitan Toronto Police Services Board and an anti-racism consultant. *The Toronto Star* led the onslaught, claiming that Minors denied that the Holocaust was racist and that he compared the police to "an occupying army." Minors never made the first statement and the second one was misrepresented. Although he admits the "occupying army" phrase might have been clumsy, its pertinence to the Black experience in Toronto is not so far off base. Toronto police have shot a number of Black youths with apparent impunity. As *The Stephen Lewis Report* observed: "there was another emotion that was palpable, and it was fear... it was from members of the Black community, and in particular, mothers. The eight shootings over the last four years, and the sense, real or imagined, of unpredictable police encounters with Black youth has many families very frightened."<sup>19</sup> There was no media outcry against *The Lewis Report*, but the report does seem to vindicate Minors' contention that the feeling in the Black community is one of fear and distrust of the police — the main point in comparing the police to an "occupying army." Thus it is easy to understand *Share's* editorial outrage: "The mainstream media, by its performance, emphasize — almost glorify — the activities of Black criminals, while ignoring many of the positive

artwork. Some of the public art images (stencils, graffiti) have been converted into T-shirts and buttons, further widening the impact of counter-culture agitprop.

Anti-fascist/anti-racist agitprop first found its way onto Toronto streets through postering and spray painting. ARA artists created posters that were then photocopied and distributed around the city. Partly in response to the heightened presence of neo-Nazi skinheads, the postering was first done in the downtown area: along Yonge, Queen, throughout Kensington Market, along King, Bloor, Bathurst and Spadina. Later, key neighbourhoods were postered in concert with broader campaigns.

The ARA campaign against Ernst Zundel is a good example. Zundel is a self-proclaimed Nazi who lives in Toronto (at 206 Carlton Street) and runs a publishing operation, one of the world's largest neo-Nazi propaganda outlets. Zundel, well-known to Canadians as a Holocaust denier, puts



out hate propaganda that is sent to fascists worldwide. In the ARA campaign, posters targeting Zundel were put up around his neighbourhood. (Stickers were also produced. One of the most popular ones was an image of a rat superimposed with Zundel's face, with a headline reading "Run, Nazi, run.") This agitprop was done while people were organizing against Zundel and his hate literature, and it



and significant contributions which are being made by other Blacks. And those Blacks who accept public office — whether elected or appointed — are being put under intense scrutiny and are being judged by a whole different set of values from their White counterparts who are in similar positions.<sup>20</sup>

This implicit and explicit racism, which manifests itself in the media, has made it much more difficult to deal with arguments from the racist right — especially because the mainstream media perpetuates stereotypes of the Black community and immigrants. The media consequently bolsters and deepens popular prejudices which provide the climate within which the far right groups hope to thrive. The far right hopes, by playing the race and crime cards and downplaying other aspects of their authoritarian agenda, to reach out to a wider audience.

### The European Experience in Canada?

Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer,  
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world...

W.B. Yeats, *The Second Coming*

In Europe the growth of the racist far right has primarily taken two forms. On the one hand, there is the growth of electoral organizations which attempt to cultivate a level of "respectability," such as the Front National in France, the Republikaner in Germany, the Freedom Party in Austria and the MSI (Movimento Sociale Italiano) in Italy. On the other hand, there are the violent and paramilitary neo-Nazi groups whose main objective is the terrorizing of communities, fire-bombing hostels for asylum seekers, desecrating Jewish cemeteries, and attacking left wing and progressive groups. The relationship between these two forms varies from country to country, but in all instances there are covert, if not overt connections. As one commentator observes of Jorg Haider, the leader of the Austrian Freedom Party: "the main difference between Haider and those to his right is political realism. Though he shares many of their views, he is only interested in expressing them if there is a political advantage to be gained";<sup>21</sup> or in a formula with general application beyond the MSI, the respectable neo-fascist organizations adopted a dual strategy characterized as "the double-breasted suit with the club."<sup>22</sup>

The European far right has had spectacular success over the last year — the MSI, as part of Berlusconi's National Alliance, gained 13% of the vote and five cabinet posts; Haider's Freedom Party looks set to smash the Austrian two party system after receiving 23% of the vote) giving them forty-two seats in the 183-seat parliament, and the Flemish Vlaams Blok gained 28% of the vote in Antwerp. What has underlain the extreme right's electoral success? First, there is the growing economic instability across the European Union: one in every four eighteen to twenty-five year-olds is unemployed, unemployment is perennially high, and there are increasing government attacks on welfare and wages (it is estimated that wages fell by 13% in Belgium between 1982–1992). Secondly, there has been growing disenchantment with governments in general, revealed most starkly in Italy with the *Tangentopoli* crisis, the corruption and bribery scandal which has rocked Italy. Both of these factors have led to a fracturing of traditional political loyalties and a growing voter volatility; and it is against this backdrop that the far right has sung the simple siren song of immigration controls. It is also important to remember that the politicization of the immigration debate in Europe precedes the break-up of the Eastern Bloc by over a decade — the first serious asylum debate in Germany was 1980–81, and the Front National in France has invoked immigration with an increasing frequency and ferociousness since the early '80s, even to the



Right and page 32: police escort and procession at the funeral of Toronto police constable Todd Baylis, June 22, 1994. Stills courtesy Susan Young.

extent of adapting an old Nazi slogan declaring "500,000 unemployed, 500,000 immigrants, the solution is simple" (the slogan at present refers to "3 million unemployed, etc.").

Along with the political debate around immigration there has been the growing incidence of violence against immigrants in general and the Black community in particular. The British Crime Survey indicates that there are 130,000–140,000 racial attacks every year in Britain.<sup>23</sup> In Germany there has been a sharp increase in attacks on foreigners — 1,483 attacks in 1991, 2,584 attacks in 1992, with 6,395 cases of a xenophobic character reported in 1993. And still yet, seventeen asylum seekers were killed in 1992 and eight were killed in 1993.<sup>24</sup> Again these are familiar figures across much of Europe.

The ramifications of the growth in organized racist political parties and the increase in racist attacks have been profound. Mainstream politicians have begun to adopt and repeat the phraseology of the likes of Le Pen and Schonhuber: for example, Jacques Chirac, leader of the Rassemblement pour la République (RPR) in France, referred to Arabs as "noisy and smelly," and in Germany, Chancellor Kohl's Christian Democrats adopted slogans from the Republikaner and the Nazi National Democratic Party. Along with some politicians' capitulation to the rhetoric of the far right, the media has assisted in fanning the flames of racial intolerance. One German headline exclaimed: "If I weren't a policeman, I'd be a skinhead!"; or as *Bild*, a German tabloid, declared in a series of scurrilous headlines: "Living space requisitioned: family must take in refugees," and "Germany's most unbelievable help wanted ad: refugee home seeks German cleaning woman."<sup>25</sup>

Two aspects of the European experience need to be emphasized. First, most of the electoral parties and the violent neo-Nazi groups did not spring from nowhere, but they were much smaller and weaker at the beginning of the 1980s. Their success has been quick and dramatic. Between 1972–1983 the Front National could not break through the one percent barrier. In the legislative vote in 1981 they received 0.2% of the votes cast, but in the European election of 1984 they gained a stunning 11% of the popular vote. The Front National has arrived and its electoral support continues to hover around the 15% mark nationally, with much stronger city and regional representation in parts of France. A similar pattern of rapid transformation from marginal group to nationally significant party is true of all European far right parties, with the possible exception of the Italian MSI. Secondly, studies have revealed that the background of voters by generation, education, and socio-economic position does not provide any glaring anomalies between far right and traditional right parties; however, the far right parties are marginally more successful at mobilizing younger voters. Thus, the stereotype of the far right voter as uneducated, unemployed or under-employed young male needs to be revised. In the wake of the Vlaams Blok's electoral success in Antwerp, a Belgian academic explained the far right's appeal: "older voters spoke of insecurity and connected it to immigration. Younger people blamed unemployment on the presence of Moroccans, Turks and East Europeans."<sup>26</sup>

In light of the above, it becomes apparent that the European far right movement has grown rapidly on a programme of anti-immigration policies which have found a resonance for a European electorate beset by economic uncertainty and the failure of traditional governments to offer solutions. In this sense, the far right's appeal extends beyond any one age group or socio-economic group.

What are the chances of Canada following Europe and seeing the rise of far right racist political organization? The prospects in the immediate future for the Canadian far right look bleak. However, complacency should be avoided. The Canadian economy is fragile, unemployment continues to run above 10%, there are growing pressure and attacks on social spending. The Canadian political system has also been shaken

helped raise public awareness that Zundel lived in Toronto and was free to publish and distribute his hate.

Agitprop was also a key tactic in ARA's campaign against IXL and Reckless, two stores owned, run and frequented by neo-Nazis. These stores serve as meeting places for segments



of the neo-Nazi movement, so stickers were created to identify the stores and inform the public as to their function. The stickers were distributed along Yonge and around the vicinities of the stores. Stickers are a very important form of agitprop, because they're inclusive — anyone can put them up. This can't be said of the spray-painted stencils or graffiti, because that work is necessarily of a more clandestine nature.

Using agitative propaganda as a tool to fight fascism and racism can only be fully effective if it is used alongside other tactics. Agitprop as public art works on a visual level to create public awareness around issues. But once the public is thinking about these issues, it becomes crucial that people have access to more in-depth material. ARA has avoided the possibility of its agitprop becoming an isolated strategy by including the group's phone number on the posters and stickers distributed throughout the city. This allows the public to call and request additional information or get involved in counter-protest organizing. It has been a very effective link between the different levels of anti-racist work, especially between agitprop and more in-depth literature. (The literature itself is creative and eye-catching, so people



up with the spectacular collapse of the Conservative Party, a lacklustre NDP, and the rapid rise to prominence of the BQ and the Reform Party. All indicators show that the volatility of the electorate and the demise of traditional party loyalties are as true in Canada as in Europe. To some degree, the Reform Party's role in the Canadian political landscape is a paler version of the right wing populist parties of Europe. Although the Reform Party is clearly not the same as the virulently xenophobic parties of Europe — parties that demanded an immediate end to immigration and in some cases call for repatriation — it has nonetheless shifted the political terrain in Canada to the right. It is this fact which explains, however much it may disturb Preston Manning, the attraction of the Reform Party to racists and white supremacists in Canada.

Of the far right itself, its failure to find a common platform and to adopt a unified strategy is an obvious weakness that prevents it from posing a genuine political threat. Part of this failure lies in the fact that the far right does not have a leader of real charisma or stature to enable the movement to overcome its squabbling. A fact which is not lost on some: "What we have done is pitiful compared to what we should have done. Never was the time better for a national network than now. Yet they're not exploiting it. The Canadian right has not yet produced somebody who can coalesce the divergent groups in a meaningful political way. That has been our downfall."<sup>27</sup> Even so, white supremacist and neo-Nazi candidates, without drawing much media attention, ran in the recent Metro Toronto elections. They polled in three mayoral elections (Toronto, Scarborough and East York) 6,161 votes or 3% of votes cast. This showing, however pathetic, can still



be favourably compared to the fortunes of the British far right, which fielded twenty-seven candidates in the 1992 General Election and received only 11,800 votes.

But if the far right does not pose a serious political threat at present, it certainly poses a physical one. The most recent example of this is the threatening letter sent to Humberside Collegiate, in Toronto, demanding the dismissal of Black teachers. This threat was followed up by neo-Nazis attacking a teacher and knocking him unconscious by pushing him down a stairwell.

Therefore, vigilance is required to prevent neo-Nazis from gaining confidence, wherever they spring up they need to be opposed — whether this be events such as European Heritage Week organized by Don Andrews' Nationalist Party, which was given official blessing by former Mayor McCaffery in St. Catharines, or neo-Nazi violence in our streets, schools and workplaces. Moreover, and here is the hard part, we need to challenge the systemic, everyday racism from which the neo-Nazis draw sustenance. In our society, which generates and maintains antagonisms, the lesson to be learned from Europe is that equality and freedom from oppression is not something we can simply expect, but it is something we have to fight for on a daily basis.

*John Forrest is a writer and activist living in Toronto.*

#### Notes

1. Julian Sher, *White Hoods: Canada's Ku Klux Klan* (New Star Books, 1983), p.108.
2. Warren Kinsella, *Web of Hate: Inside Canada's Far-Right Network* (Harper-Collins, 1994), p. 260.
3. David Van Biema, "When White Makes Right," *Time Magazine*, 9 August 1993, p. 38.
4. Stephen Lewis, *The Stephen Lewis Report*, June 1992, p. 2.
5. Stanley Barrett, *Is God a Racist? The Right Wing in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), p. 325.
6. Quoted in *The Toronto Star*.
7. Albert Nerenberg, *This Magazine*, November 1994.
8. Quoted by Kinsella, *ibid.*, p.186.
9. See Kinsella for further details and other examples, *ibid.*
10. Pierre Berton, "Why muzzle the wackos?" *The Toronto Star*, 14 November 1992.
11. Editorials in *The Ottawa Citizen*, *The Toronto Star* and *The Globe and Mail* respectively, 28 August 1992.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Editorial, *The Montreal Gazette*, 12 March 1993.
14. *The Province*, 5 October 1994.
15. *The Ottawa Citizen*, 1 June 1993.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Figures from Sandro Contenta's "Politicians play law-and-order card," *The Toronto Star*, 15 August 1993.
18. *The Globe and Mail*, 5 November 1994.
19. *The Stephen Lewis Report*, p. 3.
20. Editorial, *Share*, 27 October 1994.
21. Robert Knight, "Haider, the Freedom Party and the Extreme Right in Austria," *Parliamentary Affairs*, OUP, 1992, p. 293.
22. Paul Furlong, "The Extreme Right in Italy: Old Orders and Dangerous Novelties," *Parliamentary Affairs*, *ibid.*
23. Tony Kushner, "The Fascist as 'Other'?" Racism and Neo-Nazism in Contemporary Britain" in *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 28, no. 1, 1994, p. 37.
24. Werner Bergmann, "Xenophobia & Antisemitism After the Unification of Germany," *Patterns of Prejudice*, *ibid.*, p. 76.
25. For these and other headlines see Michael Schmidt's *The New Reich: Violent Extremism & Beyond* (CITY: Pantheon Books, 1993).
26. *The Manchester Guardian*, 23 October 1994.
27. Zundel in *The Globe and Mail*, 8 February 1993.

actually want to read it. There is a great deal of anti-racist information available in Toronto, but it's usually presented in such a way that it bores all but the most involved reader. ARA has realized that interesting and provocative graphics and headlines make the public more likely to read the text.)

Posters created for specific ARA campaigns, or "actions," are a combination of both the literature and the artwork. These posters usually give background information to certain actions and also contain related graphics. Elements of agitprop exist in both these posters and the literature.

Agitprop has been successful in driving Nazis off the streets of Toronto — at least for the time being. Without public art, groups like Anti-Racist Action would have little resources to educate the public, create media interest and counter the rise of white supremacist and fascist groups. Agitprop is a useful tool in creating an unwelcoming and uncomfortable atmosphere for neo-Nazis. Agitprop works on a variety of levels with both the public and neo-Nazis themselves, but effects damage on a primarily psychological level: it has a demoralizing effect on fascist organizers.

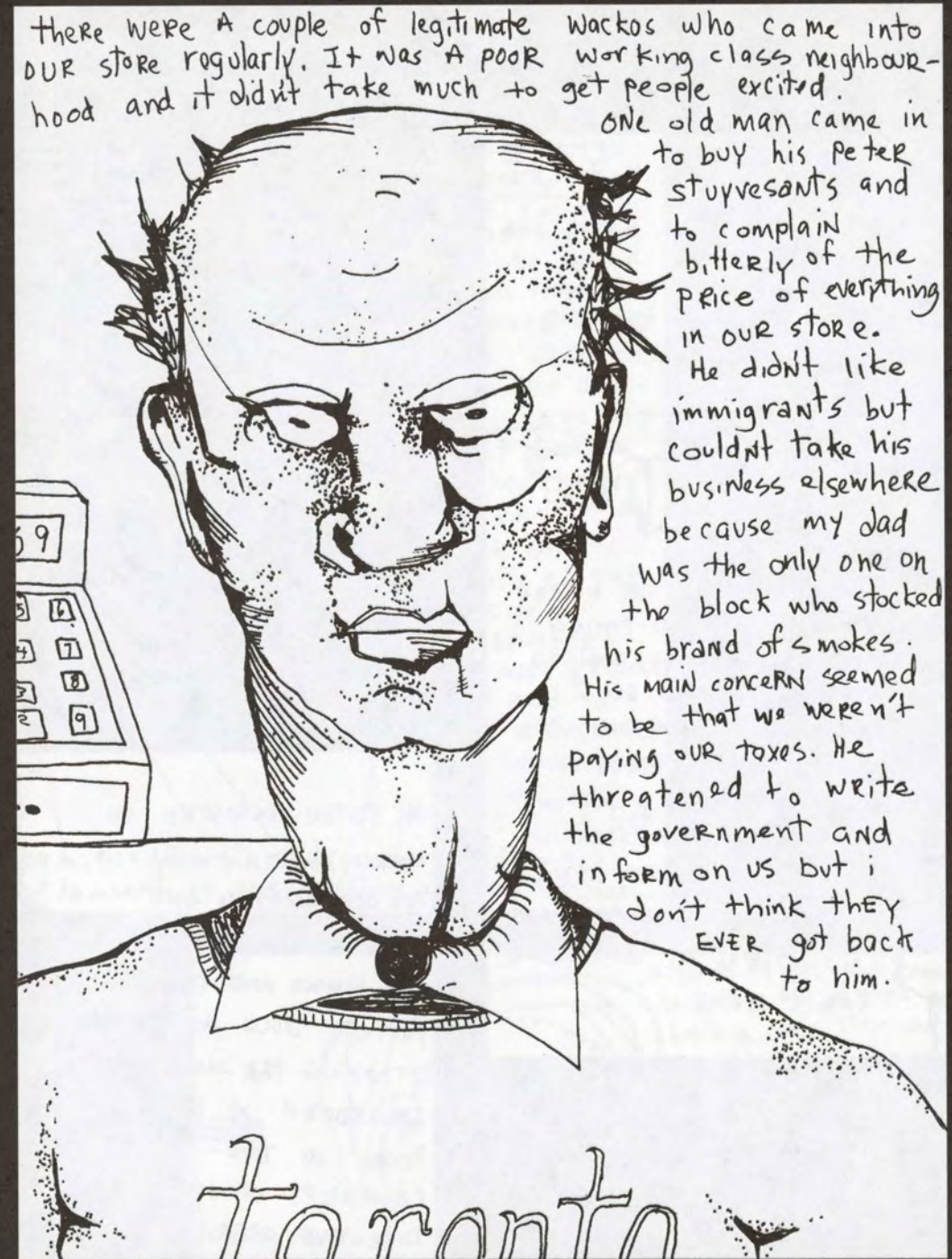
Anti-fascist and anti-racist organizations have implemented a policy of zero tolerance for neo-Nazis in Toronto, and agitative, militant public art has been an important tool.

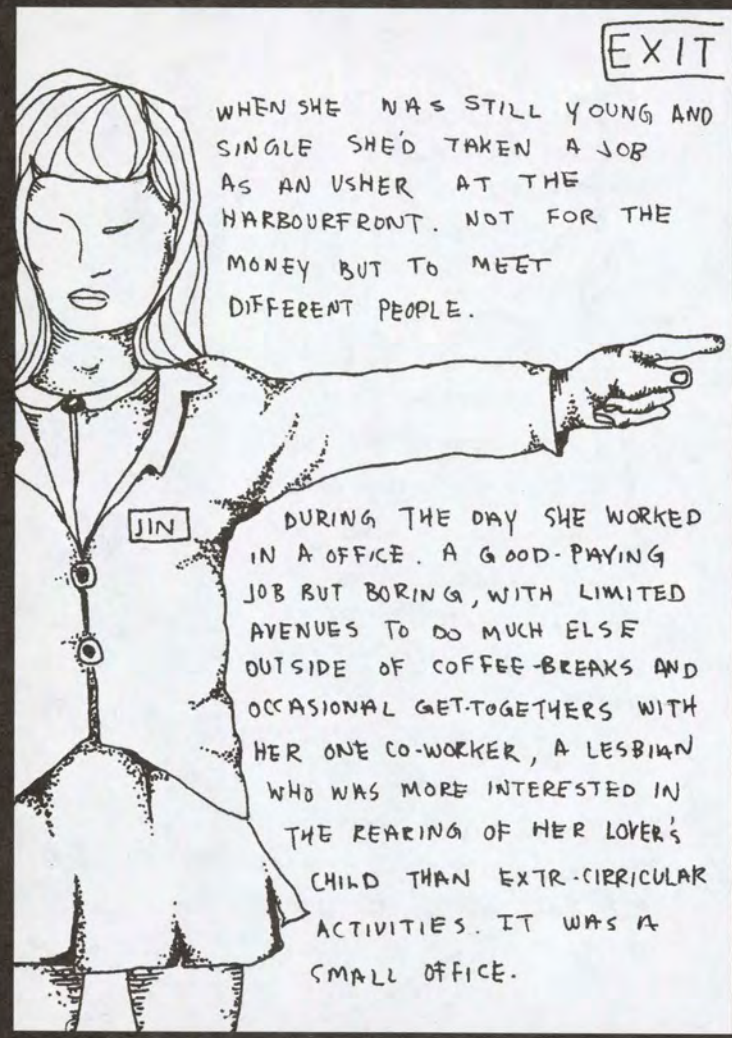
*Miriam Patel (a pseudonym) has done anti-racist work in Toronto high schools and throughout the city. The use of a pseudonym is necessary due to the harassment of anti-racist activists in Toronto by groups including the Heritage Front.*



# Min-Sook Lee

Min-Sook Lee is working on a series of bar stories culled from time spent working in too many restaurants.

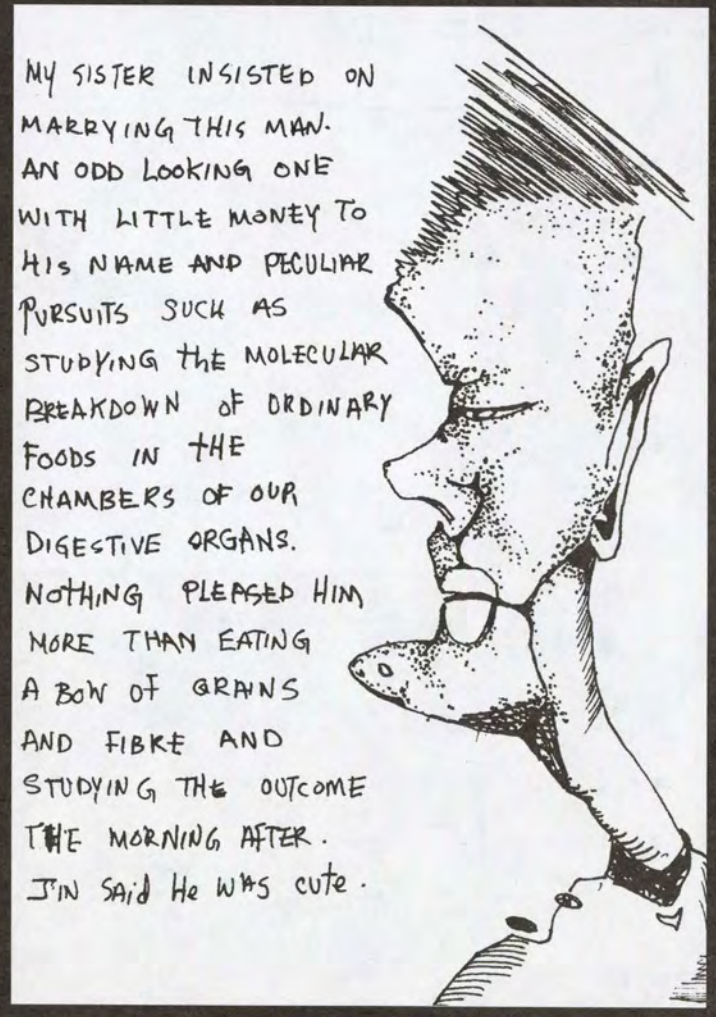




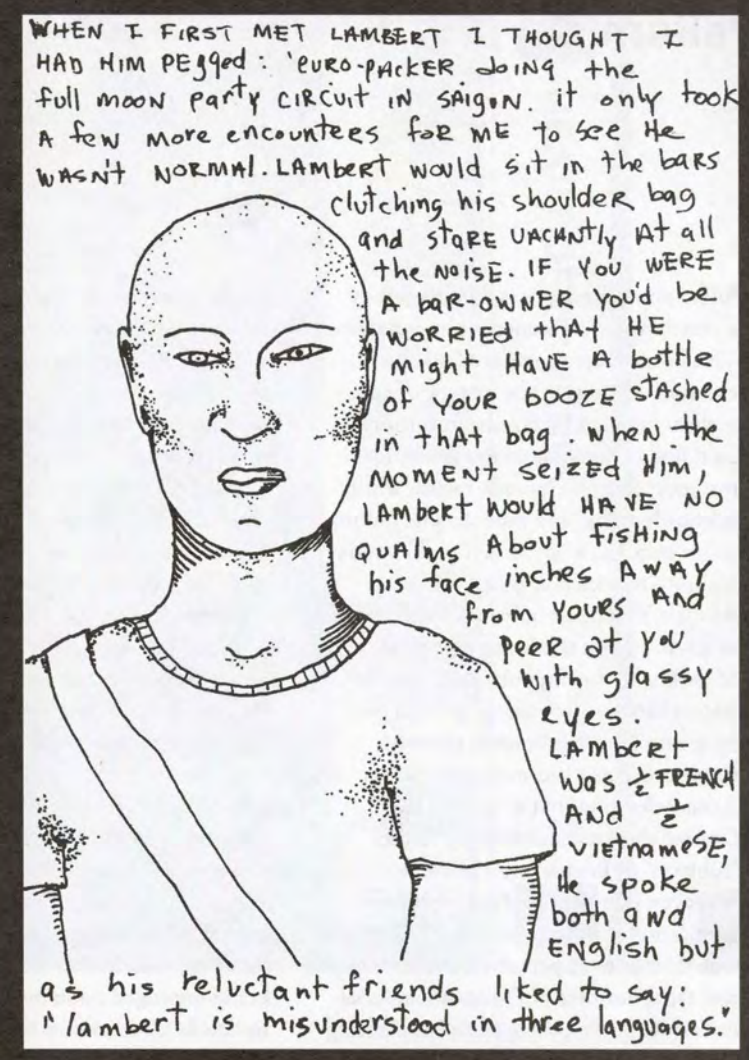
EXIT

WHEN SHE WAS STILL YOUNG AND SINGLE SHE'D TAKEN A JOB AS AN USHER AT THE HARBOURFRONT. NOT FOR THE MONEY BUT TO MEET DIFFERENT PEOPLE.

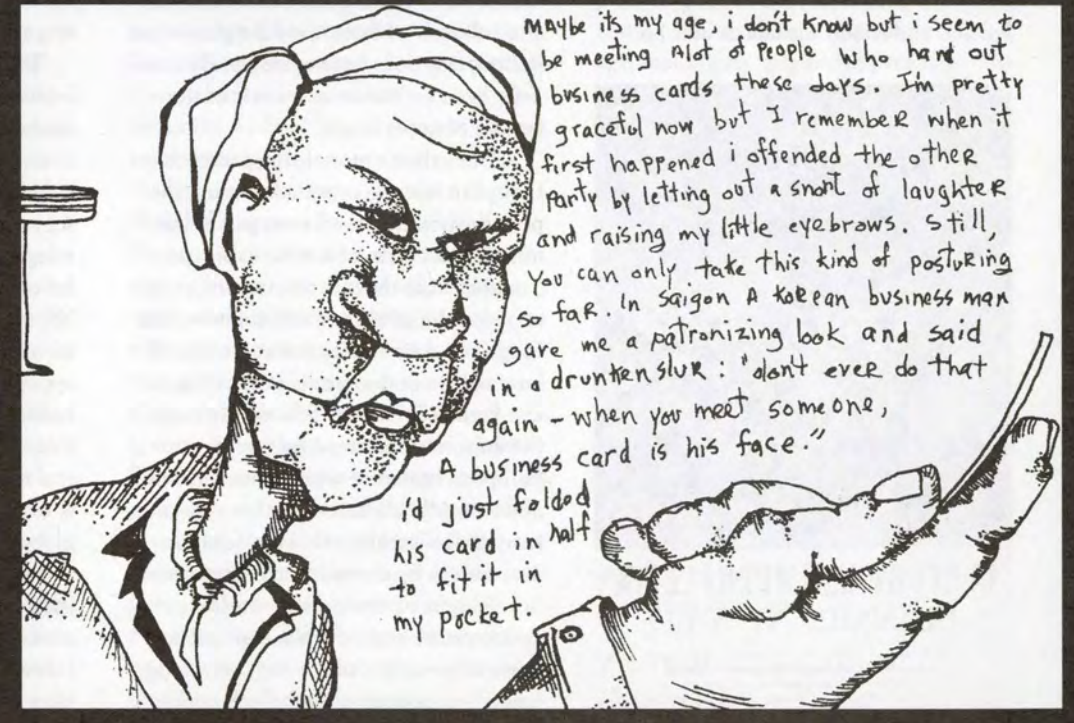
DURING THE DAY SHE WORKED IN A OFFICE. A GOOD-PAYING JOB BUT BORING, WITH LIMITED AVENUES TO DO MUCH ELSE OUTSIDE OF COFFEE-BREAKS AND OCCASIONAL GET-TOGETHERS WITH HER ONE CO-WORKER, A LESBIAN WHO WAS MORE INTERESTED IN THE REARING OF HER LOVER'S CHILD THAN EXTR-CIRRICULAR ACTIVITIES. IT WAS A SMALL OFFICE.



MY SISTER INSISTED ON MARRYING THIS MAN. AN ODD LOOKING ONE WITH LITTLE MONEY TO HIS NAME AND PECULIAR PURSUITS SUCH AS STUDYING THE MOLECULAR BREAKDOWN OF ORDINARY FOODS IN THE CHAMBERS OF OUR DIGESTIVE ORGANS. NOTHING PLEASED HIM MORE THAN EATING A BOW OF GRAINS AND FIBRE AND STUDYING THE OUTCOME THE MORNING AFTER. JIN SAID HE WAS CUTE.



WHEN I FIRST MET LAMBERT I THOUGHT I HAD HIM PEGGED: 'EURO-PACKER' DOING THE FULL MOON PARTY CIRCUIT IN SAIGON. IT ONLY TOOK A FEW MORE ENCOUNTERS FOR ME TO SEE HE WASN'T NORMAL. LAMBERT WOULD SIT IN THE BARS CLUTCHING HIS SHOULDER BAG AND STARE VACANTLY AT ALL THE NOISE. IF YOU WERE A BAR-OWNER YOU'D BE WORRIED THAT HE MIGHT HAVE A BOTTLE OF YOUR BOOZE STASHED IN THAT BAG. WHEN THE MOMENT SEIZED HIM, LAMBERT WOULD HAVE NO QUALMS ABOUT FISHING HIS FACE INCHES AWAY FROM YOURS AND PEER AT YOU WITH GLASSY EYES. LAMBERT WAS 1/2 FRENCH AND 1/2 VIETNAMESE, HE SPOKE BOTH AND ENGLISH BUT AS HIS RELUCTANT FRIENDS LIKED TO SAY: 'LAMBERT IS MISUNDERSTOOD IN THREE LANGUAGES.'



MAYBE ITS MY AGE, I DON'T KNOW BUT I SEEM TO BE MEETING A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO HAND OUT BUSINESS CARDS THESE DAYS. I'M PRETTY GRACEFUL NOW BUT I REMEMBER WHEN IT FIRST HAPPENED I OFFENDED THE OTHER PARTY BY LETTING OUT A SNORT OF LAUGHTER AND RAISING MY LITTLE EYEBROWS. STILL, YOU CAN ONLY TAKE THIS KIND OF POSTURING SO FAR. IN SAIGON A KOREAN BUSINESS MAN GAVE ME A PATRONIZING LOOK AND SAID IN A DRUNKEN SLUR: 'DON'T EVER DO THAT AGAIN - WHEN YOU MEET SOMEONE, A BUSINESS CARD IS HIS FACE.' I'D JUST FOLDED HIS CARD IN HALF TO FIT IT IN MY POCKET.

# Culture and Imperialism

by Edward W. Said  
Vintage Books, 1994

YASHAR ESSOP

In *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said argues that any understanding of French and British imperialism requires the study of the literary and cultural productions by those under imperial control. Colonial or periphery culture illuminates metropolitan or central culture. The inverse, as is well known, is usually taken for granted, and many university disciplines are built on this often unexamined premise. Central to Said's book is the idea of contrapuntal reading, in which the literature produced by the imperial powers is read against that of the colonized countries. Contrapuntal reading allows us to escape accepting established canonical texts as the ultimate Word that eclipses all other voices and versions of reality.

Said demonstrates how "great" literary texts by writers such as Jane Austen, Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling, E.M. Forster, and Albert Camus cannot be

fully appreciated unless illuminated by a concomitant awareness of imperialism. This knowledge is garnered mainly through writings in the history of colonialism detailed by European authors. Said finds it impossible to excuse, for instance, Joseph Conrad's racism while acknowledging, and indeed contributing to his status as a "great" writer. Conrad's inability to conceive of the Black Africans described in his *Heart of Darkness* as anything but the living embodiments of darkness, the impermeable, and the unspeakable, is frequently glossed over by critics who concentrate upon his significance as a pre-modernist writer. Acknowledging that an author like Conrad displays insensitivity to the "subjects" of British imperialism does not, however, diminish Said's respect and admiration for the artist himself. And it is true that Conrad perceived the barbarity and rapaciousness of European imperialism while participating in and expressing some of its prejudices. If Conrad was incapable of valuing the human "objects" and "subjects" of British and Belgian imperialism, this does not negate his effectiveness, even brilliance, as a critic of the system of imperialism.

Colonialism's monolithic presence in European history, especially during the period when the novel emerged as the middle class form of artistic expression (roughly from the late nineteenth century to about the 1920s), makes it impossible to ignore or obliterate the centrality of imperialism in the production of English and French literature. Said emphasizes the importance of reading "great" European literature with a constant sense of its worldly affiliations rather than an ivory-tower creation that cannot bear desecration by contact with, or examination in light of, the outside world.

Literature and criticism can create a sense of presence, of a living, breathing, struggling community in which people

can become aware of global interdependencies. The global community, rather than the mere product of technology, that sudden twentieth-century phenomenon alluded to in the media, is the result of the processes of imperialism inaugurated in the late seventeenth century when Europe began its expansion and acquisition of territories overseas. The fact that colonialism has dominated European history for such a long period of time (until the 1940s the list of Europe's colonial holdings were still fairly long) makes it all the more strange that colonialism is rarely studied in tandem with the products of English and French culture. Such an omission, whether willful or simply expeditious, has serious consequences. More particularly, it curtails literature and culture's efficacy at representing the other side of the coin. There are other races and other worlds constantly being impinged upon by European experience. In effect, there is no such thing as a crisply delineated European experience: the world is not England or France, but it is complex and hybrid.

The obvious criticism in *Culture and Imperialism* is that it neglects the exploration of periphery literature and criticism, concentrating instead on a discussion of European literature. The very subject that Said seeks to champion is relegated to a secondary status through his obvious emphasis on European writers. Yet, he still provides a corrective treatment of the Eurocentric, humanistic approach to literature that views it as the hothouse product of a cultural elite. In this view, literature owes very little to real world conditions and situations – it is stripped of its political, economic and global associations.

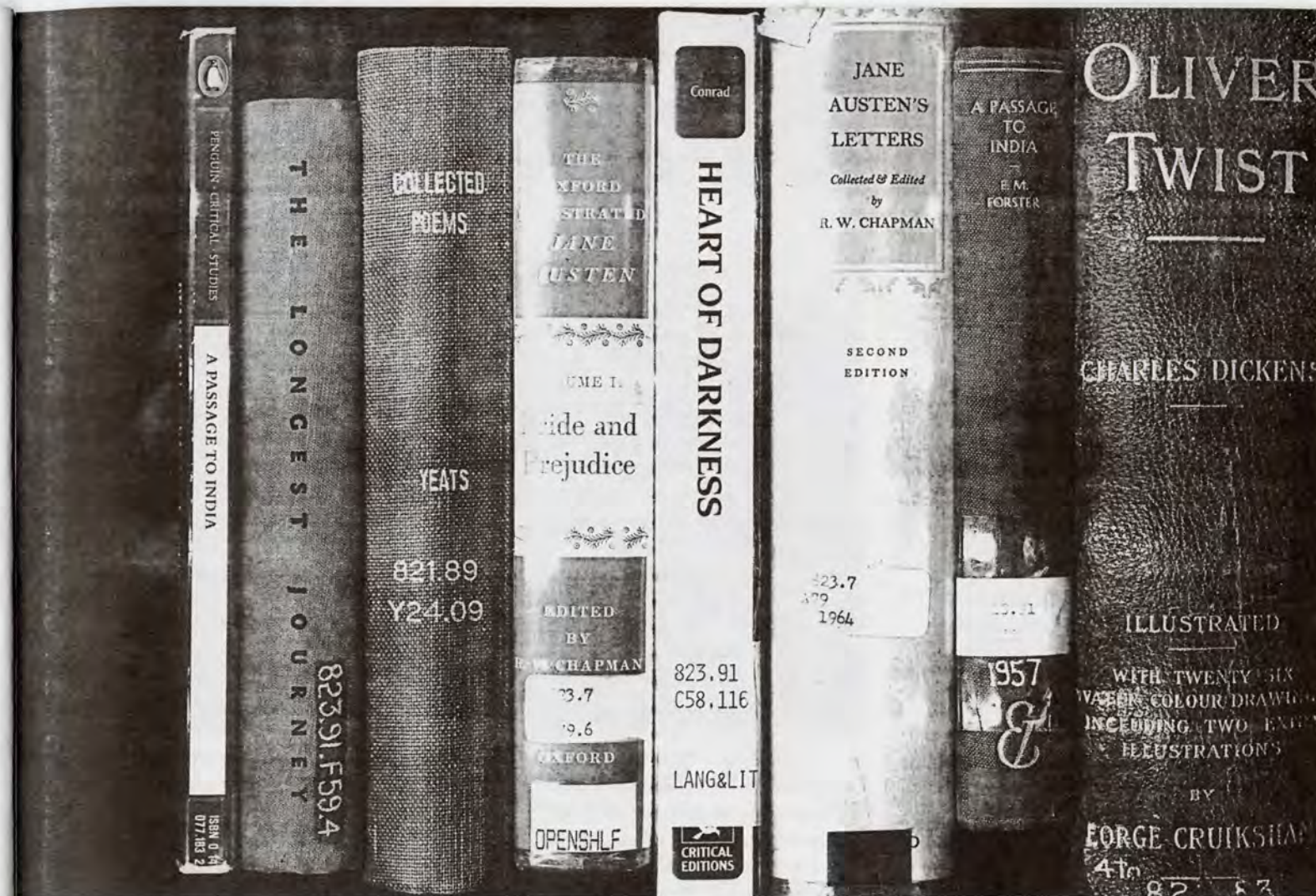
For instance, Said shows how E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India* gains in significance when alternated with a reading of Edward M. Thompson's study of British imperialism in *The Other Side of the Medal*.

Cover painting: Henri Rousseau, *The Representatives of the Foreign Powers, Coming to Hail the Republic as a Token of Peace, 1907.*



CULTURE AND IMPERIALISM  
EDWARD W. SAID

"Grandly conceived...urgently written and urgently needed... No one studying the relations between the metropolitan West and the decolonizing world can ignore Mr. Said's work."  
—The New York Times Book Review



By drawing our attention to the existence of dissenting English and Indian opinions he demonstrates that these otherwise marginalized voices illustrate the dangers and abuses of British imperialism. Said circumvents the easy separation of colonial from canonical literature, suggesting that the operation of this distinction both trivializes and impoverishes our understanding of cultural and literary expressions.

Although he is primarily concerned with the interpretation of and approach to European and colonial texts, Said is fairly insistent upon the power of literature to shape, change and control human attitudes. Said transcends many of the obsessions of postmodern and deconstructionist literary critics, who frequently understand texts as self-contained and self-referential constructions. This literary vacuum in which much contemporary criticism takes place is alien to Said. For him, literature reflects the world, if not always adequately, accurately or benignly,

and has the capacity to change and improve it. A critical approach to colonial literature has the power to make cultures and peoples present so that they can no longer be regarded as abstractions upon which power can be exercised with impunity, without regard for their value and humanity.

The contemporary ignorance of Middle Eastern and African culture on the part of the Western world opens the way to frequent barbarities. But ignorance of the historical struggles and political aspirations of a people makes it easier to dominate, ignore or violate them. Said describes the widespread ignorance of Islamic culture and Middle Eastern countries as a distortion of religious fundamentalism and terrorism that dominates the Western (particularly American) imagination. Such ignorance permits the mass destruction brought about by the Gulf War without arousing popular outrage. If Arabs are portrayed as terrorists and religious fanatics, as they

are remorselessly depicted by the media, it is that much easier to destroy and subjugate them. If, on the other hand, their history is ever present, their sufferings and aspirations tangible to even the most ill-informed and bigoted of persons, it is more difficult to treat them as an inferior or secondary race. Cultural ignorance has its nasty side effects.

Ignorance of colonialism, its literary and cultural by-products, makes it impossible to understand the modern world as a global interconnected and complex community. The interplay of cultures has been a permanent feature of the modern world. Universities and the media have hardly acknowledged this fact, preferring the Eurocentric view of the world, a perspective that seems tenuous and vacant. In the end, Said's *Culture and Imperialism* forces us to rethink these taken-for-granted assumptions.

Yashar Essop is a recent graduate from the University of Toronto. He is from South Africa.

## 'We're Rooted Here and They Can't Pull Us Up': Essays in African Canadian Women's History

by Peggy Bristow, Dionne Brand,  
Linda Carty, Afua Cooper,  
Sylvia Hamilton, Adrienne Shadd  
University of Toronto Press, 1994

DIONNE STEPHENS

Recently, York University's popular Women's Studies Department was accused of failing to attract women of colour.<sup>1</sup> While Women's Studies professors at York and elsewhere focus on forging a unity based on sisterhood, many women of colour feel torn between their racial community and a desire to affirm their gender. This division is due in part to the way in which course materials stream the students' way of thinking. Attempts to address this problem have resulted in courses that offer a single lesson on "race in feminist theory" in which all women of colour are acknowledged as one homogeneous body.

In university classrooms, the attention paid to Black women tends to focus less on their contributions to Canadian society and more on their challenges to feminist theories. Angela Davis, bell hooks

and Audre Lorde are put onto reading lists to speak on the Black feminist perspective. While each of these women have made valuable contributions to both feminist and Black scholarship, their experiences of American culture fall short of providing a full historical and representational voice for Black women's experiences north of the border.

In response to this need, University of Toronto Press has recently published a book entitled *'We're Rooted Here and They Can't Pull Us Up': Essays in African Canadian Women's History*. This collection of essays successfully combines both women's and Black studies; it fills a void educators never seem to know how to address. Furthermore the book definitely lays the foundation for both a Black voice in women's studies and a fresh feminist perspective in Canadian history.

Coordinated by Peggy Bristow,<sup>2</sup> the collection is authored by six Black women known for their work in both the feminist and the Black community. Dionne Brand, Linda Carty, Afua Cooper, Sylvia Hamilton and Adrienne Shadd's contributions, while diverse in focus, connect successfully to provide an in-depth, historical look at Black women in Canada that can be understood by and reflected in the experiences of Canadian Black women today. The writers hope their "new point of view" will challenge traditional and current ideas in academia.

From the outset, *'We're Rooted Here and They Can't Pull Us Up': Essays in African Canadian Women's History* introduces itself as a feminist contribution to the study of Black culture in Canada. To substantiate their approach, the authors make numerous references to other sources, which provide the reader with access to data and facts often overlooked in Eurocentric history. From Peraleen Oliver's 1953 book *A Brief History of the Coloured Baptists of Nova Scotia, 1872-1953* to John Robinson's

"Seek the Truth" (1990), the reader is provided with a detailed overview of other researchers in the field.

Sylvia Hamilton's contribution, "Naming Names, Naming Ourselves: A Survey of Early Black Women in Nova Scotia," provides a look into the arrival patterns of Blacks to Canada, with a specific focus on women's roles. Hamilton, a writer and filmmaker, is best remembered for her 1989 award-winning documentary *Black Mother Black Daughter*. Continuing her interest in Black Nova Scotians, she documents their experiences escaping slavery, facing racism and sexism in a country inaccurately portrayed as "the land of freedom." Hamilton's essay shows that Black women have always been a part of community organization and activism; they took on leadership, organizational and fundraising roles for the Black community's survival.

"The Lord Seemed to Say 'Go': Women and the Underground Railroad Movement," provides another look at Black women's independence in a young nation. Written by Adrienne Shadd (a descendant of nineteenth-century newspaperwoman and abolitionist Mary Ann Shadd Cary), it looks at one of the most widely recognized events involving Blacks in both American and Canadian history. Shadd addresses the difficulties that Black women had to face in escaping slavery. While touching on popularized female heroes of the Underground Railroad, like Harriet Tubman, Shadd puts forth other women's contributions to this lifeline, destroying the stereotype of Black women's successes as a few celebrated cases.

This same challenging of stereotypes is found in Peggy Bristow's look at Black women's lives from 1850-1865 in Buxton and Chatham, Ontario. Still home to a large Black community today, Bristow's "Whatever You Raise in the Ground You Can Sell it in Chatham" equips the reader



Graduating class of Ethel Gibson, of Kingston County area, Nova Scotia (ca. 1921). Back row, left to right: Mary Washington, Ethel Jenkins, Lucinda McWilliamson. Front row, left to right: Ethel Gibson, Daisy Bacota. Photo: Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia.

with a background of the real-life day-to-day racism that the first Black settlers in this area faced. Canada has often been considered a nation that welcomed all people (although today many are questioning this claim). Bristow points to the mid-1800s when Blacks in Ontario faced barriers from the minute they arrived. The experiences and continued perseverance of the Black women living in these towns are documented by Bristow as a testament to the importance of Black women's roles in their communities' survival.

Afua Cooper continues the theme of women working in the Black community, focusing on one individual's experiences as a Black teacher during the nineteenth century. Known for her extensive work in Black education, Cooper's "Black Woman Teacher Mary Bibbs" looks into this educator's efforts to bring education to Black children in Canada and extend her involvement beyond the school walls. Furthermore, this account of one Black woman's life takes on added significance as it provides a detailed look at broader society's influence and agenda

for the Black community.

Similarly, Black women's interaction in broader society is a major element of Dionne Brand's contribution, "We Weren't Allowed to Go into Factory Work Until Hitler Started the War." This essay explores Black women's roles in Canadian society during World War II. Like Cooper, Brand brings in interesting points about the government's policies and legislation regarding Black women's employment opportunities and the economic necessities which forced them to struggle under this oppression. As in her earlier works "Sisters in the Struggle" and "No Burden to Carry: Narratives of Black Working Women in Ontario," "We Weren't Allowed to Go into Factory Work Until Hitler Started the War" successfully combines both the personal and societal perspectives that influenced Black women's experiences during the early part of this century.

Linda Carty's "African Women and the State" provides a fitting closing as she reviews the political climate for Canadian Black women both in the past and present. Drawing on her widely rec-

ognized work on the position of women of colour in advanced capitalist and Third World nations, Carty examines employment patterns of Black women throughout Canadian history. Noting the diversity of women in the Black community due to changing immigration patterns in the last five decades, Carty analyses the responses the powers-that-be have enacted to control Black women's lives economically, politically and socially.

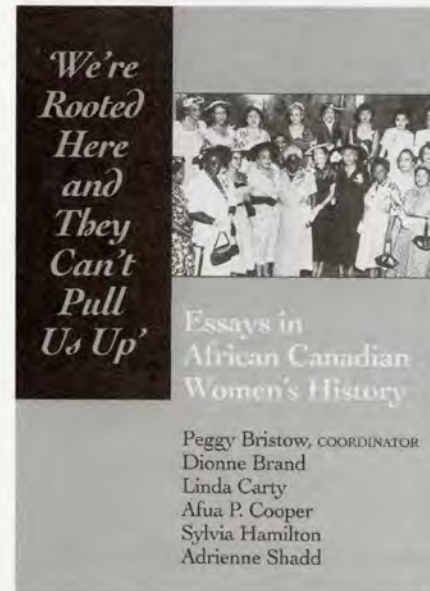
These last three elements are the key issues that run throughout the book in various forms. Presented in historical, racial and gender terms, *'We're Rooted Here and They Can't Pull Us Up'* is a success on many levels. Its title alone serves as an expression of Black women's realities and response to them. In that context, the book is a physical object that has caught up on lost time, giving young Black women a starting point within the Canadian women's movement and a vision of the role they have mapped out in the Black community.

Beyond its importance to the Canadian Black feminist identity, *'We're Rooted Here and They Can't Pull Us Up'* offers a fresh interpretation of an emerging Canadian history for all people. For feminist studies and history programmes, this text is a must. Its presence will be pivotal in anti-racist education and race relations on a broader context. As well, it is a powerful medium, providing a voice that has in the past been viewed without understanding or context.

Dionne Stephens attends York University, where she is actively involved in the media and issues concerning Black women on campus.

### Notes

1. *excalibur*, 6 April 1994, vol. 28 no. 31.
2. Peggy Bristow is a widely recognized researcher at the Centre for Women's Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.



# Yoshiko Kanai

## Moira

A Space Gallery, Toronto  
September 3 to October 15, 1994

KYO MACLEAR

Wafting spirit-shells, suspended by fishing wire, loop celestially from colourfully twined strips of washi. Unclad plaster "women" are coming unstitched, spilling forth gnarled twigs and tatters of patterned kimono remnants. Window-paned tinderboxes seal in their emotionally incendiary contents: displays of inflated condoms and a string of copies of Mao Tse-Tung's "Red Book"; a cloth heart pierced with a knife, trailing waxy splatters; and in yet another box, an armless chair shrouded with wild boar's fur. Yoshiko Kanai has created a visual cacophony of what she has termed "non-extravagant" textures and surfaces. This splaying of industrial, manufactured and natural materials, messily colliding and reconciling in shared space, provides an apt visual metaphor for some of the questions Tokyo-based artist Kanai poses in

*Moira*. Without proposing a resolution, Kanai sees this installation as a gesture towards exposing the multiple bifurcations — of body/spirit, art/craft, West/East, masculinity/femininity, public/private — that regulate the cultural production and multiple subjectivities of Japanese women artists.

While opining that "Art History makes Western people," Yoshiko Kanai has set about constructing an artistic practice and praxis that can lay bare the particulars of her subjectivity. Critical of the discursive closure imposed upon her by mainstream art writers from various international contexts — who have on numerous occasions stamped her work and aesthetic sensibility as "Eastern" and "feminine" — Kanai is anxious to construct her own matrix for viewing. Confronted with the Scylla of Western Orientalism and the Charybdis of diasporic nostalgia for Asia, she seeks to violate these imperialist structures of sentimentality.

Tacitly posing the question, What am I? What is Woman?, Kanai proceeds to

excavate the constructions of femininity that have constituted, and continue to constitute, her subjectivity. She begins by locating her negotiations with desire, sexuality, and creative expressivity amidst the intimacy of her relationships with female family members. Installed in three separate locations in the gallery are shrine-like configurations consisting of plaster portraits (of mother, older sister, and "self") mounted on wood-framed glass boxes. Each box "houses" a story. These vignettes, or portrait assemblages, are elucidated by short prose pieces inscribed on one side of the box in red Letraset. Read separately, each construction signifies a separate isolation or narrative of "being." But these ostensibly discrete stories bleed together through Kanai's text. In *Untitled (Mother)*, she writes: "Mother never enjoyed sex...she kept her purity against my father's wild desire, but I can never be pure like her." Kanai's own inter-subjectivity, and her desire, are cast in relation to a storehouse of mythologies of femininity, replete with gendered notions of purity, fidelity, and promiscuity. Oblique but ubiquitous references to her father, and to a male lover (in *Desire and Fear*), serve as lodestones evoking a continuum of conflicting emotions: constructions of masculinity are configured and re-configured as both repellent and attractive.

Kanai has lodged a layered set of responses in this structured process of myth-making and re-making. Her first gesture is to embrace archetypal notions of woman, by mythologizing herself as *Moira*, "one of the three sisters of fate." Contained within this circle of interpretation is her desire to invite imaginings of a strong Asian feminist community. She offers up the particulars of her experience with the hope that other women can create "generalized meaning." But here, she resists both romantic tropes of "community" and the temptation to

reduce "family" and "home" to sites of repression. Both emerge as terrains charged with the search for power, and equally ridden with pain and pleasure.

*Hope and Despair*, the "story" of Kanai's older sister, evinces this tension. The contrast between the surface calm of the chiselled plaster portrait and the disinterred armature of knotted kindling and cloth that bursts out of the body's "frame" resonates powerfully. As a formal response to the "cult of the refined" in traditionalist notions of Japanese aesthetics, Kanai has sought to lay bare her artistic process. These constructions, at once incomplete or over-completed, dissolving or re-assembling, are never seamless.

The literal story of Kanai's sister's involvement with student protests and the Japanese Communist Party is bitter-sweet. Once inspired by her sister's radicalism, Kanai now despairs that her sibling will have "nothing to hold on to in the age of communism's decline." Presenting a bleak forecast of her sister's ability to cope with this collapse of (grand) narrative structures, Kanai's hopes are invested in proposing an alternate narrative: here, the cult of romantic love is proffered as a proxy for Party Communism. Kanai's own system of meaning-making is concomitantly transformed and re-secured.

A large black and white photo mural mounted on a far wall serves as a portable context for the exhibition. Much in the same way that travelling performers might unfurl a backdrop for theatrical vignettes, Kanai presents the viewer with a photo banner that sets the *mise-en-scène* for her myriad narrative installations. She inserted this portion of the installation during a recent studio residency in New York City, partially in mocking response to what she described as an implicit demand that "minority" artists "say their history." The photograph, which loosely references *Hope and Despair*, shows mem-



bers of Zen Gakuren massed together in protest. No explanatory text is offered, so that hermetic readings of this image of 1960s student resistance as "documentary" are disrupted by the absence of nomenclature. What appears is not an iconograph of protest, or an authenticated moment in Japanese history, but rather a non-synchronous event that evades a linear or atomized reading of the exhibition. By invoking instances of collective disturbance, the photograph destabilizes assumptions of memory and identity as

somehow set apart from the grinding traffic of world events, cultural representations, or material histories. Our stories are mired in these heterogeneous sites and ambivalent moments, Kanai suggests. And it is these intersections of pandemic experiences and events, terrible and beautiful, that can produce epiphanies of understanding and collective meaning — however shifting and ephemeral.

*Kyo Maclear is a Toronto-based writer and visual artist.*



*Moira*, sculpture, 1994

## G.B. Jones' Feminist Home Invasion

Mercer Union, Toronto  
November 5 to December 22, 1994

JANĒ FARROW

This past November, Toronto's Mercer Union featured the pencil drawings of G.B. Jones, local punk-D.I.Y. queen and all-round iconoclast. Curated by Shonagh Adelman, the exhibit was the fifth in a series entitled "Girly Pictures" and also included Jones' 1992 Super-8 classic "The Yo Yo Gang."

Seeing G.B. Jones' work on display in an art gallery is like finding a well-thumbed *Penthouse* catalogued and shelved at the Library of Congress. The juxtaposition of her snarky, punker-dyke subjects against virginal white walls, varnished floors and full-spectrum lighting resonates with a charming ambivalence and absurdity.

Jones' series of pencil drawings feature female troublemakers committing acts of sexual misbehaviour. The first is a cruisy tattoo scene between surly biker babes and the second an SM prison fantasy between two inmates and a guard who gets fucked and beat on by her captives. G.B. Jones' drawings are not likely to be featured in *Ms.* magazine's arts and culture section in the next two or three hundred years.



Tom of Finland, Untitled.

To understand Jones' subjects and representational strategy one must first acknowledge her blatant appropriation of Tom of Finland's hyper-fetishized gay male porn. Tom is the uncontested "father" of the modern homo-clone aesthetic. His realistic, cartoon-like representations of hard-bodied (and almost always) white men are widely available and displayed



Prison Breakout #5, graphite on paper, 13.75 x 10 inches, 1991.

throughout the Western queer-boy stratosphere. His slick, stylized drawings embrace a coarse, hierarchical praxis of top and bottom, getting and giving. A host of horny cowboys, cops, sailors, leather boys, mechanics and construction workers suck and fuck their way to a heady climax in the boiler rooms, bars and workshops of a sweaty, macho-man's world.

Technically, G.B. Jones' renderings are a bit more crude and a little less exaggerated than Tom's. Her subject matter parallels his but with several significant departures. Jones' models are rarely authority figures — they are rebels and outcasts, female deviants (gay/bi/straight/who cares) playing out forbidden sexual roles on the margins. It is worth noting that the roles of top and bottom or butch and femme do not conflate with external norms of authority and power. In fact, these roles are inversely empowered in the role-playing depicted. For instance, in the sequence involving the prison guard and the two inmates, it is the guard who gets fucked and beaten by the prisoners. This is a critical variance from Tom's drawings, which constantly reproduce and uphold conventional roles of

authority and hierarchy within sexual practice. Tom's cops and captains are, and always will be, compulsively "greek active."

The punker dykes of Jones' drawings are refugees from the established moral and gender order. Unlike Tom's subjects, they are not members of the military or police force and do not wield state-sponsored authority. G.B. Jones' pencil drawings are a radical reconfiguration of Tom of Finland's pornographic language of desire. Her out-

right hijacking of his craft "steals" the language of the "father," a feminist strategy she furthers by conducting a full-scale home invasion on the Great Mother (the iconized Andrea Dworkin, *et al.*) when she graphically depicts taboo sex and power roles between women.

Of course, radical sex does not necessarily equal radical politics — playing with power in the bedroom does not automatically entail sharing it in the kitchen or on the streets. And we also know that girls and boys are equally susceptible to this revolutionary lunch-bag let-down. Nevertheless, G.B. Jones' clever inversion of Tom of Finland's lusty gay male porn is radical and transgressive as a representational strategy. Jones' studly, dyke-punk outcasts will always be getting more bang for their sex-radical buck than Tom's father-fucking sailor boys rubbing each other's power-inscribed dicks on the poop deck.

*Jane Farrow recently returned to Toronto after five years living in Vancouver and Halifax, and currently pursues two-thirds of a life as an aspiring, unnameable something.*

## Index Volume 17

COMPILED BY  
KATHLEEN PIRRIE  
ADAMS AND  
DIANA BRYDEN

### AIDS Issues/Awareness

Ibañez-Carrasco, José Francisco  
"Multiculturalism and AIDS: Doing the Right Thing!," no. 4, 13-15.

Li, Xiaoping  
"Dismantling Invisibility: Asian Artists Responding to the AIDS Crisis," (A Space, Toronto), review, no. 3, 35-36.

Rashid, Ian  
"Cruising Media: Serial Killers & Other 'Undesirables,'" no. 1, 6-7.

### Anti-Racism

Dawes, Kwame  
"Cutting Your Nose to Spite Your Face: The challenges of diversity in the Canadian artistic community," no. 3, 11-13.

Fung, Richard  
"Call In the Tropes: Miss Saigon undergoes analysis," no. 2, 7-9.

Ibañez-Carrasco, José Francisco  
"Multiculturalism and AIDS: Doing the Right Thing!," no. 4, 13-15.

Lewis, Sharon  
"Rocking the Show Boat," no. 2, 26-27.

Philip, M. Nourbese  
"Sinking: \$6 Million & still counting," no. 2, 14-25.

### Art/Exhibitions

Andreae, Janice  
Shonagh Adelman:  
"Teledonna," (A Space, Toronto), review, no. 4, 45-48.

augustine, karen/miranda  
Danny Tisdale: "The Last of the African Americans," (YYZ, Toronto), interview, no. 3, 44-47.

augustine, karen/miranda, Carol Laing and Brenda Joy Lem  
"Multiplying Desires: A Discussion of 'Remapping Tales of Desire,'" (A Space, Toronto), no. 2, 30.

Beatty, Greg  
Paul Sisetski: "Island of the Damned," (Dunlop Art Gallery, Regina), review, no. 1, 29.

Bullen, Charmian, SEE Mulin, Charlene  
"Public Art, Public Process: Vancouver Community Fence Project," no. 4, p. 9.

Chan, Lorraine  
"Telling Relations: Sexuality and the Family," curated by Larissa Lai, (grunt gallery, Vancouver), review, no. 1, 26-28.

Creery, Janet  
Karen Atkinson, Andrea Liss:  
"Remapping Tales of Desire," (A Space, Toronto), review, no. 2, 31-32.



Fuse Christmas party, 1993. Back, left to right: Susan Kealey, Chris Eamon, Lloyd Wong. Front, left to right: Andrew Beardsall, Karlene Mootoo, Andrew J. Paterson.

Derksen, Jeff  
"Bookends and Odd Books," curated by Ashok Mathur, (Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff), review, no. 3, 31-32.

Eamon, Christopher  
Ben Smit, (Cold City Gallery, Toronto), review, no. 4, 39.

Li, Xiaoping  
"Dismantling Invisibility: Asian Artists Responding to the AIDS Crisis," (A Space, Toronto), review, no. 3, 35-36.

Marks, Laura U.  
"In the Seam/En couture," (Access Art Now, Toronto), review, no. 3, 42-43.

Mulin, Charlene, SEE Bullen, Charmian  
"Public Art, Public Process: Vancouver Community Fence Project," no. 4, p. 9.

Reade, Cyril  
"A Cup for a Cup," (Forest City Gallery, London), review, no. 2, 33-34.

Rudder, Jennifer  
"Ghosts: An Exhibition by the Blanket Artists' Collective," (Gallery 76, Toronto), review, no. 1, 30-32.

Rudder, Jennifer  
"Spontaneous Combustion," (One Queen Street East, Toronto), review, no. 3, 39-41.

Wright, Cynthia  
"Talking Cock, Lesbians and Aural Sex," interview with Shonagh Adelman, no. 4, 44-48.



### Artist's Projects

Anthony, Terence  
"Maybe if I listen to the rain  
long enuf,"  
no. 5 & 6, 43-46.

Ho Tam  
"Excerpts from The YELLOW  
Pages,"  
no. 2, 28-29.

Mollinèaux, Melinda  
"They demanded a witness,"  
no. 4, 20-21.

Wood, Kelly and  
Robertson, Lisa  
"untitled,"  
no. 1, 24-25.

### Arts Organizations

Dawes, Kwame  
"Cutting Your Nose to Spite  
Your Face: The challenges of  
diversity in the Canadian  
artistic community,"  
no. 3, 11-13.

### Asian Culture And Politics

Chan, Lorraine  
"Telling Relations: Sexuality  
and the Family," curated by  
Larissa Lai, (grunt gallery,  
Vancouver) review,  
no. 1, 26-28.

Fung, Richard  
"Call in the Tropes: Miss  
Saigon Undergoes Analysis,"  
no. 2, 7-9.

Fung, Richard  
"Interview with David Henry  
Hwang,"  
no. 2, 10-13.

Kobayashi, Tamai  
"Heartbeat in the Diaspora:  
Taiko and Community,"  
no. 5 & 6, 24-26.

Li, Xiaoping  
"Dismantling Invisibility:  
Asian Artists Responding to  
the AIDS Crisis," (A Space,  
Toronto), review,  
no. 3, 35-36.

Maart, Rozena and Tanna,  
Shruti  
"Portrait of the Colonized  
in Gurinder Chadha's 'Baji on  
the Beach,'"  
no. 4, 10-12.

McFarlane, Scott  
"The Rising Sun in the Media,"  
no. 2, 12-13.

Palmer, Hazelle  
"Returning the Gaze,"  
(edited by Himani Bannerji,  
Sister Vision Press), review,  
no. 1, 39-40.

Srivastava, Vinita  
"Notes on Bhangra,"  
no. 5 & 6, 18-20.

### Black Culture And Politics

augustine, karen/miranda  
"Breaking Crackers: A  
Conversation with Peter  
Hudson, editor of 'diaspora,'"  
no. 2, 45-46.

augustine, karen/miranda  
Danny Tisdale: "The Last of  
the African Americans,"  
(YYZ, Toronto), interview,  
no. 3, 44-47.

augustine, karen/miranda  
"givin' props 2 da boyz: a  
black review of the Festival  
of Festivals,"  
no. 2, 41-42.

Chan, Lorraine  
"Telling Relations: Sexuality  
and the Family," curated  
by Larissa Lai, (grunt gallery,  
Vancouver) review,  
no. 1, 26-28.

Essop, Daria  
"Music in the New South  
Africa,"  
no. 5 & 6, 15-17.

Lawrence, Glace W.  
"Black is Back!: (Toronto  
Festival of Festivals)," review,  
no. 1, 33-36.

Lewis, Sharon  
"Rocking the Show Boat,"  
no. 2, 26-27.

Marshall, Victor Bains  
"Harlem State of Mind: A  
Conversation with Greg Tate,"  
no. 5 & 6, 32-34.

Oscar, James  
"Reachin' (a new refutation  
of space and time): interview  
with the Diggable Planets,"  
no. 5 & 6, 38-42.

Palmer, Hazelle  
"Returning the Gaze," (edited  
by Himani Bannerji, Sister  
Vision Press), review,  
no. 1, 39-40.

Philip, M. Nourbese  
"Sinking: \$6 Million & still  
counting,"  
no. 2, 14-25.

### Books

Bryden, Diana  
"Sounding Differences:  
Conversations with Seventeen  
Canadian Women Writers,"  
(by Janice Williamson,  
University of Toronto Press);  
"Writers & Company:  
In Conversation with CBC  
Radio's Eleanor Wachtel,"  
(by Eleanor Wachtel, Alfred  
A. Knopf Canada), review  
no. 2, 36-37.

Cehan, Brent  
"Extended Play: Sounding  
off from John Cage to Dr.  
Funkenstein," (by John  
Corbett, Duke University  
Press), review,  
no. 5 & 6, 53-56.

Dacey, Marc  
"Rotten: No Irish, No Blacks,  
No Dogs," (by John Lydon,  
with Keith and Kent  
Zimmerman, St. Martin's  
Press), review,  
no. 5 & 6, 49.

Decter, Ann  
"In Her I Am," (by Chrystos,  
Press Gang); "Stone Butch  
Blues," (by Leslie Feinberg,  
Firebrand Books), review,  
no. 4, 37-38.

Folland, Tom  
"Rock My Religion: Writings  
and Art Projects 1965-90,"  
(by Dan Graham), review,  
no. 2, 35.

Essop, Yashar  
"Ranters and Crowd Pleasers:  
Punk and Pop Music, 1977-  
92," (by Greil Marcus,  
Doubleday), review,  
no. 5 & 6, 51-53.

Ingram, Gordon Brent  
"They Write Their Dreams on  
the Rock Forever," (by Annie  
Zetco York, Richard Daly and  
Chris Arnett: Talonbooks);  
"Bowl of Bone/Tale of the  
Syuwe," (directed by Jan-  
Marie Martell and Annie  
Zetco York: NFB), review,  
no. 3, 37-39.

Palmer, Hazelle  
"Returning the Gaze," (edited  
by Himani Bannerji, Sister  
Vision Press), review,  
no. 1, 39-40.

Reinke, Steve  
"Music/Sound 1948-1993:  
The Michael Snow Project,"  
(edited by Michael Snow,  
Alfred A. Knopf Canada),  
review,  
no. 5 & 6, 50-51.

Robertson, Clive  
"Ineluctable Studies:  
Collective Autobiographies  
of the Knowledge Class,"  
review,  
no. 4, 34-36.

Shin, Ann  
"Radio Rethink: art, sound  
and transmission," (edited  
by Diana Augaitis and Dan  
Lander, Walter Phillips  
Gallery), review,  
no. 5 & 6, 47-48.

Wong, Lloyd  
"Queer Looks," (edited by  
Martha Gever, John Greyson  
and Pratibha Parmar, Between  
the Lines Press), review,  
no. 3, 34-35.

### Feminism

augustine, karen/miranda  
"givin' props 2 da boyz: a  
black review of the Festival  
of Festivals,"  
no. 2, 41-42.

Bryden, Diana  
"Sounding Differences:  
Conversations with Seventeen  
Canadian Women Writers,"  
(by Janice Williamson,  
University of Toronto Press);  
"Writers & Company: In  
Conversation with CBC  
Radio's Eleanor Wachtel,"  
(by Eleanor Wachtel, Alfred  
A. Knopf Canada), review,  
no. 2, 36-37.

Chan, Lorraine  
"Telling Relations: Sexuality  
and the Family," curated by  
Larissa Lai, (grunt gallery,  
Vancouver) review,  
no. 1, 26-28.

Crosbie, Lynn  
"Even You Can Not Resist Her:  
9 Courtney Love Tantras,"  
no. 5 & 6, 35-37.

Palmer, Hazelle  
"Returning the Gaze,"  
(edited by Himani Bannerji,  
Sister Vision Press), review,  
no. 1, 39-40.

### Film and Video

augustine, karen/miranda  
"givin' props 2 da boyz: a  
black review of the Festival  
of Festivals,"  
no. 2, 41-42.

Czegledy, Nina  
"New Video Realities in a  
New East Europe: A Personal  
Report,"  
no. 4, 16-19.

Fung, Richard  
"Interview with David Henry  
Hwang,"  
no. 2, 10-11.

Ingram, Gordon Brent  
"They Write Their Dreams on  
the Rock Forever," (by Annie  
Zetco York, Richard Daly and  
Chris Arnett, Talonbooks);  
"Bowl of Bone/Tale of the  
Syuwe," (directed by Jan-  
Marie Martell and Annie  
Zetco York: NFB), review,  
no. 3, 37-39.

Lawrence, Glace W.  
"Black is Back!: (Toronto  
Festival of Festivals)," review,  
no. 1, 33-36.

Lee, Helen  
"Notes from the Indie Circuit,"  
(Toronto Festival of Festivals),  
review,  
no. 2, 38-40.

Levi  
"Profile: Shawna Dempsey  
and Lorri Millan,"  
no. 1, 43-44.

Maart, Rozena and Tanna,  
Shruti  
"Portrait of the Colonized in  
Gurinder Chadha's 'Baji on  
the Beach,'"  
no. 4, 10-12.

Marks, Laura U.  
"Packaged For Export,  
Contents Under Pressure:  
Canadian Film and Video in  
a U.S. Context,"  
no. 1, 12-23.

Miller, Earl  
Dennis Day: "Auto Biography,"  
(YYZ, Toronto), review,  
no. 4, 43.

Reid-Pharr, Robert F.  
"Mix: The 7th New York  
Lesbian and Gay  
Experimental Film and Video  
Festival," review,  
no. 2, 43-44.

Tuer, Dot  
"All in the Family: An  
Examination of Community  
Access Cable in Canada,"  
no. 3, 23-30.

Wanyeki, Lynne  
"Twenty Bold, Brash and  
Beautiful Years: Video In's  
Twentieth Anniversary,"  
(Video In, Vancouver),  
review,  
no. 3, 32-33.

### First Nation/Inuit Culture And Politics

Ingram, Gordon Brent  
"They Write Their Dreams  
on the Rock Forever," (by  
Annie Zetco York, Richard  
Daly and Chris Arnett,  
Talonbooks); "Bowl of  
Bone/Tale of the Syuwe,"  
(directed by Jan-Marie  
Martell and Annie Zetco  
York: NFB), review,  
no. 3, 37-39.

Robertson, Clive  
"Kaiashits/Boneman,"  
(Innuinuit Theatre Company,  
L'Ascension, Quebec), review,  
no. 1, 37-39.

### Lesbian/Gay Culture And Politics

Andreae, Janice  
Shonagh Adelman:  
"Teledonna," (A Space,  
Toronto), review,  
no. 4, 45-48.

Benson, Denise  
"Community Radio at Odds  
with 'Community Standards?'"  
no. 5 & 6, 5-10.

Carol, Elaine  
Pierre Molinier:  
"The Precursor," (Toronto  
Photographers Workshop),  
review,  
no. 4, 40.

Cehan, Brent  
"You're Beautiful Man,  
You're Beautiful: Beauties and  
Monstrosities," (Damn  
Straight, Toronto), review,  
no. 4, 41-42.

Chan, Lorraine  
"Telling Relations: Sexuality  
and the Family," curated by  
Larissa Lai, (grunt gallery,  
Vancouver) review,  
no. 1, 26-28.

Gomez, Gabriel  
"DQTV: Public Access Queers,"  
no. 1, 8-11.

Levi  
"Profile: Shawna Dempsey  
and Lorri Millan,"  
no. 1, 43-44.

Li, Xiaoping  
"Dismantling Invisibility:  
Asian Artists Responding to  
the AIDS Crisis," (A Space,  
Toronto), review,  
no. 3, 35-36.

Marks, Laura U.  
"Packaged For Export:  
Canadian Film and Video in  
a U.S. Context,"  
no. 1, 12-23.

Miller, Earl  
Dennis Day: "Auto Biography,"  
(YYZ, Toronto), review,  
no. 4, 43.

Reid-Pharr, Robert F.  
"Mix: The 7th New York  
Lesbian and Gay  
Experimental Film and Video  
Festival," review  
no. 2, 43-44.

Wong, Lloyd  
"Queer Looks," (edited by  
Martha Gever, John Greyson  
and Pratibha Parmar, Between  
the Lines Press), review,  
no. 3, 34-35.

Wright, Cynthia  
"Talking Cock, Lesbians and  
Aural Sex": interview with  
Shonagh Adelman,  
no. 4, 44-48.

## Mass Media

Benson, Denise  
"Community Radio at Odds with 'Community Standards'"  
no. 5 & 6, 5-10.

Gomez, Gabriel  
"DQTV: Public Access Queers,"  
no. 1, 8-11.

Maitland-Carter, Kathleen  
"Summer of Love — Winter of Discontent: British Criminal Justice Bill,"  
no. 5 & 6, 11-14.

McIntosh, David  
"Cyborgs in Denial: Technology and Identity in the Net,"  
no. 3, 14-22.

Rashid, Ian  
"Cruising Media: Serial Killers & Other 'Undesirables,'"  
no. 1, 6-7.

Tuer, Dot  
"All in the Family: An Examination of Community Access Cable in Canada,"  
no. 3, 23-30.

## Music

Cehan, Brent  
"Extended Play: Sounding off from John Cage to Dr. Funkenstein," (by John Corbett, Duke University Press), review,  
no. 5 & 6, 53-56.

Crosbie, Lynn  
"Even You Can Not Resist Her: 9 Courtney Love Tantras,"  
no. 5 & 6, 35-37.

Dacey, Marc  
"Rotten: No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs," (by John Lydon, with Keith and Kent Zimmerman, St. Martin's Press), review,  
no. 5 & 6, 49.

El-Yassir, Nada  
"Rhythm Activism: An interview with Marcel Khalife,"  
no. 5 & 6, 21-23.

Essop, Daria  
"Music in the New South Africa,"  
no. 5 & 6, 15-17.

Essop, Yashar  
"Ravers and Crowd Pleasers: Punk and Pop Music, 1977-92," (by Greil Marcus: Doubleday), review,  
no. 5 & 6, 51-53.

Kobayashi, Tamai  
"Heartbeat in the Diaspora: Taiko and Community,"  
no. 5 & 6, 24-26.

Maitland-Carter, Kathleen  
"Summer of Love — Winter of Discontent: British Criminal Justice Bill,"  
no. 5 & 6, 11-14.

Marshall, Victor Bains  
"Harlem State of Mind: A Conversation with Greg Tate,"  
no. 5 & 6, 32-34.

Oscar, James  
"Reachin' (a new refutation of space and time): interview with the Diggable Planets,"  
no. 5 & 6, 38-42.

Reinke, Steve  
"Music/Sound 1948-1993: The Michael Snow Project," (edited by Michael Snow, Knopf Canada), review,  
no. 5 & 6, 50-51.

Shin, Ann  
"Radio Rethink: art, sound and transmission," (edited by Diana Augaitis and Dan Lander, Walter Phillips Gallery), review,  
no. 5 & 6, 47-48.

Srivastava, Vinita  
"Notes on Bhangra,"  
no. 5 & 6, 18-20.

Straw, Will  
"Organized Disorder: The Changing Space of the Record Shop,"  
no. 5 & 6, 27-31.

## Obituaries

Buchan, David  
by A.A. Bronson  
no. 3, 3.

Flack, Robert  
by Andy Fabo,  
no. 2, 1.

Wilson, Alexander  
by Andy Fabo,  
no. 2, 1.

## Performance

augustine, karen/miranda  
Danny Tisdale: "The Last African American: In the 22nd Century," (YYZ, Toronto), interview,  
no. 3, 44-47.

Cehan, Brent  
"You're Beautiful Man, You're Beautiful: Beauties and Monstrosities," (Damn Straight, Toronto), review,  
no. 4, 41-42.

Farah, Mary Anne  
"Telematic Performance Loops in Toronto and Quebec," (Inter-Access, Toronto and Obscure, Quebec City), review,  
no. 1, 41-42.

Levi  
"Profile: Shawna Dempsey and Lorri Millan"  
no. 1, 43-44.

Robertson, Clive  
"Kaiashits/Boneman," (Innuinuit Theatre Company, L'Ascension, Quebec), review,  
no. 1, 37-39.

## Photography

Carol, Elaine  
Pierre Molinier:  
"The Precursor," (Toronto Photographers Workshop), review,  
no. 4, 40.

Eamon, Christopher  
"Ben Smit," (Cold City Gallery, Toronto), review,  
no. 4, 39.

## Popular Culture

Maitland-Carter, Kathleen  
"Summer of Love — Winter of Discontent: British Criminal Justice Bill,"  
no. 5 & 6, 11-14.

Marshall, Victor Bains  
"Harlem State of Mind: A Conversation with Greg Tate,"  
no. 5 & 6, 32-34.

Oscar, James  
"Reachin' (a new refutation of space and time): interview with the Diggable Planets,"  
no. 5 & 6, 38-42.

Sacchetti, Clara and Dufresne, Todd  
"President's Choice Through the Looking Glass: Loblaw's, Nichol & Specular Consumption,"  
no. 4, 22-31.

Srivastava, Vinita  
"Notes on Bhangra,"  
no. 5 & 6, 18-20.

Straw, Will  
"Organized Disorder: The Changing Space of the Record Shop,"  
no. 5 & 6, 27-31.



a journal for women artists of african descent  
**AT THE CROSSROADS**  
PO Box 317, Stn P, Toronto, ON Canada M5S 2S8 • ph: (416) 538-4296 • fx: (416) 360-0781

upcoming deadlines:  
Queer Black Women's Art  
(February 1995)  
Youth Art & Culture  
(September 1995)  
please send a SASE for  
submission guidelines

Subscriptions (4 issues) Cdn: ind \$11/inst \$20; \*US: ind \$10/inst  
\$18; \*Foreign: ind \$15/inst \$23; Free to prisoners

back issues \$2 each

#3 (BET in Canada, Systemic Oppression in the  
Women's Movement & Art World, Urban Bush Women)

#1 & #2— SOLD OUT

\*US & Foreign orders to be paid in US funds

distributed by CMPA (416) 362-2546 and DeBoer's (201) 667-9300

submissions sought from Black writers & artists for the book

## EYES ON THIS: Africanadian Perspectives on Art, Media, Politics & Culture

Students & unpublished writers are strongly encouraged to solicit work. No fiction or poetry, but can be interviews, transcribed radio programmes, criticism... on music, media, step & rap culture, technology, lesbian & gay culture...  
Max 5000 words.

Visual artists may send slides, photographs or photocopies of art work, including graffiti, comix, phototext...

For more information, leave your name & number for Karen Augustine c/o FUSE Magazine at (416) 367-0159, or send a self-addressed stamped envelope to:

EYES ON THIS  
PO Box 317, Stn P  
Toronto, ON  
M5S 2S8

deadline: DECEMBER 1995

# FIELD GUIDE TO THE EMERGING CULTURE

ANITA RODDICK • IVAN ILLICH • PAUL HAWKEN • HERMAN DALY • SUSAN GRIFFIN  
VACLAV HAVEL • LISA CARVER • TERRY TEMPEST WILLIAMS • BOBBY MCFERRIN

## UTNE READER

UR

JAN-FEB 95 NO. 67

THE BEST OF THE ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

\$4.95 USA \$5.95 CAN

### VISIONARIES

WHO COULD CHANGE YOUR LIFE

UTNE READER SORTS OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY... AND TOMORROW. EVERY OTHER MONTH, UTNE READER OFFERS THE FRESHEST NEWS, OPINION, AND HUMOR — FROM OVER 2,100 INDEPENDENT MAGAZINES, NEWSLETTERS, AND JOURNALS. IT'S "THE BEST OF THE ALTERNATIVE MEDIA" — BRINGING YOU A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT JUST HAPPENED, WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT, AND WHAT IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN NEXT. **SUBSCRIBE TODAY** AND GET ONE YEAR (6 ISSUES) FOR ONLY \$30 CAN. YOU'LL **SAVE 16%** OFF THE COVER PRICE, AND GET HOME DELIVERY.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE PRINT)  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY/PROV/CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PAYMENT ENCLOSED  BILL ME

RETURN TO: **UTNE READER**, 11-2660 MEADOWVALE BLVD, MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO L5N 6M6 • FOR FASTER SERVICE: **1-800-736-UTNE**

ALLOW 4-5 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY OF FIRST ISSUE.

D1AAS-9