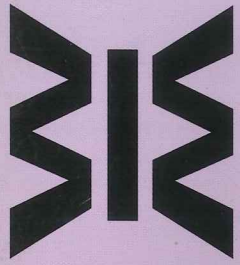


No. 68/69 - Fall/Winter 2005



Women & Environments

international
magazine

FEMINISMS, TRANSNATIONALITY AND THE NATION

**Indigeneity and Transnationality?
An Interview with Bonita Lawrence**

JOCELYN THORPE

**Canadian Nationalism and the
Making of a Global Apartheid**

NANDITA SHARMA

**Beyond Transnationality:
Building Community and
Possibilities for Urban
Hybridities**

LEELA VISWANATHAN

**Harvesting Seeds of Justice:
The Plight of Migrant Farm
Workers in Ontario**

EVELYN ENCALADA GREZ

**Constructing Global and
National Nature: Population,
Immigration and the
Green-washing of Racism
and Misogyny**

STEPHANIE RUTHERFORD



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WARD '05

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Women & Environments International is a unique Canadian magazine, which examines women's multiple relations to their environments — natural, built and social — from feminist and anti-racist perspectives. It has provided a forum for academic research and theory, professional practice and community experience since 1976. Produced by a volunteer editorial board the magazine contributes to feminist social change. The magazine is associated with the Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Studies at New College, University of Toronto.

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We are working on the following issue theme:

Women and Urban Sustainability — Special 30th Anniversary Issue — The publication will contribute to and be part of the World Urban Forum and Habitat +30 that will take place in Vancouver in June 2006. This issue will focus on urban sustainability from the point of view of feminist organizing, research, practice and theory.

Your participation in issue teams, ideas, articles, news and funds are critical to the survival of Women & Environments International Magazine. For Editorial Guidelines, Calls for Papers and more visit our website: www.weimag.com

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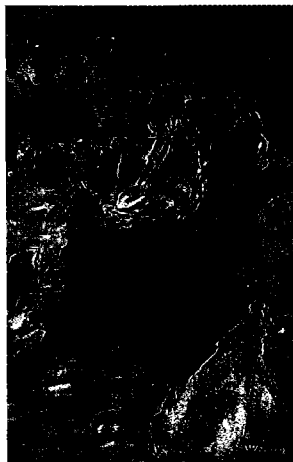
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Canada

ON THE COVER

The Dividing Lines

In this piece, I wanted to reflect upon the simultaneous stability and fragility of national boundaries, and to show the work that goes into both maintaining and resisting the power that operates through borders. I also wanted to represent visually the complex issues addressed in this magazine, and to emphasize that transnational relationships are not only constructed through trade agreements and by corporations, but through the alliances that people make across difference. The piece is acrylic on canvas. — Ward Minnis



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Feminisms, Transnationality and the Nation

A Word From This Issue's Editors

How can we make feminist sense of the world today, especially when the world seems endlessly complicated? As transnational corporations continue to exert a powerful force in the current global order, the nation-form appears less relevant, and less powerful than it did before. Yet, as many contributors to this magazine argue, the nation is anything but irrelevant. For Aboriginal people in North America, for example, the nations of Canada, the United States and Mexico cannot be understood as power-neutral entities, but are in fact colonial constructs that constrain Aboriginal self-determination and otherwise perpetuate the domination of Native peoples within national boundaries. For the estimated two hundred thousand non-status residents of Canada, many of whom are women, national boundaries are also salient. While the Canadian economy depends upon this non-status labour force to perform low-wage work in often unsafe conditions, non-status people find it extremely difficult to access necessary services for fear of having their immigration status revealed and being deported. As the border between Mexico and the United States is policed with increasingly violent consequences for migrants attempting to cross it, other borders are opening with relative ease: since 1993, more than eight thousand Chinese children have been adopted into Canadian families — a gendered, racialized, classed and heteronormative process which most often involves Chinese girls being adopted into the homes of white, affluent, heterosexual couples in North America. Goods as well as people travel across national boundaries, and it is possible that a shirt sold in Canada traveled in various forms to India, Singapore, and Hong Kong, and was handled by women working in factories in each of these places, before it appeared at a store in Canada.

What is transnational feminism? What is its history?

In the last decade or so, feminists, notably Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, have struggled to make feminist sense of our contemporary world. Transnational feminism(s) have roots in postcolonial studies, feminist and anti-racist theorizing and activism. Postcolonial studies draw our attention to how colonial histories and relationships of power operate in the present, as well as how new forms of colonialism continue to impact our lives. Feminist and anti-racist scholars and activists have focused on taking apart the category of 'woman' or 'women.' This contribution requires us to see how the lives and experiences of different women cannot be adequately understood without looking at how other signs of power, such as race, class, sexuality, ability and nationality intersect and interact with gender to shape people's lives and relationships with one another.

Feminist scholars have also challenged leftist analyses of globalization, forcing us to ask: How is power working here? Is there resistance? How are people resisting? Where are women in discussions of globalization? Rather than taking economic globalization and the supposed demise of the nation-state as a given, this perspective allows us to ask how and when the idea of 'globalization' is used and not used, and by whom. It also allows us to pay attention to who gains from the use of this term, and at whose expense.

What exactly is transnational feminism about?

From here, we can see some of the important influences in the ongoing development of transnational feminism, and thus begin to imagine a transnational feminist framework as a flexible, changing and interdisciplinary grouping of theory and practice that attempts to provide a means for understanding and responding to contemporary practices and politics. A transnational feminist approach attempts to de-stabilize familiar boundaries, such as those placed around nations, gender and race. It hopes to debunk what we 'know' about power, spaces and peoples and to look at the uneven and power-laden relationships among people, including among women, in different parts of the world. Rather than just considering the relationships of power that operate between men and women, transnational feminism pays close attention to the unequal and asymmetrical relationships among women. It requires us to see that we cannot understand gender without an integrated analysis that considers race, class, nationhood, ethnicity, sexuality and ability. Central to a transnational feminist framework is highlighting inequalities and differences rather than overemphasizing commonalities. For example, we are cautioned against suggesting that there are 'women's issues' that affect all women evenly across the globe. Similarly, we resist overemphasizing the global power of western spaces/nations such as Canada because within these nations, power is spread unevenly amongst citizens and non-citizens in Canada. The extent to which some have access to the privileges and powers of 'Canada' is greatly limited by race, citizenship, gender, class, ability and sexuality.

Transnational feminism is also focused on what is best described as "thinking backwards and thinking outwards." This phrase suggests that we must look back, at histories, texts, practices and peoples, to understand the present situation of transnational spaces. Further, our thinking must be expanded outwards to see the multiple effects on any set of issues. This requires pushing against boundaries to see what is perceived to be outside and beneath borders.

What does it mean for feminists?

This approach does not mean a new and better feminism, but rather an ongoing, historicized and vital contribution to continuing feminist and anti-racist work. For women and feminists from the north, transnational feminism points out the limitations of analyses and political work that only address gender or 'women's issues.' In fact, a transnational feminist approach would consider feminism itself to be an object of analysis and critique. Feminist complicity with imperialism and racism, for example, highlights the fact that feminism and feminist activists are not immune to power relations. The same can be said for the cooptation of feminist language and ideals through gender mainstreaming in organizations such as the United Nations. By centering an analysis of feminism, we can question the universality of so called 'global sisterhood' and explore which issues are prioritized, whose voices are heard, and who is ultimately silenced in the process. By paying attention to the historical relationships between feminism and colonialism and imperialism, we can hold ourselves accountable and strive to think critically about our strategies for change now and in the future.

Looking at the Nation

Drawing on connections to postcolonial theory, one of the key themes addressed by transnational feminist analysis is nations and nationalisms, both through history and in the present moment of globalization. The 'nation,' however, is a separate entity from that of the 'state.' The 'state' is an assemblage of various governmental institutions and apparatuses that establish, maintain, and administer public policy, enforce laws, and ensure (to varying degrees) the health of its population. In contrast, the 'nation' can be loosely defined as a historical and ideological construct that provides a 'place' or 'home' for particular ideas about a 'common culture,' 'common destiny' or 'common origin.' 'Nationalisms' can be seen as the different expressions of these ideas about the 'nation.' Transnational feminist analysis allows for an exploration of the issues of 'nations' and 'nationalisms' in a wide variety of contexts across time and space, including, for example, anti-colonial struggles, nationalist imperialist expansion, and debates around multiculturalism. In particular, this approach draws attention to how power relations of gender, race, class, and sexuality have been used and continues to be used to strengthen national mythologies and nationalisms. Women's bodies, for example, have long been used as symbols of national pride and identity in order to define who belongs and who does not. Transnational feminist analyses also consider the complicity of women with nationalism and nation building projects and seek to question the relationship between feminisms and the nation.

Contributors to this issue have engaged with the themes of feminisms, transnationality and the nation in different ways. Through examinations of diverse topics such as figure skating, migrant workers, the politics of obesity, and capoeira, these articles employ transnational feminist analyses to highlight the complexities of contemporary nations and the world at large. In

addition, the authors point to the ongoing need for movements toward social justice to be anchored in self-reflexive feminist and anti-racist analytics. This particular issue of *Women and Environments International Magazine* represents an attempt to showcase some of the ways in which transnational feminist analyses can be used to think about the world today. ☸

Putting This Issue Together

Our team was a committed and candid group. We each contributed to all areas of the publication process and welcomed the opportunity to enjoy food, drink and laughter on the way.

Megan Rivers-Moore is starting her first year of a PhD at the University of Cambridge. Her work uses transnational feminist analysis to look at tourism in Central America.

Jocelyn Thorpe is in the third year of her PhD in Environmental Studies at York University. She is interested in employing a transnational feminist perspective to consider the history of Canadian forestry.

Sarah Turnbull is a doctoral student at the Centre of Criminology and is in the Collaborative Program in Women's Studies at the Women and Gender Studies Institute at the University of Toronto. Her main areas of interest are punishment, parole, 'risk,' and anti-racist feminist theory.

Marie Vander Kloet is a doctoral student in Sociology and Equity Studies in Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. Her research is in the area of recreation, sport and physical culture; notable areas of interest include analyzing lifeguard subjectivities and outdoor recreation and Canadianness. She is interested in the theoretical perks of feminist post-structuralism and transnational feminisms.

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Features

Indigeneity and Transnationality?

An Interview with Bonita Lawrence

Bonita Lawrence is a professor at the School of Social Sciences, Atkinson, at York University in Toronto. She is the author of *'Real' Indians and Others: Mixed Blood Urban Native Peoples and Indigenous Nationhood*. She has also co-edited, with Kim Anderson, *Strong Women Stories: Native Vision and Community Survival*.

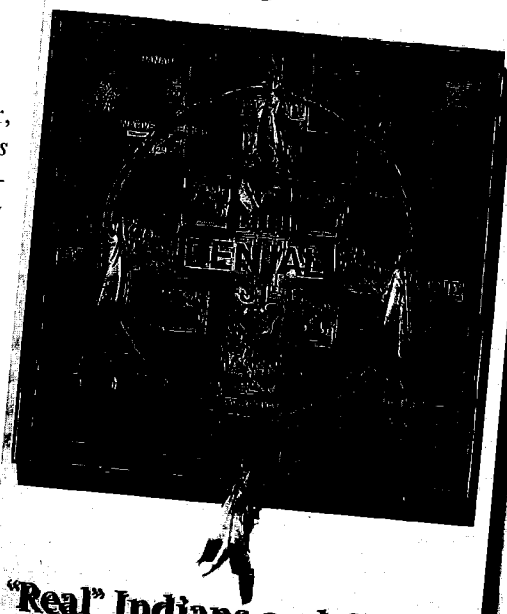
Jocelyn Thorpe, a member of the guest editorial team for this edition of WEI, talked with Bonita in her office earlier this year.

JOCELYN: *In your book 'Real' Indians and Others, you talk about how the lives of mixed-blood urban Aboriginal people in Canada are profoundly shaped by processes of diaspora created by government policies meant to cut off ties between Native peoples and their communities (for example, forced removal from lands and displacement through adoption and residential schooling). You also discuss the tensions and complexities of Native identity for people who may or may not have legal 'Indian' status, who live in urban centres, and who are mixed-blood. The themes of diaspora and hybridity often also appear in feminist work on transnationality. What do you find are the strengths and weaknesses of a transnational feminist analytic (often informed by postcolonial studies) for comprehending the experiences of the urban Aboriginal people you interviewed for your book?*

BONITA: I think I would start by differentiating between the manner in which hybridity and diaspora are theorized within postcolonial writing and how I use it in the text. For Native people, any emphasis on diasporic identity which does not affirm the continuity of traditional identity and land-based communities and their interconnections with diasporic Native

identity is an invitation to despair, assimilate, and inevitably vanish *as peoples*. In the same way, hybrid identities which are not explicitly Indigenous-identified are fatal for collective Indigenous survival. Native people have to think about community survival at all times, since our existence is always under threat; post-colonial scholars are not under those constraints. The other assumption which often accompanies an emphasis on hybridity is that 'ethnic absolutism' is untenable. None of this works for Native people because the land is occupied by the most powerful nation-state in the world (or its satellites). Whether it is healthy or not, Native societies have to be able to close themselves to outsiders when survival is threatened.

In terms of the weaknesses of transnational feminism, there is a very big reason that a lot of Aboriginal theorists, even women theorists who focus on Aboriginal women, don't take up transnational feminism: we are not post-colonial. We are still colonized. In some ways that can sound like a glib response, since we are all part of a global system. What difference does it make that some of us have been formally decolonized and some of us haven't? But there is a difference, and most of the postcolonial scholarship is premised on states which have won national independence, which means their right to survival as peoples is not disputed. Because of this, there is a lack of vision about Indigenous futures. I listened to a talk that [Gayatri] Spivak gave in Toronto about five years ago, and in the talk she referred to Indigenous peoples as being "consigned to the dustbin of humanity." I know she meant this sympathetically, but really, what good is it for



'Real' Indians and Others
Mixed-Blood Urban Native Peoples
and Indigenous Nationhood
Bonita Lawrence

Aboriginal peoples to be discursively consigned to a dustbin? (laughter) That is a very sweeping outsider statement, which to me summarizes how a lot of postcolonial theory treats Aboriginal peoples. I haven't read transnational feminism extensively, but what I have read, I haven't found useful. I think the reason I haven't found it useful is because of this lack of awareness of what it means to still be colonized, what it means to communities in the every day. One of the things that it means is that you are removed from being global actors, you are removed as actors on the global stage, so that decolonization stops in the Americas, and in Australia and New Zealand, it stops.

The emphasis, especially in North America, is on oppressed groups within the Americas. Never is the issue of what are we going to do about the *existence* of Canada addressed, or the existence of the

United States, the existence of Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, you name it, the existence of Guatemala, of these settler states. The cases are different because of different experiences of colonization. But, in practical ways, what do you do when the existence of Canada means that our identities are always at the verge of extinction? How do you cope with that? It means that resistance is always being severely criminalized. Certain types of working within the system are rewarded. The municipalization of reserves, for example, is applauded and leaders who follow that will be endorsed by the state. Meanwhile, communities that challenge the basic framework of the Americas are severely criminalized and academics who speak out about that are criminalized, especially in the U.S.

The strength of transnational feminism is that it looks at how constructs of the nation are racialized and gendered. The fact is, it is useful to be aware of those things, to look at the struggles around sovereignty in Native communities and to actually look at the risk of nationalisms being framed in gendered and racialized ways. That is the strength of transnational feminism, but that is very abstract. We look at that and we think how relevant is that in the various communities? Kim Anderson and I just finished co-editing a journal on Indigenous women and the state of our nations. One of the things we talk about in the introduction to it is that sovereignty issues, decolonization, have to be addressed on our terms, on terms that make sense to us. Much of the transnational feminist scholarship, not to mention post-colonial scholarship in general, does not. It is very theory-heavy. Is it useful for us right now? I don't think so.

JOCELYN: *Again in your book, you talk about the dangers of theorizing Native identity not as an authentic essence, given, for example, how Canadian (and American) courts have rendered land claims invalid when plaintiffs do not appear Native (that is to say primordial) enough. At the same time, you also discuss how white-defined Native 'authenticity' has served to restrict Aboriginal rights*

to precontact activities, and to limit their abilities to define and develop their communities in contemporary ways. How do you think about and attempt to negotiate this tension?

BONITA: I think that those things need to get sorted out in Native communities, because it is a question of how you approach the government when you are in this sort of bind. The situation of Algonquin people in the Ottawa valley who are dealing with a land claim for their traditional territories is one example where these issues have not been sufficiently discussed. There are tremendous splits within different communities about who is an authentic Native person, who has a right to an Indigenous identity. This is being fought out in the open while Canada is sitting there smiling and watching. So really, it's a struggle that needs to be fought out in the communities, a debate, a discussion, a sharing really, so that it is not being fought out at all. And I have seen it starting to happen.

JOCELYN: *In your book, you discuss how urban mixed-blood Native people represent the other half of a history of colonization. Please talk about how this is the case, and speak about the potential you see here for urban mixed-bloods and reserve-based communities to meet and work together towards decolonization.*

BONITA: When I was researching the book, one thing that really hit me was the number of people I talked to whose parents had never gone home after the end of residential schools. The story we always hear is about the people who went back to their communities traumatized, not knowing how to be parents or how to speak the language anymore. They have lost any sense of community. They have developed patriarchal ways. They have developed fear; it has broken their spirits. We always hear about that, but not about the hidden half of the story. One woman I talked to, for example, said she had seven or eight siblings, and that only one of them went home after residential school. There are seven out of eight who aren't at home, so really, what's at home on the reserves is only the tip of the iceberg. The hidden half of colonization starts with that — the people who didn't go

home, or who had to leave home forcibly, for good, for example, the Aboriginal children who were adopted out of their communities. The adoptees might end up on the street, maybe commit violent crimes. They are just drifting through society. The statistics suggest that between seventy and ninety percent of Aboriginal people in prisons are products of the 60s scoop, so that's a whole Native history that is off reserve and yet is part of their nations. The reserves are part of the story, but so are urban settings. Urban settings are not extraneous, they carry the 'hidden half' of Native communities' histories. So adoptees are another part of that hidden history.

This is probably the most obvious when it comes to issues of status. I didn't really see Indian status as an instrument of genocide until I interviewed people for my book. In a group of thirty people, nineteen had grandmothers who had Indian status, twelve themselves had Indian status, and only five were able to pass it on to their children. That is something really profound: from nineteen to twelve to five in just two generations in a group of thirty people. I have tried to do some figures on it, and if twenty-five thousand women lost their status in one hundred twenty-six years, then the numbers are staggering. With each woman who lost her status, how many grandchildren and great grandchildren don't have status? I figure that if you look at two generations, you are looking at a million and if you look at three generations you get up to two million. That's a lot of people to be removed from Indianness, especially when you think that there were only three hundred fifty thousand status Indians left in 1985. I think now it's a half a million more, but if you think that the numbers would have been closer to two million, that would have brought us up to being ten to twelve percent of the Canadian population. That would have meant some political changes like those the Maori have been able to make in New Zealand. When you are ten to twelve percent of the population, you can bring back language, it can become a national priority, you can force it. The same with black people in the U.S. This doesn't mean that

a large group of the population isn't impoverished and criminalized, but there are enough of you that you can force certain changes.

That's part of the reason why the really politically astute people that I interviewed are saying things like that being adopted is a Native experience, being non-status is a Native experience. If you look upon it that way, as a kind of a historical progression, as a parting of ways between two groups, you start to see these two sides of the picture of colonization. The difficulty is that one side is looked at very differently than the other side, and I think the approach to dealing with what a lot of people see as colonization is to just try and pretend that the problem doesn't exist. Indian status is just a colonial construct, but just try suggesting to a status Indian that it shouldn't then matter if they lose their status. Or ask a non-status person and they'll say "Oh, well, I think that status is a colonial construct. But I do think that status Indians are more Indian than we are" — this kind of thing.

And this does reflect a certain reality. If you grow up in a Native community, you have a certain set of experiences. Reserves are places where Nativeness can be taken for granted. It has both a positive and negative effect. On the one hand, people are sure of their identities in a way that people in the cities aren't. In the

cities, each individual has to negotiate his or her identity in the face of a society that says you don't exist or are tarnished or broken. If you look very Indian, you are the product of tarnished and broken people. If you don't, then, you're not Indian. Negotiating this kind of Native identity is a big burden. On reserves, no one is saying that you are not an Indian. I mean, you have got that official status, you are part of a community. That's the strength. The weakness is, I think, that a lot of people in the communities aren't very critical about colonization. They aren't very critical about what Native values are. They don't have to ask those questions, and so they don't.

JOCELYN: *It's amazing that you draw such richness out of so few stories. Or that so few stories are in fact so many.*

BONITA: It came from living in Toronto and being involved in the Native community. In some ways, that was a question too. As a scholar now and having sat on research ethics boards, I see that the question of who has the right to tell the stories, and under what conditions stories are told, is central. The thesis I wrote which became the book contains lots of stories of bitter experiences which I left out of the book, partly because some of the people are too much in trauma, and I didn't want to approach them about putting their pain on display. But that's also a question: If the stories that people tell follow stereotypes, what are the ethics of putting this on display for a non-Native society? A society that is going to hate you to death or love you to death, but either way it is your death. What is your responsibility to your community in an urban setting where there are no formal representatives to negotiate with over these decisions? In writing this book, I tried to rely on what Elders had taught me, but I didn't really have much guidance about whether or not I should be telling certain stories. Is this the story they need to hear, or will this story feed further destruction?

JOCELYN: *The border between Canada and the United States is, of course, a colonial imposition. Yet while Canadian and American histories of colonization are enmeshed in one another, each country*

has sustained different ways of ordering Native identities and lives. What consequences do the different settlement histories and government policies have on how Native identity is conceptualized in divergent ways by Native people in Canada and the United States?

BONITA: In some ways, it is just a colonial border, because I think that lived experiences on reserves in Canada and the U.S. are in many ways similar. But at the same time, in terms of identity issues, I think we have not theorized enough about the differences. For example, the label Indian has been appropriated by Native people in America as a badge of indigeneity. In Canada, anyone under the age of 40 finds that label really problematic. The label halfbreed gets appropriated here, the way Indian does there, because of the legal definitions of halfbreed in the Indian Act. In the US that is really frowned upon. There are little differences like that, but more to the point is that we know we have been classified by the government, and yet those identities become our terrain of struggle. Most people say that these labels are colonial impositions, but it's more complicated than that. We are forced to struggle on the colonizers' terms, and in Canada, the struggle around the Indian Act is very gendered. In the U.S., they are constantly denying gender, saying that we are Indians first and women second. Gender-neutral perspectives are sought and gendered realities are denied. In Canada, this is impossible because being a Native woman implies certain things about your relationship to your community, because the Indian Act works along the lines of gender. ❧

Further Reading:

Lawrence, Bonita: **'Real' Indians and Others: Mixed Blood Urban Native Peoples and Indigenous Nationhood**, Bison Books, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln NE, 2004

Anderson, Kim; Lawrence, Bonita (eds.) **Strong Women Stories: Native Vision and Community Survival**, Sumach Press, Toronto, 2003

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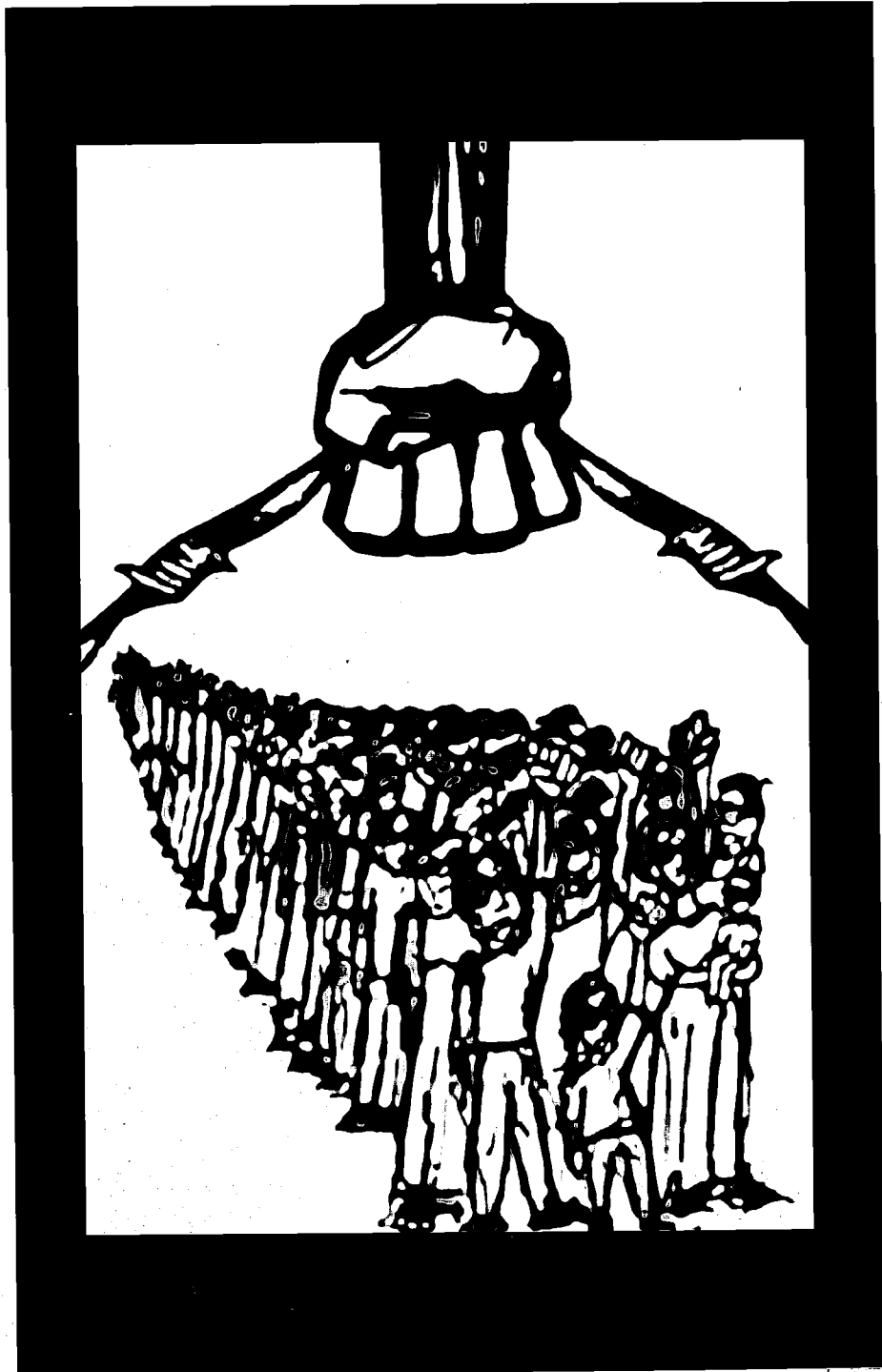
Canadian Nationalism and the Making of a Global Apartheid

Nandita Sharma

Thinking Like a State

Far from being obsolete, national states remain very powerful governing bodies. In particular, the regulation of national borders through state controls on citizenship and immigration profoundly shape people's sense of space and their place in it. However, despite the fact that we live in a period of unprecedented numbers of people crossing international borders, we often think of issues of national identity as pertaining only to those with citizenship status. However, issues of border controls are perhaps even more important for those who are cast as the nation's Others, those who live their lives as 'foreigners' within the territory governed by the state.

In the maintenance and control over borders, the Canadian national state is an essential component of creating and deeply entrenching what can only be characterized as a system of *global apartheid*. The Canadian state is far from being a 'victim' of forces of capitalist globalization or a hapless, neutral (and neutered) body. In this article, I show that state controls on who can gain access to Canadian citizenship and immigration status help to secure a globally competitive labour market in Canada. This is done by denying a growing number of migrants full, permanent status in the country. In trying to understand how such policies come to be seen as legitimate by so many in Canada, I examine recent, draconian policies on citizenship and immigration in the context of the ongoing importance of national identities — of 'being Canadian.' I argue that identifying oneself through reference to the 'Canadian nation' works to secure legitimacy for the subordination of people who are legally and socially made into 'foreigners' or 'non-Canadians' in Canada.



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The necessity of investigating both the material and the ideological affects of national state policies lies in the fact that most of us think like a state. We see others and ourselves as either 'foreigners' or 'citizens.' Ideas of 'race,' ethnicity and gender profoundly inform, and are likewise informed, by notions of national belonging and not-belonging. In this, women, especially those who are negatively racialized or cast as ethnic-others, and therefore seen as belonging to another 'nation,' have always been most easily cast as 'foreigners.' Historically, in Canada, this has affected non-white women not only in terms of whether they are actually able to enter the country but also what happens to them once they are in 'Canadian' space. While white women have historically been perceived as a 'civilizing force,' non-white women have been seen as the harbingers of 'foreign-ness' and defined as a problem for 'Canadians.' Consequently, the social and legal process of becoming 'Canadian' continues to be the most out of reach to non-white women. These women are positioned as amongst the most vulnerable of people in Canadian society through the interlocking affects of 'race,' gender and nation.

For those women and men who live as 'foreigners' in Canada, their experiences are shaped by a constant denial of the social, political and economic rights of citizenship, as well as a denial of the legitimacy of making themselves at home. The flip side of this nationalist scenario is that for the vast majority of those who are accorded the status (social and legal) of 'being Canadian,' these denials seem perfectly reasonable.

The existence of two (or more) different legal regimes, in this case one for 'foreigners' and one for 'citizens,' is indicative of the existence of a system of apartheid. In Canada the apartheid between citizens and non-citizens compliments and complicates the system of apartheid that has long existed between indigenous people and citizens. I argue that the creation of a global apartheid, in which a growing number of people living within the Canadian national state are denied full, legal status, is dependant upon the seemingly legiti-

mate power that national states have to accord differential status to people on the basis of their citizenship status. Today, the main pattern of migration into Canada is of people denied the status of permanent resident (the first, necessary step to becoming a citizen) and who are, instead, relegated to the ranks of legal 'foreigners,' either as 'illegals' or as 'temporary migrant workers.' This is especially true in the case of non-white women entering Canada. In shifting the immigration status of people in this regressive direction, the Canadian national state is not alone.

We live in a world where unprecedented levels of human migration run up against the most restrictive immigration policies the world has ever known — a world of carrier sanctions, 'short stop operations,' military-style training of airport or border police personnel, lists of safe third countries, lists of safe countries of origin, readmission agreements with neighbouring countries that form a buffer zone to further clandestine migrations, immigration intelligence sharing, reinforced border controls, armed interventions at sea and military interventions. This is the world of border controls — a 'fortress rich world' — encountered by people for whom migration is a major part of their survival strategies.

Canadian Controls on Citizenship and Immigration

Canada's latest contribution to maintaining this fortress is its June 2002 Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), the provisions of which include: increased money, resources and international cooperation on interdiction (i.e., preventing people from ever reaching Canada and being able to apply for refugee status); expansion of the powers of detention (e.g., automatic detention for anyone arriving with the aid of smugglers); the possibility of life sentences for those convicted of smuggling people, even if they were motivated by humanitarian concerns; denying people convicted of 'serious' crimes or association with 'criminals' from making claims for refugee or immigration status; the imprisonment in Canada of non-citizens under

the authority of a 'security certificate' that denies people access to fair and impartial hearings; absence of a legislative definition for the terms 'terrorism,' 'membership in a terrorist organization' and 'security of Canada' that leaves refugees and immigrants susceptible to unprincipled, arbitrary and even unconstitutional decision making; the creation of a permanent resident card which allows the government to more closely monitor, track and deport permanent residents; the creation of 'new inadmissibility clauses' which will bar those who, for whatever reason, misrepresented their situation in their immigration applications; and an increase in the power of the government to deport those with permanent residence status.

Many mainstream commentators say that this is a world that 'Canadians' have been blindly and unwillingly thrust into. If this is true, then this lack of awareness can only be described as willful ignorance (to borrow a phrase from Dionne Brand). The Canadian government is especially forceful in asserting that its restrictive immigration policies are a necessary *reaction* to high levels of hidden migrations — to people 'jumping the queue.' This is the big lie.

Canadian immigration policies are made alongside all of its other policies, policies that help to create the massive crisis of displacement that is underway. Canadian state policies on trade liberalization, on foreign 'aid,' on military operations, on revamping fiscal policies, on the promotion of industry and tourism, among others, are helping to create a global crisis that is forcing people off their small-scale farms, out of rapidly growing and unsustainable urban ghettos, out of war zones and zones of ecological disasters. In the same session of the House of Commons, these policies are debated, discussed at cabinet-level meetings and passed by parliament. In short, Canada's immigration policies are made with the full realization of the broader Canadian state agenda of promoting the interests of global capital and with the full realization that denying permanent, legal status to the growing numbers of displaced people makes for a very competitive labour force. Indeed, it can be said that denying the majority of

migrants seeking entry to Canada permanent status is the main business of Canadian immigration policy.

Global Apartheid in Canada

National states with their regulation of labour markets remain essential to global capital. That the competitiveness of national labour markets relies on social systems of differentiation that cheapen the labour of negatively gendered and racialized working people is well documented. However, a less studied aspect of how national labour markets are regulated and made competitive are the *legal* differences of national state categories of citizenship and immigration status. Today, people categorized by the state as either 'illegal' or as 'temporary migrant labour' are becoming more and more important to the competitive capacity of capitalists — and represent a growing number of all (im)migrants to Canada. Imposing such a status upon migrants ensures that even though they work in Canada, they have no real access to minimum employment standards or wage levels, to workers' safety protections or needed social services which are reserved for those with the status of 'citizen' or 'permanent resident.'

Global apartheid, then, is not about keeping people apart. Like other systems of apartheid — the system of 'Indian' reservations in Canada or the Bantustan system of apartheid in South Africa — people who occupy different legal categories of membership and non-membership live and work closely together. In South Africa, it would be a rare occurrence indeed for a 'white' family to not use 'black' and/or 'coloured' servants (the racialized state categories assigned to those governed by different legal regimes). Likewise, in the initial period of settlement in Canada, many white farmers were given free land by the state. Many of these farmers relied heavily on the labour of those indigenous persons whose lands they came to occupy and who were categorized as 'Indians' by the Canadian state. 'Indian' reservations, then, aside from severing indigenous people from their non-capitalist modes of life, also brought them into the capitalist labour market. As

such, reservations acted, in part, as pools of captive and available labour power for 'Canadian' employers, a labour pool guaranteed by the Canadian state.

This much is already known. Indeed, a common sense understanding of apartheid is one where *racialized* classification schemes are the major makers of legal differences (whites, Indians, blacks and coloureds, for instance). However, such regimes of apartheid have historically depended on the difference of *citizenship status* to make common sense of the gross inequalities organized through them. Initially, the system of reservations in Canada relied on excluding those renamed as 'Indians' from Canadian citizenship. Likewise, in apartheid-era South Africa, the state organized a system of Bantustans designated as the legal 'homelands' of people categorized as blacks. In this way, the South African state, like Canada, was able to declare itself a 'democratic' regime by asserting that all of its 'citizens' were able to vote and participate in national society. Such statements were only plausible because large parts of the population were excluded from citizenship rights. This situation was seemingly reasonable by the collective refusal to recognize that it was the state that had the power to determine who was a 'citizen' and who was a 'foreigner.'

In both the South African and Canadian systems of apartheid, inequality was legitimized by evasively and legally producing different groups as racialized *national* subjects — as *not* Canadian; not South African. This was *legally* manifested through the construction of differential citizenships. The South African example is clearer cut. In Canada, Indian reservations legally existed within Canadian national space, whereas in South Africa the Bantustans were seen as being wholly outside of South African jurisdiction (although, in reality of course completely governed and controlled by the South African state). In both cases, however, the justification of 'separate but equal' nations — a founding ideology of the global system of national states — was the main rationale given for the continued existence of inequalities. As Ghassan

Hage would say, in each instance of apartheid "...a mode of domination [was] presented as a form of egalitarianism."

Since women cast as outsiders to the 'white Canadian nation' had the greatest difficulties in being seen as belonging in Canadianized space, this process of differentiating between members and non-members was highly gendered. Citizenship, then, is a difference-making device, one wholly reliant on processes of racialization and gendering the imagined 'nation.' All national states have relied on one system of apartheid or another. No national state has existed without 'foreigners' within it. Far from being a progressive force throughout the history of the national state system, then, citizenship has constructed deep, layered levels of inequalities. These inequities are created through state categories of differential national membership that accomplish, both materially and ideologically, the gendered racialization of class in Canada.

Yet, apartheid continues to be largely associated with racialized legal differentiations alone. And because such differentiations are, almost without exception, no longer a part of national legal systems, there is a strong tendency to deny that any form of apartheid exists at all. Not only does this legitimize global inequalities, it also renders as legal and legitimate the use of coercive state power against those defined as non-nationals. People differentiated on the basis of their nationality/citizenship status are told to rely on 'their own state' for protection, entitlements and rights. This, of course, is a cruel set of instructions for those displaced by the global operation of capitalism and the equally *global* system of national states that support it.

For this reason, nationalist ideologies and the nationalists who utilize them are not only concerned with constructing a national community but also with securing the legitimate power to organize and materialize the difference between citizens and their Others *within* nationalized space. In modern, national styles of ruling there is a convergence between the imagining of communities as *national* and the ability of *states* to uphold and defend the space it

occupies. In this sense, what we have usually understood to be nation-building projects are more accurately understood as *nation state*-building projects. It is for this reason that borders — and the immigration policies that enforce and regulate them — are the point where the nation state's sovereignty finds its expression.

Border controls, therefore, are wholly ideological. While I do not wish to underestimate the enormous damage done to people's lives by the existence of national borders, the difficulties of passing through them, the forced immobility of those who otherwise would migrate or the growing numbers of deaths of people who try, it is important to recognize that more people are crossing national borders today than at any other point in human history — the United Nations (2003) estimates 175,000 people every year. It is the fact that most of the world's migrants are defined as 'foreigners' once they are *inside* national states that lies at the heart of making a global apartheid.

The 'fortress rich world,' then, is not so much an impenetrable barrier but a rationale for ensuring that those who can be named as the 'foreigners' within are denied the rights and entitlements of 'citizens' and 'permanent residents.' The right of national states to differently categorize people is enshrined within the global system of governance. It is a key aspect of national sovereignty and is the paramount

principle governing the mandate of the members of the United Nations. It is this 'right' that gives states the right to prevent people from crossing into their nationalized territories and/or to differentiate amongst people *within* national boundaries. It is this right that we must challenge and work to abolish.

In struggling for a world without borders, however, not only do we come up against the powerful interests that back the fraternal twins of national states and global capital, we also come up against ourselves and our deeply held identity of being national subjects. Many of us have made the boundaries of national states the boundaries of our own identities. We think of ourselves as 'citizens,' if not of Canada then India, Peru, the Philippines, Iraq, Poland, the Barbados and so on — or the future citizens of the hoped for national state of Kurds, Palestinians and others who have so far been excluded from the modernist project of national state building. It is this identification with national citizenship that grants legitimacy to the global system of national states with their highly regulated labour markets. It is these identities that prevent us from moving towards social justice and a world without borders.

In working towards such a world, we must challenge the borders that we enact every time we ally our empathies and sympathies not with people who experience the world the way we do, as exploited workers

world the way we do, as exploited workers for example, but people who share the same national identity, the same 'race,' 'gender,' 'nation' and so on. These imposed identities are the identities that impose upon us the world of state managers and global capitalists. One of the most urgent tasks ahead of us, then, is the need to create new ways of seeing ourselves and each other, ways that are based on people's practices rather than on identities. Alliances, then, could be built upon actual practices rather than abstract notions of being. ❧

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Beyond Transnationality

Building Community and Possibilities for Urban Hybridities

Leela Viswanathan

Cities are vibrant eclectic places. All sorts of people are drawn to cities for equally diverse reasons. Some would say that globalization is characterized by the lightning speed at which international migrations of people and the flow of money and technology take place and has contributed to the growth of cities, urbanization, and the diversity of urban populations. Urban historians have explored many tensions involved with economic and cultural globalization processes. For example, the so-called opportunities of the global labour market have contributed to the migration of skilled workers all over the world and consequently, to extensive labour market flexibility in cities. This flexibility is reflected among urban populations of the underemployed, particularly among recent immigrants. The impact of increased immigration when considered alongside Canada's state policy on multiculturalism has also created an interesting dynamic. State multiculturalism policies and programs have offered a context for building greater harmony across cultural differences through sharing immigrant stories, present and past. At the same time, this cultural diversity has been packaged as a commodity, marketed through corporate campaigns by cities competing for global investments. These tensions have contributed to the further racialization of groups and neighbourhoods. Aggrieved groups may come together to form communities in their struggle as underemployed workers or racialized people in the city. Their grievances and oppressions are made more complex by a nation or city's competition for global capital and can also be the basis for fragmentation and friction across these so-called communities. This fragmentation may be most evident when efforts to bridge across cultural, class, and gender differences seem too lofty and com-



Toronto Skyline

plicated regardless of the scale of the task — individual, metropolitan, or national.

Aihwa Ong, author of *Flexible Citizenship*, has suggested that talking about transnationality instead of globalization can enable parties to focus on a 'cultural logic,' one that recognizes the "multiplicity of uses and conceptions of culture". In this vein, what if we permitted ourselves to be a part of a multiplicity or a multiplicity? This play on words might allow us to recognize the possibility for multiple identities within groups and across allegiances in cities. This would be a multiplicity in which we are all composites of one sort or another, a blend of knowledges and experiences in the city, recognizing areas of commonality as well as difference and perhaps reflecting processes of hybrid formation. Can hybridities provide the basis for community building against oppressions related to globalization processes, or are hybridities the outcomes of community-building processes? This article is my attempt to

start a conversation that explores the possibilities for considering hybridity in relation to community building in our cities.

Urban Hybridities and Community Formation

Allow me to clarify some of the language that I am using here. First, is hybridity a static state of being or a process of becoming? I think that there is a tendency to oscillate between the two possibilities; however I prefer to think of hybridity as a dynamic entity, always in the process of being and becoming at the same time. By using the term hybridity, I am allowing for hybrid identities to be vulnerable, if not openly, to transformation. One way of considering hybridity is offered by Lisa Lowe in her book *Immigrant Acts*: it is an interlinking of histories that have survived within relationships of unequal power and domination. For example, I posit that my mother's hybridity could be considered to be constructed through *processes* drawn from the colonial histories of India, her nation of ori-

gin, and the *stories* of her forty years of experience living as a citizen of Canada, which is part of the over 100 years worth of stories of people from the Indian subcontinent living in Canada, as well as the diverse cultural histories of Canada's peoples. This is a good example of how an individual woman's hybridity is informed over time and space by her spatial location, immigrant history, and experience being categorized as a single income, sole parent South Asian

ration of the processes that contribute to the formation of hybrid identities. The possibilities for hybridities, beyond transnationality, would seem unlimited in the context of cities. According to Iris Marion Young, cities are meeting places of strangers. As an ideal space, cities, according to Young should allow for "social differentiation without exclusion." The heterogeneity of cities, for Young, provides an alternative to the homogeneity associated with conven-

form communities in their struggle to address common oppressions and in their struggles for commonality.

Transformational Thinking

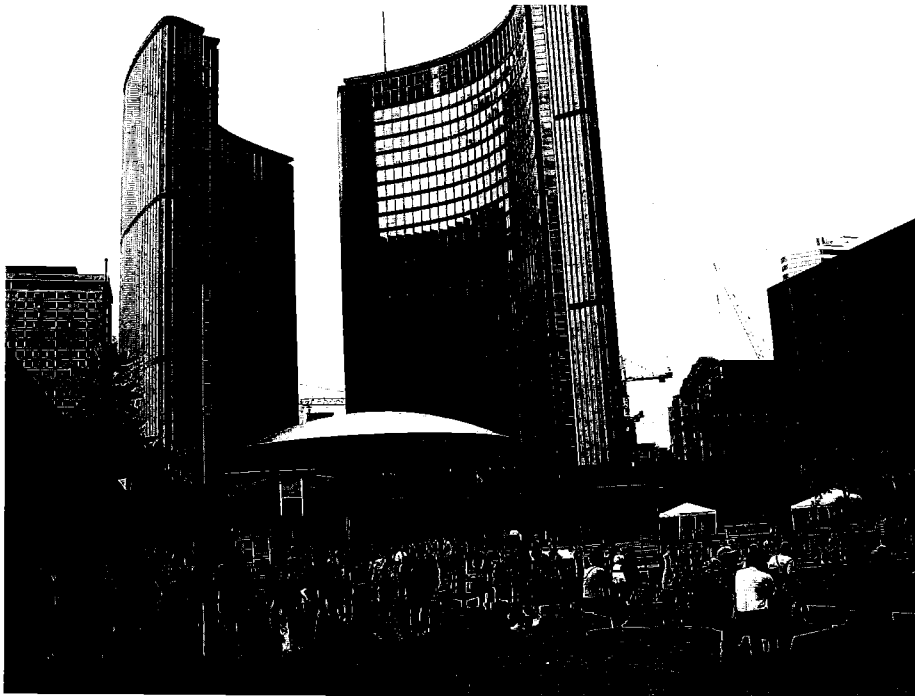
If those of us who live in cities are indeed embodiments of hybridities or possess the potential to be, can we then say that hybridity is the norm in the urban context? I suppose that the downfall of a 'hybridity as norm' argument is that it could perpetuate universalist thinking — that we are all the same and that we are therefore, all included in society. It's as though exclusion does not exist! Our knowledge of first and second wave feminisms has teased out that we are not all the same, and we are not all equal, not even in our hybridities. My intention for exploring urban hybridities is not to perpetuate universalism. Rather it is an attempt to push our way (or at least my way) out of the binary opposites of universal and particular, public and private. Hybridity should allow for the particular and the universal to be present at the same time, in the same space, and in the public realm if one chooses to do so.

We must all recognize that we are made up of multiple, complexly constructed identities. There will be elements of ourselves that are positioned at social margins and/or in subordination to other elements given the relations of power in the state (beyond our bodies), and each element may operate on us in different ways. We negotiate these differences within ourselves, and we choose the extent to which (if at all) we engage with these elements of ourselves embodied, as public and as private at the same time. I argue that this struggle through and within hybridity provides potential starting points for processes of anti-discrimination, anti-racism, and anti-oppression at the level of the self and of society. That we are all hybrids though perhaps not in the same way, could be transformational rather than a confirmation of assimilation into a supposed universal norm within cities.

Building Counter-Narratives

Hybridity is a politicized concept. Drawing from Lowe's work, George

LEELA VISWANATHAN



Toronto City Hall

resident of a bi-cultural but supposedly multicultural country, Canada; this is an apt starting point for my discussion. Transnational identities can change as histories and geographies are reconstructed when people travel back and forth between, say, Canada and their countries of origin and in turn build various social, cultural, and economic relationships between these nations and locations. Even the construction of what is, or was, home may change; these transnational identities are produced, reproduced, and transformed such that hybridity can call to mind, complicate, and eliminate national boundaries. I argue that hybridity should go beyond transnationality.

Putting the term 'urban' in front of the term 'hybridity' opens the conversation to considering how cities allow for the explo-

ritational notions of community. Cities contain many diverse 'voices' that can live together without necessarily forming a community; nevertheless, an alternative formulation of community is made possible within the context of the city. Namely, community building as a process can be considered as striving for commonality but recognizing that the starting point of this struggle may not be one of commonality. The endpoint may not be homogeneity either, as what is deemed to be common may change over time. This version of community is possible in cities where diverse groups are already present and at play, for as I mentioned earlier, processes such as globalization and urbanisation have brought together people from different parts of the world, different classes and experiences. Groups

Lipsitz states that "[a]ggrrieved groups will not magically unite because they are separately oppressed, but coalitions within and across categories can be built by open and honest discussion of the ways in which all of us have been differentially racialised, gendered and infused with complex and composite identities." Perhaps by considering or even claiming hybridity we offer ourselves an opportunity to build a counter-narrative to normative explanations for identity such as the state-sponsored stories offered by official multiculturalism in Canada, or those about mainstream practices of social planning in the city of Toronto, Ontario.

Even though globalization brings nations closer together through commerce and technology, Lipsitz shows that globalization can exacerbate "economic inequality, cultural insecurity, and ethnic religious and racial rivalries, renew old antagonisms and even engender new conflicts." He suggests that the politics of difference is often reduced to identity politics. As such, it is sustained by governments that may tout multiculturalism and social inclusion, but ultimately reinforce the status quo and fail to confront the meanings and manifestations of diversity in all its forms. Multiculturalism, in turn, becomes "a matter of adding experiences of 'others' onto to what [is] already presume[d] to be true about culture and history". Lipsitz notes that individual efforts to promote anti-racism and anti-discrimination can only go so far: collective action is needed in order for there to be social and systemic change. Such action has historically been undertaken by alliances across cultural and ethnic groups; however, what is essential to these partnerships is not necessarily who the participants are, but what they know, what they have experienced, and "[t]heir situated knowledges".

Since 1999, the Chinese Canadian National Council-Toronto Chapter (CCNC-T), the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) and the Hispanic Development Council (HDC) have been engaged in joint social planning activities in Toronto. In early 2003, the African Canadian Social Development Council (ACSDC) officially joined the

partnership. They have come together as the Alternative Planning Group (APG). The APG's work has been considered by some local print media as worth watching in the unfolding landscape of social planning in Toronto. Much of their recognition is focused on their ethno-cultural membership, not necessarily on what they know and what they have experienced. Their strength and reasons for coming together are based on the various groups' experiences and on their struggles not only to build their own communities but to contribute innovative, anti-racist approaches to social planning collectively within the city. The APG is questioning the conventionally paternalistic approaches to social planning in the city. The APG shows that planning needs to be done by communities and for communities with equity principles negotiated at the core of their practices.

While my conception of hybridity is not necessarily the basis by which a coalition such as the APG might have come together, I see the potential of the APG becoming something as a collective that they are not, or may never have become, each on their own. So perhaps hybridity is indeed not simply what we are in cities, but part of a process of becoming in the city, even through our struggles for commonality, community-building and recog-

nition of differences. In my own research, I am exploring how the stories of the APG provide alternative narratives to not just social planning processes and practices but also to state sponsored narratives of multiculturalism. Ultimately, I cannot possibly end a discussion of hybridity; I think it should be left open to become something more, through your contribution... ❧

Leela Viswanathan is a doctoral candidate in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University in Toronto, Canada. Her dissertation research explores the APG's contribution to the transformation of social planning in Toronto. She can be reached at viswanle@yorku.ca

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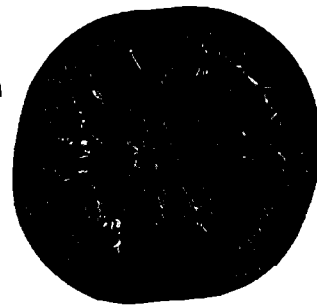
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Harvesting Seeds of Justice

The Plight of Migrant Farm Workers in Ontario

Evelyn Encalada Grez



Since 1966, Canada has managed an explicitly racialized and gendered guest worker program. The Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP) has structured a controlled and subservient labour force to sustain agri-business in Canada. The vast majority of migrant farm workers are men from depressed rural communities in the Caribbean and Mexico who are forced to migrate in order to sustain their families. Poverty, structural adjustment programs and free trade policies leave them little choice and create conditions in which peasants, small-scale farmers and workers become migrants.

Once in Canada, migrant farm workers confront deplorable living and working conditions. Fear and economic necessity are the main deterrents to taking action to improve these conditions. Workers confront the very real threat of being sent home or suspended from the program if they vocalize their concerns. Repatriation is a coercive mechanism for control and compliance — either you bear the conditions or you get sent home. There are many more waiting to take your place.

In the years that I have conducted community outreach in rural Ontario, I have constantly heard migrant workers compare life and work in Canada to slavery. While I cannot speak for migrant workers, I can speak from my position as a long-time advocate and co-founder of a political non-profit collective called Justicia for Migrant Workers (J4MW). As an advocate, I sense the urgency to raise awareness about the plight of migrant farm workers in Canada in order to inspire others to act, resist and join the movement for the rights of migrant workers worldwide. Many people do not know about this SAWP and associate only the United States with the exploitation of

Señorita, nos tratan como animales!
(Miss, they treat us like animals!)

— Mexican migrant farm worker, April 2004, Leamington, Ontario

migrant labour. However, forced migration, in its different manifestations, is widespread and reflective of a volatile global economy that causes immense suffering among millions. It also speaks to the continued extraction of resources from the global south to the north that maintains the privileges we take for granted every day.

The plight of migrant farm workers in Canada provides a space for critical reflection about the unspoken sexist and racist foundations of this country's economy and society. In this article, I begin by briefly explaining the logistics of the SAWP, and then discuss the problems of the program and trace its multiple sites of exploitation. I end with a discussion of J4MW and the challenges we confront in our community organizing efforts.

The Mexican and Caribbean Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP)

The SAWP was started by the federal government in 1966 with the first group of workers from Jamaica. Mexico and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados were later incorporated into the SAWP. Every year an average of 20,000 workers migrate to different provinces across Canada to perform arduous agricultural work.

Workers are screened and selected in their home countries. They have to abide by labour contracts with Canadian employers that outline rights and responsibilities, such as the duration of the con-

tract, the guarantee of a forty hour work week, the number and frequency of rest periods, the terms of premature repatriation and health care concerns. Suitable housing is to be paid for and provided by the employer. Employers are also required to train workers on health and safety issues. Workers incur part of their travel costs along with their employers. They pay taxes and contribute to the Canadian Pension Plan and Employment Insurance, and receive provincial health care coverage. Employers are required to ensure they receive medical attention upon request. Employers are able to 'name' or recall a worker to renew a contract. 'Named' workers are able to secure better contract terms than 'unnamed' workers. The average wage in 2004 was CAD 8.00 per hour.

The majority of workers are married men and the few women who participate have to be single household heads with children. In 2004, only 277 women participated in Ontario as opposed to 14 846 men. At the national level, women account for only 3% of the agricultural migrant labour force. The program is geared towards men because they are seen as the primary providers. Only women who are seen as 'breadwinners' are eligible. Women participating in the SAWP have to rely on alternate child caregivers and support systems in their home countries to be able to work in Canada. Employers are able to choose the number of workers they need and they can also specify preferences for workers' country of origin and sex,

which tends to reinforce the racialized, gendered and heteronormative aspects of the SAWP. These requests are processed by an administrative body on behalf of the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development. Today, the majority of SAWP workers are Mexican men who are concentrated in Ontario.

The Multiple Sites of Exploitation

The SAWP is flawed on many counts. Contract stipulations are rarely enforced and fail to adequately protect migrant workers. The federal government does not monitor the program because labour, health and housing fall under provincial jurisdiction. Overlapping jurisdictions and the lack of national standards result in an inconsistent program. Therefore, it is up to employers and Caribbean and Mexican consulate liaison officers to ensure that program requirements are met. This poses significant problems for migrant workers because consulate officials tend to side with employers to protect contracts as they represent much needed remittances.

In J4MW's rural outreach over the last 5 years, we have heard numerous concerns from hundreds of (primarily male) migrant workers. Both female and male workers take issue with their treatment at work. As migrant workers, they are forced to perform the hardest and most dangerous jobs. If they refuse, their employers can threaten not to 'name' them again or issue a complaint to the corresponding consulate officials often resulting in 'outspoken' workers being repatriated and/or suspended from the SAWP. When workers are injured on the job, they are often sent home instead of receiving proper medical care in Canada. Many workers feel as if they are seen as machines that do not have the right to tire or break down. Since employers are responsible for workers' housing needs, many workers are placed in deplorable housing that allows employers to cut costs. Workers also complain about the racism they confront in rural communities since many have been harassed and taunted by local townspeople.

It is quite disconcerting that thousands of workers have been working in Canada for the majority of their lives without

being able to claim residency. Despite their immeasurable contributions to the Canadian economy, female and male migrant farm workers can only secure status with the assistance of their employers. This type of sponsorship is extremely rare because the program structurally thwarts permanent residency for migrant workers. For one, workers' families and dependents lure them back to the home country after months of agonizing separation.



Migrant workers in Ontario's tomato fields.

Ineligibility for status is also associated with Canada's notion of a white settler society — a sentiment that is particularly prominent in many rural towns. Brown/black bodies (both female and male) are deemed 'preconditioned' for back-breaking work but not deemed worthy of citizenship.

Overall, the flaws of the SAWP serve to create a marginalized labour force. Employers are free to choose the type of labour force they can exploit and many will deliberately divide the labour force by race and gender to pin workers against one another. Workers from a certain country can be threatened that the following year they will be replaced by workers from another. Language barriers also serve to divide Mexican and Caribbean migrant workers. Employers dictate and regulate where and how workers live and

work. Some workers have strict curfews and are not permitted to leave the farms without permission. Both employers and the SAWP police workers' sexualities. Since single mothers are allowed into the program, employers often choose to hire women from a different 'race' than male workers in attempts to prevent personal intimate interactions. I have certainly heard of exceptions and talk of good *patrones* (employers). But good *patrones*,

too, possess the power to buy and profit from migrant workers' 'unfree' labour.

The SAWP clearly discriminates against women. Women workers constantly confront the need to protect their jobs and silence themselves once problems arise. As women, many feel that they have to constantly prove they can handle the work even though it may mean overworking when their bodies tire or become ill. Women are typically assigned intricate types of labour, such as those common in nurseries, which are tied to certain notions of gender and 'women's work'. However, Ofelia Becerril reminds us that "the preference for men in the program does not have anything to do with women's productivity but instead with the control of women's sexuality... [E]mployers are not only able to control the hours of work but also impose time to eat, to buy food, to

rest, to wash, to cook, to go to church, and to have sex. Everything is regulated and controlled, just like a supervisor of one of the big farms claimed, 'Mexican workers are here just to work.'" Women must also painfully contend with their role as mothers from a distance. It is extremely difficult to have to leave your children behind for up to ten months per year in order to provide for them.

The SAWP frontally challenges the discourse of Canada as a compassionate nation that respects human rights. These false illusions deter meaningful dialogue about the multiple sources of inequality that acutely stratify Canadian society. This discourse does not easily allow us to name and question racism. The plight of migrant workers, if talked about at all, is often dismissed on the grounds that at least workers from the so-called 'third world' have jobs. But these jobs come at a high price for migrant workers, their families and home communities. Migrant farm workers suffer immensely from separation, isolation and racism in rural Canada.

Sowing the Seeds of Resistance

In April 2001, male Mexican migrant farm workers organized a wildcat strike in one of the largest greenhouses in Leamington, Ontario, a small farming town located near the Windsor-Detroit border. Leamington is known as the Tomato Capital of Canada with over 800 acres of greenhouses with an estimated value of CAD \$180 million. Labour stoppages among migrant farm workers are uncommon because they do not have the right to collective bargaining nor to form unions. Workers' worst fears were confirmed when 21 ringleaders were identified and sent home by orders of the Mexican Consulate in Toronto.

The strike counted on a concerted community response. St. Michael's Church in Leamington alerted labour activists in Toronto to document the situation in order to apply pressure to policy-makers. An adhoc group of volunteers was quickly assembled by Chris Ramsaroop to travel to Leamington and talk to workers. I was asked to join the

group as an interpreter. The worker response was so overwhelming that the investigative mission led to the creation of the Global Justice Caravan Project headed by the labour movement and its volunteers. We sought to reach out to both Mexican and Caribbean workers across the province whose voices were not being heard. Seeking to operate from a worker-centred approach, the Project's core volunteers, Chris Ramsaroop, Jessica Farias and Sonia Singh and I, co-founded J4MW in the summer of 2002.

Today J4MW continues to raise awareness and to support the creation of a strong, united front among workers. Shared ethnicity, gender or experiences of exploitation do not easily equate with a uniform class-consciousness — every worker has different views and varies in terms of the risks that they are prepared to take to effect change. Structural impediments of the SAWP serve to effectively divide workers across and within racial and gendered lines. We forcefully strive to reach out to all migrant workers in order

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to thwart the divide and conquer practices that are set in place by the program. For example, we organize strategizing meetings with Caribbean and Mexican workers so they can understand each other's experiences. However, because the migrant labour force fluctuates immensely, we can develop bonds of trust with many workers but often we never see them again if they are sent to a different province.

Migrating to Canada for many reasons ourselves, the volunteer members of J4MW envision a world where people are not forced to abandon their families and communities in order to survive. This implies that peoples of the south not be deprived of subsistence in their communities by advocating for a radical change that humanizes the economy. This also involves constantly questioning our choices, privileges and complicity in perpetuating global economic inequality. As such, J4MW sees itself as part of the anti-globalization movement.

We are not advocating for the abolition of the program since most workers we engage with press for improvements. Despite the serious problems of SAWP, it responds to the immediate survival needs of workers and their families. But at the moment the program favours men over women, assuming that men are the sole providers in heterosexual family arrangements. Participation in the program should be more flexible to meet the needs of the rural communities that depend on it. Migrant farm workers must be engaged in all aspects of the decision-making processes under the SAWP that ultimately structure their lives. We vigorously stress the right to permanent residency status for female and male workers and their loved ones. Not all workers want residency but it should be an available choice. Lastly, migrant workers should have the right to form and join unions of their choice to

protect their labour rights.

I have detailed the manner in which migrant farm workers are controlled and structured as a gendered, racialized and heteronormative labour force by the SAWP. The SAWP indicates that Canada, too, is part of the 'Northern Fortress' that keeps so-called 'undesirables' at bay. We often associate xenophobia and racism with the neighbouring United States that frantically guards its borders. However, we erect borders of our own when workers of colour from the global south are treated as non-persons. Migrant farm workers are thrown crumbs for the amount of work and hardship they endure. If they want crumbs from Canada, they must take them in silence and acquiescence.

Fear and economic necessity are very real and powerful deterrents for worker defiance. But the Leamington strike of 2001 demonstrated that workers can and do fight back in numerous ways. This strike sowed the seeds of a growing movement for migrant farm workers' rights. This act of defiance was led by workers who risked it all. The labour movement in Ontario heeded the call and responded with solidarity and support. Various changes and initiatives emerged as a result of this strike, such as the production of a documentary on the plight of male Mexican migrant farm workers in Leamington called *El Contrato* [reviewed in the Films and Videos section], a new Mexican consulate office in Leamington, changes to Ontario's occupational health and safety legislation and the formation of community groups like J4MW.

Driven by the workers we have met in rural Ontario, J4MW seeks radical change to the SAWP. Our aims are quite ambitious for a small, volunteer-based collective. However, J4MW is motivated by the injustices faced by thousands of migrant farm workers in Canada. Since our first

outreach trip to Leamington, we have been moved by workers' testimonies and outrage. We are committed for the long haul in the fight for respect and dignity for all migrant farm workers in Canada. ✘

Evelyn Encalada Grez is a PhD candidate at OISE at the University of Toronto. She was born in Chile but grew up with the struggles of an immigrant working class family in Canada. Evelyn co-founded J4MW and was part of the production team of *El Contrato*.

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Constructing Global and National Nature Population

Immigration and the Green-washing of Racism and Misogyny

Stephanie Rutherford

Discourses of over-population and 'out of control' immigration have emerged as environmentalism's ugly underbelly. Apocalyptic and dystopian green narratives of over-population and limits on the earth's carrying capacity simultaneously obscure and legitimize the presence of racism, xenophobia and misogyny. Circumscribing both global and national ideas of the environment, notions of over-population and its attendant solutions need to be taken apart by environmental advocates, and revealed as having nothing to do with environmentalism or the protection of nature.

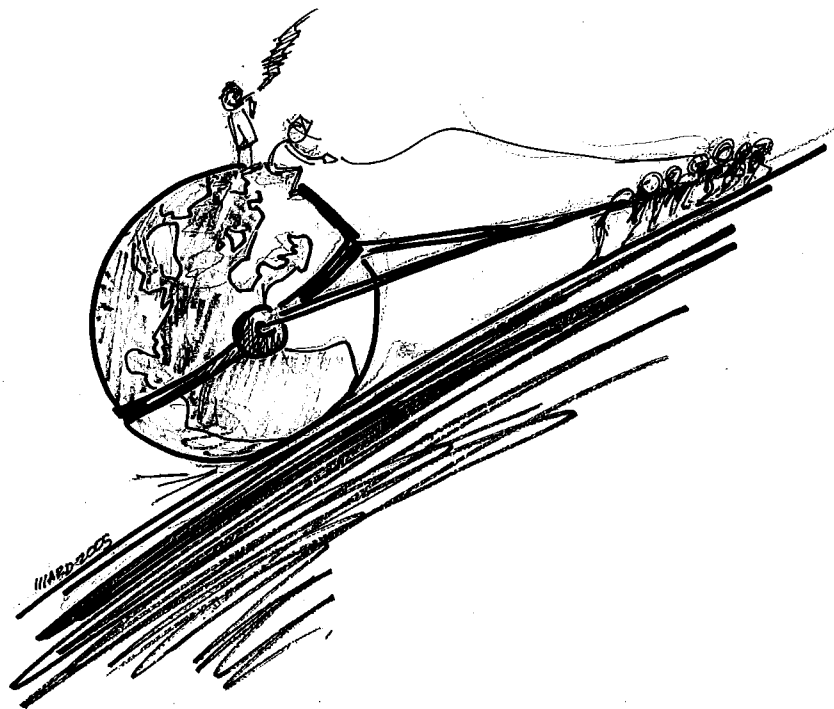
Imagining the Global Environment

To be sure, examining the global environmental crisis is not limited to the discussion of population. Climate change, natural resource depletion and the protection of biodiversity all figure large in the analysis of the global state of nature. However, the idea of population is central to the notion of the 'limits of the earth.' The concern about the 'population problem' is not new to the environmentalist cause. With the release of neo-Malthusian tracts such as Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb* in 1968 and *The Limits to Growth* by the Club of Rome in 1972, population emerged squarely in the sights of the green movement that was beginning to understand the environmental crisis as a global one. The work of environmental luminaries such as Garrett Hardin, with his notion of the 'tragedy of the commons,' has served to bolster this analysis, framing the globe as limited by its carrying capacity and in need of human intervention to 'save' nature from ourselves. The earth is envisioned as both contained and vulnerable — a common place or shared habitat

whose fate is the responsibility of us all. This idea of limits, carrying capacity, or outstripping the resources of the earth is a key tenet of the environmental problematic.

It is because of this notion of a shared earth in peril that the impulse toward green imperialism becomes justifiable. If the earth and its resources are indeed finite, then its management becomes a cause for global intervention. Discussion of population and its stabilization has become central to this management, and NGOs that are global in scope name population growth in their key program areas. Thus the Worldwatch Institute, the American Sierra Club, United Nations Population Fund and the Audubon Society all mark population as one of the primary issues that contributes to environmental devastation. Clearly, what we are talking about here is not the number of children that women in the global north are having. This is, in reality, a racialized and

gendered issue that is used to define the people of the south. Mobilizing concerns about gender and the environment, these international environmental organizations reach down, often from their headquarters in Canada, the United States and Europe to 'help' people of the 'third world,' particularly women, manage themselves and their bodies. What can be seen are the ideas which define the third world in the western imagination: over-populated, too fertile, and 'backward' in their treatment of women. This in turn justifies the intervention of international NGOs to manage women's reproduction under the auspices of securing the stability of the global environment. The issue can then be discussed in terms of certain kinds of bodies which are the bearers of too much life, shifting the debate and making women's fertility the cause and solution to global environmental problems. What this covers up is the way in which many of the global environmental issues are



WARD MINNIS

produced not from the overpopulation of the south, but from the over-consumption and exploitation of resources by people and industries of the north.

Preserving the Nation

It would seem self-evident and in keeping with the globalization story that if the environmental crisis is conceived of as global, then the nation and its nature would be given less primacy. And yet, this does not necessarily seem to be the case, particularly when discussing the so-called population problem. Myths of overpopulation have been used by national groups to reinforce what is foundationally a racist anti-immigration platform — to produce and define the nation, and its nature, as constituted by and for certain kinds of people. As Sherene Razack tells us, third world immigrants and refugees attempting to enter Canada are imagined as greedy hordes, seeking to burst into our borders to steal resources and change the 'Canadian' way of life. This is also played out in green organizations that support a moratorium on immigration to forestall the eventual crisis of carrying capacity. For example, the Diversity Alliance for a Sustainable America (DASA) asserts that immigration into the United States needs to be severely curtailed to stem the environmental devastation that will occur if the U.S. becomes the next 'China' — an over-crowded environmental wasteland. This apocalyptic panic is evident in reporting on immigration to the American Southwest, in which DASA members reveal their fear that this region is being re-colonized by Mexicans. Why is this a problem? Yeh Ling-Ling, executive director of this organization, states in *Sierra Magazine*: "Even the poor ones [immigrants] are using more resources here than in their native lands. Go to Costco. Look at those immigrants. What are they buying? Boom boxes, hi-fis, televisions. They drive SUVs. Did they have those goods in their home countries? I doubt it." In Ling-Ling's analysis, these people are intruders, rather than 'good' immigrants, greedily consuming with no regard for its effects. This neglects the connections between race, class, gender and citizenship, obscuring the fact that many immigrants to the United States and

Canada, especially women, simply do not have the economic means to consume in the way Ling-Ling suggests.

Rather, there is an easier alibi. We are told the story that stopping immigration for the sake of nature is necessary to maintain the integrity of the nation. The border is re-emphasized as that zone which is fundamental to keeping 'them' away from 'us' — our resources, our land, our nature. This is not the one-worldism that characterizes some notions of the global environment but a strongly nationalistic platform about pro-

What can be seen are the ideas which define the third world in the western imagination: overpopulated, too fertile, and 'backward' in their treatment of women. This in turn justifies the intervention of international NGOs to manage women's reproduction

tecting America from the other. This nationalism sharply defines who can be insiders and who should remain outsiders — the masses from the south who are both over-productive and over-consuming and must be kept outside of the nation. We should not imagine the Canadian case to be kinder and gentler, as we are oft to do when comparing ourselves to the United States. Similar narratives can also be seen in Canada in the dangerous immigration analysis of groups like Canada First. In an online article entitled 'World Immigration: The clock is ticking!', immigration to Canada is characterized as a "flood that is changing Canada as surely — and just as radically as an armed invasion would." Invoking Erlich, Hardin and Malthus, Canada First argues, "We have also been informed that it is equally selfish to notice that while some regions produce children at a rate never before possible, the

rest of us are compelled to cheerfully carry those kids on our backs. In the race to over populate the planet, the planet is losing." Thus, it is evident how maintaining borders and neglecting racism, sexism and other oppressions, are central to understanding environmental crises, such as myths of 'overpopulation.'

Unpacking Greened Racism

While the majority of the groups utilizing these ideas may be putatively defined as on the fringe of green politics, it should not be forgotten that the Sierra Club in the United States was almost taken over by an anti-immigration faction that was formed by people from both within and outside the organization. This is not in the past of the environmental movement, but very much the present. The discussion of the 'population-problem' at the expense of more coherent and radical assessment of the interlocking causes of environmental problems opens the door for green imperialism and the regulation of particular women's bodies. Further, it represents an opportunity for those who would use green rhetoric to support xenophobia and anti-immigration policies whose connections to the environment are a sham. Those of us who are concerned about our environments need to pay attention to how environmental ideas and practices can draw upon and reinforce racialized, gendered and neo-imperialist oppressions. ❧

Stephanie Rutherford is a doctoral candidate in Environmental Studies at York University. Her work centres on a Foucauldian analysis of nature narratives.

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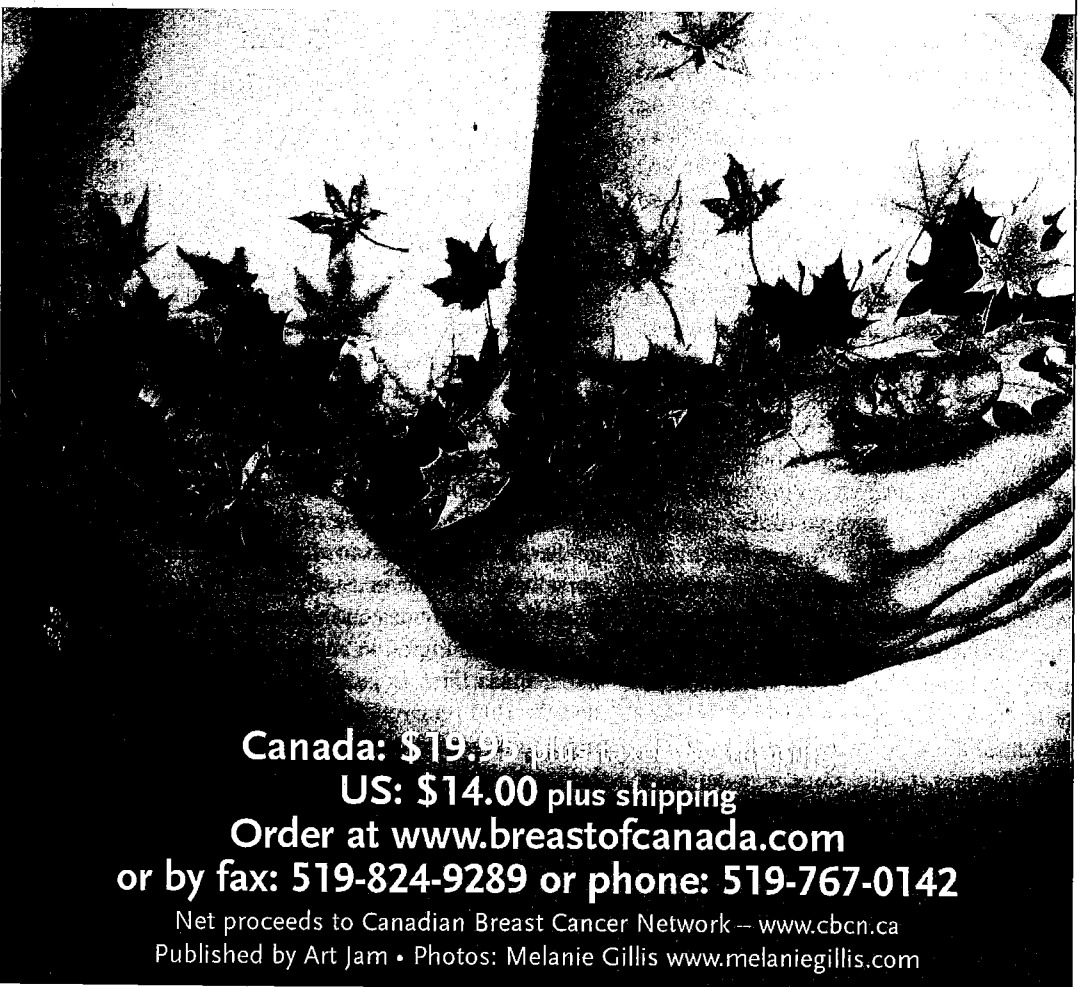
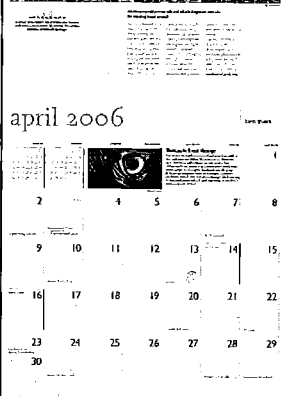
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WE Research

WHO Has a Weight Problem

Globalization, the "Obesity Epidemic", and the World Health Organization

Deborah McPhail

These days, fat is a serious global issue. Indeed, the World Health Organization (WHO) recently declared that fat — or, to use the medical term, 'obesity' — has reached epidemic proportions on a global scale. According to the WHO, more than one billion adults world-wide are overweight, and at least 300 million of them are clinically obese. The WHO concern over the international obesity problem adds to and sets the tenor for the more local (national, provincial, city-wide) discussions about obesity that are constantly appearing in newspapers, popular magazines, television and radio programming, left-leaning and anti-globalization publications, and local government policies.

But is obesity really as big a problem as it appears to be? In this article, I explore the wildly popular global obesity epidemic by analyzing the international health policy of the World Health Organization. I argue that the WHO's obesity policy, more than trying to deal with the global obesity epidemic, in fact helps to produce obesity as a global problem. Instead of asking, "what is wrong with our world that it makes people fat?", we should be asking, "why all this concern with obesity? Who is concerned, anyway, and why now?" As some feminists have argued, the regulation of women's bodies through the diet industry has had devastating consequences for many women. Asking questions of the obesity epidemic instead of taking it for granted as the truth opens up the possibility of exploring how the contemporary concern with obesity is tied to political and economic processes, as well as gendered, racialized and national inequalities.

The WHO is a self-pronounced international and apolitical body, connected to the United Nations both structurally and finan-

cially. The WHO is comprised of 190 member states, divided into six regional groupings — African Region, Eastern Mediterranean Region, Southeast Asia Region, Western Pacific Region, Americas Region, and European Region. Each region has an office and a regional committee which establishes policies in accordance with the general guidelines and global policies of the WHO. Through this regional mechanization, the WHO is able to claim its legitimacy as a democratic, globally-vital yet locally-sensitive international body. Since its inception in 1948, the WHO has been concerned with formulating international regulations to equalize and normalize health and sanitation standards. The WHO's obesity policies hail from a tradition of concern about world-wide epidemics. Epidemic containment practices undertaken by the WHO have focussed on the allocation of funding during times of epidemiological crisis and, even more so, on the ratification and implementation of policies proposing health programming and containment strategies to member countries. Member countries are expected to adopt WHO policies at the national level, and also to agree to implement surveillance programs designed to provide the WHO with accurate statistics regarding 'problem' diseases. Obesity is considered one such disease.

The WHO's global policy on obesity is part of their 'Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity, and Health,' and is linked to their chronic disease prevention program. Obesity exists in WHO policy as its own disease category, placed in charts alongside diseases like cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and osteoporosis. It is defined by the WHO in accordance with the technology of measurement often used by the medical community: the body mass index. Body mass index is calculated by divid-

ing weight in kilograms by height in square metres (kg/m²). The WHO considers a BMI of 25 to be overweight. A BMI of over 30 is considered obese.

The WHO insists, despite more commonsense assumptions, that obesity is not a disease exclusive to the first world. In their 'Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health' document released in May 2004, the World Health Assembly states:

In the poorest countries, even though infectious diseases and undernutrition dominate their current disease burden, the major risk factors for chronic diseases are spreading. The prevalence of overweight and obesity is increasing in developing countries, and even in low-income groups in richer countries.

Through the rhetoric of the minority world's 'double burden' of under and over-nutrition, the WHO is able to pronounce the obesity epidemic as truly global. All countries, regardless of economics, have 'caught' obesity. The global character of obesity is further made true by the WHO's explanation for global obesity: the new global economy. While the WHO notes that "genes are important in determining a person's susceptibility to weight gain," what is really at the heart of the world's increasing girth is the "worldwide nutrition transition" caused by the "globalization of food markets" and the "development" and "modernization" of the third world. This representation, in which the 'spread' of fat is conflated with the 'development' of the third world, could be read in a number of ways. For instance, might WHO obesity documentation be acknowledging the current imperialist 'modernization'/westernization of the third world, taking an opportunity to formulate resistance to it? Or might this discourse of development, which reproduces the dominant idea that non-western coun-

tries are backwards compared to the west, reflect something more insidious?

The explanation that obesity is caused by the development and modernization of the non-west works to reinforce global power relations. As recent feminist work on globalization argues, while current global power relations seem natural and inevitable, they in fact are neither of these things, but a pastiche of tenuously-held-together fantasies, policies, and regulatory practices. To speak of globalization as global is to render it natural, inevitable and immutable. It is important, then, to interrupt the 'will to globalize' so popular now in dominant rhetoric. This is a 'will' apparent in the WHO's continued insistence first that there is a global society; second that there is an eminent obesity threat to that global society; and third while it is the construction of that global society causing that very threat, it is individuals and their return to traditional behaviours, not state-wide returns to 'traditional economies,' that will neutralize it. Through its continued recognition of globalization as if it were given and legitimate, the WHO produces both the obese body and globalization as natural and obvious, in turn legitimizing current inequities founding the global economy.

Granted, it is important to crack globalization open, and thus to expose its fragility and precariousness. It is also important not to ignore or underemphasize some forms of globalization as very real manifestations of modern power relations. While localities and individuals do provide resistance to globalization in multifarious ways, those same localities and individuals are regulated and produced by the dictates of transnational corporations like Nike and Coca Cola, global trade agreements like NAFTA, and global agencies like the World Trade Organization and the World Health Organization. These global corporations, agreements, and agencies generally work to the greatest benefit of the west, although even within western countries, these benefits vary based on factors such as one's gender and race.

The World Health Organization is an agency that was born and only has meaning

within an understanding of the world as a global whole. As is evidenced by its will to globalize, the WHO expresses its legitimacy as a global organization, working within a globalized world with a globalized economy. As such, the WHO is subject to and organized by westerncentric power relations which govern globalization and make it legitimate. Here is why: the WHO is financed primarily by member states. While member states are all obligated to pay membership fees, other moneys come from the United Nations and its agencies and the 'voluntary contributions' of member states. One could speculate, then, that the WHO's

The west's anxiety about obesity should worry feminists familiar with the myriad of negative effects that dominant ideals of beauty have had, and continue to have, on many women.

agenda is far from apolitical. If the WHO relies in large part on funds from member states, then it would make sense that the member states who give more funding have more say in WHO policy formulation. While government funding seems to be a better option than, for example, corporate sponsorship, it is still important to take a critical look at how the relative economic power of some states over others can lead to agendas that do not serve the needs of all WHO member states equally. Rich member states are, of course, those states which benefit most from current global economic arrangements — states which are primarily western or dedicated to western-led models of economics. The benefits that certain member states receive from the global economy are perhaps what drive such policy statements as: "...nothing in the strategy shall be construed as a justification for the adoption of trade-restrictive measures or trade-distorting practices."

It can be argued, then, that the World Health Organization, although acting as a global body, works primarily to address

western concerns. And the west is very, very concerned about obesity. North America's concern with obesity is obvious to anyone who watches television, listens to the radio, or reads newspapers, magazines, or local health policies like the Romanow Report. The west's anxiety about obesity should worry feminists familiar with the myriad of negative effects that dominant ideals of beauty have had, and continue to have, on many women. We must ask ourselves: Why all this concern with obesity? Who does it benefit, and at whose expense? As a product of western imagination, WHO obesity policy allows for the west to cover over what one would venture to call the more pressing health issues precipitated by current global processes — undernutrition, and environmental degradation of water, air and plant life, to name just a couple. The policy encapsulates what, perhaps, is one of the most angst-provoking and stunningly silenced questions of the time: What are the consequences of the new global order? Undoubtedly there is more at issue, here, than the increased girth of bodies. A changing climate, U.S.-led wars for oil, growing poverty and unemployment, inequality in the distribution of nutritious food, and the environmental devastation of agricultural land — certainly these things precipitate more pressing health concerns. Because obesity is such a problem to global agencies, as opposed to any range of seemingly devastating and pressing health issues, this probematization begs one to question the motivations for the WHO's insistence on a global obesity epidemic. ❧

Deborah McPhail is a PhD student in Women's Studies at York University. Her research is about the 'obesity epidemic.'

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The Fluid Border

Children Crossing Borders in the Americas

Anne Collinson

After losing his mother on the perilous journey from Cuba to the United States in November 1999, Elian Gonzalez became a symbol of Cuban-U.S. relations, parental rights, nationality and nation, and immigrant children in need of protection. The ensuing controversy over Gonzalez's fate led to increased U.S. media coverage of children from Latin America and the Caribbean, and fueled debates over the state of children in U.S. immigration law. The plight of 'the littlest immigrants' was examined in *The New York Times* on November 3, 2003 in an article which described Mexican children who cross the Mexico-U.S. border alone to be reunited with their biological parents who are living in the United States. The article stated that "Mexican consular authorities report they have repatriated more than 9 800 unaccompanied Mexican minors caught crossing illegally in the first nine months of [this] year." On February 24, 2004, U.S. National Public Radio ran a similar story interviewing border guards who had caught children and infants packed into trunks, dashboards, special containers in gas tanks, and — in one case — into a three-foot high piñata accompanied by 'coyotes' (adults paid to smuggle others into the United States).

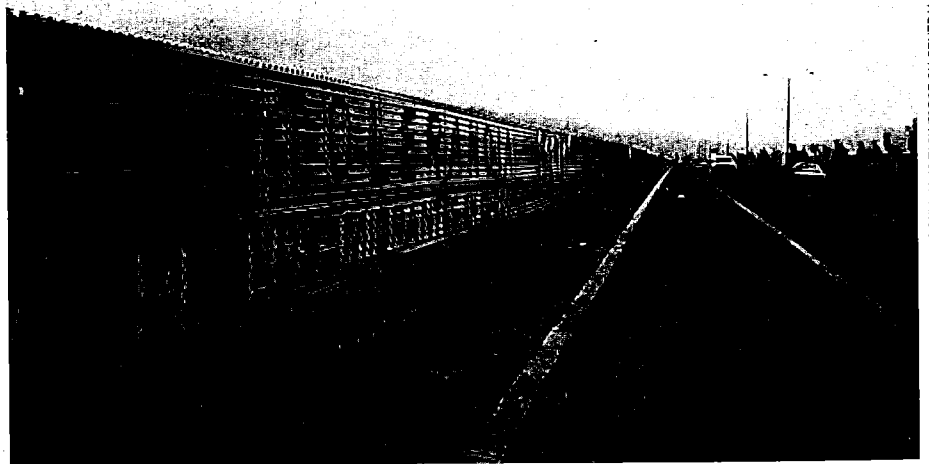
This widespread and heavily monitored migration demonstrates the central role of nations in policing the movement of people — including infants and children — across borders despite the increased flow of goods among North American states. These two very different types of child migration, adoption and reunification, illustrate the fluidity of the Mexico-U.S. border, which allows certain children to cross the border easily and forces others to risk their lives in order to enter the United States. These crossings also raise questions about the international rights of children to

be raised by their birth parents and to maintain their nationalities.

Increased policing of the Mexico-U.S. border has made people's yearly, monthly, even weekly or daily crossing more dangerous and often impossible, forcing many Mexicans who work in the United States to cross the border less often. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (formerly the Immigration and Naturalization Service) does not keep statistics that indicate the sex of those caught crossing the border. We know, for example, that roughly half of documented workers from Mexico and Central America are women and that women who work in the United States (with or without official documentation) tend to be employed as domestic workers. Prior to September 11, 2001, more women were willing to risk crossing the border monthly, or weekly to return to their families, whereas men — who tend to find work that involves travel or irregular time off such as agricultural work — were less like-

ly to be able to return home on a regular basis. With increased border surveillance, the movement of workers has declined. More and more, children are crossing the border to reunite themselves with their parents who remain in the U.S. This type of migration, less publicized but more widespread than the uproar around the Gonzalez case suggested, forces questions about transnational labour practices and immigration policy, nationality, and definitions of the 'family.' The U.S. government has made several attempts to discourage undocumented immigrants from crossing the Mexican-U.S. border throughout the late-twentieth century. Each of these schemes has involved the forced repatriation of those caught crossing into the United States. Children and teenagers who cross alone are often included in this repatriation.

The 'Lateral Repatriation Program,' lasting only twenty days in September 2003, repatriated 4 000 Mexicans, including minors. Although U.S. officials refused



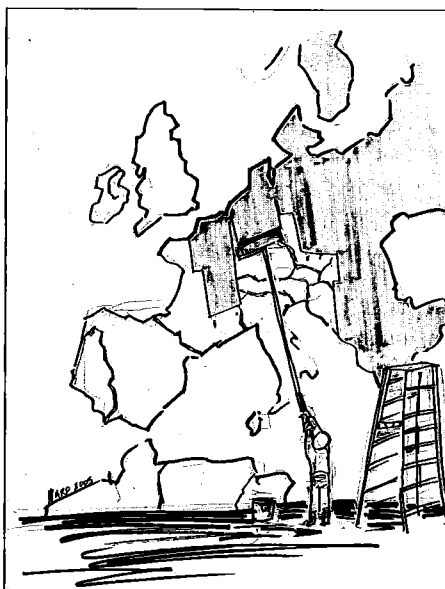
Fence at the U.S.-Mexico border in California.

REBECCA PHARES. COURTESY OF THE RELIGIOUS TASK FORCE ON CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO, WWW.RTFCEAM.ORG

to fly unaccompanied minors to the border during this program, over 85 000 undocumented Mexican migrants under the age of 17 were arrested while attempting to enter the United States in 2003. Despite this vigilant monitoring of the Mexico-U.S. border, the United States government has recently revived the pre-September 11 notion of a borderless North America, proposing that Canada, the United States, and Mexico should collectively be responsible for the monitoring of their external borders while permitting the free flow of people and goods within the continent.

Despite the varied attempts to secure North American borders, what rights do children have in terms of immigration, asylum seeking, or claims to a nation? In 1959, the United Nations determined that each child "shall be entitled from his [sic] birth to a name and a nationality" (Principle 3, 1959 U.N. Declaration on the Rights of the Child). By the 1989 U.N. Declaration on the Rights of the Child, this clause read that each child shall have "the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents" (Article 7, Part 1, 1989 U.N. Declaration on the Rights of the Child). This Convention has not been ratified by the United States (though the U.S. government has signed it, signaling its intention to ratify).

While the children of legal and extra-legal workers face deportation and repatriation, children who cross the same borders to be placed with adoptive — usually U.S. born — parents do not face similar border enforcement. The right to one's own name and nationality and biological parents is trumped by the process of adoption as tens of thousands of children are adopted transnationally to Canada, the United States, and Western Europe. Popular images of transnationally adopted children generally depict girls. China's one child policy and a cultural preference for male children have made the face of international adoption female. Narratives of rescue also evoke the image of female children. This feminized representation is a stark contrast from the notion of a so-called 'illegal' immigrant; in fact, the



notion that children enter as undocumented migrants does not correspond to the cultural image of extra-legal immigrants. Historically, popularized images of immigration focused on a perceived threat, rather than the helplessness and 'deserving' image of the adopted child.

These children enter their adoptive countries on visas and are naturalized in their new country. Although some adoptive parents keep ties with birth mothers (very few keep ties with birth fathers), most children will never meet their biological parents. Conditions in most sending countries permit few birth parents to keep up correspondence with children placed in other countries. For example, Guatemala, the site of a 36-year civil war, consistently places more children out of country than any other country in the Americas despite its small population. The increasingly popular 'roots trips' to birth countries promotes a sort of cultural tourism. Although transnationally adopted children move more freely across borders than any other children, being adopted can effectively remove a child's access to the rights convened by Article 7 of the 1989 Declaration. Despite the fact that adopted children are treated differently in many ways than other immigrant children, inter-country adoption raises a number of issues concerning child rights, immigration and migration, and the role of national governments in regulating child citizenship.

One 1997 *Good Housekeeping* article demonstrates the emotional turmoil that can result from the ability of some children to easily cross borders and the right of a child "to know and be cared for by [her] parents." The article details the life story of Gina Marie Craig, a troubled teen living in Ashtabula, Ohio. Surviving typical clashes between teenage children and parents, Gina often ended arguments with "I don't have to listen to you. You're not my real parents." In 1996, Gina's adoptive parents were contacted by a physician who worked closely with the Association in Search of Disappeared Children who claimed that Gina had been kidnapped by the Salvadoran military and her parents were still alive and searching for her.

Gina had been adopted from El Salvador in 1984, when she was six. As a child she had moved around the countryside fleeing violent clashes between the Salvadoran military and the Marxist guerillas during the civil war that persisted from 1980 to 1992. Surviving a bombing with her family, Gina (born Imelda Lopez Lainez) was hit in the leg with shrapnel. Her injuries were treated at a military field hospital. Her parents were forced to move on because of the continued bombing and Gina was sent to an orphanage. After clearance from the Salvadoran Tribunal for the Protection of Minors, she was issued a certificate of 'Moral and Material Abandonment' and was placed with an American family who raised her in Ohio.

Stunned by the news that her birth family was still alive, Gina returned to El Salvador after DNA testing proved she was the missing daughter of Jose Lainez and Maria Victoria Lopez. Meeting with her birth parents — and communicating through a translator — Gina met her extended birth family and even returned to the site of the bombing that caused her injuries. Since more than two thousand children were placed in the United States during the Salvadoran civil war, many believe that more of the disappeared will surface in similar circumstances to Gina's. UNICEF has long objected to the outplacement of children during times of war, unrest, or natural disaster since every effort to locate living relatives is near impossible

during the social upheaval in these circumstances. In fact, UNICEF stepped in this past December to assure Indian and Indonesian officials that children who appeared to have been orphaned in the tsunami would not be placed out of the country since it was impossible during the disaster's aftermath to locate living relatives.

The twin events of children who attempt to cross borders to reunite themselves with their parents, and the children who move more easily through adoption but in the process may lose their rights to name, nation, and parental care, call into question the permeability of borders. For some children, the border is almost impenetrable and for these children the stakes are high when they try to enter the United States. For adoptable children, two major issues surface. First, does the movement from family of origin to family of care efface a child's nationality? Second, how is nationality negotiated — both legally and culturally — in adoption? Further, when does the placement of children in countries other than their birth countries violate a child's right to be raised by her or his birth parents? In the midst of all of this, governments and advocacy groups continue to debate the utility of free trade of manufactured goods, food, and jobs in the Americas. Little is done to protect the rights of border-crossing children to name and nationality, though there are multiple acts and laws governing how, when, and with whom children can enter the United States. The 'littlest immigrants' serve as a human depiction of the strength of nations to remain forceful in policing their borders despite the increases in trade, particularly within the Americas. Like certain types of goods, only children destined for U.S. families are welcomed with open arms. Children who enter without the protection of visas issued for adoption face a much different future in the United States. ❧

Anne Collinson is a Canadian living in Columbus, Ohio. She is writing a dissertation titled "'The Littlest Immigrants': Adoption, Migration, and Exploitation of Border-Crossing Children in the Americas" at Ohio State University.

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A Journal of Feminist Geography

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Recasting the Diaspora

Current Transnational Adoption Flows

Alexandria J. Johnstone

Flowing in the Undercurrent

The adoption of children from China into Canadian families is now the largest transnational movement of adopted children, a process which has brought more than eight thousand Chinese children into Canada since 1993. The political and cultural economy of this adoption process is marked by the movement of children through and across uneven class, racial/ethnic, national, and gendered spaces. Relations of power interact with shifting social relations that not only create 'abandoned' children (almost all of them are girls), but then recreate them as 'adoptable' children as they migrate from orphanage care in Chinese welfare institutions to adoptive families in Canada (almost all adoptive families are older, white, well-educated, and relatively affluent).

Transnational adoption occurs today on a large scale, but the specific nature of migration and political economy of the phenomenon — as primarily a 'gendered' migration process — receives relatively little attention in either the adoption or transnational literature. While transnationalism tends to be gender blind, much of the adoption literature usually focuses on the psychosocial adjustment of adopted children and their newfound selves, families, and nations. This reflects a one-way settlement process. Thinking about transnational adoption as a series of ongoing exchanges across multiple borders and political and cultural boundaries opens up new ways of considering this phenomenon.

Recently, the media has discussed transnational adoption by focusing on individual adoption stories and the alleged fashionableness of adopting a Chinese girl. The political economy of adoption involves material and symbolic relations of exchange and value. It includes caring

and consumption, the local and the global, and it recreates and transforms relations of power that propel the movement of children and shape adoptees in particular ways. Transnational adoption involves social actors and institutions with an investment in both 'the best interest of the child' and in the maintenance of particular kinds of children, families, institutions and nations. In transnational China-Canada adoption, an elaborate network of organizations and social actors work to make Chinese adoptees into adoptable children. Of course, "the object here is a child — not just an object but a subject with its own possibilities of agency — and this," Ann Anagnost reminds us, "is the source of unease, because we can never be sure that the child will grow into what we wish it to be." As such, the child always holds the possibility of disrupting processes of social reproduction.

A cultural analysis of China-Canada adoption illuminates the way social actors construct the identities of abandoned and adopted children at various locations in their migration. These identities are marked not only by the social and historical spaces and particular places through which Chinese children move, but also by the changing historical and social relations which remain inextricably linked to the biographies of individual children and to their material conditions. Even when marginalized and abandoned Chinese children are transformed into adopted 'Canadians,' representing a kind of re-birth, unequal histories are dramatized and responded to. The borders of space and time they cross cannot be blurred, as their actual movement — from 'over there' to 'over here,' and from 'orphanage' to 'family' — reveals uneven relations of power and difference. Mapping and linking these identities, meanings, and values

within and across the various locations that make up China-Canada adoption migration reveals issues of race/ethnicity, nation, gender, and class.

Transnational Processes and Border-Crossings

While adoptive parents sometimes use the language of 'gift' and 'fate' to tell their adoption narratives, their children are actually delivered to them via the policies and practices among China-Canada exchange partners: state officials, social workers, adoption agencies, and orphanage caregivers. While the selection and preparation of 'adoptable' children in China and 'able to adopt' parents in Canada may seem to be separate processes, they are intertwined via the ideologies, images, and resources that circulate even before either children or parents cross the Pacific. Capitalism and humanitarianism are not distinct, but interwoven practices. This is not to say that adoption is a purely rational market: transnationally adopted children are not simply bought and sold as they exchange hands and cross borders. Rather, people and institutions around them enter into social relations of exchange, meaning, and value that include both caring and consumption.

This network of adoption partners and the transactions they make brings particular children into being for particular parents in specific ways. The political economy of exchange reveals how the power of Canadian financial donations enforces modern care standards in Chinese orphanages, and how the power of Canadian images of Chinese baby girls, as victims of patriarchy and neglect, provokes the desire to adopt them. We also see how the power of Chinese officials determines who can adopt, and how the power of Chinese nationalistic and modernistic desires

relates to the outpouring of Canadian multicultural desires and humanitarian concern for abandoned children.

An overflow of children, a constrained and channeled flow of resources, and a convoluted network of needs and desires determine which children are eligible to become adoptable. With the introduction of more money to a specific group of Chinese orphanages through transnational adoption, children's health increasingly improves; and through an increasingly regulated system of child placement, parents can usually expect to receive a healthy adoptable child. At the heart of the matter is the image of the desirable child that shapes the process by which certain children come into the Chinese-Canadian adoption process, and the transnational exchange of money and modern care standards makes that possible.

What is most disquieting is the increasing market-orientation of China-Canada adoption over the competing needs of children as desirable objects and parents as the consumers, with agencies and state officials as mediators of this relationship. Despite what the China Center of Adoption Affairs and Canadian adoption agencies claim to be their regulatory standards for recruiting acceptable parents for Chinese children, a surplus of children and the private (and often for-profit) interests of agencies actually reinforce all too often the dominant position of the 'real client.' To be sure, promising to fulfill family desires sometimes means (almost) guaranteeing the right kind of child and services. For many families, the appeal of adopting from China is a combination of relatively short waiting times, the availability of healthy baby girls without baggage, China's openness to older parents and single parents (until recently), and a connection to a much valorized Chinese culture — described as ancient, rich, and unique — echoing decades of variations in Canada on the 'exotic East.'

The picture is even more complex when one takes into account the fact that many of the recent improvements in orphanage life have come about as a direct result of the mandatory 'donation' given by adoptive families. Families, agencies,

and Chinese welfare institutes are thus caught up in an interplay of caring and consumerist practices, in which the adoption system seems to tailor the available Chinese children to the stated wishes of

the would-be adoptive parents. This leads to an apparent contradiction: transnational adoption programs emphasize the best interests of children and their distinct rights as individuals, but end up simulta-



KIM RADFORD

This drawing is intended to depict a particular perspective on the effects of globalization. I see globalization as creating an uneven distribution of power between the southern countries and the north. This white hand shows how the hands of the north are in control of global policies. Some major policies instilled by the north are the debt repayment through establishment of policies that enforce market liberalization and loss of public power. This diminishes the power of global diversity, as white power wraps its fingers around global economies. — Kim Radford

neously distinguishing among children and orphanages in a world of unequal resources and competing needs. Thus, a social justice frame helps us appreciate the linkages and contradictions within transnational adoption processes and practices around the needs of Chinese orphans.

The adoption process by which this transformation is enacted locally happens through transnational circulations of money, ideas, and practices. Money is channeled back into the improvement and standardization of facilities, which provides the base for the practices that create and prepare particular children who will be placed for transnational adoption. China-Canada adoption thus weaves together seemingly disparate intra- and inter-national relations of power, which structurally link the movement of people, meanings, and resources while de-linking others.

The Power of Difference: Recasting Diaspora

The particular movement of the adopted child gives rise to what drives the political economy of a migration process that simultaneously involves caring and consumption. Carefully tracing her historical mutations and contemporary manifestations brings into different light her movement across the relations of social exchange at various locations of connected categories of difference — not just her actual migration and construction of her value and identity, but also her birth and abandonment, and her imagined rebirth. China adoption brings into sharp relief Canada's internal 'multicultural mosaic' dynamics, as it reveals the real effects of ethnicizing people from what constitutes outsider-status — poor abandoned Chinese children — into what constitutes insider-status — privileged white Canadian citizens. Charting the material inequalities within and across national boundaries reveals the privileges of whiteness through which she is culturally transformed for the process of adoption into Canada, and shows how her new identity is shaped at the invisible borders of race/ethnicity, class, and gender.

In keeping with feminist critiques that attempt to analyze unequal and interlock-



A PASSAGE TO THE HEART

ing systems of power and privilege, I draw attention to the fact that the political economy of capital offers unequal degrees of mobility, belonging, and opportunity. It thus seems necessary to highlight those rarely mentioned — the birth parents, infants left behind, and the unwanted children who fail to survive — who may indeed be further disempowered and marginalized by the creation and mobility of adoptable children. This reveals to us where inequalities lie.

While family is the key site for making sense of differences, it is also the cultural site of national reproduction and transformation. Thus for China, some female children are set adrift in the world, to help the motherland achieve its global destiny and to promote world peace among nations. Freed of their marginalized status, adopted girls are then free to be Chinese in affirming ways. For Canada, providing citizenship for transnationally adopted children is culturally powerful — both materially and symbolically — as it feeds two related myths simultaneously: Canada benevolently promotes 'peaceful' world relationships, and it folds multiculturalism into the transcendent national vision of itself. The families perform the work of carrying out these myths. In doing so, the adopted girls from China become the harmonious bridge-builders who simultaneously embody, contain, and sustain the ideology of state-sanctioned multiculturalism.

At the same time, transnational adoption — as a contemporary social phenomenon — has as much to do with reimagining family, kinship, and the nation as it does with diaspora. In this way, it offers a tremendous opportunity to think about an 'ethical multiculturalism' that cuts across historical divisions of gender, race, class,

and nation to create transnational local and global networks, at once disparate and all too connected. Transnational families are becoming more commonplace in many parts of the world today. The deep ethical ambiguities of adoption are increasingly being publicly explored in transnational adoption communities, which include the Chinese adoption community. It offers a relatively new diasporic space in which to discover new ways of questioning traditional family structures and strategies of resistance to orientalist and racist, gendered (and other oppressive) discourses and practices. Diaspora thus emerges as both a concept and an imagined space for revamping national and transnational communities based on destination, association, and a common set of anti-oppressive social practices, economic responsibilities, and political commitments. For as Stuart Hall notes: "The future belongs to the impure...to those who are ready to take in a bit of the other, as well as being what they themselves are." ㊦

Alexandria Johnstone is a second year doctoral student at the University of Toronto. Her dissertation area is transnational adoption between China and Canada. She also works in the domestic adoption field, something which has provided her with some insight into adoption issues, and particularly about why people choose international adoption.

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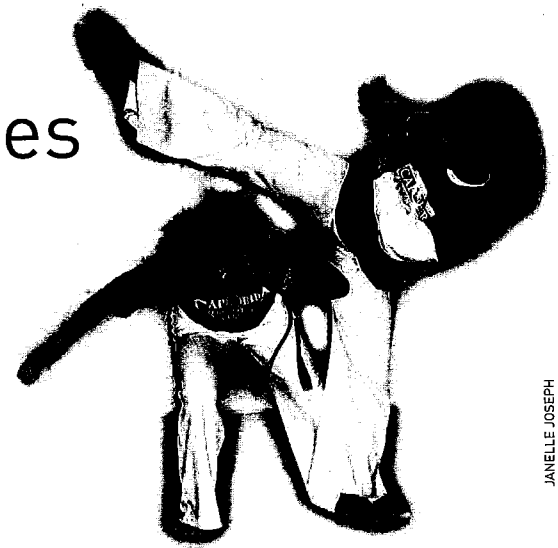
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Transgressing Boundaries and Crossing Borders

As Capoeiristas Brasileiras (Female Brazilian Practitioners of an Afro-Brazilian Martial Art)

Janelle Joseph



JANELLE JOSEPH

The world of capoeira, for the initiated few, is an all-encompassing lifestyle, philosophy, sport, martial art, dance, and game. Through the movements (gestural and translocative) of their bodies, *as capoeiristas brasileiras* (female Brazilian capoeira players) represent a novel community of Brazilian women. By participating in a cultural activity designed for and by men, they transgress gender boundaries, and as they emigrate from Brazil with increasing frequency, *as capoeiristas brasileiras* have changed their citizenship, found work, and made homes away from home. They cross borders to present Afro-Brazilian culture to northern worlds and in doing so enter and create what Mary Louise Pratt calls 'contact zones,' social spaces where disparate cultures meet, accommodate, resist, and grapple with each other, borrowing and lending in both directions. The transformation and translocation of *as capoeiristas brasileiras* are the purview of this essay.

Capoeira: Martial Art, Dance, Game

A capoeira é uma celebração da vida nos corpos que sofrem do oppression, uma expressão da liberdade que permite os pobres sentem ricos, e os fracos, forte.

(Capoeira is a celebration of life in bodies that suffer from oppression, an expression of freedom which allows the poor to feel rich and the weak, strong).

Capoeira is a fluid, rhythmic ritual, with enigmatic and often contradictory characteristics. The gestures of the *capoeirista* are those of a martial artist, with ritualized but sometimes violent attacks and counter attacks. Capoeira is

Capoeira is an art that allows people to see life's injustices and at the same time offers a strategy with which to confront them.

— Bira Almeida, founder of the United Capoeira Foundation

'played' in the style of an African dance, which has two main features: *atabaques* (drums) and a *roda* (circle) formation with dancers in the centre. Participants in the circle sing, clap and play the drums and other instruments; the songs and rhythms guide the two sparring dancers. Capoeira is considered a game, typical of the uninhibited and expressive activities of children that feature simultaneous cooperation and competition. Capoeira weaves African and Brazilian tradition, history, spirituality, and philosophy into a unique martial art orally transmitted from *mestres* (masters) to students.

Originally, it was exclusively male African slaves in Brazil who played capoeira. They practiced the martial art in a clandestine fashion, as a form of cultural celebration and self-defense on plantations. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, captured, manumitted and runaway slaves played capoeira on plantations and in the mountains and jungles of Brazil. As more slaves gained their freedom towards the end of the nineteenth century, capoeira circles were a common occurrence in the cities and the martial art was adopted by street gangs as the weapon of choice. After the abolition of slavery in 1888, all cultural gatherings of dark-skinned Brazilians, including

capoeira circles, were outlawed in Brazil. However, capoeiristas continued to play and were viciously punished until the middle of the twentieth century. At this time the government harnessed the activity for 'cultural exhibitions' to promote Brazil as a 'mixed-race nation' and to symbolically affirm the importance of the Afro-Brazilian population in the history and culture of the country. Today capoeira is open to people of all ages, genders, nationalities and ethnicities.

As Capoeiristas Brasileiras: Transgressing Boundaries

In Brazilian society, men have significant advantages over women. Further, compared to their white counterparts, *pretas* (black women) continue to be educated less, paid less, occupy lower status jobs, suffer from more debilitating diseases and domestic violence, are sterilized more, and have children who continue to die from higher rates of disease and violence.

James Scott has suggested that every minority group draws on the dominant group's ideas, vocabularies and mechanisms, juxtaposed with their own beliefs, and creates "a 'hidden transcript' that represents a critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant." From the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, Brazil's



Capoeiristas: Patera & Taquinha



Capoeiristas: Patera & Taquinha

pretos (black men) used capoeira as a 'hidden transcript,' a means of liberation from slavery, class constraints, poverty and the limitations of the human body. Influenced by international women's movements in the 1960s, *pretas* (black women) began to adopt and adapt this martial art as their own 'hidden transcript'; capoeira was (and still is) used to subvert a hegemonic world-view. When women play capoeira they defy patriarchy, racial oppression, gender constraints of their social lives, and prescriptions on their physicality of which they have grown accustomed. Capoeira demands strong bodies that 'take up space.' As Jerri-Jo Idarius found through interviews with capoeiristas, "Every second I am in the capoeira class, I am conscious that I am a woman... Women [habitually] make their bodies as small as possible. ... Capoeira reminds me to take up [more] space."

Today as *capoeiristas brasileiras* use the activity to subvert the hegemonic structure of society and capoeira culture as they play amongst men; they continue to challenge notions of the form and meaning of the cultural activity, defy which actions and behaviours are considered 'natural' and appropriate for the female body, and alter the ways some women think about and react to violence. As *capoeiristas brasileiras* are encouraged to participate and to travel overseas to exhibit and promote capoeira worldwide as a gender-inclusive art and to represent Brazil as a non-discriminatory nation. Many black women who face a lack of opportunity at home and have few resources at their disposal see capoeira as 'a way out.'

Globalization operates
on a global scale,
cutting across national
boundaries, integrating
and connecting
communities and
organizations in new
space-time combinations,
making the world in
reality and in experience
more interconnected.

– Joseph Maguire and Jason Tuck

As Capoeiristas Brasileiras: Crossing Borders

The driving force behind globalization and transnationality is economic exploitation and the manipulation of communities and people as markets, consumers and workers. The wealth of the Northern nations has brought many economically disadvantaged capoeiristas to the United States (1970s), England (1980s) and Canada (1990s), looking for an easy way to support themselves and their families not available in Brazil.

There are a handful of *brasileiras pretas* (black Brazilian women) practicing capoeira in the north. They left Brazil in order to make considerable amounts of

money not available in the slums where the majority of urban black women live and minimum wage is less than a dollar a day. Some are the girlfriends and wives of masters who crossed borders with the hopes of starting new capoeira groups in (relatively) rich, predominantly white countries of the northern world. Others are those who left Brazil in search of a better life, took up work (mainly in gendered and racialized employment sectors) and began to practice capoeira once settled in the north. Both groups struggle to define the local as a distinctive community.

Few *capoeiristas brasileiras* migrate independently. Those who face great economic hardships at home are usually eager to cross borders with their 'masters' (instructors). In addition to training capoeira, they have been expected to establish and/or maintain family units and relations in the interests of anchoring their male compatriots emotionally, and have also become players in the job market, often in low paid positions as domestic workers, custodians, servers, and nannies, or in the entertainment sector as dancers. As *capoeiristas brasileiras* usually remain responsible for all domestic duties and childcare as well as the everyday administration for the capoeira group such as advertising, registering new members, collecting membership fees, and/or teaching classes. In doing so, they unite people from around the world, even connecting with other *brasileiras* who were excluded from capoeira in Brazil either explicitly or implicitly by sexist groups. Ironically, it is in the north where as *brasileiras* are able to 'find their roots.' Puma, a

brasileira preta living in Vancouver says,

When I started capoeira it was funny because I was always a dancer so I went to L.A. to do a dance show and they had a piece of capoeira. Only one woman was doing capoeira so when I saw it I said I am a woman too and I wanna do this. If she can do it, I can do it! ... Its not fair only guys do it. So when I went back [enrolling in a capoeira class] was the first thing I did.

Drawing on this uniquely Brazilian art form is an empowering way for brasileiras to re/discover and re/vitalize their sense of community and heritage, re/connect to their culture and to challenge traditional gender roles.

ern nations, as *capoeiristas brasileiras* take advantage of what bell hooks calls "ethnicity as spice," "seasoning that can liven up the dull dish that is mainstream culture." Popular images of Brazil as the land of the carnival, with exotic, primitive, entertaining, dark-skinned, writhing dancers, is in line with the entrenched structure of white supremacy in many northern nations. Those brasileiras who feel exalted at this opportunity to express themselves within white, mainstream commodity culture are in some ways depoliticized. It is the commodification of race and ethnicity as resources for pleasure which allows for the prosperity of as *capoeiristas brasileiras* outside of Brazil.

As *capoeiristas brasileiras* constantly reproduce and disrupt the singular vision of how a Brazilian woman behaves and what she can achieve. They contest patriarchal, hegemonic exercises of power through a counter-culture that encourages large, strong female bodies, intense attacks and counter attacks, vociferous

singing, animated physical expression and celebration. As *capoeiristas brasileiras* use capoeira's fundamental movement, the *ginga*, the graceful swing of the body, which disguises all attacks and provides the momentum for escape, to transcend static female Brazilian identities, explore their personal boundaries of violence, to present a serious challenge to prevailing notions of small, docile feminine bodies, and to form local and global capoeira communities. The *ginga* is embodied resistance; it represents capoeira's principle of physical expression for bodies otherwise silenced, making it an ideal site of transcendence for any marginal group, especially *brasileiras*.

Due to global economic inequalities, black Brazilian women are increasingly moving northward. As they cross international borders they not only facilitate the

development of a newfound sense of control over their bodies and their lives but also contribute to the consumption and in some cases misappropriation of an indigenous art by those living in the north. Additionally, they indirectly contribute to a loss of earning power and racial and gender exploitation in their home country. Capoeira allows some measure of freedom from familial, gendered and national constraints, but *brasileira* transnationality also plays a role in reinforcing oppression on a number of levels. As *capoeiristas brasileiras* are engaged in building a new 'nation' of women who are resilient yet mutable, brute yet graceful, free yet subjugated, culturally omnivorous, with plural identities, full of all the contradictions inherent in the capoeira game itself. ❧

Janelle Joseph is a PhD candidate in the Department of Exercise Sciences at the University of Toronto. Her research foci include gender, race, transnational identities, and alternative movement practices, specifically martial arts and para-theatrical performance. She specializes in Afro-Brazilian and Canadian cultures. She has presented her work at conferences in Canada and the United States.

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JANELLE JOSEPH



Transnationality: Successes and Failures

On the one hand, the translocation of *brasileiras* has aided in the formation of distinctive local Brazilian communities around the world. They have brought together Brazilian diasporic subjects and created 'contact zones' by sharing their culture with others who bring their own sensibilities to the capoeira lifestyle, philosophy, sport, martial art, dance and game. They also engender global capoeira communities as groups proliferate and make linkages across multiple nations. They have blurred national identities and permitted a new form of multiculturalism where people, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, or skin colour are able to consume, relish and exhibit Afro-Brazilian culture.

On the other hand, by introducing this Afro-Brazilian cultural activity to north-

Local I Under Global Eye

An Assessment of Women's Participation in the Mozambican Democratic Process

Carmeliza Rosário and Emídio Machiana

Historical Background

Historically, Mozambique, because of its history, has been much influenced by international events and conditions. The colonial process in Mozambique imported the administrative structure from Portugal with complete disregard for local administrative logic and functions. Up to the 1970s, gender equity was hardly discussed in Portuguese-influenced circles of either rural or urban Mozambican cultures, and very seldom came to the public's attention. After independence in 1975, colonial borders were maintained, and the Portuguese state apparatus was not completely eliminated. Quite the contrary: the new socialist ideology reinforced the centralized and bureaucratic character of the state. This new ideology also tried to force a national identity, completely suppressing any kind of ethnic affiliation and loyalty. In addition, the industry-based ideal of development strongly repressed alternative indigenous economic modes of production. Although the role of women in society became an important issue in the revolutionary discourse, women were not necessarily regarded as equal to men. Women got their own national celebration day, and their own national civic organization, affiliated with the ruling party, through which they could express themselves politically. They were not, however, expected to be the heads of households, nor to have the same rights, obligations and responsibilities as males within the family.

The second republic, instituted in 1990, adopted a new constitution that introduced western democratic principles, with increased civil and political liberties. For example, one party rule was eliminated; separation of the executive, legislative and judicial powers was instituted; independent associations and new parties were allowed

to constitute themselves; and the protection of freedom of the press was formalized. The relationship already established with the World Bank and other donor countries and institutions further reinforced economic, administrative, political and social changes. Issues such as administrative decentralization, democratization, civil society reinforcement and gender became central to development. Civil society and gender awareness have indeed grown with the mushrooming of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). But this has not translated into local ownership of change, as the international organizations' development models still prevail. Often, access to financing, credit, allowance, and aid relief is based on conditions which impose standardized ideals for socioeconomic growth. Thus, development concepts have been strongly politicized, and introduced into political jargon with the sole aim of being financed. The notion of the

nation-state, for instance, idealized in the first republic, has opened up to the acknowledgement of local leadership, as well as the attempted introduction of some local languages into the educational system. For many, these changes have not necessarily meant recognition of different ethnicities per se, but rather an opportunity to use ethnic and local specific affiliations and networks for political gains. This could assure not only more support in the elections, but also the dilution of any opposition discourse founded in ethnic related issues.

In this context, we discuss if and how concepts such as nation, democracy and gender are relevant, efficient and incorporated into electoral discourses as a part of the Mozambican democratization process. Global ideas have been aiming at results without regard for processes to such a degree that society has not been able to keep up with institutional intentions and policies. Public policies and ideas remain too vague on most issues deemed globally unavoidable and essential.

Feminist Theory and the Place of Gender in a Multiethnic Background

Many feminist theories argue that categories such as gender, race and class do not exist in isolation, but are part of an intimate relationship. Globally, Mozambique forms



Girls embroidering during colonial times.

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part of a 'race' and 'class' of sub-Saharan peripheral countries. These countries have their own understandings of their place in the global sphere, which is not often translated into a similar evaluation by the 'global eye.' They seldom perceive themselves the same way the world perceives and categorizes them.

Typically, countries such as Mozambique lack the power to negotiate their own fate. More often, ideas and theories from northern states prevail, and processes considered normal are introduced, regardless of relevance or preparedness. Thus, rural women learn about the idea of equal opportunities only to find them an abstract, distant and foreign notion. The reality they are submerged in does not provide the means to effectively achieve these equal opportunities as the implementers imagine them.

A good example of this are the rules governing Mozambican nationals — rules that are influenced by foreign practices and have been since colonial times. Regimes have changed, but even today's laws are still not based in local practice. This has made it difficult to apply laws, as the majority do not understand or relate to them. Even rulers, who might have once been part of the margins, lead contradictory lives. They take on the new values of the global centre and try to force the devalued peripheral values out, often without entirely incorporating the newly acquired values either.

While race, class and gender are interconnected categories at the individual level, they also operate at national, international and global levels. This is because nations may also be considered entities with their own 'class' and 'race' in the global sphere, but also because gendered subjects within them will always be affected by the way a particular 'race' and 'class' of a country is positioned within the global system.

What do Nation, Democracy and Gender Mean to Mozambique?

In Mozambique's case, democracy has been synonymous with the truce between government and the rebel guerilla in the war between 1977 and 1992. There is also an unclear idea of what sort of a nation Mozambique is or is striving to be.

Governments have been systematically failing to address the country's multiplicity of ethnic identities and affiliations, religions and other sources of difference. Alternating between suppressing and celebrating difference, as well as between a total rejection of the colonial legacy and the incorporation of new legislation from the former metropolis, the country has yet to define its effective identity and sense of direction. The challenge remains: Which notions of nation, democracy and gender will be used to guide Mozambique into prosperity and wellbeing?

The 2004 Elections

After observing 45 days of televised public media coverage of political parties and presidential candidates during the 2004 electoral campaign, we concluded the following:

- **Gender** had a relatively secondary role within electoral campaign speeches. It was not considered an essential subject to national development in the way that issues such as employment, water and sanitation, transport and communication, schooling and health, were. Speeches about gender were mostly used as a mobilization tool for a selected female voter demographic. Gender was most often mentioned where the audience was primarily composed of women or when the candidate was a woman, both during her own speech or when interviewed by journalists. In certain localities, the choice of a female candidate was not publicly justified by certain political forces as based on her competence or because of a possible gender equity policy of her party. Rather, female candidacy was due to specific historical contexts such as the civil war and migration patterns, which had both reduced the male population in the area.

- **Nation** was also an issue very weakly developed during the electoral speeches. There was no plan of action to address the hidden problems that might come about regarding issues such as ethnicity and power sharing. For a long time the issue of ethnicity has been considered a taboo in Mozambique. The constitution states that no party is allowed to be based on ethnic grounds and interests. However, during the campaign there were still accusations by the ruling party that certain parties were appeal-



Abiba Luamumu, political leader in Ngapapa, Mueda during the period of armed struggle.

ing to tribal votes. Opposition parties, on the other hand, argued in their speeches that the government only represented the interests of the southern region, which was privileged over the rest of the country, and that the current party's governance has stripped the Mozambican people of its dignity. The ruling party has long been perceived as associated with the southern ethnic group, as all of its past leaders came from the south. This is a theme opposition parties use to reach audiences frustrated with their lack of opportunities. This climate of 'ethnic' suspicion hides a strong need for a project of nation-building, something that was never mentioned during the campaign.

- **Democracy** was a more recurrent subject with the most varied interpretations. Parties and candidates either described the Mozambican democratic process as consolidated, or as suffering from partisan politics, or as in need of regularly alternating the ruling party. Both the ruling party, Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO), and the major opposition party, Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO), claim the achievement of institutionalized democracy for themselves. Thus, the ruling party maintains that democracy in Mozambique is in the

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Women with cargo.

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FRELIMO campaign, Manhiça, 1999.

process of consolidation, while the opposition claims that only they can really finalize the process of democratization. The major opposition party goes so far as to argue that the current state is still without the rule of law. The smaller opposition parties, on the other hand, see alternating power as the best sign of true democracy. For them it will only be when the ruling party loses its hold on power that democracy will have finally entered the political arena. It appears, then, that for the political actors in Mozambique democracy is noth-

ing more than the act of voting, after which citizens cease to have importance, role or voice in the democratic process. There is no public participation regarding the structure and role of the different public institutions, including some traditional ones. And there is definitely no broad discussion around what type of democracy and representation the country is aiming for.

Which Way?

The concepts of democratization, social and economic stability and respect

for gender equality within a development framework do exist in Mozambique, and are being used in the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans. However, the major players in the democratization process not only do not use these concepts in the crosscutting manner they should be used, but they also do not seem to grasp the important connections between these ideas. The question then unfolds as to whether this lack of attention and implementation is due to a clash with local values and resistance to the 'global pace', or simply political apathy.

Not recognizing the role that rooted, rediscovered or recreated social values might play in 'silently' (and at times not so silently) hampering globalizing processes, such as democratization, nation stabilization and gender equity, development could cause serious problems in Mozambique. Despite the efforts of the international and donor community, Mozambique will not walk in the pace of development expected or demanded. This is especially the case if as a nation Mozambique continues to design development strategies that conform with international norms, rather than profoundly reflect on the ways that these norms can include Mozambican identities. Clearly, as gender issues go, there will continue to be a meager space for any pressure group to discuss, lobby and ensure equality of opportunities within such a divided and fairly unsettled civil society. ❧

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Transnationalism, Canadian Identity, and the Performance of Femininity in Elite Canadian Figure Skating

The Case of José Chouinard

Karen McGarry

In 2002, a coach I interviewed proudly remarked that José Chouinard, a popular Canadian figure skating champion and Olympian in the 1990s, embodied “the essence of a respectable Canadian girl.” As Canada’s second-ranked sport in terms of television spectatorship and advertising revenue, figure skating has always been imagined as an important part of Canadian pop culture and identity. This is especially true for the many Canadian women who comprise the majority of skating’s spectator demographic. Drawing upon anthropological fieldwork among national and Olympic-level Canadian figure skaters, coaches, sponsors, and journalists conducted between 2000 and 2002, this article focuses on women’s figure skating, with special emphasis on my informants’ comments about Quebecoise skater, José Chouinard.

Widely hailed as the ‘epitome of femininity’ and a proud Canadian, popular perceptions of Chouinard’s Canadianness were contingent upon her adoption of white, upper-class Anglophone aesthetics, as well as the nostalgic imagery of former female Hollywood icons. Chouinard’s image was often likened to that of Grace Kelly and Audrey Hepburn, and Canadians frequently regarded the consumption of Chouinard’s image by American spectators as tangible proof of Canadian success. Ultimately, and ironically, the circulation and positive international reception of her image in international magazines, ice shows, and other transnational contexts (and especially American contexts) solidified her status as a valued Canadian ‘at home.’ In many ways, my informants’ narratives provide an oppor-

tunity for an exploration of the ways in which Canadian identity discourses are dependent upon transnational flows and consumption, and the ways in which the commodification of particular images of both ‘Canadianness’ and ‘femininity’ converge.

Figure skating, much like other nationalist spectacles, represents an important arena for the construction of a sense of ‘Canadian identity’ that is partly dependent upon socially conservative, mainstream, and idealized images of skaters for public consumption. Within women’s figure skating, skaters are expected to embody a socially appropriate, hegemonic form of femininity, manifested in such things as hairstyles, costumes, and overall demeanour and comportment. Interestingly,

the production of a ‘respectable’ femininity is increasingly predicated upon the appropriation of particular images of race and class as well as the transnational, glamorized aesthetics of Hollywood.

In Canada, women’s figure skating has not acquired the same level of status or recognition as men’s skating. This is partly because male skating champions such as Toller Cranston, Brian Orser, Kurt Browning, and Elvis Stojko have won a plethora of international medals, World championships, and Olympic medals in recent years, making them household names throughout Canada. In contrast, few Canadian women have achieved the same level of international celebrity and achievement. Elizabeth Manley’s 1988 Olympic and World silver medal wins were Canada’s last medal victories for women at World Championship or Olympic games. As such, most Canadian female skaters do not acquire the same levels of international recognition or sponsorship opportunities as do their male counterparts. Nevertheless, there were a couple of Canadian female skaters who were nostalgically remembered by my informants and hailed as examples of ‘Canadian’ female champions. They served as role models for young skaters and were frequently commented upon by coaches and choreographers, who remembered them for their “beauty and femininity,” as one coach described them.

Despite the cultural emphasis currently placed on men’s singles skaters, however, female skaters are expected to embody a mainstream form of femininity as an index of a national icon. Barbara Ann Scott, the



José Chouinard

MICHELLE WOJTYLA



Women and Gender Studies Institute
Graduate Collaborative Program in Women's Studies

CITIZENSHIP, SPACE, SUBJECTIVITY

December 7, 2005, 1:00 – 6:00 pm

The Women and Gender Studies Institute will host the annual GCWS Symposium on the theme of "Citizenship, Space, Subjectivity" on December 7, 2005.

Papers explore the multifaceted connections between citizenship, space and subjectivity from a variety of disciplinary and conceptual perspectives, in contemporary and historical contexts.

Topics include:

- Conceptualizing citizenship in formal/legal terms, in socioal/political categories, and in literary representations
- Sexual citizenship
- Solidarity movements
- Links between citizenship, human rights and neoliberalism
- Citizenship and identity formation
- Cultural imperialism
- Knowledge production
- Indigenous and subjugated knowledges
- Scientific knowledges
- Critical spaces of race and racialization, ethnicities, memory and loss, literature and culture
- Critical disability studies
- Media and visual arts
- Language use in social contexts

The GCWS Symposium provides an opportunity for Women's Studies graduate students and others working on feminist and/or gender related topics to share their work and to learn from each other as we conduct feminist scholarship from within our various disciplines and fields of inquiry. By providing a welcoming space for discussion of various representations of citizenship and subjectivity from multiple disciplines, this symposium aims to reveal new insights and advance feminist theorizing. It is part of our commitment to building a community of Women's Studies graduate students at the University of Toronto.

For more information about the GCWS Symposium, please contact:

Marian Reed, Undergraduate & Graduate Administrator
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1947-1948 World Champion and Olympic gold medallist, was often positioned as the supreme role model of both a sense of 'femininity' and 'Canadianness.' Even though Scott's Olympic victory occurred over fifty years ago, skaters, coaches, and fans fondly and nostalgically remembered her. At one training centre, a male coach spent a couple of hours indoctrinating his young female students about Canadian skating history. After showing some film clips of Scott's programs, he declared that Scott was noteworthy for her "Hollywood star looks." He discussed how she serves as a model for young skaters. Rather than highlighting Scott's significant athletic achievements, he stressed Scott's physical appearance and success in the United States as proof of her national celebrity status. Indeed, Scott was often likened to a Hollywood princess. Her blonde hair, blue eyes, and ultra-feminine demeanour garnered her lucrative sponsorships and commercial success in North American ice shows and carnivals. She even had a popular children's doll made in her image. Young skaters were also informed that Scott had a very "polite and ladylike" demeanour and that she never acted "better than anyone else." In essence, then, Scott was positioned as a quintessentially 'feminine' skater based upon her appearance and demeanour, which, in turn, was viewed as ladylike and worthy of emulation.

In contrast to Scott, Elizabeth Manley's achievements were rarely remarked upon, and I was often surprised to find that Manley was discursively positioned as a lesser champion in the eyes of many skaters and coaches. Manley may have been bolstered in the media as 'Canada's sweetheart' in the days and months following her surprise medal at the Calgary Olympics. Yet she was also de-feminized by the above coach, as well as in the stories of some fans and other skaters. One coach, for instance, claimed that her body was "not ideal." Manley's shorter leg length, according to one choreographer, gave her a "stocky appearance" that was decidedly unfeminine. Other coaches and skaters engaged in gossip surrounding Manley's broken family background, her long string of serious relationships, and her alleged 'party girl' persona, which stood in stark contrast to

Barbara Scott's cool, refined elegance. Scott's "glamorous personality" was declared to make her a "notable Canadian champion." The label of 'femininity,' then, was reserved for those skaters who best emulated the stereotype of the demure, chaste ice princess that became associated with Scott and, more interestingly, with a long list of American skating champions like Peggy Fleming, Dorothy Hamill, Kristi Yamaguchi, Nancy Kerrigan, Tara Lipinski, and Michelle Kwan. Ironically, many of my informants equated notions of 'Canadianness' with societally dominant and, particularly, *American* attitudes and aesthetics of femininity.

Why, then, is a mainstream femininity, predicated upon visual aesthetics as well as conformity to, and emulation of, Hollywood icons, so important within Canadian figure skating? To answer this question, I turn your attention to an analysis of my informants' narratives about José Chouinard. Chouinard was born in Rosemont, Quebec, in 1969. In addition to being a two-time Olympian, Chouinard was a three-time Canadian Champion in the early 1990s. Despite the fact that she had long-since retired from amateur competitive skating by 2000, she was fondly remembered and talked about by the skaters, coaches, and media representatives. In many ways, her personality, demeanour, and appearance signified her 'femininity' and her status as a 'Canadian.' Chouinard trained in Quebec for the majority of her amateur career, but in preparation for the 1994 Lillehammer Olympics, and in an effort to improve her technical and artistic abilities, she moved to Toronto to train at the exclusive Granite Club, alongside other prominent skaters including World Champion Kurt Browning. Interestingly, it was only after Chouinard's move to Toronto that she achieved a greater level of recognition from the mass media and corporate sponsors, and, according to one coach, she transformed herself into a "true, feminine lady, like from a Hollywood film." Another coach pronounced that, "we really cleaned her up." There was a general perception that as Chouinard's competitive career progressed, she sought (probably unconsciously) to reinvent herself in terms

of her costumes, skating style, and demeanour to conform to an acceptable and desirable upper-class, English-Canadian aesthetic, predicated partly upon nostalgic reinterpretations of and homages to past Canadian champions, such as Scott and other Hollywood-inspired idols. Many coaches cited her move to Toronto as a key aspect of this transformation. To be a 'feminine' Canadian woman, within the context of figure skating, increasingly means defining oneself as white, Anglophone, and in line with the perceived glamour and minimalist aesthetics of the Hollywoodized imagery mimicked by many other top women skaters. As one (Anglophone) informant told me:

She always had such great potential, but she wasn't really realizing it where she was, you know. She was just excessive, unfeminine almost, in terms of music, and costumes, so...Quebecois.

Despite the fact that the province of Quebec has produced a large number of top Canadian figure skaters, many English-speaking coaches deemed Quebecois skaters to be, in the words of one informant, "unrefined, like diamonds-in-the-rough." Quebec was considered to be a good starting point for skaters, but once they reached a certain age or ability, it was thought best that they receive finishing at other Canadian or international institutions. Prior to her move to Toronto, Chouinard was labelled as having "big hair, glitzy, ugly costumes, and just an unrefined aura" about her. One coach claimed that, "we don't want that here [at our club]." He then went on to describe the skaters at his training centre suggesting that, "our skaters are really packaged well. I think our skaters have amazing finish. That's kind of our trademark."

These comments clearly illustrate the intense, discriminatory regionalisms that exist within discourses of Canadian figure skating, and the ways in which the bodies of Anglophone's are perceived as being the official bodies of Canadian skating as well as more refined than those of Quebecois skaters. The bodies of female Quebecois skaters were often characterized by official (and predominantly Anglophone) skating discourses as 'excessive.' Bodily excess, in the form of the heavy make-up and ornate

costumes, as described by one coach, is associated with a variety of identities, including that of a lower-class status. The construction of Quebecois skaters' bodies as aggressive and made-up positions them unfavourably for involvement in the production of a national identity. Nevertheless, discussions of Chouinard's femininity frequently emphasize the perceived hard work and bodily discipline that she possessed, qualities which are metaphorically linked with the success of past Canadian female skating sensations and, ultimately, with that of the nation. Skating to the music from *La Fille Mal Gardée* and *An American in Paris* during the 1994 competitive season, Chouinard was transformed into, in the words of one coach, "a subtle, sophisticated, understated lady." Some people likened her to Audrey Hepburn. At one point in her career, Chouinard even mimicked Hepburn's clothing and hairstyle and skated to the song *Moon River* from the film, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. Chouinard's transformation into a 'lady' of high social class and, by extension, of national worth, occurred through a refinement of her on-ice appearance and technique in well-established, urban skating clubs, as well as her high marketability in international circles.

Ultimately, my informants' nostalgic discussions about Chouinard reveal some interesting things regarding the ways in which discourses of Canadian nationalism and identity are predicated upon the transnational flow of images of 'Canadianness.' While many claim that Canada has a peculiar 'identity crisis,' or a lack of identity, many conversations are predicated upon the need to identify the nation in terms of notions of difference, in terms of what it is not. Most Canadian nationalist discourses, as authors like Margaret Atwood and Eva Mackey have suggested, are narratives of victimization, of the struggle to survive the increasing cultural and economic hegemony of America, and to make a name for itself within such contexts. As such, many Canadian identity discussions are about defining a sense of nationhood that stands in juxtaposition to this increasing hegemony. A favourite Canadian pastime, it seems, is bashing our American neighbour. The popular CBC documentary "Talking to

Americans," for example, drew television ratings that rivalled NHL hockey when it first aired in 2001. It featured Canadian actor/comedian Rick Mercer, who travelled throughout the United States with the goal of asking ordinary Americans ridiculous questions about Canada in an effort to reveal American ignorance of its neighbour. The seriousness of many Americans' responses to such seemingly humorous questions as: "Should the mayor of Toronto reinstate the Toronto polar bear hunt?" drew widespread laughter and helped fuel a sense of Canadian nationalism within the domain of Canadian pop culture. Canadians, or so they told themselves, were more enlightened, worldly, and smarter than Americans.

At other times, however, Canadian identity discourses are highly dependent upon the appropriation of societally dominant (and increasingly) American imagery. For example, at the 1994 Olympic games, Chouinard was scheduled to skate her long program immediately following American Tonya Harding. Harding broke a skate lace during her warm-up and had to be shuffled to the back of the skating group. This forced Chouinard onto the ice early, before she was ready. While Chouinard did not have a stellar performance that evening, I spoke with many skaters and coaches who praised Chouinard and her efforts. One coach had this to say about her:

She was stunning. She showed Americans what it really meant to be a lady champion. And the reporters were all over her afterward. I had several American reporters requesting interviews with her, endorsements were coming in...it was just the contrast she provided to Tonya. She was everything Tonya wasn't. And she was Canadian. It made us all feel so good. Here was a Canadian beating them [the Americans] at their own ice princess game! And the attention she got, I tell you...

In this instance, Chouinard's appropriation of Hollywood imagery, and the level of interest that she generated among American reporters and spectators, was cited as a marker of Chouinard's femininity and Canadianness — evidence that she had "beat them at their own game." Chouinard, if only briefly, served as a symbol, demonstrating that Canadians could compete in the

global marketplace. Similarly, the discursive parallels my informants made between Chouinard and American screen idols such as Kelly and Hepburn shows she "made it big." It is through this process of juxtaposition that Canadians derive a sense of self-worth and, in many ways, assuage Canadian fears of American economic and cultural imperialism. Chouinard provided a tangible example of Canada's ability to compete in the global marketplace. In this case, her successful appropriation (and consumption by American audiences) of a hegemonic form of femininity fuelled a sense of Canadian national pride. Chouinard illustrates the ways in which Canadians depend upon America to construct a sense of national self-worth. Even though it could be argued that there was nothing uniquely 'Canadian' about Chouinard, in terms of her appearance, musical selection, or demeanour, the fact that she was so sought-after among American journalists following the 1994 Olympics was cited as a source of pride. One skater told me that many Canadian reporters, instead of covering the event, were covering American reporters' reactions to Chouinard — another example of the ironies and transnational influence on the production of Canadian identity discourses. The Chouinard example, then, is a clear illustration of the tension between the homogenizing and hybridizing influences of globalization. In this case, Chouinard's status as a national symbol was ironically dependent upon her successful appropriation and internalisation of global, societally dominant female imagery, and the circulation of her image within transnational (and particularly American) environments.

✻

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In the Field

Immigration Status As a Gender Issue in the Toronto Don't Ask Don't Tell Campaign

Stephanie Hobbs and Ali Sauer

In 1998 a young woman's refugee claim failed and lawyers advised her that she and her son should stay under the radar. In her own words:

Going out was a no-no for fear of something going wrong and the police getting involved. My son had to be transferred to another school. Although the Immigration Act states that any minor child under the age of 18 with a refugee claim or with no status does not need a study permit to attend school, the school ignored this and asked for documents that show your status.

Last year I was threatened and, thinking that I would be protected, I called the police not knowing that Immigration had put out a warrant for my arrest. One of the officers that came asked me for my ID and made a call to immigration after seeing that they had expired. The next day I was told that I had to surrender our passports which was our only form of ID.

We have to at least try to understand how much pressure people who live in these situations are under. They know the conditions that they left behind, which in my case were death threats and a police force that was not sensitive to the abuse of women. They would do anything to make their lives easier, things such as taking very low paying jobs, and taking abuse and not reporting it due to fear of being caught.

The Don't Ask Don't Tell Campaign

The Toronto Don't Ask Don't Tell Campaign is a coalition-based effort urg-



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ing the City of Toronto to adopt a Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) policy to protect people like this woman and the thousands of other people living without status in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). A DADT policy would mean that city workers

would be prevented from inquiring about the immigration status of people accessing city services. Furthermore, city employees would be prohibited from sharing information with federal and provincial enforcement agencies, includ-

ing the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), on the immigration status of anyone accessing city services. The very real threat of detection, potentially resulting in deportation or imprisonment in a detention centre, currently prevents many people without status from using services such as social housing, education, emergency services including police, health care, and social assistance. Implementing a Don't Ask Don't Tell policy would improve the quality of life of thousands of the most vulnerable people living in the GTA.

Why DADT is Necessary

The estimated 200 000 non-status residents of Canada not only contribute to the economy through paying taxes such as GST and PST, property tax, and gas tax, but also non-status people constitute a vast and highly exploited workforce, often working for very low wages and no benefits in unsafe conditions with no job security. The Canadian economy benefits from and depends on this marginal, non-citizen labour force, even as it denies these people access to services that they contribute to. In addition to their paid work, non-status persons also perform socially essential unpaid labour within the 'private' spheres of home and family, often without the support of social assistance. Far from being a 'drain on the economy', non-status immigrants and refugees are crucial to the economic well-being of the GTA and from a purely economic perspective, it is highly unreasonable to deny people without status the right to adequate social services.

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in its "Thematic Discussion on Non-Citizens and Racial Discrimination" states that "various international human rights bodies have established that non-citizens enjoy human rights on the same footing as citizens: states therefore have a duty to respect, protect, ensure and promote the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of non-citizens." The CERD specifically references non-citizens' rights to adequate housing, protection against physical violence and crime, social ser-



vices and the rights to a minimum standard of living. The case of Wendy Maxwell is one example of the institutionalized violation of these legally enshrined basic human rights of non-citizens in Toronto. When Maxwell, a non-status GTA resident, reported to the Toronto police that she was sexually assaulted by a security guard in 2001, she was met with the immediate threat of deportation. "Women with non-status cannot report sexual harassment at work, spousal abuse or even rape if the result is being punished by deportation," said Maxwell.

The Toronto District School Board, while obligated to accept students regardless of their or their parents' citizenship status, has been inconsistent in enforcing this policy. In addition, non-status parents have been hassled by schools and reported to the CIC. Consequently many non-status parents are understandably afraid to enroll their children in the public school system. The provincial Social Housing and Reform Act currently compels city workers to check the status of people applying for housing. People without status, an economically marginalized population, are unable to get on waiting lists for social housing. Without a DADT policy in place, the City of Toronto has many institutionalized barriers that prevent a

very marginalized population from accessing vital city services.

Transnational Antiracist Feminist Solidarity

The DADT Toronto Campaign provides an excellent launching point from which to engage some of the most pressing theoretical and practical concerns of transnational anti-racist feminist solidarity. Transnational feminist solidarity work must be attentive to the different ways that 'nations' are imagined and constructed by sexist and racist immigration policies, within a national landscape that is experienced very differently according to a person's identity. Many of the people involved with the DADT coalition are employed as front-line service workers, and have been able to use their network bases and specialized expertise to subvert their exclusionary 'gatekeeper' roles within the system: they are refusing to uncritically participate in the enforcement violence that is a part of current service provision. Coalition work between citizens and non-citizens occurs across a power differential that underlines the need for transnational feminist solidarity work to be performed in an up front and self-critical manner. This ensures that coalitions such as DADT, which are comprised of a broad spectrum of people with different access to power, do not emulate the same power dynamics that they criticize. It is necessary to examine not only the role of national citizens in policing internal borders and in discriminatory service provision but to be conscious of relationships within and around the campaign itself.

Within the specifically gendered spaces occupied by citizens and non-citizens in Toronto, women who carry citizenship privilege would do well to remember that the stakes for 'sisters in struggle' are higher than we might be able to appreciate. For those of us who come from positions of relative privilege, perhaps the work of anti-racist feminist solidarity lies in acknowledging the relative risk with which we engage across difference while working toward anti-racist feminist goals. In a discussion of anti-racist transnational organizing for justice,

Syeda and Thompson caution that 'in-reach' work is absolutely necessary; '[T]o teach each other how to learn and be accountable to each other. . . we attempted to treat justice not only as swift and singular acts...but also as a process sustained in the daily and small ways we see and treat each other.'

It is important to challenge the very narrow and often ethnocentric notion of what activism is and where front line work actually happens. Within the framework of DADT, the differentiation of risk is clear: 'political' actions can be very unsafe for non-status individuals who risk incarceration and deportation by being publicly and politically visible. The front lines of transnational feminist solidarity are experienced very differently by different people; this creates power relations within coalitions like DADT, and even determines access to the coalition itself. The political goals of the DADT coalition can only be meaningfully achieved through self-reflexive attention to the problems, as well as the diverse possibilities, of solidarity work.

The DADT Campaign is gathering momentum and bringing non-citizens and citizens together as neighbours in a shared struggle to guarantee safe access to municipal services. In January of 2005, the official launch party for the DADT Campaign drew more than 200 people. As a result of outreach work and coalition-building, the number of people at organizing meetings is steadily increasing. The campaign's broad base of support includes affected communities and

activists, unions, service providers, city councillors, academics and many other allies. DADT has been officially endorsed by a broad spectrum of organizations. What have been characterized as 'unlikely alliances' make transnational solidarity possible and these alliances, in turn, allow for citizens to attempt to dismantle the exclusive nationalist category of which they are a part, working in alliance with non-citizens. We must take care to engage in a dialogue between the interests of coalition and the need to recognize the heterogeneity of coalition members, both those with and without legal status. We understand that the strength of the coalition is, in fact, in its broad base and that the campaign's work is best suited to an allied network in Toronto's transnational context.

As illustrated by the examples cited above, the lack of access to city services directly translates into a violation of basic human rights of the thousands of non-status persons who contribute in vital ways to the social life and economy of the GTA. Until Toronto adopts a DADT policy, it is not a safe space for some of the most vulnerable immigrant and refugee members of a city that often promotes itself as the most multicultural urban centre in the world. Although more than thirty municipalities in the U.S. have adopted some form of a DADT policy, there is no such policy in existence anywhere in Canada. For this reason the adoption of a DADT policy in Toronto will set an important precedent within this country. A DADT policy would send a message to all people

of Toronto that the city supports and recognizes every city resident, regardless of citizenship status, and will mean that city funds could no longer be used to further the discriminatory immigration policies of the Canadian state. The success of this campaign will be both in its effective mobilization of a network of transnational solidarity and in the eventual goal that a DADT policy will achieve: access without fear for all city residents. ❧

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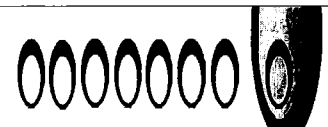
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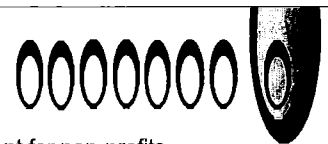
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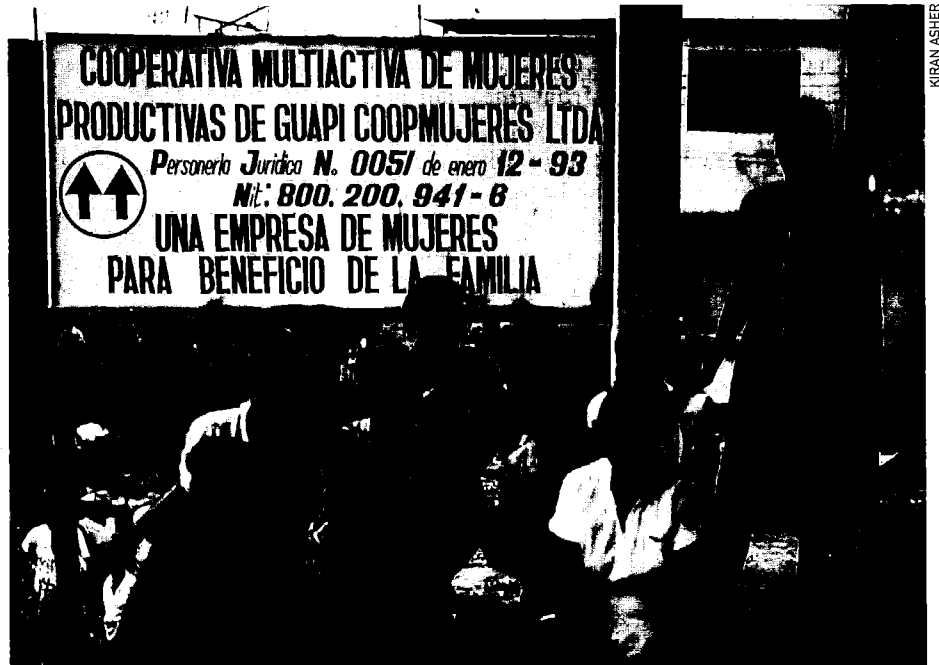
Seeing Through the Eyes of Black Women

Afro-Colombian Women's Activism in the Pacific Lowlands

Kiran Asher

From the window of the office of CoopMujeres, a women's cooperative in the southwest Pacific town of Guapi, Colombia, I had a clear view of the river that gave the town its name. In the middle of the river, men were punting long rafts of logs (hand-hewn with axes and lashed together with vines) to be sold down river. At the river's edge, men unloaded bananas, coconuts, citrus and other tropical fruits, as well as fish and mollusks, from their canoes. Close by, children bathed noisily and women washed clothes and pots on the riverbank. A block away, the town's main plaza was full of vendors — mostly women — selling produce and fish just unloaded off the boats, as well as basil and a myriad of medicinal herbs brought from their gardens. Lining the plaza were dry goods stores stocked with the basic items necessary for life in the rural, riverine areas of the Pacific: rice, sugar, rubber boots, twine, fish hooks, gasoline, rum. A stall selling local handicrafts, an initiative of *CoopMujeres*, was a recent addition to the milieu.

I turned my attention to the bright, whitewashed room alive with the energy of *CoopMujeres* members: several street vendors with whom I had haggled earlier that morning; Dora Ortiz, the nimble craftswoman who had sold me several reed baskets at the *CoopMujeres* handicraft stall; and Sylveria Rodriguez, the director of *CoopMujeres*, with her serious eyes and brilliant smile. There were also two other visitors, the coordinators of a new Canadian-Colombian Program for Black Women. Sylveria was telling them about the future plans of the cooperative. *CoopMujeres* members wanted technical training to obtain credits and loans and to increase women's income through better production and commercialization of their



Women from CoopMujeres in front of their office.

artisan and agricultural products. In addition, Sylveria noted that *CoopMujeres* wanted to hold workshops on methods of political participation and citizen leadership, as well as on women's health and interpersonal and family relations.

Black women are an active and visible part of the Pacific region's economy. In the 1980s, women bakers, seamstresses, fishmongers, and fruit vendors in several Pacific towns formed small groups around their 'productive' activities. With funds from international donors, a Colombian state development program encouraged these women's groups to form formal cooperatives. Cooperative members trained in micro-enterprise management, established rotating, low-interest credit schemes for the women associates, and established a social network including emergency funds to aid women in times of acute domestic crisis. *CoopMujeres* was one such group. In the 1990s, within the context of broader socioeconomic and

political changes that were sweeping the Pacific Lowlands, state and international groups took a renewed interest in Afro-Colombian women.

The Pacific Littoral of Colombia is a region rich in natural resources, known internationally as a 'biodiversity hotspot' and within Colombia as a 'marginal' or 'underdeveloped' area. Ninety percent of its population is Afro-Colombian. In 1993, the Colombian government passed a law (known as law 70), based on Article 55 of the 1991 constitution, that recognizes Afro-Colombians as a separate ethnic minority and accords them various rights, including collective titles to their lands. Based on this law and other policies in the 1991 constitution, the Colombian state has launched numerous internationally funded 'sustainable development' initiatives to promote economic growth, conserve the environment and improve local living standards in the Pacific region.

In 1995, I was in Colombia to study

Afro-Colombian struggles for ethnic rights. As an Indian and a feminist, I was especially interested in the role of black women in these social movements and in the Colombian state's development initiatives in the region. In turn, some Afro-Colombians were curious about sharing their experiences with me and questioning me about what I knew about grassroots struggles in India (where I am from), in other parts of Latin America (where I had done fieldwork) and the United States (where I now live). It was this interest that had led me to the *CoopMujeres* meeting on April 5, 1995. At the meeting, one of the coordinators of the Program for Black Women asked Sylveria why a women's rights workshop was not among the activities that cooperative members wanted to arrange. Sylveria replied:

We already know our rights. Now we need to learn how to obtain our rights, teach other people about our rights. We need to educate our men about women's rights. Last year we celebrated Father's Day at CoopMujeres. This year we are trying to make each member 'conquer' her partner and bring him to the workshop.

The previous year, a workshop on cooking with regional products was held in conjunction with the Father's Day celebration. The event combined productive activities (cooking) with recovery of local culinary traditions and showcased the activities of cooperative members for the attendant husbands and fathers.

On the day following the meeting, Cipriana Diuza, a schoolteacher and a new member of *CoopMujeres*, told me that she joined the cooperative because it was "organized, grounded and actively helped single women, single mothers, poor women, and heads of families." She also confessed to being curious about "all this fuss about being black women." She stated that "we are black women, joyous but still enslaved, still afraid. We still need to learn to value our dialect, our religion, our dances." Women from cooperatives in other Pacific towns, such as Buenaventura, Guapi, and Tumaco, expressed similar sentiments. They wanted to continue working on income-generating productive activities, but also wanted to expand the groups' collective aims to include a focus on 'black

women's identities.'

Afro-Colombian women had called for more recognition of their identities and roles in ethnic struggles at two earlier meetings of black women of the region (in Buenaventura in 1990 and in Guapi in 1992). At the Guapi meeting, many women expressed that the state's development programs for women did not adequately reflect their needs or address their realities. As a result, they established a network of black women's organizations — *La Red de Mujeres Negras del Pacífico* (The Network of Black Women of the Pacific). One of the fundamental goals of the network is to "create autonomous women's organizations that manifest and reflect our development, interests and ethnic cultural identity."



View of the Rio Guapi from the Coopmujeres office.

CoopMujeres was among the organizations linked to the network. Another was the *Fundemujer* cooperative of Buenaventura.

While sitting in the office of *Fundemujer* in August 1995, I listened as Mercedes Segura and her colleagues, Patricia Moreno, Dora Alonso, and Myrna Rosa Rodríguez, recounted their experiences of the 1990 meeting. At that meeting they had reflected on black women's perceptions of their ethnic and gender identity, asked questions about their territorial rights and discussed strategies to reclaim these rights. Mercedes stated that "then we had to discuss how to work with our first enemy, the man-friend," alluding to men folk at home, but also to the men within broader black struggles in the region. *Fundemujer* members claimed that:

We want to see the ethno-political struggles with the eyes of black women. But the [members of the ethnic social movements] do not want the two struggles together. Their position is that the gender

struggle weakens the ethnic struggle.

Fundemujer members observed that black women and their organizations played a key role in the struggle for law 70. They also observed that black women provided important logistical support (cooking for meetings, managing the office, keeping the books) within regional Afro-Colombian social movements. They also felt, however, that the members of these organizations did not recognize or acknowledge the work and value of black women as women. Patricia Moreno continued:

A member of one of these social movements said that they were afraid of us talking about gender lest we forget the ethnic struggle. They think that gender issues from the 'interior' [referring to the Andean capitals of the region and the country] will dilute the ethnic struggle. This terrifies them. They believe that we do not feel our own oppression. It is outside forces that 'research' us. As if we do not feel our sexual, physical subordination!

Fundemujer members, like others in the Network of Black Women, wanted to address their ethnic and gender concerns collectively as black women, but also organizationally independent of the black social movements in the region. Patricia explained:

We don't want to be lost in the general hubbub about the Pacific. We want to learn from *mestiza* women's struggles and black struggles. We do not want to militate against anybody, nor do we want to be appropriated.

Teofila Betancur is an active, and very eloquent, member of the network. During a conversation in 1995 in the city of Cali she told me,

Black women have helped law 70 as women. However, they have little or no visible public or political role as black women. This is also true in black women's cooperatives. Black women are discriminated against triply — as poor people, as women, and as blacks. This leads them to undervalue themselves. Black women on the coast as well as in the cities are straightening, coloring, or perming their hair to 'whiten' themselves, and adopt customs of mainstream Colombian society in an attempt to gain social accep-

tance. This devalues black women and their beauty. So network members organized hair workshops and hair style competitions among black women in Guapi. Now more than half of black women in Guapi sport cornrows, braids and other traditional Afro-Colombian hairdos. We need to work from the 'head out' to regain our external identity as black women, to reflect on and affirm ourselves as black women, as we are with our own culture.

Teofila Betancur and her colleagues believed that the focus on black women's identity and self-esteem are an integral first step in the network's broader aims of working toward the betterment of black women and their communities. When I met Teofila again in 1999, she told me that the Guapi section of the network had expanded to seventy-four local, river-based and regional women's groups in the Cauca state. Each group was involved in various kinds of activities including 'productive' projects, such as cultivation and recuperation of native food crops and medicinal plants, as well as 'conservation' projects that focus on agricultural and silvicultural practices to conserve the environment. According to Teofila, the various activities and projects undertaken by the groups within the network arise from "their needs, perceptions, and experiences as black women, and represent their collective strength." To symbolize this strength, the Guapi network adopted the name *Matamba y Guasá: Fuerza y Convocatoria de la Mujer del Pacífico Caucaño* (The *Matamba y Guasá: Strength and Convocation of Woman of the Pacific Cauca Coast*), where *Matamba* is the name of a very strong vine and *Guasá* is a name of a musical instrument traditionally played by women.

Sixteen months of ethnographic fieldwork (conducted between 1993 and 1999) revealed to me the manifold linkages between development, ethnicity and gender issues in the Pacific. The mainstream literature on women, gender and development helped me understand some of the dynamics of black women's organizing in the region. For instance, the formation of women's cooperatives corresponded to the international trend of Women-in-



A group of Afro-Colombian women attending a workshop on food production and food security organized by La Red de Mujeres Negras del Pacífico (The Network of Black Women of the Pacific).

Development (WID) frameworks that focus on integrating women into the development process by harnessing their productive activities. However, influenced to various degrees by feminists and development professionals in the north and south, WID perspectives are giving way to Gender and Development (GAD) approaches. The latter sees gender relations as a subset of the social relations of power and dominance at household, community, regional, local, national and international levels which shape and limit women's 'productive' work as well as their 'reproductive' work. GAD approaches aim to transform existing gender relations and 'empower' women to become key decision-makers: GAD frameworks implicitly informed the Canadian-Colombian Program for Black Women.

Yet neither of these approaches to development and gender provided insights into the complexities of black women's identities and political activism. Nor did they help me understand how development interventions and ethnic struggles in the region shaped the language and terms of women's organizations and networks. As a scholar committed to grassroots, 'solution-oriented' research, it was a while before I found the ostensibly 'dense' postcolonial and feminist theories that gave me the conceptual tools necessary to understand Afro-Colombian women's political agency. This scholarship reveals the multiplicity of locations and issues around which diverse women act and it was the work of these feminists that helped me pay attention to the

dynamic, oppositional nature of women's domination and resistance. I saw how Afro-Colombian women's identities and organizations are shaped by the language and practices of development institutions and current ethnic movements. But I also saw how black women in turn draw on the terms and resources of development initiatives and on the cultural discourses prevalent in the region to address their needs and disrupt the agendas of both the state and ethnic struggles. Asserting the primacy of ethnicity, Afro-Colombian women demand that state-sponsored development programs broaden their mandates to address their concerns as women and as blacks. They simultaneously invoke their experiences and perceptions as black women in order to address their concerns independent of struggles to implement law 70. It was at the *CoopMujeres* meeting in Guapi in April 1995 that I began to see through the eyes of black women. What I saw were active agents of social history, reclaiming their voices and establishing the terms of their own development. ❧

Kiran Asher is a feminist scholar trained in wildlife ecology, comparative politics and feminist theory. She is currently completing a book based on her research on Afro-Colombian social movements that examines how development processes in the third world, and the struggles against them, are uneven and marked by paradoxes and contradictions.

Bits of Barbados

By Monique Welch



Barbados, the 'Gem of the Caribbean', is a tropical paradise that promises sunshine, beautiful beaches, a game of polo or golf all in a relaxed atmosphere...

Or at least that's what the advertisements say. But Barbados is selling much more than its beaches; it is selling its land. To facilitate development, the government is able to sell acquired land for commercial or residential use. Dreams of making Barbados internationally known and accepted in the global market place made it a stiff competitor amongst its Caribbean neighbours. The motivation for tourism-oriented development was triggered by a decline in the profits from the sugarcane industry, as we were no longer able to meet our quotas. Suddenly, almost overnight, cane fields became golf courses, and windows to the sea were blocked out by luxurious all inclusive resorts. Now, real estate marketing strategies target people in the countries where the majority of tourists originate. Some portfolios feature full-colour images of luxurious condominiums, with prices often exceeding a quarter of a million U.S. dollars.

The real cost, however, is much higher. Who can afford to make these investments? It is not the average tourist, and it is certainly not the average Barbadian. In fact, the average Barbadian will only set foot in such places as an employee: a maid, groundskeeper, security technician or the like. Although there may be room for advancement, there is the proverbial glass ceiling, which limits how successful they can become. Golf courses, polo lodges, beach resorts and elaborately priced condominiums are all luxuries that the people of Barbados will never be able to afford. Now, instead of cotton, tobacco or sugarcane, it is our land that is being taken, sold beneath our feet under the guise of foreign exchange and foreign investment. We are told that this type of

investment helps our economy, but the truth is that exclusive resorts provide us with only a fraction of the money they earn, because foreign investors are offered incentives like reduced tariffs. Since many of these establishments are not locally owned, their profits do not trickle down to Barbadians.

To make matters worse, the price of land in Barbados is escalating at an exponential rate. One of my greatest fears is that I will not be able to own land in the country of my birth both because there may not be any left, and because what remains will be unaffordable. Currently, the price of land available for purchase exceeds the budget of the average Barbadian. Within the next decade, I think our entire landscape will change drastically: There will be fewer bungalow-style homes and chattel houses, and the closest thing to home will be a condominium on the waterfront of an artificial lake, if we can afford to live there.

Tourism does not affect men and women equally. More specifically, women are more exploited, in part because they make up the majority of workers in the industry. Some employees spend the day cleaning, cooking, babysitting and performing other jobs around the resorts. Many of these women have families, and at the end of a long day, they must return home and perform similar chores for their households. Many of them must cope daily with unwanted sexual advances from visitors in search of a good time. Others have accepted this as a means of supplementing their income, especially when they are the main or sole providers for their families. As a result, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) are often passed on to these women and their partners. It is often thought that only women in the industry are victims of this. Perhaps this is believed

since most of the people employed in the industry are women. However, it must be noted that male workers in the industry are often met with propositions from female travelers, with the same interests.

Workers in the tourism industry have become a new version of indentured servants. Money is still the main incentive, but employees in such an industry will never earn enough to own a home or attain the lifestyle of those for whom they work. Land that was once used to feed ourselves has been developed into luxury resorts. Packaged so nicely, working at one of these resorts doesn't seem quite as difficult as the manual labour of our ancestors, but this time we have lost all



MONIQUE WELCH

Chattel style home made from green heart or purple heart wood, generally brightly painted with a hitch roof and handmade wooden louvers and awnings. These houses got their name because they can easily be transported. More photos of chattel houses can be seen at: mendesco.com/chatelh.htm (those featured are more modernized versions), and www.barbados.org/chattel.htm (this site shows the trademark fretwork associated with chattel houses).

hope of regaining the soil they bought with their sweat and blood. There is a price on our country, the sand, the sea, the water, the air itself. We parcel it out and sell it to anyone with the ability to buy. But as we sell bits of Barbados, we sell a bit of our soul. We market our country, all wrapped up in a lovely package of 'all inclusiveness'; but it should be called all exclusive, because the only people included are the world's wealthy. ☸

Monique Welch is of Barbadian descent and a student at York University. She is in pursuit of a Bachelor Degree in Environmental Studies, with an interest in Environmental Management of Coastal Ecosystems.

Undoing Development

A Conversation Between Megan Rivers-Moore and Leonardo Solano Méndez

Megan Rivers-Moore and Leonardo Solano Méndez recently participated in a youth internship program funded by the Canadian federal government. The program is designed to provide young people from Canada with job skills and to offer technical training to 'underdeveloped' or 'developing' countries. The focus of this program was information technology (IT), and included design, networking, and data bases. After a few days of orientation training, Megan and Leonardo spent six months, from November 2004 to April 2005, in Maputo, Mozambique.

TRAINING

LEONARDO: When I went to the army base to be trained, I didn't have any expectations really, since I'd never done anything like that before. Being at an army base where soldiers were being trained was pretty weird, but I also understood quite fast that it was part of the training, putting us through a premature cultural shock to prepare us for our internships.

MEGAN: I thought the army culture shock was really something too, but do you really think it was on purpose?

LEONARDO: I'm not sure, but in some ways it was so obvious...Anyway, I accepted this internship basically because I hoped it would improve my chances of getting a good job in the Canadian job market since, as a recent immigrant, I'd been having a hard time finding work. So I took the training pretty seriously in terms of my professional development, life and job skills. But a lot of the people who were in my group were there primarily for the adventure of going overseas; and they did a lot of drinking and partying on the base...

We were trained to be sensitive and aware of other cultures. Which to start is very problematic...

MEGAN: Why?

LEONARDO: Because I think that once we

talk about being 'sensitive' to other cultures, there's already a problem: we're starting from a place of difference and distance. The way difference is approached really lacked practicality. For example, it would have been useful to hear about specific cases of work situations, like I could have used suggestions on how to deal with colleagues asking me for money, rather than just very general suggestions about being 'sensitive.'

MEGAN: Right. And 'sensitivity' really leaves out any kind of political or social or economic context in which those differences exist and have to be negotiated. In my training, there was a lot of talk about how we'd have to be flexible about time...that in the places we're going time is understood differently and we shouldn't get upset when stuff takes a long time to happen. Which is fine except think of the variety of places we were being sent! Mozambique, Costa Rica, Sri Lanka, Hungary...do you really think all those places are the same? In some ways the whole 'sensitivity' thing functioned to erase all the differences *between* the places we were going. I was also dismayed that there wasn't any talk about gender in any of the training at all...nothing about the gender of the interns, about gender relations in the places we were being sent, nothing.

LEONARDO: That's true. Didn't they tell you about sexual harassment?

MEGAN: Yeah, but all they said was that sexual harassment isn't culturally relative and if we were sexually harassed on the job they'd bring us home. Lovely. They ended up implying that everything else *is* culturally relative and that there was nothing more to say about gender. Can you talk about that iceberg exercise you did? We were spared that particular item...

LEONARDO: The iceberg exercise asks you to identify what aspects of Canadian culture are more noticeable (above the water)

and then the stuff underneath. I was with a bunch of Canadian citizens and I'm an immigrant, a permanent resident, so my perspective was very different. People talked about the national anthem, the Maple Leafs logo, hockey, politeness, multiculturalism. Basically a huge stereotype of white Canadianness with the multiculturalism thrown in at the end.

MEGAN: White Canadian masculinity, in particular. The hockey thing is deeply gendered as well.

LEONARDO: That's true. I thought, "Okay, I'm a guy but I'm not that interested in hockey and in a few years I'm going to become a Canadian citizen. What then?"

MEGAN: So you felt that the image of Canadian culture being presented and affirmed was not something you could identify with?

LEONARDO: No. At first I thought maybe I just don't know what Canadian culture is...but of course I know there are lots of people in Canada who don't fit that stereotype, like me.

MEGAN: Were most of the people in your group white?

LEONARDO: Including me, there were three people of colour.

MEGAN: Did anyone say 'racism' or something like that for the parts of Canadian culture that are 'underwater'? Was there any challenge to that stereotypical notion of 'Canadianness'?

LEONARDO: No, not really.

MEGAN: In my training, we didn't do that exercise. The stuff about Canada wasn't what was a problem, it was more the things that people would say about other places.

LEONARDO: Like what?

MEGAN: Like, "I hear that Africans are really friendly."

LEONARDO: Oh god.

MEGAN: Yeah. And that type of comment really wasn't challenged in a meaningful way. I remember saying something stupid

and sarcastic, like "really? All of them? Every single one? Well, that's a relief." But there were a number of really problematic comments along those lines and nothing done to address them. There was no anti-racism component. It's interesting because the people with a strong tech background were horrified at how little the rest of us knew about IT. And the few of us with a background in 'development' or politics were horrified by what the tech people were saying about 'development.'

'DEVELOPMENT'

MEGAN: What else did you talk about in the training?

LEONARDO: Well, at one point we talked about potential problems in our internships and I caused some trouble by saying that technology isn't sustainable.

MEGAN: So basically you were saying that our internships, designed around IT, weren't going to be sustainable!

LEONARDO: Yes.

MEGAN: You must have been very popular. So I guess people weren't happy to hear that, since they were about to set out on their IT development internships?

LEONARDO: No, it wasn't really a welcome perspective. But I felt strongly that training and education are sustainable but that technology is not. We all have brains but we don't all have money in our pockets to pay for technology. And now that I'm almost finished my internship, I feel that my experience here in Mozambique has really confirmed that.

MEGAN: How so?

LEONARDO: Once I got to Mozambique, I very quickly realized that the small local NGO where I work lacks basic infrastructure. For example, their computers are so old that they can't run the newer software that is necessary to improve their communications via the internet. I often felt like I was trying to make magic and I had to start from zero in many ways. On the other hand, now that I'm doing the training, I'm surprised and happy to see how excited everyone is to be learning and to ask questions. Everyone has shown a lot of enthusiasm. The students who are particularly strong are helping the others, which is exactly why education, or

'capacity building' in development language, is more sustainable than anything else. We're sent here to build capacity so people can use technology, but the basic problems of infrastructure continue. One of my students asked me if they'll have continued access to the software that we're using after I'm gone. And I had to tell him that we don't have licenses to share the software, which is really stupid. At the army base training, we were all given a CD with lots of demos of comput-

going to Mozambique through a Canadian government program to do 'development' work, I'm really happy for the opportunity; but I also feel weird. The word development is very familiar to me from Costa Rica, in the context of all sorts of people arriving there to 'do development.' I've seen what big international NGOs are doing in Costa Rica: everything is so bureaucratic, which you experienced first hand in your internship in Mozambique. It was always clear to me that these pro-



Leonardo Solano Méndez trains coworkers.

er resources and training material. But we weren't given any actual software, which is incredibly frustrating when you're working for a small and poor local NGO rather than a big international organization. Money is really what they need, more than anything else.

MEGAN: Right. Access to software or to funding hasn't been a problem in my case. But there have been other problems, like the *slow* bureaucracy of the UN system that has meant that although we arrived in Mozambique and started working at the beginning of November 2004, the project I was here to work on didn't get going until February 2005. That was an immensely frustrating experience.

LEONARDO: Being from Costa Rica but

grams are much more about the development of the people taking part, rather than of the countries where they're going. It's also really problematic because I don't think that foreigners working in another country are always going to be aware of people's real needs. In my case, coming from a place with that history and then going somewhere else to do development work, I wondered what I was expected to do and what I was really doing. Was I going for the adventure? Did I want to change things? Who am I to do this work? Right before I got the internship, I got a few contracts through the Canadian government to give workshops on life in Costa Rica for people going there to do development work, and then suddenly I

was one of those people! That always has made me feel uncomfortable.

MEGAN: But not uncomfortable enough not to come to Mozambique!

LEONARDO: I was clearly also interested in the adventure.

MEGAN: And do you think it's true in your case that this experience has been more about your development than about the NGO where you work or Mozambique more broadly?

LEONARDO: Absolutely. Definitely.

MEGAN: I think that this notion of personal development, at least for many white Canadians, is really wrapped up in this idea of who 'Canadians' are and what Canada's imagined role in the world is. There is still a strong idea that Canada is fundamentally different from the U.S., that we are not imperialists, that our job is peacekeeping and developing, rather than waging war — as if these things can



Land issues meeting with women from Mafavuka.

be that easily separated. And so many young people march off without any political or historical analysis of the world or understanding of why things are the way they are. They get to have this great experience on their resumes and then get on with their lives. I think it would be one thing if everyone were straight up about that, but the fact that it all gets wrapped up in this idea of 'developing' the poor

third world and being selfless and giving the poor, powerless masses your help is just totally ridiculous.

RACE

LEONARDO: It was the first day I used public transportation alone and everyone still looked at me, even when I wasn't with you.

MEGAN: That's right! Before we left Canada you talked about how much I would stick out!

LEONARDO: I realized I was wrong really quickly, and with a lot of regret. On a chapa [minibus], I'm just another whitey. My brownish skin didn't do me any favours.

MEGAN: And you've found that really hard.

LEONARDO: On some level, it's a bit like I've been losing my identity because I'm obviously seen as just another white guy



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in Maputo, and I've never identified as a white person. I always feel the need to stress that Canada is my second country, my adopted country, it's only part of who I am and where I'm from. But I also don't want to deny Canada altogether, because I think that lots of other immigrants and people of colour should be doing these internships and showing that Canada is not just made up of hockey-playing white people.

MEGAN: Speaking of white people, one white woman at my training on the army base talked about how she was going to feel like a celebrity in Africa since everyone would want to look at her and touch her. That was horrendous. There was just a total lack of analysis around the context of white people marching off into the sunset to 'develop' Africa.

LEONARDO: But you've actually had an experience of being surrounded by kids who were freaking out about your being white.

MEGAN: Right, but it was really weird. I felt more like E.T. than like a celebrity. I also think the context is so important. Those kids had obviously not seen many white people, but when they have seen white people, who were they? Well, these kids were born after the end of colonialism in Mozambique in 1975, but their parents

would have had contact with a pretty brutal colonial power. And this particular community is trying to fight off a white South African investor who is trying to steal their land to set up a tourism business (which I was there to research, although the local people wouldn't have necessarily known that). So all of that would have come into play in the meaning of my presence in their community and their reaction to me. It's very complex and difficult and gross.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

MEGAN: Any final thoughts, now that we're nearing the end of our internships?

LEONARDO: Basically just that even though I'm providing training, the real problem is money. And the needs in Mozambique are so much more long-term than an internship can address. The problems are so huge here that to arrive to 'do development' is impossible. Very basic problems need to be addressed. Even for the people who aren't dealing with HIV/AIDS, malaria, leprosy, whatever, the lucky ones who have been able to finish high school, say, they get stuck for years because there isn't enough space in the one public university in Maputo. So there are issues at the most basic level, in terms of public health, but things aren't easy even for the

people who are relatively better off.

MEGAN: Yeah. One of the most difficult things for me too now that this is coming to an end is having to face how difficult change is. I loved doing the research into women and land conflicts, but the women we interviewed were clearly being so generous with their time because they hoped that we would be able to do something concrete and immediate to help them. Which of course we couldn't. And that feeling of disappointing people, of not being able to help them change things right now...that's hard. It starts to feel manipulative. This is my first experience doing field research, but this must always be a problem, whether it's academic or non-academic research. And I'm not sure what the solution is. ✖

Megan Rivers-Moore is a PhD student in Social and Political Science at the University of Cambridge.

Leonardo Solano Méndez was born in Costa Rica, is a permanent resident of Canada, and lives in England. He studied advertising and marketing and is a graphic and web designer.



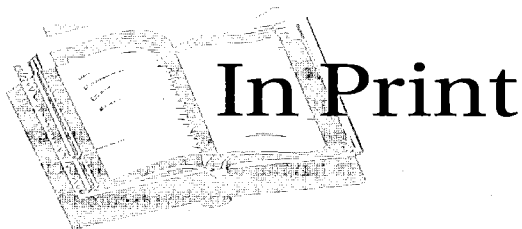
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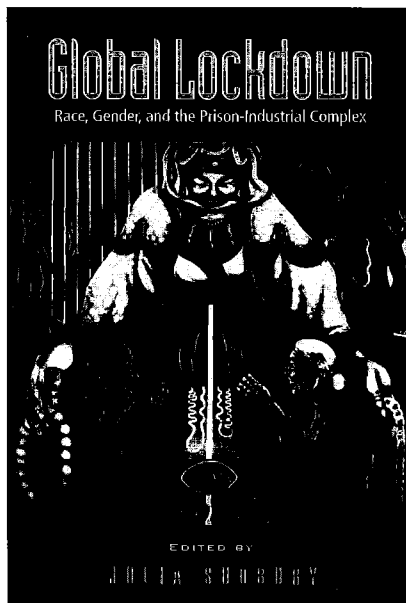
In Print

All books reviewed below are available or can be ordered at the Toronto Women's Bookstore, advertised in this issue.

GLOBAL LOCKDOWN: RACE, GENDER, AND THE PRISON-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

Edited by Julia Sudbury. New York: Routledge, 2004. CAD 35.95 paper (ISBN 0-415-95057-0), 352 pages.
www.routledge.com

Reviewed by Antonia Baker



An impressive volume of twenty articles, **Global Lockdown** calls for a new approach to thinking about women in prison. Edited by prison abolitionist Julia Sudbury, it looks at the explosion of women's imprisonment as a crisis of working class women of colour and indigenous women globally. Unlike much existing prison research, it locates the experiences of

prisoners at the centre of analysis, and using a transnational feminist approach, encourages us to think beyond the limits of national borders in order to critique the role of race, citizenship, global capitalism and military occupation in the expansion of prison regimes.

Compelling and layered, this anthology moves outside the usual scope of U.S.-centric writing on the prison industrial complex. Contributors analyze prisons in South Africa, Canada, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Australia, Italy, Jamaica, Britain, Colombia, Portugal, Palestine, the U.S. and Pakistan. Many write from their prison cells. Indeed, **Global Lockdown** is successful because it contains writings by those who best understand the prison industrial complex: prisoners and their families.

Personal narratives and critical essays reveal the effects of imprisonment on women's lives, while rejecting the notion that there is a singular or universal experience of incarceration. Comparisons of prisons from different countries have been written before, but as Sudbury cautions us, many international studies stop short of questioning how borders are policed and the ways in which people's mobility is restricted while capital flows unimpeded.

There are, however, common features in women's prisons worldwide. As one of the fastest growing prison populations, women are confined in overcrowded jails where human rights violations are rampant. Sudbury asks what has caused the unprecedented rise in the number of women being sent to prison. She discredits theorists who point to an increased pattern of women's offending, arguing that crime rates are falling. Explanations that hinge on women's past experiences of abuse are also problematic in that they obscure the larger political and economic forces driving mass imprisonment.

While much has been written on private investment and prison industries prior to **Global Lockdown**, there has been little discussion on how prisons are transformed by free trade agreements and economic restructuring, including the interplay between the globalized war on drugs, the criminalization of migration and increased border control and security. Sudbury encourages activists to consider other spaces of confinement, such as immigration detention centres, noting that "Immigrant rights and prison activists rarely share the same platform." **Global Lockdown** is an academic book, but also a tool for organizing, offering examples of successful cross-border campaigns.

A phrase stays with me from Ruth Wilson Gilmore's chapter, 'Pierce the Future for Hope: Mothers and Prisoners in the Post Keynesian California Landscape': "without glorification or shame." Romanticizing the prison experience or stigmatizing it renders the pains of imprisonment invisible. What makes **Global Lockdown** unique among other books on the prison industrial complex is that many of its voices are those of women inside, orienting us to centre the experiences of women of colour in our analyses and organizing.

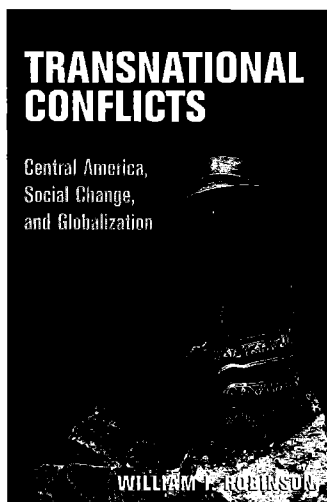
Antonia Baker is a prison abolitionist and a member of the Prisoners Justice Action Committee (PJAC) and 81 Reasons Coalition to Stop the Youth Superjail. She is also a radio host and programmer on CKLN88.1fm in Toronto. PJAC can be contacted at pjac_committee@yahoo.com.

Editors' note: A similar review by Antonia Baker was previously published in *New Socialist*.

TRANSNATIONAL CONFLICTS: CENTRAL AMERICA, SOCIAL CHANGE, AND GLOBALIZATION

By William I. Robinson. London: Verso, 2003. USD 26.00 paper (ISBN: 1859844391), 400 pages.

Reviewed by Megan Rivers-Moore



William I. Robinson's latest contribution to scholarship on Central America is an ambitious and challenging book that is both theoretically sharp and solidly rooted in empirical material. Robinson writes from the perspective that academics make a commitment to either uphold the current social order or to change it, and he firmly locates himself within the latter group. His aim, first, is to suggest new ways of theorizing

globalization and development, and second, to examine Central America in particular, highlighting the region's specific insertion in transnational capitalism. The book offers a structuralist explanation of globalization as the latest phase of capitalism, yet Robinson is careful not to ignore the question of individual agency and action.

Robinson argues that the issue of 'development' can no longer be analyzed according to individual nation states, because power-holders in the current context are a transnational elite that is no longer constrained by national borders. 'Development' and 'underdevelopment' can no longer be located territorially, but rather are determined by social groups globally. The four main features of transnational processes outlined by Robinson are: national and regional insertion into the globalized economy through specialized activities within a global division of labour; transnational class formation, as some classes become globalized and others disappear altogether; neoliberalism and political polyarchy, which Robinson defines as "low-intensity democracy"; and finally the transnationalization of political systems and civil societies. Throughout the book, Robinson emphasizes the gendered aspects of these processes. For example, Robinson highlights the specific effects of neoliberal economic policies on women's labour, exploring the types of jobs in which women are concentrated (service and factory) and the short and long term consequences that such policies have on women. This attention to the gendered character of transnational processes is one of the strengths of his analysis.

Given his focus on transnational processes and globalized networks of power, Robinson runs the risk of writing off the role of nation states all together. While he argues that nation states have become less and less powerful, he is quick to point out the important role they have played in restructuring national economies to play new and specialized roles in the global context. In his examination of Central America, Robinson looks at each country individually in order to highlight specific historical, economic and political trajectories. In particular, he emphasizes the role of the emergence of a new transnational elite in each country and their relationship with the transnational elite across the globe. While his point is well argued, the lack of detail about who precisely these people are means that the transnational elite occasionally comes across as a shadowy, mysterious group of the rich and powerful. His argument is stronger when he examines the role of international aid organizations and international financial institutions, such as USAID and the World Bank, in pushing for the implementation of policies to open up national economies to transnational intervention. Robinson argues that these interventions have been in the interest of a transnational elite that has gained power in governments throughout the world. Yet this still implies a major role for nation states in these processes, and in particular the role of the U.S. government and international financial institutions that remain dominated by U.S. interests. Robinson would argue that U.S. interests are, in fact, the interests of a transnational elite. While I remain unprepared to write off the importance of nation states entirely, Robinson's book is extremely well written and well argued, and could potentially produce an interesting debate on these issues, especially given his use of Central America as a concrete case study.

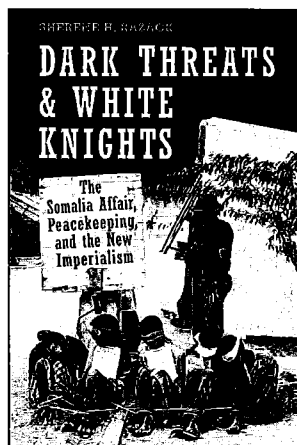
Perhaps most provocatively, Robinson claims that because social exclusion is inherent to the current phase of global capitalism, further unrest and upheaval is likely in Central America. This flies in the face of most observers who have celebrated the return (or the first appearance, in some cases) of peace and democracy throughout the region. Robinson calls for transnationalization from below as the only possible response to the status quo, arguing that social movements must work across borders in order to develop a viable alternative to global capitalism. Unfortunately, he does not go into much detail on this point, leaving the hard work of strategizing for change to others. Despite this weakness, Robinson has produced a challenging and timely book with theoretical tools that could be put to use in analyzing other regions of the world.

Megan Rivers-Moore is a PhD student in Social and Political Science at the University of Cambridge.

DARK THREATS AND WHITE KNIGHTS: THE SOMALIA AFFAIR, PEACEKEEPING, AND THE NEW IMPERIALISM

By Sherene H. Razack. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004. CAD 50.00 cloth (ISBN 0-8020-8708-6), CAD 24.95 paper (ISBN 0-8020-8663-2), 236 pages.

Reviewed by Sarah Turnbull



The image on the front cover of Sherene Razack's new book, **Dark Threats and White Knights**, is unsettling: five Somali children blindfolded, roped together, sitting in the dirt with signs on their chests, under the guard of a soldier. Not exactly what you think should happen during a peacekeeping mission. This image suggests that something went terribly wrong in Somalia.

And things did go wrong.

On March 4, 1993, two Somali men were shot in the back by Canadian peacekeepers as they ran away from the military compound. Twelve days later, sixteen year old Shidane Abukar was tortured to death as numerous Canadian peacekeepers looked on. When trophy photos surfaced of these and other atrocities, there could be little doubt that what went wrong was more widespread than two isolated incidents of violence. As these incidents became known in Canada, however, the nation's role as peacekeeper to the world went largely unscrutinized in mainstream accounts. Despite a national inquiry into Canada's military intervention in Somalia (which was terminated before the commission could complete its mandate), the issue of racism disappeared in law and the national memory. Over ten years later, the events that led to what became known as the Somalia Affair have largely been forgotten.

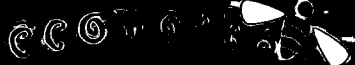
In **Dark Threats and White Knights**, Razack presents a powerful case study of the Somalia Affair, showing how racism and imperialism are very much part of modern day peacekeeping missions. She argues for a contextualized and historicized approach to understanding western nations' practices of peacekeeping so that we can see how we are implicated in the problems we seek to solve. Otherwise, contemporary peacekeeping will continue as a colonial project, one that maintains the mythology of the global civilizing mission.

Razack also demonstrates how the violence of peacekeeping is largely forgiven and forgotten when the story becomes one of a nation wronged by a few bad

apples and a rogue regiment. She presents a compelling argument that racism is central to understanding the Somalia Affair and the violence that occurred at the hands of Canadian peacekeepers. To support this argument, Razack provides a detailed theoretical discussion of the interconnections between race, gender, colonialism and identity. She clearly outlines the ways in which masculinities and race are linked in the production of the particular gender identities that individual male soldiers performed in Somalia.

Razack offers an insightful feminist analysis of the interconnections between race, masculinities and the nation. This book is a valuable contribution to understanding both contemporary peacekeeping practices and national mythology. It compels readers to think reflexively about how we are implicated in various conflicts both at home and in other countries, and also helps us understand present-day forms of institutionalized racism. It is an important and insightful read that very much applies to the current situations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan.

Sarah Turnbull is a PhD student at the Centre of Criminology, University of Toronto.




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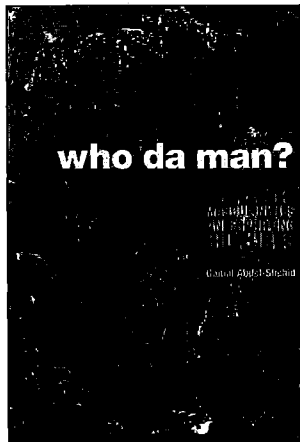
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WHO DA MAN: BLACK MASCULINITIES AND SPORTING CULTURES

By Gamal Abdel-Shehid. Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press Inc., 2005. CAD 24.95 paper (ISBN 1-55130-261-6), 198 pages.

Reviewed by Marie Vander Kloet



Gamal Abdel-Shehid's **Who Da Man: Black Masculinities and Sporting Cultures** provides a cultural study of sport and critical sport sociology with a much-needed analysis of race, sexuality and sporting culture in Canada. Reading this book left me, as a critical sport sociologist, feeling unsettled. By disrupting any positions of comfort or innocence, Abdel-Shehid digs into deeply Canadian sporting

practices and exposes the extent to which nationhood has strategically produced 'stable' black masculinities. He argues convincingly for the necessity of a black queer theory of sport.

Who Da Man begins with two chapters that explore a variety of theoretical and research paradigms which have affected black masculinities in sporting cultures. Here, Abdel-Shehid reads C.L.R James and Henry Edwards together in the hope of drafting a theory of black masculinity that is not static. Through this theorization, he provides a compelling and challenging feminist and queer critique of black sporting masculinities in Canada. The next three chapters analyze three sport-specific contexts from Canadian sporting culture, specifically Ben Johnson, the Toronto Raptors and black quarterbacking in the NFL and in Canada. He closes with a final chapter which looks closely at desire and pleasure, and interrupts the heteronormativity presumed to be implicit in black sporting cultures (and in sport more broadly).

Abdel-Shehid complicates and explores topics presumed finished in sport sociology. He engages with Canada's legacy of shaming Ben Johnson, with the practices of racial stacking in team sports, with the dangers of re/producing 'cool pose' and with the unsettling prevalence of heterosexism and homophobia in black sporting cultures. Through his examination of myriad cultural, media and sport specific events in Canada, he pushes his readers to see how black masculinity has been made through roots (permanence) and routes (movement). This book is a healthy mix of scholarly reflection and pragmatic examination. Abdel-Shehid

does not become trapped in complex language or inaccessible ideas; rather, he delves into theory in order to examine practices of Canadian sporting culture and black masculinity. He resists the temptation to conflate Canadian and American experiences, while simultaneously pushing sport beyond a simple nation-building project. The result is a book that all athletes, scholars and Canadians should read.

In an era of ongoing media coverage of debates around government funding for elite sport, Olympic mania and commitment to sport and the Canadian state, this book offers a politicized analysis of black masculinities, sport and Canadianness. Abdel-Shehid requires us to look through a new lens at gender, race and sexuality in sporting culture; what we see is exactly what we have been missing.

Marie Vander Kloet is a PhD student in Sociology and Equity Studies at OISE/UT.

AN INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S STUDIES: GENDER IN A TRANSNATIONAL WORLD

By Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan: New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002. CAD 73.95 paper (ISBN: 007109389X), 576 pages.

Reviewed by Mia Quint



I received Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan's reader, **Introduction to Women's Studies: Gender in a Transnational World**, last year as a gift from my professor. I was taking a course in transnational feminism (my first women's studies course) because I was interested in the phenomenon of transnationalism. I am studying

the implications and effects of globalization and information technology on higher education, and I was dissatisfied with the common accounts of globalization within the literature. It is possible that my peers in the class could feel the excited tension that was building up inside of me when I was introduced to the range of subjects and methods. Now, long after the completion of the course, I consistently refer back to this reader and feel the same sense of excitement as I did when taking that class.

This reader, geared towards undergraduate students, is engaging and purposeful for a range of academic and professional work as well as everyday ways of thinking about the contemporary world. Grewal and Kaplan state

in their invaluable introduction, "the goal of this introductory textbook is to encourage people to be more aware of the connections between their lives and what they learn about the rest of the world." And the truth is that the transnational world is a world in which such connections can be made. As the authors themselves explain, "to begin to think more internationally means that we learn to make connections between the lives and cultures of women in diverse places without reducing all women's experience into a common culture."

Why think about the world transnationally? Before reading this text, I was accustomed to thinking about the linkages of the world in terms of internationalism or more recently in terms of globalization. As opposed to international, which conjures up a more traditional image of cross-border relations and passports, and as opposed to the global, which can be problematic because of how it glosses over local situations and realities, transnational is a more dynamic term for a much more complicated situation. The reader is divided into four parts: Women's Bodies in Science and Culture; Gendered Identities: Individuals, Communities, Nations; Representations, Cultures, Media, and Markets; and Gendering Globalization and Displacement. Each part is introduced with an essay by the editors, and followed by a collection of article excerpts, short essays, cartoons, news clippings and sections from fiction and autobiographical works. Each short piece is prefaced with a contextualizing paragraph from the editors and followed with a short list of key terms and definitions. The reader therefore knows why each piece was chosen, how it relates to the section's theme, and something about its author. I find this particularly important as I am used to textbooks presented as if the writer were an omniscient presence. Grewal and Kaplan's reader offers a comprehensive, accessible and creative introduction to gender in a transnational world, and I strongly recommend it to everyone.

Mia Joy Quint is a PhD candidate at OISE/UT's department

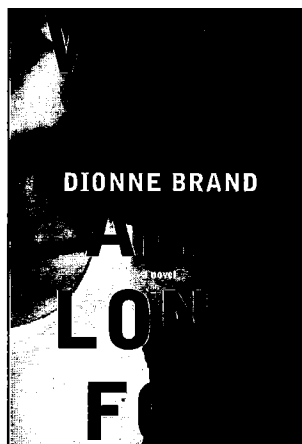
of Theory and Policy Studies. The focus of her work revolves around the political economy of the Open Source and Open Access movements and implications of these movements on the landscape of higher education. She is also the editor of the open access journal Higher Education Perspectives (hep.oise.utoronto.ca).

Editors' note: A second edition of this text is being released in 2006.

WHAT WE ALL LONG FOR

By Dionne Brand. Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 2005. CAD 29.95 cloth (ISBN: 0-676-97167-9), 319 pages.

Reviewed by Jocelyn Thorpe



Dionne Brand's latest novel is indeed **What We All Long For** in a book: magic writing, heartbreakingly strong and vulnerable characters, haunting themes that linger long after all the pages have been turned, and a nail-biting plot.

What We All Long For follows the lives of four young friends living in Toronto. Tuyen, installation artist and sister of a boy lost in her family's shuffle from Vietnam to

Toronto, lives in a wreck of an apartment on College Street. Carla, Tuyen's love, has the apartment next door. Carla rides her bike around the city at lightning speed, but still cannot shake the grip of her mother's ghost, her desire to save her brother, or her own pain. Their poet friend Oku packs his bag for school every day, though he dropped out months ago. Oku loves beautiful Jackie,

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who owns a second-hand clothing store and appears to be steely calm. The four met in high school, all of them having learned early on that fitting in is not so easy when your skin is wrong, all of them bored with the prejudices of high school (like when the phys. ed. teacher asked studious — and black — Oku to run track), and all of them unwilling to bend into shape for a system that refuses them room to breathe. Though they don't talk about it much, the friends' lives and selves are indelibly marked by the racism of dominant Canadian culture, and it is in part their outsider status that brings them together. But it is not only this. Brand's characters are, more than anything else, alive and young, full of each other and of possibility.

Brand writes Toronto beautifully. The city is raw, violent and vibrant, containing endless possibility, but also so much pain. Yet somehow people get by in the city. The Toronto of Brand's novel is not a passive backdrop to the action of the characters, but exists as a force in its own right. It both shapes the characters of the novel — the palpable longing of the city compels Tuyen to construct and obsess over an installation piece which can hold everyone's unspeakable longings — and is itself created by the characters. What gives the city a pulse is not upscale High Park, which Carla rides her bike through and despises, but Tuyen and her installations on Queen Street West, Jackie with her store, Carla careening around the corner of Keele and Bloor, and Oku's impromptu spoken word poetry with his friends in a coffee shop. The city is alive with everyone's stories, interactions and longings, and Brand's characters do not only live in the city, they are of and in love with Toronto.

Haunting the text of **What We All Long For** is Tuyen's parents' longing for the son, Quy, they lost so many years ago and have searched for ever since. Tuyen's brother Binh takes up his parents' quest for the lost boy, eventually finding him and bringing him to Toronto. Meanwhile, the reader knows about Quy through his first person narrative which is interspersed with the story of Tuyen and her friends. Quy is no longer the loving son lost so many years ago, but a desperate man who has survived off his own pretty face and other people's backs. Tension builds as Binh gets closer to finding Quy, and the inevitable encounter between Quy and his family is, not surprisingly, violent. But what happens is completely unexpected.

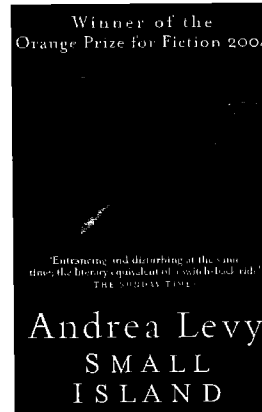
What We All Long For is about longing and belonging, survival and pain, diaspora, friendship and home. What a treat to get to read Brand's gorgeous prose, and to get to know her complicated and real characters, including her Toronto.

Jocelyn Thorpe is a PhD student in Environmental Studies at York University in Toronto.

SMALL ISLAND

By Andrea Levy: London: Headline, 2004. CAD 14.95 paper (ISBN: 0-7553-0750-X), 533 pages.

Reviewed by Marie Vander Kloet, Susan Boyle, Megan Rivers-Moore and Rachael Sullivan



Approximately one year ago, a group of book lovers and foodies got together to form a book club/supper group. Meeting regularly to enjoy delicious meals, great wine, good company and a chat about a book, we have often joked about branching out: What else could our book club do? Some members of our club agreed to review **Small Island** in an attempt to broaden our book club horizons and to provide multiple perspectives on a great novel. Here's what we thought:

Small Island is a superb novel which, deservedly, won the Orange Prize for Fiction, an award for women writers judged exclusively by women. The novel tackles many complex issues, including immigration, imperialism, racism, war, love and friendship, through telling the stories of Hortense, Gilbert, Queenie and Bernard. One of the most compelling aspects of the book is that Levy refuses to portray any of her characters as entirely innocent or completely reprehensible. All the characters struggle — slowly, painfully and unevenly — with how the world is changing before, during and after World War II. Queenie, for example, a white working class British woman, takes in Jamaican boarders after the war. Her white neighbours are outraged by this, and shun not only the boarders, but also Queenie herself. Yet Queenie is not an entirely sympathetic character. She does what she feels she must, taking in boarders to supply her with a much needed income when her husband Bernard refuses to come home after the war. Queenie, in one of her many racist moments, assumes that Hortense, a newly arrived Jamaican boarder, speaks no English and has never been to a shop. Hortense, on the other hand, is horrified by the conditions of her room, which she considers far beneath her upper class standards. Hortense's husband, Gilbert, who is also from Jamaica, is initially surprised by the racism and ignorance he constantly confronts after immigrating to England. In particular, he is shocked that while Jamaicans know so much about 'the mother country,' the English seem to know nothing about Jamaica: most English people he comes across assume Jamaica to be located in Africa.

Though none of the characters are perfect, each one is compelling in a different way. Hortense loses some of

her pride in order to forgive herself and her husband for their imperfect lives, and for the racism they are forced to confront daily. Gilbert, angered at first by Hortense's disdain for him and the shabbiness of the England to which they have access, grows appreciative of his wife. He learns to see both her vulnerability and her strength, and grows stronger and kinder as a result. Queenie, imperious and opinionated without being informed, is sometimes unbelievably self-absorbed. But she finds love and friendship right where she least expects it, and develops a sense of justice beyond her own self-preservation. And Bernard, not in any way equipped for war, realizes in his second chance that he must change if he expects company in old age. Levy's characters are shaped by their relative imperial, national, gender and class positions, positions which hinder and help them. Yet her characters also challenge their positions, and make alliances across differences. Though imperfect and provisional, the relationships that the characters develop with one another are what allow them to survive differently in a changed world.

We highly recommend this book. One of Levy's most important contributions is that she reminds us that racism, border crossings, and empire have a much longer history than discourses of globalization often allow. Another is that she forces us to question which, indeed, is the small island — England or Jamaica? Or are neither of them islands at all?

Marie Vander Kloet, Susan Boyle, Megan Rivers-Moore and **Rachael Sullivan** meet regularly with their bookclub to enjoy food, wine, and books.

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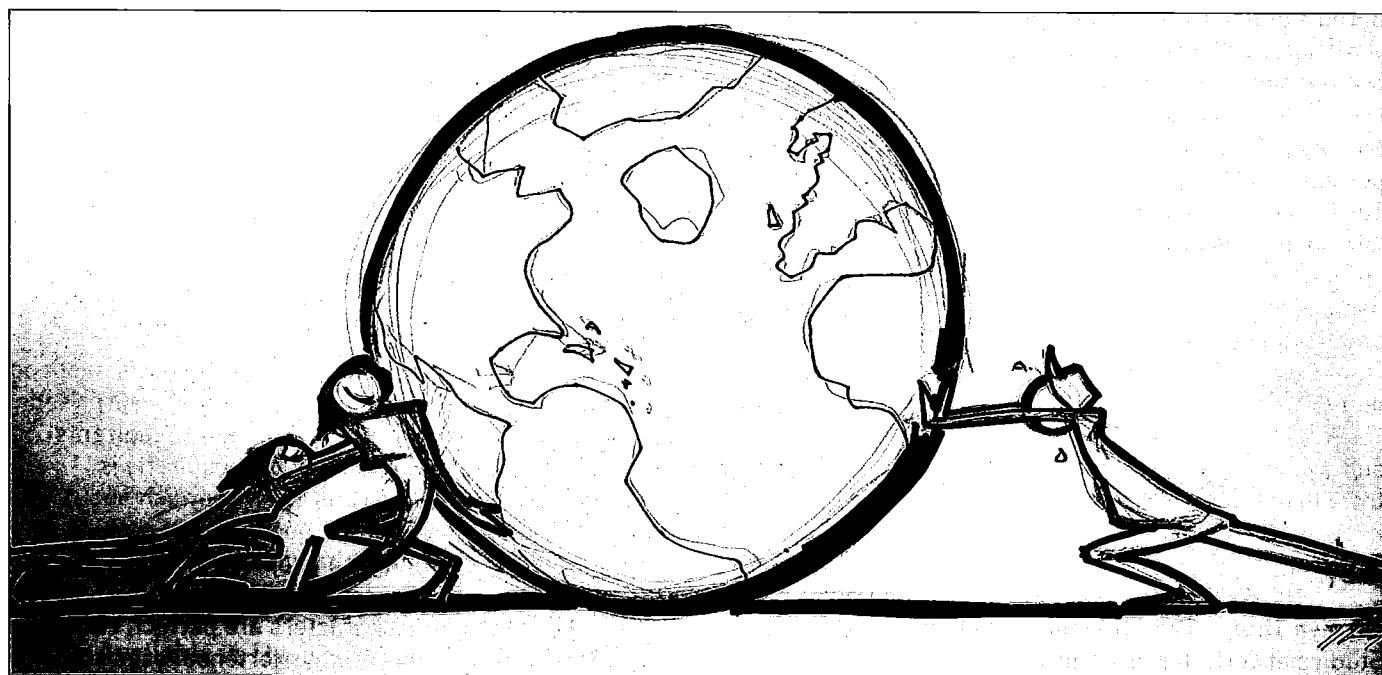
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WARD MINNIS

Film & Video

EL CONTRATO

Min Sook Lee (Director). Karen King-Chigbo (Producer).
Montreal, QC: National Film Board of Canada, 2003. 50
min., VHS or DVD, CAD 49.95

Reviewed by Frank Loreto



One spring while I was waiting in the arrivals area at Pearson Airport in Toronto, I found myself suddenly in the midst of a large number of men arriving from Mexico. I realized that these people were migrant workers, here to begin the new farming season. As their names were called, I wondered what would it be like to be a migrant worker in southwestern Ontario.

In *El Contrato*, the answer is clearly, "Not very good." Or as one of the workers in the film states, "slavery has not disappeared." This film follows the lives of Mexican workers in Leamington, Ontario. Leamington, once famous for Heinz tomatoes, now has the most concentrated number of greenhouses in all of North America. One quarter of a billion pounds of tomatoes come from this area. The growers in Leamington rely heavily on Mexican workers who have been contracted out to do the work. One greenhouse alone can employ 100 workers, the huge majority of whom, because of gendered ideas about manual labour, are men.

El Contrato looks in detail at two migrant workers, 'M', who wears a mask to hide his identity, and Teodoro. The film begins in Mexico as the workers prepare to leave home for the next eight months. Only married men are allowed to apply for this job, a stipulation designed to ensure that no one stays behind in Canada after the contract is over. This is an example of one way that work is not only gendered, but also reinforces heterosexuality and the nuclear family as the norm: men are encouraged to leave home to perform the role of breadwinner for their families (while their wives stay home to raise the children), but it is assumed that the draw of their female partners and children will bring the men home at the end of the season. The workers are provided with housing, but in Teodoro's house, there are nine other men living in very close quarters. If a worker causes any trouble or challenges the bosses, he can be sent back home. For instance, in the film when the Mexican Consul

General is called in to mediate in a case of mistreatment of one of the workers, he makes it clear that they are not to cause any trouble. The claim is made that he is more interested in the contract with the growers than in the rights of the Mexican workers. He states that he cannot deal with problems on a case-by-case basis. After another visit by the Consul General, the men feel that his basic message is: if you don't like the conditions in Canada, don't come.

El Contrato is a hard-hitting film that is at its most powerful when the workers call home. Clearly, they miss their families and would much rather be with them. They simply cannot as there is no work at home and their families need the support that they are able to provide. One worker breaks into tears when he learns that his wife has delivered their baby girl prematurely. He had hoped to be home in time. Workers relate stories of abuses and mistreatment only when they are assured that their faces will not be filmed. However, each man knows that if he were to quit, there is a line waiting in Mexico for his place. Teodoro states, "if 2000 or 4000 refuse to return, another 4000 would come." While these men are essential to the greenhouse operations, they are not always welcomed in the community. One grower/resident, in an attempt to show her open mindedness, states that when some of the Mexican workers get inebriated, "the police just call their owners and they come pick them up." This film is clearly biased in favour of the workers; however, their story must be told and *El Contrato* does a fine job.

Highly recommended.

Frank Loreto is a teacher-librarian at St. Thomas Aquinas Secondary School in Brampton, Ontario. He has been doing this for 20+ years and shows no signs of slowing down.



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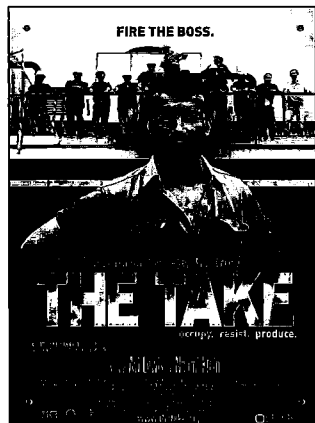
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THE TAKE

Avi Lewis (Director). Silva Basmajian, Katie McKenna, Avi Lewis, Naomi Klein (Producers). National Film Board of Canada, 2004. 87 min., VHS or DVD, CAD 38.95

Reviewed by Kate Berniaz and Ryan Mijker



The Take is a creation of Canadian left wing power-couple Naomi Klein (No Logo) and Avi Lewis (CBC's CounterSpin and son of Stephen Lewis and Michele Landsberg). The documentary explores Argentina's economic collapse and the subsequent response of some of the country's workers. The film follows male workers from a Buenos Aires car parts factory who lose

their jobs when the factory owners close down the factory. Not only are the workers unemployed, but they are also owed a large amount of back wages by the company. Their response is to take over the factory and run it as a cooperative. When we went to the film, we expected to see an exciting opening scene of the unemployed workers breaking into the factory and immediately starting up the machines. In reality, this process was lengthy and time-consuming, with the workers winding their way through political and legal channels. The film documents Freddy Espinoza, the main character and organizer in the film, at home struggling between working to open this factory while financially supporting his wife and children. The focus is on the responsibilities male workers have to their families and, at the same time, the role families play in spurring the workers to action.

As well as following the factory's progress, the film attempts to offer a look at Argentina's political and economic history. Unfortunately, this is an incomplete and distorted representation of Argentina's political past.

The Take describes former socialist president Peron only as a hero, a contested perspective to say the least. Still, Klein and Lewis successfully connect the local takeover of factories in Argentina with global labour and anti-corporate movements. It was heartening to see the success of different cooperative models, including Zanon, a tile factory in Argentina's south, and Brukman, a suit factory in downtown Buenos Aires that has been running for a number of years. Brukman is a cooperative of almost all middle-aged and older women, who are seen in the film marching in the street to protest the potential closing of the factory. One touching moment during this scene is when a sister of one of the workers

explains that the cooperative was supporting her sister financially as she battled with cancer and underwent chemotherapy. This was support not offered by her former employers. It would have been interesting to see the different dynamics in the organizational process between the car parts factory and the Brukman factory to identify the different challenges the workers face because of the age and gender of those involved.

Though there are hopeful moments, it was discouraging to see support for politicians like Menem, a right wing IMF/World Bank pawn. The film shows how the population nearly re-elects Menem after his economic restructuring, encouraged by the IMF/World Bank and other industrialized nations, caused mass unemployment and poverty.

The accompaniments to the film on the DVD are especially interesting and give a different perspective on the making of the film. This includes an introduction to the staff working on the film and their experiences. It really demonstrates how the film is a form of activism for those involved, another part of their ongoing fight against corporate globalization. As an extension of this activism, they have included strategies for action and how you can get involved on **The Take** website: www.nfb.ca/webextension/thetake.

This film did not change how we saw the world, but it did remind us that incremental change in the face of corporate globalization is possible, and that the people involved in this change are not only or primarily young hipsters at the battle in Seattle; they are workers (paid and un-paid) all over the world, who are simply trying to feed and support themselves and their families. And, although the film is contrived and staged at times, we enjoyed it overall and would recommend it for those moments when you feel that another world is impossible.

Kate Berniaz and **Ryan Mijker** live in Vancouver, B.C. Both completed their BAs in Sociology from Simon Fraser University; Kate with a minor in women's studies and Ryan with a minor in anthropology.

Announcements

One Planet, Many People: Atlas of Our Changing Environment

In celebration of World Environment Day on June 3, 2005, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in cooperation with NASA, United States Geological Survey (USGS) and University of Maryland launched **One Planet, Many People: Atlas of our Changing Environment**. Using satellite images, graphics and text, this publication provides evidence of environmental change. The focus is on the status and trends over several decades, both in physical and human geography. The 334-page hardbound atlas discusses human influences on our Earth, including changes in land use, biological diversity, and climate. **One Planet** presents visual evidence of global environmental changes — both the good and the bad — resulting from natural processes and human-induced activities including those of the atmosphere, coastal areas, waters, forests, croplands, grasslands, urban areas, and tundra and polar regions. The atlas demonstrates how our growing number of people and their consumption patterns are shrinking our natural resource base. The challenge is: how do we satisfy human needs without compromising the health of ecosystems? You may access the Atlas on line at www.na.unep.net or you may purchase a hard copy from www.earthprint.com.

Visiting Scholar 2006-2007 McGill Centre for Research and Teaching on Women

The McGill Centre for Research and Teaching on Women invites applications for the position of Visiting Scholar with the Centre. These positions are open to any scholar who wishes to spend one or two academic terms in a university environment in order to carry out research on women. The Centre offers office space and support, ongoing seminars and workshop programs, contact with other women's studies scholars within McGill and in neighbouring universities — all this located at the center of a stimulating, bilingual urban environment. Scholars may wish to apply for external grants; limited research funding of \$1000 per term is available from the Centre. If interested, please write, with a copy of your curriculum vitae, a brief outline of the research to be undertaken, copies of two recent short publications, and the names of two referees to:

Dr. Shree Mulay, Director
Centre for Research and Teaching on Women,
3487 Peel Street, 2nd floor,
Montreal, QC, H3A 1W7
Tel: 514-398-3911; Fax: 514-398-3986

Candidates requiring assurance of a position in order to obtain funding elsewhere are invited to apply one year in advance.
Deadline: November 30th, 2005

Recent Resources about Gender and Sustainability

Evaluation of the Involvement of Women in Transport Science, Traffic Planning and Mobility Politics in the Past and in the Present in Germany, by Meike Spitzner and Gabriele Zauke. The English translation of the overview was prepared in 2003. "Strukturwandel in Verkehrswissenschaft, -planung und -politik? - Rückblick und aktuelle Bilanz der Einmischung von Frauen in Verkehrswissenschaft, -planung und -politik" was published in *Deutscher Städtetag, Kommission "Frauen in der Stadt"* (Hg.) in 1995. You can find the English overview on the website of the European Network "City & Shelter," Brussels: www.cityshelter.org, go to Gender and Mobility, then to Genre et transports-mobilité/ Gender issues and transport-mobility, then double-click on "Evaluation of the involvement of Gender in Transport-mobility in Germany."

GENANET is an English and German website focusing on Gender, Environment and Sustainability: www.genanet.de.

INFORSE is a Danish based international network for sustainable energy. The September issue of Sustainable Energy News (SEN) has just been published. The December 2004 issue focuses on women and energy. European readers receive a paper copy by mail. All issues can be downloaded from the INFORSE website as pdf files (350kB) at: www.inforse.org, double-click on the issue and then on "download."

Biodiversity: Life Insurance for our Changing World

I am pleased to inform you that members of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-Related Conventions have released a joint statement on the contribution of biodiversity to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The timing of the release coincides with the beginning of the Millennium +5 Summit taking place in New York, USA from September 14th to 16th 2005.

The statement is entitled, "**Biodiversity: Life Insurance for our Changing World.**" It calls upon leaders attending the summit in New York to "recognize that to make the MDGs a reality in a highly populated planet, biological diversity needs to be used sustainably and its benefits more equitably shared." The full text is available on the Convention's website at: www.biodiv.org/doc/statements/mdg-2005-en.pdf.

The Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-Related Conventions was established following a request of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (decision V/26) to enhance cooperation among the five biodiversity-related conventions.

Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
E-mail: secretariat@biodiv.org
Web: www.biodiv.org

Join the Habitat JAM — World Urban Forum December 1 - 3, 2005

As part of the preparations for the 3rd World Urban Forum, the Government of Canada, in partnership with UN-Habitat and IBM, will sponsor a global 72-hour internet event from December 1st to 3rd, 2005.

Imagine tens of thousands of people around the world connecting in real time over the internet to find solutions to key urban issues. Imagine a radically new form of global problem-solving that promises to empower people to take charge of decisions that affect their lives. Imagine the results that could be achieved by this unprecedented global conversation and collaboration. This is the Habitat JAM.

During the event, more than 100,000 people from around the world will discuss, debate and collaborate about issues that affect their daily lives. The JAM will help forge a holistic view on controversial and urgent issues that face a rapidly urbanizing planet — issues that can only be solved through broad, global consensus.

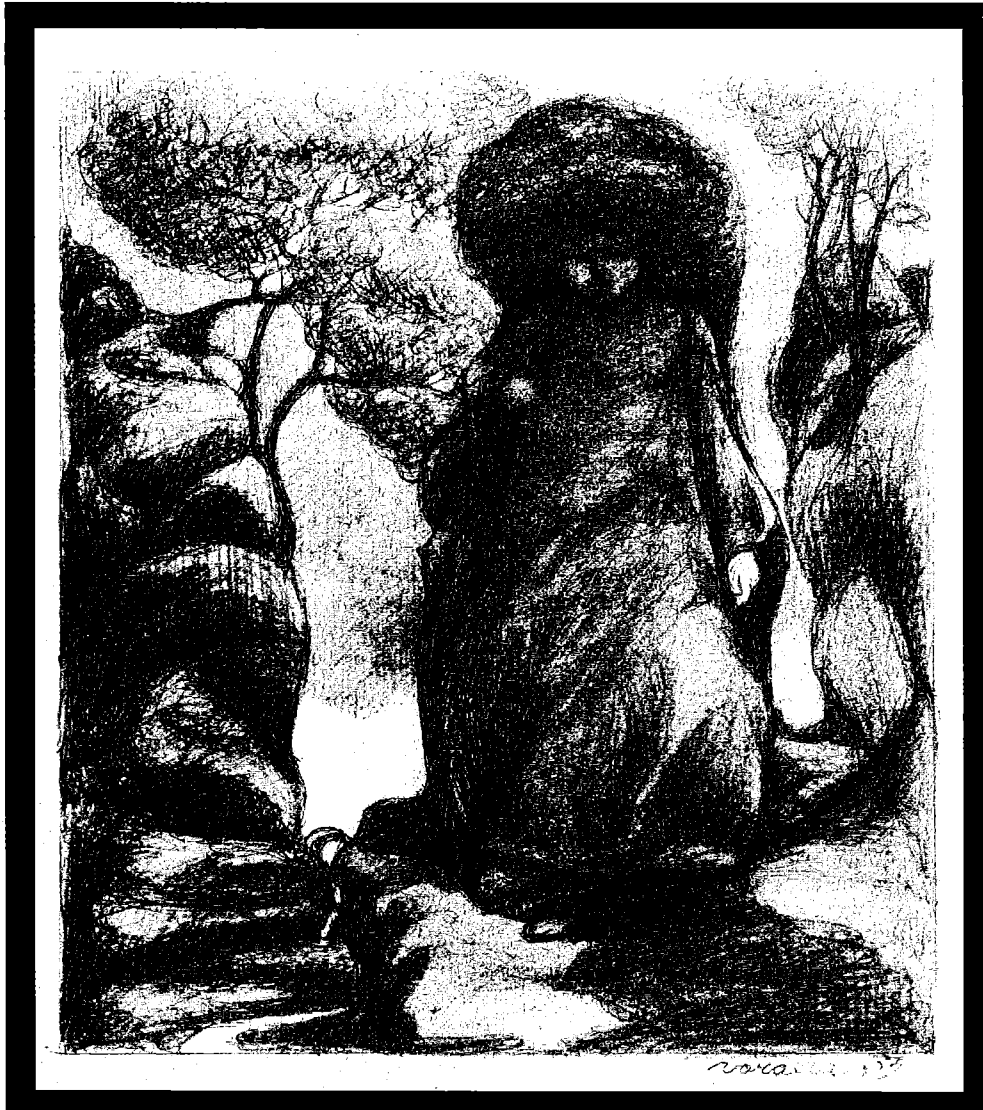
Now that registration for the Habitat JAM is official open, we will be holding a series of Web seminars throughout October to explain more about the Habitat JAM and how you can be a part of it this phenomenal event and have an impact on the global agenda for urban sustainability.

There are many seminar dates and times from which choose. Please visit un-habitat-jam.webex.com and enroll in a 1/2 hour session.

To register for the Habitat JAM and ensure your participation during the December event, visit www.habitatjam.com.

You probably know lots of people who would be interested in learning more about the Habitat JAM, so please forward this invitation to your friends and colleagues.

Gayle Moss
Director of International Marketing, Habitat JAM
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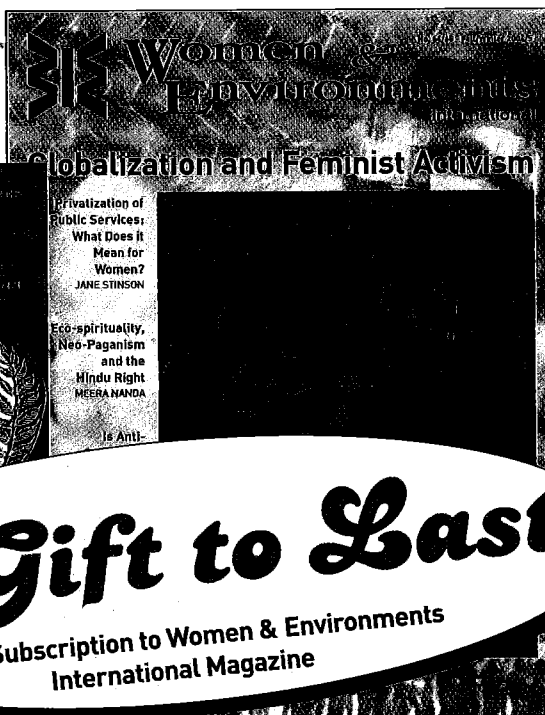
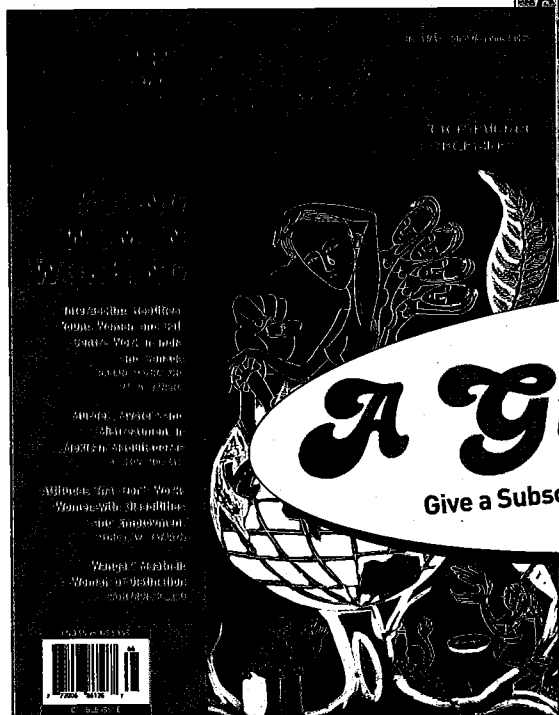
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Featured artist **Ward Minnis**
www.wardmin.com

Ward Minnis was born in Nassau, Bahamas, in July 1977. He earned an associates degree in Art from the College of the Bahamas in 2004. As a visual artist he has participated in major exhibitions like the "Famous Faces of Nassau" two-man show in May of 2004. He has also acted in several plays and is a member of the Bahamian Track Road Theatre group. Presently he is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in English Literature and Caribbean Studies at York University.

