

Editorial

The theme of this special edition of *Canadian Woman Studies*, "Women 2000: Eradicating Poverty and Violence in the 21st Century," reflects the desire to take stock of where we are as a feminist movement in the year 2000. As the articles in this special edition reveal, the analysis of, and responses to, the systemic nature of poverty and violence against women continue to evolve and grow. The authors provide diverse frameworks and perspectives to evaluate our organizing and strategic interventions on all levels, national and international, political, legal, and personal. Throughout, we highlight sections of "It's Time for Change," the Canadian Women's March Committee's blueprint for broad legislative reform that is essential to end poverty and violence against women in Canada.

Central to our challenge is the recognition that we must take into account the reality of all the lives of all women in order to better fight oppression in all systemic forms, in particular by the patriarchal subordination of women, racism, and class exploitation. The links between violence and poverty are real for the illegal immigrant whether she is enslaved for sex or indentured as a domestic worker or cheap factory labour. We must refuse enforced migration whether it be from countries of the economic South, from economically depressed provinces, or from rural or village life. We must press back the law and order agenda until only peaceful justice will do as the acceptable order. Legal interventions that serve the same old unjust order are no longer tolerable.

Feminist analysis and theory is often behind the practice of the grassroots women's movement whose praxis reveals the challenge of trying to make liberal democratic legal institutions honour women's equality. We try to make human rights instruments truly serve women, the poor, people of colour, Aboriginal women and men, and historically disadvantaged groups. We struggle to keep the revolutionary potential of each transition house in a context where the gender perspective on violence against women is being scrutinized.

As we debate and organize to eradicate poverty and end violence against women, we have some cause to celebrate. Feminists across the world are preparing for the Women's World March 2000 against Poverty and Violence Against Women. The *Fédération des femmes du Québec* initiated this unprecedented worldwide feminist action. It has united over 5000 organizations from 157 countries around the goals of the March. In Quebec women will march and protest in every region and finally meet in Montréal on October 14th for a province-wide demonstration. On the East coast, fishers

will equip buses for women who will join the mass demonstrations in Quebec and Ottawa on route to New York. On the West coast Aboriginal women are launching rafts in the mighty Fraser River to trace the ancient trade and culture routes as part of their protest. In Calgary, women have convinced the mayor to declare the week of October 17 a "week of solidarity with the World Women's March." In Saskatchewan, women will rally to defend the rights of immigrant women and domestic workers, while in Ontario, in preparation for a provincial meeting to be held in Ottawa on October 14th, Francophone women are assembling a huge quilt with hundreds of pieces of material containing women's demands. In New Brunswick women will be marching on their capital city to present specific demands to their government, while in Nova Scotia, six communities will link together to hold concurrent events, forums, and action on poverty and violence. In Prince Edward Island, women are organizing a walk along Confederation Trail while in Newfoundland a women's conference will be held in Gander. In Nunavut several cultural events around the March will be organized and in the Yukon and North West Territories, there will be a series of local and regional events. These are only a few examples of the many events that women are organizing across Canada. On a national level, thousands of women from around the country will converge on Parliament Hill on October 15th to demand an end to poverty and violence against women, and on October 17 they will lobby MPs, Cabinet ministers and, hopefully, meet with the Prime Minister to get a response from the government to the demands that are being put forward.

The significance of this global movement is underscored by the fact that the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, and leaders of both the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, will meet with an international delegation of the Women's March that includes members from all of the participating countries.

Let this issue remind us of the integrity and brilliance of the ordinary women labouring to end violence against women and poverty. Tenured law professors speak beside transition house workers with less than high school education. Practiced organizers of 30 years speak beside and with new participants. Each makes a great contribution but we marvel most at the collective voice, the collective wisdom, the collective action. It's the unrelenting combination of theorizing, doing, and evaluating all the work that these pages celebrate.

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