

## Summaries

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# Summaries

## —● **The World March of Women in the Year 2000**

### **Interview with Françoise David**

VIVIAN BARBOT and RUTH ROSE

In this interview, Françoise David, president of the Quebec Federation of Women recounts what she has learned, what has given her the most satisfaction and what her hopes are for the World March of Women. Beyond its primary role of promoting the demands of women, she says the March also serves as a gigantic workshop for popular education and for forging solidarity networks both nationally and internationally. Françoise David also describes how women from all over the world have succeeded in overcoming differences in language, culture and experience in order to adopt a common platform and mobilize for the March in more than 150 countries.

## —● **New and renewed solidarities**

### **The World March of Women in the Year 2000**

VIVIAN BARBOT

The World March of Women in the Year 2000 has provided the occasion for women in the Quebec feminist movement to experiment with new ways of expressing their solidarity. Recognizing the diversity which exists amongst women in the feminist movement, activists have had to look at their collective actions in a new perspective. Acknowledging this diversity, whether it has to do with sexual orientation, culture or something else, the members of the Fédération des femmes du Québec are trying to promote solidarity between and within groups in a way that takes into account the real interests of all women.

## —● **Gender Relations in the Light of the Children's Illness**

### **Examples from Bolivia and Peru**

CHARLES-ÉDOUARD DE SUREMAIN, PIERRE LEFÈVRE and IRIS PECHO

This paper is based on data collected during an in-depth socio-anthropological investigation in Peru and Bolivia (rural and urban areas). It aims to reveal social representations in relation to the role of women and gender relations as well as the issues, social logics and micro-level decision-making processes which occur between mothers and their husbands during episodes of children's illness. It also analyses the conflicts, alliances and negotiations that are likely to occur between them when a child gets sick. Operational propositions for health projects are presented in the conclusion.

—● **Labour Market Integration and Exclusion of Female Immigrants with Reference to Italy**

GIOVANNA CAMPANI

This article discusses the position of women in international migration with particular attention to their situation in the labour market in Italy, a country where the informal economy represents an important share of productive activities. Firstly, the elements which distinguish contemporary international migration from that of the period 1950 to 1975 are identified in relation to economic globalization and the transformation of the industrial system. Using an analysis of gender, ethnicity and class, the polarization of labour markets and its impact on the situation of women immigrants in Europe is then discussed. Finally, two employment sectors where women migrants to Italy are concentrated are examined: domestic work and the sex industry.

—● **Home Caregivers Overworked and Undervalued**

RUTH ROSE

Home caregivers, almost exclusively women, are hired to take care of children or sick, handicapped or elderly adults and to do housework in the employer's residence. In the context of a long-term campaign by the *Association des aides familiales du Québec* (Quebec Association of Home Caregivers) to gain recognition for this occupation and the skills it requires, the purpose of this study is to measure the content of the work done by a diversified sample of 22 caregivers, most of whom are recent immigrants from poor countries. Data on the education, training and previous work experience of the caregivers and on their hours of work are confronted with information on wages and working conditions in order to confirm the hypothesis that the occupation of caregiver is undervalued.

—● **From Poverty to Misery Distress Due to Undernourishment Among Women in Greater Quebec**

LISE PILON

In a country where the supermarket is a powerful symbol of the abundance of food, more than 16,500 families in the Quebec Metropolitan Region lack enough money to buy basic foods, are seriously undernourished and must depend on private charity to survive. This kind of daily torture can be labelled «distress due to undernourishment». Women, whether they live alone, as single-mothers or in traditional families, are more frequently affected than men. We have identified three degrees of severity of distress linked to undernourishment, using interviews on the way in which affected persons live their lives. Among the consequences are the loss of the capacity to provide one's own food, serious physical and mental health problems and abandonment of the hope of ever escaping from the situation. Distress due to undernourishment is the result of the rapid impoverishment of

workers excluded from the mainstream economy over the past five years. The underlying social cause is a system of domination and exploitation which has profoundly modified the social contract between the State, private enterprise and workers: while the work load and the insecurity of those who still have jobs has increased, others have been excluded from the labour market, condemning them to a life of misery.

—● **Food Aid**

**Male-female Equality in Southern Sudan**

SATU LASSILA

In a note concerning the distribution of food during a severe famine in the Sudan, the author deals with the difficulties which arose because of the unequal position of men and women and which affected various aspects of the operation. A short extract from her diary shows the kind of challenges faced in the field by the teams responsible for this kind of mission.

—● **Marching to Eliminate Female Genital Mutilations**

AOUA BOCAR LY-TALL

After having first situated FGM historically and geographically and after having explained what is involved, this article demonstrates how this practice concerns North America today (Quebec, Canada and the United States). It then attempts to identify the ideologies which underlie FGM and allow them to persevere, as well as to show how they constitute an extreme form of violence towards women. It then examines the actions already undertaken in order to eliminate FGM in North America as well as worldwide. Finally, it discusses the strategies developed by the African women's movement in order that, by the end of the first fifteen years of the Third millennium, Horizon 2015, FGM will have become only an old nightmare.

—● **Marching for Lesbians' Right to Equality**

IRÈNE DEMCZUK

The author discusses the demands concerning the rights of lesbians in the political platform of the World March of Women in the Year 2000 and their relevance as a feminist struggle. She describes the main reasons for hesitating to support these rights as expressed by feminist delegations at the international preparatory meeting for the March in Montreal in October 1998. Lastly, she emphasizes some of the issues at stake in this debate, defining the rights of lesbians as fundamental human rights, and their non-recognition as a serious challenge to solidarity among women.

### —● **The Rights of Lesbians in Quebec and Canada**

RUTH ROSE

The years 1999 and 2000 marked a major step forward in the recognition of the right of lesbians and gays to equality when Quebec, Ontario and the federal government adopted omnibus bills granting same-sex common-law spouses almost all the same rights as heterosexual couples under the tax system, social security programs and family law. British Columbia has achieved almost the same results as a consequence of judicial decisions and the amendment of individual laws. After tracing a brief history of recent progress, this article discusses what remains to be done in order to end, once and for all, discrimination against lesbians, particularly in the areas of immigration, marriage, the right to have children and public attitudes.

### —● **Marching for Pay Equity in New Brunswick**

HUBERTE GAUTREAU and AURÉA CORMIER

In the context of the World March of Women, the New Brunswick Committee has decided that their top priority would be the adoption of a pro-active law on pay equity. This paper presents the problematic of pay equity as well as a brief history of the Canadian and New Brunswick laws which aim to attain that objective. Next, it relates the steps undertaken by the Women's Union for Pay Equity and by the New Brunswick Committee to promote their demand. To achieve their objective, the Women's Union members presented information in a workshop setting where women were invited to share their day to day encounters with pay inequities. Their testimonies reveal the pernicious effects of such injustices on their personal lives as well as the contribution of these injustices toward the establishment of a dominated-dominant relationship within the couple.

