

RESISTER

DECEMBER

WOMEN ONLY

25p

No. 20

LEEDS ANARCHIST-FEMINIST PAPER

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Last month legal history was made when Lorraine Miles from Essex successfully won a civil case against a man who'd raped her. She was awarded £25,108 in damages from Kenneth Cain, and this is the first time that this has happened through the civil courts. However, the money hasn't been paid yet in case there is an appeal.

Lorraine Miles went to Cain, a physiotherapist, for treatment to a shoulder injury she got weightlifting. It was at his premises that he first assaulted her and later raped her. She was too shocked to go to the police, which is why no criminal conviction could be brought against Cain.

She became withdrawn and depressed afterwards though, many people noticed the massive change in her character. Judge Justice Caulfield believed that she was telling the truth, so damages were awarded.

Although it's easier, in theory, to win a civil case than a criminal one, it was still risky for Lorraine to have brought this case, as her "reputation" and mental health could have been called into question as they might have been in the criminal courts if Cain had been found not guilty.

A civil case rests on the believability of the case rather than on concrete proof that a rape took

place, as in the criminal courts, which is often hard to prove.

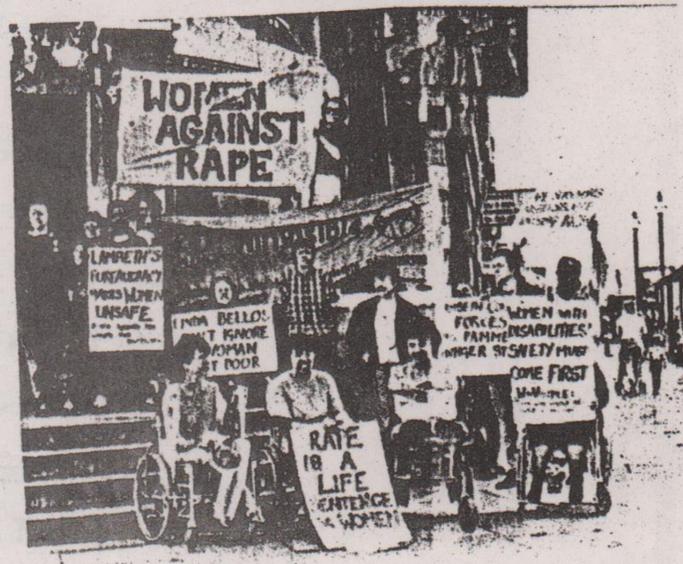
A spokeswoman for Women Against Rape said it was a victory, and hopefully would set a precedent. Perhaps now women can get some sort of justice from the courts, which as we know has been nigh on impossible to get so far.

Mentioned elsewhere:-

Judge Sir Harold Cassel lives at 49, Lennox Gardens, London SW1.

Tel 01 584 2721.

His hobbies include shooting, swimming and going to the opera. Unfortunately we don't know the address of his country retreat, we're sure he's got one!!



TERESA RAMASHAMOLA

Last month we saw President Botha stop the executions of the Sharpeville Six, & gave them 25 year sentences instead. Theresa Ramashamola is the only woman among the Sharpeville Six, who were accused of 'Murder by Association' following the death of a Lekoa town councillor during the Vaal uprising. On September 3rd 1984, there was a protest march to the offices of the Orange/Vaal Development Board. It began as a peaceful demonstration, many thousand strong, protesting against rent increases. But, it ended in a battle. At least 250 people were injured, mostly by rubber bullets, & 14 people died. Ten were killed by the police on their own admission. Hundreds of police attacked the march, & 3 local Black councillors died in the affray.

More than a month later, Theresa Ramashamola, along with 5 men, was detained under the Internal Security Act. Their trial began nearly a year later, in September '85, in the Pretoria Supreme Court.

They were accused of 'subversion' & the murder of councillor Dlamini. The evidence against them came from two secret witnesses, who were assaulted by the police to tell their story, & contradicted themselves on numerous occasions. It was one of these 'witnesses' who alleged that Theresa shouted 'let's kill him' & thus incited the crowd. In fact, she was shot in the head during the early part of the march & so was not even around when Dlamini was killed.

None of the Sharpeville Six were found by the courts to have caused the councillors death, but their dissatisfaction with the Apartheid system, & the colour of their skin, is enough for this barbaric regime to have Theresa & her comrades, put behind bars for 25 years. And this case is no exception, there are at least 50 people on death row in South Africa today. 'luckily', our Resister for this month, was spared death - not for humanitarian reasons, Botha couldn't risk throwing such a big spanner into the works, but now that the Sharpeville Six have had their reprieve, we mustn't stop fighting for those who haven't.

WOMEN ONLY HOSPITAL CLOSURE

In London, there is a hospital which is staffed entirely by women - The Elizabeth Garret Anderson Hospital (EGA). However, all this is to change at Christmas time, when Santa is to deliver a sack of 6 male gynaecologists into the hospital.

No longer can the authorities bear this supportive women only environment, which is not only essential for women who have been raped but for women from cultural backgrounds which prohibit treatment by men, for those who have had traumatic experiences of male gynaecologists, & for those of us who prefer intimate examinations to be carried out by members of our own sex.

Action is being taken to fight this attack of women's space. For more info. contact:

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DECEMBER 30th

WHEN IS YOUR BODY
NOT YOUR BODY?
-WHEN YOU'RE A WOMAN

Today the courts are being used to force pregnant women into having, or not having treatment, against their will, & are being put on trial for 'crimes committed against the foetus'. Not only are women having court orders made out against them forcing them to have caesarian sections, but brain dead women are being kept on life support systems. The potential life of a foetus is being given far more importance & status than the life of the woman.

In Georgia, in a well publicised case, 25 year old Donna Piazzi was admitted to hospital in June 86 having been found unconscious in a public toilet with a needle in her arm. She was declared brain-dead of a probable drug overdose and her husband asked doctors to disconnect her from respirators. Then a man, claiming to be the father of the fetus asked that she be kept alive to allow the 20 week old fetus to develop. Her husband did not deny the man was the father. Hospital officials requested a decision from the court judge as to who had the right to determine

whether she should be disconnected - the husband, the probable father - or the fetus itself. One issue under consideration was whether the fetus would survive or not. The hospital stated that "Although not probable, there exists a medical possibility that Donna Piazzi's body can remain functioning until the point that the fetus would be viable." Doctors testified in court that a 25 week old fetus could survive if removed from the mother's body, but might have disabilities. The lawyer representing the fetus said 'If the baby dies, you're no worse off than had they gone ahead and terminated the life-support system..But I think a life is worth a chance.' A judge ruled that she be kept functioning and after 7 weeks a Caesarian was performed when the fetal heartbeat

weakened. The fetus died of multiple organ failure and perinatal asphyxia. It was over three months premature. Donna was removed from life support systems and died shortly afterwards.

Colleen Fuller was in a coma with irreversible brain damage, after attempting suicide in jail. She had been arrested for pulling the hair of a female bar employee. A judge assigned the fetus a lawyer, after denying the woman's family's request for an abortion. Another lawyer was appointed to represent the woman. In the end, her mother decided not to appeal and the abortion was denied. (4)

Live women are also being seen as secondary to the lives of foetus'.

In Los Angeles in 1981, a pregnant woman with terminal cancer wanted her doctors to attempt to resuscitate her first if she went into cardiac arrest as a result of chemotherapy and that they should prioritise her if a choice had to be made between her and the fetus. Doctors wanted to force her to have a Caesarian, which would have killed her. Social Services filed a court petition, charging her with

neglect and being an unfit parent. They wanted the fetus to be named a 'dependent child of the court'. The court finally ruled in favour of the woman but she died soon after.

In Washington D.C. 27 year old Angie C. terminally ill with cancer was forced to have a caesarian against her wishes, those of her husband, parents and doctors. She died two days afterwards and the 26 week old fetus did not survive. She had had bone cancer since age 13. After extensive treatment, she was told that she was free of cancer and then became pregnant. Several months into the pregnancy, she was diagnosed as having a large tumour in her lung and would only have a few weeks left to live.

Angie agreed to treatment that might help her survive longer, but insisted that her own care and comfort be primary. Her husband, mother and her doctors agreed that keeping her comfortable while she died was what she wanted and that her wishes be honoured. The lawyer for the hospital, against the wishes of her doctors, went for a court order to determine whether the hospital had to act to save the fetus, in order to protect the hospital from potential liability. Within 6 hours a court order was issued requiring a Caesarian, despite the fact that the fetus had only a 50-60% chance of surviving the operation - and knowing that it would precipitate her death. Angie actually regained consciousness before surgery and told her doctor she didn't want it done. But surgery was performed and she died.

In the Court of Appeal, before one judge, it was stated that the government's interest in preserving the health of the fetus was more important than the mother's 'right against bodily harm'.



n Middlesborough (yes, England), a 24 year old woman gave birth to a 2 month premature daughter having been on a life support system. She had been in a coma for five weeks after a brain haemorrhage. Doctors had estimated that there was a good chance of survival for the fetus and so kept her 'alive'.

The authorities have even intervened where they believed women to be negligent &/or mentally incompetent.

In Berkshire, a 30 year old woman who took methadone while pregnant had her child taken away at birth. The baby was born with drug withdrawal symptoms and was placed in intensive care. Foster parents then looked after her.

In Michigan, it was agreed that a child could have a cause of action against his mother for taking tetracycline (an antibiotic) during her pregnancy, which discoloured his teeth (a known side effect).

In Washington D.C. a judge sentenced an unmarried woman to 180 days in jail after theft charges. A harsh sentence for a first time offender, but deemed necessary by Judge Wolf (!) as she was pregnant and tested positive for cocaine use. "She's apparently an addictive personality and I'll be darned if I'm going to have a baby born that way". He continued "I can't trust you, Ms Vaughan, and that's a hell of a thing to say". However, Wolf was thwarted in his efforts to incarcerate her until the baby's birth by the authorities releasing her along with many others when DC's prisons became too overcrowded. Washington Post, 23.7.88 and OOB office.

In pregnancy there are now considered to be two potential patients - the woman and the fetus. Medical technology is advancing at such a rate that the fetus can now be operated on in the womb. Whether this is done with the woman's consent or not becomes a crucial issue, as well as the woman knowing the risks involved to herself. The more medicine can do for the fetus, the more pressure there will be on women to submit to surgery. The issue of quality control (ie. which fetuses 'deserve' surgery and which don't) will clearly become a crucial one, as more and more operations are possible.

The picture is depressing. In the not too distant future, we will see pregnant women subjected to various drug tests by law - so not only will the State be able to keep an eye on the health of its population (for its benefit) but it will have increasing control over women's lives, let alone the implications this will all have on abortion rights.

'It is clear at this point that pregnancy has become a disease with two potential patients - the pregnant woman and her fetus - and of those, the fetus is medically and technically by far the more interesting one..... Yet, we must recognise that once a physician can treat a fetus in the womb, the fetus then acquires the status of a semi-independent entity. And this confronts us with ethical and legal problems that we don't know how to solve, but that are not unlike some of the problems that surround the other end of life. If women are to retain a measure of control over what goes on inside our bodies, we will have to assert our rights to choose not only whether to be pregnant and bear a child, but how to do it - whether we want medical help, at what times and how much'.

Ruth Hubbard, 'The Fetus as Patient', Ms Magazine, Oct.82.

It is not only pregnant women's lives which are becoming increasingly controlled by men & the state.

After putting together the above article, the judges struck again. First Sir Harold Cassel concluded that of course a step-father sexually assaulted his 12 year old step-daughter. Well his wife was pregnant you know, & so obviously her sexual appetite was low. So what was this healthy young man to do - He sexually abused a girl, & her Mum was blamed for his actions.

Then there was the judge who decided that yes, the 35 year old mentally handicapped woman would be better off if she were sterilised. After all, she was now enjoying a sexual relationship with a fellow resident, & it would be 'disastrous' if she were to become pregnant.

Remember the hitch hiker in 1982, who was raped & then herself found guilty of 'contributory negligence'.

Also in 1982, a judge reminded his jury at a rape case, to remember the expression 'Stop it, I like it'.

In 1983, one judge said of the sexual assault of a 7 year old, that although it was a serious offence, it was the sort of accident that could happen to almost anyone.

Another judge gave a rapist the minimum sentence of 12 months because he viewed the victim as 'somewhat over emotional'.

And then there was the judge who told an attempted rapist that he hoped his employers would regard his fortnight in prison as a holiday.

Is it any wonder that women have only suspicion for the judicial system.

Women & Health

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a crippling disease, which effects one in four women, & yet so few women are given information about it.

Osteoporosis literally means porous or brittle bones-bones that have lost much of the calcium they need to remain strong & firm. It is a disease which develops silently over many years, gradually & without discomfort, & may creep up on you suddenly, or with a painful fracture after only a slight fall or awkward movement, or clothes may appear not to fit properly anymore because the spine is starting to curve.

To make strong bones, a diet rich in calcium & consistent physical activity is needed. At about the age of 35, we start to lose more bone mass than we replace, & for women, at menopause, the drop in oestrogen levels causes the body to lose calcium more rapidly, thus making the bones brittle.

The now weakened bones in the spine may become compressed, causing loss of height. Then they fracture & collapse, causing the curve of the spine. OR the bones may break easily, the most at risk being the back, forearm, wrist, upper thigh & hip.

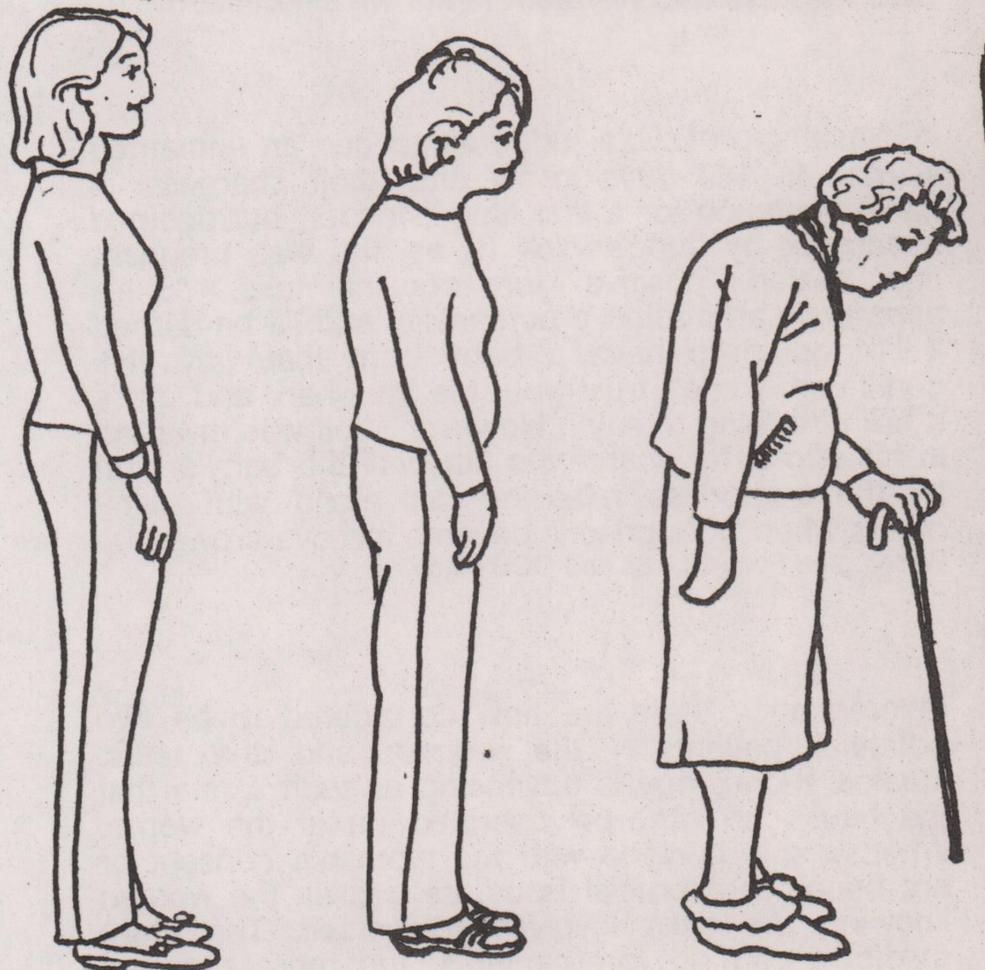
Other causes of osteoporosis may include a lack of vitamin D in the diet, which is essential for the body to absorb calcium.

Larger, plump women are less at risk from this disease, & excessive dieting is particularly damaging to bone structure. Fair skinned women seem to be affected more often, as are women with a history of osteoporosis in the family, or who have had their ovaries removed early. Other illnesses, such as rheumatoid arthritis, hyperparathyroidism & asthma, & some prescribed medicines (eg. corticosteroids) may also contribute to osteoporosis as they inhibit growth of the cells which produce bone tissue.

Hip fractures cause more women to die than cancer of the breast, uterus & cervix combined. And yet very few women have heard of osteoporosis, very little research has been conducted into its causes or treatment. & once affected, the only help available is private, consequently, in Britain alone, 9 million women each year, are dependent on donations

for bone scans, etc. Thus only 1% of osteoporosis patients are offered such a scan! (You may remember a Doctor in Sheffield putting up £12,000 to keep his ward going-the only 'bone centre' in Britain-because Government funds were being withdrawn.)

The only area where the professionals are becoming interested, is in hormone replacement therapy (HRT). This involves women taking synthetic oestrogen (ie. 'the pill') for about 6 years around menopause. During menopause, the woman's sudden loss of oestrogen means the body doesn't retain calcium as well as it used to. The Dr's response then, is to give synthetic oestrogen-ignoring the risks of thrombosis, cancer, etc.



Osteoporosis CAN be prevented, ^{but} see -ing as its men in control of the purse strings-men who see women's health as unimportant or irrelevant, then we can't expect them to provide the information on osteoporosis, the bone scanners, or menopausal clinics. SO, what can WE do to prevent it-eating a calcium rich diet THROUGHOUT our lives is essential, just increasing calcium at menopause won't work. The medics always turn to dairy foods for calcium, obviously no good for vegans so here's a list of calcium rich food that may be useful:

portions of some plant foods containing 125mg of calcium.

wholemeal bread	16oz
white bread	5oz
sesame seeds	1/3oz
soya flour	2oz
haricot beans	2½oz
almonds	1³/4oz
Brazil nuts	2½oz
parsley	1³/4oz
spinach	3/4oz
broccoli tops	3oz
turnip tops	4½oz
molasses	3/4oz
baking powder	1tspn.
hard water	2pints



Plamil concentrated soya milk is brilliant it has got calcium added to the same level as cows milk, 500mg, whereas all other soya milk is pretty crap with onlt 90mg per pint.

recommended daily intakes & food sources of calcium.

children 1-9yrs.	600mg.
boys & girls 9-15 yrs.	700mg.
boys & girls 15-18yrs.	700mg.
men & women	500mg.
women, 3-9months of pregnancy	1200mg
breast feeding women	1200mg

Vutamin D is essential for the absorbtion of calcium. For vegans, this vit.D can be found in margarine (NB. vitamin D3 is not vegan, but vit.D2 is), some soya milks. But the best source is made in our own bodies when the skin is exposed to sunlight.

Alcohol in excess increases calcium los as it interferes with calcium metabolism. Smoking & dieting also decrease calcium in the body, as they both mess around with our hormones.

The bones also need steady regular exercise-nothing drastic, you don't need to go into training, but, go for longer walks do abit of bopping at home, etc. A little steady exercise every day is better than sudden outbursts.

So basically, bones need to be built up with calcium & exercise, & any loss prevented. And it disgusts me that so many women are affected by this disease, which renders 1 in 2 of the sufferers dependent on others to help with every-day things ie. dressing, cooking, shopping, etc & 1 in 6 die.

DEGRADING THE NURSES

Earlier this year, healthworkers were striking up & down the country. To put a stop to this action being taken, the Government promised the nurses at least a 15% pay rise.

The pay rise is now being introduced, but as was feared earlier, the rise doesnot cross the board; there are those who will get a 17% rise, & those who will get 4%.

To decide who should get what, Kenneth Clarke introduced the grading system, whereby each nurse is assessed individually, & the hospital management then decides which grade of work she does, & therefore what her grade of pay should be.

However, for many nurses, this has meant that they have been given work grades inappropriate to the actual work they do- ie. the new job descriptions are totally inappropriate.

So for example, the lowest grade is grade A, & is given to unqualified auxillaries. Their lowest basic salery should be £5000 & top £6,300. However, the job description states that nurses on this grade shouldnot work unsupervised. If ypu've ever been in hospital, then you'll know that it's these women who do all the bedbaths, feeding of patients etc-UNsupervised.

Right upto the highest grade, (H) job descriptions donot correlate with the work & responsibilities that the nurse are doing. They're doing higher grade work for the lower grade money.

The result has been the 'working to grade' action by the nurses- they're doing their work according to the grade management dished out, consequently, reducing their workload. Those disatisfied with the grades they were given, are also being encouraged to appeal, but this is a farcical experience, being passed from pillar to post, a tactic to minimise the numbers of nurses questioning the grades given to them.

So, Looks like the Government's
Isn't off the hook yet!



AFTER ALTON.

Already Tory back benchers are planning to bring up abortion again on the political agenda. Since the abortion act was introduced in 1967, it has been attacked at least 12 times. So we can't afford to pat ourselves on the back & put our feet up.

Now's the time to look at local resources & do something about abortion facilities in our own areas. In Leeds, where only 14% of abortions are carried out on the NHS, this means we've got a lot of work on our hands.

A York campaign has approached abortion from the angle of creating a public presence, & suggest the following tactics:

-A letter writing campaign in the local newspapers. Write with your own complaint whenever the opportunity arises. Respond to articles in the newspaper about abortion or gynecological services with your facts & opinions.

-Work a list of sympathetic GPs & spread the word (any known Drs in Leeds, please send their names & addresses to Resister)

-Look out for retiring consultants & try to influence the decision over the new appointment so as not to be landed with an anti-abortionist.

-Respond to health authority meetings & other official things going on where your opinions as a consumer group can be aired.

-write up a leaflet about NHS & private abortion facilities in your area; women's needs; & ideas on how to improve the services.

-Write to the Community health council, demanding abortion facilities in your area.

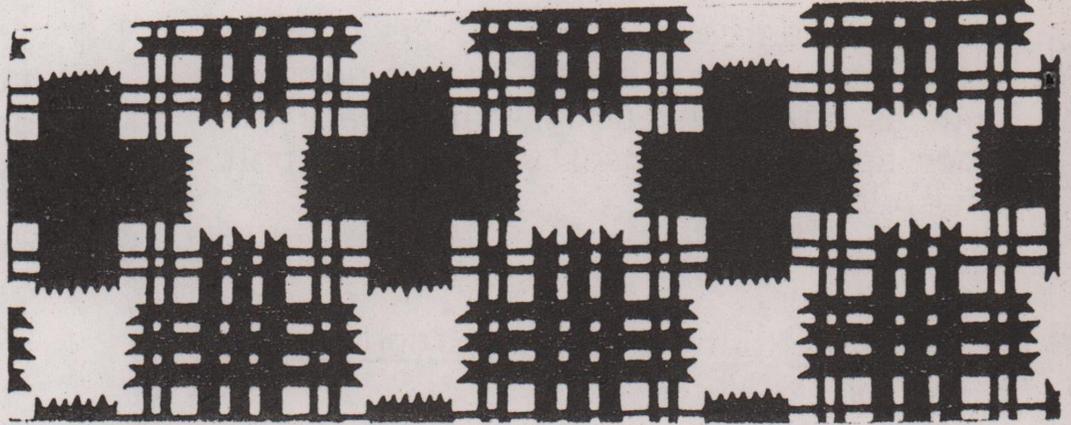
Personally, I think putting energy into changing the situation/facilities & public opinion is more important than putting energy into setting up abortion funds. Each abortion costs at least £100, & in Leeds, there are about 1571 abortions per year (1986 figures) - many of these women will need financial help, & it is impossible for a fund, i.e. Leeds Abortion Fund (LAF) to fulfill this need.

Between April & July '88, LAF were able to help just 3 women. Meanwhile, during this time span there will have been about

390 private abortions. So although the 3 women were helped, the situation still exists which forces all women into the absurd position of having to prove that they are worthy of medical treatment, or forces them to have unwanted children, or forces them to resort to shitty jobs. Abortion funds are just a drop in the ocean, & help only a few when perhaps we should be putting energy into fighting for all women.

Neither am I into private medicine, whether it be for a hip operation or an abortion, & I don't see the point of actively supporting this system of privatization when we could be smashing it.

Molly Toff.



Last month we were subjected to yet another begging session on TV, as capitalists tried

to show us how caring they are by awarding cheques to 'Children in need' - who was given the most, British Telecom or Yorkshire TV? Who gives a fuck.

These outbursts may bring in a fair amount of money for a deserving group of people BUT it's not all they do. It means that the responsibility for providing special needs is taken from society & is forced onto the individual. The government is relieved off the burden, & the job is sold to people sat at home watching TV. It becomes a good excuse for the Government not to cough up.

But what of those children in need. They become objects of pity, they are no longer the subjects, but are items being used to hit the sentiments of millions to bring in the dough. But it's not any disabled child who is used, oh no, they have to look sweet enough for the people at home to say 'aah, poor thing', & put their hands in their pockets. These children are not allowed to be in control of their own situation, they aren't allowed to look as though they're doing something about their needs - no they have to look as though they need you to survive.

The whole thing is absurd, the politics of the situation aren't even mentioned - the fact that children have to beg for money is not challenged

Children's needs shouldn't become yet another guilt tripping experience for those who don't have such needs.

The Crack: A Belfast Year. Sally Belfrage.

Made up from interviews with Belfast people (almost entirely women) this book is compelling reading. Like "Only the Rivers Run Free" it's subjects are both protestant and catholic but unlike the previous authors Belfrage seems to have more than a penchant for promoting the Workers Party. Ignore that aspect and your faced with the complicated jigsaw of Belfast life. All those interviewed had stories to tell. Bravery and contradiction sit side by side and the books all the more readable for it.

Although Belfrage is a more than capable writer I found her political analysis annoying. The people speak well enough for themselves without Belfrages' attempt at a conclusion.

PROTEST !!
TURF LODGE WOMEN
WANT BRITISH TROOPS
OUT

You killed Leo Norney
You tried to kill Sandy Lynch
You tried ~~to~~ kill Brian Stewart
You are destroying our children

WE WANT LIFE PROTECTED
—NOT DESTROYED
WE WANT TRUTH — NOT LIES

*Your actions destroy life.
Your words are lies.
Bring your Criminals to justice.
LEAVE THE DISTRICT

● Women in Divis Flats, Belfast, challenging RUC members during one of many frequent raids on the flats



War and an Irish Town. Eamonn McCann

McCanns' account of growing up in a catholic ghetto in Derry mixes the personal and the theoretical with a wry irony that's painfully funny.

The politics of Northern Ireland are never simple and this books strength is that it doesn't attempt to pretend that they are. From the civil rights movement and the vicious attacks upon the community by the RUC; to the deployment of troops and community resistance; to the reactions and the strengths and weaknesses of the community itself.

Oppression forced a political education upon the people of Northern Ireland, before the attacks by the RUC and troops IRA volunteers were few and far between. McCann does not shy away from admitting that the most recent phase of the troubles began with a spate of sectarian violence (the orange orders fear of losing power were fuelled by the rise of the civil rights movement) but it demolishes the myth that the British states role is one of protecting the protestants and catholics from each other. It's quite clear that the republicans' war is against the British state and not the protestants - many republicans come from protestant backgrounds and are scathing about religious strangle-holds. The book chronicles the events leading up to armed resistance and is not afraid to point out the mistakes made by the resisters. The account of how the people held the Bogside and for the first time got a sense of their own power is both moving and inspiring - it's also realistic.

The last chapter is an appraisal of the provo's and their critics. As an option I'd always take anarchism as opposed to socialism, but McCanns' arguments in favour of provo resistance are both illuminating and sound. This is the book you give to the lefty who dismisses the Irish peoples struggle as mindless terrorism.

Out Of The Maze. Derek Dunne

This is the true story of the escape of 38 IRA men from the high security Maze prison. It reads like a thriller but none of it is fiction. The way that the men organised themselves to take control of the jail is amazing...and one in the eye for those that say there are no victories against the all powerfull state.

It follows the fortunes of the men on the run, many of them believed that they'd be able to return to the south and lead a relatively normal existance. Life on the run appears in some ways to be almost as hard as prison but infinitely preferable.

This book is a classic history of resistance.



Tell Them Everything. Margaretta D'Arcy

This is the story of a british woman writer who served a three month sentence in Armagh jail with the women on the no wash protest. Conditions inside the prison were inhuman and squalid, but the bravery and determination of the women - who's lives were disappearing behind prison sentences - forces a gut reaction. Whilst I couldn't help but feel that D'Arcy was "playing at it" the book is still essential reading. And at least D'Arcy poses a crucial question for the womens movement. Can it remain silent in the face of the sufferings and resistance of the republican women prisoners in Ireland?

No Time For Love. Hugo Meenan

Meenan is a former member of the British army, the civil rights movement, the Official IRA, the Irish Republican Socialist party. Meenan spent time in the H blocks and this book has been published since release...it undoubtably draws on personal experience.

It's a thriller about an IRA man on active service and on the run. For the most it's tense and well written, but the plot has some obvious weaknesses ie: Dympna the beautiful police spy who masquarades as a revolutionary and has the hero within her grasp in a single night. In the security conscious North it just couldn't happen, but suspend your disbelief and read on. By the final chapter the hero had been shot, had escaped, succesfully blown up a barracks...and although slightly bashed to bits was living to fight another day. I'll be honest; I enjoyed this book but felt a bit aggrieved at the lack of believable women characters.

Protest and Resistance Worldwide

'With this work I learned to grow as a person, to have an opinion, to criticize, to understand. Women are at home, just keeping things going. They don't know how to do anything else ...'

Chilean 'arpillera'-maker (22)

Around the world there are many examples of women using textiles to negotiate situations of political constraint. Banners, patchwork, and appliqué pictures are made in protest and solidarity, as well as financial necessity.

The Pentagon Peace Ribbon, for example, brought women from across the United States together in protest against the threat of nuclear war. Their embroidered panels incorporating peace imagery were joined to form a ribbon long enough to encircle the Pentagon in August 1985, on the fortieth anniversary of the American atomic bombings of Japan. October 1987 saw the unveiling of the Names Project, also in Washington. This huge quilt was made up of over 2,000 panels, each dedicated to an individual who had died of AIDS. It served as a moving protest banner for the largest gay rights demonstration ever, as over half a million people walked among the handsewn memorial. (23)

In Australia, a group of women in the small town of Daylesford, near Melbourne, have been making 'Word Banners' since meeting at an embroidery class in 1981. Each letter is made by a different woman and joined together on a lightweight frame. Their banners have been used on Peace rallies and by environmental groups. (24)

For the working-class women living in the shanty towns around Santiago, 'arpillera' or patchworks provide a means of expression, opposition and economic survival. They are made from scraps of material sewn onto squares of sacking, and adapt the traditional embroidery of Chile to show 'what people are living through' under the Chilean military junta: men search in dustbins for food; mothers and daughters of 'the disappeared' chain themselves to the railings of the National Congress in protest; a woman sits by the telephone waiting for news of her son. Ironically, the worldwide distribution of this unsigned work is rarely intercepted, since the authorities regard it as 'artesanía', craftwork made by poor and ignorant



Chilean patchworks or 'arpilleras' provide the working class women living in the shanty towns around Santiago with a means of expression and of opposition to the military junta; they are also a way of earning a much needed income.

women. (25)

The work of Chilean refugee groups in London was seen by members of the Zamani Soweto Sisters Council during a visit to Britain in 1981, inspiring them to set up similar projects in Soweto. The Council is an umbrella organisation which encourages and supports the work of local self-help groups in the Black township. These groups offer self- and unemployed women the opportunity to learn new skills, teaching classes in dressmaking, knitting and sewing. Patchwork and appliqué are not new to Africa but these projects have revived its use, with both traditional designs and new imagery reflecting aspects of past and present Azanian life - including the destruction of Black homesteads by armed police. (26) Evidence of the political significance of textiles was demonstrated during a police raid on the home of Winnie Mandela. Amongst the personal possessions confiscated was a 'subversive' bedspread crocheted in the colours of the African National Congress.



it feels like
 my first big date
 yet here I am
 a twentysix year old
 veteran of the sex war
 arranging
 to meet a woman
 for dinner

Margot Nash



WHAT'S ON

Sat 10th Dec: Reclaim the night march in Huddersfield. Meet 6.30, followed at 8.30 by social (mixed) at Poly. Students Union.

Sat 10th Dec: "Women take note" Bradford Community Arts centre, Chapel St., Bradford. A day of voice/singing/percussion workshop, followed by a gig in the evening. Organised by Bradford Women Singers. Info, tel: Brad. 497348

The Womens Music Project
 Invites all women to a music evening at the 202 centre, Belle Vue Rd. Sat 17th Dec. 8pm-10pm. Live Music/Food

Thur 22nd Dec: Women's Disco Rockshots

Sat 28th Jan: Demo for British withdrawal from Ireland. Anniversary of Bloody Sunday.

Feb 11th: 1st National Fat Women's Conference, London 10am-6pm, Party in evening.
 Info: S.A.E. To
 London Fat Women's group
 London Women's Centre
 Wasley House
 4 Wild Court
 London WC2

