

# PRAIRIE WOMEN



T. V. Première  
Thursday, January 19  
**VISION-TV**  
"The Cutting Edge"

9:30 pm and repeated 12:30 am Newfoundland  
9:00 pm and repeated midnight Atlantic  
8:00 pm and repeated 11:00 pm Eastern  
7:00 pm and repeated 10:00 pm Central  
6:00 pm and repeated 9:00 pm Mountain  
5:00 pm and repeated 8:00 pm Pacific

**PRAIRIE WOMEN** brings to life the Canadian Prairies of the 1920s and '30s. A film about women, it shows how they reached out from lonely farms and a harsh environment to come together and work cooperatively to improve the conditions of their lives.

They were not afraid to tackle controversial subjects like health care, birth control, women's property rights, rural education. . . even world peace. They found strength in one another through cooperative groups like the Women Grain Growers and the United Farm Women. Their commitment to meet and organize overcame the challenges of a lack of money and child care facilities, as well as bad weather and roads.

Their generation saw women declared 'persons' by the Privy Council; their legacy includes universal medicare, legal and accessible birth control, and improved women's property rights.

*Prairie Women* recreates the history of these women through their diaries, letters, speeches and articles, while linking their era to ours through interviews with seven of them, now aged sixty-five to ninety-three.

*Written and Directed by*  
Barbara Evans



National  
Film Board  
of Canada      Office  
national du film  
du Canada

**DEC** Film & Video

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January, 1989

Dear Friends,

DEC Films is pleased to announce the release of three new women's films and videos. We think that you will find these useful and appropriate resources in stimulating discussions in women's studies courses and within women's organizations.

The Struggle for Choice is a five part Canadian video series that chronicles the movement and strategies of abortion rights groups since 1969.

(5 - 30 min. parts, video) Rental \$30/\$50 per part; Purchase one-part \$325, series \$1195.

Just Because of Who We Are is a powerful video documentary about the issue of violence against lesbians.

(28 min., video) Rental \$30/\$50; Purchase \$395.

The Passion of Remembrance focuses on the black experience in Britain and raises a range of issues around gender, sexuality, race and intergenerational conflict between Black British youth and their immigrant parents.

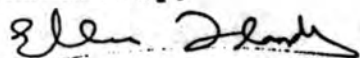
(80 min., 16mm/video) Rental \$75/\$110 video, \$150/\$175 16mm. Purchase enquire.

Please get in touch with us to arrange viewings of the above new releases. You may want to encourage your institution or public library to purchase copies; this will enable you to show the films to many gatherings over the years.

These are only three resources of an extensive collection of women's films and videos distributed by DEC. Please let us know if you wish to receive a catalogue of our other resources.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Ellen Flanders  
DEC Films

# The Struggle for Choice

a 5-part history of the abortion rights struggle in Canada



**National Coalition for Free Abortion on Demand Demonstration Montreal 1979**

Canada, 1987

Producer: Nancy Nicol

5-30 min. parts, colour, video formats

Rental: \$30/\$50; Sale: one part-\$325, series \$1200

*The Struggle for Choice* is a five part video series that chronicles the movement and strategies of abortion rights groups since 1969.

## Part 1—Abortion Caravan

In 1969 the federal law on abortion was liberalized to allow hospital abortions if approved by a therapeutic abortion committee. Women organized an abortion caravan across the country to respond to the limitations of the new law, which still kept abortion within the criminal code. When they arrived in Ottawa, they shut down parliament for the first time with their chants of "Free Abortion On Demand".

## Part 2—Access

The difficulty in getting access to medically safe abortions is the theme of this tape. Through women's stories, regional disparities and class differences become evident. The staff at an immigrant women's centre discuss particular difficulties they have in helping women get abortions.

## Part 3—Quebec 1971-1980

The history of abortion rights in Quebec stands apart from the rest of the country. The Parti Quebecois adopted a position of 'Free Abortion on Demand' and stopped prosecuting doctors giving abortions. The abortion rights movement went on to establish abortion clinics without abortion committees under the Quebec Health Insurance.

## Part 4—Restraint/Repression

This tape looks at broader economic questions, the recession and its impact on women's struggle for reproductive freedom. Related issues, such as daycare, health services and low wages are examined. British Columbia and Quebec are the regions seen in this tape.

## Part 5—The Legal Battle

In 1983, Dr. Morgentaler opened two illegal clinics in Toronto and Winnipeg. In this section the way that the Pro-choice movement uses the courts to fight for abortion rights is examined. Organizations such as Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics and Canadian Abortion Rights Action League are interviewed.

There are first person accounts of what it was like to need an abortion when the procedure wasn't legal. A glimpse of the emergence of militant anti-choice groups. A description of rights so hard won, so quickly lost.

The series documents a history so recent it is within many people's living memory. This makes it both endearing and eerie. The women marching on Parliament Hill aren't early turn-of-the-century suffragettes. They're Mary and Joan and you and me.

Lois Sweet,  
Toronto Star



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## Passion of Remembrance



Britain, 1986  
 Producers: Sankofa Film and Video Collective  
 (Marian Blackwood and Isaac Julien)  
 80 min., colour, 16mm/video  
 Rental: Video — \$75/\$110, 16mm — \$150/\$175  
 Sale: Enquire

*The Passion of Remembrance* represents a new wave of British filmmaking and part of the struggle of developing a cinematic language for the Black experience.

The film is constructed in three separate layers: the first segment is a narrative which revolves around the Baptistes, a Black working-class family in contemporary England. Maggie, the daughter, goes to gay clubs and has gay friends. This brings her into conflict with some members of her Black study group as well as her father. Maggie works in video

and at points in the narrative she plays her tapes — solarized images of riots, demonstrations and celebrations.

This documentary footage becomes the second layer of the film, underlining how the personal conflicts in the narrative are informed by larger social struggles.

In the third layer, a Black female speaker in a metaphorical, desert landscape re-evaluates the Black movements of the '60s and '70s from a feminist point of view. Through juxtaposition and the interaction between these three layers, the film raises a range of issues concerning gender, sexuality, race and intergenerational conflict between Black British youth and their immigrant parents.

## Hairpiece: A Film for Nappy-Headed People

U.S.A., 1982  
 Producer: Ayoka Chenzira  
 10 min., colour, 16mm and video  
 Rental: 16mm—\$30/\$50, Video—\$20/\$45  
 Sale: 16mm—\$275, Video—\$150

An animated satire on the question of self image for Black women. With paintings by Varnette Honeywood, the film uses collage and animation, line drawings, still photographs and a humorous text. *Hairpiece* explores the situation for Black women living in a society where beautiful hair is viewed as hair that blows in the wind and lets you be free.



Liberated animation with an edge  
 ... jubilant ... exuberant ... eccentric.

Janet Maslin,  
 New York Times

## The Way to My Father's Village



Canada, 1988  
 Producer: Richard Fung  
 38 min., colour, video  
 Rental: \$35/\$55, Sale: \$350

*The Way to My Father's Village* traces family history from Canada to Trinidad to China. It is thoughtful in tone and innovative in style. The producer's memories of his father, discussions with older family members, and search through official documents reveal his history. He also steps back to examine how people from the West have looked at China through the ages. By the end, we gain insight into problems of cultural identity.

Producer's Statement:

I was born and grew up in Trinidad, on the other side of the world from China. In the fall of 1986, I finally went to my father's village in southern Guangdong. This experimental documentary is neither a biography of my father nor a travelogue about China. Instead, it comes from the search of the children of immigrants for our roots. Whether we will it or not, we are linked or are seen to be linked to a country of which we may have little or no experience. The tape is about history and memory, the experience of colonialism, tourism. It is also about assumptions of much documentary, especially the notions of objectivity and truth.

## JUST BECAUSE OF WHO WE ARE

**A new video documentary about the violence that today still threatens lesbians, women who love other women.**

*by Toni Dickerson, Abigail Norman, Lydia Dean Pilcher, Robin Omata, Afua Kafi Akua, and Daresha Kyi, edited by Diana Agosta*



*Just Because of Who We Are* focuses on the neglected issue of violence against lesbians. With warmth and unquenchable spirit, the women tell their own stories — about everything from queer-bashing to arbitrary arrests, from family rejection to involuntary institutionalization. Produced by a multi-racial collective, *Just Because...* clearly shows the compounded discrimination faced by lesbians of colour. The tape raises questions about anti-lesbian violence: where does it come from, what are the consequences, what are the implications, what can be done about it?

As Susie Day of Gay Community News points out, "The most convincing aspect of this work is that it links information about violence with which we are by now somewhat familiar — harassment, arrests, alcoholism — with an uncomfortably close look at who is causing it. Footage of the religious right at St. Patrick's Cathedral protesting the Gay Pride March, upstanding citizens testifying at City Hall against New York's proposed gay rights bill, and stories from victims of 'underground' anti-gay groups in Massachusetts may be troubling, but at this point in our history, we cannot be afraid to look."

28 min., colour, video formats  
Rental: \$30/\$55; Sale: \$395



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*"The wonder of it all is that we keep loving."  
—Joan Nestle, in the tape*