

## Native women tell of threats over suit

By DON RETSON  
Journal Staff Writer

Sixteen Indian women have been threatened and harassed since filing a class action suit against the Samson Band, a panel on racial discrimination was told Tuesday.

Jenny Margetts, president of Indian Rights for Indian Women, said the threats have forced the 16 women to meet off the Samson reserve.

The suit, filed recently in Federal Court, says the band discriminated in cutting the women off from monthly payments to band members.

The Samson Band at Hobbema, 80 km south of Edmonton, is one of the richest in Canada. Members receive \$500 to \$1,500 a month in royalties and other income, Margetts said.

The 16 women regained Indian status through 1985 amendments to the Indian Act known as

Bill C-31, but the band argues the women aren't eligible for the payments.

Margetts said the women received payments from the federal government until last April, when responsibility was transferred to the band.

Band chief Jim Omeasoo was unavailable for comment Tuesday.

"Sometimes Indians are their own worst enemies," Margetts said at a local panel discussion to mark International Day to Eliminate Racial Discrimination. The discussion was sponsored by the Edmonton Women's Network of the federal public service.

Margetts slammed federal civil servants for not consulting natives on issues affecting them.

The panel also heard talks by Edmonton Southeast MP David Kilgour, Gordon Kadota,

past president of the National Association of Japanese Canadians, and Michelle Falardeau-Ramsay, deputy chief commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

Falardeau-Ramsay said recent studies show 15 per cent of Canadians hold views that are "blatantly racist," and another 25 to 35 per cent show "moderately racist tendencies."

Despite a federal policy of employment equity, "very few" federal departments have a fair level of representation of minorities, she said.

Kilgour cited figures showing that women, visible minorities, natives and disabled people aren't adequately represented in the federal public service.

Kadota expressed concern about irresponsible news reports that, he said, suggest Asians are taking over places such as Banff and Vancouver.

# Alberta

## Reinstated Indians threatened

By DON THOMAS  
Journal Staff Writer

Thousands of Albertans have been reinstated as treaty Indians but remain frozen out of reserve life, says an Indian women's rights activist.

Jenny Margetts, a founder of Indian Rights for Indian Women, agreed with a federal report released Thursday that says reinstated Indians continue to suffer discrimination.

"We're not welcome back to our reserves. Most women in Alberta have not attempted to return because of the threats, verbally and on TV, by individuals from the different reserves," she said.

A 1985 Indian Act amendment, Bill C-31, was aimed at restoring Indian status to women who had lost status by marrying non-Indians. Men who marry non-Indians have always retained their status.

The amendment also allowed others to regain status lost for various reasons. The population of status Indians in Alberta has jumped 25 per cent since 1985, mainly due to Bill C-31.

Women who regain status are automatically registered as members of their home bands. Others who regain status must apply to the bands, which are allowed to set their own rules.

The report released Thursday by the Canadian Human Rights Commission says women may be reinstated, "but that does not ensure . . . that effective loss of band status will not recur."

It says Ottawa didn't give the bands enough money to cope with the unexpectedly large numbers seeking reinstatement.

"I have not yet heard of one Indian woman who has moved back to the reserve," says Nellie Carlson, another founder of the Indian rights group.

"The reason? Money. Greed, in big capital letters. Non-sharing."

Percy Potts, a vice-president of the Indian Association of Alberta, said the federal government failed to forecast how many people would regain status and what effect that would have.

"If you have only a 45-gallon drum and you try and put 50 gallons in it, something's going to happen," he said.

"I don't think anyone really disagreed with the whole concept of reinstating the people that were entitled to be reinstated. . . . I'm saddened to hear the human rights commission viewed it that way.

"Our concern was that there was going to be additional resources required and additional land base. It's reality and the federal government refuses to deal with reality."

Ottawa provided extra funding to cover costs of the reinstated people. But it runs out in 1990 and cabinet has not said whether it will be extended.

The report also says there has been foot-dragging on employment equity programs aimed at getting more natives into the federal civil service.

The key requirement is to give Indians and Metis more money for education, said Muriel



Activist Jenny Margetts

. . . 'we're not welcome back to our reserves'

Stanley-Venne, a Metis recently hired by the National Film Board's Alberta office in Edmonton.

She's only the second native the NFB has hired in Canada, said regional director Graydon McCrea. Native ancestry was a factor in hiring her, he said.

**BARBARA EVANS**  
**Apt. 2D - 8712 97th Avenue,**  
**Edmonton, Alberta T6C 2C1**  
**Tel: (403) 468 5049**

Leslie Stewart,  
Co-ordinating Cttee on Women's Studies,  
11019 - 90 Avenue,  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6C 2E1

March 9, 1988

Dear Leslie,

Following is a brief description of the presentation I made to the Women's Research Centre meeting on December 13th, 1987:

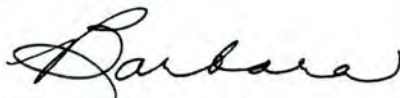
I discussed various aspects of research going into a film, from researching funding sources - which is often very difficult because of the vast sums involved - to researching ideas, archival material, interview subjects, crew members, technical and aesthetic considerations, etc. At the proposal stage it is also necessary research the audience the film is being made for.

The obstacles to making a feminist film are frequently daunting. The paternalistic structure of the film "industry" makes it difficult for women to speak with an authentic voice. The way women are represented on screen has, up until now, been almost exclusively defined by men. The exorbitant amounts of money involved in making a film often means that producing organizations (with the exception of the National Film Board's Studio D) or individuals are unwilling to take risks on women or on subject matter of particular interest to women, demand a great deal of control, and tend to continually reproduce the same (male-defined) form and content, with only the slightest of modifications, over and over again.

Examples from my film *Prairie Women*, which most of the group had seen, were given.

The discussion which followed was stimulating and very useful for me - I hope it was for others. I have also found the presentations by other women very valuable and learned a great deal from them. The opportunity for women from varying areas of work to get together and discuss their shared problems and offer support and suggestions for alternatives is really wonderful. Thank you all at the Women's Resource Centre for providing the opportunity - I'm very much looking forward to future meetings.

In sisterhood,



Barbara Evans



---

8712 97th Avenue, Suite D, Edmonton, Alberta T6C 2C1 Tel: (403) 468 5049

**BARBARA EVANS**

**Producer, Director, Writer, Editor**

**Curriculum Vitae**

A graduate of the University of British Columbia and the British National Film School, Ms. Evans has worked as a director, producer, writer, researcher and editor. She has worked in Britain for educational television, the BBC, ITV and the British Film Institute. She was a founding member of the London Women's Film Group and the British Newsreel Collective. In Canada she has worked as an editor for the National Film Board on such films as Wonderland, a documentary about land use in British Columbia, and Bitter Medicine, a film on the history of medicare, originally broadcast on CBC's Quarterly Report. She has also edited a number of independent documentaries as well as the feature films Latitude 55 and Walls and was editor of the Atlantis Films - National Film Board co-production, To Set Our House in Order. Barbara Evans has recently directed the National Film Board film, Prairie Women, a history of organized farm women on the Canadian Prairies and is preparing a book based on her research for the film. Prairie Women won the 1987 Golden Sheaf Award at the Yorkton Film Festival for best documentary film over 30 minutes. Ms. Evans is currently producing and directing two independent film productions, Humanity First - A History of the CCF and Jessie's Albums, the story of a farm woman who documented her life through photographs in the early years of this century.

As a writer, Barbara Evans has written for the following publications: The Manchester Guardian, The Times Educational Supplement, Teachers' World, Race Today, Spare Rib, Kinesis and Canadian Dimension.

(FULL CURRICULUM VITAE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST)

Five Beginnings For Research  
With Women's Bodies

1) A SIMPLE QUESTION

How do girls and women learn to move?

Women's Ways of Knowing modified:

- passivity
- lady-like activity
- playfulness
- skilled
- skilled, self-conscious

2) USING ANALOGY

Body Language

- women learn to communicate in a limited body language
- body language about us denigrates us
- we have learned about our bodies as objects; can learn and experience them as subjects
- do in social studies what we have been doing in literature and theory and life

3) THEORY

Work, Sexuality and Embodiment - socialist feminist theory

- sexed bodies have been accepted as theoretically impermeable givens by socialist feminists
- embodiment is the real material basis of capitalist patriarchy

4) EMPIRICAL STUDY: A CONTEXTUALIZED DIALOGUE, INCLUDING QUESTIONS

Women's experiences of embodiment

- difficulties:
  - getting at objective and subjective view
  - positioning myself with respect to the data, and the theory
- early findings:

5) EPISTEMOLOGY

The view from a body

- what is Haraway saying? Is she talking about a symbolic body? or a "real" body? She allows the cultural construction of knowledge to become apparent by citing herself.

A Theoretical Description of Life in Racist, Ableist, Capitalist Patriarchy

<u>processes of existence</u>	WORK*	SEXUALITY*	EMBODIMENT	RACIALITY
<u>structure*</u>	class*	heterosexuality*	ability, beauty	race
<u>qualities*</u>	class*	sex roles*	body habits	ethnicity
<u>consequence*</u>	production*	production reproduction*	representation	production reproductn
<u>object*</u>	product*	product child*	bodyobject	product child
<u>congealed form*</u>	capital*	gender/family*	ovum, sperm, fetus	slavery, colonizatr
<u>method*</u>	dialectical materialism*	consciousness raising*	view from a body (play)	?
<u>issue*</u>	control*	control*	control	control
<u>manifestation of control</u>	classism	sexism	ableism	racism

Definitions

1. Processes of existence: ways in which we live as humans
2. Structure: how a particular process of existence is organized
3. Qualities: characteristics of people that indicate that the structures are in place.
4. Consequence: what conscious activity results from this process of existence.
5. Object: What is created by this conscious activity.
6. Congealed form: how this process of existence is preserved when conscious activity is not taking place or an object has not been made. The way in which the process is preserved.
7. Method: the way the process of existence is analyzed
8. Issue: Why it is important to analyze these processes of existence.

\* From MacKinnon, 1982

*Ch. Bye*

## Bibliography

Haraway, Donna. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective". Feminist Studies, 14, 3, Fall 1988, 575-600.

Kauffman, Linda, Gender and Theory: Dialogues on Feminist Criticism. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989.

Kroker, Arthur and Marilouise Kroker, "Theses on the Disappearing Body in the Hypermodern Condition" Canadian Journal of Social and Political Theory, 11, 1-2, 1987, pp i-xiii

Lugones, Maria, "Playfulness, World Travelling and Loving Perception" Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy 2, 2, Summer 1987, 3-20.

Mackinnon, Catherine, "Marxism, Feminism, Method and the State: An Agenda for Theory", Signs, 7, 3, Spring 1982

O'Brien, Mary, The Politics of Reproduction. London: Roulledge and Kegan Paul, 1981.

O'Neill, John. Five Bodies Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1985.

Suleiman, Susan Robin. The Female Body in Western Culture: Contemporary Perspectives Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985.

Wittig, Monique, The Lesbian Body, David LeVay (trans.). New York: Avon Books, 1973.