

INVESTING IN WOMEN'S EQUALITY

West Coast LEAF is grateful for the support that we receive from our donors and members. Your valued support provides crucial funding for our mission to advance women's equality through our work in the areas of law reform, public legal education and litigation.

Thank you for your commitment to advancing women's equality. Your investment in West Coast LEAF makes our work possible.

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT:

West Coast LEAF would like to thank Vancity for their generous support as Presenting Sponsor of the 2006 Equality Breakfast. Vancity's support as this year's Presenting Sponsor was a significant contributor to the event's success. This year we raised nearly \$30,000.

Vancity

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

■ West Coast LEAF Annual General Meeting, Thursday, June 22nd 2006, 6:00 - 8:00 pm, YWCA Health & Wellness Centre, 535 Hornby Street, Vancouver. RSVP by June 19 to 604-684-8772

■ Watch for information about the summer launch party of *West Coast LEAF: Transforming Women's Future*, a film by Pampa Productions celebrating the 20 year history of West Coast LEAF.

JOIN THE THEMIS MONTHLY GIVING CLUB!

Monthly Giving is the best way to support West Coast LEAF. It provides sustainable revenue, reduces administrative costs, and helps us to plan for the future.

CONTACT US!

We value your support and invite any questions or comments you may have. Please feel free to contact us at 604-684-8772 or toll free in BC at 1-866-737-7716. Thank you!

Thank you!

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LEAFlet is the newsletter of the BC branch of the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund. LEAFlet is published quarterly.

Editorial Direction: Alison Brewin, Chris Conroy, Natasha Shields
Writing: Michelle Hopkins, Lien Yeung, Alison Brewin, Niveria Oliveira

West Coast LEAF is a provincial organization committed to promoting women's equality before Canadian courts, government agencies and human rights commissions; and to providing public legal education on the issue of equality rights for women. West Coast LEAF is supported by:



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LEAFlet

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In May 11, 2006, the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada announced that persons who have been identified as trafficked persons in Canada are now eligible for a Temporary Resident Permit (TRP) for up to 120 days to recover from the impact of crimes committed against them. Individuals who receive TRPs will be eligible for health-care benefits under the Interim Federal Health program.

West Coast LEAF has been involved in the issue of trafficked persons through its membership in a steering committee that includes representatives from the Global Alliance Against Trafficking of Women (GATW-C), the Sex Workers

Steering Committee on Human Rights & Human Trafficking

by Michelle Hopkins,
Program Director

Action Network (SWAN), and the West Coast Domestic Workers Association (WCDWA). The steering committee reports back to the Anti-Trafficking Coalition of Vancouver (ATCV) which represents approximately seventy non-governmental organizations in BC.

While the ATCV recognizes that the TRP is an advancement in the federal government's policy as it relates to trafficked persons, the ATCV insists further steps are necessary to ensure the rights of trafficked persons are protected as guaranteed under Canadian and international law. The ATCV takes the position that trafficked persons also need access to basic social services such as housing, income security, legal aid and settlement services.

The committee continues to meet with representatives from the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General to provide input on the development of service protocols with government and non-government agencies in BC.

A Tale of Everywoman: Jean Scott writes about her life, her loves, and her courage

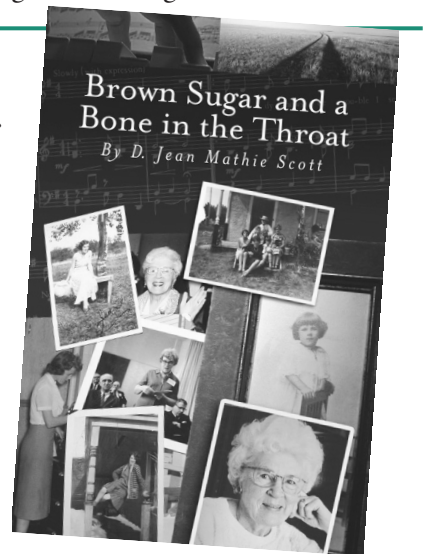
by Alison Brewin, Executive Director

In 'post-modern' feminist theory, there is risk at taking one woman's life and suggesting it represents the entire female experience. We know that no one woman's reality can express the fulsomeness of that thing we know to be true: women experience discrimination in our society because of their gender.

But in coming up with words to describe that gendered reality, there are very few that do not emerge in Jean Scott's life. In fact, her autobiography *Brown Sugar and a Bone in the Throat* is a story of just those words: poverty, domestic service, spousal abuse, single parenthood, sexual expression, childcare,

extended family, sexual harassment, workplace rights, illegal abortion, romance, pay equity, cancer, and community activism. It is a story of one woman's journey through Canadian society in the 20th century. What shows up in every chapter, and every page, is courage, strength, and an overwhelming optimism.

That Jean felt great despair and isolation at moments in her life is certainly true, but her capacity for moving forward, for building friendships and family bonds, and her continued faith in justice and goodness shines through even the moments that must have been horribly painful at the time.



I have left Bill for the fourth time. I have no job, no bed to sleep in and not a dime to buy food. Much as I enjoyed being known as a soprano soloist, that wouldn't earn me a cent; but I was young and strong and reliable. I'd done plenty of housework and I knew how to work. The only work I can get is housework. The pay is poor but with the usual bed and board; if it's hard cleaning you can hope for a few dollars extra...so I start looking.

...Mrs. Hart knew I was always in
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NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Please join us at our Annual General Meeting

THURSDAY, JUNE 22ND, 2006

at the YWCA at 535 Hornby (Note: not the hotel on Beatty Street)
Help us say a very fond farewell to our departing Board members, and welcome in our newest members.

NO MEANS NO

Vancouver:

The program was hosted by Sir Charles Tupper secondary school. A total of 28 senior Human Services students were trained in the Peer Facilitator and "No Means No" workshops curricula. These students presented to elementary school students at Brock and Livingstone elementary schools. Tasha Riley, Ph.D. candidate in Educational Studies trained the senior students and supported many of them while they delivered workshops.

Burnaby Youth

Secure Custody Centre:

Justice for Girls' Annabel Webb delivered the curriculum for marginalized young women to a group at the Centre in early February. The young women enjoyed the program and Annabel's feedback was

Program Coordinator's Report

by Niveria Oliveira

that providing legal information to youth who are dealing with the legal system is empowering. Annabel has recommended that we incorporate the amendments to the Criminal Code and Canada Evidence Act (Bill C-2) into the curriculum for future workshops. These amendments will be incorporated within the next few months in preparation for workshops in the fall.

Nelson:

"No Means No" was hosted by L.V. Rogers secondary school in Nelson.

Sarah Sherk trained the senior students who presented throughout various elementary schools in School District 8. The Peer Facilitators also had the opportunity to introduce the program to a wider audience through their participation on a peer to peer show hosted by Kootenay Coop Radio.

YOUTH IN THE WORKPLACE

The curriculum for these workshops focusing on legal rights and responsibilities with respect to employment is under development. The goal is to have the curriculum ready for focus sessions by the end of June. As with the "No Means No" program, the Vancouver School Board has been supportive of West Coast LEAF's efforts to provide youth with legal education that is delivered through a peer to peer facilitation model.

Patrons: Borden Ladner Gervais, Guild, Yule & Co., Law Society of BC, Lawson Lundell, Miller Thomson LLP, Singleton Urquhart LLP, Stikeman Elliott LLP

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Transforming Our Future workshop

by Lien Yeung, Practicum Student

In May 30-31, West Coast LEAF successfully delivered a session of "Transforming Our Future: Legal Strategies for Equality" workshop to over 20 frontline workers attending the BC Yukon Society of Transition Houses conference.

While most participants were in Vancouver to take part in the conference, some travelled from as far as Mission specifically for the workshop.

According to the overall positive feed-

back from participants, not only did the workshop "demystify the legal system," it created an opportunity for women from across the sector to share their experiences. One participant said the opportunity was "a pleasure and an inspiration."

The two-day program was facilitated by Executive Director, Alison Brewin and for the first time, Program Director, Michelle Hopkins. Drawing on the experience West Coast LEAF has with the legal system,

participants were introduced to the organization's work and how the law can be used as a tool to advance women's equality.

The first day provided participants with information on the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as well as legal strategies that could further their

clients' concerns such as litigation, administrative tribunals, international law, lobbying, and public legal education. The significance of the equality guarantees in Section 15 of the *Charter* were particularly emphasized by the facilitators.

The second day allowed everyone to put their knowledge to the test by partnering in groups to analyze case scenarios and develop legal strategies. The facilitators provided participants with tips on working with lawyers, including solicitor-client privileges, the differences between legal fees and costs, and how to research the law on your own.

At the end of the workshop, the floor was opened to participants to discuss any concerns related to their frontline work experience. Some issues that consistently arose were lack of legal aid available to women involved in family law matters and the complexities involved in navigating legal resources. The suggested list of legal resources has since been compiled and made available to the participants.

Participants were treated to delicious catered lunches, which were met with great enthusiasm. West Coast LEAF looks forward to delivering additional workshops throughout the year.



Left to right: Guadalupe Dufour (Powell River), Kristal Low (WCLEAF Law Intern) and Rebecca Taylor (Victoria).

Equality Breakfast Thanks

The 19th Annual Equality Breakfast, proudly presented by Vancity, was held on March 10, 2006 and was one of our most successful events to date. This year's event raised nearly \$30,000 to support our public legal education programs in communities around the province. In particular, the event generates funds for our successful youth anti-violence workshops, "No Means No", and the development of our new Youth in the Workplace program.

Over 525 guests were in attendance to hear this year's guest speaker Senator

Mobina Jaffer, enjoy a delicious breakfast and bid on exciting silent auction items. We thank Senator Jaffer for her inspiring words as our keynote speaker, and thank this year's sponsors, including our event partner, Fasken Martineau DuMoulin. We are grateful for those who attended and we look forward to 2007, which marks the event's 20th anniversary.

West Coast LEAF would like to extend a very special thanks to the following event sponsors and silent auction contributors for their generous support.

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A Tale of Everywoman

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demand at concerts and in the United Church for my fine soprano voice. But she also knew, too, that I'd walked away from the local baker because of his treatment of me and she was not stupid when we met now, when I needed any work I could get. With what dignity I had left, I said I'd gladly take her offer... (1936)

Brown Sugar and a Bone in the Throat begins with the immigration of Jean's grandparents from Britain to the Canadian prairies. It spans the century, closing on a beautiful patio in Chilliwack in 2004. Her early life is defined by her parent's slow decline from small town merchants, to poverty and ill health. Her success at getting into nursing school was cut short by her mother's illness and her family's need. An early marriage to a vio-

lent and controlling man forced Jean into a transitory period of domestic service until a romance that ended in a surprise pregnancy forced her back to her husband. She left him for the last time when it was clear that giving her son a 'legitimate' father was not worth the abuse.

Jean raised her son, Spencer, on her own by relying on the support of her extended family. She put herself through secretarial school and landed a job with the United Steelworkers. A trade union activist was born. Under the early mentorship of Eileen Suffrin, Jean went on to become a central pillar in the union movement in Canada, a candidate in elections, and founder of the Memorial Society (which addresses the funeral needs of working and low income families.)

Memories of those times still trigger a surge of pleasure: we were engaged in battle, for a good cause; we have energy to burn, the pulse increasing as the

fighters' adrenalin floods the system. It was as natural as breathing for me to share work with the union and the political arena.

Born in a grocery store in 1912, Jean moves through life with a *joi de vivre* that inspires, challenges and celebrates. Her commitment to women's equality has garnered a long list of awards, including the Governor General Person's Case award in 1990. Describing her inspirations, Jean gives us great insight into her theory of feminism:

There sit the women of McAuley and Rocanville, those who exhibited "snobbery"; they influenced me to do the opposite: to model and educate women in "the sisterhood". It is only when women of all backgrounds treat one another as equals that their demands to be treated as equals with men will be realized.