

"This restitution to families and victims comes off as a deterrent which is more beneficial than a prison sentence or a fine," says Culhane. "This must be transmitted. You hardly need a \$4 million justice system which would deal with these areas." Culhane says 80 percent of the prison population could make restitution.

"We have a moral obligation to oppose laws which are immoral... just part of the general struggle of staying alive," says Culhane.

Staying alive, to Culhane, means fighting for men's and women's rights. "There are some feminists who I have big arguments with because I only work with male

percent of the people visiting the prisoners are women. "Women suffer when men are in prisons," she says.

"I challenge women to send their sisters into the prisons. They probably haven't gone near them. Unfortunately, there are some women who share the middle class idealism which says you fight for women's rights in the board room and the voting room. That really doesn't affect the majority of women.

"And I would add to that by saying that I challenge any women's group that is concerned about rape, about wife battering, about child abuse, violence, poverty and racism; how do you deal with your problem, fight it, or research it without going to prison to see where the end product of each of these abuses is sitting?" say Culhane.

Culhane sees progress because of her efforts, but "only to the extent that more people are becoming aware. I am met with less hostility, people are more willing to listen," says Culhane. "The fact that the struggle is continuing means that we are

survivors and if we are surviving, struggles have been won and that is a point for us.

"If you stop you are on the other side. Just by stopping and doing nothing, you are supporting by silent consent," says Culhane

Her plans for the future are to keep on going. She follows the letterhead of Prisoner's Rights Group.

"Which is that prisoners are part of society and you are not going to change prisons until you change society," she says.

Her biggest goal in the near future is to stop construction of a new maximum security penitentiary called Renou, 100 miles away from Moncton in New Brunswick. It is due to open next April, but she hopes to prevent that and encourage the closure of other prisons across Canada.

It'll probably be just one more prison that she's kicked out of, eventually. But the white-haired woman on the physical building steps likes the outside better anyway.

statistically, homicide records show that the death penalty is not a deterrent. In 1975, the last year before abolition, the murder rate was 3.09 per 100,000 of the population. After capital punishment was struck from the criminal code in 1976, the homicide rate fell to 2.74 per 100,000, by the end of 1983, the last year records were available. (Patrick Nagel, Vancouver Sun, October 11, 1984)

"There are the other 15 percent who are not as dangerous as the five percent, but need psychiatric help. They won't get it by sitting in prison. They should be in psychiatric wards.

"When humans are put away they have no more ability to cope than when they went in."

The remaining five percent, those like Clifford Olson, could remain in one institution. Culhane says they would total no more than one hundred in Canada.

"You are then looking at one institution instead of 250. This prison would have humane atmosphere. It would not entail a humiliating keeper and kept relationship. This is a direction we can begin to look at instead of the penal colonies which we are seeing now."

Culhane finds the distinction between victim and offender in society frustrating. "When you talk of victims, stop and check the word before you take it at face value. There is a fine line between victim and offender."

In her latest book Culhane quotes from the book *1984 and After 1984* that "prisons are for those who can't afford the cost of legal protection, for those who dare to be poor and who refuse to live gratefully and passively on meagre handouts, for those who are born into a social-economic position which deprives them of education and dare to use other means to seek escape from their demeaning poverty, for native people, whose dignified way of life has been stripped away by the white man and replaced with the dehumanising and deadly life of alcohol, for women who refuse any longer to be subjected to routine beatings from a man and who dare to fight back, and for women whose socialized and economic dependency on men, and fear of them, draws them into criminal complicity."

The rule of the law does not stop at the entrance of the prison gate for Culhane.

What makes assault outside the prison also makes it assault inside the prison, she says. "The ways that prisoners are treated today will be reflected in how they act tomorrow.

"How much longer is it going to take before people who are resisting the growth of prisons and the destruction of the environment are going to be put in prisons?"

"About three thousand people are being held in prison in the US for resistance," she says.

"How long will it be if we grant the government the right to use capital punishment now, on basis of the Clifford Olsons, before it is used in the interests of protecting national security?" asks Culhane. "We must understand, and this is my strongest argument about capital punishment, that we are handing a mechanism to the government that this year will deal with those types of culprits (Clifford Olsons). But who knows whether next year they are not going to extend it to refer to protecting national security, and anybody that is a threat to national security should be considered a traitor and liable for execution? Then how long will it be before people who are demonstrating in front of nuclear power plants are next?"

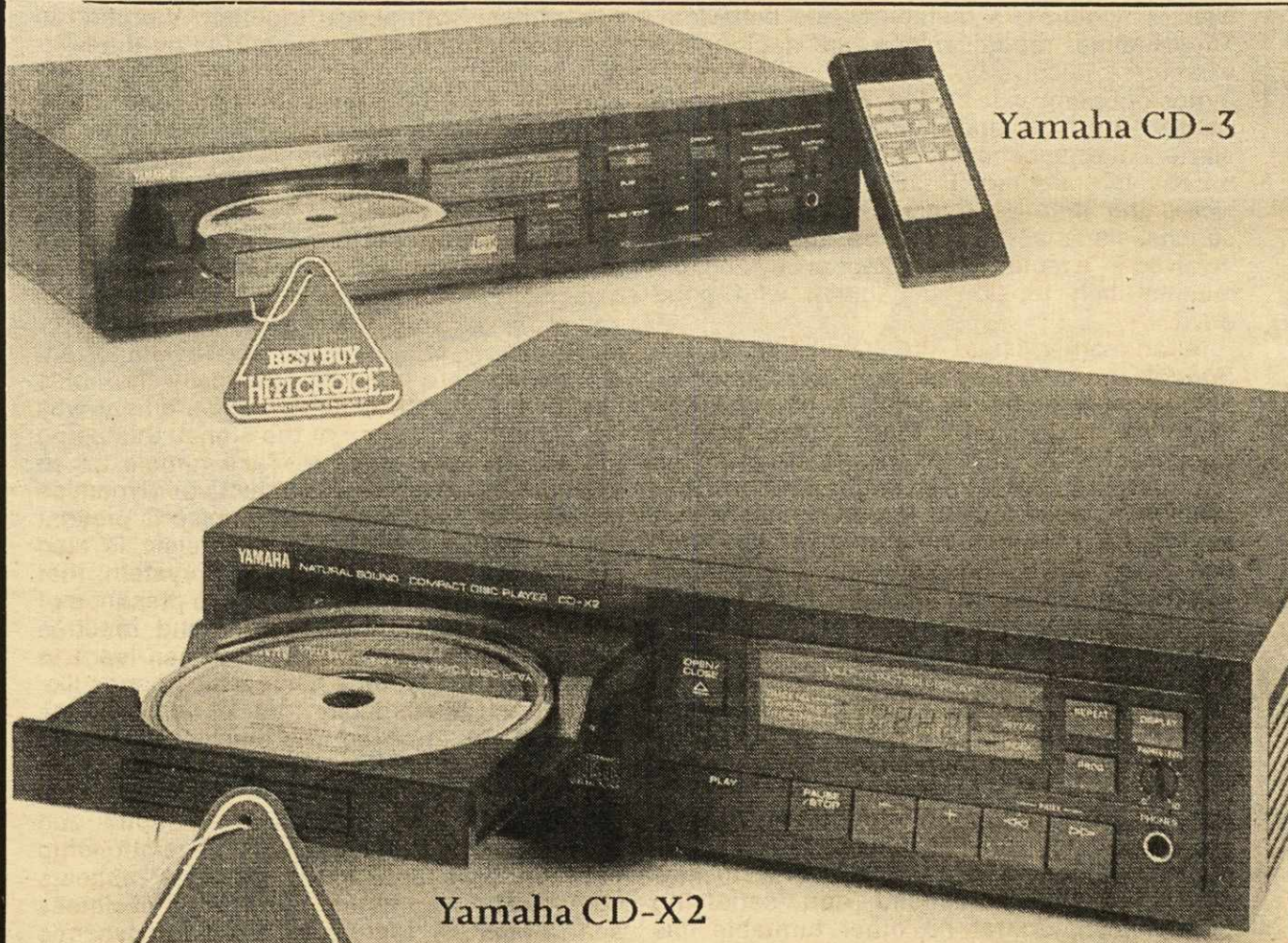
There may be even come a time when any woman who self-aborts may be considered a murderer and be sentenced with execution, Culhane speculates.

prisoners. They say we should only work with women prisoners. I mean, come on, that's absurd. Women represent five percent of the prison population. Now if we are going to fight transfers and solitary confinement, you know you can't narrow yourself down to five percent of the population," says Culhane. She says about 80

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