

Language barriers and loneliness

Immigrant women face compound problems

By BRENDA WEEKS
 Women the world over face common problems. Witnessing the symposium on The Problems of Immigrant Women in Canada, this was seen to be so. The panel looked to be a women's mini U.N., peopled by five women, all from different cultural backgrounds. They were brought together by the York International Student's Centre to speak at Calumet on Tuesday night.

Medeiros, a Portuguese member of the Portuguese Community Movement. There are 80,000 Portuguese immigrants in Toronto. Medeiros emphasized the intense problems of the women in that group.

"The Portuguese family is patriarchal, and therefore the woman is subordinate to her husband in a system which has since been carried over to Canada," Medeiros said. "The women work the less stable jobs in

factories and in the cleaning services to support their families. Often working nights, they are unable to attend English classes to gain any voice that might lend them the means to improve their lot."

An immigrant from India six years ago, Himani Banerji was next to speak. The story of her people was somewhat different from that of the Portuguese, since most immigrant Indians speak English, have money and are upwardly mobile.

HUSBANDS' BAGGAGE

"But the women come as part of their husbands' baggage," said Banerji with candor. "Ours is a patriarchal, male-dominated society as well, but also we are used to big family collectives. This means having to adjust to small nuclear families, which demands social adjustments that don't come easily. Indian women become very lonely, packed away in their isolated houses in the suburbs. Our cultural life becomes dislocated, which leads to a very real identity crisis."

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

Banerji also lamented the lack of knowledge of social services available for immigrant women, as well as the contempt that children develop for their mothers who may have accents and old country ways.

Marlene Green, co-ordinator of the Black Education Project told about herself and other West Indian women in Canada.

"The dilemma for so many Caribbean women here is that they are trying to maintain a standard of living for themselves



Marlene Green, left, and Gloria Montero at the Immigrant Women's conference at York on Tuesday.

in the city, while simultaneously supporting the family back home. And marriage there is regarded differently from here," Green said.

"SERIAL MONOGAMY"

"What one anthropologist has termed 'serial monogamy' amongst my race is scorned in this country. We get unpleasant reactions from Canadian schools when a Caribbean woman sends her two or three children to a school, and they all might not necessarily be from the same father."

Green continued: "Caribbean

mothers often work two jobs, having little time for social contacts, and thus they lead extremely limited and restricted lives."

THE TOTAL PICTURE

From the Centre for Spanish People, author and lecturer Gloria Montero rounded out the total picture. "Most immigrant women witness the exploitation that their men and children suffer," she said, "and so lose any courage they might have to protest for improvements. The problems are compounded by their low status as women. Also in their countries, union organization was so often considered anti-government. We have to push for more protective legislation. And if we continue to place the middle-class white, and often male interpretation, on the laws affecting our immigrant women, the problems will continue. We are losing our first generation of new immigrants by concentrating only on their children as Canadians."

The panel was moderated by Professor Patty Stamp from the department of social science at York and organized by Susan Miller, co-ordinator of the York International Student Centre.

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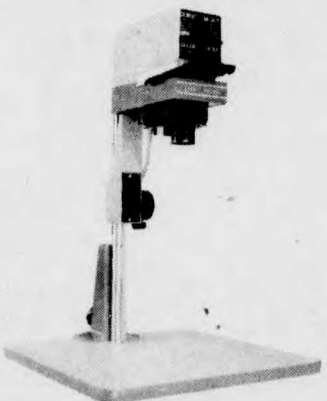
MR. DARKROOM

It was never my intention to lean on the commercial aspect of our business in this series. However, at several recent public colour printing demonstrations a very blunt question has been asked. "Why is Durst equipment so much more expensive than other brands?" To fully appreciate the reasons for price difference we must refresh our understanding of the true function of an enlarger.

Any enlarger performs one major function: that of taking a small negative or slide and magnifying it into a print of the required size. This may be anything from album-size to a wall mural. Print quality depends on efficiency of the lighting system and correct alignment of negative carrier and lens system. When these two all-important components function poorly the end result suffers. The question is, what do you look for to make sure that every possible enlarger benefit is working for you. Notice that I use the word benefit, not feature. If you analyze a "feature" list, many of the facts listed mean nothing at all when translated to terms of what they do to create a better enlargement.

First, is the enlarger steady? Is the column rigid enough to support the head steadily, and designed to allow turning of the head to project on a wall or even the floor when you want a bigger print than can be done on the baseboard. Is the elevating mechanism firm enough to permit easy raising and lowering yet hold the head in a fixed position during printing? As to the lamphouse itself, how is it constructed? On a Durst it will be either a one-piece casting or stamped rigid metal. If the unit has bellows are they plate-riveted in place or only glued? Are the lamphouse and mounting plate held together securely? Is the negative carrier an integral part of the lamphouse assuring perfect alignment with the light path? Can you adjust the lamp ver-

tically and horizontally to compensate for flaws within the bulb itself? While we're on the lamp, with Cibachrome taking its place in the amateur darkroom the need for bright, efficient illumination becomes more important as this superb material is slower than presently existing colour printing paper. Thinking colour automatically raises the question of a colourhead. Two of our lower priced units do not accept this, but all Durst enlargers have a filter drawer as standard equipment. Can you change negative formats quickly and easily? Are accessory negative carriers and condensers available? Is the lens-mount standard? Do you need a compact unit that disassembles easily? The "take-apart" unit for portability and easy storage was created many years ago by Durst.



In a nutshell, look for an enlarger designed with top quality printing in mind. Don't be sidetracked by fancy design and "gimmicks". For a preview of the Durst enlarger family drop me a line. My nine-step Darkroom Chart will show you how easy it is to be a blow-up expert, and you'll also receive a brochure on darkroom accessories by the Paterson people, who also believe that equipment should be designed for use, not used for their design.

Mr. Darkroom, Braun Electric Canada Ltd., 3269 American Dr., Mississauga, Ont. L4V 1B9

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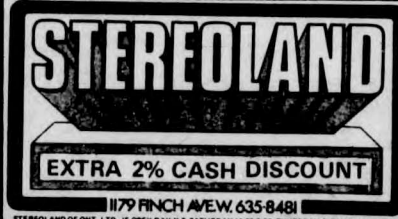
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