our tiny budget went to that Conference. Michèle worked in such projects as the Canadian Women's Music and Cultural Festivals that were held in 1995, '96 and '97, the Human Rights Lobby for including sexual orientation as one of the areas where discrimination is prohibited (now part of the Manitoba Human Rights Act), the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women, the Winnipeg Native Family Development Group, and the first three Gay Pride Parades. She was an artist, a writer and poet, a gardener, and for four years in Winnipeg, a Taiko drummer. When the University of Manitoba failed to rehire Michèle in 1988 (one of the wondrous ways universities have of eliminating principled opposition), she worked at the checkout in Woolco and finished her PhD dissertation, published in 1992 as *Feminism and Anti-Feminism in Early Economic Thought*. After Michèle was hired by Women's Studies at the University of Victoria in 1990, she returned to Winnipeg several times to work on her research on pay equity. On July 6, 1997, her friends and colleagues jammed the West End Cultural Centre for performances of Fabuki Daiko and others to celebrate her life and to support her healing, just a month before her healing ended.

Michèle's time in Winnipeg had been wondrous in terms of people and energy, but also punishing; before she moved to Victoria, she told me of a dream she had of driving on past the University of Manitoba and of seeing ahead the fields of green grasses. I can only imagine what it took for her to turn her battered and aged Volvo in there every day, to call her press conferences against the administration, to take on the Senate and the President, and to push even her progressive colleagues faster than they might have proceeded. But if she was hurt in Winnipeg, and I think she was, it was not her determined resistance that hurt her, but the oppressions she resisted. The conclusion I take is not for us to go easy and adopt a subdued compliance, but for us to recognize that oppression kills, quickly or slowly.

When I talk or write of feminism, I am thinking of Michèle. And when I remember her (which is every minute), I know what is important in feminism: the people struggling to change the material systems of making meanings which oppress women and damage everyone. Feminism is women doing the work of making our lives matter; theory and knowledge are just how we talk about that. What I care about and try to live is the embodied feminism, the transformative feminism, that I met when I met Michèle. What I have learned is that there is no other kind. Each one of us counts.

Michèle was an artist who supported the arts, a political activist who worked in solidarity, a feminist who fought for women, a teacher who was a doer, an anti-racist who worked for us all. She was a thinker, a fierce critic, and the best kind of friend - one who challenged us to take up who we want to be and to work actively for the world we want to live in - and to do it now.

Keith Louise Fulton

MICHÈLE PUJOL, THE UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA AND BEYOND

Even now, a year and a half after Michèle Pujol's death, I sometimes think I've caught a glimpse of her as I turn the corner of the Women's Studies corridor at the University of Victoria where we were colleagues since 1990. For me, one of the daily pleasures of working on the first floor of Clearihue B-Block was running into Michèle, even intercepting her as she passed my office, wanting to know what she thought of shared problems or concerns. I needed her clear-minded, steady vision of social justice and her unwavering attention to the myriad oppressions that structure our University environment. Not just a friend, she also provided for me - and, I would venture, for many people drawn to her - both a reality check and a constant challenge to personal complacencies and wavering commitments. Her proximity was a pleasure, but it was also one of the rigours of my working life, and one I do not wish to lose. Not surprising that she still inhabits my dream life; were her potent presence to disappear from our academic corridor, we would be much diminished.

At the memorial event held at UVic after her death, student after student rose to speak of

what Michèle and her teaching had meant to them. With tears streaming down their faces, they talked of how grateful they were for her gentle but demanding analyses of economic structures, of socio-political systems, of artistic creation. They saluted her remarkable knowledge and her inspired gift for teaching. They talked of how much they had loved her. We discovered a great deal about Michèle in those testimonials: how many people, for example, she had supported not just intellectually and emotionally, but also financially. No one should have been surprised; she lived her principles consistently. If she was demanding of those around her, she always exacted more of herself.

The students who knew her as a fearless lesbian academic and activist would not have known, as I did, the risk she took when she came to interview for her position in 1990 and told the hiring committee, with her hands shaking but her voice steady, that she wanted to develop Canada's first lesbian studies course in Women's Studies. Speaking to strangers drawn from across the campus - we were then only a free-standing programme, not a department in control of its own hiring - she could not have known if that self-outing might have cost her the position.

Two years later, with "Sinister Wisdom" one of our established courses, Michèle created for an introductory course a small, optional, ungraded, experience-based classroom exercise, which she called the Lesbian Walk. Students were asked to walk about the campus for ten minutes holding hands; this would give heterosexual women a chance to walk, very briefly, in lesbians' shoes. Students who did not wish to do this were not required to do so; all that was asked of them was that they stay in the classroom and reflect on why this might be difficult (or even dangerous). For three years, students welcomed the chance to try this. Then an aggrieved student went to the city press, claiming harassment as a heterosexual woman at the hands of a lesbian prof. A juicy morsel for homophobic audiences, this small event became a national *cause célèbre*. Michèle had to explain herself and her teaching in print, on radio and on television, and she did so with characteristic dignity, winning solid support from progressive people across Canada. But the cost was great: I witnessed close in the extraordinary pain of the false accusations and the huge amount of work involved in responding to the charges. I also saw the immediate and unanimous student support for the value of that exercise. How cruel that the final public vindication of Michèle's exercise was not delivered by the B.C. Human Rights Commission until after her death. But even before her death, Michèle's students had created what is now an annual event: a joyous, noisy, cross-campus "Michèle Pujol Memorial Lesbian March" - celebration and affirmation of the struggle against heterosexism.

None of us, except her partner Brook, knew Michèle was ill until she was mortally ill; Michèle never complained or asked for sympathy. But when I heard the news, the image that came to haunt me was the physical meaning of "working against the grain." Thinking about Michèle's courageous life and final struggle, the commonplace phrase became once again a powerful metaphor for what can happen to a hand or a life. Pull with the grain and it's a smooth, even pleasurable experience; push against it and the hand can be ripped to shreds. Do this again and again and the hand will be, at the very least, forever scarred. But if the repeated push can damage the hand, it will also, over time, gradually transform the wood, create an alternative way of travelling over that surface. I believe that Michèle paid a high price in physical terms for a lifetime of committed, often dangerous, political work. But she also made a huge difference in the several spheres she inhabited.

In the fall of 1998, Michèle's groundbreaking 1992 book, *Feminism and Anti-Feminism in Early Economic Thought*, was reissued in a second edition. Michèle had been pained by the high price of the original hardback that put the book beyond the reach of many potential readers. How pleased she would be to learn that the book, still in hardcover, still with its original British publisher, is now selling for a third of its first price. It has a growing audience; it will continue its revolutionary work. Her life work may be over, but in her death she still enables that of

others who are picking up her projects, carrying them on, developing them further. We miss her physical presence, but she is still with us.

Christine St. Peter

Daughters' Geographies

my mother had
a map of
France in her head
a map of the dams
built all over the country

her father was
an engineer
he built dams
reshaped landscapes
flooded villages and farmland

i have
a map of
the world in my head
or rather
of the French
colonial empire (long dead)

my father was
a colonial administrator
(administrateur des colonies)
he did not build empires
but he helped to
maintain them
reshaped political landscapes
flooded peoples' identities
dammed up their consciousness
until one day
they could not
be contained any longer

Michèle Pujol

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