

des recommandations présentées dans ce document.

Le programme d'action sociale prévoit en outre quatre séances d'échanges d'expériences par année, dont deux en français et deux en anglais. Ces assemblées permettent aux personnages âgées et, en particulier, aux représentants des 168 organismes du Forum, de faire connaître les initiatives intéressantes, les expériences novatrices qui s'inscrivent à l'actif ou au bénéfice du troisième âge.

Au titre de l'action sociale, le FCAM est appelé à participer aux consultations des gouvernements fédéral et provincial sur les politiques relatives à l'amélioration de la situation des personnes âgées. Il a notamment présenté un rapport ("Pour mieux vieillir") au Conseil consultatif national sur le troisième âge, dans le cadre de la consultation des organismes non gouvernementaux en vue de l'Assemblée mondiale sur le vieillissement tenue à Vienne en 1982.

De son côté, le Forum a pris, souvent l'initiative d'adresser aux autorités appropriées des recommandations portant par exemple sur la réduction du tarif de transport en commun, l'amélioration des soins et des services à domicile. D'autres interventions ont pris la forme de mémoires présentés sur diverses questions d'intérêt économique ou social: augmentation des tarifs de téléphone, formation des adultes âgés, abolition de la retraite obligatoire, etc.

Par une large gamme d'activités, le FCAM répond à de nombreux besoins et fait appel en même temps aux talents les plus divers. Coopérer à l'oeuvre commune du Forum, c'est travailler pour soi autant que pour autrui. Avancer en âge au Forum, c'est progresser et se renouveler...

Pour entrer en contact avec le Forum des citoyens âgés de Montréal, téléphoner au numéro 937-7401 ou écrire à l'adresse suivante: 1800, boulevard Dorchester ouest, Montréal (Québec) H3H 2H2.

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WOULD A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME SMELL AT ALL?*

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Les attitudes envers les noms diffèrent selon les cultures : il y a des modes de noms, et certaines personnes désirent même changer le leur. L'auteure discute également de l'influence du féminisme sur l'appellation. Puisque le fait de donner un nom a une énorme importance sur le plan social et politique, il devrait être abordé d'une manière intégrante et interdisciplinaire.

In Verona, as in many societies ranging from "primitive" to "advanced," you needed only hear another person's name to know whether s/he were friend or foe. Loyalties were kinship clear, biologically based and socially enforced. Shakespeare is one of the most articulate challengers of the ethic of the family feud, a mini-war whose clearest symbol is the name. *Romeo and Juliet* opens on "two households, both alike in dignity." Montagues and Capulets fight for names' sake only, having long since lost the reasons for their feuding.

"Deny thy father and refuse thy name," says Juliet; "'Tis but thy name that is my enemy. Thou art thyself. . ." Romeo responds: "Call me but love and I'll be new baptiz'd . . ." Rebirth, renewal, re-baptism appear in many cultures as images for expressing naming traditions. Naming and renaming of child or adult can be a central occasion, often involving festivities.

I expected to find a rich literature on naming. A frustrating search through more than two hundred books on marriage, family, and community yielded not one reference to the practice of giving and receiving names. Anthropologists relate naming to kinship or ritual. It is

not clear why the literature is peripheral and scant, when names occupy so prominent a place in our lives, rhetoric, and consciousness.

Contradictions abound. Women refuse to take husbands' names but battle for the dubious privilege of keeping their fathers'. The "first" or "given" name is dumped on an unsuspecting infant. The concept of "woman's own name" isn't irrelevant; but we need to clarify issues and politics, and look cross-culturally at the significance of naming.

Names have not always been linked to either sex or to "carrying on the family." In another time or place you might be named for your village or your father's profession (not, to my knowledge, for your mother's). As in *Romeo and Juliet*, a name can signify more than familial connection: it can clarify one's reputation and character. We speak of "having a good name" when we mean "living virtuously." "She made a name for herself" implies that she transcended the limits of name, family, status, circumstances, to become successful — usually in economic terms. *Making* a name for oneself means there is opportunity to reach beyond one's birthright (or birth-wrong).

Your own name is probably not exclusively yours. It has been visited on you so that you can "continue the line."

The line is usually transported by male children. All manner of sins have been perpetrated on female children, including infanticide. Wives have been divorced for failing to bring forth male heirs, out of ignorance that sperm carry the determining chromosomes. With great passion, ordinary people and extraordinary artists have sung the praises of the male child (virtuous through no fault of his own) who carries "the name."

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Not every culture is male-dominated and not every male-dominated culture uses our kind of linear genealogy. In many societies, female and male children are named for women. Inuit *sipiniq* may be the most gender-free system. Here, the child's life not only commemorates the life of the namesake; it also represents it. A girl named for a man is treated as a boy until puberty, and a boy named for a woman is "a girl." The practice extends to kinship terms: a girl named for her grandfather is addressed as "father" by her parents.

Ashkenazic Jewish tradition includes a significant matrilineal strain, set within a predominantly patrilineal pattern. Boys may have matronymic lastnames such as Rivkin (from *Rivke* — Rebecca); men have taken mothers' or wives' names, sometimes to avoid conscription. (The term "lastname" is used as a substitute for "surname," which is male-derived.) Ashanti husbands inherit identities from their mothers; fathers have rights but mothers carry the line.

Each Nyakyusa man has three family names — those of paternal grandfather, father, and mother. Girls receive names of their mothers' and their fathers' families. In Canada and the U.S. the norm is first, middle, and paternal lastname. One's first name is usually unique in the family, unless it is a (male) "junior." Ashkenazic Jews cannot share a first or middle name with any living relative: what does honour in a Christian family does dishonour in a Jewish one. In a Catholic family, the child may get one name at birth and another at confirmation, or a string of names may be collected on various occasions.

In modern Soviet law kinship is at least nominally egalitarian: "upon registering a marriage the spouses may declare . . . their desire to have the common surname of . . . husband or . . . wife, or to retain the prenuptial surnames." (Bernard Farber, *Comparative Kinship Systems*, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1968, p. 61). If parents share a lastname, their children share it. If not, they select a name. If they disagree, the name is determined by an Agency of Guard-

ianship and Curatorship. After divorce, the children keep the surname given at birth. A child in the U.S.S.R. is thus genealogically independent. Like homes, clothing, and other social accoutrements, names come in and out of fashion. I recall classmates in the 1950s in Oklahoma named Jim, Judy, and David and few named Amos, Selena, or Valerie. I was born of New York "foreigners" and my name was exotic. Children in school were made fun of for having odd names or received nicknames that revealed or concealed personality or body traits. (The subject of nicknaming and identity has received considerable attention among students of behaviour and self-concept.)

People are liked or disliked because their lastnames are associated with a particular country or culture. Canadian children express problems associated with instant-identity, depending on which ethnic groups are currently in or out of favour. Contemporary Romanians emphasize their Roman origins rather than their Slavic affiliations. They have changed the English from "Rumania" to "Romania" in official publications, and there is a marked preference for names and other words that stress Western culture. Like Shakespeare's Veronese, Americans have rejected German, Japanese, or Russian names (some mistakenly labelled "Jewish" because they "sound" that way) according to the nation's state of embattlement or class-related consciousness. U.S. and Canadian country-club rosters have been filled with Anglo-Saxon appellations: having fought to obtain freedom from England, both countries hang tenaciously onto cultural Anglophilia.

Immigrants with "different" (long, non-English, or otherwise unusual) names sometimes change them. Writers use pen names for various reasons. George Eliot did it to conceal her gender, O. Henry his imprisonment. Others choose *noms de plume* to fulfil fantasies or hide duplicity. It is fashionable for science-fiction writers to have one name for "good" writing and another for the potboilers they often survive on. Some have several names, with fans

competing to discover who is "really" who. As a journalist, I have used different names to separate arts' criticism from reportage, primarily to preserve editors' illusions of exclusivity or credibility. Sometimes I write more freely under a name I'm not called by.

It is common practice to change one's name to gain social acceptance or professional credibility. Gaining in popularity is a revival of the old idea of naming to communicate one's commitments.

The ultimate naming nightmare is expressed in F.M. Esfandiary's novel, *Identity Card* (NY: Grove Press, 1966). Daryoush Aryana loses his official Iranian card and is denied identity by the state. However he says his name, he is granted no existence without the document.

Symbols can be important components of, or stimulants to, social change. Often, change precedes the formalization of new symbols, leaving laws and dictionaries behind practice. A woman's name change at marriage is less symbolic of her being *changed* than *exchanged*: ownership is transferred from father (who "gives her away") to husband, with a concomitant change in the woman's (derivative) identity. No longer her father's daughter, she becomes her husband's wife. It takes more than a label, or less, to change habits and attitudes.

Religious naming ceremonies celebrate birth, baptism, circumcision, christening, and other events. A convert to cult or religion may take or receive a new name to symbolize rebirth or renewal — or new ownership. Entrance to a monastery or convent includes a new name and kinship title (Mother, Father, Sister, Brother). Name and title place monk or nun inside a surrogate family where kinship is reckoned socially rather than biologically.

Names follow political changes. People and places are named or renamed according to who is in power. A change may signify victory (Stalin-grad) or commemorate leadership (Kennedy Center). With the domination of colonial takeover comes domination by naming. As a wife is "managed" or controlled under husband's lastname (and child under

parent's name), so an entire populace may be controlled by naming. One of the last official actions that preceded the Holocaust was the restriction of Jewish first and last-names in Germany and other European countries.

The more fashionable individualism becomes, the greater is the effort to make each name appear unique, to represent family rather than nation or community, or to separate the individual from all others. A family is a mini-culture, reflecting and affecting the culture at large. Even when naming is separated from its macro-context it remains a political act. Some of the choices families make today reflect the feminist movement. (Women keep names after marriage; daughters are named for mothers; lastnames are hyphenated composites of both parents' names). An unfortunate consequence of semi-conscious political posturing is that certain ways of naming are labelled "liberated" and others not. One woman said she hated her authoritarian father; yet she expressed pride in having retained her "own" lastname (*his*) after marriage. The extended hyphenation of Ms. Linda Smith-Jones is Ms. Linda Smith-Jones-Cohen-Colingworth-Orlovsky-Kazantsakis-Steinem-Griswold-Knopf. In a few generations we will need larger birth certificates, fatter phone books, an end to school roll call, and other institutions. We might end up using numbers or switch to "hey there" or "you."

Looking to the future, Robert Rimmer's *Proposition 31* has members of a two-family "corporate marriage" fuse their lastnames into a new one. Marge Piercy's future world (in *Woman on the Edge of Time*) combines elements of tribal and religious rituals of various cultures. Each child's coming of age is symbolized by her/his selection of a name to replace the baby-name given by the child's three mothers (men and women who choose parenthood). Piercy uses "per" instead of "his" or "her," as members of Twin Oaks and other egalitarian communities use the neutral pronoun "co."

Another feature of Piercy's new world is ambisexual (or bisexual)

naming that matches the androgynous sexuality of the people. Characters named Jack-rabbit, Tilia, Bee are women and men. (Bee, for instance, is a man.) Native American traditions are reflected in the women's and men's initiation survival rites and the nature-oriented names.

As in past times, people who form new societies often use names to signal their intentions. The Amana communities took their name from a Biblical quotation indicating a Utopian place. The Society of Separatists, Harmony, Peace Union, and the Abode of the Message have labels that represent their members. A new name may place a person in a group — a club, community, secret order. It may represent a philosophy. Twin Oaks, a Walden Two community, has eliminated lastnames and permits no status-defining titles. Some members change their first names. Other groups adopt communal lastnames, as in the Mulberry Family. Communards may choose fantasy names or names representing ideas, attitudes, or hopes.

As do monasteries and convents, communes use kinship terms to convey closeness and symbolize rebirth into a new "family" and also to keep others outside the group. The Shakers were founded by Mother Ann Lee, whose biological children died in infancy. "Mother" Ann's followers received sibling titles; leaders rose to parental status. As in monastic orders, sexual intercourse among Shakers was prohibited. (No one knew better than Mother Ann the awful consequences of child-bearing in a time of high infant mortality!) The prohibition served to deny incestuous relationships: since all were siblings, parents, or children, there was no one left outside the taboo.

Not all communities that use family terminology practise celibacy. The Rainbow Family declares "We are simply brothers and sisters bound together by our love . . . and desire to live in peace." Here, family labels are either a romantic expression of universal human closeness ("we're all brothers and sisters") or an indication of permission to commit incest, depending on the interpretation. Incest taboos and other

mores apply to both social and biological categories. According to the particular group, "incest" might be defined as having sex with one's biological son, daughter, brother, or sister, or with an adopted relative or close friend. It may also be defined as having sex with someone in one's extended family, which could reach as far as an entire village.

What you are called — your names and other labels — affects more than your sense of who you "are." It can cause, create, or control your world view. It can tell you whom to love or marry, whom not to love or marry, and as Shakespeare so poignantly shows, how your family feud can become a full-scale war. Names can control relationships, work, and the ability to integrate one's personal history into present and future.

Members of the various academic disciplines have played with naming, usually in a peripheral fashion. Ethnographies often contain naming data which gatherers have failed to integrate into the larger analyses. Exceptions include Jane Goodale's work on the Tiwi. Mary V. Seeman is rare among those in psychological and psychiatric fields in her concern for the importance of naming. (She has used names to stimulate therapeutic turning points as a practitioner and has explored the relationship between name and identity. (See "Names and Dream-Work," *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 24, 1979, pp. 243-246, and "Name and Identity," *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 24, 1980, pp. 129-137.)

There is a small scattering of onomatologists (naming scholars) in Canada, England, and the United States. They come from different disciplines, most notably linguistics. Their work has been isolated, highly focussed, and rather narrow. What is needed is an integrative, interdisciplinary approach that acknowledges the enormous social and political significance of naming.

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