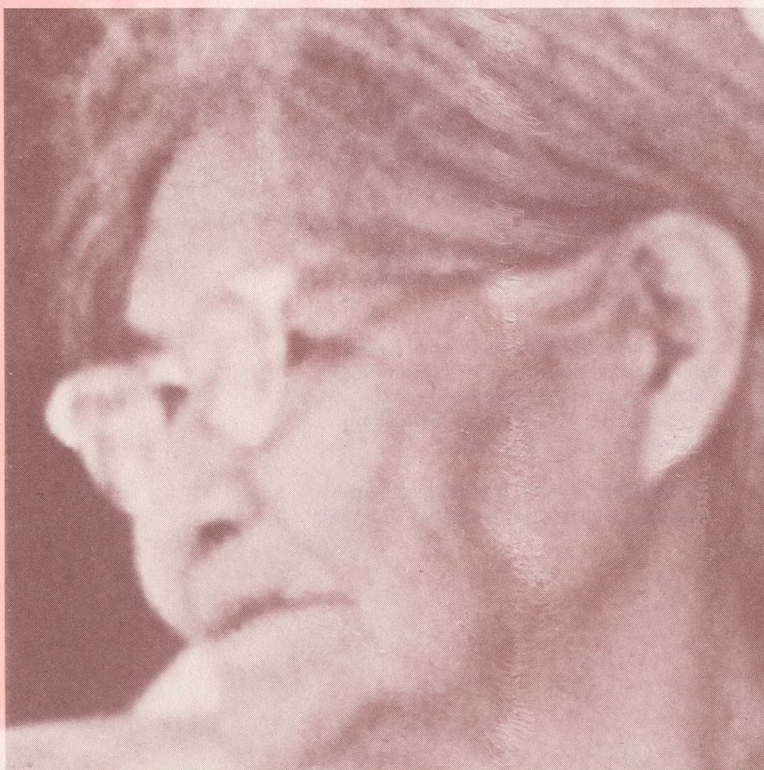
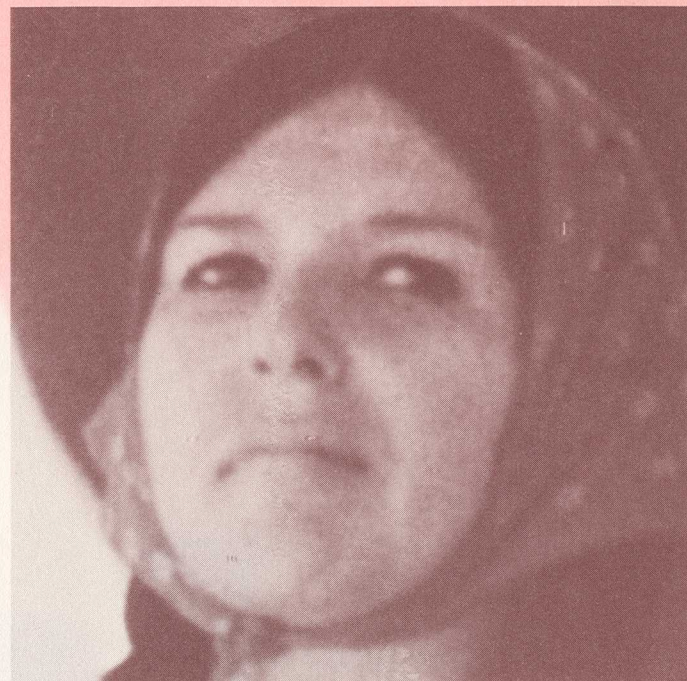


**Our Dear Sisters**





Produced by  
The National Film Board of Canada  
for the program

## challenge for change société nouvelle

in cooperation with departments and  
agencies of the Government of Canada

Distributed by  
The National Film Board of Canada

# Our Dear Sisters

16mm Color  
Screening Time: 14 minutes 40 seconds

one of a group of films about

## WORKING MOTHERS

*Festival Photographed by Bob Nichol  
assisted by Susan Gabori  
Interview Photographed by Joan Hutton  
assisted by Nesya Shapiro  
Location Sound: Ted Haley  
Interview Sound: Esther Auger  
Editing: Donna Nichol  
Re-recording: Jean-Pierre Joutel  
Negative Cutting: Mae Walsh  
Produced and Directed by  
Kathleen Shannon  
Executive Producer: Len Chatwin*

Alanis is a native North American performer and film-maker. In this film she tells us about her life and what she sees. Her observations shake some of our cultural assumptions.

*People working with this film have found questions like these help focus the discussion:*

Why does this film make so many women cry?

In native society, "the woman is very highly respected; the mother of children is something very sacred." Is white society ambivalent about women, about mothers? Why do we expect to pay low wages to baby-sitters, house-keepers?

When Alanis visits an Indian reserve, her child becomes "another child of the tribe". Who is responsible for children in white society?

Why are some women who "stay home" beginning to feel guilty? Do they resent other women who "work outside"? Who defines *work* in our society?

Many of us feel ambivalent – at least sometimes – about our children and guilty about the ambivalence. Why?

"The old people stand like trees among us. They tell us who we are." Is this true in white society? Who defines the *important* and the *marginal* people in our culture?

What kind of support systems do we need to discover for nuclear families? Must we expect to pay for them in money, or are there ways of building mutual support systems?

If I redefine *myself*, does that change anything? How does a society change?