

# SYLVIA SPRING

## Writing/Filmmaking



Inducted: 2003  
Years at GCI & VS:  
1956 - 1960

Sylvia Spring was born in Galt on July 14, 1942 and graduated from GCI & VS in 1960. She earned her Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree in English Literature and Drama at the State University of New York at Buffalo. As a writer, director and producer in radio, film, and video for public, private, institutional and educational media such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), National Film Board of Canada (NFB), TV Ontario (TVO), Cable Public Affairs Channel (CPAC), and WETV (Global Access Satellite Network), she has focused over the years in areas of international development, human rights, education, youth, health and women. Further, Sylvia has been a writer, researcher, analyst, workshop leader and conference speaker for many projects of national and international agencies such as the Canadian Human Rights Commission, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Ms. Spring wrote the screenplay and directed 'Madeline Is' in 1971, which captures the dawning of the women's movement at the time and was the first English Canadian feature film to be directed by a woman in Canada. In 1979, the Task Force on Sex-Role Stereotyping in the Broadcast Media, led by Ms. Spring, looked into, and developed guidelines for, the problem of the portrayal of women in the media. An outgrowth of this study was Media Watch whose mandate is to work to eliminate sexism in the media. Using multimedia

Ms. Spring, in 1998, wrote and was executive producer of *Making Waves: Canadian Women Evolving Through The 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, which explores the contributions of Canadian women to all facets of society.

Between 1984 and 1998, Ms. Spring planned and delivered training workshops and conferences on Women in Media, Democratization of Media, Media Literacy and Media Monitoring in Canada and around the world. In 1989, Ms. Spring researched, wrote and directed four filmstrips / videos for the NFB and CIDA on development issues for elementary schools entitled, *Something In Common: Children Of Other Lands* that won several educational media awards in Canada and the United States. As executive producer for WETV, she produced a series of daily live-to-air documentaries, *Voices and Visions*, from the Beijing World Conference on Women in 1995. As executive producer and president of Making Waves Productions, she produced the video documentary, *Breaking the Silence: Stories from AIDS Activists in Southern Africa* (1996), a one hour film on HIV / AIDS that not only shows the full dimensions of the epidemic but also tells how gender equality can help curtail the epidemic. The film won prizes at the 1996 Reel Awards, Canada and the 1996 Intercom Festival, Chicago.