

Al Jordan once told Fanny Kiefer to "Think of radio like a piece of black velvet and that it was her job to put one jewel in the middle of it." Since then, Kiefer has been dazzling the Vancouver audience with her insights, questions and guests. She began her broadcasting career when her travels led her to Vancouver. Before that, she had run a ski resort in Jasper, and worked as a fashion coordinator at Eaton's. Kiefer is the host of Shaw TV's Studio 4 talk show. Her media career includes being a researcher, producer at CJOR Radio and working in private radio, public radio and television, and Internet broadcasting. Past interviews include Prime Minister Paul Martin, Premier Gordon Campbell, Ann-Marie Macdonald, Bill Richardson, Debbie Travis, Carole Taylor, John Bishop, Ian Hanomansing, Dr. Art Hister and Robert Bateman. *VLM* decided to exchange hats with Kiefer and put her in the hot seat. Here's what our Vancouver jewel had to say.



ONE GREAT FANNY!

FANNY KIEFER: A WOMAN WITH VOICE

Q & A with VLM

VLM: What was your first media job?

FK: I started in radio as a producer at CJOR radio, which was then the top talk station in the city, with Jack Webster. I produced a show for a guy named Chuck Cook who went on to become the Tory Whip. My first on-air gig was a show called "Street Talk in the Afternoon". I was in the hallway and the then sports director said 'You are doing a show.' I said I wanted to be behind the scenes and he said, 'No no no, you've got the right voice.' And so that was my first gig.

VLM: What do you miss about radio?

FK: Well, you don't have to worry about your earrings, or you're make-up or whether your hair is curled or straight. I mean, you have to look good because you interview guests at the station but it's different. I miss the intimacy of radio, the way you have to paint a picture. And course there is the cheating aspect, you can have all of your information right in front of you and your audience thinks it is all coming out of your brain.

VLM: What don't you miss?

FK: I like all aspects of radio.

VLM: Fair enough, you are in the business of asking questions, Fanny. Where do your questions come from?

FK: I do a lot of research. I was born curious. I am a yakker and I love great conversation. I also try and stay present and I listen, which of course is the key. And then you have to go where angels fear to tread and the question you want to ask, the question you think you should ask, you have to ask, and that gives it the edge it needs.

VLM: Who is the most exciting person you've interviewed?

FK: Ever? Oh...I don't think there is just one. I think there is a composite of the exciting person, and that would be someone who has great ideas, is spontaneous, down-to-earth, and provocative. It doesn't matter what they are talking about, they could be talking about bumblebees, movies or whatever...it's about the passion they have for their subject.

VLM: How many years have you been in Vancouver?

FK: Since about 1971.

VLM: How do you think the Vancouver social scene has changed over the years?

FK: When I first came here, there were three restaurants that you would go to and it certainly wasn't as multi-cultural. You would run into people that you knew a lot. Actually you still do, this is a

five degree of separation city. But it felt like a small town when I first moved here. As for now, while I am certainly not hanging out at Voda anymore, there wasn't a Voda. When I first moved here, Gastown was the hot spot and Woodward's was the store where everybody shopped.

VLM: Do you have any nicknames?

FK: Fanny. My real name is Janis.

VLM: How did you get named Fanny?

FK: My first and only husband nicknamed me Fanny when we were in first-year-university because he thought I had a great ass. It stuck. What do I know?

VLM: Okay, let's move onto finding out a few Fanny facts. What is next on your to-do list?

FK: To do some radio in the future, and perhaps improve my golf game.

VLM: What makes you laugh?

FK: People.

VLM: What is something you could rant about?

FK: Inequality.

VLM: Do you ever argue with your guests?

FK: I disagree with them; I won't call them names or anything. But will I come back at them? Sure, because I am noisy and a bit of a loud mouth. I think your real question is would I set up my guests to make some real T.V. and make them look like an idiot. No, that's not my style. Actually I don't think that tactic works for women on air or T.V.

VLM: But it works for men?

FK: I think women spar differently. Guys give each other shots all the time and then they are over it. Women have a lot of sensitivity. I think we can be powerful and opinionated and in the trenches but berating and bullying just doesn't work for us. Women are more successful when they use their intelligence.

VLM: Interesting. Who would play you if your life was made into a movie?

FK: Everybody says Diane Keaton but I don't know why.

VLM: What gets you going in the morning?

FK: A cup of strong organic coffee, some green juice with wheatgrass and an apple.

VLM: If they were going to make a new dollar bill, whose face do you think we should put on it?

FK: Judy LaMarch; she was one of the first female members of parliament. She was fearless, she was a role model and she was the first female talk show host in this city.

VLM: What is something that surprises people about you?

FK: That I am vulnerable. When you are noisy and chatty and solid in your shoes like me, people often expect me to always be as strong as an ox.

VLM: I want to return to something we briefly touched on earlier; you said

"I love a martini, a proper one as they say. Olives or a twist, I can go either way, very dry. I don't like martinis with umbrellas in them."

you've been here since 1971. Vancouver as a city has undergone a bit of change since then. In your opinion, who are some of the people that have really impacted Vancouver in the last 30-some years?

FK: Wow, that's a tough question...let me think a minute. People who have changed this city...Well there is Bing Thom, Judge Nancy Morrison, Jack Webster, Leon Bibb, Wade Davis, Terry Fox, Sarah McLachlan... I could go on all day...

VLM: Besides that question, what do you consider your biggest challenge?

FK: Well, I want to die a well woman and I want to die rich, so however I do that I guess. On a more serious note, it is also challenging to find people who really get you.

VLM: After a tough day, how do you reward yourself?

FK: I love a martini, a proper one as they say. Olives or a twist, I can go either way, very dry. I don't like martinis with umbrellas in them. **VLM**

-Julia Smith