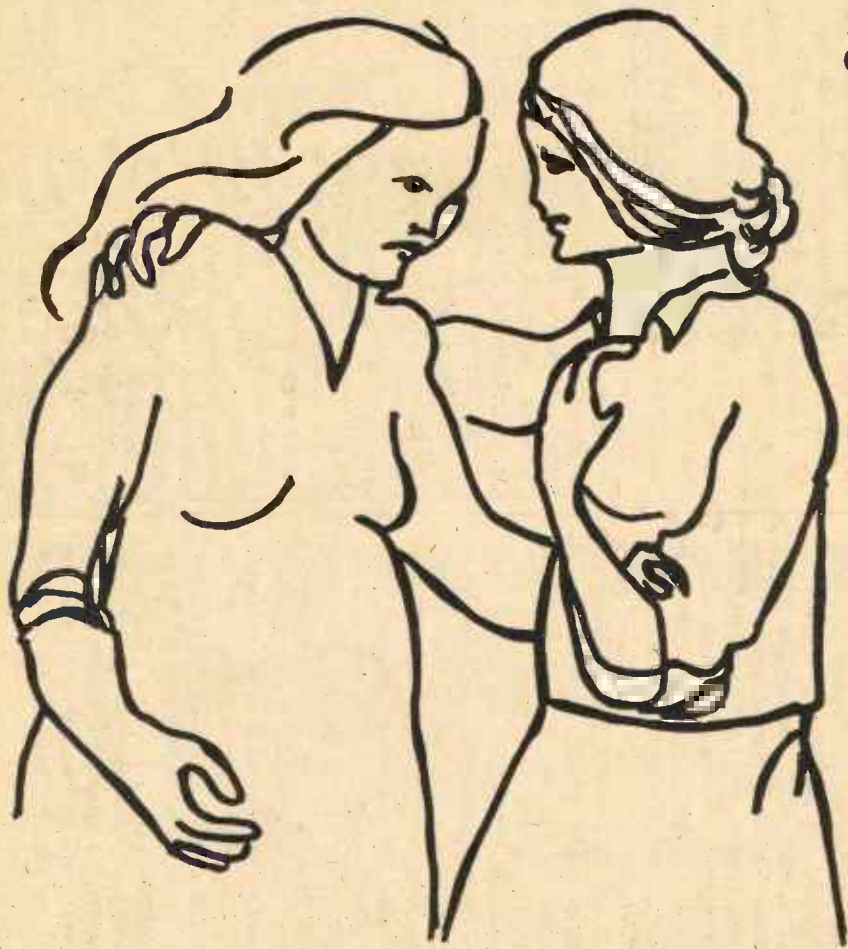


the

NORTHERN WOMAN

50¢



*women's new
regional journal*

Volume 2

Issue 4

EDITORIAL

The theme of this issue is "Women in Distress" We have reviewed issues and Areas which are particularly stressful to women. The abortion issue is still hotly debated, and the outcome will help to determine for many women and children the quality of life they will experience. We have looked at the problem of alcoholism as it relates to women. We have talked about the struggles of welfare women, working women and union women. We have looked at the area of health care and its inadequacies as they relate to women.

Almost without exception, the problems we face are merely symptomatic of a social system which fails to recognize basic human rights - the right to adequate food, shelter and medical care - the right of each child to grow in peace.

Too often, we focus on the "freedoms" we enjoy - the freedom to buy a white or a green dishwasher, the freedom to have one or two cars. We talk of the freedom of free speech, the freedom of the press, the freedom to belong to any political party, the freedom of choice. But when we look at our freedoms, we find they are often illusions of freedom. It is the people with money who get the press and the talk time. Why else must we form an alternative press? Our provincial government attempted to eradicate all political parties except the three largest. How great is our freedom of choice? Women who wish to choose whether to work inside or outside the home, find the choice less than free. We have to take into account the fact that we have very little day care at prices we are unable to afford on salaries that are far from adequate.

If we, as women, wish to make lasting and valuable changes, we will have to address the underlying causes and not merely the symptoms. We will have to establish priorities and policies which grant each of us the very basic rights to which we should be entitled.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The newsletter group, a separate yet supportive group of the Northern Women's Centre, reflects the complexity of the makeup of the Northern Women's Centre as a whole.

Being a smaller, unified group, the editorial board of THE NORTHERN WOMAN will attempt, through collective, creative and thought provoking comments, to respond to, and express (through a consensus of opinion) their reactions to, various articles, letters and timely topics of interest.

Through such a policy it is hoped that THE NORTHERN WOMAN will become a tool for women to develop an increased understanding of their situation and forces affecting their lives.

LETTERS

Dear Sisters:

I call you sisters even though I do not know any of you, partly because of the impact the poem "Crowbar" had on me. It was so meaningful to me at this stage of my life. It is very comforting to know other women share my feelings of being scared about leaving the known, safe and traditional.

I have started a c-r group because of the helpful 14 week outline. Have you noticed you have only included 11 weeks? I have high hopes of our c-r group making the transitions in our lives easier.

M. Gibbons Thunder Bay

Editors note:

Copies of the 14 week outline for CR can be mailed to you. Phone or write Northern Women's Centre P.O. Box 314 "F" Thunder Bay, 622-3989.

Dear readers:

This journal has a mailing list of over 700. With the exception of exchanges most names have at one time been a paid up subscription. Into this office flows the life of the movement, an ongoing record of the hopes and thought and the creative talents of women to whom sisterhood has become a reality. We volunteer our time and energy to share this harvest with you, and hopefully you will respond with your interest and support. There is no way we can continue to keep unpaid subscribers on our mailing list. This journal must in the final analysis support itself or die. With the mailing of this issue we will therefore revise our list but not without regret for we truly believe we are an instrument of growth that you should respond to. **PUT A CHECK IN THE MAIL, BE A SISTER!**

Dear Editor:

On behalf of the Northwestern Ontario International Women's Year Co-ordinating Council, I would like to indicate our feelings on crisis housing in Thunder Bay.

During 1975, our Co-ordinating Council has on its list of priority projects - crisis housing. To this end, a grant was obtained for assistance in setting up such a place in Thunder Bay.

Our hope is that the purpose of such a refuge would be to assist "women in transition", who are in need of advice, job counselling, encouragement, and a temporary roof over their heads. Women in this position need and want comfort, guidance, reassurance and relevant information and such interval housing should serve this purpose.

Certainly the facilities should be well maintained and guidelines and appropriate house rules drawn up, but the top priority should be for the welfare and future of the women in the homes. Trained (women) counsellors should be available to talk to these women, try to build up their confidence, and inform them of their rights, and then help to direct them in the way in which they want to go. This is not the time in their lives when they need regimentation and impersonal care *They need Positive help and personal concern!*

Focus on these important aspects of life during personal crises does much towards getting women on the right track, helps them to find themselves, and decide what it is they want to do with their lives.

This is the kind of personal assistance we had in mind when our IWY Council decided that they wanted to help to set up crisis housing in Thunder Bay. We would hope that the homes set up now would serve these purposes and not merely the impersonal one of providing a roof over their heads for a short period of time and then sending them back into the bad situation from which they came.

We feel that women who want to get out of an unhappy situation should be given the opportunity to have a choice in what she wants to do with her life and follow through to become more of an individual and a human being. And what a better time to start than during "The Year of the Woman".

Yours in Sisterhood,
Bernice Cain,
Chairwoman
NWO IWY Co-ordinating Council

Dear Sisters,

I picked the Northern Woman from Aid'Elle, our Women's Resource Centre here in Timmins, read it from page 1 to 16. Good reading, good food for thought.

Here's my name and cheque for your subscription list.

In Sisterhood,
Jacqueline Hétu

Dear Sisters:

Abortion is one of the fundamental issues of a woman's right to choose, however in the system where the right to choose is governed only by the amount of capital one controls, one has at her disposal. There are women in this world, in this country who cannot conceive of women fighting for abortion. These women are poor, black, Indian - they have had forced abortions, preventing them from having the children they've wanted.

In focusing our energies on this single "issue" women are alienating and not speaking to great number of women in England, Canada, U.S.A., and Third World countries, who are struggling for the basic right to have children without forced abortion.

The only issue - the only possible strategy to which we should apply ourselves is one which asks for capital - for the money we so desperately need to take control over our work - our minds - our bodies. *Wages for Housework* \$\$\$. Then we can choose if we want children or abortions, marriage, to type, to serve, to smile, to screw; to be a lesbian, to be straight, to cook, to do whatever we want to do, including refusing our housework.

In sisterhood
Mallory

Dear Sisters:

Just read your latest issue and thought it was terrific. I haven't seen one for quite a while. Here's my cheque for \$3.00, and keep up the good work!

Anita Lange

Dear Friends,

Have received *The Northern Woman* regional journal in the mail. Your newsletter has been sorely missed here for its information and contact but if this paper is the result of receiving no newsletters then - we rejoice!

Marvellous, good work! Your first issue in newsprint looks really fine. Please do not take us off your mailing list. Do you have time to write us how the transition came about and why? I want to also applaud your wages for housework content in the issue. Stand by for our special issue being put out by the Toronto WFH Committee.

Every distinct region in Canada should have a "regional journal". Perhaps, in your letter to us, you could write it so that other newsletters could learn from your experience so that we could print it as we send papers to all the centres.

We know you will continue for as long as you are needed. Good luck!

In Solidarity,
Pat Leslie
for The Other Woman Collective



Dear Sisters?

Being a former Northern woman, I was pleased to receive your latest issue until I read this. (this issue then, is not publishing a lengthy letter that disputes a woman's right to have an abortion, In the future *The Northern Woman* will not be a vehicle for bias ectra.) I would have wanted to read this letter you in your destructive bias have with held. I do not appreciate your making decisions for me regarding this issue, you seem to lack not only respect for life but also the opinions of other women, your sisters. The Thunder-bolt was a disgusting, ugly display. I find your present policy of condemnation and anti-life repulsive and do not wish to see another issue.

Mary Kay Purch
Brandon.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

SOCIAL WORKERS DILEMMA

The high cost of being a professional social worker is not something the average person thinks about. That the cost is less for those motivated by economic status, professional recognition and other power trips is evident, but for the truly committed, those with a real desire to meet human needs, who have to jettison many an ideal for a computerized formula, the price is exorbitant. As the young nurse is conditioned to examine every case in the cold light of reason, so the social worker can expect to be programmed to fit the system, to move among the victimized portions of society without questioning the criteria that has been formulated by a hierarchy that has in many cases never been touched by the desperation they have presumed to have all the answers for.

The good and caring social worker doesn't last, she burns out, not from a heavy case load but from the day to day struggle with a system mired in its own impotence, a system that gives neither the case-worker nor the case a right to their own individuality.

What do you do, a case-worker asks when you see a woman under the care of a psychiatrist with countless bottles of pills on her table, counter top, fridge and wherever else you could imagine. When her total income is \$179 and her rent is \$170, when her psychiatrist is not even aware of her financial predicament. When the road she has travelled has been so bitter and cruel and so familiar to you for you have been down it, what can you do when you see what, for the Grace of God could have broken you, has broken her. When

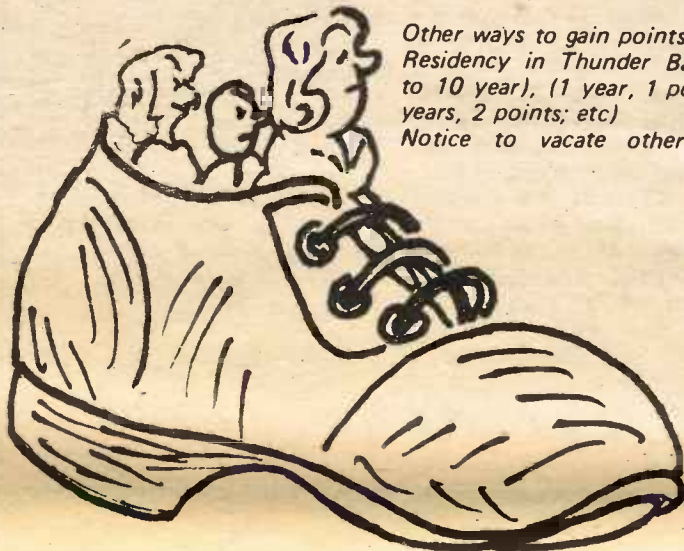
you know food is hard to come by but pills are in plentiful supply.

What do you do she asks, if you are a single parent mother, possibly handicapped, when you are faced with the departure of your last child and you realize with its leaving your basic source of income and security is gone. Would it be strange if you felt panic, fear, resentment for the years you played the role of mother? Could you be excused if you played sick to keep your child with you. What can you do if you can't work, if you're a shade too young for the pension, if your disability allowance is \$130 and you have a notice of eviction? Where can you take the furniture you have lovingly cared for, because it's the only thing you have ever owned. The answer lies in the hands of the social worker. She will find you the kind of place society thinks you deserve. The case worker is looking for this place you deserve. She's a little handicapped, of course, since if you are to eat she must find a place for not more than \$75. If she is unable to do this, she must consult the big computer and it will tell her to be objective - in other words, forget it.

The big computer is also the keeper of virtue it seems, and what goes on in the bedroom of a recipient of mother's allowance is a matter of grave concern. Straying from the straight and narrow may get you evicted if you live in low-rental housing. Your mother's allowance may be cut off, you may have to pay back a suitable amount retroactive to your fall from Grace or endure the humiliation of signing an official document stating that you

solemnly swear you will not engage in common law hanky panky. Although this machine is impervious to sentiment of any kind, gossip and innuendo will light up all its buttons and send it vomiting out eviction notices without having to justify its actions. Unfortunately we are not sufficiently civilized to have an appeal board that will hear your defence although I understand there's a half-assed promise of one laying round somewhere.

Information which is not generally made public is the following criteria used to establish eligibility for tenancy in Thunder Bay low rental housing. We believe it should be public knowledge, and perhaps it will be of interest to our readers.



There was an old woman who lived in a shoe
With all this red tape, what else could she do

OHC's Point System

Upon acquiring enough one can acquire an OHC housing unit. (the numbers listed represent the maximum number of points. Judgement of the interviewer determines the maximum or less.)

PRESENT CONDITIONS OF HOUSING:

overcrowding 5 points
disrepair 5 points
inadequate bathroom facilities 5 points

lack of recreation space 2 points

other unsatisfactory conditions 2 points
(must be specified)

Receiving the maximum points for the above can total 30 points.

Other ways to gain points:

Residency in Thunder Bay (up to 10 year), (1 year, 1 point; 2 years, 2 points; etc)

Notice to vacate other than

cause (cause being drunk parties, damage, etc. . . . 30 points.

Percent of income spent for rent:

0 to 25% no points

26% to 29% 3 points

30% to 34% 5 points

35% to 39% 10 points

40% to 49% 15 points

50% or over 20 points

Abnormal financial commitments 15 points

Separated families because of lack of accomodation 15 points

Aggravated health factors because of present accomodation 15 points

The waiting period can be used to gain points if there has been no offer for accomodation-extra points. for waiting:

1 year 1 point

2 years 2 points

3 years 4 points

4 years 6 points

5 years 8 points

6 years 10 points.

The good and caring social worker must challenge the system. When she ceases to question she has become a robot and hence a liability to human progress. We can help if we are informed as to the role she plays and the things that trouble her about that role. If you are a social worker in Northwestern Ontario, if your area of concern is people, you have something to contribute to this dialogue.

testimonies

The testimonials included here cannot convey the sense of frustration, anger, distress and in some cases acceptance that were expressed during the relating of these events. Without exception each woman asks why? why? why? why? was I treated this way?

My husband and I had one of many fights in which he became physically abusive in front of our child. I convinced him to cool off by going for a walk. I locked him out as I was very frightened. He tried to get back in by breaking the door down with an axe. I locked myself in the bedroom and phoned the operator who called the O.P.P. The police arrived and took him away. My eight year old and I managed to get a little rest. My husband arrived home at 8:30 a.m. and informed me the O.P.P. had checked him into a motel down the road for 'his' own good, and left him at his word not to bother me. I received no protection but was left to the mercy of this maniac who could have returned to carry out his threat to kill me.

My doctor recommended an I.U.D. and not the pill for birth control as I am prone to possible side effects of the pill. I became infected from the I.U.D. and the same doctor fitted me with a diaphragm. I became pregnant while wearing the diaphragm. The same doctor confirmed my pregnancy and tried to persuade me to go through with the pregnancy as he said I would be sorry later. I explained I was not prepared to marry the man by whom I became pregnant, that I had been unemployed and had just obtained a job; and that I felt I should be the one to decide whether to go through with the pregnancy or not. The doctor agreed to refer me to a psychiatrist. I had a brief conversation with the psychiatrist which did not deal with my being pregnant, however I did tell him about the birth control methods I was using. I have since been informed I am not eligible for an abortion. My doctor said if I had \$250. (which I don't), I could go to Minneapolis. I was open and honest with both doctors believing I would be able to have an abortion. I am now angry and desperate and looking for an illegal abortion. The Women's Centre was sympathetic but not able to help me.

I am a mother. I have three children. I left them eight years ago. It all happened while I was separated from my husband. At the time I was going to school and supporting myself and the kids. My husband paid the rent, this was his way of keeping tabs on me and at the same time seeing the children once a week.

The separation was quite strained at the time. One of the reasons being he kept telling me he was going to kill himself. Then he'd call his mother and tell her the same thing, she'd phone me quite upset, I'd feel worse. He was so psychotic I felt he might carry out this threat.

I refused to let him in the house to see the kids if he was by himself as I was very frightened of him. He has sent me to the hospital before with injuries requiring stitches.

One morning he came to the house around 6 o'clock. The kids were sleeping. He broke the lock on the door and came in. He jumped on me in bed. I struggled, but was trying not to make any noise because I didn't want to wake the kids. So I ended up just lying there. Afterwards when he let me up I was bleeding so I got dressed and used a pad.

My babysitter came about this time and I left the kids with her. My husband was still there. Instead of going to school I went to a friend's house and broke down. From here it was a short trip to the doctor's and then the hospital.

Two days later when I went home Vic wouldn't leave. That night after supper he still wouldn't leave so I walked out. My friend tried to get me to go back because of the kids but I was too scared to do it while he was still there. For two nights I stayed with a friend. Then I moved into a hotel.... The only time I went back to that house was to get my clothes.

I had went off the pill. When I missed my period the doctor informed me this was "normal". Later, I was told by a second doctor this was "normal" A third doctor said I had an infection. Finally after weeks of worry the fourth doctor informed me I was in fact pregnant. By my calculation approx 16 weeks. This fourth doctor and one other arranged for me to have a therapeutic abortion. I entered the hospital and was prepared for a hysterotomy, then at the last minute the fifth doctor, said the board had refused my case. I was sent home. By this late date I had to either go through with the pregnancy or go over to the States. I went to the States.

I was nineteen when I had my second child. The doctor said I was too young to have my tubes tied. He prescribed the "pill". I got pregnant again. I learned after, the "pill" is not reliable during the first month. The doctor did not tell me that. I should have used another means of birth control during this period.

A middle class housewife is just a husband away from Welfare

More TESTIMONIES

FROM WOMEN

in the next issue

MOTHER was a DYKE

by Reva

WHAT DOES IT MEAN to be a mother? What does it mean to be a lesbian mother? These two questions are fully related as motherhood itself is a large and unending task and being a lesbian just adds that much more pressure to the issue. As the mother of an 8-year-old daughter and as a lesbian who shares her life with a lover, I feel prepared to make a few comments on the subject of lesbians as mothers and related problems.

My own personal experience has been positive so far but, dire consequences could have resulted from a number of incidents. The main problem, I find, is trying to balance the fact of happiness and rightness versus the "don't tell people" attitude one must adopt with children. If it is so good and mother and her lover are so happy, why can't my child speak freely of this to any and everyone she feels like telling about it? Obviously we know the answer but how does one make it sensible to a child? I haven't fully solved this problem so far and my daughter's pronouncements could have created havoc on a number of occasions. It is only with a bit of luck that

the people she has felt free with have not freaked out or reacted badly. I am waiting for the axe to fall one day, or have we really reached the age of enlightenment?

I get many requests from my daughter. "Bring me a father." "Why don't you get married?" "I want a sister or a brother." Any divorced or widowed mother must get the same requests, but do they feel the impossibility of fulfilling such demands? I do not plan to create such an environment for her and must repeat time and again that I am happy being gay and with my woman. As she gets older, these pleas become more infrequent. As a matter of fact, I do believe she has accepted us as a couple and loves us both as parent figures. Occasionally there is still the attitude of "you are cheating me out of a father, sister, brother, a normal life" but we can cope with it.

AS with any adoptive parent, there is always the problem of acceptance on both sides. The lover must accept the fact that she, too, constitutes an authoritative figure, must be prepared to mete out punishment when needed, and love when needed. The child must learn

to respect this new authority and if possible, to love her as well. In our home, both aspects have come to maturity and there is a good balance of war and peace and a lot of loving for everyone.

How do I feel about my child choosing a gay lifestyle? Personally I don't believe we have any control over the sexual identification of our children. Weren't our parents straight? I want many things for my child: a strong sense of self worth, an ability to give and receive love, an inner peace, the ability to cope with whatever life happens to dish up. If she can incorporate all these ideals then where she sleeps, or with whom will make little difference to me.

There are many other problems related to being a lesbian mother but since they aren't my present problems I have decided not to go into them. Being a mother is no easy task. Being gay comes with its own set of problems. Being a gay mother is a combination of both. I like being a mother and I like being a dyke, too.

reprinted from *gay times*, Nov. 1975.



A WOMAN'S CREDIT UNION

We have just learned that in the city of Toronto a Credit union for women has just been formed. If we are persuaded that freedom begins and is heavily weighted on being capable and responsible in money matters we will think soberly about the implications this new venture could have on us as women who are about to consider a new independence for ourselves and hopefully for our sisters.

The concept of Credit unions are familiar to most of us and on the face of it we see no barriers to us as women in having an account there. We have learned that our account is accessible to us but we have also learned that in the final analysis our state of grace goes no further than our own balance unless a male co-signer is in our corner so to speak.

The brochure from the Metro womans credit Union gives us food for thought when it asks the question Why a Credit Union for Women Only? and states, "We as a group are poorer than men. Women are paid less and have less access to funds. Credit granting institutions discriminate against women, who as a result obtain fewer loans and build poor credit ratings. A feminist credit union will provide an alternative to the current unjust system, and will be more responsive to womans needs.

Our Philosophy

Women have been consistently denied access to economic control and knowledge. We can gain economic power by withdrawing from male dominated financial institutions and redistributing our resources among women who have suffered discrimination based on sex, race, class, sexual preference, religion, marital status or age.

Loan priorities; crafts trade, education, job training, and personal for emergency situations.

Something to think about and we will have further information in later issues as we correspond with this credit union and see how it works and is working.

THE IMAGE OF WOMEN AS OBJECT OF AGRESSION

Every day women are presented as being appropriate objects of assault by the pictures on the covers of such magazines as *Master Detective* and *Confidential Detective*, among others. Any young boy or girl or adult sees these pictures any time they go up to a magazine rack. The pictures invariably show a woman in a state of partial undress or otherwise exposed who is bound, gagged and/or threatened with a gun, knife or in some way being subjected to violence or threat. The composition of the picture and often the titles printed on the covers deliver a clear message that associates sex with violence and presents women as the object of such aggressive behavior.

We know that almost all of our attitudes about the appropriate treatment of other people and even of animals for that matter, come not from specific teaching on the part of parents and teachers, but from the day to day examples which are presented. These examples are set by the entire culture in which we grow up. Not only our parents and families' behavior, but the pictures we see, the television we watch, the behavior of strangers and playmates - all of these things become our models for what our culture believes is right and proper.

continued page 13

A HITCH TO THE HOOTCH

Though alcohol has been associated, at least traditionally, with strong male sit around the pub holding their liquor types, this is proving to be quite misleading. Women dig holding their liquor too - though many times for different (vis-a-vis men) reasons and not with the same glossy social approval men have developed for themselves.

As more information starts to drip out of the male dominated poll taking world we start to hear of a higher occurrence of female alcoholism, and we start to believe that awareness and support should be developed (along with a little understanding of cause and effect.)

Femininity has generally meant being neat, pretty and most of all in control. Now Alcohol just doesn't fit into that definition - therefore women have not been able to expose any of their drink or drug habits without suffering the most abrupt conflict of image.

We tend to hide out, slipping out to the liquor store before anyone catches us and slipping back home before anyone knows we're gone. Women tend to be so secretive that the woman next door may be an alcoholic and no one will ever find out.

Alcoholism among women has been so extremely unacceptable socially that many have gone for years without consulting a physician for general medical reasons, in fear she might disclose the addiction.

Some researchers feel that women don't constitute enough of a statistic to even be included in most studies, whereas, women are in fairly isolated situations, and studies would have to be taken to the environment familiar to them, e.g. the home. As these studies haven't been done sufficiently yet, we can't really say what percentage of alcoholics are women though indications are that there are more than the LCB and/or government would like to be held responsible for.

As indicated, information regarding women vs. liquor is limited but here are a few generalizations made which might be valid. It seems women do not start drinking to excess until relatively late 20's - 40's when the oppression of womans' role appears most stark, children are grown, the future seems too predictable. Generally a large group turns to drink as an anti-depressant, a non prescription drug showing, possibly that there was a deeper emotional need before the alcohol replaced it as the oversymptom. It is a fairly well known fact that women outnumber men radically in mental hospitals and psychiatric outpatient clinics.

Women respond best to individual attention and treatment for alcohol addiction. This is in very sharp contrast to the pattern of effective treatment for men, where group indulgence is common and group treatment most positive. Though we make

these broad generalizations we understand that anyone addicted to anything in this society has a massive chore to muster up enough motivation to change. The forces working against us push us toward self destruction and addiction and until the roots of these forces are dug up, and good health doesn't seem like an anti-social disease, we cannot expect sweeping strides toward mental and physical well being.

It has been difficult for so many of us being isolated and unsure of ourselves. Women that have come from situations such as broken homes, poverty, alcoholic parents have had a hard struggle to stay on top of it all. The Women's Liberation Movement hopefully will, or has, begun the establishment of a healthy woman image.

Now we're becoming stronger and hopefully can eventually turn to each other for support instead of the laundry hamper.

Bonnie Beckwoman
taken from *Pedestal*, Jan. 1974



thunder bolt

To Rick Smith, Thunder Bay's open line, closed mind, radio and television commentator who, IWY notwithstanding, has continued to insult women daily. His anti-women comments are too numerous, and too worthless, to record.

thunder clap

To Jane Coulson who continued to support her sister co-workers for the duration of the long strike at the Port Arthur Clinic. Jane's father is Dr. D. B. Coulson, and her mother was a scab employee at the clinic.

WOMAN and STRESS a probe

For 16 weeks, during the past year four women in Thunder Bay undertook a "Women and Stress" probe, with a grant from the Dept. of Nat'l Health and Welfare. The following information is from the detailed report, compiled in Sept. 1975. The complete report is on file at the office of The Northern Woman.

The concept of stress has to this time been almost exclusively applied to those life events of a crisis or occasional nature in terms of available research. The concept that on-going types of stress could and do lead to physical and psychological illness and breakdown has since been widely introduced by Dr. Hans Selye, currently of the University of Montreal.

Discussions with the Northern Women's Centre, the Lakehead Social Planning Council Daycare Committee, the Director of the Family Life program at Lakehead University, as well as other resource persons, led us to address the research to the problems faced by non-working mothers, with children under the age of fourteen.

It was our impression that many factors combine to create stress for these women: lack of adequate daycare; absence of spouse through death, divorce, or temporary absence in the case of bush workers, truck drivers, salesmen, lack of supportive groups such as family, close friends, or women's groups; inadequate housing situations; socioeconomic status; mobility and access to transportation; perception of role and self-concept; isolation and climate peculiar to Thunder Bay.

Our objectives in developing a research design in this area was then to obtain descriptive data on what conditions presently exist with women who have children in Thunder Bay, and to determine the nature of any stressful situations. In addition we felt that it would be useful to attempt to evaluate the function and effectiveness of community agencies dealing with these women, and discover what services, if any, existed to aid with stress reduction.

It is the intent of this study to make a plea for more research to be directed to the everyday situations that women deal with and perceive as stressful in negative or troublesome ways. It is our hypothesis that daily distress situations may not have the magnitude of "life change" or "life crisis" events, but are of significant importance in the illness behavior and health behavior of women. There is also the suggestion that daily stress may have a greater and more intense cumulative effect than crisis stress. The popularization of Transcendental Meditation, Bio-feedback, Yaga, Massage, health foods, physical fitness and many other approaches to the more relaxed, healthy approach to living, all seemed aimed at reducing the stresses (distresses) of living. Any or all approaches may be useful to individuals, however it is the intention of this study to identify through examining what women per-

ceive as stressors of everyday living. Once these are identified approaches to deal with them can be suggested, alternatives offered, preparation and internalization and socialization of these means presented. Individuals then have the options to actively integrate their lives in a more comfortable way.

The inherent difficulty of measuring the physiological effects of everyday stress situations over a period of time, caused the reliance for stress information to be the self-disclosure of the respondent "feeling upset". The incidence of headaches, increased heartbeat, mood change, depression, seems to indicate an accurate subjective reporting of physiological effect. Respondents often used the terminology "My nerves are bad when.... happens", "I don't seem to have enough energy", as well as reports of itching, hives, skin eruptions, or scratching and stomach aches. Women reported when they felt a case of "nerve" coming on they did such and such. The respondents seemed to want to change or make more effective ways of reducing stressful situations. A common example was "Yelling" at their children which may have resolved the immediate situation with the children, but created stressful feeling about themselves.

Data collection was done through the interviewing process. A total of 352 valid interviews were obtained.

Respondents judgements of their own physical health, mental and emotional health, and physical fitness is totally subjective. Interviewers often felt the women responding were either unaware or unable to admit or recognize her own image. The most common was being overweight. Table 2 is the respondents self rating.

It would have been more useful to have recorded the number, type and frequency of illness and visits to a doctor over the past year than the broad rating used in this questionnaire.

The criteria for development of the stress profile will be concerned with the negative stress. The interviewers explained to the women that a response of "never" meant the situation caused no noticeable effect on their mood. A response of "seldom" meant that when the situation occurred there was a noticeable but small change in mood, physical activity or behavior. A response of "sometimes" meant the situation caused very noticeable effect on their mood, etc. A response of often meant a disturbing change in mood, etc.

The raw data reveals the details of each situation in raw score terms. For the development of the profile a mean was determined from the scores of all those that responded with some stress to that particular situation. Table 3. The intensity score is the median of all scores for that particular situation.

Table 2

	POOR	FAIR	AVERAGE	GOOD	VERY GOOD
Mental and emotional health	12	23	108	132	69
Physical fitness	36	55	138	82	34
Physical health	7	13	92	115	119

Table 3 *

STRESS PROFILE

Ranking of stressors as per Women and Stress Questionnaire

Stressor	Mean frequency	Median intensity
Children quarreling	2.88	2.39
Disciplining of children	2.47	2.10
Children's bedtime	2.47	1.68
Daily homemaking and child care	2.39	1.72
Preparing supper	2.35	1.62
Preparing for special occasions (Christmas, birthdays etc.)	2.22	1.78
Supper time	2.19	1.61
Winter	2.17	1.79
Facing another day (getting up)	2.16	1.32
Changes in the weather	2.13	1.41
Spouse late for supper	2.13	2.09
Obligations to family	2.07	1.46
Child's-children's relationship with school or teacher	2.04	1.71
Discussion about money	2.03	3.12
Lack of privacy	1.99	1.78
Fear of being alone	1.99	1.64
Children returning from school	1.98	1.24
Obligations to self	1.97	1.61
Keeping supper waiting for spouse	1.96	2.08

* out of a total of 38

CONTINUED on page 6

WOMEN AND STRESS

continued

Daily stress events listed on the questionnaire were gathered from conversations with women's groups in the community and a small pretest sample conducted. The collected data appears to suggest that although the stressors frequency of impact on the respondents lives is relatively small the occurrence of the stressors is on an ongoing or daily basis. These stressors continually demand adaptive behavior in order to maintain some semblance of order in living processes. From this observation it can be inferred that daily stress may have an accumulative effect on the individuals ability to adapt and thus lead to a breakdown in physical or mental health. Unfortunately conversations with resp. were not recorded in detail, however there was agreement among the interviewers that the probability of at least 50% of the respondents have at sometime sought help (usually their doctor) for depression or frustration in coping with their lives. That most of these women had received either tranquilizers or "pep" pills as a crutch to help them cope. The women expressed to us their dislike of using pills and voluntarily stopped taking them. It is interesting to note that taking prescribed medication is the least used stress reducing behaviour.

The ranking of stress reducing mechanisms appears in Table 4. Many women gave their own other behaviours they observed about themselves or ways they reacted to stress. A complete list is in Table 5

The control of the stress situation in a passive response is usually external to the individual. The stressor may not be recognized or accepted, being in some instances an awareness of "something is bothering me" kind of feeling. Everyday psycho-social stressors may be perceived as too unimportant or threatening to admit to oneself or persons one interacts with. During the interviews this was mentioned innumerable times, "I can't tell my husband I hate supper time" "Who can I tell I sometimes hate my kids, husband, parents, in laws etc." "How can I tell my husband the demands of taking care of the house and kids is too much for me to handle sometimes." The kids are always fighting, I must not be a very good mother." From the stress reducing mechanisms it appears that "talking things over with spouse" is the most frequent stress reducing respons, it may not be the most useful. Legitimization of daily psycho-social stressors needs further research.

The mean number of stressors for all respondents is 19.0. The mean number of stress reducing behaviors is 19.8. No inference or correlations are made between the two scores. One male houseperson insisted he was a mother and wanted to fill out the questionnaire. His wish was complied with and the data kept separate. It is interesting to note that his perceived stress is almost identical to the stress profile developed from women respondents. His total number of stressors is 19.0 and the total number of stress reducing behaviors is 17. Men who were at home during the interviews did also mention their own feeling of being left out because "I have stress too."

MORNINGS I HATE



GOING ON THE BUS TO WORK I HATE.



WORK I HATE.



COMING HOME FROM WORK I HATE.



FEIFFER

SOMETIMES I THINK...



WHAT A RELIEF TO ESCAPE ALL THIS AND GET MARRIED.



AND THEN I REMEMBER....

I AM MARRIED.

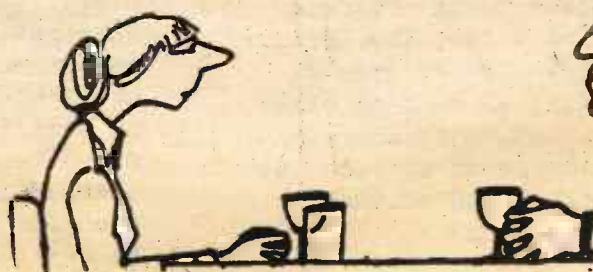


TABLE 4 *

Stress Reducing Behaviors Profile

Behavior	Mean frequency
Talk with spouse	3.24
Yell at children	2.96
Become depressed	2.95
Cry	2.88
Headaches	2.87
Drink coffee	2.82
Talk with someone other than family member	2.65
Smoke cigarettes	2.61
Talk with children	2.57
Yell at spouse	2.57
Take a bath or shower	2.55
Do housework	2.50
Sleeplessness	2.41
Heart beat quickens, nervous	2.35
Eat	2.26
Read	2.26
Watch TV	2.19

* out of a total of 32

In the process of doing the interviews, the interviewers were often admitted into the home with "you sure came to the right house," or it's about time someone was concerned about housewives,". An anecdote that seems to reveal a gross lack of self awareness was reported. The respondent willingly and quickly responded to the questionnaire, little seemed to bother or upset the women according to her responses, everything was fine, no upsets over anything in her life. She was extremely obese and after the questionnaire was completed, the woman consumed an entire bag of cookies. During the cooky eating the resp. gave an intense self-disclosure of all the things that really upset her. The interviewer was in conversation with the resp. for two hours. The questionnaire for this woman was not included in the data as it was obviously meaningless after the intense disclosure.

TABLE 5 *

Respondents self disclosed behaviors for reducing stress

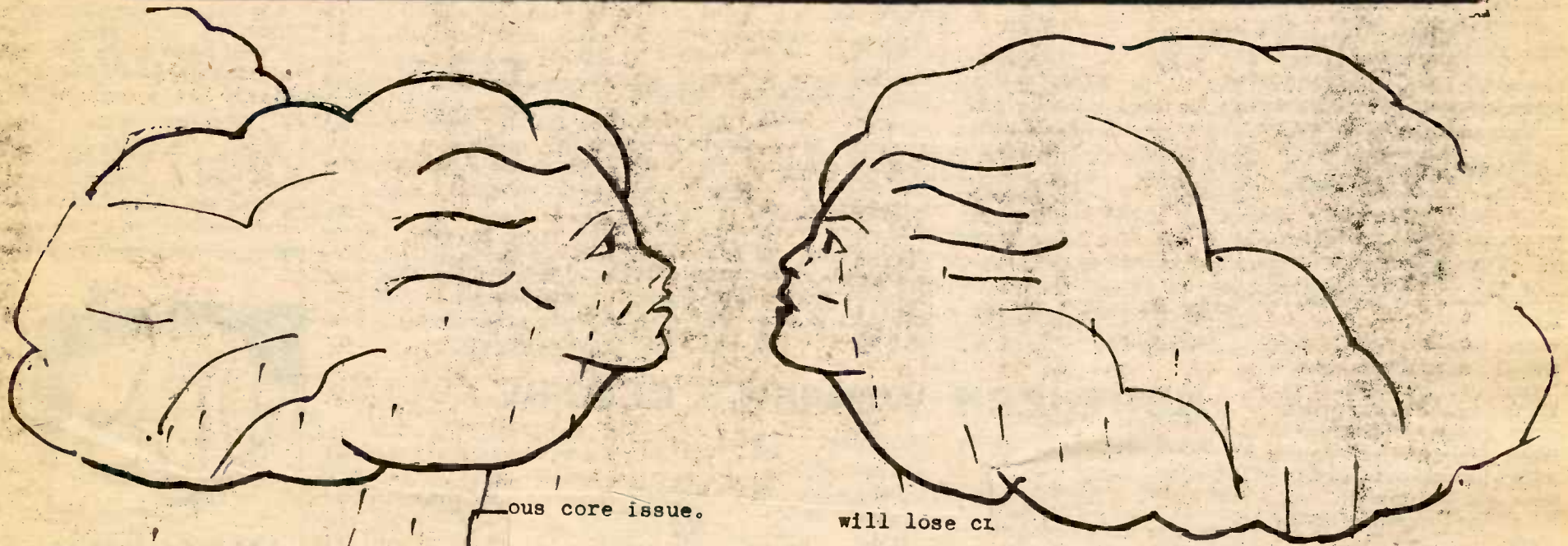
Behavior	# of women
Be alone to think, daydream	26
Religious readings, church, dial-a-message	7
Watch soap operas	4
Listen or play music	5
Visit with friends	8
Meditate or do yoga	5
Run away	4
Bite finger nails	4
Lose temper, scream	5

*out of a total of 17

The women in this survey were asked to indicate whether any of a presented list of services would be useful in assisting them in coping or reducing stress in their lives. Table 7. An observation that the top four stressors on the stress profile relate to interactions with children, yet the desire for parent education courses is wanted by less than half of the 352 resp. Is this a reflection on the supposed thought that women are supposed to know how to "mother" and admitting difficulty in relating with their children and seeking assistance is to reinforcing of feelings of inadequacy.

The women surveyed appear to be generally satisfied with their role in life. It should be noted that disstress is not necessarily an indicator of unhappiness or dissatisfaction. Women know and expect stress in their lives, the problem seems to be to learn to accommodate the stress so it can be lived with in a responsible manner.

POETRY



ous core issue.

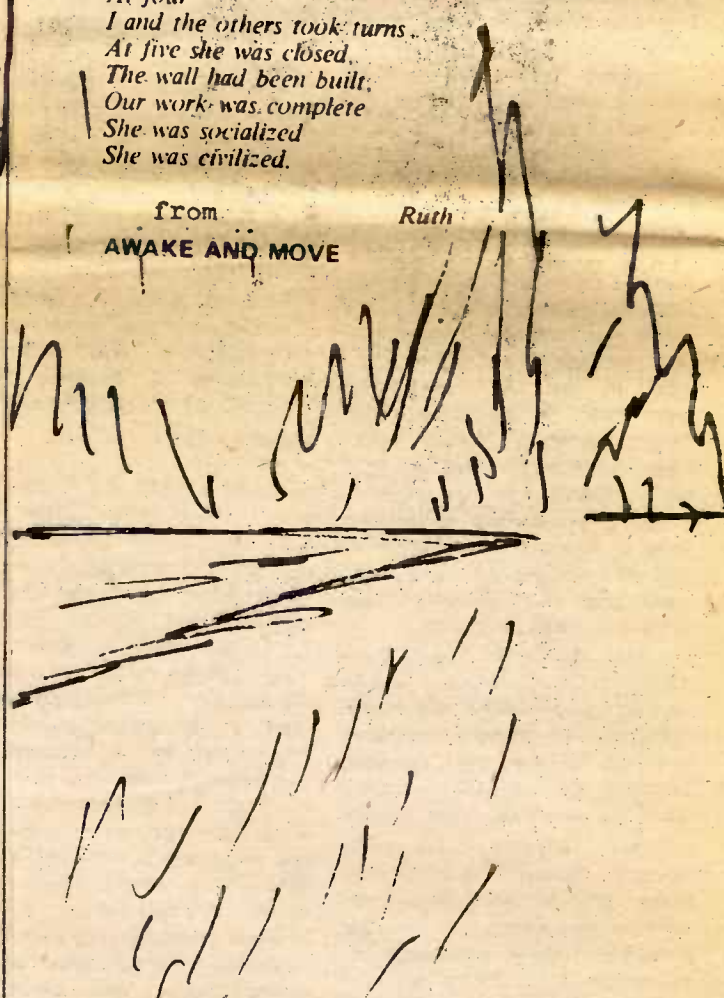
will lose ci

MY CHILD

The destruction of my child
was gradual.
At one she was a flower
Blooming, smiling, guileless.
At two
She danced when she walked
At three
Already I had built a wall be-
tween us
At four
I and the others took turns.
At five she was closed.
The wall had been built.
Our work was complete
She was socialized
She was civilized.

from Ruth

AWAKE AND MOVE



TO A PEACE ROSE

One day when I was feeling
blue
(there wasn't one thing I could do
that didn't end up wrong)
'Twas years ago, the kids were
small,
For heaven's sake, how they could
bawl.
The house looked like a wind
went through
And scattered each thing which
was to.
Then in my garden I did see
A miracle just meant for me.
A Rose in bloom - a perfect
Sight
Like God had whispered, "It's
alright."
Long after leaves and petals
went
I remembered beauty, heaven
sent.

Dorothy Redford



THE CLINIC STRIKE

Our sisters stand
outside the warm
with lips and fingers blue
no chance it seems
for justice now
they bend before sacred cow
that holds our health
at ransom.
Our sisters cry
into a wind
that shatters
human silence
and ponder well
a spirit call
to violence.
Break them, smash
them to the wall
these idols of our ages
give them over
to the wind
they are unwritten pages.
for flesh and blood
are pilloried
upon the cross of need
when even sacred cows
have leave
to ride a horse of greed.

Gert



if we try
to write
what we think
you want
us to write,
doesn't that
get us into
this whole
mind-reading
thing, and
open up
a can of
WORMS

CLASSIFIED

30 Words free for Women's
Publications, Services/Jobs,
Place to live. Sent to the
NorthernWoman 316 Bay St.
Thunder Bay "P" or phone
345-5841.

Wanted women with car-
pentry skills phone 345-5841
or 622-4637.

Every Woman's Almanac
1976 - Appointment calen-
dar and handbook available
from the Women's Press 305,
280 Bloor St. W. Toronto. A
List of their publications is
available on request.

Typist - gestetner operator,
needed to work on I.W.Y.
Herstory Project, starting
Jan. 26, 1976. Phone Liz
Jobbitt, 939-2057.

The IWY Council is publish-
ing a directory of women's
organizations in N.W.O. Any
groups wishing to be listed
contact Liz Jobbitt, RR 1,
Thunder Bay "F"

Toronto Women's Bookstore,
85 Harbord St., Toronto, has
books, has books for, by and
about Women, non-sexist
children's books, women's
records, posters, buttons.
Write enclosing a stamp for
the mail order catalogue.

nard
r

ABOUT US

In the last issue, a history of the NORTHERN WOMEN'S CENTRE, what has been happening, and possibly where the centre is headed, was promised.

There are three separate parts of N.W.C. being: it's past, dating back to a three day conference in the spring of 1973 at which time approximately 50 women decided on the last day, that they saw the need and were willing to put energy into the formation of a women's centre.

The second part of the centre's being happened when a "place" the 2nd floor of the YMCA became available, after about a year of meetings in Wesley Church. It was to be a space for women to learn, share, give and receive support in a non-competitive atmosphere.

A full time co-ordinator was hired; a library of books and pamphlets, supplemented by a special collection from the Brodie St. Library, was set up. A separate space for children, which later became a Child Care Co-operative, was made available. The centre became the meeting place for the newsletter, general and business meetings, counseling, and socializing.

Funding from Secretary of State was received, however, we continued our own fund raising by selling books, buttons, posters, raffles and flea market participation. The money we raised ourselves was rewarding, but in no way could we have functioned without money from the government.

We were already in high gear with workshops, speakers etc., when in Dec. 1974, six people were hired to co-ordinate different activities, through L.I.P. The community and existing social service agencies were already aware of our willingness to give support to any and all women needing it and now more than ever women turned or were referred to us in increasing numbers. We had in effect become another social service agency, albeit underpaid, unrecognized and frustrated that the existing agencies used us, but did not take us very seriously when we tried to take a more compassionate role towards women in a crisis situation. In spite of warnings from women who could see how we were being taken advantage of, we continued to "never say no" to a woman in a crisis situation. After all we were being paid, taxpayers money at that, and we had to prove ourselves, to ourselves and the community. Didn't we?

Problems during this time were many. Unequal work loads, particularly for the Crisis Co-ordinator, and at times all the staff, were discussed and re-discussed and seldom permanently resolved. Our continual efforts to encourage new women to become involved (in spite of sacrificing principles) met with little success. Volunteers and the collective fell away leaving the work and decision making to the "paid" staff. What had happened to our original aims and objectives for the centre? Or had we really any? "Support for women" was such a generalized interpretation of a women's centre, easy to agree to but difficult to implement because

it does not define goals nor ideologies.

However, in spite of operating in an energy draining vacuum, this period on L.I.P. was a very busy one. There were workshops, film nights, innumerable public speaking engagements; speakers came to talk to us and meetings, meetings, meetings; the format changing from general to business to policy. They were "all women are welcome meetings", however, it has taken us up to the present time to realize that

NORTHERN WOMEN'S CENTRE

no matter what you call it, it is not a good introduction for a new member and also that most people do not necessarily want to share in the responsibility of the group. Most women ceiving this type of introduction to the centre did return.

We hosted a national conference of women's centres were given credit for initiating the seminar that led to formation of the I.W.Y. coordinating council, recognized and proved the need for housing for women.

International Women's to small sons needing brought with it more direction a school was more commitments, but a copy of the Public this time we had already spt was obtained and ourselves too thin. The nd necessary steps crisis centre functioned f, by one. An Unorgan-few months, then due to l Section was formed of support from volunteers a public meeting of enforcement. agencies, held at Mrs. Holmes physicians, had to be Mrs. Neill served the continued. a CARAL groumonths as Treasurer Thunder Bay had been stal years as Chairman. separate from W.C. with ard was interdenom-continuing to dispense ith Roman Catholics, control, VD, and abortion iple and Presbyterians mation.

In June 1975 L.I.P. fun roll drawn up with was finished, the centre notices sent out and not. The phone continues realised the Board ring the mail arrived in bun There were letters to ans petitions to circulate, rec for speakers and workshop fill, appointments to put in Women continued to phonesociety come to the centre, mainly us dis-information or to encountat longs sympathetic listener. Mostl as a the staff had to look for of blood work to support themstfor that but remained committed, ty when what they could when days be-could, in fact many of how far original core group remjirection centrally involved. Most oThat we organizational and workd ended sponsibility was carried bylves and women and most were lit for, is ning to wonder where e of be-were going and why. Thst core. Bay's community of wt women had not taken the centre ive with, own. We puzzled over honest apathy of women. We kns to find, were good women, comp on both ate and caring, compromis without times in order not to al women in the communit to the majority of wom were still those "wome bers".

The women's centre hi come a part of what M Adams calls the "comj trap": that pervasive philosophy that believe women's primary socia tion is to provide ten and compassion...the ir notion that the needs o should be woman's m not exclusive concern".

The needs of others

had been our major concern; meanwhile leadership women had burned out and left the centre as their personal energy and commitment was not being replenished. The demands made on the centre left little time nor energy to support the very women who needed revitalization the most, ourselves.

As part of the women's movement we seemed to be growing intellectually, emotionally and politically, (rape and housework are political) in a direction seldom compatible to relationships with friends, husbands, lovers and employers. So, on the one hand we were dealing with the frustration, desperation and hopelessness of women's lives, lobbying to change oppressive legislation, and on the other hand strug-

without a phone for three weeks. This time gave the few of us still actively involved a sense of relief, a breathing space, a time to re-evaluate priorities, not just for the centre but for ourselves.

This re-evaluating process is still happening and to date no commitments to programs or activities involving the centre as a whole has happened. Instead personal commitments to the newsletter, IWY council, CARAL, free from the pressure of being representative of a body of women, are given.

Most importantly, for the core group involved, is the centre's function as a place to have some fun, laughter, long overdue relaxation. Does the woman's movement really have no sense of humour?

gling to direct and control our own changing lives.

Many women had, as a result



Important, also is the centre's function as a nurturing, energizing place, where we can

ather and be in touch elings and gut react- ch other, share and solve some of the our lives.

y the centre will be accommodate the the new women for "education" and n who have moved he limits of the he safe, the known, till need their sisters ce that the risk and all worthwhile.

was ready for the busi educating children,

By this time St. An Presbyterian Church, th Main St. was closed, sundry expenses out sentable for a class room, nning Secretary of iture and books were cy, and have a volun- and a teacher hired person on a limited began with 18 pupils. A the government's soon the Presbyterian C was overcrowded and buildings pressed into serv class rooms.

In 1937, a Public Schor built and enlarged to c the size from 4 to 8 class in one year. Then follow change from a Public Sch a Continuation School eventually a High School.

e that door or put what is plainly now the whole person. is open ended and limits, and I sub- is not the end of

at should concern eginning of a larger ch is beginning to r minds eye. We the vision to see beyond our differ- goal that is yet to will be won by the take the women's iously and have in ight us inch by m a position of le.

these reasons I the IWY council will hold another arly spring, where t to discuss what done for us and to capture those fine ur founding sem- talk freely about that were too s that were unreal- at were too heavy ecommit ourselves j a logical deter- to raise the con- ourselves and our ver and whoever . I am petitioning lers to phone me the office on Bay l me if you would seminar.

In Sisterhood Gert Beadle

tight money policy, it is doubtful women's programs will be considered as worthy of funding, so we will make do with what we have for as long as we can.

The location of the centre - westfort area - does not make us as accessible for dropping in as did the "Y", however, June is there Tuesdays and Fri. 10-3 and welcomes anyone who cares to come around. Meetings are still every second Thur., Jan. 22, Feb. 5, Mar. 4, 18 etc. They are still "all women welcome" meetings. Could be a rap session, film speaker, or a game of charades. Hope to see you.



Self-evaluation on the part of centres is as important if not more so, than any other type of evaluation for the Women's Movement at the moment. Through this process, more women will gain experience in setting up manageable priorities, and so lessen the sense of frustration in seeming always to be in a position of trying to destroy a brick wall when your only tool is a darned needle.

Jane Taylor

bloodshed will take more love than either sex has shown thus far, yet that is the magic ingredient; and for the good of the world, we must find it. There is a new chicken coming out of the egg these days, still prepared to love and forgive but not regardless. We who were born to believe we must wear the mask of deceit to be acceptable in this man's world, will cling to the trap-pings that hide us from ourselves and others; but the us we saw in Landfor's presentation cannot be broken without knowing how much we are responsible for our own chains.

Women's liberation is...



"the more the merrier"

Women's liberation is...



everyone dancing together

Dear Sisters:

Your new format and broader scope is most appealing and just what we need to provide communication between all women in our area, no matter what their role or philosophy. So often we bask in the fellowship of sisters who share our ideals and cease to make the effort to understand or reach out to those with whom we disagree.

Over the past couple of years I have become increasingly distressed over the polarization that has taken place between women involved in the 'right to life' movement and those who uphold the ideal of 'a wo-

Letters

man's right to choose'. We are all sisters, but it is obvious that women on both sides of this issue believe most strongly that they are right. As in any situation where strong commitments have been made and compromise is virtually impossible, the credibility of the individual involved is threatened and little else they have to say is taken seriously because it is overshadowed by the monstrous core issue.

Although the pros and cons of abortion are of vital importance to every woman, they are, in fact, only one of many areas where the rights of women are being infringed upon

and where supportive and constructive dialogue is needed to keep us united and working for similar goals. This issue needs to be discussed and there are many vehicles through which it can be brought to the attention of the public. It is my fear, however, that the Northern Woman will polarize so many of its readers that the many other areas of concern to women which also need discussion will lose credibility.

As I said earlier, your paper reaches out to all women and I look forward to reading about and hearing from women who share my views as well as those with whom I would differ. I sincerely hope, however, that the cool refreshing waters of this excellent publication will not be muddied by becoming the forum for destructive and fruitless haranguing.

Yours in positiveness,
Janet Owen



Do you want us to write what we think, or what we think you want us to write



if we try to write what we think you want us to write, doesn't that get us into this whole mind-reading thing, and open up a can of worms

We worked on this issue:

Gert Lynne Maureen Laurie
Robin Noreen Doreen Catherine
Sharon Estelle Ruth Bev

SUGGESTED READING

To Deliver Me of My Dreams - Elizabeth Avakian

Rape: The First Sourcebook For Women - Noreen Connell and Cassandra Wilson

Law Is Not For Women - June Caldwell

You Can Go From There from Here Shirley Maclean

Women and Madness - Phyllis Chesler

Now It's my Turn - Joyce Beaton

Sisterhood is Powerful - Robin Morgan

MORE SUGGESTED READING

Future of Motherhood Jessie Bernard
When Morning Breaks B. Aptheeker
Canadian Establishment

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30 Words free for Women's Publications, Services/Jobs, Place to live. Sent to the NorthernWoman 316 Bay St. Thunder Bay "P" or phone 345-5841.

Wanted women with carpentry skills phone 345-5841 or 622-4637.

Every Woman's Almanac 1976 - Appointment calendar and handbook available from the Women's Press 305, 280 Bloor St. W. Toronto. A List of their publications is available on request.

Typist - gestetner operator, needed to work on I.W.Y. Herstory Project, starting Jan. 26, 1976. Phone Liz Jobbitt, 939-2057.

The IWY Council is publishing a directory of women's organizations in N.W.O. Any groups wishing to be listed contact Liz Jobbitt, RR 1, Thunder Bay "F"

Toronto Women's Bookstore, 85 Harbord St., Toronto, has books; has books for, by and about Women, non-sexist children's books, women's records, posters, buttons. Write enclosing a stamp for the mail order catalogue.

Dear Readers

Those of us that formed the collective for this journal recognized the trap the issue of abortion could set and hoped to avoid it. Any notion that we were cool and impartial viewers of the human scene would be hypocrisy in the truest sense, the very nature of our level of consciousness compels us to a biased approach. Our commitment to the concept of sisterhood demands this journal to bleed with and for all women regardless of their point of view. To question the motive of bias is to question conviction and conviction is the stuff of the soul and needs no apology. It follows therefore that all bias has its roots in well intentioned soil and must be viewed in the context of healthy exchange.

An ancient Chinese philosopher said (there was a time when men knew, before men told him what he ought to know) perhaps that is the blessed state we wish for women, to have the surety that removes them from all biased manipulation so that personal choices are made between them and their own conscience.

We value your letters and if they are written without rancour, with the same respect we intend to show you your difference of opinion is no barrier to mutual understanding. We will not however play the game of confrontation with anyone, our position is well known. We are in good company with the status of women council and other progressive thinkers.

If we are to use Women In Distress as our central theme we cannot skirt the issue, we can however not lend ourselves to the bitterness the subject provokes. The point in Janet Owens' letter is well made, we have taken it seriously and hope that you our readers will do the same.

To Mary Kay of Brandon you are quite right, to take a shot at a sister because she took a shot at her sisters is not good but it only goes to show we are not above the self-righteousness we deplore in others. Hang in there Mary Kay we progress. EDITORS

Profile on Pioneer Women

A profile of a pioneer woman, submitted by Ginger Ball of Geraldton.

Mrs. Dorothea Neill

Mrs. Neill arrived in Geraldton in 1935 and took up residence in a small three roomed log cabin down the train tracks from town.

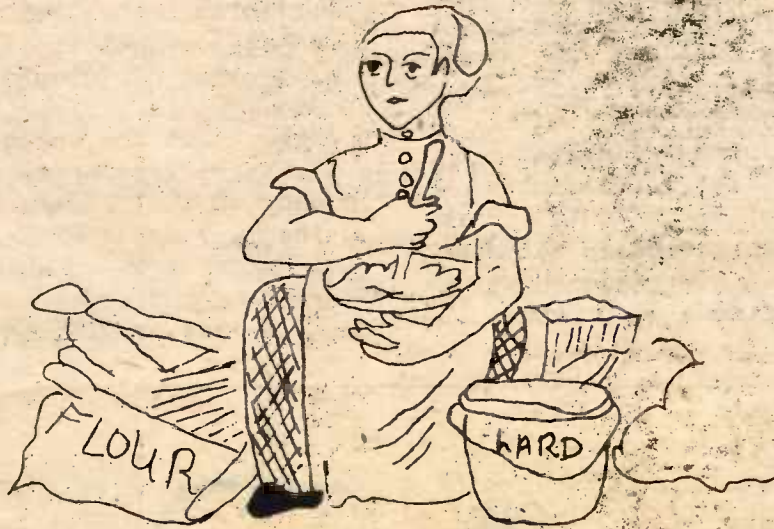
She was fortunate that she had a log cabin with a floor in it, many people didn't. She also had a water pump in the kitchen which produced a pint of water at a time before it needed a rest. Wash water was carried from the creek and heated on the large wood cook stove. A gas lantern provided the only light for the small home.

By 1936, the family moved to the present home at the corner of Fourth Ave. S.W. and Second St. W. This home also had a pump in the kitchen which served until the water main was laid along Fourth ave. It was in 1937 that electricity was available and Mrs. Neill was able to make use of her perfectly good washing machine which had sat idle for some time due to the lack of electricity while she washed the families clothing on the wash board. Running water finally came to that area and a great wash day was observed with no water to carry.

Mrs. Neill was instrumental in many projects within the community. She worked for the establishment of the educational system, the building of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. The beginning of the Public Library and the Music Festival.

Geraldton was a thriving Community long before the Provincial Government recognised that fact. The people within the community met each need as it occurred and worked out their own remedy to the situation.

Welcome Geraldton



With two small sons needing an education a school was necessary. A copy of the Public School Act was obtained and studied and necessary steps taken one by one. An Unorganized School Section was formed following a public meeting of 25 people held at Mrs. Holmes restaurant. Mrs. Neill served the first four months as Treasurer and then 7 years as Chairman. The first board was interdenominational with Roman Catholics, Jewish people and Presbyterians as members.

An assessor was appointed and a tax roll drawn up with assessment notices sent out and some funds realised the Board

was ready for the business of educating children.

By this time St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, then on Main St. was closed, ^{to make} presentable for a classroom. Furniture and books were ordered and a teacher hired. School began with 18 pupils. All too soon the Presbyterian Church was overcrowded and other buildings pressed into service as class rooms.

In 1937, a Public School was built and enlarged to double the size from 4 to 8 classrooms in one year. Then followed a change from a Public School to a Continuation School and eventually a High School.

Library

During the 1940's it was brought to Mrs. Neill's attention that a Public Library would be an asset to the community. A copy of the Library Act was obtained and studied and step by step the instructions were followed leading to the opening of a Library in 1947. To get permission to start a Library one must have a petition signed by the people of the community and present said petition to the elected officials. This was done in December 1945.

The First Library operated from the High School Annex, January 1947. Later it moved to a small building at the corner of Main St. and Fourth Ave. S. Still later it operated from the upstairs of the Post Office (during the 50's) followed by the last move in 1967, when the Centennial Library opened in the permanent building.

Music Festival

The Music Festival Committee had Mrs. Dorothea Neill as the first Chairman. The first Festival was conducted in the Ukranian Hall, at the corner of Hogarth Avenue and First St. W. The Rotary Club later took over the sponsorship of the Festival. The Curling Rink Hall was used for years for the Festival. The High School Auditorium was later used for the Festival and most recently the Auditorium of B.A. Parker Public School. For 28 years the Music Festival has played an important part in the lives of young people in the Town of Geraldton.

The Educational Institutions, the Presbyterian Church, the Public Library and the Music Festival, are all living testimony to the efforts of Mrs. Dorothea Neill.

Mrs. Neill's children have grown and she is many times a grandmother. She enjoys her retirement years spending the summers in Geraldton and the cold winter months in warmer climates.

T.V. REVUE

Vivaca Landfors, I am a woman

A beautiful, magic, painful hour of self realization. To even consider the possibility that one woman in the viewing audience did not see herself in the presentation, fills me with despair at the extent of our self deception. From innocence to the passion that hangs us high and good we saw ourselves bought and sold, used and discarded, loved and loving, hated and hating, tormented and tormenting, and always underneath it all stuck with the knowing. That we should want to be Marilyn Monroe when the mad woman of Chailot is so near our natural bend, is the mystery of our generation; that we

should want to mince about in all the chain mail that society has fashioned, to make us disavow that spirit in us that longs to stride as purposeful as a panther with the smell of blood in the wind, to settle for that sleeping beauty mentality when Dianna the huntress bays beneath our skin, shows how far we have gone in the direction of peace at any price. That we have done it for love and ended up hating both our selves and those we think we did it for, is the natural consequence of betraying our innermost core. That men find honest women almost impossible to live with, and that women find honest men almost impossible to find, calls for new thinking on both sides. To do it without

bloodshed will take more love than either sex has shown thus far, yet that is the magic ingredient, and for the good of the world, we must find it. There is a new chicken coming out of the egg these days, still prepared to love and forgive but not regardless. We who were born to believe we must wear the mask of deceit to be acceptable in this man's world, will cling to the trappings that hide us from ourselves and others; but the us we saw in Landfors's presentation cannot be broken without knowing how much we are responsible for our own chains.



SUPPORT SUSAN SAXE! T-shirts and posters, "Sometimes It's Very Hard for a Woman to Make Herself Heard"; shirts for adults in blue or gold, S,M,L,XL; children, S,M,L, gold only--\$4 postpaid; posters, red, blue, black on yellow, \$3 postpaid or 3 for \$8. Photo-poster, "I intend to keep on fighting . . ." black on red, \$3 or 3 for \$8. Saxe poem, "Self Defense," 75c, 3 for \$2. Free leaflet about Susan on request. Order from: Susan Saxe Defense Fund, c/o N.I.G., 1427 Walnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19102. Additional contributions for her Boston defense gratefully received!

Sometimes it's very hard for a woman to make herself heard!

THE SOCIALIZED PENIS

CONT'D

we have dealt with so far that isn't normally seen or even partly exposed. Also because you knew that when this was achieved, the girl really liked you, and that getting the bra unhooked and off would not be far away. Maybe as soon as next week. When older, the same night. And you also sensed that you were getting closer to the core of sexuality (excuse the geographically mixed metaphor). Then began the assault on the crotch, in steps similar to those of the battle of the breast. You caressed her hip, worked around to her ass, pulled her close to announce (if it hadn't already been discovered) the existence of your penis and give it some pleasurable friction (and provide the girl's with a topic of gossip later? if you were erect). They you worked down to the side of her leg. Then the front of her thigh. Then with a deep breath, and microscopic steps, you slowly progressed toward the vaginal entrance (how many of you had imagined the entrance 4 inches higher than you found it to be?). Now here there are many variables: was it at a swim party when she only had on the bottom part of a two-piece suit, or was she wearing jeans, or did she have a skirt on? Whatever the case, you usually ended up rubbing her crotch getting your hand (as one variation of the phrase goes) in her pants. Then you sort of played around above or on top of her slit and eventually got a finger in it, and by accident or design (depending on your previous intelligence briefings) found the "magic button". And soon (usually), all hell broke loose and more than ever before, you didn't quite know what to do with yourself if fucking wasn't yet in the script.

And that pretty much covers the pre-coital scenario. Except it was described in a semi-humorous manner and, as a male, many of these events were terrifying. You, most often had to take the first step. And you could be rejected. Refused. Denied. Cold and flat. And that could hurt. Hurt bad. In your own eyes and in your male friends' eyes. Being scared to try and therefore not trying could just as easily become the subject of psychological self-punishment and social ostracism. So there was always this elementary duality: while apparently the aggressor and conqueror, you were captive to a judgment by the female who would accept or reject you.

Also important to remember is how these events were reported to/discussed with male friends after the party or date. Or gone over in your own mind, again and again, detail by detail. How every step along the initiation route was stimulating and could/did cause an erection (remember the 4-hour erections and blue balls?). How we compared notes, made tactical suggestions, commented on important signs - heavier breathing, torso writhing, aggressive hands, a more daring tongue, involvement of teeth, goose bumps, erected nipples, and when menstruation occurred or was expected to occur. Which girls like what since in those days "relationships" were short-lived and you never knew

which female you might be with another time. And if you were ever in doubt as to what came next in the scenario, your friends informed you of the specifics of the next escalation. And sometimes, if that wasn't possible, the female you were with (embarrassingly enough) let you know in any one of a number of subtle (or not-so-subtle) ways what was next on the agenda.

There were, in retrospect, many funny occasions that cropped up in this initiation process. I don't really need to talk about them because you probably have your own to tell. What stuns me now is that origins of the tragedy of sex emerge clearly from that process of socialized sexuality.

Continued next issue

WOMEN'S STRESSORS

In conclusion the study gives a picture of the daily situations that women with children are dealing with. The magnitude of the stressors does not appear large. The impact of stress on lives doesn't appear to be very intense. However, the realm of daily stress situations that are perceived or reacted to as stressful need to be explored in greater detail. There is an implication that the known relationship of major life events or life crisis to impaired psychosocial functioning and/or physical health may also be relevant to daily stressors.

TABLE 7

Would any of the following services be useful to you in coping with stress

	Yes	No
Special interest courses	231	91
Opportunity to continue education	187	126
Parent education groups	173	134
Neighborhood recreation groups	157	149
Credit counselling	99	201
Women's Centre	93	204
Marriage education courses	75	216
Drug or alcohol counselling	47	247

good numbers

to call

- The Northern Woman 345-5841
- Northern Women's Centre • 622-3989
- Women in Neighbourhoods • 622-8187
- Community Action Centre • 345-0921
- Mother's on Budgets 622-2863
- Social Services (City)... 623-2711
- Crisis Intervention 344-3571
- Family Counselling Agency 623-9596
- Legal Aid 345-1972
- Telecare 344-1192
- Smith CLINIC (alcohol & drugs) • 344-2431
- Crisis Housing 623-2711
- Human Rights Commission 475-1693
- Employment Standards Act 475-1691
- Municipal Day Care 344-3922
622-2450

Frustrated?
Have a Problem?

contact the
**COMMUNITY
ACTION CENTRE**
345.0021 or 345.0921



Canadian Association for Repeal of the Abortion Law



"The purpose of CARAL is to ensure that no woman in Canada is denied access to safe, legal abortion. Our aim is the repeal of all sections of the Criminal Code dealing with abortion, and the establishment of comprehensive contraceptive and abortion services, including appropriate counselling, across the country. We regard the right to safe, legal abortion as a fundamental human right."

I WANT TO JOIN CARAL!

NAME (Print).....Phone.....

ADDRESS.....Street.....City.....Province...

OCCUPATION.....

Name of Federal Riding or Member.....

Enclosed is my financial contribution of \$.....

(Be as generous as possible--programs like this are costly.
Minumums - individual \$5.00 - family \$10.00 - groups \$50.00
Students, senior citizens, unemployed \$1.00 minimum)

I AGREE WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF CARAL. Signature.....

Please return application & cheque to: CARAL, Box 424 (P) Cambridge, Ont. 11

HOW TO SAY NO TO STORASKA

In Oct. 1975 the Arthur St. Public Library showed the film "How to Say No to a Rapist--and Survive" by Frederic Storaska, author of the book by the same name. Only about 20 people viewed it--requests being made that the film be shown again with resource people present.

The film was brought back and was to be shown again in Dec. with a panel member present from the Northern Women's Centre.

In the meantime, the centre had received information, directed to Colleges and Universities in the States, warning women of the "Lecture-entertainment" of Storaska, who styles himself as "the nation's authority on rape" and too there was a warning that a film and a book were also being distributed.

The Feminist Alliance Against Rape Newsletter suggests that "Storaska's organization is nothing more than his booking agency. No feminists belong to or support Storaska's National Organization for the Prevention of Rape. The National Organization of Women condemns Storaska, and describes protests organized by women attending his performances on campus.

Four women from the Northern Women's Centre were allowed to preview the film before its scheduled showing. The public showing was cancelled due to inclement weather. In the opinion of the women this cancellation was fortunate as the advice offered is dangerous.

Storaska advises women not to scream or resist, but to be humble to the rapist; this is contrary to the findings of the majority of police and psychological researchers. Rapists seek out and expect vulnerable women, and often flee when they discover that their victim is not. It ignores the effectiveness of an initial, aggressive reaction which transfers the element of surprise from the victim to the rapist.

Storaska on film, was seen as that of a "performer", attractive in appearance and presentation but condescending and patronizing in attitude. To advise women never to resist the most violent, humiliating form of male aggression against women, is to ask them to return to their traditionally passive, accepting role in our society. These are the very roles from which women presently struggle to free themselves. In this sense, Storaska's film represents just one more technique of male oppression, which we as women can do without.

This film is being boycotted in other cities in Canada, and should the Library intend to show it again in Thunder Bay, we would do the same.

REVIEWS

Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape by Susan Brownmiller, Simon and Schuster, N.Y. \$10.95

Against Our Will has been described as "long awaited", "lusted after", (Time, October 13, 1975); "monumental" and "chilling" (New York Times Book Review, October 13, 1975). Since feminists working in anti-rape organizing, and other interested persons have indeed waited a long time, and somewhat impatiently for Brownmiller's book, it may be valuable for us to examine why this book about rape is being received with such interest and acclaim. Brownmiller's stated purpose in writing this work has been to give rape its history, in order that it may be denied a future; and this is where the value of the book lies.

One facet of the work of the feminist movement has been to reclaim women's history. Forgotten women figures who played key roles in documented history, writers, artists, activists, researchers, etc., have been revealed to us by feminist historians. More important, though, than the achievements of individual women, is the history of social, religious, and political movements of women which existed in the past. Further, through the study of archeology, mythology and folklore, women are beginning to unearth something of our unwritten history. Feminist writers, filmmakers, and distribution companies have attempted to disseminate knowledge of this history to contemporary women. But why? It seems that firm grounding in an historical perspective provides us with the sense of continuity and sisterhood often absent in our lives.

This is the key to the impact of Brownmiller's work. By exhaustive research and documentation, Susan Brownmiller has provided a vindication of our ideas about rape, ideas which originally stemmed for the most part from individual pain and anguish. In the past, rape and the threat of rape was perceived with terror on an individual level. The pain felt by individual women who have been raped has grown in the last five years into a mass confrontation with sexism on all levels. Brownmiller's book documents the idea that rape is a political act, used by men as a tool of oppression against women.

This is not to say that Against Our Will should be accepted with unqualified praise. The main body of the work, with its extensive documentation is extremely valuable. However contradictions are apparent and must be resolved. One of the most obvious difficulties occurs with Brownmiller's wholesale acceptance of the present criminal justice system. The idea that 50-50 integration of the criminal justice system on all levels could reverse male domination of that system is, quite simply, unrealistic. Brownmiller does not recognize the necessity of women gaining actual power, as opposed to numerical parity with men. She does not see a total restructuring of the male-dominated power structure as a concrete goal, much less a definite possibility. Furthermore, an important function of rape crisis centers is omitted by Brownmiller in her description of anti-rape organizing in Chapter 12, "Women Fight Back". The idea of crisis centers functioning as agents of change, as pressure groups confronting existing institutions, as political groups, is omitted. "any crisis centers which have been operative for a period of years have come to the realization that it is necessary to be much more than a "crisis" center, dealing with rape primarily after-the-fact. Constant contact with women who have been raped only reinforces the need for work in basic organizing for all women to eliminate the threat of rape from their lives. Since this chapter is in part a description of actions women can take to regain some measure of control over their lives, the inclusion of this concept would have been valuable for Brownmiller's readers. In light of Brownmiller's research, it seems inexcusable that the few suggestions of concrete actions she does make are so ineffectual and out of touch with reality.

Brownmiller's analysis of prostitution and rape, and her subsequent denunciation of legalized prostitution as a deterrent to rape, is accurate as it stands. However, she does not approach prostitution as a means of survival necessary to some women. She fails to make the connection between an oppressive, capitalistic economic system and the reality of women selling their bodies in order to survive. In general, the issue of class is dealt with inconsistently throughout the book. It is necessary to read the entire work carefully in order to piece together Brownmiller's overall perspective. For example, in Chapter 6, "The Police-Blotter Rapist," she uses police statistics of convicted rapists to present a profile of a rapist as primarily lower class. It is not until the last paragraph of this chapter that Brownmiller even alludes to the fact that rapists come from other than lower class backgrounds. Then she does so in an indirect fashion with references to Greek mythology.

The concept of the rapist as a product of a "subculture" of violence is also put forth in this chapter. The term subculture is in itself extremely misleading, as it implies a culture distinct from the main, or dominant culture. Rapists are a product of the dominant culture, and Brownmiller herself provides extensive evidence for this, in her discussions of movies, songs, pornography and other elements of our culture which degrade women.

Against Our Will is undoubtedly a work of major importance, and should be read with care by all women who are working now to eliminate rape from our society. Also, this book has the potential to challenge those entrenched attitudes in our society which have nurtured the commission of rape as an act of power. As such, Against Our Will goes a long way towards Brownmiller's goal: "to deny rape its future".

Feminist Alliance Against Rape Newsletter

by Nancy McDonald

Thunder Bay has not had a Rape Crisis Centre for some time now. Regrettably it closed after being operational only a few months. Money commitment from volunteers, lack of support from police, physicians, etc. contributed to its demise. However, Thunder Bay has a real need for a centre and any interested individuals or groups that would like to put time and energy into initiating one are asked to call N.W.C. 622-3989.

It is not the police, the courts
or men who
will stop
rape
women, will stop rape



ABORTION? IN CANADA

A BRIEF ON THE ABORTION QUESTION IN CANADA

Prepared by the Humanist Association of Ottawa, June 1975.

Our purpose here is to examine briefly evidence available on some aspects of abortion on the world scene, and to bring out two facts which we feel Canadians need to face squarely before there can be any resolution to this ongoing national controversy.

The first type of evidence has to do with the prevalence of abortions. One can go to a number of places for reasonable evidence concerning numbers, we shall use the most direct, a survey by International Planned Parenthood Federation in 1973. This survey provides the first fact: in most countries of the world the abortion ratio lies between about 1:8 (one abortion for 8 live births) and 2:1, whether legal or illegal, with a world average of 1:2. To-day 60% of the world's population lives in countries where abortion is allowed for medico-social reasons. In the remaining countries the fact that abortion is illegal has not produced a low abortion ratio: it is often very high, about 1:1 in Italy and parts of Latin America for example. It is also useful to recognize that the prevalence of abortion is not new. For example, a ratio of 1:2 was quoted for the state of Michigan in the last century, and abortion was unregulated in Britain from about 1300-1800.

What are the consequences of this world pattern for Canada to-day? Obviously the frequently heard argument that abortion amounts to murder must be considered unrealistic, because a large proportion of the women on earth would then have to be murderers (the average family has two to three children, so that each woman on the average must have one abortion). Secondly, the concern often expressed about the increase in the abortion ratio since 1970, as revealed by Statistics Canada (1:8 in 1973), is misplaced. These statistics refer to therapeutic (legal) abortions only - there are no firm statistics for illegal abortions in Canada. The evidence we have suggests that the number of illegal abortions in Canada is decreasing to balance the increase in legal ones. This behaviour is consistent with the world pattern given above.

Most important, however, are the consequences concerning legislation. The data from Italy and Latin America, for example, shows that restrictive legislation does not lead to a low abortion ratio. It appears that "... every normal woman seems to assume the right emotionally to achieve motherhood and to renounce motherhood, whether it is legal or not". The effect of restrictive legislation, a cruel way, by refusing access to proper medical care. This af-

fect is probably the main motivation behind the movement to repeal Canada's present abortion law.

The second fact we wish to establish comes from studies in anthropology and sociology. A study of 23 primitive cultures shows that a strong correlation exists between punishment of abortion and disrespect for life, as evidenced by, for example, the practice of slavery, and the killing, torturing and mutilating of enemies captured in warfare. In an effort to determine whether this relationship observed in pre-industrial societies is relevant to contemporary society, a personality profile was constructed in a recent sociological study of 96 students at the University of California. Here again a strong correlation was found between support for the statement "abortion should be punished by society" and statements which characterize a disrespect for life, such as "violence is really necessary to solve our problems" and "hard physical punishment is good for children who disobey a lot". Even more relevant to us is an analysis of the voting pattern of the 98 members of our Canadian parliament who voted on the omnibus reform bill in the 1968-69 session, which included reform of the abortion law, and also on the bill in the 1967-68 session which proposed to abolish capital punishment. Here 80% voted either for both reform bills or against both reform bills, a social pattern in agreement with the two other studies. (It should be noted that correlations give the trend in a society but do not apply to any given individual, who may support a particular issue for reasons quite different from the trend. It is important for the individual to recognize, however, the trend in society he/she is also supporting).

What then are the consequences of this second fact for the abortion question in Canada to-day? Virtually the only argument put forward by those who are against legalizing abortion has been that abortion is morally wrong because it shows disrespect for human life (slogans "pro-life", "right-to-life", etc.). This is an understandable instinctive response to the always unpleasant problem of abortion. However, the above scientific studies show that this argument is not merely misleading, but is actually directly contradicted by the evidence. These studies in fact support the view that the quality of permitting women to choose

between a safe, legal abortion and an unwanted child.

The net consequences of the two facts developed above is to de-emphasize side-

Woman As...from pg.

We have begun to realize that public media have this kind of influence and are properly concerned about extensive exposure, especially of children, to violence on television. We no longer believe it is appropriate to present black people or any minority group in such a way

issues and expose the main question: do Canadians want an autocratic society, which attempts to impose a common morality by repressive legislation, or do they want a humanistic, multi-cultural society, where reliance is placed on the individual conscience of its members to the maximum extent possible? It is no accident that the major democratic societies with which we are most closely associated, Britain, France and the United States, have made the latter choice, and left abortion to the discretion of doctor and patient.

We urge members of Parliament to respond appropriately to the challenge of International Women's Year by supporting the repeal of Section 251 of the Criminal Code, Canada's abortion law, and that expansion of government birth control programs in order to attain a lower abortion ratio humanely and effectively. The government position that the present law is a suitable compromise between two extremes is not correct. Firstly, it does not work equitably, but, secondly, repeal of this law does not represent an extreme position. Repeal represents a moderate one which leaves the choice to the individual woman, between the extremes of pro and anti abortion. This middle position is backed by many responsible Canadian institutions such as the Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the Royal Commission, the Canadian Medical Association, the Canadian Federation of University Women, the United Church Women, the National Council of Jewish women, etc. The reason for their support is that repeal of the law is connected with valid empirical evidence regarding consequences, as illustrated earlier. Usually this middle position is mistakenly called pro abortion in the media. In fact everyone normally feels a revulsion for abortion, but it is the groups who support repeal of the law who are also urging more effective birth control programs which would reduce the need for abortion.

Thus the government position leans toward the right wing extremist groups formed especially to influence opinion on this issue. The enormous petition delivered recently to parliament is certainly a tribute to their zeal, but if a relatively unbiased view of Canadian opinion is desired we recommend the 1974 Gallup Poll (62% in favour of repeal) or the Chatelaine Poll (over 70% in favour of repeal in 1974).

that states or implies they are appropriate objects for derision, exploitation or violence.

If the sort of magazine I have described consistently showed a Newfoundland fisherman, and Indian or a Black person in such a manner, there would be an outrage protest. Members of these groups would quite properly see this sort of thing as being unacceptable. As a female and a Psychologist, I say that current presentation of women as objects of aggression is just as inappropriate.

The fact that women are assaulted and raped in our culture is not a reason for such

MORGENTALER *The Doctor Who Couldn't Turn Away*



MORGENTALER

The Doctor Who Couldn't Turn Away
by Eleanor Wright Pelrine \$9.95

Available from all fine bookstores.

VISIT BY CARAL REPRESENTATIVE

Jean Forden, Executive Vice-president of The Canadian Association for Repeal of the Abortion Law (CARAL) visited Thunder Bay on November 6, in connection with her nationwide membership drive and public education tour.

CARAL members in the city arranged for her to do two T.V. interviews and one for radio for the purpose of outlining CARAL's aims and objectives. From all reports these interviews went very well indeed. During the evening she spoke to about 20-25 women at an informal meeting at the Northern Women's Centre.

Jean explained that CARAL was established in November, 1974 as an "Umbrella" organization to give individuals and interest groups working toward removal of the abortion laws from the Criminal code, a national voice.

Only one third of "approved" hospitals have set up therapeutic abortion committees which makes it impossible for

presentations. Newfoundland fishermen, Indians and Black people are also exploited and assaulted physically and psychologically. The fact that this is inappropriate is why we don't present such images in public media as models any more.

It is time to get such images of women at least out of the easy access of children. This could be quite simple accomplished by not putting these magazines out on view. Any adults who wish to buy them can perfectly easily ask for them.

Lois Hayweiser, Ph.D.,
Psychology Department

the law to be applied equitably with the result being that it discriminates against poor women, and women in isolated and outlying areas. Also the definition of "health" is left up to the individual committees - some committees take the narrowest definition, that is, the physical well-being of the woman while others may go to the broader definition and take in the psychological well-being of the woman.

An important point to remember is that abortion is a fact of life and will remain so until fail-proof contraceptives are available. CARAL regards the right to a safe legal abortion as a fundamental right. The key words are "freedom of choice". If we can get abortion out of the criminal code, it can be treated as any other medical matter - a Private concern of patient and doctor.

Jean went on to say that the second consideration of CARAL is to press for better sex education and the establishment of comprehensive contraceptive and abortion services.

A discussion took place regarding the situation locally and one woman passed on the information that there may be only one hospital in Thunder Bay performing abortions. It became apparent that we need to bring the information for this area up to date. We should also set up a "watchdog" committee to ensure that we do not lose some of the rights now granted under the present confusing law.

In order for CARAL to be effective it requires the financial as well as moral support of everyone. Those working for more restrictive laws which would send desperate women to back street butchers are well organized and heavily funded. You will find a clip-out membership form in this paper - please join CARAL now!

the socialized penis

PART I

By Jack Litewka

This is to a certain degree, a personal story. I felt the need to make it public because I have sensed for a long time, and now see more clearly every day, the disaster of sexuality in its present forms. Some women have been struggling with this reality. They have attempted to expose the male/female myth in the hope of creating a healthier reality. But most men have been (at best) silent or (at worst) dishonest—and often ignorant and defensive. This essay is an attempt to help men begin talking among themselves and hopefully with women.

The people who should have initiated the dialogue are psychoanalysts and psychiatrists: the psycho-healers. But they have failed us. And themselves. By and large, they have concentrated their energies on helping people adapt to realities of the social system rather than examining the foundations of that system. But, like the rest of us, these people are damaged. And being damaged, they are incapable of dealing with their own experience. Have you seen much written or spoken about masturbation? I haven't. The psycho-healers, most of whom are men, always talk about the phenomenon of masturbation as if it was "other," "out there". Have you ever heard a psycho-healer say, "When I masturbate(d)..."? Of course not. They are incapable or terrified of dealing with their own experience. So I am attempting to deal with mine, with those of men I know, in an effort to help us begin to deal more honestly with one aspect of male socialization.

Like the psycho-healers, like everyone, I am also damaged. I may be incapable of asking the right questions. I know I'm not able now to supply the "answers" that are needed. Desperately needed. But I'm going to try, and I hope that other men will also begin trying. Through persistence and honesty and perhaps by accident, we'll end up asking the right questions and be better able to answer them.

I'm very grateful to a few close friends, male and female, who are involved in this struggle and who have given me support and encouragement and criticism and chunks of their own lives in the writing of this

ESSAY I'm also very happy the Women's Movement exists and that many women are committed to undoing the damage done to all of us. I am not going to re-discuss what women writers have already explored. The sexual socialization of men in this century is what I want to deal with. More specifically, socialized sexual response. Still more specifically, the socialized penis. My penis, not just those of other men out there.

* * *

I was raised in America and learned - as did many other boys in my childhood and men I know now - to perform sexually on desire or request. This performance I think can be considered the norm, an ability that most males wanted to develop or maintain. The males who didn't conform to this norm usually felt incomplete, unskilled, or unmanly. And this

insufficiency often resulted in self-damning fear and anxiety, while other "healthy" males who automatically or easily conformed to the norm just cruised along, dropping anchor in this or that port when entertainment's hunger urged.

I think I am typical of most American males when I say that getting aroused, getting an erection, was not a major problem in adolescence. If there was a major problem, it was in not knowing what to do, or not being allowed to do anything, with an erection. So you had to learn how to hide it or deal with the embarrassment of its discovery.

I don't know when I began to be annoyed with the way women and men relate. Like most men, I think, I only dealt with a relationship when I had experienced enough and was troubled enough to look back at a previous relationship. But by the time one seriously begins to examine male/female relationships, it is usually too late. Because one has already been thoroughly socialized. So instead of dealing with male/female relationships, one is incapable of examining them, or refuses to examine them, or stands under it intellectually and laughs at the absurdity. Or tragedy.

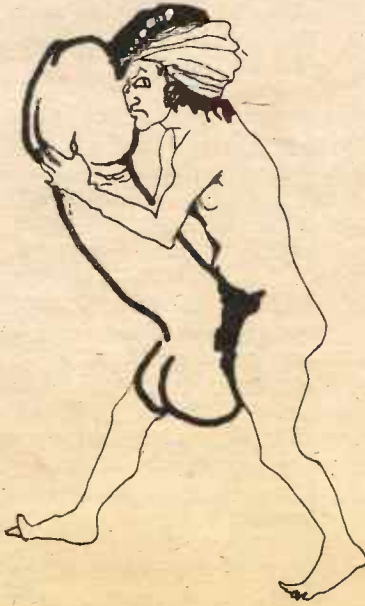
In the last year and a half, something happened to me on three separate occasions that made me decide to seriously analyze the way I had been sexually socialized. I now understand that the incidents occurred because I was already grappling with the origins of my sexuality.

Incident 1. A woman I like (and who liked me - "love" may be a mythic word so it is not being used, especially since it has nothing to do with erection) and I were in bed together for the first time. We talked and hugged and played. To my surprise and dismay, I didn't get an erection. At least not at the propitious moment (I did have erections now and then throughout the night). And I didn't know why. Maybe I was just too tired or had been fucking and masturbating too much (though that had never been a problem before). But it didn't disturb me too much because the woman was supportive and we both knew there would be other nights. So we rolled together, smelled each other, heard our breathing, and had a lovely night despite absence of coitus.

In the following year, I had a few relationships and my penis was its old arrogant self, so that one night seemed an unexplained oddity and was pretty much forgotten. My sexual life had the same sexual dynamic as my previous sexual history, so things were back to normal. But then came round two.

Incident 2. Similar in all respects to Incident 1. No erection at the right time. Again, I did have erections now and then throughout the night. Again, I didn't know why. But I knew it wasn't from being too tired or fucking or masturbating too much, since I hadn't slept with a woman in about a month and since I had spent

the past week on vacation just reading, resting, doing odd jobs - not masturbating and enjoying the absence of tension. Again, it wasn't a hassle because the woman knew me and I knew her and we both knew people the other had slept with, so it was chalked off as a freak with neither of us to blame. We touched along the whole length of our bodies and discussed basketball, politics, and our social/sexual histories. She fell asleep. I couldn't, my brain gnawing at me, having scary thoughts about a present (temporary) or impending impotency, and resolving to do something - but not knowing what.



Simplistically, I made an assumption: it had to be me or the woman I was with. But since it had happened with two different women, I figured it was me (though there might have been similarities between the women and the situations). But since I had performed sexually in a normal way many times in the year between these incidents, I assumed that it had to be something about these particular women in combination with me.

My immediate concern was my own fright. The "no erection at the right time" syndrome had happened to me twice. I was scared, very scared. Images of impotence hung in the air and wouldn't disappear. So I got in touch with an old love who I still spend a loving night or two with every five or six months and with whom I had always had good sexual chemistry. We got together two nights later and history prevailed: my penis had its timing back and I performed like the stud I was always meant to be. Which was a tremendous relief.

But I still had no answer to my question: why didn't I get an erection at the right time on two different occasions when I was with women I wanted to be with and who wanted to be with me, when there was mutual attraction and social/political/intellectual compatibility? I had a few clues, a few hunches, a few theories. But at best they were very partial answers. So I started to do a lot of thinking and isolated myself from old loves and potential new ones. I decided to read a lot of 19th-century porno literature, hoping that there might be repeated patterns (and there were) of male/female sexual activities that I could learn something from. (I realize now that this was a cop-out, a refusal or inability to look at myself, my own sexual experience;

and that to look at "other" sexuality, to learn from second-hand experience, was a safer path and one of less resistance. And for that reason, too, it may actually have been the only way I could start the examination.) I also read a lot of feminist writings, and continued to have many and long talks with a few close friends, all of whom are intensely involved with the liberation of people. I learned much during this time (a lot of which I already knew but couldn't make cohere), not all of which lends itself to this essay. But it all fed into an increasingly less diffuse puzzle.

Incident 3: This occasion was similar in almost all respects to Incidents 1 & 2, occurring about 18 months after the first incident and 6 months after the second. Between the second and third incidents, my sexual life had again been normal (for me).

This time I wasn't as frightened because I had already begun to figure out what was going on and had the reassurance that I was determined enough to maybe, just maybe, see it through to solution. Again, the woman was supportive and someone who I had gone through many things with over the years: this was just going to be another thing that we would have to deal with. Also, there was some hope because perceptions were beginning to clump together.

It became increasingly clear to me that in order to find answers to my emerging questions, I would have to go back and retrace the steps that were parts of my sexual history. Simultaneously, I was thinking that if my socialized sexuality was in any way similar to that of other men, then my formulations wouldn't be idiosyncratic to my experience. And as clues found me, I remembered old talks with young male friends and checked them against recent talks with adult male friends. It seemed that we had all gone through a basically similar process (with countless variations). Even those males who had not conformed to the norm, who didn't perform sexually according to the book, were affected by the norm process (sometimes resulting in a devastating social and sexual isolation). So I thought it would be worth the effort to construct a norm, however flawed, to determine what shape that image took. And to see if that image could teach.

* * *

The Initiation of a Young Male: in looking back on my sexual experiences and those of male friends, a very definite and sequential pattern was evident. I'm talking about actual (overt) sexual events, not subliminal or imagined or representational sexual experience. I'm thinking of adolescent time in adolescent terms when males begin to experiment and develop their knowledge and expertise. I'm thinking about things you did sequentially as you got older. With a few total exceptions and an odd irregularity or two (like fucking a "whore" before you'd kissed a "girl")

among the many men I have known and talked with, the sequence runs roughly as follows.

You kiss a girl. You kiss a girl a number of times. You kiss a girl continuously (make out). You kiss a girl continuously and get your tongue into the act. All though the process you learn to use your hands to round out the orchestration, at first with simple clumsy chords and later with complex harmonies (with the woman, of course, being the instrument made to respond to the musician). You, as a young male, are told (or figure out) what sensitive spots you should seek, and learn more as the young female (hopefully) responds to your hands. First you just hug and grasp. Then you make little circles on her shoulders with your fingers. Then you go for the back of the neck, and run your fingers through her hair (music, please) and then over her face and throat. Then the outer ear (lobes especially). And middle ear. Then lower back (at which point your tongue might cover the ear as a stand-in for the absent hand). Then the tender sides of the waist above the (maybe-not-yet) hip bones. Then the belly. And after that, upper belly and the rib cage. Here let us take a deep breath before the great leap upward to the breast, which is a bold and broken into a number of ritualistic steps. First the hand over one breast, with blouse and bra between your hand and the female's flesh. This is a move that took special courage (balls?) and was very exciting for it seemed a new level of sensuality (which it was for the female, but for the male? not only a new level of expectation). Then came a kind of figure-eight roving over the chest from one breast to the other (if your position allowed - how many right-handed lovers out there?). Then a sneaking between buttons (later unbuttoned) so your hand is on the breast with only the bra separating you from flesh. (or if the procedure was too uncouth or too visible to others in the dusky room or impossible because of a no-button sweater you worked underneath the garment from a fleshy belly right up to the bra.) Then, by means of gradually developed finger dexterity, you begin to attack the flesh of the breast itself, working down from the top of the bra into the cup. And if you hadn't yet picked up any signs of female complicity in your previous experience, it was often clear here.

she sat and breathed normally your fingers didn't stand a chance (bras were worn very tightly in my junior high school so that nipples were always pointing up at your eyes). I she wanted to be helpful, she would deeply exhale and move her shoulder forward so there was space between the bra and the breast. (Women's cooperation during all these events is an interesting topic and really should be written about by a woman.) And here came the rainbow's gold - the assault on the nipple. While a kiss was exciting, and cupping a breast breath-taking, the conquest of the nipple was transcendent. Partly because it was the only part of a female's anatomy that

News Briefs

Three London women working as waitresses and bartenders have been awarded a total of \$1,633 in back pay.

Janet Baillie, Rose Jackson and Paula Hill, employees of the Ramada Inn in London, were receiving the minimum wage. They worked in the upstairs lounge of the motel, pouring drinks and serving patrons both at the bar and at tables. Male bartenders pouring and serving drinks in a comparable area downstairs were being paid three dollars per hour. No male bartenders were employed upstairs.

The employer felt that the wage difference was justified because the upstairs lounge was quieter and more pleasant place to work, and because the women had more opportunity to earn tips there.

However, Mr. Samuel Lerner, Q.C., who presided at the hearing at the London Court House in October 20th, ruled that the work performed by the waiters and waitresses was substantially the same and that under Section 33 (1) of the Employment Standards Act a wage differential was not justified.

Complaints under this section of the Act have resulted in assessments against eleven employers during the first ten months of this year. A total of 76 employees have received back pay amounting to \$33,907.

A COMPLAINT THAT GOT SOMEWHERE

A spokeswoman for the Vancouver Status of Women in Vancouver, British Columbia recently wrote the following letter to the Vancouver Calendar Magazine: "Dear Sir: May I draw attention to the ad in your March issue showing two hardhats in a manhole gawking up at a naked pair of legs with the caption 'The Longer the Better'... The female sexist equivalent to this ad would be picture of a group of secretaries staring at the boss' crotch with the same title... On behalf of the 1400 affiliated members of the Vancouver Status of Women, I would appreciate a prompt reply."

She received this letter from the marketing director of the B&H Cigaretter Co. in response: "Based on your letter and several others, we are withdrawing the 'Longer the Better' ad from the campaign mix as quickly as possible, and are taking down the outdoor ads from across Southwestern Ontario. We apologize for personally offending you with this ad and hope that since we are trying to be socially conscious that you will support us..."

GETTING THE MESSAGE

The majority of advertisers are producing ads which are objectionable or offensive to women, the Ontario Advisory Council on the Status of Women has found. In a recently published report, "About Face", the Council examined the results of a media-monitoring experiment which tapped a random sample of Ontario

women. The Biggest complaint was against stereotyping or demeaning the female role, which accounted for 30 percent, and ads showing women as sex objects or obsessed with their own physical attractiveness accounted for 22 percent. The Council advises the public to help eliminate offensive ads in the following ways:

- Tune in to the underlying message and try to recognize what the ad is implying about the role and behavior of women;

- Complain to the product manufacturer, the TV or radio station or publication carrying the ad, the advertising agency, if you know it, and to the Canadian Advertising Advisory Board, 1240 Bay Street, Toronto;

- If possible, put your complaint in writing rather than by phone, and make it clear that unless you get a satisfactory reply, you will stop buying the advertised product;

- Carry through with the threat, even if the substitute you buy is less satisfying;

- Tell friends, neighbors and workmates what you are doing and encourage them to follow your example;

- Keep the Ontario Status of Women Council informed of your interest. The address is 801 Bay St., 3rd floor, Toronto.

NOTE: 'About Face' is available from The Northern Women's Centre.

FORT FRANCES WOMEN GOING PLACES

Mrs. Edna Avis was named chairman of the board of governors of Confederation College, which serves the largest geographic area in Ontario. There are 12 other members of the board, including one other woman, Mrs. A. Powell of Thunder Bay.

Christine Johanson has been awarded a Canada - U.S.S.R. exchange scholarship for studies at Leningrad State University. She will also research in Moscow.

Governor-General of Canada, Jules Leger, was presented with a beaded jacket, designed and hand made by Nancy Jones. Nancy was the first woman to win the Canadian open beaver handling contest in 1969 and has since received considerable praise and publicity for both her pelting and designing.

Dorothy Redford

PEARL WARDMAN - SISTER STRIKER

The story of Pearl Wardman, battle scarred survivor of the Fort Frances Clinic strike is not the story of cut and dried statistics. Beyond the reasons for the strike and the outcome of it, we find a woman who loved her job, and if members of the public are to be believed, was very good at it. It is also the story of members of the medical profession who once had her affection and trust, losing all semblance of both for reasons that do no credit to either their profession or themselves as human beings.

"I am not bitter", she said, "I am sad, for I have to consider, if they are capable of such smallness, such petty viciousness, as they displayed when their position of power was challenged, how safe in their hands is the patient whose very life may depend on them?"

Pearl, who won the gold medal in her class for theory, believes she is black listed in so far as her profession is concerned. More than a year later, as a volunteer in a blood clinic, the doctor present treated her as a pariah.

It is ironic that first consideration of the advantages of a union in the clinic was sparked by staff being summarily dismissed without just cause, it is further evidence of their naivete that they began in high hopes confident the years they had served the clinic, the loyalty they had shown the doctors would serve them well in their struggle for job security. Approximately 18 months without a contract, poorly paid, some of the service staff under \$2.00 an hour, they decided to go the union route, and all hell broke loose. Pearl thought her position was valued and secure. Talking to her, one can see why she became the leader and the lightning rod for the doctors' wrath. She is a strong positive person who doesn't mince words. Where once she was complimented and trusted, she became the (expletive deleted) that will lick my boots.

THE CLINIC STRIKE

They say this week-end will wrap it up. The clinic strike will be over. David Suzuki on discussing a racial incident said "what really depresses me is the people who watched without protest". I guess that's where I'm at, this horrible feeling that we have lost the capacity to care enough to protest. That we will justify and alibi and evade the truth of what happened in our midst. That once more right is might and arrogance does not need to apologize to anyone. The Port Arthur clinic will remain a running sore on the conscience of all the thinking citizenry of this community and hopefully will manifest itself in a real exodus from it's services. To have invested any faith in it's capacity for human response is only possible to the simple minded.

But however right Pearl read her employers they did not read her right for she quit. She has only praise for her co-workers who went down the line with her. Out of 22 only 5 remain on the clinic staff.

Pearl has only lost her job but the citizens of Port Frances have lost a competent, caring, member of a health clinic. They have lost her and others because they have allowed a handful of egotistical stragglers to flaunt power that is neither earned or deserved.

Pearl hopes to present a brief at the IWY seminar in Thunder Bay, March 6 and hopes to meet the Port Arthur Clinic strikers who also have reason to reassess the ethics of the medical profession.

"Ah life"

Let us consider the blade that is sheathed in wit, delivered in a ha ha fashion. To confuse the target, we are left with the knowledge that although our motive was lethal, the only blood on the knife is ours. Strangely enough the shaft may be justifiable, an excuse for a frontal attack as honest as the eskimo that kills for survival. When we are used and taken advantage of, sometimes by people we are struggling to maintain affection for, we must protest or bleed to death. What is it in us that limits our protest to vacillating rhetoric, that thing in us that hopes in our bitter humour some seed of conscience might take root and without rupturing a relationship, a burden might be lifted from us. Not until we are against the wall, will we bare our teeth and snarl... enough already... get off my back or I'll break your leg. Then having done what may be the most heroic and triumphant thing we have ever done we are mired in the guilt of having not lived up to our own long suffering image. I have lost a friend we mourn, I have lost a lover, I have lost (dare I say it) a husband. On closer scrutiny we may find our loss is miniscule compared to the loss of our compatriot who has lost a compulsive, functioning, martyr a handy little gadget for any tool kit.

MOTHERS ON BUDGETS

Mothers on Budgets are a group of low-income mothers. For the most part they are single parents supporting children.

We hold get togethers on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month.

For Feb. 25th meeting we are having a lawyer come in and talk about Women's Rights in the area of separation, divorce, custody of children, credit etc.

We meet every second Wednesday night at 7p.m. at 224 Cumming Street. Call 623-2863 for further information.

Maureen

SPEAKING OUT

ON PROSTITUTION



The following paper was presented at an all-day fillibuster of a New York State Legislature hearing on Prostitution as a victimless crime.

by Susan Brownmiller

As with most other issues of women's liberation, the problem of prostitution is unbelievable complex, resting as it does on economics, psychology, sexuality and the male power principle. There are some who say that the male power principle embodies the first three points. To be perfectly honest, that's what I'd say.

One fact about prostitution I'm sure has not escaped your notice: the buyers, the ones who hold the cash in their hand, the ones who create the market by their demand, they are all men, gentlemen, the same sex as yourselves.

In the 1940's, the Kinsey Report—which was probably the last really documented report on sexuality—stated that two-thirds of all American men have some experience with a prostitute. In 1964 R.E.L. Masters estimated that the figure was closer to 80%.

Now the stock your sex is buying with dollar bills is human flesh, for the most part, but not always, the same sex as myself. I say "not always", because in this city you can go any evening to the corner of 53rd St. and Third Ave. and see men buying other men for sex. This is seldom talked about but it is relevant. Again the buyers are always men.

Now the myth has it that the female prostitute is the seller of her own flesh, that she is a free participant in her act, that she has made a conscious choice to sell her body. This is a male myth, one that your sex has rather successfully popularized for your own self interest. It has not only absolved you of your responsibility in this terrible crime of buying another human beings body, it has conveniently shifted your guilt onto our shoulders. The law in this city is applied to punish the woman and let the man go scotfree.

Now there is something else that the male sex has always tried to do to cover up its crime: it has tried to separate the women engaged in prostitution from the rest of the women in the culture. It calls her "the other", it marks her the bad woman, it sends her to jail, and it tells the rest of us that we are very good and virtuous and we have nothing in common with her.

Well, gentlemen, I have good news for you. We have seen through that little myth; the feminist movement identifies itself with the female victim of the male created institution known as prostitution.

Now, I am white, and middle class and ambitious; and I have no trouble identifying with either the call girl or the street hustler, and I can explain why: I've been working to support myself in the city for fifteen years, and I've had more offers to sell my body for money than I have had to be an executive. Now when I see a young woman hustling on the street, I see a young woman like myself who has ambition. But she has no options. I mean, what else could she be? She could be a waitress, she could be a secretary, she could be a welfare mother, she could be somebody's wife.

There was a time when I was working to support myself as a waitress and a file clerk. The disparity between my reality situation and my ambition to be an actress, was so great that I gave serious thought to the social pressure to do a little hustling. And that is something, gentlemen, that I really don't think you comprehend, I don't think that anyone has ever asked you to sell your body, or presumed that your body was for sale. I wonder if a cab driver has ever turned to you and remarked, "I see you're little short of change. Perhaps we could work together. I could steer some customers your way." I wonder if a man has ever walked up to you in a hotel lobby and muttered, "What's your price? I wonder if you've ever applied for work in a bar and the owner, or manager, looked you up and down and said, "Are you sure you're over eighteen? Why don't you come downstairs with me and prove it?"

Now these were all experiences that happened to me at a time when perhaps I looked more vulnerable than I am today, and when I was certainly more desperate. So now perhaps you can understand why I identify with the prostitute, and why, when I see a front page headline in the New York Times, "Mayor Stepping Up Drive on Prostitutes and Smut", I know in a very real sense that it is me and my entire sex that the mayor and the Times are talking about. And when this mayor appoints a task force of six men and no women to study the problems of pimps, porn, and prostitution, giving equal moral weight to each category, I know that his failure to appoint even one woman is not an oversight, it's just that the boys have decided they've got to get together and do a little superficial something to preserve their fun.

Now I am worried that your hearing today is to open the door to the legalization of prostitution.

Gentlemen, if you extend the definition of government-inspected meat to the sale of human flesh, you will do it over our dead bodies. The women's movement will tolerate the legalization of sex slavery in this state. Yes, there is a prostitution problem. It is expressed by Judge..., who has written: "Most men who visit prostitutes would be considered normal." It was expressed by Judge..., who began to hold prostitutes in his court without bail after he got some complaints from friends of who were in town for a Bar Association hearing. They claimed they were actually being harassed by men on the street. Well, if Judge Schwab were to put on a skirt and walk down 42nd St., or even Fifth Ave., any afternoon, despite his hairy legs, I think he would begin to understand what street harassment is all about. It is women who are being harassed, day and night and they are being harassed by men and not the reverse.

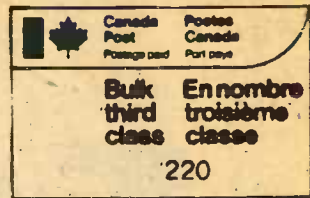
There is a serious problem in our society, when women with prostitution must sell their bodies because there is no other way they can earn \$15,000 a year. There is a serious problem when men think a woman's access to the female body is, if not a divine right, at least a monetary right.

Prostitution will not end in this country until men see women as equals. And men will not see women as equals until there is an end to prostitution. So it seems we will have to work for the full equality of women and the end to prostitution side by side. In the meantime it seems to me, it's foolish to prosecute a woman for a crime in which she is the victim. But it is equally reprehensible to let a man go free for the criminal act of purchasing another's body.

Now that concludes the formal part of my testimony. I had a great deal of difficulty writing these words down because, as the poet Adrienne Rich said in another context, "this is the oppressor's language," and it's very clear when you start to write about prostitution that you're using the oppressor's language, which is the male language. The institution is defined by the woman: prostitution; but it is the man who does the buying. There is no formal word to describe that man; we have just a couple of slang words like "john," "trick," that the prostitute uses. Perhaps that's because it's all men and men have never felt the need for a specific word in the language that defines something which is their province. Anyway, I've had trouble, and because of that I feel that other women from the movement must speak now....

taken from The Other Woman
June 1972

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