

NORTHERN WOMAN

Volume

2

Issue

6

50¢



Adapted from
1931 Edition
of
Canadian
Home
Journal



EDITORIAL



Reflections on Movement Strategy

Is what we're doing truly weakening the institutions that structure our lives?

"It seems like a long time ago that we (that is, the women's movement) made a deliberate decision to base our activity on a direction which involved the setting up of alternative institutions to: 1) better meet our needs under a capitalist system and 2) use these in order to develop a comprehensive strategy. What happened to the second part of this decision?" (Pat Leslie, "Feminism and Business", 'The Other Woman', Vol. 4, No. 2)

Developing a political analysis is not just writing position papers to be glued onto reality. It is vital that we analyse and evaluate what we are learning 'as we work to create alternatives'. This is difficult because we are often running as fast as we can just to stay in the same place. We struggle against hassles with money, energy, time, organization, day-to-day routine matters. Yet we are in danger of creating new bureaucracies, concerned only with maintaining ourselves and rarely questioning our purposes and usefulness. We are also in danger of creating pleasant ghettos for ourselves. Alternative institutions become comfortable to those who work in them. WE must ask: how many women do we reach? What do our alternatives say about our goals and values, about our politics?

Capitalist institutions destroy people's independence and freedom by convincing them that they do not have any business deciding how they should structure their lives. Accordingly, feminism seeks to abolish authority. Authority is the ability and power to determine or command on the basis of a hierarchical position. Authority is both internal and external. It will not be enough to weaken external authority because authority takes social and psychological forms. It becomes

much more insidious and difficult to fight when it is internalized and becomes part of our personality structure.

While we reject authority, we still need ways of structuring our alternatives. Finding non-coercive ways is very difficult. It is not enough that an alternative institution be owned by "the people" or "women" or "the collective". This is just a meaningless, abstract idea unless that organization is fully worker-controlled and run. Furthermore, people operating institutions must be responsible and responsive. They must be aware of their impact and take responsibility for their actions. They must be available for criticism, ideally on a face-to-face level of contact.

THUNDER BOLT

To Dr. Chacko who equates the undesirable qualities of a social worker by the degrees of cleavage.

We are in this movement because we are feminists, women who can no longer tolerate our oppression and who work to begin the creation of freedom. We are creating a revolution that will transform ourselves and our world. However, we must avoid the attitude that we in the women's movement are somehow the vanguard, the enlightened, who will lead Canadian women to liberation. We struggle out of necessity, not because we are altruistic missionaries.

Moreover, if we struggle around our true needs, then we avoid the trap of becoming martyrs for some abstract and ultimately futile idea. "The woman who sacrifices her needs for the sake of the movement is no threat to anyone, except to herself and the movement. Men have always respected an Antigone, adored a Joan of Arc, and why not? Such heroines deviate little from the norm: they sacrifice themselves for a principle or a vision rather than a man, but as long as they are sacrificing themselves, mankind is safe. The woman who endangers the patriarchy is the woman whose love for others grows from her love for herself--whose personal and political alliances stem from identification, not altruism. It is only when we love

ourselves that we begin the work of destroying the patriarchy." (Karen Lindsey, Boston Phoenix).

We must remember this if sisterhood is ever to mean anything. We have insisted on an autonomous women's movement because we believe that sexism is the most fundamental oppression. However, we have divisions because, while all women experience sexism, it in vastly different ways, according to class, race, age, education, sexual orientation... We cannot gloss over the divisions by invoking the notion of "sisterhood" conquering all. Sisterhood is our ideal, politically and spiritually, but it means struggle to reach it and maintain it.

It is imperative that we strengthen the communication links and networks. We must give each other feedback on an ongoing basis, and make it easier for new women to become involved in the movement.

Credit to : The Other Woman



THANKS TO OUR READERS

The cup of the collective, whose joy and passion is to send you this journal is dangerously close to running over, so good has been the response to our efforts. The energy it takes and the time we spend is so easily translated into a labour of love when we begin to feel appreciated. There is little in the conventional press that speaks directly to the cause of sisterhood, one must either do something of great import or something utterly outrageous to be news, in the context of being newsworthy. We here at the journal are persuaded that all across this great north west, in public or isolation, history is being written simply by our being here. When the mind moves us to new dimensions and we are encouraged to think of the roles we have played in the past and the vistas that beckon us in the future, we get an entirely new concept of the power and privilege that is ours simply by virtue of being women. There are things we must know about each other; there is no segment of society that is not made better by the knowledge of what goes on in the lives and minds of one another. What is good and strong and vital in each one of us must be made available to all of us. Knowledge in the academic sense can be as cold as statistics but the heart, dear friends calls for more. And so we say thank you for your support.

NOREEN, DOREEN, GERT, MARG, LYNNE
EVE, WENDY, SHARON, LESTER



DAY CARE



THUNDER BAY
CO-OPERATIVE NURSERY
SCHOOL

PURPOSE

For children, 3 to 4 years old, an opportunity for creative play and interaction with other children.

SUPERVISION

A qualified pre-school education teacher; parent participation (although not obligatory); students from Confederation College; maximum adult/child ration of 1:8.

SESSIONS

A.M., 9:30 to 11:30
Tuesday to Friday
P.M., 1:15 to 3:15,
Tuesday to Friday

ACTIVITIES

Indoor and outdoor play; art work and crafts; circle time; various trips, e.g., library, pet store, fire station and train and sleigh rides.

LOCATION

1000 Huron Avenue (Vance Chapman School)

TELEPHONE

For more information, call 345-8651 (School) or 68306722 (Registrar)

REGISTER NOW FOR SEPTEMBER

NEWS RELEASE April 21st, 1976.

The Thunder Bay Co-operative Nursery School is now accepting registrations for September.

Children, 3 to 4 years old, have an opportunity for creative play and interaction with other children.

Morning and afternoon classes are conducted at 1000 Hurone Ave. (Vance Chapman School).

For more information call the Registrar at 683-6722.

THUNDER BAY CO - OPERATIVE
Nursery School

1000 Huron Ave. T. Bay, "P"

WHAT IS DAY CARE?

DAY CARE IS "my first best friend"

DAY CARE IS "a rocking boat, dry pants, and my thumb"

DAY CARE IS "being captain of a ship for a day"

DAY CARE IS "making pictures for our kitchen at home"

DAY CARE IS "sand in my shoes"

DAY CARE IS "helping make cookies"

DAY CARE IS "child-rearing support for the modern family"

DAY CARE IS "a sub-community within our community - it's our kids' neighbourhood"

DAY CARE IS "a service for the conscientious mother with a career"

DAY CARE IS "a total growth environment for happy, healthy, normal kids".

EPILEPSY THUNDER BAY

EPILEPSY THUNDER BAY

During the year 1975 a special committee was organized in Thunder Bay under the direction of Paulette Sitch whose goal was to work towards the establishment of an epilepsy association in the Lakehead region. In October this group became known as Epilepsy Thunder Bay Steering Committee and in February of this year was officially recognized as Epilepsy Thunder Bay, a Chapter of the Ontario Epilepsy Association.

Education of the general public is high on the list of priorities of Epilepsy Thunder Bay through dissemination of information with the main goal being the removal of the stigma currently attached to this disorder, thus creating an informed public who thoroughly understand epilepsy. Education together with understanding can help towards the achievement of that goal.

With proper therapy, most epileptics can now live essentially normal lives. The most serious hazard of an epileptic disorder, in many instances, is not the seizures, per se, but the associated emotional disturbances which may develop in a youngster as the result of mismanagement at home, in the school, or in the community. The Chapter can be of great assistance by giving support and guidance to parents of epileptic children, the education of teachers and education of the general public.

200,000 Canadians are believed to have epilepsy. Prejudice is costly to society and wasteful in terms of human happiness. The old attitudes of fear and prejudice against people with epilepsy bars them from employment in many industries. It is estimated that one in four people whose condition is whole or partially controlled by medication is still not able to hold a job, just because he or she is epileptic. This costs the country millions of dollars a year in unemployment, welfare and lost productivity. Prejudice can be eliminated through education. Public attitudes are slowly changing about epilepsy as people learn more about it. But institutions and official policy makers are often more slow to change.

Persons who wish to become involved with Epilepsy Thunder Bay can write to:

Epilepsy Thunder Bay
Post Office Box 481
Thunder Bay South

or telephone 623-6764 or 623-2290.

The Ontario Epilepsy Association's aims and objectives might be summed up as giving support and guidance to epileptics. This can be done in many ways--patient and public education, employer contact and education, information and referral services, parent groups, social groups and vocational assistance.

Epilepsy in itself may not be tragic, but the superstitious fear and ignorance with which it is regarded by the general public is tragic. Vast advances have been made in the medical and neurological treatment of epilepsy, but limited social or educational progress has been made in assisting persons with epilepsy to develop adequate personalities and self-confidence. The prime purpose of Epilepsy Thunder Bay is to combat the prejudice, fear and ignorance still associated with this affliction. Therefore, education of the general public is one of the most important functions of the Ontario Epilepsy Association.

Epilepsy is not a disease. It is a sign or symptom, and it results from, or is part of, an underlying neurological disorder. Seizures may occur at any age in both sexes, in any race, or in any individual. With proper therapy, most epileptics can now live essentially normal lives. The most serious hazard of an epileptic disorder, in many instances, is not the seizures, per se, but the associated emotional disturbances which may develop in a youngster as a result of mismanagement at home, in the school or in the community. The Chapter can be of great assistance by giving support and guidance to parents of epileptic children, the education of teachers and the education of the general public. Public attitudes are slowly changing about epilepsy as people learn more about it. It is the hope of the Ontario Epilepsy Association, now renamed Epilepsy Ontario, to create a public awareness that epilepsy is not a handicap, but, rather an inconvenience.

FAMILY PROPERTY LAW (part two)

FAMILY PROPERTY LAW

Ownership of other property

Part 1 of this series dealt with ownership of the matrimonial home (the principal residence of the married couple)

For other property, ownership once again is determined by WHO HOLDS TITLE AND WHO PAID FOR IT. Let us look at several ways that married couples manage the finances and purchase of property.

(1) Sometimes the spouse will purchase property such as a car, furnishings, boat, or cottage by making monthly payments and the title (ownership Papers) is placed in the purchasing spouses name. If on the other hand the other spouse assists with the payments on this property from their savings or earnings, this spouse must keep an accurate account of the amounts contributed and prove the money used was their own, i.e. cancelled cheques from their personal account or proof of payroll deduction, if no record is kept they will have a difficult time proving any claim to ownership of the property.

(2) Often when both spouses are working the husbands money is used to purchase real property i.e. payments on the mortgage, purchase of stocks and bonds, a summer home or car. The wives earnings are frequently used to purchase food and clothing, music lessons for the children, or decorating the home. In other words, her money does not purchase property. If the marriage ends the assets (property) belong to the husband. The wife has nothing to show for her financial contribution to the marriage.

Under existing laws, a married woman in Ontario is under no obligation to maintain herself or to contribute towards her own support, or to the support of her husband and

children. If she is a wage earner the woman can invest her money, purchase real estate or spend it without her husbands consent. It is the husbands duty to support his wife while the marriage lasts.

(3) The married womans contribution to the marriage as a homemaker has not been recognized under the separation of property system. So long as property disputes between spouses are resolved on the basis of direct financial contribution to the purchase price, the wife who stays at home on either a full time or part time basis will be short-changed because her role as homemaker has deprived her of the right to earn money and obtain property.

BILL 75. 1.(3) (c). States
" EXCEPT AS AGREED BETWEEN THEM, WHERE A HUSBAND AND WIFE CONTRIBUTE WORK, MONEY, OR MONEY'S WORTH IN RESPECT OF THE ACQUISITION, MANAGEMENT MAINTAINENCE, OPERATION OR IMPROVEMENT OF PROPERTY IN WHICH THE OTHER HAS OR HAD A PROPERTY INTEREST, THE HUSBAND OR WIFE SHALL NOT BE DISENTITLED TO ANY RIGHT TO COMPENSATION OR OTHER INTEREST FLOWING FROM SUCH CONTRIBUTION BY REASON ONLY OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF HUSBAND AND WIFE OR THAT THE ACTS CONSTITUTING THE CONTRIBUTION, ARE THOSE OF A REASONABLE SPOUSE OF THAT SEX IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES;

Hopefully this section of BILL 75 will get rid of the worst features of the Murdoch case and others similar to it, situations in which a wife was not allowed any share of the home, it's contents or a share of any other property because of her contribution as a homemaker. Under BILL 75, what will be the courts evaluation of a wife's contribution if she remains a homemaker who manages and maintains a home?. To benefit from this clause in BILL 75 both spouses will need documentation for proof of contribution.

(4) Equally controversial is the measure of a spouses contribution to a small business owned by the other spouse, i.e.

(a) The wife who keeps the books and does the billing for her husbands

garage or repair shop.

(b) The wife who works in the small corner store receiving no salary.

(c) The husband who does repairs or keeps books for a small business his wife owns.

(d) The wife who works in the fields and barns of the family farm.

Hopefully BILL 75(3). (c) will grant recognition to this type of contribution to the assets of a marriage.

(5) If a wife is at home and the husband is the sole owner, savings made by the wife from house-keeping allowances, property purchased with these savings, or investment made with them, belong to the husband, strict separation of property means that increases, decreases, rents profits, etc are added to the value of the property of the owner.

There are obvious inadequacies, difficulties, and unfair rules in the present laws governing property relations between husband and wife. Why we work for reform of these laws, how can the purchase of property and ownership be shared by married couples.

(1) LEARN AND KNOW MORE ABOUT FAMILY PROPERTY LAWS AND MAKE THEM WORK FOR YOU AND YOUR PARTNERSHIP.

(2) CONSIDER JOINT TENANCY AS A METHOD OF OWNING AND SHARING PROPERTY.

(3) IF BOTH SPOUSES WORK, CONSIDER THE CONTRIBUTION THAT BOTH SPOUSES CAN MAKE TOWARD THE PURCHASE OF PROPERTY. EVERYTHING NEEDN NOT BE JOINTLY OWNED BUT BOTH SPOUSES, ESPECIALLY THE WIFE SHOULD CONSIDER INVESTMENT OF EARNINGS IN REAL PROPERTY.

(4) AS WELL AS SHARING IN THE PURCHASE OF PROPERTY, THE SPOUSES SHOULD SHARE IN THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PAYING FOR THE NECESSARY ITEMS IN THEIR DAILY LIVES.

(5) DO NOT BE COMPLAISANT WOMEN HAVE A RIGHT AND A DUTY TO THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES TO KNOW THE LAWS, AND TO BE INTERESTED IN THE PURCHASING POWER OF THEIR EARNINGS (OR) GIFTS OF MONEY WITH REGARD TO INVESTMENT AND PROPERTY.

JOAN PACKOTA
UNIVERSITY WOMANS CLUB
THUNDER BAY

KENORA VISIT

An invitation to accompany Lisa Bengsston our good rep. from Sect'y State, on a visit to Kenora gave me an opportunity to talk with the originators and staff of the Water St. Residence for Women. The simplicity that chose the name is reflected in the house itself and personified in the person of Bertha Williamson, the single staff member who runs it with gentle authority and considerable good humour. Bertha is native and while the house is available to all races it is her own sisters she has the privilege of serving most of the time.

Formerly a hospital it provides accomodation for a maximum of 10 women whose admittance requirement is that she be referred from the treatment centre. The length of stay is flexible as Bertha explained, they stay till the problem resolves itself. The close community nature of the native family makes it easy to follow up their progress after leaving.

4

The house itself is cheery and well kept. A sewing room is in the making; a piano is in the living room; an accessible kitchen. The women in the house were busily engaged in housekeeping duties and I had the feeling from the woman who was ironing, that she was doing it for everybody, so great was the air of co-operation. "I don't do anything", Bertha told us, I just talk and listen. The women do their own marketing, cooking, cleaning, laundry. A resident that upgraded her education from grade four to the place where she could qualify for training as a day care staff person, was cited as a success story. Some women do day work to help with their costs to the house. There is no staff at night. Bertha does not believe in people being hired to watch people. That is nonsense she says. Under a simple and civilized set of rules very few people will take advantages. That is a piece of wisdom that seems to have escaped my own race I'm sorry to say.

Penny Bradley a member on the board of the Friendship Centre along with Kitty Iverson and Bertha Williamson conceived and brought the house into being. It is supported by funding from the Presbyterian Church, subsidized by a per diem rate of \$8.00 a day from Ontario Social Services and a comfort allowance. Under this arrangement the future looks secure. I find it very appealing that a church should guarantee this security and do it without any manipulative strings attached. My congratulations to them for living the life--and my congratulations also to the residents of the house itself, who seem to have grasped a simple reality that while a problem exists the responsibilities of living continue and manifests itself in as simple a thing as keeping your surroundings and yourself as intact as possible. To do it in a sharing way makes it all the more appealing. Bertha has promised to keep in touch through THE NORTHERN WOMAN.

continued page 5

SISTERS FROM WOMEN'S PROGRAMMES EXCLUDED

by Noreen Lavoie

As part of IWY the Women's Programme of the Dept. of the Secretary of State sponsored a series of 12 seminars entitled Interchange

75...A Forum For Action on Women's Issues. The last of these 12 seminars Women and Alternatives, held Dec. 2-5, 1975, saw about 35 participating women from all across Canada. I was the delegate from Thunder Bay.

These women were chosen, for the most part, with the exception of a few selected by the members of their groups, by the Secretary of State, because of their participation in women's legal aid clinics, health collectives/self-help clinics, women's centres, alternative media groups, transition houses, feminist therapy groups, lesbian feminist collectives etc. We were described as "grass roots feminists".

There was a feeling of discomfort and suspicion almost from the beginning of this seminar. No one seemed to know why specifically they were chosen, or why they were there at all. There was no material sent prior, so that the delegate could discuss with their collectives the priorities of their particular groups or the purpose of the seminar.

On arrival Mon. night each delegate was assigned a large room with 2 double beds. The implication was that the government did not want to encourage lesbianism by billeting two women together. A silly and presumptuous reason and a waste of money.

Tuesday morning we started off with a plenary session. The structure table arrangement, microphones, interpreters and the large number of women from women's programme had an intimidating effect on many of us, particularly those who had never spoken into a mike before or spoken in front of a large group. It was also strange to hear a male voice interpreting the words of a French speaking woman.

A list of the delegates names and room numbers were requested as well as the per diem cheques for meals. These were promised but

those with no money found it necessary to eat in the hotel dining room as the cheques never arrived till Thur., and the feelings of isolation persisted after leaving the plenary sessions or workshops as no list of names and room numbers materialized either.

Tuesday after the short plenary session we were asked to read the Stimulus Paper and other material that was distributed (in our isolated rooms). I personally found the Stimulus paper heavy reading although assumptions about the women's movement (there is a recession and we are treading water--we are burned out feminists) bounced off the page at me. This was a liberal government's analysis of the movement, which I could not agree with.

Wednesday morning the workshops began. This first workshop is vague now, except for the feeling that nothing concrete happened and there was not a free flow of conversation happening, and I still

didn't understand the reasons for this seminar or what we were supposed to accomplish at it.

Workshops in the afternoon also produced little in the way of productivity and there was a noticeable strain on the leaders to keep us on topic, i.e. what has the women's movement done; what problems could be encountered to create alternatives in this society; effective ways to produce more satisfying solutions regarding women's issues; what would the long term implications of these changes be.

Wednesday evening saw the coming together of a small group of women who sat up till after 2:a.m. analysing and trying to justify the feelings of paranoia that seemed to prevail on a wide scale. It was sensed and feared that we were there for an overall purpose, which we didn't understand.

JUSTIFYING OUR PARANOIA

Comments on the process of analysis were taken by one of the women in the group at this meeting, and from these notes are some of

their conclusions---we as grass roots feminists were seen as possible agents of social change---information gleaned from us, i.e. experience, practice theory, values, could be used in a manner women from women's programme understand---this information would not stay at the level of women's programme (bottom level of Secretary of State) but go to a higher level---we agree this is not good, as women's programme have no power and those that possibly want power over us already have the most economic power---women in women programme are employees of the system that continues to oppress us---this seminar could be to design a modified form of social control using what we're giving them to diffuse us---delegates were chosen because of their political naivete---we were being led to see the trees and not the forest---Dept. of Women's Affairs may be implemented such as the Dept. of Indian Affairs which would isolate women's issues and be implemented by the hierarchy--this seminar is really a public hearing, but at the personal, not political level to make it invisible.

Conclusions This is not the government of the people, even though it may have been the genuine feeling of women in the programm---women in women's programme now, are not necessarily going to be there next year---we are not going to isolate the variables that made us radicals--we are not making recommendations or telling them our processes in order to stop other women before they get to this stage---we were being co-opted into leadership positions to give the system we're fighting ammunition---this disallows us to identify the government as the enemy--women in women's programme may not even know where the reports are going and this is why we must exclude them---in no way were we faulting women from women's programme.

WAS THE GOVERNMENT PAYING FOR US TO PLAN THE REVOLUTION?? NO IT WAS TO LEARN OUR PROCESSES

Thursday morning instead of going directly into workshops as scheduled, a plenary was called

and women from the late night meeting put forth their conclusions about the seminar. Nervous energy was high but guilt at rejection of our sisters from Women's Programme had not quite reared it's ugly head. Although they were assured there was no hostility towards them, they were naturally defensive. **THERE WAS UNANIMITY AMONG THE DELEGATES THEY SHOULD LEAVE. THEY LEFT.** The interpreters left. We moved to the floor and formed a large circle. The Francophone women were very able to communicate in English.

The remaining time was spent in analysing and justifying what we had done, whether it was a democratic decision or whether a certain few had a strong influence on the decision to exclude the women from the remaining part of the seminar. Emotions really ran high and guilt and searching for a scapegoat continued till late Fri. afternoon. Some women had planes to catch and some women could just not take any more of the emotional strain.

Whether we were right or wrong in our feelings of paranoia about the motivations of the government in sponsoring the Women And Alternatives Seminar and the fact that no resolutions came about, as did from all eleven previous seminars, this was a valuable experience for all of us involved. One woman stated she felt she had lost her political virginity, and I'm sure she spoke for many of us. Now, six months after this seminar, I still feel good about what happened. For some of us we felt power for the first time. Personally I grew a little and learned a lot from the women who participated in "the secret meeting". The women's movement reluctant to model themselves along the lines of the male pyramid structure, nevertheless needs leaders who have analytical minds and can share with those of us that don't. The radicalization of many of the delegates in itself justifies what happened at this seminar. As for what we did by excluding our feminist sisters from women's programme, we can be assured they understood why this had to be because they are firstly feminists and secondly employees of the government.

KENORA CON'T

A visit to the native women's office was icing on the cake. Lisa is helping them plan a conference. Nancy Morrison and Peggy Copenease seem to operate in a hive of activities. Only the truly committed could spend the energy one sees around them.

It seems fairly certain a rep. from this group will take a place on the Northwestern Decade for progress Council now operating out of Thunder Bay. Our family of Northern women increases as we support and sustain each other. Over the raucous voice of Eleanor Jacobson, the native women of Kenora, care and share and struggle together, bringing honour to us all.

HERE AND THERE



A local prominent businessman broke the law today and yet he is immune to prosecution. In his role as landlord, he entered an apartment when the parent was not home, only the teenage daughter. He told her that he was there to "inspect" the apartment.

He went through the bedroom, the kitchen, including fridge, cupboards and drawers. He then told the girl that the place was dirty, messy and a fire hazard. He also added that her mother "could probably be expecting an eviction notice". When the mother returned home, she was confronted with a near hysterical teenager. The mother, in response to the fire hazard accusation, called the fire inspector. He came immediately and although he found quite a number of hazards in the building itself, he only advised the mother to keep her garbage receptacle away from the stove. That was the only hazard he could find in her apartment.

Apparently, because the lady has a teenager, who has friends who visit, the landlord "suspected" dope - his reason for such a thorough "search". Although he trespassed, broke the l.l. and t. act, invaded privacy, and would be subject to a \$2000. fine, upon conviction - this according to the landlords and tenant bureau at City Hall, is very hard to prove. The lady would require the services of legal aid. If no conviction resulted, she would be subject to the legal fees herself. She is a single parent and doesn't have the financial resources.

Also, a landlord needs only to give a two month eviction notice and no reason need be given.

CONCLUSION - THE LAW IS FOR THE RICH AND INJUSTICE PREVAILS!

I oppose the government's constraints program as a senseless attack on health care, municipal services, education, social services, and public sector employment and I demand that it be stopped by the Legislature.

Name _____

Address _____

Comments _____

send to your local MPP
Fort William riding Iain Angus
Port Arthur riding Jim Foulds
Queen's Park Toronto

The following is written by a young person and titled "Feelings" and was written to her social workers who felt it might convey some of the feelings of what it means to have to accept help from the system.

FEELINGS

Initially, feelings of despair, mistrust and of being no good, are the result of the prejudiced attitudes presented by the public in general.

Fortunately there are beautiful caring people coming into the Social services, for the most part, they are now thought of as friends. Occasionally one still encounters the "Mister Dress-Up". Their attitude conveys superiority and an atmosphere of hostile mistrust is created; thus very little in the way of helping is ever accomplished. Social workers are supposed to be able to relate, to keep in contact with their clients...which is impossible when the caseloads are so heavy, so the social worker has a hell of a time trying to help people. The rules and regulations governing the procedures are a pain in the ass for both sides. If more attention was placed on people's cultures and background, problems and social pressures, we would be taking a giant step toward helping people help themselves.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Have an emergency office where you don't have to have an appointment. People live 24 hours a day, not just 9 - 5.
2. Hire more social workers to lighten the case load.
3. Allow people on low incomes to reach the poverty line in earnings before cut-backs. This will give more incentive to work.

In conclusion, let people help people so that the people being helped feel that life is worth living, not just existing.

Congratulations to: Colleen Izzard, winner of the hooked rug.

NORTHERN WOMEN'S CENTRE IS NOW INCORPORATED!

Since Jan. 1976, The Northern Women's Centre has been incorporated as a non-profit charitable organization. The centre is incorporated under the name NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO WOMEN'S CENTRE, the former name being unsatisfactory to the government in that geographically it was too vague.

The centre became incorporated in order that it could be named as a beneficiary in a will. The centre wishes to thank Mary Tomlinson whose legal assistance was invaluable. The centre will continue to function unstructured as possible. However, it was necessary to appoint (they volunteered) ten women to sit as Board of Directors. If you are on the Board of Directors and wish to be replaced please notify the centre. THE FIRST ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 16th, 1976. ALL WOMEN ARE WELCOME. There will be elections to replace any vacancies on the board.

ALL WOMEN CREDIT UNION A POSSIBILITY FOR THUNDER BAY

The Northern Women's Centre has hired Laurie Hill, with funding from the Secretary of State, to investigate the feasibility of a Credit Union for women in Thunder Bay. The Metro Toronto Women's Credit Union has been in operation for some months now and has set a precedent in Ontario, in having women considered a community, which will make it easier for other women's credit unions to obtain a charter. On June 24 at 8 p.m. at the centre, 120 W. Amelia, a meeting will be held. Laurie will be prepared at that time to share all the information she has obtained to date. If you are curious, interested, or already enthusiastic about a women's credit union, please attend. If you are unable to attend, phone the centre for information.

WOMEN'S CENTRE NOT BEING UTILIZED

The Women's Centre welcomes small groups of women who wish to meet in a quite comfortable atmosphere, perhaps to meet for consciousness raising, letter writing (lobbying) whatever. There are also a lot of women trying to cope with depression. Some women have remarked that even coming to the general meetings has helped them to feel less alone with their problems. We would like to see a group or group formed at which time you could talk over your problems, with each other. Anonymity could be maintained. THE CENTRE'S HOURS ARE 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Fridays only. To inquire about using the centre for meeting phone 622-3989. For July and August only there will be no Thursday general meeting. HAVE A GOOD SUMMER!



THUNDER CLAP -

To Fort Frances and Rainy River district school boards who properly recognized the abortion issue as political, and refused permission for Anti-abortion to campaign in the school.

Dear Sisters,

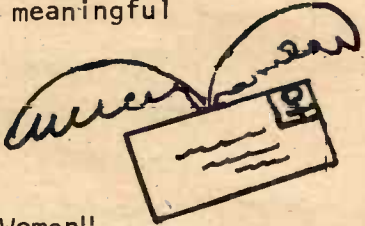
Just received Vol. 2, Issue 5, and found it most informative, particularly the articles on "Legal Sanction of Rape", "Where Do We Go?" and the "Crisis Housing Report".

I am enclosing \$2. to replace that with which you reimbursed Ann Garret, since I agree with your opinion that there are many issues on which we agree, and we should concentrate on these for the betterment of all, rather than get hung up on one contentious issue.

Congratulations on the paper - a worthwhile effort indeed.

-Patricia Baxter, T.Bay.

p.s. The poems are a real bonus. "To my first love" was particularly meaningful for me.



Dear "Northern Women"

Enclosed is \$3.00 for one years renewal of your paper.

Thanking you for the effort alone that goes into it.

May I urge you to consider joining with the Congress of Canadian Women, helping to make it stronger, and encouraging all women who participate in an organization formed 25 years, devoted to Equality, Development and Peace.

Now this Decade offers us tremendous challenges. A strong, progressive CCW across our country can do much to advance women and work for Peace.

We need to give every possible support to our Native women.

Do you have the book by Howard Adams--Prisoner of Grass, now number one in the Trent University Native Studies? This is excellent and important reading.

Out of our 16 Universities, 14 are now having courses in Native Studies. We must help make these courses real.

Best wishes to all the good Northern Women.

Sincerely

Nora Rodd Toronto

Dear People,

We would greatly appreciate it if you would place the following as an ad in your newsletter advertising The New School for Peace - "Humanistic approach to the problems of injustice, pollution, poverty, prejudice, resource depletion, revolution and war. Actualizes the values of compassion, equality, freedom and nonviolence. The New School, planned for July 31 - Aug. 13th on Grindstone Island near Ottawa. Cost for 2 weeks of an intense, enjoyable and challenging experience is \$200, including all necessities. Apply now if interested by writing to Nancy Bayly, 562 Johnson St., Kingston, Ont.

Thank you,
Nancy Bayly.

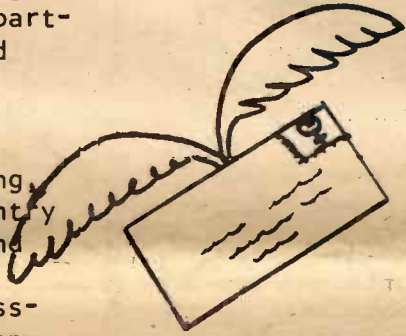
99 Braemore Adus.
Toronto 4, Ontario.
May 31, 1976.

Dear Sisters,

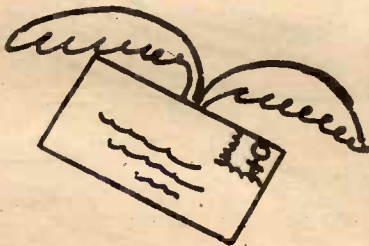
In addition to giving me a Subscription, could you please send me the issue in which you included some material on Wages for Housework. It may have been issue 2 or 3. Thanks a lot.

The paper looks really good.

Best wishes,
Francis Gregory.



LETTERS



Dear Sisters,

Please find enclosed a cheque to cover a subscription to your publication for one year, plus a very small donation.

This is the first issue of Northern Woman that I've had the pleasure to receive and read. I am very impressed with the quality of the articles and great variety of topics covered in just this one issue. I might add that I was not so pleased with one article, ("The Socialized Penis"), but I am keenly waiting for its continuation

in your next issue to see how the author can redeem himself from his apparently chauvinistic description.

Please keep up the good work. I'm sure it must be very difficult at times.

-Brooke Carfagnini

Dear Sisters:

I was thrilled to receive an issue (Vol. 2, No. 5) of the Northern Woman in the mail this morning. Enclosed is \$3.00 for my subscription, to be mailed to the following address:

14-2120 Ridge Rd.
Victoria, B.C.

I'm pleased to hear that the Victoria Women's Centre is receiving your publication.

I'd like to offer a comment regarding editorial policy on "censorship" of material. I noticed that Ann Garrett's letter against abortion was printed. Although ideally the news-journal should reflect many points of view on issues that affect women, you should be cautious of allowing the journal to be used by people who seek to destroy the foundations on which women's liberation lie. The right to secure birth control is such a foundation, and the Right-to-Life organization will use any means to prevent women from obtaining a measure of this right, which is the freedom to have an abortion. Although I thought that your reply to the letter was great, I hope that you

don't feel obliged to print "challenges" or simply material, the intention of which is to destroy the very basis of the freedom we seek to establish.

By the way, I hear that "Birthright", an anti-abortion counselling agency (whose source of funding is a well-kept secret) is establishing an office in Thunder Bay this fall.

I also would like to say that I found both Mallory's letter and Eve's article very touching. I offer deep empathy to Eve, and suggest that she send her article on her construction job experience to the Labourer's Union and let them deal with their disgusting behaviour at the next union meeting.

Enough verbosity,

Thanks, best wishes,
and love:
Georgina Garrett.

I found this while reading, and thought you might be interested in printing it:

In November, 1974, an arbitrator found that Bell had been discriminating against two of its female managerial personnel by paying them less than the men in their department with the same skills. The women were awarded \$2000. in backpay. Apparently, this decision undercut Bell's personnel policy which functions on the premise that a woman does not have to use her brains to say "one moment please", and so Bell appealed the case. The judges agreed with Ma Bell and overturned the award, claiming that only the job performed, and not the skills and experience brought to the job, could be considered in determining whether there had been any discrimination. The court's decision severely waters down the protection promised women in the federal government's Female Employees Equal Pay Act.

(from This Magazine, No. 5 & 6, Vol. 9, Nov. - Dec. 1975.)

The Northern Woman Centre has received a grant from Sect. of State for student summer employment to research the possibility of forming the first women's Credit Union in the city. She will also assist in a health choice work-shop to be held at Confederation College this fall.

CLICK!

October, 1970, walking down River Street in Winnipeg, with a dear friend, now dead, talking about the husband who divorced her, after more than 20 years, for a much younger woman. She said, "You know how much he hated the outdoors, - picnics, camping, roughing it. I loved it, but we never did it. Guess he's got the right wife, now they spent all summer on a northern lake".

Click! and at 5:30 p.m. outside a kitchen boutique on River Street I became a feminist. So now I'm a G.D. Women's Libber, sometimes a "lesbian" or a "whore" or just "frustrated". Don't know if there are any labels left. But I do know that there are identifiable Women's issues, beyond that I believe fervently that all issues are women's issues. I'm still working for peace and universal "humanhood".

Tery Padgham,
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

(reprinted from HER-SELF, Winnipeg YWCA)

POETRY

I want a women's revolution like a lover.
I lust for it, I want so much this freedom,
this end to struggle and fears and lies
we all exhale, that I could die just
with the passionate uttering of that desire.
Just once in this my only lifetime to dance
all alone and bare on a cliff under cypress trees
with no fear of where I place my feet.
To even glimpse what I might have been and never never
will become, had I not had to "waste my life" fighting
for what my lack of freedom keeps me from glimpsing.
Those who abhor violence refuse to admit they are already
experiencing it, committing it.
Those who lie in the arms of the "individual solution,"
the "private odyssey," the "personal growth,"
are the most conformist of all,
because to admit suffering is to begin
the creation of freedom.
Those who fear dying refuse to admit they are already dead.
Well, I am dying, suffocating from this hopelessness tonight,
from this dead weight of struggling with
even those few men I love and care less about
each day they kill me.

--Robin Morgan, from "Monster"



I saw a women sleeping. In her
sleep she dreamed LIFE stood
before her, and held in each hand

a gift.....In the one LOVE

in the other FREEDOM and
she said to the woman "CHOOSE!

And the woman waited long
and she said FREEDOM!

And life said "Thou hast chose
well". If thou had said LOVE
I would have given thee
what thou did ask for, and I
would have gone from thee, and
returned no more to thee.
Now the day will come when I
shall return, In that day I shall
bear both gifts in one hand.
I heard the woman laugh in
her sleep.

Olive Schreiner

THE FREE NORTH

She was Northern,
deep in her secret marrow
the depth of rock
and forest claimed her,
here in its swollen rivers
she heard the whisper of
the dipping paddles
where the loon was hiding.
More than the North,
she was the quiet pool
unpolluted....

The free north
virgin....
Yet in the wilderness
she played as fawn to doe,
a target for the hunter,
a raw resource...Ripe
for picking.
The lust of progress
felled her like a pine,
stripped her.....
Stole the treasure she
was hiding.....
Left her like an easy lay
discarded.....
She was Northern,
her braids as sleek
as feathers on a crow
and yet.....
Her destiny was wed to sorrow.

She was the time it is
and our to-morrow.

Gert Beadle.

CUT BACKS

FACTS ... FACTS ... FACTS ... FACTS

"Everyone has a little bit of suffering to do."

--Jean Luc Pepin
Dec. 5, 1975.

"Do not get discouraged if the consumer price index maintains a two-digit momentum for several months to come."

--Beryl Plumptre,
Oct. 11, 1975

"Look lady, don't expect the price of a can to stay where it is because we've brought in a freeze."

--Pierre Trudeau,
Oct. 10, 1975.

GOVERNMENT CUTBACKS

In October, Trudeau brought in a program of wage controls. He followed this in December with an announcement concerning government budget cutbacks. The main targets of the cutbacks are the people with the least power -- women, the elderly, and youth.

* Family Allowance. For a saving of \$221.3 million, the government is eliminating the 10.8% increase mothers were supposed to receive beginning January 1. This is the largest single saving in the government cutbacks program.

* UIC. Claimants with dependents who used to get 75% of their earnings have been cut to 66 2/3%. People over 65 years of age are no longer eligible, at a loss of \$120 million to those claimants.

* OFY eliminated. A saving of \$36 million and 35,000 more youth without a wage this summer.

CYC eliminated. A saving of \$6.1 million and 450 community workers wageless.

LIP cutback by \$35 million and 80,000 more people unemployed.

The Native Indian Brotherhood has calculated that the above cutbacks will mean a loss to native people across Canada of over \$6½ million. These cuts come at a time when the national unemployment rate is 7.3% and over 10% of women and 13% of youth (14 - 24 years) are unemployed.

However, the government is also "going after the rich". They have imposed a 10% surtax on those with incomes over \$30,000. There is a debate going on in Parliament whether this means that a married man with two children making \$35,000 will pay 19¢ or 35¢ more tax per week!

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

At the same time as the government is saving money on women, old people, and youth, it is increasing expenditures elsewhere. While the MP's and Senators have frozen their

CUT BACKS

salaries for a year (which they weren't planning to increase anyway), they increased their tax-free allowances as scheduled.

The government also announced recently that they are spending \$1 billion on 18 airplanes for the Armed Forces, and increasing Defense spending from \$2.5 billion to \$5 billion in the coming fiscal year.

PAID LABOUR FORCE

With the cost of living increasing the way it is, more and more women are forced to take jobs outside their homes. Between 1964 and 1974, the number of women in the Canadian labour force grew by 88.6%. 43.1% of the women in the paid labour force are self-supporting. Despite this massive increase in the proportion of women in the paid labour force, women remain in the lowest paid jobs -- "women's" jobs.

* In 1963, 61.8% of women in the paid labour force were in clerical sales, and service. By 1973, this percentage had increased to 63.1.

* And the difference between men's and women's wages is increasing. In 1971, the average man earned 44% more than the average woman. By 1973, it was 45.1% more. In Ontario in 1974, women waged workers earned \$1 billion less than if they were men.

POVERTY AND WOMEN

Imposing poverty is what these cutbacks are all about, and a woman on her own is assured a place among the poorest!

* 2/3 of all women below the age of 25 have annual incomes of less than \$5,000.

* 85% of single-parent families are mother-led.

* Almost 50% of mother-led families have an income of less than \$4,000. 23% of single father-led families have less than \$4,000.

* A male head of family has a 9.3% chance of living below the poverty line. A female head of family has a 40.1% chance.

CUTBACKS IN SOCIAL SERVICES IN ONTARIO

(If you don't live in Ontario, use these figures as a model to find out what's happening in your area.)

I. Daycare. The government cutbacks are forcing an increasing number of women out of their paid jobs and into total economic dependence on a man. The government has:

* Frozen any expansion in the number of daycare centres after March 31.

* Threatened to double the subsidized fee from 25¢ to 50¢ daily.

* Frozen the number of subsidized children.

* In effect reduced the operating budget of subsidized daycare centres by allowing only a 5.5% increase this year.

CUT BACKS

II. Universities. The Henderson Committee has recommended:

* A tuition increase of 65% over the next three years.

* The elimination of the grant portion of the Government Assistance Program, meaning students will be saddled with even huger debts when they graduate.

* The University of Toronto has already attempted to cut back the Women's Studies Program without success, and will probably try again.

III. Other Social Services

The Ontario Government has:

* Frozen the building of nursing and old age homes, meaning more work for women looking after the elderly in their own homes.

* Frozen staff and service in hospitals in 1976, meaning more work for hospital workers, 70% of whom are women.

In Metro Toronto, threatened cutbacks in social services include:

* A 50% cut in shelter allowance for welfare recipients.

* The end to supplementary benefits to Family Benefits and Old Age Security recipients, which paid for eyeglasses, dentures, hearing aids, etc.

* Reduction of staff and services in old age homes.

* Freeze on spending for visiting nurses and homemakers.

All of which means MORE WORK FOR WOMEN

IF YOU PUT A MAN ON A PEDESTAL,
YOU RISK GETTING YOUR HEAD
KICKED OFF. . .

"In this struggle, we must accomplish nothing less than a wrenching adjustment of our expectations."

--Pierre Trudeau,
Oct. 13, 1975.

"We are getting tired of always sacrificing ourselves for somebody else's good or profit. We want to stop inflation where it hurts most -- in our pocketbooks. We want the increase in our Baby Bonus and we want wages for all our work as women."

--Sallie Shum,
Dec. 24, 1975.

From a letter to the Toronto Globe and Mail.

WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK COMMITTEE
745 DANFORTH AVENUE, SUITE 301,
TORONTO, ONTARIO. 466-7457.

Parry Sound, Ont. (FNS)

A young native woman was raped by sons of the Mason Lodge here. First, they pounded salt into her vagina, they then gang-banged her. Nothing was done after the incident since she is a native woman and the men were sons of Masonic Lodge members.

PROJECT ON WIDOWS

The following article is a condensation of a research project done in the Kingston area on the status and conditions of life of some widows in that city.- Funded by the Dept. of the Secretary of State at the request of Widows United, Kingston, Ontario. We feel it will be of interest to the general public since widowhood is universal and inevitable in many cases. The following then contains excerpts from the research papers and the entire subjective evaluation.

This research consisted of 80 persons Anglo Saxon in origin, 70% of whom had resided in the area for a minimum of twenty years and of whom over 50% had been married for over 20 years. The average age was 53.4 years. Most of the subjects had been widowed for over 2 years making it difficult to examine closely the reactions to the severe grief which immediately follows the death of a loved one. Many of the widows could not remember and fully discuss this aspect because of the time lapse. The sample group was by no means random. Therefore, this report cannot reflect the total profile of widows and their problems, but there are significant trends seen in this group to support a meaningful examination of these subjects.

Although most married couples assume that the husbands earned pension and life insurance together and would provide for the widow's livelihood in the event of death, only 51.3% of our sample were receiving a widow's pension from

their husbands' employment and only 21.3% were receiving a life insurance annuity. Canada Pension, designed to supplement personal resources was being paid to 56.3% of the widows, but in some cases the widow commented that the payment was less than ten dollars a month. In 78.75% of the cases, income had dropped. 57.1% had dropped over 50 per cent. More than one-fifth had to sell their homes and move to cheaper lodging.

NEED FOR ADVICE AND HELP

A large portion of the group, 70% needed advice after the death of their husbands. In order of priority, the most needed was financial assistance. Understandably, many widows found it difficult to express trouble and grief to strangers, and often to friends. For this reason, they felt open to only their closest family. If there was no close family, these strong feelings were repressed and controlled. Many of them felt no one was really helpful to them at this time. They felt they presented a threat and embarrassment to others.

REACTIONS TO THE DEATH

Shock, relief that illness is over, sorrow, numbness, depression, confusion, nervousness and mental problems, hysteria, loneliness, fright, resignation, bitterness, surprise, helplessness, guilt, disbelief. 13.8% rejoiced, were angry at husband for leaving her alone with kids, nothing, wound-up, haunted, tragic, suppressed feelings, wanted to go home, or had no answer. 32% would consider re-marriage. 67.5% would not for various reasons. Re-marriage is not commented on with any enthusiasm and companionship was the only popular reason for considering it.

BREAKDOWN OF PROBLEM AREAS

Loneliness and general isolation -53.7%.
General adjustment problems -27.2%.
Financial problems -19.1%.
Advantages
72.5% saw no advantage in being a widow. The rest listed freedom, relief from worry over his illness, solitude, no need any longer to be servile, more mature and independent.

ATTITUDES TOWARD WIDOWS BY COMMUNITY

Over 80% of those widowed believed they were treated unfairly by the community, taken advantage of by car-repair people, house repair people, salesmen, men, lawyers and real-estate and bank personal, -in general, devalued and ignored while 13.8% saw themselves as well-treated and valued.

It is interesting to note that few widows advocated more independence and responsibility in wives before widowhood strikes, rather opting for more social security after the fact. Only three widows wanted more control in pension and life insurance decisions. Only one felt girls should get a good education and learn a trade.

SUBJECTIVE EVALUATION

Certainly not all widows have problems but many of the widows that were interviewed seemed dissatisfied with their lives. The change from the status of wife to widow seemed to present most of the problems. Grief, of course, was very difficult to live through, but the problems of adjusting to be a single independent woman seemed to continue for years and years. The strongest problem area we discovered was an inability to make decisions and solve problems (a certain passive acceptance of things). Many widows would complain about certain issues and then would be totally unable to conceive changing and solving them. For example, many women were very lonely and wanted companionship, yet would never think of meeting a new man, out of loyalty to the dead husband. Others would complain of lack of money, or a need for bigger pensions, but they would not explore possible avenues of retraining or employment.

Some widows complained of nowhere to go for help and advice, yet when asked later about what social service agencies they would use if available, they claimed that they wouldn't use any because they like to be independent. A large majority of widows were upset by the attitudes society had towards them, yet when asked what changes they would like to see in the society only a small percentage mentioned a change of attitude.

Our feelings are that many widows believe consciously or unconsciously that their life is over, that there is no point in actively changing anything. In fact, many widows never do make the adjustment to being single, independent women; they appear as wives who died with their husbands. Such an inability to change and adapt is understandable with older women who become widows.

Although many widows worked while they were married, the vast majority, 70% preferred to stay home to look after their families. The impression given was that as

housewife and mother in the home, they found value and worth in the domestic work that they did, and many felt most competent in performing such activity. Once the family disperses and the husband dies, a woman loses her role as housewife and mother. She is no longer valued for what she has done and been trained to do all her life. These skills are not easily marketable and the sense of value derived from this work soon disappears. Now, the widow must face a world of survival entirely foreign to what she has been used to. Though many women have worked before widowhood, this work most often low paying and she has not consistently pursued it all her life. Also her age and sex may go against her because many employers would be hesitant to hire an older woman who has had no consistent experience.

Very frequently, the widow is left in a situation with which she is totally unprepared to cope. She must survive in a working world where she may be unused to, she must make financial and business decisions on her own, perhaps for the first time in her life, she must make new friends on her own and in the midst of all this change, she must re-define herself from that of housewife to single woman.

The role of housewife and mother is an essential role, in this society, and to the exclusion of all other living skills, it can become a trap to the widow. If the housewife has no marketable skills, no financial or business knowledge, cannot make independent decisions; cannot survive in the male world, she is in for the biggest cultural shock of her life.

As long as marriage remains an integral part of our society, there shall be widowhood. There are 2,920 widows in Kingston, 560 of them heads of families. Every woman who marries must realize that she is a possible widow, and must prepare herself for that state realistically. The younger a couple is, the easier it is for them to recognize widowhood as a natural extension of wifehood.

In our study, less than half of the widows had discussed the possibility of widowhood at all with their husbands, and even for those who had made provisions for widowhood, their preparations were often less than adequate. The lack of involvement on the part of many of these women as wives in issues that directly determine their future living standard indicates either a complacent or a passive attitude. Perhaps some couples still believe that the woman should be shielded from complicated money matters even when they determine her future security.

So strong is our taboo against recognizing the effects of death in our midst, that many writers lump widows, divorcees, and single women together as one coherent group. But singleness is not the issue for widows; it is grief, and learning to cope alone with economic and emotional problems, exactly what she has been protected from all her married years. Our study shows that a woman, who has seen her major function as that of housewife, loses her love one, her job, her income, her social life and sometimes her home. And she must

continued on page

CREDIT \$ \$ COUNSELLING

WANTED - MORE CREDIT COUNSELLING

In a classic double-bind statement designed to hide the dismal truth about "easy credit", David Ogilvy, a British advertising executive once told an audience "Gentlemen the consumer is no moron, the consumer is your wife." Unchallenged the statement places the full burden of money mismanagement on the everyday housewife.

The truth is more complicated than advertisers can afford to have us believe. Credit Counselling shows that the lure of easy credit is oblivious to gender. Men and women, we find, are equally vulnerable to subtle invitations for indulgence in a seductive market place.

In addition to deliberate corporate consumer manipulation, credit or financial management difficulties may be caused by any number of reasons such as: illness, employment difficulties, reduced income, and so on. Regardless of cause, the result of financial difficulties can be extremely hazardous to the victims' well being, sometime jeopardizing employment, home life, and even health and mental stability.

The Ontario government has shown some leadership in providing counselling for troubled debtors. Province subsidized programs are operating in a number of centres throughout the province. The debt counselling program operated by the Thunder Bay Family and Credit Counselling agency receives 60% provincial subsidy for operating expenses. The remainder, 40%, is raised locally by donations from credit grantors, and through United Way funding. The counselling service is provided free of charge to all clients. During 1975 the agency assisted 229 clients with a variety of financial problems. Services included budgeting assistance, general financial advice, and pro-rate. Simply stated, a pro-rate service is an agreement arranged by the agency between the debtor and all creditors, which repays debts in significantly reduced monthly instalments.

Though only a small number of individuals require debt-counselling services, the amounts involved can serve as a warning to those who may be on the verge of falling prey to easy credit. Total debts for 229 clients amounted to a staggering \$1,218,019. (one million, two hundred and eighteen thousand, and nineteen dollars) owed to 1445 creditors. Only 84 of the 229 clients required pro-rate assistance. Pro-rate disbursements to the credit community (banks, credit unions, finance companies, stores), came to a sizeable \$110,065.

In human terms, the results of debt-counselling are extremely gratifying. People, once at the mercy of wage liens, legal threat, hassling telephone calls at home and at work, regained peace of mind and personal and family stability. Many families were spared the debilitating psychosocial symptoms of financial stress: divorce, desertion, depression and general despair.

Despite the proven effectiveness of credit counselling services, the program has not reached maximum effectiveness in Ontario. A significant part of the problem is that the province takes a miserly approach to the development of needed social services. Provincial subsidy policy, for example, deliberately excludes funding for program advertising or community promotion - the hassle tools of the market-place are not available for developing a well informed consumer! This point is important. With over 1.5 billion spent on advertising annually in Canada (2% of our gross national product), the high risk and even ordinary consumer is subjected to intense pressures - for many it results in a wealth of vexing problems including the ills of a debt-life style. A current prayer, "Dear Lord, please give me the luxuries of life and I'll gladly forego the necessities, typifies the attitude of many customers. It makes the modern producer King and Sovereign of all human needs (real or conditioned by advertising), and relegates the average consumer to life-long serfdom.

Inequalities in the advertising equation reveal themselves in a steady avalanche of consumer complaints to the Federal Government's official listening post, Box 99, Ottawa. Here is a quick run-down on the type and number of complaints.

- Food (2,180 complaints): quality, prices, and labelling.
- Cars and accessories (2,133 complaints): quality, failure to receive goods, guarantees and warranties, repairs and service.
- Housing and real estate (1,800 complaints): quality, price, failure to receive goods or service.
- Prices (1,911 complaints)
- Advertising (969 complaints).

Complaints cited indicate the tremendous impact of calculated marketing strategies on the more or less unprotected consumer. The modern market place has become a

jungle of confusing product claims by manufacturers and has given birth to a veritable explosion of consumer products. Only a couple of decades ago, for example, grocery stores used to stock 1500 items on their shelves, compared to 8000 (of which a thousand a year are new), in 1976.

What should the Federal Government do besides listening to consumer complaints. How can it counteract the forces of "normal" corporate sales strategies, and abnormal mass media hucksterism. Besides making business more competitive, stronger policing of the market place, allowing full consumer participation in decisions affecting them, and providing better grievance-solving mechanisms for individual consumers, senior government must develop a national network of credit counselling agencies.

It has been estimated that it would only cost \$3.3 million dollars to set up an effective nation-wide counselling program. Meanwhile, the cost of personal bankruptcy in 1970 was an

estimated sixty to ninety million dollars. The business community too has a responsibility for "cleaning up its act", perhaps by diverting a small percentage of its annual profits towards developing a more-informed consumer. Schools also must play a stronger role in preparing

informed future consumers. Lastly, individual consumers have a responsibility to become better informed about the many hidden issues related to consumer spending.

Ogilvy might not have been right, but how would we answer P.T. Barnum?

-Arend Visser.

widows cont'd

meet this trauma alone. 18.1 percent found that no one was helpful, no widows found social services to be helpful, and children emerged as the only significant helpful group of all those that widows turned to.

A good idea is an annual reassessing of the financial situation, adequacy of life insurance, wills, pension retirement plan and survivor benefits. Both partners should participate and understand all aspects of future plans and present situation. A good time for this would be the couple's anniversary. This day can be a commitment that their love and concern for each other's welfare will extend beyond the grave.

Women must accept the fact that the security of a housewife is too often short-lived. Girls must secure adequate education and employment training so they can maintain the standard of living for themselves and their children if necessary.

The original purpose of this report was to study the problems of widows in Kingston in order to make recommendations for changes in the community and in legislation. But through this study, we have discovered that only a minority of Kingston widows could propose positive changes in community and legislation that they would use and benefit from. We as researchers feel that we cannot rightfully tell widows what they need. In fact, the one recommendation we do make is that no one should tell widows what they need. Widows must explore and become aware of their own needs and wants, then perhaps they will take initiative in solving their own problems for themselves. These widows must be given an opportunity to define their own problems in a constructive way together.

We hold that no one can really help widows until they are given the opportunity to help themselves. We recommend that a drop-in centre should be formed for widows similar to those centres for senior citizens. The centre should be available for widows to drop-in and socialize a certain number of days a week. In this way, the isolation that surrounds each individual widow may be lessened, and she may see that her problems and concerns are those of other widows as well. Such a centre would supply a safe environment for widows to interact and perhaps then they will be better able to specify their needs. A counsellor may help with these discussions. A centre will also encourage widows to take responsibility and initiative in running something as concrete and tangible as the centre. People should be available to give financial and emotional advice to widows who need it. Together widows may be able to help themselves, for no one else can live for them. A widow must learn to know herself as a woman, independent and single.

FEMINIST PRESS

What is the feminist press?

The true believer will tell you it's not MS or the woman's home-maker mags, its not even Chatelaine although one finds in its pages, a certain appetizer that creates a hunger for a deeper meaning, a closer walk with a movement that has become like the cry of our own hearts. Across this Canada of ours from the north-west territories, to St Johns Newfoundland the Status of Women Councils and the centres of radical feminists comes the written expressions of discontent of women who are emotionally and mentally ready to assume a larger role in a man-made, male controlled world.

These small news-letters and growing journals are like yeast in the dough of complacency to a sex that has been eating the unleavened bread of oppression for too long. We must preserve and support this voice as a priority, it is the only voice of women totally free from the manipulation of those whose aim and desire it is to keep us ignorant of the power and confidence that is our right by birth.

In almost every case the women who write and distribute this press do so on a voluntary basis, operating on crumbs of cash provided by small grants from Gov. with the support of a growing readership. Survival is a constant threat from issue to issue we must find the drive, the energy, the cash to state our case

without apology to a society who have found it all too easy in the past to dismiss women as the appendage of the real power in control.

One of the more comprehensive journals in the feminist press is THE OTHER WOMAN out of Toronto, a good and solid read for 50¢ or \$4 a year to subscribers, free to prisons and Native Women it provides a larger look at lifestyle and the general health of the movement. We at the northern Woman will keep a supply of this fine paper for women and solicit your support for it,

as well as our own. We will also the first time print a list of other news-letters that have impressed us.

REPORT ON CEDAR GLEN

FEMINIST WEEKEND AT CEDAR GLEN

In the conference centre of the United Church at Cedar Glen, Bolton Ont. the Toronto collective hosted, without government participation a feminist weekend of what turned out to be, as far as I could see, a meeting of true believers. This person in spite of a non perceptible generation gap was enfolded in that special warmth that is generated where ever women meet without the props of pretension.

Planned without a set structure of workshops, it made a random selection of groups to first come up with subjects for further discussion in a later workshop approach. I found the small group discussion not as productive as the general discussion which took place in the large conference room. One constant theme emerged time after time, the pervasive impotence that women feel who are mentally and emotionally prepared to take a larger part in the planning of changes that must take place in society if woman is to reach her full potential in this country. The heterosexual relationship as defined in both emotional and economic terms as a form of dependancy was one that found resonance in both straight and lesbian women. It became a bridge that both sides could cross over with ease. The conference could well have justified its existence by this fact alone; a mutual recognition that differences in life styles crumble under the harsh realities of economic pressure.

The lesbian collective of Wages for Housework was vociferous and militant, they are embattled and bitter, twice oppressed, many with children finding themselves pushed to the wall by the society they equate with male supremacy. We may question the approach but never the motive; there is no question survival is the driving force, to keep their children and preserve their life-style. Wages

for Housework did not find support in the conference, it was seen as one more dependency gimmick that allows the state even more participation in the lives of women. The number of times the words money, power and control were used as a panacea for all the problems would have delighted any member of the board but in general this was a conference prepared to face up to the realities. The future and fate of the movement and all women hinges on their ability to defend and sustain each other in the struggle. Joint ownership of land and property, lifeskills for a feminist community, the role of the feminist press, the pros and cons of separation of the sexes, the third option of celibacy in avoiding the hassle of deep relationships, the subject of co-optation from the extreme male left, from social services, from the moderate liberal; a more realistic approach to the non declared feminist groups whose long term goals in the struggle for equal right lay parallel to their own, the growing interest in credit unions for women, the increasing crisis housing starts, the passion to have them owned and operated by women as true havens, the sexist literature in the schools, the push of the anti-abortion groups, All these topics combined to make the general discussion groups a fascinating study, the freedom and ease with which all took part was extremely gratifying.

My personal impression was one of tremendous vitality, not always channeled positively but a tangible physical presence; one who has always believed the spoken word is the most unreliable form of communication, I can now dismiss much of the words my own included and say with perfect confidence the spirit lives! It struggles from frustration to depression and from depression to celebration. It is in healthy flux politically aware yet obliged to buy into privilege for survival. If it has a fault it is the impatience that sets it at odds with the comp-

lacent and unaware, of its own sex. Those who have opted out of the heterosexual relationships have paid their dues. It is unthinkable that straight women everywhere should withhold the full measure of sisterhood. Man and woman relationships under the present structure are enforced and continued as an imbalance of power to the highest level of political manipulation. The personal is political and many times freedom begins and ends in the home. The word radical is misused and abused in the context of human relationships. Personally I can't see anything more radical than challenging sexism where ever it is found. That is how radical I am prepared to be and I suggest in that context we are all equally radical. The burgeoning spiritual and creative growth in the movement should give us all a measure of satisfaction. The Sat. night concert at the conference was a real power-house, singing, comedy routine from the Three of Cups, a feminist tea-room in Toronto, poetry by Alexa de Wiel and from Thunder Bay as well. A most engrossing film on the life of Gertrude Stein, that great literary genius, was the delight of the most creative minds of her time. The fact that she was a known lesbian posed no threat to her popularity. The part Alice Tooklas played in her life was fascinating.

It was an experience I wouldn't have missed, I listened and I learned I was not alone in my age group.

Kay MacPherson from NAC was a great companion and took me back to Toronto.

Whatever the conference hoped to accomplish in the way of concrete directions falls into insignificance beside the friends made, the communication established by a short walk-together along a path that is our common destiny.

GERT BEADLE

REPORT FROM COUNCIL

NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO INTERNATIONAL WOMAN'S DECADE CO-ORDINATING COUNCIL

Minutes of May 15, 1976 Meeting
held in Conference Dining
Room at Confederation College with
19 members present.

A group picture taken by a photographer
to be used in submission to the
Chronicle Journal's woman's issue,
June 29.

Minutes of previous meeting were
adopted as read.

Publicity report: Secretary's
report stated that an information
package, containing a pamphlet,
a covering letter, and a copy of the
Northern Woman journal had been sent
to approximately 100 woman's organizations
in N.W. Ontario. A press release
re: formation of the council and
its aims had appeared in all local
papers.

Discussion on Council's approach
to the media: Gert Beadle suggested
the action groups report on their own
projects under the supportive structure
of the Council and that Bernice
Cain be the official spokesperson in
the interests of the Council in
future.

Motion by Gert Beadle, seconded by
Joan that the publicity committee
be dissolved and that action groups
be responsible for their own
publicity.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Crisis Housing: Gert Beadle reported
on her meeting with Dorothy Akram,
councillor at the Tarbut St. Houses.
She stated her committee was encouraged
with the progress. Lisa informed the
group that she and Colleen and Gert
will visit the Kenora women's hostels
in June. At present, no active
citizen's committee is operating there.

ROOTS

My grandmother had a word for sex,
intercourse, fornication, or the
common screw, and all the other
definitive terms were not included
in her repertoire. She had her
own word! It was "accomodate!"
I got the feeling rather early
that accomodating each other was
something my grandparents did
rather well, and with considerable
merriment. I wasn't sure what
it was but I knew it was enough
to make her give a rough tongue
to a neighbour who had the bad
manners to catch the act in the
hayfield one day while she and
grandfather were building a hay
stack. I heard her tell my mother,
"It's nobody's business where
I accomodate my man and I told
him so, he wont come snooping
around here again I can tell you".

RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT ACTION GROUP:

Paulah Edwards reported that the core
group are presently enrolled in
Wen-do classes, a self-defense course.
They will be sponsoring a seminar on
rape and sexual assault at Confederation
College, June 19, and brochures will follow.
The group will speak at Hillcrest highschool,
with the highschool health classes,
and have already appeared at a Woman's
Institute.

Moved by Marg Lanchok that Gert's and
Paulah's reports be accepted.
Seconded by Leona Lang.

HERSTORY

Marg Lanchok reported that a grant
from the Secretary of State was
received, and interviews of the
students were completed. Paulah
Edwards will continue the project
operating out of the Northern
Woman Journal office, Bay Street.

NATIVE WOMEN

Bernice Cain reported that she
had sent letters to Marlene Pierre,
Nancy Morrison and Edith MacLeod,
asking them to join the Council.
It was pointed out they were presently
involved in the Native Women's
Conference.

SOCIAL SERVICE CUTBACKS

Sharon McKay reported. Our Council
is not affiliated with the
Coalition for Social Justice in
opposition to social service
cutbacks. Bernice Cain will send
a letter of support to Norm Richards.
Sharon McKay will be Council's
liason with this group. A telegram
of protest from this Council's
previous seminar had been sent
by Sharon.

EQUAL PAY GROUP

Leona Lang reported that a strong
core group was established. Weaknesses
in the labour laws which accounted
for the labour contract failure
at the Port Arthur Clinic was
discussed. Changes in that area will
have top priority with this group.
Motion that we affiliate with
N.A.C. who are actively lobbying for
legislative change. Unanimous consent.
Bernice will request affiliation by letter.

I got some pretty definite
ideas about my grandmothers
methods of accomodation. For one
thing, it never occurred to me
that it wasn't she who decided
just when she felt accomodating.
The word duty was dust in her
mouth. I heard her say many
times, "I never do anything I
dont enjoy, she said it about
gardening, about shooting part-
ridges and about gussying up.
Why not about accomodating?
I also got the feeling my grand-
father enjoyed the game, it was
rather like watching the mating
dance of a pair of elderly grouse,
grandmother just out of reach
and grandfather hot on the trail.
Even as a child I was caught up
in the excitement of what I
could only speculate on.

To-day I have to ask myself-
was grandmother ahead of her
time, or are we regressing?, I
would have felt very sorry indeed
for the man who had the poor
judgement to insist she be acc-
omodating. She would have whipped

Motion that all reports be
accepted by Micky murray .
Seconded by Marg Lanchok.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION HEARING

Marg Lanchok reported that
she attended an organizational
meeting on behalf of the council
and will present a brief at a
public meeting June 6.
Meeting adjourned. Next meet-
ing June 12/76

LIBERATION

I cannot breathe
this air of
unequal values
where the lyrics
for shunted womanhood
ring to the tune of
"pots 'n pans
ugly hands'
and
"aging witches
becoming bitches".

I know
another part of me
the part you fail to see
the real meaning of me
Thus fulfillment
is found
in womanhood
creating a restored
image
in the femaleness
in me.

-Wendy Peterson
Kenora

him from the yard, the way she
whipped the great Jersey bull
who was mauling my grandfather
in the manure pile. She stands
in my mind as the invincible
spirit of woman. No one would have
dared call her lady, with all
the connotations that implies,
she lived in the real world,
a world that took all her energy
to survive. That she made it
look like a grand adventure is
the legacy she left to me, and
yet she was a city school-teacher
before she and my grandfather
came by ox-cart to take up
homesteading in a raw wilderness.
My faith in my own sex is rooted
in the memories of my grandmother,
if she had a message for women
to-day I'm sure she'd say,
It never pays to be too accomodating.

NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE

ministers absent

NAC NEWS RESOLUTIONS FOR URGENT ACTION

In support of the North West Territories Status of Women Action Committee's Brief to the Mackenzie Pipeline Inquiry, re the effects of the pipeline on N.W.T. women, BE IT RESOLVED that NAC encourages member organizations to make representations at hearings across Canada of the Mackenzie Pipeline Inquiry re the effect of the pipeline upon women.

WHEREAS Native Women In Canada suffer a double discrimination and are therefore the most oppressed in the country, WHEREAS the Supreme Court of Canada has upheld the right of Indian Councils to strip Native women of their heritage when they marry, outside the band, while similar penalties are not inflicted upon men who marry outside the band, BE IT RESOLVED NAC urge that the Bill of Rights be embodied and entrenched in the BNA Act...

that NAC mount a delegation to the Minister of Indian Affairs, Judd Buchanan to ask that evictions of Native women on the Caughnawaga reservation be halted pending resolution of their appeals which are before the courts, and that the rights of Native women should not be jeopardized in any contemplated changes to the Indian Act;...

that ... (NAC delegates and member organizations be asked) to write letters of protest to the Minister, and to Ian Watson, M.P., in whose riding Caughnawaga is located...

Mary Two-Axe Early and several other Indian women took active part in discussions and lobbying M.P.'s. They are threatened with loss of homes, separation from families, loss of rights, (and their children also lose rights) such as to advanced education, ... if they marry a man who is not a registered Indian. As one vivacious older woman said: "Montreal people can come and bury their dogs in the pet cemetery on our reservation, but I cannot be buried with my own people there!"

The Herstory project begun in I.W.Y. will go into it's second phase this season with a summer work project grant. Paula Edwards will index and complete the material, to those students who applied we can only say we are sorry we couldn't hire all of them.



QUOTE

"Loserism is when oppressed people sit around and think up reasons why they can't do something. Well just DO it. Thinking up reasons why you can't is the Establishment's job!"

-Florynce R. Kennedy.

In April of this year I was fortunate enough to represent North-Western Ontario as a delegate from the Northern Women's Centre to the annual NAC (National Action Committee) conference in Ottawa. The conference began Fri. evening April 23 and continued until Sun. evening, April 25. Many women also stayed for the lobby of M.P.'s on Parliament Hill, Mon. April 26.

The conference began on a somewhat disappointing note when the panel of Marc Lalonde, Minister of Health and Welfare and also Minister in charge of Federal government participation in IWY, Ron Basford, Minister of Justice and John Munro, Minister of Labour, did not appear after they had agreed to do so. It was immediately apparent to the women present how important these men considered the conference to be. In their place they sent representatives; for Munro and Basford they had their Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Ministers, respectively in attendance.

For Lalonde, the representative was Bob Kaplan, an MP and also Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. Also on the panel was Martha Hynna Coordinator, Status of Women, Privy Council, and Jeha Roberts, MP. The men there on behalf of Munro and Basford were placed in a rather difficult position for although they could provide some information to questions asked of them they could not answer for the Ministers that they were representing. Marth Hynna was very informative and appeared to be committed to the work that she is doing. As for the two politicians; they displayed an inexcusable ignorance of women's issues and to make this ignorance even less palatable, they spoke in a very patronizing, sometimes tolerant, sometimes not-so-tolerant manner. Although the questioning of the panel was a frustrating experience for all those present, it certainly did a great deal to bring together the anger and disappointment of the women gathered there.

On Sunday the resolutions were presented to the voting delegates for refusal or acceptance. Very little opposition was raised for any of the issues with some delegates exercising reserved positions on a few. The three main issues arising out of the resolutions passed were: economic matters such as wage controls; abortion, birth control and day care; and the organization of an effective communication system which could reach the women of Canada on issues concerning them. Other resolutions dealt with such things as the Mackenzie Pipeline, the presentation of women in the media, energy alternatives, priorities in government spending etc. Details of these resolutions will be given in THE STATUS OF WOMEN NEWS.

On Mon. I participated in the lobby of MP's, in which I lobbied an individual MP; the NDP caucus, took part in the luncheon attended by John Munro and Marc Lalonde and visited the office of Bob Andras, my local MP, who had not agreed to receive any lobbyists. The lobby was the high point of the weekend for it presented an opportunity to speak face-to-face with the men and

women who have so much to do with passing the legislation influencing the lives of Canadian women.

The conference was attended by women from all parts of Canada including Newfoundland, B.C. and the Yukon. I was grateful for the chance to articulate the particular concerns of Northern women to the present.

Despite the regional, class, ethnic and political differences that existed among the women at the conference, almost unanimous agreement was reached on almost all of the issues. I think that this would have to be stated as the success of the conference.

Saturday was a busy day with workshops almost constantly in motion, first to determine the priorities and then to draw up resolutions from the workshops chosen by the delegates according to the issues they felt to be most important. The workshop I attended was to draw resolutions for the following four issues; mass consciousness-raising, abortion, wage control and day care, and political equality. The workshop I attended was typical of the others, as I'm sure it was. It is a miracle that we were able to arrive at an acceptable statement on these issues, considering the wide scope of involvement and militancy or lack of same among the women participating. But agreement was reached which was a very encouraging achievement.

BY Laurie Hill

ENGLAND

A Bill Battered Wives (Rights to Possession of Matrimonial Home) has received first reading in the English Parliament. It would "require the courts to make an order giving the wife of a man who has been convicted of an act of violence against her the complete right to possession of the matrimonial home if she applies for such an order and for purposes connected therewith."

-Spare Rib (English feminist magazine)

OTTAWA - A pilot project to continue the initiatives in the field commenced by the IWY Secretariat in 1975, eight consultants experienced with women's groups and community education have been hired to work in eight regions across the country. One of the consultants is Colleen Hughes in North-western Ontario.

Colleen Hughes can be contacted by leaving a message at 623-5241, the Secretary of State office, or through her home, 358 N. Syndicate Avenue, Thunder Bay P7C 3W5. Phone 623-3990.

CONVERSATION

HE SAYS.

MY WIFE CAN DO ANYTHING SHE LIKES AS LONG AS SHE DOES IT ON HER OWN TIME.

I'M JUST AS TRAPPED AS SHE IS I CANT DO EVERYTHING I'D LIKE EITHER.

WHY DOES SHE NEED HER OWN MONEY EVERYTHING I HAVE IS HERS.

I WANT TO STAY LOVING BUT IT'S HARD.

THE WOMANS MOVEMENT FRIGHTENS ME I'M AFRAID SHE'LL HATE ME.

IF I GIVE MYSELF OVER TO THE RAGE THAT IS IN ME, I WILL SMASH EVERYTHING WE'VE BUILT TO-GETHER.

HOW CAN I SAY THIS FRAME IS TOO SMALL TO GROW IN, WITHOUT SAYING I WANT TO GROW AWAY FROM HER.

SHE SAYS

I USED TO LOVE TO DANCE, BUT HE DOESN'T CARE TO ANYMORE.

I'M SO BORED WITH MY LIFE I COULD SCREAM.

I'M EATING TOO MUCH AND I DONT KNOW WHY.

I WANT A ROOM OF MY OWN WITH A LOCK AND KEY, I WANT TO KEEP MY DREAMS FROM BEING SMASHED.

I WANT TO STAY LOVING BUT IT'S HARD.

THE WOMANS MOVEMENT FRIGHTENS ME, THERE IS SO MUCH OF IT THAT APPLIES TO ME I DONT WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT.

IF I GIVE MYSELF OVER TO THE RAGE THAT IS IN ME, I'LL SMASH EVERYTHING WE HAVE BUILT TOGETHER.

HOW CAN I SAY THIS FRAME IS TOO SMALL TO GROW IN WITHOUT SAYING I WANT TO GROW AWAY FROM HIM.

HOW CAN WE TELL EACH OTHER HOW WE FEEL WHEN WE ARE BOTH SO DEFENSIVE WE'LL ACCUSE EACH OTHER OF NOT CARING.

I MOURN FOR MY SISTER



Credit to Country
Women Journal.

This morning as I leisurely enjoyed my second cup of coffee, I reached for the local suburban newspaper and read with horror that a 36 yr old woman had been murdered during the night. A neighbour had seen the figure of a man with a gun in her doorway. Even though I did not know her personally, nor her two children, nor her estranged husband (described by the press as having no regular address or place of employment) nor her co-workers where she was employed as secretary, I wept for her. She was my sister.

I was overcome with rage at this violent act, a symbol of the final or ultimate sacrifice of personhood which men have historically demanded of us as a separate species: woman.

The male/female relationship has probably best been characterized by the females willingness to sacrifice any or every portion of her own individual needs, goals and basic personhood. Direct confrontation was out, so she developed covert manipulation as a method. I consider it a frightening statistical fact, that married women make more suicide attempts and carry them out at a alarming and higher rate than single women.

I personally find intimate relationships with men draining. I find myself in a ping pong cycle, getting the emotional support I need from women so I can be strong enough to hassle it out with men. I find myself representing every female relationship they have experienced from mother on down; taking of an interaction with them, means taking on their garbage and accumulated myths. It is tiring to discover that each friendship turns out to be a CR experience for both of us.

Some men, in their honest groping search for new roles to play, are themselves many times lost, it takes a very self assured woman to gently guide them in the relationship. It is however a fine line between guiding and teaching a person to allow himself to be free with you and yet not attempting to dominate him denying his needs, under the guise of our own liberation.

I have watched women friends try to please men who cannot be pleased, remembering as little girls, that pleasing their fathers and grand fathers and uncles brought them love and acceptance. The circles enclosing, their worlds grow smaller and smaller as they try harder and harder to please until they are mere things, objects. Their life energies sapped

and dissipated, they either give one last sigh and surrender, or take a deep breath and come out fighting.

The tension of being powerless. The waiting and knowing that with each shadowy figure on a dimly lit street your very existence could be wiped out, or with luck you could only be raped, molested and beaten. The physical power, the physical meat muscle strength which is held over women from the time of small wobbling toddlers threatened with "when father gets home", or the gangs of boys on the way home from school-the pushing shoving, hair pulling, rock or snowball throwing. or the adolescent male sadistically teasing with an arm twist or a locked grip on your wrist. This constant taunting of muscle power over our bodies as we remember the the neighbour lady with the cauliflower ears from her husbands beating. The very real vulnerability of our experiences recorded in our minds and ever interfering with assertiveness in our adult day to day relationships with men.

How many ways do men kill women? Killing us softly, slowly, eating away at our capabilities, our self-confidence, our dignity, self respect and self esteem; eroding our hopes and dreams the Dream Killers, the Mind Killers the Soul Killers, and the epitome of their domination, when we act out their final demand and take our lives or have them taken from us.

So to-day I mourn my sister's death, shot in the head with a shotgun by her former husband, and I mourn the suffering that all my sisters have received at the hands of the men they have loved.

The rage we feel in our day to day encounters with people who lack understanding of women, the constant frustration of exploitation and belittlement, and the ever present fear of destruction, are but a few of the problems we, as women must face. Try to imagine for a moment how all these problems would feel, given a few details of another persons life. For example, men making passes at you, that you dont recognize as a pass, because you have no idea what a pass is.

Or imagine being made love to, enjoying it with the pure animal instinct we all have within us, but with none of the tenderness or care that is such a vital part of lovemaking. Or let us take it one step further; imagine yourself pregnant, imagine drs. checking you over, discussing your life, then doing something very painful to your insides, that you cannot recognize as an abortion because you dont know what an abortion is. Then you go through a post partum depression and lose control and they lock you up in a room. You get over it and everything is the same, except they give you a little pink pill, and you dont know what it is but you take it because you have so much faith in the people who give it to you that you would trust them with your life and sometimes you do.

This gruesome imagery, is unfortunately not imagery at all its not science fiction and its not a nightmare I had last night, It's all true. It happens to a very misunderstood, and completely oppressed minority of women. It happens to mentally retarded women who are misfortunate enough to be forced to live behind the walls of an institution.

The glaring facts came to me quite by accident in 1973/74 while I was working on an independent study for the college I was attending at the time. My study involved sex education for the mentally retarded. while studying, working, surveying and researching--I became quite familiar with many retarded women who lived in a southern Ont institution. I was also working within the walls of this place as a councillor. Some of the slips of the tongue, that were inadvertantly spoken to me shocked me at first, then came astonishment

then devastation that we could have come so far in the movement and still be so ignorant of a particular minority, which needed our help so desperately.

Sex Education is almost vital to the survival of these women but for some unknown reason, we haven't taught them what they need to know.

You may be justly surprised at some of the details of my study which I am about to outline, it is simply proof of our innocence on the subject.

The women I will be discussing are classified as "borderline intelligence" or dull normal", they have I.Q.'s that could run anywhere from 50 to 85*, and still be in this category. For the sake of argument we will avoid discussion of the severely and profoundly retarded. I will define normal as not retarded to avoid confusion since the term itself is questionable. I will go so far as to say that to the best of my knowledge "sex drives" in the M.R. are more closely linked to the mental, rather than chronological age of the person. Compared to the normal therefore, the borderline person, will usually exhibit less sexual behaviour, and not more as is sometimes believed.

Many more retarded women are taking their place in the community as self supporting adults, others until recently destined to a life of dependance are now viewed as capable of becoming at least partially self-sufficient. As the M.R. woman assumes a more productive role in society the more she also assumes responsibility for her own behaviour. I

maintain that this very responsibility entitles her to the same respect we receive, both sexually and emotionally, not only because we are all women, but because we are all people. It's so sad to see the abuse these women are subjected to as a result of their lower level of understanding. As our sisters, we should be helping them get the very best of treatment, rather than the all too obvious reality of our shortcomings.

My study therefore was based on the premise that retarded women can and do learn; and the ability to learn varied greatly from woman to woman but, for the most part she can behave in a socially acceptable fashion in all areas of social and sex related aspects of life. If we assume she can, and does learn, then the development of sex education programs becomes a reasonable goal.

It should be added, and I am quoting a resource guide put out by the National Institute on Mental Retardation "young retardates are vulnerable and easily misled, without careful preparation can and do fall victim to sexual seduction and exploitation". It should also be added there is no evidence of increased promiscuity among the retarded. I would also like to destroy the commonly accepted myth that aggressive sexual acts are common in the retarded, as is usually assumed, and that cases like this are extremely rare, in fact less common on the average than in the normal population. Such acts that do occur are usually due to a lack of emotional control rather than malicious intent.

It must also be pointed out that, the intellectual limitations of the mental retarded present certain difficulties in the development of sex education relevant to their needs. Generally speaking they are not capable of understanding the complex biological structure of the reproductive system, nor can they anticipate the social consequence of inappropriate sexual behavior. Yet, they must be prepared for the social roles they will assume in the future.

The term sex education covers all areas which have to do with human sexuality including our attitudes, our feelings, our behavior, and the way we relate to ourselves and others.

Guilt is an emotion we must be very careful not to instill. If for example, we slap her fingers for playing with her genitals but smile when she plays with her toes, she will be confused and may associate her genitals with feelings of guilt and shame.

But time takes care of most social embarassments, when she is old enough to go out in public, you can teach her not to masturbate, just as you teach her not to pick her nose and so on.

Theses are a few of the points brought about through careful research and determined questioning.

What I have outlined for you here, merely involves the introduction, and first chapter of my study. If signs of interest are evident, parts of the whole study will be published by the Northern Woman Journal, I hope sufficient interest will warrant this

*I.Q. levels are those of the National Institute on mental retardation

Paulah Edwards

Paulah Edwards came to us out of Windsor. This article is only part of a study she made for her thesis. Idealistic and loving she offers herself to the further understanding of what it means to be a woman and defenceless.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

NORTHERN WOMAN CENTRE....622-3989
WOMEN IN NEIGHBOURHOODS..622-8187
THE NORTHERN WOMAN.....345-5841
MOTHERS ON BUDGETS.....622-2863
SMITH CLINIC.....344-2431

SOCIAL SERVICES....623-2711
CRISIS INTERVENTION ..344-3571
FAMILY COUNCELLING....623-9596
LEGAL AID.....3451972
TELECARE.....344-1192

CRISIS HOUSING.....623-2711
HUMAN RTS. COMMISSION..475-1693
EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS...475-1691
MUNICIPAL DAY CARE.....344-3922
OR.....622-2450

RETURN TO: THE NORTHERN WOMAN
 316 Bay St.
 Thunder Bay, "P" Ontario.
 return postage guaranteed

Canada Post / Postes Canada
 Prestige paid / Port payé
 Bulk third class / En nombre troisième classe
 220

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Day Care.....3
 Epilepsy Thunder Bay..3
 Family Property Law...4
 Kenora Visit.....4
 Women & Alternatives..5
 Letters.....7
 Cut Backs.....9
 Project on Widows....10
 Credit Counselling...11
 Feminist Weekend....12
 Report N.O.I.D.....13
 National Action Cmtt.14
 I Mourn For My Sister15
 Sexual Education.....16

Donna Shaw
 627 S. High St.
 City P

THUNDER BAY

THIS IS YOUR LAST COPY
 YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS DUE
 PLEASE SUPPORT US

THE NORTHERN WOMAN
 316 BAY STREET
 THUNDER BAY, ONT.

(SIX ISSUES)
 \$3.00 YEAR
 \$7.00 BUSINESS
 OR INSTITUTION

GIFT

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____

DONATIONS
 GRATEFULLY
 ACCEPTED

want to get involved?
 call 345-5841 any Wed.
 or Friday.