

Northern Woman Journal

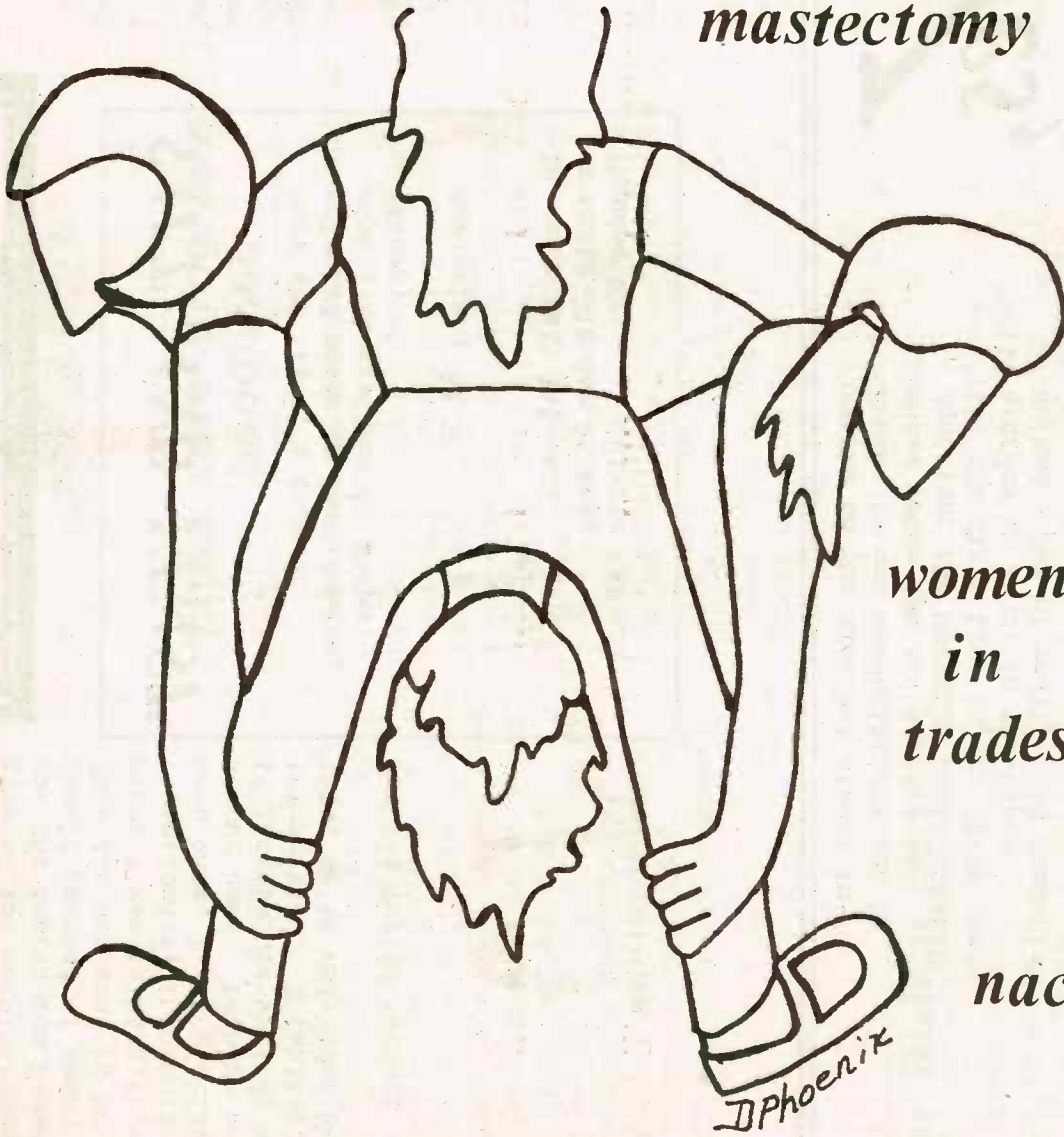
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THUNDER BAY
Ontario

midwifery
mastectomy



women
in
trades

nac

sex harassment

Midwifery : a labour of love

by Melissa Tefft



Midwife assisting woman in childbirth. Woodcut: Scipio Mercurio 1721.

In February, 1980 an International Conference for Midwifery was held in Vancouver, B.C. Over 300 people, one third of whom were midwives, attended from North America and Europe. The purpose of the conference was to join together women who were concerned with improving birthing possibilities in Canada; and the central focus of discussion was the necessity of legalizing the midwife and recognizing the role in healthy birthing.

During the two days of presentations, the speakers included mothers, lay midwives, nurse midwives, an economist, a doctor, an author of midwife heritage and a gynecologist who teaches midwifery in Holland. Though all presentations were different perspectives of midwifery, there was unanimous agreement that it was time to give the power and respect of birthing back to the mothers and the midwives. The Doctor from Holland agreed that interference is what causes many complications in births. Modern European countries have a remarkable lower rate of deaths and cuttings in births than in Canada and, they all have midwives attending the majority of births. One A.M.A. doctor said he had learned a great deal about birthing from the nurse midwives and that the medical association would look into the possibility of establishing a registry for midwives. But these wheels of bureaucracy grind slowly and people were anxious to work now for legalization. One result of the conference was the forming of a midwife organization to fight for the legalization and recognition of midwifery in B.C.

The midwives in B.C. are the most organized in Canada. They are presenting birthing issues in the media and are lobbying for legalization, hoping that if B.C. legalizes midwifery, other provinces will follow. The B.C. nursing association has endorsed their cause. They have some support from the medical community but also

a great deal of opposition from them. Some of their strongest support comes from women who have had to endure hospital birth procedures even in a healthy birth.

One midwife who attended this conference is Barbara Kemeny. Barbara is 26 years old and has been a midwife for the past eight years. She trained in a University hospital in Germany and continued working there with hospital and home births, delivering over 1,000 babies. Now that she resides in Thunder Bay she is legally unable to continue in her profession.

The following is a conversation between Barbara Kemeny and interviewer Melissa Tefft. The answers on this interview are not direct quotes given by Barbara. We collaborated in the writing to make the English as clear as possible. Further in this article will be a direct account of Barbara's home birth in her very own words.

so the midwives role was one of support and reassurance

For most North Americans midwifery is a very unfamiliar concept. Would you describe your work and the heritage of being a midwife in Europe?

In Germany the midwife has maintained her tradition for hundreds of years. She is first of all a woman. She is educated in and responsible for the physiology of pregnancy, birth, and post natal care of the mother and child. In the old days, birthing was an accepted part of life and the midwives were healers and highly respected members of the town. They knew everyone in town and were usually on the council. They would travel great distances for births and stay for a while afterwards to help the family. So the midwives role was one of support and reassurance to a natural process.

Once the child was born she supervised the expulsion of the placenta, tied off the umbilical cord and cared for the mother and infant during recovery. She based her work on the idea of permitting the birth to unfold with little or no interference.

During the 1500 and 1600's leaders of Christianity linked the midwives with the witches and proclaimed them demons of the church. The atrocities committed to ensure the elimination of the women healers often left a village with only one woman. Through these extensive burnings continued over centuries, the babies continued to be born and the women continued to secretly teach each other the birthing process.

With the rise of medical schools and medical technology, doctors made themselves available to deal with complications of delivery. With the invention of forceps in the 1720's, the midwife/doctor debate began as to who was to have control over attending births. Fortunately, in the mid 1800's in Europe the importance of the midwife was finally recognized. Training became subsidized by the government and midwifery was now part of the medical profession. The midwives maintained control as overseers of the births and doctors were called in only for pathology or a very high risk birth. Such high risks and/or pathology were exceptions and not expectations.

Today in Germany because of the technology and urbanization the midwife's connection with the community has changed, but she still delivers most of the babies in hospitals and at home. The doctors are available for crisis situations but the midwife still makes the decisions. Legally a doctor cannot even examine, much less operate on a birthing mother except in the presence and with the approval of the midwife.

cont'd page 8



LETTERS etc

Dear Sisters,

I've been meaning to write you for some time now but have been busy getting settled here in B.C. You will find enclosed our January Newsletter and a Feminist Booklist. I trust you will find both very informative. You will also, no doubt find reprints of your own articles from the Journal. To keep the network strong across Canada, it is so necessary to keep in touch this way. Feel free to use any of our articles for reprint in your Journal as well. As a member of the Decade Coordinating Council in Dryden, Ontario, I enjoyed my subscription to the Journal; now as a new resident of B.C., I've brought and shared the Journal with the women here. They were quite impressed with the professional look and content of the Journal, to say the least, and would like to continue receiving copies. My own subscription is up, and due to my current financial situation, could I possibly send you our newsletters in return for the Journals? It might be advantageous for your group to make copies of the Booklist and distribute them to the Decade Council, city library etc. It is so important for women to have access to the kinds of books listed in the Feminist Booklist. As usual, you people are doing a wonderful job with the Journal, as the women here in Kelowna would agree. There are often many exceptional articles in the Vancouver Kinesis and if you aren't already receiving copies, and/or articles, would you be interested in doing so?

I will close for now and continue looking forward to the next Journal.

In sisterhood
Love & Laughter
Barb J. Halliday

Dear Friends:

As a reader of the Northern Woman Journal I would hope you would be concerned at the intention of C.B.C. to drop the Ombudsman from its future programming. I have been so impressed by the sincerity and directness of Kathleen Ruff on the Sun. nite program. I feel as women we should assert some pressure on the Canadian Broadcasting System to support her continuing struggle on behalf of those caught up in the bureaucratic meatgrinder.

I have already made my protest in a personal letter to the C.B.C. and hope you will encourage other women to do the same.

Sincerely Nora Feldon

Heather Bishop Concert

Feminist Singer-Songwriter, Heather Bishop will be performing at the Ukranian Labour Temple, Ogden Street May 25th, 1980 at 8:00 pm. Tickets are \$4.50 advance, \$5.00 door, and are available at the Co-Op Bookshop.

To the staff of the Northern Woman:

As a former student at Lakehead University, I very much enjoyed reading your little paper.

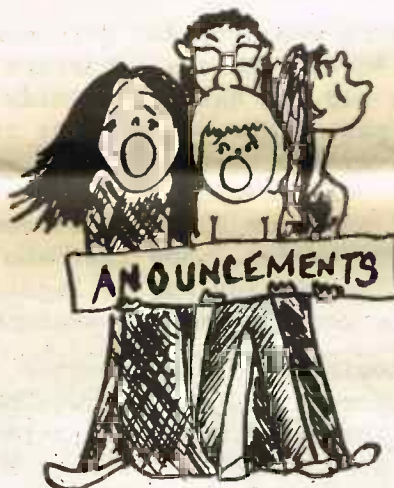
Your work is quite a service to the women of Thunder Bay. Unfortunately we don't have a women's newspaper (that I am aware of at least) in London or even on campus at Western. I would be delighted if you could send me the Northern Woman. Who knows, it might provide much needed inspiration!

Sincerely,
Rachel Smeijers
Huron College Library
London, Ontario

Dear friends,

I just finished reading your Jan/Feb issue and was well pleased to find so much really good information concerning women's health. I was particularly excited by the article on vaginal sponges and am anxious to try one out.

Susan Craddock
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan



child care programs handbook

The Lakehead Social Planning Council Day Care Committee is pleased to announce the publication of their handbook of child care programs. This handbook is the result of a study conducted during the summer of 1979. It is of particular interest to parents of pre-school children, detailing information on Day Care Centres, Private Home Nursery Schools, Occasional Child Care Services and programs for parents where child care is provided. The Handbook is being distributed to family and child serving agencies, community organizations and parent groups. Copies of the Handbook are available free of charge at:

LSPC Office
221 Bay Street
Thunder Bay P, Ontario
Phone - 345-3631

speakers, films etc slated for Thursday nights at Centre

A Northern Women's Centre general membership meeting was held April 7, 1980, ably chaired by Lewy Smith.

The members present expressed their desires to have the Centre involved in more activities, programming and outreach that would bring renewed interest and participation from women in the community.

Programming has been scheduled on a monthly basis which will include a monthly business meeting that will take place on the FIRST Thursday of each month. The remaining Thursday evenings have been allocated for speakers, films workshops etc., starting at 7:30p.m.

The business meetings are open to ALL women. For more details regarding Thursday evening activities phone the Centre at 345-7802.

raffle

NORTH WESTERN ONTARIO WOMEN'S CENTRE

1st prize
hand knit Icelandic wool pullover

2nd prize
white wool V-neck vest

Draw to be held June 3, 1980 at 1:00 pm, 316 Bay Street, Thunder Bay
SUPPORT YOUR CENTRE - COME IN AND BUY A TICKET

reading list

Starting this issue the Northern Woman Journal Collective plans to provide a list of suggested reading, feminist anthologies, auto/biographies of women, fiction, etc. The books recommended this issue are all available at the Northern Women's Centre library. Your suggestions will be welcomed.

NON-FICTION

The Second Sex - Simone de Beauvoir

The Dialectic of Sex - Shulamith Firestone

Going Too Far - The Personal Chronicle of a Feminist - Robin Morgan

Sappo Was a Right on Woman - Sidney Abbott/Barbara Love

Gyn/Ecology - The Metaphysics of Radical Feminism - Mary Daly

A Woman Born - Adrienne Rich

Our Bodies, Ourselves - Boston Women's Health Collective

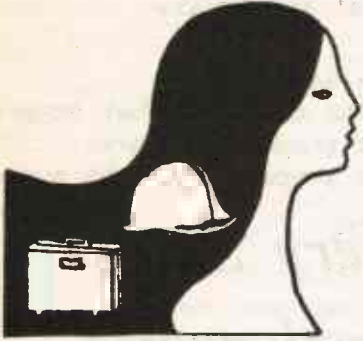
FICTION

The Women's Room - Marilyn French

Surfacing - Margaret Atwood

Science-Fiction

Woman on the Edge of Time - Marge Piercy



ONE INDUSTRY TOWNS PROVIDE NO LIFE FOR A WOMAN

No Life For A Woman - a film about the lives of women in single industry resource towns - highlighted the Women and Economic Development workshop held in Thunder Bay April 12, 1980. The film, directed by Bonnie Kreps, was introduced to the workshop by Sharon McGowan from British Columbia, who told of her experiences while making the film and suggested that the Northern experience in single industry towns extends itself all across the Canadian North.

No Life For A Woman is a stark indictment of poor planning, depressingly long winters and cruel isolation. The extreme loneliness and boredom experienced by women with

no outlet for mental stimulation, no meeting places for social interchange and no chance for employment was leavened in one instance by a Woman's Centre which seemed to fill a void and produce a support system of companionship and counselling.

The film, making the case as it did for the spin-offs that occur in the mental processes when a woman is confined to limited opportunities in no way paralleled the reality of what occurs when the same conditions exist with the added burden of poor housing and inadequate financial stability -- a condition all too familiar to Northern Ontario. Nevertheless an interesting cycle emerges - the Company which prefers the young married man, the wife who has babies to relieve the boredom, the husband who must remain faithful and usually in debt to the Company.

The workshop, sponsored by the Economic Development Committee of the N.W.O. Women's Decade Co-ordinating Council, brought together women from across Northwestern Ontario. Following discussion of the film the workshop focussed on issues of work, health and how to organize.

The health of women and children in the north was a fixed priority with all delegates. Issues included: availability and quality; the importance of dental care; nutrition; family planning and the unavailability of abortion facilities; the ever present condition of stress that accompanies uncertainty of job security; alcohol and use of drugs; violence - and no places of haven such as transitional houses; the absence of day care for those fortunate enough to be employed. No life for a woman,

to be sure. The Women and Health workshop recommended the development of a network and reliance on women as the experts on their own health, through setting up self-help and education groups, by using resources and resource people available in the communities.

Recommendations coming from the Women and Work discussion included: determining the responsibility of each government agency for establishing secondary industry in the region; lobbying Canada Employment to make a concrete commitment to provide quality service to women clients and provide educational training programs (e.g. I.N.T.O.) for women in their home communities; encouraging regional companies to introduce Affirmative Action programs. A Job List inventory was proposed which would identify N.W.O. women according to their interest in work outside the home, present skill level, interest in non-traditional work and training. Research regarding union regulations as they affect women's training and employment in non-traditional unionized crafts and trades occupations was also recommended.

In addition to the Thunder Bay meeting the Women and Economic Development Committee has sponsored meetings in Fort Frances and Ignace. The response was very positive at both these meetings, with the possibility of forming a women's centre being discussed.

The film, No Life For A Woman, will be available to groups in Northwestern Ontario through the N.W.O. Regional Library, 910 Victoria Ave., Thunder Bay. For further information about the Women and Economic Development Committee contact Lisa Bengtsson

Women in the Trades

Kay Andrews is a student in the Millwright course at Confederation College. She talks here with Joan Baril.

Joan: (admiring a wooden table Kay has made) Do you think all the carpentry you did has helped you in the millwright course?

Kay: No, not really. Living out in the bush did, because you became familiar with tools just because you had to get things done. But I think it's more having to get things done and having to do things by necessity

Kay: I found that my personal life has been enriched by the course as I'm introduced to various things such as the use of tools. My perspectives immediately grow because I can see all kinds of things that I can do for myself. For example, if I want to build something or have something constructed I have so much more information. I can make tools for instance.

Joan: Is that what a millwright does, make tools?

Kay: The millwright course is formally listed as industrial maintenance, mechanics and so on. On the job, there are a lot of things that might

have to be repaired. Some things can be constructed, welding construction, fabricating supports and so on. Depending on the plant you are working in you might send some of the jobs to a machinist or you might be doing most of it yourself.

Joan: So in other words you have to learn how to repair almost anything.



Kay: In our program we are getting an exposure to the different basic skills and anything beyond you would learn on the job. This course is one of the pre-apprenticeship programs. It's an introduction to the basic skills and if a person is lucky they will find an apprenticeship opening and then they will work with a journeyman.

Joan: So how many hours do you get subtracted from your apprenticeship by taking this course?

Kay: 1800 out of 8000.

Joan: The course is forty weeks and after you have to find your own apprenticeship?

Kay: That's right.

Joan: Do you think that will be a problem?

Kay: There might be a few openings around the countryside. Otherwise you can find a regular job and bide your time until you find an apprenticeship. There was a woman in the program last year and she was offered a job as a millwright at two local plants. So it isn't impossible locally cont'd page 7

A news column to keep our readers up to date on women's issues - national, international and local.

Passive? or Aggressive?

A recent study has shown that many passive women refuse to consider assertiveness training because they believe they are already too aggressive. But women who have taken these courses say they now understand their own natures more realistically.

For information on an upcoming three day workshop at Confederation College, May 7, 8, 9 phone 475-6232.

Flasher Foiled

A flasher approached a Vancouver woman, Carole Carl as she was painting the outside of a hotel. He pulled down his pants and grabbed her leg but Carole, with her paint roller covered in orange paint, simply painted him up and down. The police had no trouble picking him up later.

Feminist Holiday

If you would like to give yourself a feminist holiday this summer, consider the Michigan Women's Music Festival, a day's drive from Thunder Bay at Hesperia, Michigan near Lansing.

The four day event (August 14, 15, 16, 17) has received rave notices from local women who have attended in the past. Ticket price includes camping, food and workshops on feminist music and thought.

Write: We Want the Music Collective, 1501 Lyons Street, Mount Pleasant, Michigan 48858, U.S.A.

The festival is for women and female children only.

The Unequal \$ Payoff \$

Education pays off. Your employment chances are better and a university degree pays more than a college diploma says Statscan in a report released in early April.

But it is an unequal pay-off. Being male guarantees a salary higher by \$1,200 to \$4,300 than a woman of the same education.

There is a second bonus for the male graduate. Less unemployment. Women, regardless of educational level, face more difficulty finding a job. Even a post-graduate degree such as a doctorate does not increase a woman's job chances.

What about the other end of the social scale, the unskilled worker from the underclass or disadvantaged classes? These people have the most difficult time earning a living and again women are more disadvantaged than men.

In a study done in Hamilton by Ulrich Wendt, poor women have a harder time than men in finding jobs. In comparison to men they have fewer personal contacts into the job market. The use of personal contacts is the most efficient way to find a job but women are more often forced to use the least successful methods such as relying on formal agencies

like Canada Employment.

Women are the poorest of the poor. 47% of the women studied received under \$3.00 an hour compared to 13% of the men. Only 5% of the women earned more than 4 dollars although 57% of the men did.

The study found because of low pay, poor working conditions, and few chances of advancement half of the women felt dissatisfied with their jobs. 70% of the men considered themselves "very satisfied". These facts apply regardless of the age, the education or skill level of the woman.

Can a Woman Student Beat The System?

In view of the dismal employment and salary statistics mentioned above, is there any way a Thunder Bay woman student can beat the system?

As a woman student you have to realize you are handicapped. No matter how much education you get or what course you take you will probably make less money and have a harder time finding a job than a man who takes the same course.

Quit school? No solution. Unskilled women are the worst off of all.

Wait for society to change? This is the best long term solution. Attitudes to women have changed a lot in the last two years. Economic conditions can change too but it's going to take a lot of push.

Find the right course of study? This is the best short term solution. Here are some suggestions.

University students should shun Arts. Inexplicably, women are still entering arts, the high road to educated unemployment. Many are even entering teaching, an almost extinct profession. Suggested alternatives: the so-called male professions, medicine, dentistry and at Lakehead, engineering.

Both college and university students should think about labour relations, business and science. Your best employment chances (as of April 1980) are in computer science and engineering technology.

Shun the female ghetto trades (child care, health aide, dental aide). All women, including those with a good education, should consider the skilled trades. But first be warned it is difficult (but not impossible) for a woman to get an apprenticeship in Thunder Bay. Many companies who employ apprentices want job experience. This is one of the reasons why it is tough to get into electrician, carpentry or auto mechanics.

It is easier to get into trades programs at Confederation College. Among others, two good choices are welding and electronics.

Women have always been in sales but usually on the low paying retail side. Now they are moving into real estate and insurance.

When researching your future career it's not enough to check out the average salary. You must know the

average female salary.

We would like to hear other suggestions from our readers to answer this question; "Can a woman beat the system?"

A (Very Short) Questionnaire on the Canadian Armed Forces

Recently women in the Canadian Armed Forces were allowed to serve as sailors for the first time. Eight women were assigned to a non-combatant ship, the Cormorant.

The women will be:

- a) learning navigation and other marine skills.
- b) working in the kitchen and as clerks.

Women have been sailing in non-military ships on the Great Lakes for over sixty years. The Armed forces therefore

- a) apologized for past discrimination and welcomed all qualified women to apply.
- b) explained that the first eight women were "on trial" for two years to see if women sailors work out.

Are you tired of these "firsts" as I am? Why is there no carry-over from one form of an occupation to another division of the same occupation?

We heard about the first woman bus driver in Russia (Israel, America, Canada) then the first school bus driver next a woman long distance bus driver and now "the first woman municipal bus driver".

These are achievements by pioneering women but how long do we have to keep pioneering and being "on trial" in every division and subdivision in every occupational category?

(answer to questionnaire - b)

THUNDER CLAP



To Gert Beadle who has donated the proceeds from her latest book of Poetry *RISING* to the NORTHERN WOMAN JOURNAL. Watch for it!

COMING SOON

In early February, 1980, the TV program Marketplace, revealed that one in eleven women would develop breast cancer. The program was directed to women who have had a mastectomy and were limited in their choice of wearing apparel. A showing of specially designed clothing modelled by women having had mastectomies, was valuable to women who had undergone this type of surgery.

What stayed in my mind however, long after the program was over, was the women viewers who had NOT had a mastectomy. What were their feelings? Were they all convinced they would not be that "one" on eleven; fearful that they may indeed be that "one"; relieved that if they were that "one" that clothing would be available so that "you really couldn't tell"? Were they surprised that designers and manufacturers had not filled the 'fashion gap'? Were they indignant that the cost of a prosthesis (artificial breast) was not covered by OHIP as other artificial limbs are? (A breast prosthesis is considered as only having a cosmetic value).

Four years ago we were reading that one in seventeen women would have breast cancer. Is breast cancer on the rise or is it being detected earlier? In Thunder Bay, detection methods are mainly that of mammography. All women are referred to McKellar Hospital. The Port Arthur General Hospital which in the past had been doing mammography (X-ray), is considering a safer form of X-ray using a lower dose of radiation. Cost in relation to value is also a consideration. To date they have not decided if this will be zero-graphy or another method. There is a controversy about whether women under 50 should be exposed to mammography related doses of radiation. Radiation is cumulative and can trigger cancer cells to grow. Menstruating women under 50 are still producing estrogen, and cancer cells tend to absorb estrogen, which prompts them to grow.

the surgeon decides how extensive the surgery will be .

A third cancer detection method is a biopsy. A biopsy can be a surgical procedure whereby small pieces of tissue are taken, sliced thinly, stained and mounted on glass slides. The interpretation of the biopsy is done by the pathologist. This process takes about 24 hours unless the surgeon asks for a "frozen section". This must be processed specially, and is much more costly than the regular sections. Also, they do not stain as well. The advantage of a frozen section is that it only takes 10 or 15 minutes to prepare. On the basis of the evidence the pathologist ascertains whether or not cancer is present. Subsequently, the surgeon decides if cancer cells are found, how extensive the surgery will be. However, no surgery will be performed if the woman has not signed the consent

forms. Unless you have complete confidence in the surgeon, do not sign the consent forms for extensive surgery.

Another form of biopsy is a needle biopsy (aspiration or withdrawing fluid from the lump by needle). Many doctors do not aspirate and the reasons are not clear. Cancer lumps rarely contain fluid, so if a lump can be reduced by aspiration, it is most likely not cancerous. Since cysts tend to be multiple, some women are subjected to hospitalization and many needless operations for removal of cysts that could have been just as successfully treated in the office.



Contact was made in Thunder Bay with fifteen women. For all fifteen, mammography followed by a surgical biopsy and removal of the breast while under the biopsy anesthetic, was their experience. All fifteen had signed the consent forms for surgery before the biopsy was done.

Some women are considered high risk. For all women, but especially for these women, new cancer detection methods are essential.

The incidence of breast cancer is about twice as high in families in which close relatives have had it, than those in which there is no history of it. However, in the past it was not spoken about between women, so it was difficult to know if your grandmothers or aunts had a mastectomy or were treated for breast cancer. When the breast of a woman in her teens, twenties, or thirties is exposed to small doses of radiation there is a striking increase in the incidence of breast cancer. This was observed when the treatment of tuberculosis involved frequent X-ray examinations. A history of having had a cancer in one breast increases the chances of getting one in the other. Women who have not had children are a little more apt to get breast cancer than those who have. Reasons for this are unclear.

Every woman has pinhead-sized cysts in the breasts. It is the natural result of the activity of the breasts that occurs before each menstrual period. It is only the larger cysts that show as lumps. Although women with lumps are not necessarily more prone to breast cancer, these lumps can be a constant source of worry. Breasts should be examined a few days after the menstrual period when they should have returned to normal. If you find a lump, don't wait - see your doctor at once. Don't submit to open operation for a biopsy if you are still menstruating and your doctor thinks the lump could be a cyst. Instead, ask him or her to aspirate it in the office or find a doctor who will.

Whether the incidence of breast cancer is on the rise, is not known. It is certainly not decreasing. Will it soon be normal for half of all women to have only one breast? or none? None of us want to be the "one" in eleven to get breast cancer or the "one" in twenty one who die from it. Our breasts are part of our reproductive system and unlike other forms of cancer women have little effectiveness in removing the cancer causing agents from their environment. Breast cancer starts either in the milk glands or in the ducts that carry the milk to the nipple.

Have doctor's attitudes changed towards women who are acting as their own advocates and in their own interests? In the area of self breast examination, yes. According to Better Homes and Gardens Family Medical Guide, 1966, only "intelligent" women patients were encouraged to examine their breasts every month. The "others" it goes on to say may perpetuate harmful cancer phobias.

In the past doctors were routinely doing radical mastectomies (removal of the breast, lymph nodes, and chest muscles). At the present time, modified radical mastectomies (removal of the breast and axilla lymph nodes), are the preferred treatment. A few doctors are now removing only the malignant tumor, (lumpectomy or partial mastectomy). We would like our readers to let us know who those doctors are and what cities they are practicing in.

The psychological benefits of leaving the breast intact; the evidence that more radical surgery does not guarantee a cure; and our own non-acceptance of present breast cancer detection and treatment methods, hopefully should hasten us to the day when doctors will say WE DON'T DO MASTECTOMIES ANYMORE.

TIRED OF BEING IGNORED

NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) held their annual meeting March 14-17, 1980 in Ottawa. Over 400 women delegates, representing 140 member groups attended the conference. Four delegates of Northwestern Ontario, representing the Northwestern Ontario International Decade Councils of Fort Francis and Thunder Bay, and a member of the Thunder Bay Rape and Sexual Assault Centre attended the conference.



"THEY USE THAT THREAT OF DISINTEGRATION TO ENTRAP US AND I REFUSE TO BE CONNED"

The central theme of the conference was Feminist Visions of the Future: The Family of the 80's. Rosemary Brown, a New Democratic member of the B.C. legislature was the key note speaker. Addressing the theme of the conference, Ms Brown warned women not to accept the responsibility for the disintegration of the traditional family, 'working father, housewife mother, and 2.5 children'. Brown warned women not to be conned. "They use the threat of disintegration to entrap us and I refuse to be conned", she said. "There is a conspiracy to get us out of the work force, back into the home, and the obstetrical ward, and consuming again". Government, big business and the advertisers are the nebulous we, always anxious to con women back into the home, where they cannot take jobs from "needy men" and where they have more time to consume. "The family is not breaking down; it is changing. The goal of the feminist movement is not to destroy the family, but to reform its structure", she stated.

In recognition of Brown's philosophy conference resolutions dealt with: rights for Indian women, free and adequate child care, unemployment restrictions on pregnant women, rights for domestic workers, Canada Pension Plan coverage for homemakers and equal pay for work of equal value.

On Saturday the delegates from NWO attended the workshop chaired by Madeline Parent, entitled Perspectives on Domestic Labour. A panel, consisting of representatives from various unions and members of the domestic labour force, discussed several problems of the domestic workers and in particular addressed the hardships experienced by immigrant domestic workers. They are not covered under the Employment Standards Act, are exploited as cheap labour, and although they contribute to UIC are unable to collect benefits. Resolutions dealt with qualifying conditions for maternity benefits under the UIC Act, CEIC restrictions on work permits of domestic workers, protection of immigrant domestic workers and pension coverage for homemakers.

Saturday afternoon the NWO delegates

attended the workshops entitled The Economic Penalties of Parenting. This workshop addressed the problems experienced by working mothers. Topics such as increased maternity benefits, provision of free and adequate child care and sexual harassment on the job were discussed.

Saturday evening Mary O'Brien from the Department of Sociology O.I.S.E. addressed the delegates, speaking on The Personal is the Political. Ms. O'Brien stated that the family could be the most potent political force in the country if women would utilize their influence within the family to educate her children on the oppression of women. We also heard a spokesperson from Bell Canada, who clarified the oppressive position of women workers within Bell and asked for the support of NAC in their struggle for rights. The Nellie McClung Theatre, from Winnipeg presented several skits on the feminist struggle beginning with the early suffragists and concluding with a spoof on sexist advertising. It was very entertaining, and clarified even further the absurdity of the patriarchal society in which we live.

Sunday there was a Feminist Bus Tour conducted by the Ottawa Women and the Law Group. The Annual Meeting, broken up into a morning session dealing with the resolutions and an afternoon session, dealing with business was the last opportunity for all delegates to gather. The evening was taken up in smaller groups in preparation for the Monday deputations. The NWO delegates attended the group which was to meet with Pierre Juneau, Deputy Minister of the Secretary of State. Approximately 15 women, representing all regions of Canada were members of the group. Jill Porter, past NAC secretary, chaired the meeting. It was agreed that Jill should meet with Nancy Lawand, Director of Women's Programmes - Secretary of State, to clarify facts which we wished to use at the lobbying session.

Monday afternoon we attended the lobbying session at Secretary of State offices. We addressed the following topics:

The allocation of funds to Women's Programmes, as compared to funds given to other programmes (eg. Native Programmes - \$20 million, Multiculturalism \$6 million, Official Languages - \$15 million, \$700,000 Women's Programmes.)

The fact that male field officers, working for the Secretary of State are on permanent staff, while the women field officers employed by

Women's Programmes are forced to work on a renewable contractual basis.

The discontinuation of the Feminist Services Training Programme that offered important and needed services in the communities, and acted to employ women, although on a short term basis.

The allocation of funds to the National Indian Brotherhood by Secretary of State and the disproportionate amount given to Indian women in their pursuit of equal rights under the Indian Act.

In the final analysis the meeting was very much the "bureaucrats meeting". No promises were made and no mutual agreements were forthcoming. Although Mr. Juneau agreed that women were a low priority on government spending he suggested that this could not be alleviated by the government, due to the financial restrictions. He threw the question of money back to the women and suggested that we lobby other groups to convince them to put aside a portion of their money for women's projects. He also suggested that rather than increasing the funds to Secretary of State that we lobby for the reallocation of funds within the department. We stated that this was unacceptable and that we would rather take funds from the Department of Defense. When we approached Juneau concerning the field officers, he was unaware of the policy and referred the question to Nancy Lawand. Ms. Lawand said that although men are permanent staff and women non-permanent, the women have held their jobs for several years and are in fact renewed.

Following the deputations the delegates attended a press conference, held at the Press Club. Each lobbying group presented a summary and analysis of their sessions. Questions directed to the NAC executive by the press focused on rights of Indian women, rights of domestic workers and the plan of action following the conference. They also focused on the issue of militancy which was brought out by Lynn McDonald, President of NAC. McDonald stated that women had been lobbying for several years on certain issues (i.e. Indian women have been active for 10 years on rights for Indian women, and Rape Crisis Centres have been lobbying for the past 5 years on changes in the Criminal Code regarding rape and sexual assault) and were not only tired of being ignored but were angry and would soon reach the point where militancy would be the only alternative.

cont'd on page 12

Joan: How about moving? Would you like to go out West?

Kay: Oh not just now. My two daughters are both in high school and I don't think a move would be good for them.

Joan: Does the College help you try to get an apprenticeship?

Kay: They do what they can to help you find a job. That's really the hardest part - looking for a job but from what I've heard and seen, the College is really excellent. I was talking to Lillian, the Student Awards Officer at the College, and she told me the girls that are in technology and by and large very successful and giving the boys a real run for their money and everyone is really pleased with what's happening. Not just the people in the College but the employers who hire them seem to be tickled too.

Joan: I'm really glad to hear that.

Kay: Oh, it makes so much difference to me. It's so encouraging. Just hearing about other women in the trades and their experiences makes you feel you are not isolated. It raises your morale a bit.

Joan: Is there another woman in your course?

Kay: Yes, there is one other in the program. She's very successful. She has had some background already and so she's familiar with some of the work, but it's a little bit different for me being an older person and being in a group that has the assurance and the certainty of youth. Self confidence is one of the most essential things to being successful. I suppose this applies no matter what you do. I've noticed that if you don't know how to do something that, if you have the buoyancy that self-confidence gives, you can deal with the problem in a very positive manner. Self-esteem - it's the key.

Joan: What's next in the course?

Kay: After this section of the program there will be a field placement and then a section in the welding shop and then in the machine shop.

Joan: How long is the field placement?

Kay: We are all scheduled to go to three different local plants and we'll spend three weeks in each and it will be my first time I've ever seen inside an industrial plant. (Laughs) I'm such a complete greenhorn I don't know what questions to ask to find out about things. I feel pretty silly a lot of the time. That's why the field placement will be such a valuable thing.

Joan: Do you know where you're going?

Kay: The first one is going to be the machine shop at the College. The second is Great West Timber and then Canada Car. Roland, one of the instructors is responsible for digging up these placements and has gone out of his way to try to sound out people to find what kind of reception they give women but also to consider my personal needs. I have a light build

and this is often considered a heavy labouring position and I'm older too and both will militate against me finding an apprenticeship opening in millwright work.

(Kay describes meeting a woman welder working in the trade). It was a real lift. She is such an inspiration. She is a welder and has been working in the field for a few years and thoroughly enjoys her field. Speaking to a person like that is very exciting particularly because I'm trying to get into the trades, too.

Joan: I guess a lot of women did these jobs during the war. Have you ever met any?

Kay: I don't think so.

Joan: I sure would like to interview one.

Kay: These are the people we have to hear from now as a voice. That would be terrifically supportive.

Joan: But in a lot of ways it was easier for them because there were a lot of women in the plants and a lot of support.

Kay: Oh yes, the nation needed them and industry needed them. That's the key. Industry needed them and made it as easy as possible, welcomed them.

Joan: And then afterwards ...

Kay: Do you know afterwards it got so bad for women that I remember in the town where I was living there was a reluctance to hire a woman teacher if she was married.

Joan: Do you find being in school relaxing?

Kay: No, being in school is not a relaxing experience. It is stimulating. It is rewarding because you can see things are happening, but never relaxing. In many ways it is stressful and so every now and again I feel resentful. I think, "Why does it have to be such a burden, why couldn't a person feel uplifted because they are learning new things and that's exciting." But it's that fact that everything is being learned and everything is new which causes the stress. It's no light undertaking. Every single job I ever had, I was winking it and it's just such a refreshing change to walk into a situation where you are presumed to be untrained and that it's all right - that is such a relief.

My classes start at eight in the morning but some of the trades courses start at seven. If a person had to take a bus they wouldn't be able to get there. It takes me an hour to get to school by bus. The buses don't run that early.

Joan: So you would have to have a car if you had to start at seven?

Kay: Right.

Joan: Is the math the same as you had in school or is this all different math?

Kay: I never had much math in school. Anyway it was so long ago that it wouldn't matter. But I never had a decent math background. All my former education was for a different

purpose. It was in a different area. It was in the arts and so it developed a more intuitive type of thinking. There was evaluation and critical analysis and things like that but it isn't the type of learning that is involved in math. I have come to appreciate a lot about learning mechanisms. Today I think things are taught better in school to give a person a spectrum of math and science and not just the arts. I would have liked to have had some kind of shop training in high school too.

Joan: The girls in high school have that opportunity now, I believe.

Kay: My kids had that option but I was asking them and the girls still tend to pick domestic science. I guess home economics is just something that is already familiar. Even now for girls some things are more familiar than others.

Joan: What made you decide to go back to school?

Kay: It's been about five years since I left university and I've done different jobs since then. It became fairly obvious to me that the only people who were making a living wage were skilled tradespeople and that's what a person has to do to survive and provide a decent environment for their family. Precious few women have had the opportunity. So I might be out in the forefront but it's necessity.

The trades -- that's the only hope for women. Your daughter is an apprentice, isn't she?

Joan: Yes, she's an apprentice printer. She was working as a clerk and she moved from the clerical side of the business to the trades side and that's a move a lot of women don't even think about.

How many women are in trades training at the college?

Kay: There are a few in welding. There are lots of women in the technology courses and surveying. There are a lot of women in auto parts. About a third of the students there are women. There is a woman going into diesel mechanics. There are two in cutter and skidder. But this is a course that is reluctant to accept women because there are so few people willing to employ women.

Joan: Isn't that a catch-22 situation for women?

Kay: Oh, yeah. The women they will accept are those with any possibility of becoming employed, there was one woman who was working with her husband and they could be employed as a team.

Joan: I always thought that this course should be cutter and/or skidder, so that people could have the opportunity to just learn to run one machine. More women could do that than do both.

Do you think it would be helpful if all the women at the College in the trades could get together to talk? Do you think the women would be interested?

Cont'd page 12

How would you describe the midwife's work with one mother?

First of all, especially with the home birth, the midwife is involved with the whole pregnancy. Visits start early in the pregnancy and become more frequent as the birthing time arrives. The midwife takes the time not only to do physical check-ups but to advise and talk about nutrition, exercise, sexuality, fears, wishes, relationships; whatever is most on the mother's mind. Such questions change of course as the pregnancy changes. The midwife takes the time to be on call when needed. The midwife develops a relationship with the partner or coach who may be assisting in the birth. When the birthing time arrives she aids the mother in labour and birth. Following the birth, the midwife stays as long as is necessary and then comes daily to help with the adjustment, breast-feeding, questions, and any possible complications. When she is no longer needed her work with this birth is completed.

You see the principle of birth is the same for every woman, and yet each woman's body and baby are unique and, how she deals with her pregnancy too is unique. So here is where the midwife beside having her technical skills must learn to be very open minded and critical so that she may respond to/respect the needs of the mother. If any conditions do arise that the midwife feels are emergencies, a doctor is available but the midwife is still in control during any administering to the mother

With a birth by a midwife the woman has the opportunity to take full responsibility for her choices, her actions, her birth, and her child. She is not strapped down, drugged, cut up or rushed through the birth process. There is such an opportunity here for bonding and for the mother and father (should he choose to participate) to really know where this child has come from. Most important, the midwife does not deliver the baby, the mother does. The role of the midwife is to simply help and support using the power of her knowledge.

What do you know of the heritage of midwives in North America and why are we virtually without midwives in our medical system?

This is an enormous question. First of all recorded heritage of midwives is very limited. With the combination of the male midwives, the male dominated medical schools and the male historians; women's heritage has been greatly lost. In most Indian cultures in North America the women heal the women and the men heal the men. There is respect for each knowing her/his own needs; it is not a polarization but a separation of balance. As North America became resettled, the midwives from Europe were an integral part of the community. They were soon ousted however, by the growth of male-midwives and the field of obstetrics in medicine.



drawing by Alice Neel

In the 1700's male midwives started to take over birthing. They had training available in the all male medical schools and could sometimes afford apprenticeships with doctors. With growing technology and the invention of forceps, they became the heroes, flashing in at the last minute to deliver difficult births. They also came to be known as the 'death bearers' because many doctors were horribly inexperienced with their new instruments/tools. However, their popularity, especially with the upper classes grew as they began promising quick and easy deliveries. To allow for the growth and respect of obstetrics as a male field and not 'just woman's work' they tried convincing women that birthing was a disease and a danger and that the pregnant woman needed a man even for a seemingly normal delivery. In addition they convinced women that the midwife was in fact ignorant, unprogressive and dangerous. The systematic implementation of this fear along with the pressure for women to be submissive, docile and genteel made many women feel it was safer and more progressive to choose a male midwife over a woman.

infant and maternal mortality rates rose proportionately with the rise of male midwives

The midwives continued attending births but economically they were being forced out of their profession. By the 1820's birthing had moved from an art (a natural process) to a science (a controlled/man made technology). The rise in infant and maternal mortality rates rose proportionately with the rise in male-midwives and the use of forceps and cesareans. Though many fought for the midwives case, the majority of the medical profession continued to discredit the women's work and revel in their own new technologies despite the statistics. They established lying-in wards where the poor could go free of charge to deliver their babies and where the doctors took incredible liberties for experimentation. Around the 1850's the women's movement organized around birthing issues. They established midwife schools but opposition from the medical profession forced their closure. With the invention of anesthesia and the offering

of a painless birth, the male midwife moved further into the field. By late 19th century upper and middle class women were beginning to embrace the view that childbirth was a disease that could most properly be controlled by the use of instruments, drugs and surgery. So the midwives work moved more into the poor and isolated areas where they were not a threat to the doctor's economic power. This situation remains the same today. In 1910 still 50% of North American births were attended by midwives but by 1930 only 15% were midwife births.

In the last thirty years there has been a slow rise in nurse midwife but still in 1973 only 1% of the births in the USA were attended by nurse-midwives or midwives. The medical profession still has almost complete control in birthing.

How do you see birthing in North America today?

That they have taken the control away from women is evident in most births in North America today. This is a system of maternity care where first of all forces most women to deliver in hospitals. The prenatal visits are quick and the pregnant woman has little opportunity to be informed of the process that she is part of. She becomes part of a dehumanizing, institutional assembly line where, instead of being part of a family drama where her work and wishes are respected, she is stripped of personal possessions and placed in stark, sterile surroundings as someone ready to undergo an operation or imprisonment. After her hard work and pain of delivering, her child is whisked away. She faces routine shaving of her pubic hair, routine episiotomy, anesthesia, routine use of forceps and a rack like delivery bed. Only a few years ago it was routine to strap a woman down if she got too 'excited'. A lot of these procedures - rather than aiding the birthing woman, serve only the interests of the medical profession in pulling out the child. They are completely counter to the birthing process. They have transformed it into a feared ordeal. One has to ask why the doctors have fought so hard for control over the basic female function and can on.

my vision and hope is that women will take their power back

conclude they must be compelled to interfere with our birthing out of jealousy and fear of women's generative powers.

You see the responsibility of birth is taken away by the doctors. The woman is seen as the victim of a disease and is treated as such; when really what she is doing is bringing new life into the world. We must take this power back and assume the responsibility once more both for ourselves and our children.

During the last two decades the options for birthing are once more increasing. A woman can request a natural birth in the hospital and have one partner available for coaching. Only some doctors will go with these requests and often nurses have found the difference in routine alarming. Most women don't even know there are choices open to them. In the USA there is a rise in nurse-midwives and birthing centres are now becoming available in some cities. How do you feel about these changes?

I think these changes are absolutely necessary and a step in the right direction. The birthing centres are usually large homes that have been converted so that a woman can rent a comfortable room for her birth and have the father and/or friends with her during her birth. The mother is informed of her possible choices right from the start. The midwife aids in the delivery and is the overseer to make sure everything runs smoothly. There are facilities & supplies in the house and if there are any complications there are doctors on call at the hospitals. It's excellent. A woman can create her own birth and know the responsibility of it and this is good. Also the midwives can help and continue learning from each other.

So here the pregnancy is treated as normal, not a disease. One struggle with the nurse midwives is that because they have been trained in the medical system, they have been trained to look for the pathology. In a birth you must look for the natural process and guide it along - being alert to complications. So the nurse-midwives have to re-think their entire attitudes toward disease. What makes me happy in these centres is that women are refusing to be victims. They are taking back to themselves a power which is rightfully theirs. It is only outrageous that the change is so slow! - from the medical side, especially!

Because we have no training facilities in Canada for midwifery, many women have become lay midwives by apprenticing or training with each other and setting up in effect their own intimate schools. How do you feel about these lay midwives?

On one hand it is so good that women are refusing the hospital and creating their own births. In British Columbia there is a group of women who organized themselves to learn birthing. They set up an extensive study group using medical books and had nurse midwives come and teach them and then they began delivering their own children. These kinds of actions are what kept midwifery alive during the witch burnings in Europe. The only warning I would have here is that even though birthing is natural there are ways to help a mother birth and there is much knowledge and experience that a midwife acquires after training and delivering babies. It is an art and great respect should be given to the training involved. There are some who think because they have attended a few births they know all about it. Although their experiences are valid, the long experience is necessary to give the birthing mother the best care possible. I am always for personal responsibility and people being strong with themselves. In the case of birthing I would suggest that only a midwife with good experience and theoretical knowledge should attend the mother. I respect the technology that medicine has developed but in the hands of most doctors the technology is abused and over used. In the hands of conscious women or men this butchery would not happen. I would like to see willing/progressive doctors and nurse midwives open to sharing their knowledge and experience with the lay midwives. I do know that the lay midwives are starved for more knowledge. My vision and hope is that women will take their power back and that the doctors will be forced to rethink their whole approach to birthing and stop flashing around in their white coats like gods, being paid extra for every complication. I would hope that women go beyond this fear we have been taught around birth and learn to see it not as a disease but as our own birth right. When enough women take the responsibility and control, there will be fewer victims of the hospital drama.

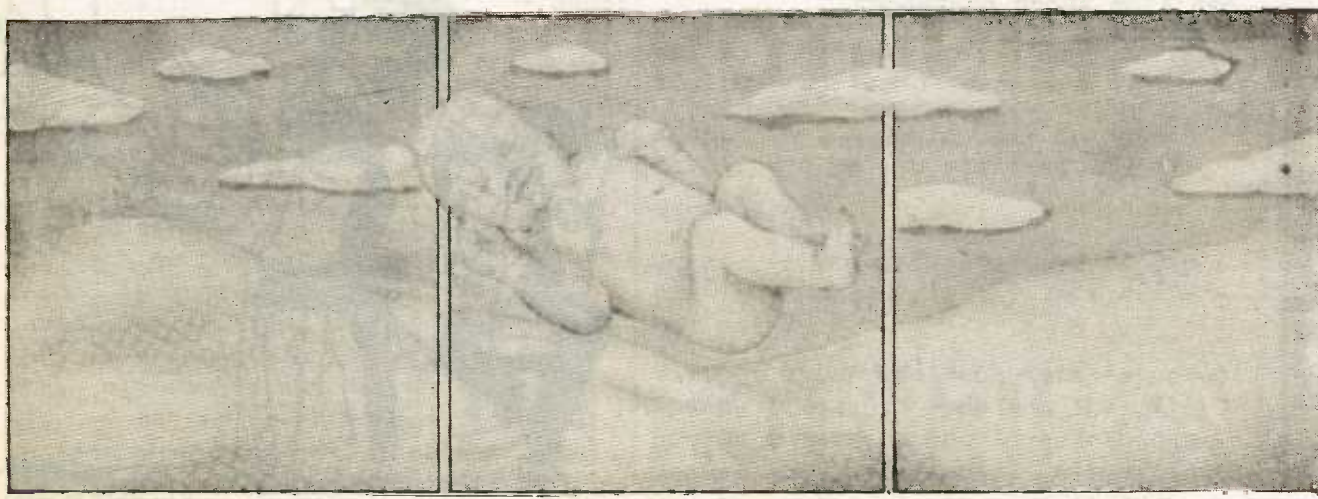
What is the legal status of midwives in Canada?

Legally we do not exist because we are not a registered profession. It is under provincial law. In February, I attended a midwives conference in Vancouver and the B.C. midwives are the most organized in Canada. They are growing in number and they are united in their goal to legalize and regulate midwifery in their province, hoping the other provinces would follow them. They are publicly gathering respect for themselves and have the nursing association backing their proposals to the provincial legislature for legalization. As yet though, a midwife attending a birth without the presence of a doctor is practicing medicine without a license. Nurse-midwives who train overseas can only get jobs as obstetrical nurses, which means they are assistants with very little responsibility. Most refuse to assist in the normal North American type births and some have gone up north where midwifery is legal because there are no doctors available. This law states that below a certain geographical parallel, the midwives are once again illegal because doctors are available in these areas. So we conclude that these northern regions would not be economically profitable for the doctors, so they do not exercise their power there.



'So what could a woman in this region do if she wanted a home birth?'

First the woman and her partner have to examine their choices. They should talk to a good doctor or gynecologist, if one is available, read as much as possible and talk with a midwife. They have to take on the responsibility of the birth and know that they have no legal support. If a home birth is chosen it is important to have an experienced midwife and other supportive mothers around. The pregnant woman considering a home birth should make sure she has a healthy pregnancy. This is one of the most important factors going into a home birth. If she can get backup from a progressive doctor that is good. Women with toxemia, over weight, diabetes, breach, any serious problems with inner organs or any pelvis pathology should not have a home birth without good medical backup. Women with previous abnormalities or frequent miscarriages should consider a hospital birth. I personally would recommend a hospital birth for all the above pathological conditions. Women with previous cesareans should consult their doctor. In most of these cases i.e. cesarean cases, a spontaneous delivery is possible, but it is considered a high risk birth and would need medical supervision. When the woman is healthy and is prepared for birth, a home birth is a very real and available alternative. cont'd



jaun's birth

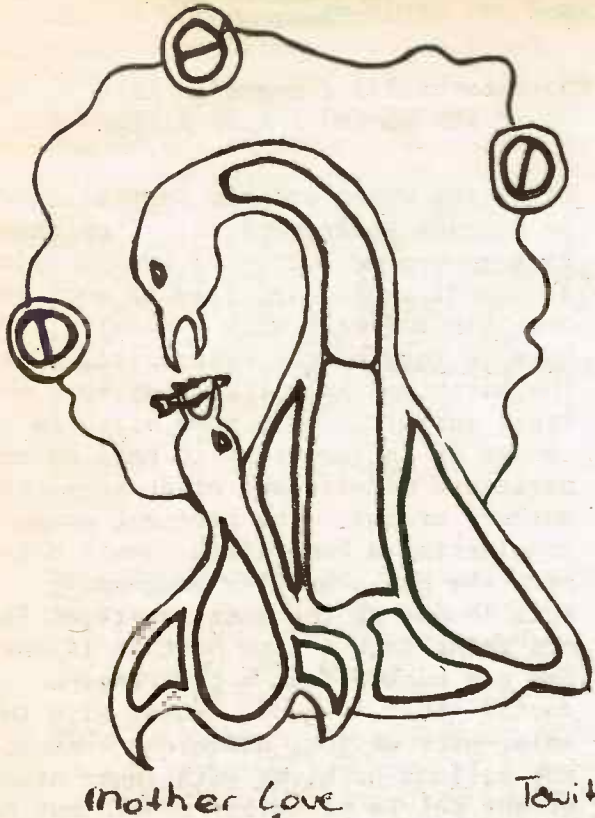
By Barbara Kemeny

In the summer of 1979, I expected my first child. During my pregnancy I was living in Thunder Bay, Canada. I knew about my wishes how to bear my child - and about my possibilities in Thunder Bay to do so. I found almost no satisfaction whatsoever so I decided very surely to go back home with my dear friend to West Germany, to have the child at home.

I knew from my experiences as a midwife that this was the only way for me to give birth after a normal pregnancy.

So when we arrived in Germany in my 8th month of pregnancy I looked up the yellow pages in the phone book under "Midwives", and found a wonderful 64 year old woman. She was incredible natural and simple and we started to get to know each other before my due date. I lived in a little village and my midwife in a bigger town, 15 miles apart.

On July 23 I went into labour. My friend and my brother (10 years old) were still sleeping in the same bed. I started with medium strong labour right away, nevertheless I tried to get more sleep until the morning between my contractions. My friend was trained by me to listen to my heartbeats with a wooden fetoscope, so he did once in a while. We did the breathing together, snuggled and smooched until I called the midwife around 7:30 A.M. She came, gave me an enema and prepared my bed and her needs to deliver our child.



We were supported by a few friends of ours who I felt so nice about to share the experience with. I walked in the house when I felt like, sat, leaned out of the window, I heard the chicken in our garden and the neighbours cows to get fresh air. We talked with the midwife about a lot of subjects while my labor went on and she let me go through it. She just had control over everything.

During the whole time I felt like being my own midwife, because I followed every step of contractions and dilation. By about 9:00 A.M. I was 3 cm dilated and carried on with dignity and strength for this new human being. Hours went by as my midwife massaged, talked or just was there. My brother went outside to play with friends, came in once in a while to give me a fresh facecloth. By 11:00 A.M. my contractions became noticeable stronger and I started to throw up quite frequently - a sign of good dilation. I layed down in my bed again and felt most comfortable there. 12:15 P.M. I was fully dilated and started pushing. My midwife gave me good support in coaching me and so did my friend, who did a tremendous job. Everybody was pushing, helping me to get the big baby through my vagina. And here he was, 12:50 P.M., a healthy strong boy, slightly crying on my stomach. I massaged him, my friend touched him and warm sunshine came through my window. We were so amazed and so in love. After the umbilical cord was collapsed and cut, the midwife bathed the baby. Then we slept together for about one-half hour after my placenta came out 10 min. after birth. Then my boy would not breast feed and so we weighed him and measured him. 4130 gr (9 lb 307) 55cm (22 in.) long and 37cm. (15 inch) head circum. He slept again and had his first suck after two hours. I got up the first time one hour after I gave birth and felt great walking to the washroom. I did not have an episiotomy and could sit comfortably right away. I tore slightly on both my labs and had a couple of stitches on my vagina.

I connected more and more with my baby after every minute. When clean ups were finished and the baby slept we had champagne with our midwife and fed her some dinner, which she deserved dearly.

I thank for a healthy, lovely child. I thank my midwife for her immense output - she took care of me like a mother!

I thank my dear friend and my brother for so much love during these hours. I thank my friends for their presence.

I encourage every woman who has a healthy or complicated pregnancy to search for alternative human childbirth in our society.

I would like to thank the people in the community who collected money for my flight to Vancouver for the conference. This was an incredible effort to support a midwife in the struggle for connections, learnings and recognition among everybody.

What it Means to be a Woman

The following article was on display in a local shopping mall in an educational exhibition presented by the students of Westgate High School. It was written by Cyndi Otway a student in Ms. Sandra Metelnick's sociology class.

As a woman your physical features are different from men. This is pointed out to you constantly during life. You have to wear more clothing than men to hide these features (defects). As a woman you have to prove you can play hockey, basketball, etc. just as well as any man can. You can't dive off a high diving board because of fear of falling out of your swimsuit.

As a woman you can't talk back to people (like parents, friends, teachers) You have to be nice and take in all the yelling yourself. As a woman you must be good in school - what I mean is behave. You can't stand on desks or tell obscene jokes; you have to be goody-two-shoes.

Because you are a woman you must follow proper etiquette at all times. You can't phone men and you certainly cannot ask them out. You have to stay home and hope they call you. When you do go out with a man, you worry about how you look, what you should wear. And your hair must be clean and shining all the time.

As a woman you have to wear dresses that make you self-conscious and stupid panty-hose which make you itch all evening. And you have to put up with men talking about the car they own or the porno flick they saw last week.

A woman always has to worry about her reputation and she has to watch that men don't take advantage of her. A woman has to know how to cook, how to make clothing, and how to do the monthly budget. She has to make a good home for her husband. She must go through the pain of having a child and staying up with that child when he/she is sick and when he/she awakes in the middle of the night.

As a woman you are pushed into going to those boring parties men want to go to. Or you go shopping with a man, and he can't tell the difference between a slip and a bathing suit.

But yet, what would a woman do without her man?



I AM A LEAF

I am a leaf, of a twig,
of a branch, of a tree
that grew in the North
in the nineteenth century.
The sweat of my ancestors
dried in the sun,
their bones salt the earth
in the land that they won.
They, like the soil and the
forest and stream,
shaped and produced this northern dream.
No spoilers of nature,
they prized every tree,
and dying invested
that spirit in me.
In those young days,
'twas the fashion to shoot
the fox who connived
to steal and pollute,
and hang his hide
on branch or fence
with no kind word in his defence.
Today, the fox
has been transformed --
all hidden his intent,
and we in some benign concern
withhold the sentence
he has earned.
But I like them, grow cold and stricken,
to see a fox among the chickens.
For Atikokan is the target
for a bureaucratic plot,
by a government that's willing
to risk the lives of working men
by taking credit for his killing.
And if he protests,
it won't be for long, a little starvation
will change his song.
Where else can they dump
this lethal load?
Where else does it matter so little?
Where else are we grateful
for even a crumb
from the power brokers' table?
Will they tell us it's cheaper
to dump in the north,
that no other place will suit?
Will they tell us they
listen to be polite,

but they've already decided to do it?
Will they tell us
they don't really give a damn
if the future proves them wrong?
Will they still be
grinning and picking their teeth
to the beat of their
old safety song?
What must we do with insanity
that wheels and deals
in humanity,
but refuse to swallow
the ball of wax,
whatever it's fancy wrapping,
and tell them bluntly
to their face,
to bury their death in another place -
perhaps in the basement
of government house
or the P.M.'s swimming pool.
If it's all as safe as they testify,
lots of places could qualify.
But the north that once
was virgin pure,
has met those selling death before.
The poisoned Wabigoon implies,
in the lust for progress
all innocence dies,
all are expendable in the search,
unless you belong to
a corporate church.
The north was born before the bulb,
with no loss to the spirit.
No kin of mine would sell her soul
for the price we're investing in it.
In this last bastion of defence
I join the host who care,
and will not yield
to pressure or debate, --
from those who come in smiling masks
with danger lethal and unmasked,
that may in time affect
our children's fate.
So know it now and mark it well.
The tribe that nurtured
me would tell,
this federal power to go to hell.

by Gert Beadle



TICKLED PINK

She went to work and came home to supper questions, aware of anger rising within like a mushroom bomb as she washed soapy dishes and dusted tables: feeling content as they fell asleep, legs and arms entwined; conscious of sorrow as she talked to girl friends of times she had not known were lost... until the telling.

Once upon a time, while playing in the Land of the Roles, a freckle-faced princess fell in love with a man. It did not happen gracefully or innocently but with tear-stained and pondering days. Nor did it end happily ever after, although the ever after continues as they share a bed and breakfast, going out to

dinner and dancing, returning to laughter, silence and a sigh.

The princess washes dishes once a day, waters the plants on Wednesday and Saturday and tries to write a few pages every night. He works for six days and sometimes takes a day of rest, enjoys driving, hates the city and loves her, reaching up to offer a hug when she brings him a cup of coffee.

Together they rent a house, pay the utilities and buy food. Alone they play their moods and kick their dreams about, as agile as the best of soccer players.

She touches her lips with a hesitant hand and realizes the spell is broken, as she shakes the sleep from

her head. The witches cauldron she harbours in the body begins to bubble and boil, scalding him, making their bed to lie filled with frogs, hopping into their separate corners, hoping in their separate ways.

He feels the change and shrugs it off as "hormones", although whether due to excess or lack of, he wouldn't say. The Blues that boil and bubble within her, sip after sip of its blasphemous brew causing her to look about and sigh with wonder. "It tickles to be a woman, but not always my fancy." (Spreading her arms wide to hold the world)

by Joyce Thierry

Kay: Yes, I think it would be helpful. Some people aren't as outgoing as others and again you feel the need for a little moral support. Sometimes people take the things that happen to them as just their lot - that's what people do - they do their course and try to survive not realizing that things can be changed.

(They discuss finances which Kay describes as a tight squeak.)

Kay: The first day of class you become aware that you have to get safety boots and you have to get coversalls so in those first weeks we were living hand to mouth.

Joan: How much are safety boots?

Kay: Around thirty dollars but I got mine on sale with

Kay: Around thirty dollars but I got mine on sale, so I had a bit of luck.

Joan: What about the Women's Credit Union?

Kay: I haven't gone to them and I'll tell you the reason. I am getting so little to live on that I didn't dare to even try to get a loan because I couldn't pay a loan back - you see how stringent my situation is. And some weeks my money wouldn't arrive and then we had some pretty lean weekends.

Joan: How do the other students support themselves?

Kay: There are a few fee payers. But the other students are on unemployment insurance and all of them, even those who are single, get more money than I do.

Joan: Do you regret going back to school?

Kay: No, I don't. I just can't believe it. It has been a wonderful experience. Everyone is so encouraging. It seems that the people at the College have gone out of their way. No, it's the right move for me.

NAC CONFERENCE CONT'..

.... PERSONAL COMMENTS

The NAC conference gave a grass roots worker from Thunder Bay an opportunity to view the political component of the feminist movement in action. It was a gathering of concerned, articulate, active and organized women, representing all the regions of Canada. It was an excellent opportunity to share information and through this gave me a better understanding of the political decision-making process.

Not only did the conference serve as a vehicle for the dissemination of information, but also acted as a refreshing reminder that organized women, learning from our past mistakes and successes, can reach the top echelon of the political arena and effect social change. Although there may be no immediate effects from the conference it served as a training ground for future politically active women - the decision-makers of tomorrow!

by Kathie Cram

book review

PRONATALISM: THE MYTH OF MOM AND APPLE PIE

Edited by Ellen Peck and Judith Senderowitz

A fascinating resource book on the socialization of females by subtle pressure to accept the theory that bearing children is a universal instinct as opposed to an individual rational choice.

Society's romance with reproduction is manifested and fully explored in the text books of our education, in our literature, on the screen, in television, in the state as a form of special privilege for the family. The moral pressure of the womanly woman who has found her true vocation in big families as opposed to that selfish female who has opted for other ways to express her creativity.

That parenting is the other side of the coin and must be thought of as a vocation makes this book valuable to the life skills teacher. The questions that arise have not been answered by our present day emotional approach to the biological readiness of the female for birth, which has very little to do with our psychological capacity for parenting. To every young woman who is in doubt of, or ignorant of the reasons why she must reproduce to affirm her self as a woman, I heartily recommend this book. Pronatalism is a word we will hear more often in the future as we struggle to dispell the myths that deprive children of their right to be born into families that have planned and prepared for them.

By Gert Beadle

FAMILY DISPUTES

by Kathie Cram

In 1978, an eight month project, "Women in Transition" investigated the degree of battering occurring to Thunder Bay women in the domestic environment. The study showed that more than 1,000 women were battered on a regular basis.

This information was shocking and as a result the research team put forth a series of recommendations which they believed would help diminish the incidence of wife battering. One of these recommendations urged for the development of a family dispute counselling unit to be attached to the Thunder Bay Police Department.

The need for such a unit was reaffirmed at the May conference "Women Against Violence".

In July, the Lakehead Social Planning Council hired a student to look into the feasibility of the resolutions on the family dispute unit, Ms. Cram found that its development in Thunder Bay was indeed feasible.

As a result a committee was struck which would be responsible for developing a model for a Family Dispute Counselling Unit in Thunder Bay.

This committee, which is sponsored by the Lakehead Social Planning Council, is composed of representatives from various agencies. Among these agencies are: Thunder Bay District Health Council, Children's Aid Society, City Social Services, Department of Social Work Lakehead University, Addiction Research Foundation, etc.

At present, the committee is involved in collecting data from the police department and community agencies in an effort to analyze the local need for such a service.

Although the committee has not yet written a final proposal, a brief explanation of the anticipated operational plan may help clarify how the crisis unit would perform.

The police receive a call relating to family dispute and respond on the first instance. After assessing the situation, deciding whether or not the family would benefit from immediate counselling, and obtaining

agreement from the individuals, attending officer calls a crisis worker.

The crisis worker goes out to home, and his/her responsibility at this point, is to cool down hostilities and do some problem solving.

Sorting out priorities and goals with the clients. This is done to determine whether further counselling is necessary and if so, to refer the clients to an appropriate agency.

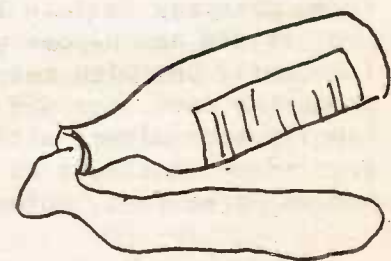
If on the first interview the crisis worker believes that those involved are not in a "reasonable state of mind", is, drugs or alcohol are involved, the worker makes arrangements



the client(s) within the next 24 hours. At this time the initial problem solving is done, and if necessary a referral made to an appropriate agency.

It is then the responsibility of the crisis worker to do appropriate follow-up, monitoring the progress being made by the client(s).

In terms of reference, the crisis worker would be proposed as a preventive service, in that it would serve to prevent future incidents of wife and child battering. It would also serve, in particular, to prevent serious psychological effects on the young child placed innocently in the centre of family violence.



POETRY

QUIET SAVAGE

Preserve it thus;
Fresh, not binding
With perfection of faults and glories.

Capture the free and wild
Swelling and flaunting of shores.

Catch the threads
that unravel the emotions.
Delicate plucking.
Weakened relent
Beauteous gushing.
Bo-peep of infinite strength.

by Karin Banerd
Sault Ste Marie

MOONFACE

At school
there was a girl
whose face was clouded
like the moon,
not riddled with laugh lines
or coloured red from the wind.
She claimed she had
many friends.
They borrowed her notes
and misplaced her name,
because at times
she was invisible,
clinging to walls
like restless ivy.

by Rosalyn Taylor Perrett
Thunder Bay



JUNE

You, who once were beautiful
whose laughing eyes brightened up the seasons;
whose smile gave me reasons
to keep struggling up that mountain,
whose soft beige skin invited kisses,
whose eyes now are loving
whose tender glance gave me fulfillment.
Now as thin as chalk on a slate.
Recall our laughing looking for your car,
recall you trying to wake me up for school,
recall our hopes so full
and great hopes powered our souls,
Now my eyes with ice, they do fade,
now we've chosen, slipped past, have gone.
Now I'm a stranger,
now a stranger is my song.

Love you
Sammi Kakeeway
Vancouver

i could have picked the daisies
along the road's side,
hundreds and hundreds
speckled the gravelled ditch
drinking the brown clay rain water.
i could have tucked two
behind my ear
 against my hair,
placed them in a mason jar
upon my windowsill....
but
so fleeting is the flower's smile
to the laughter of her field....

viola goderre
Thunder Bay

SEXUAL HARASSMENT — EVERY WOMAN'S ISSUE

"Sexual harassment is any repeated and unwanted sexual comments, looks, suggestions or physical contact that you find offensive and which occurs on the job or in a classroom situation. Sexual harassment can also occur during a job interview, where sexual favors are expected as a condition of employment."

This is a definition of sexual harassment used by a committee formed to study the problem of sexual harassment in Northwestern Ontario. The study arose in response to a recommendation made at the May 1979 conference, Women Against Violence. The resolution urged that Northern Women's Centre become a place of complaint and support for victims of sexual harassment. Before proceeding it was decided that we should conduct an exploratory study; its purpose being three-fold:

1. To investigate the extent of sexual harassment experienced by women in Northwestern Ontario.
2. At the same time to raise the consciousness of women in Northwestern Ontario regarding the definition of sexual harassment and to inform them that they are not alone.
3. To determine whether or not the extent of sexual harassment in the region justifies the establishment of Northern Women's Centre as a place of complaint and support for victims of sexual harassment.

A questionnaire was composed and distributed to various community agencies, hospitals, clinics, unions and post secondary educational institutions. It also appeared as a supplement in the Northern Women's Journal, and was published in the Kenora Daily Mirror and News and Lakehead Living. We distributed 1500 questionnaires, and received 55 in return.

The responses have yet to be analyzed, although a few initial observations may be made. The

majority of respondents consider the problem of sexual harassment serious, so serious that most of the women quit their jobs. Most experienced the harassment at a place of employment, as opposed to an educational institution. The majority are employed as secretaries. When asked if they reported the harassment most responded that they had not and cited the major reason for not reporting it as being "would not be believed". The sexual harassment was ongoing, experienced at least once a week and lasting as long as four years.

Several of the women added letters explaining in more detail their plight. One woman told the story of how she was sexually harassed by two men at different locations. The harassment began as the occasional pat on the shoulder, and "was even a bit fatherly". But it soon became blatantly sexual. One man began grabbing at her breasts and tried to kiss her. When she responded, getting "verbally abusive", he reminded her of his friendship with the supervisor. "I was told", she said, "to be a good girl because he controlled a job evaluation report". The woman was emotionally and physically affected. "I felt physically ill that I could be so intimidated and handled. I got edgy, cried at home to my husband, depressed", she said. The abuse is still ongoing; her only recourse she believes is to quit.

Another woman tells of her sexual harassment experiences with a boss, boyfriends and married men. She tells of her loneliness in trying to handle the problem. Her friends would listen, but it was of no help. She thought of confiding in her parents, but "all they would say is that I probably deserve it, or it was my own fault."

Both of these women had a sense of self blame, almost guilt for accepting the abuse. It is a sad comment on our society when the victims are the "guilty", and the guilty have the power to control.

McKellar Hospital, as well as McKenzie Forest Products in Hudson, refused to display our questionnaires. The director of employee relations, Mr. G. Robinson, at McKellar, simply stated, "No such behavior is practised nor tolerated at this hospital and I do not believe that we should suggest such practices exist by displaying your literature". His comments are indeed interesting considering that some of our volunteers are ex-employees and have witnessed sexual harassment on the premises.

Sexual harassment is a serious problem. Women suffer physically, emotionally and economically. They are forced to quit well paying jobs primarily because our patriarchal society view it as a joke and thereby condone it. A few years ago rape and wife battering were neatly swept under the carpet; our society claiming that "good girls don't get raped", or that the beaten wives yearn for physical punishment. Sexual harassment, like rape and wife beating is an aggressive, powerful act, meant to humiliate, degrade and control. Stand up, gather your courage, organize and fight!

A final report, with a literature review and alternate methods of handling the problem, will be completed by early May. If you are interested in receiving a copy please contact Northern Women's Centre, 316 Bay Street, Thunder Bay. If you are a victim of sexual harassment and would like to share your experience please write us at the above address.

Kathie Cram.

 *IS THERE AN ASTERISK ON YOUR LABEL ?
 PLEASE RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION



THE END

Despite lobbying for continuation by Secretary of State - Women's Programs, and the women hired under this program, Feminist Services Training Programme has come to an end.

Feminist Services was a one year project which saw placements working with The Northwestern Ontario

Women's Centre, The Northern Women's Credit Union, Northern Woman Journal, Crisis Homes Inc., Beendigen -Native Women's Crisis House, Immigrant Information Centre, Thunder Bay Rape and Sexual Assault Centre and the Planning committee for a proposed Family Dispute Unit. Feminist Services was an exciting and unique program and certainly deserved a more just reward than to see these

positive steps for women's services ended.

To Wilma Sellers, Jane Goldie, Joanne Fisher, Jerri Platt, Laurie Cunningham, Carol Sprakes, Kathy Cram, and Leni Untinen, Good Luck with your future career plans, hopefully in the area of women's services.

woman kidnaps daughter - jailed

FREE KAMALLA MILLER

Kamalla Miller is a 26 year old mother, a feminist, pacifist, and anarchist. She is charged in California with kidnapping her own daughter, Val Valeena Mariska (Iska) Miller, and with two related charges.

Kamalla and Arthur Miller asked her parents, the Moores, to take care of Iska and her brother Jason temporarily in 1974. They had been thrown out of work by the recession, and saw no alternative, as one child was sick. A few weeks later, when they had jobs (Arthur makes \$9.50/hr. as a shipfitter) they asked for their children back. Instead, they were ordered to report to a custody hearing.

Hearings continued for eight months, dealing mostly with the Millers' lifestyle and political beliefs and activities. That Kamalla and Arthur have long been active in labor, peace, anti-nuclear and other struggles was held against them in conservative Orange County, (Arthur was described in one report as a "fanatical communist IWW organizer"), as was the fact that Kamalla is epileptic, though that is under complete control. The judge said he did not have to rule the Millers unfit, just decide which home would be better. Money was his criteria - he said David Rockefeller would be the ideal parent - and the Moores make more money, so they got the children.

Jason died of asphyxiation while in the Moores' "care". Kamalla's own childhood included being taken out of school in the 8th grade and being locked in the house for two years. Her father was an alcoholic who would play with a loaded gun while he was drinking. Deeply worried about her child's safety, and seeing no alternative, Kamalla in 1978 went to California, got Iska, and came back to Arkansas. In July of 1979 she was arrested.

PLEASE HELP! WRITE Jerry Brown, Sacramento, Cal. to protest. Demand Kamalla be freed. DONATE \$2, \$20, \$200, or any amount to help. The Support Committee is broke and there are printing, postage, and other bills to pay. PUBLICIZE the case in your area or network. Contact us for more info.

CONTACT:
Kamalla Miller Support
Bayou LaRose
2115 Esplanade Ave.
New Orleans, L.A.
70119

Kammalla Miller Support
3304 Clinton Ave. S.,
Minneapolis, Minn.
55408

Checks payable to Flow Carlson or
Bruce Baechler or Arthur Miller.
All three names.

McKellar pure?

There is no sexual harassment in McKellar Hospital, Thunder Bay. We were informed that haughtily as they refused to accept the questionnaires. We were happy to hear that one will not be goosed in the elevators or pinched in the linen closets since some of us have worked there in the past and found it an occupational hazard. It is all part of preserving the myth that the house of Doctors has a moral standard above the common. If it is professional, it cannot be crude or seen to be crude. Libido is dormant in the pursuit of common good. To shatter the illusion will destroy one of our favourite fairy tales - that all nurses are angelic and all doctors saintly and the auxiliary members who clean and carry and feed them are somehow uplifted by the example. That we in our ignorance of this great truth even suggested they move in the common herd calls for at least three lashes from a used rectal tube.

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breast cancer update

After being told of one woman's experience with breast cancer and the lack of safer detection methods in Thunder Bay, I decided to see what was happening in Toronto.

I phoned the 'Women's College Hospital' with several questions regarding the detection and treatment of breast cancer. They still give women mammograms and zerograms, both are x-rays with only slightly differing degrees of strength. Since there is still a controversy regarding the safety of these detection methods I didn't consider this progress. I was much more interested in another method - Thermography. This is not an x-ray, but it has proven to be effective.

It is a heat detector and any malignancy in the breast is shown as a much hotter area. Malignancies give off more heat than benign lumps. I was even told that a pregnant woman could feel safe in getting a thermogram done. The Women's College Hospital will only do these tests by referral. Your own doctor will have to realize the need and send you to a larger centre where they have Thermography. This detection method still has not reached Thunder Bay. All of us should ask our doctors why?!

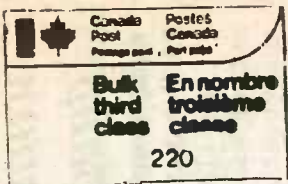
The Women's College Hospital has a Breast Centre. They specialize in problems with women's breasts. They have four surgeons, two women and two men. They decide what form of treatment is best for a breast cancer patient. The modified radical mastectomy is still by far the most effective treatment although I did get the impression that they are more open to less radical types of treatment.

After talking on the phone for what seemed an hour, I was conscious of the guardedness of every response I got, as though it would be detrimental to give me too much information. They got the impression I was calling for myself instead of women in general. They did not want to be quoted and since I was talking to a nurse or a receptionist, informative as she might have been, I was getting information second hand. Perhaps more can be done if letters are written seeking more information. I realize, just writing this, we've only just begun.

Rosalyn Taylor Perrett

Yes, I'll help

Thanks to the slow but steady increase in our subscriptions and to those women who add a financial donation; the NORTHERN WOMAN JOURNAL for the first time in its SEVEN years history is \$432. in the black. We had a lot of really good comments about our last issue. Could we have more written feedback??. Thanks women.



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