

**Saskatoon
Women's Liberation
Newsletter**



May 1975

25¢

Photo by Sheila Rowswell

MARCH AND RALLY

SPONSORED BY:

SASKATOON WOMENS CENTRE
SASKATOON WOMENS LIBERATION
SASKATOON WOMEN FOR
ABORTION REPEAL

WOMEN AND LAW CTR

FOR INFORMATION
PHONE:

SASKATOON:

242-5830

244-3932

343-7044

OR

REGINA:

DENISE

522-8751

SATURDAY - MAY 10TH - 2:00 PM

GATHER IN FRONT OF
CITY HALL

WE DEMAND:

- .. EQUAL PAY FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE ..
- .. UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO QUALITY DAYCARE ..
- .. SAFE AND EFFECTIVE BIRTH CONTROL FOR ALL ..
- .. REMOVAL OF ABORTION FROM THE CRIMINAL CODE ..
- .. EQUAL RIGHTS IN MARRIAGE AND PROPERTY LAW ..
- .. FREEDOM OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION ..

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S
YEAR HAS BEEN A
FACE IN DEALING
WITH THE ISSUES THAT THE
WOMENS MOVEMENT HAS
RAISED TIME AND TIME AGAIN!!

SPEAKERS:

ELAINE VON ODER

KATHY ULMER

LAURA JONES

COLLEEN POLLREIS

WOMEN UNITE ACROSS CANADA

Editorial

WOMEN IN ART



by M. L. Perron

Ah yes! The first question that comes to mind is "Where are they?" Women don't have the historic reputation in art that men do. Women artists usually wind up in the "stuck" position of being not quite at the top, locally known and revered, teachers and examples of people helping others to make it. Those women who do make it, do so at great personal expense and against incredible odds, so that there have been some Emily Carrs, Barbara Hepworths, Berthe Morissots, Kathe Kollwitzs.

Speaking from a strictly personal point of view, I can identify what some of those odds are and what happens to those who beat the odds.

The starting point is the conscious decision, "I am going to be an artist". Enter the first odd: the financial one, how to be self-supporting in a notoriously non-supporting field. The two solutions most often offered by relatives, friends, and society at large are entering one of the helping professions or marriage. In reality, there is only one because membership in a helping profession becomes a marriage.

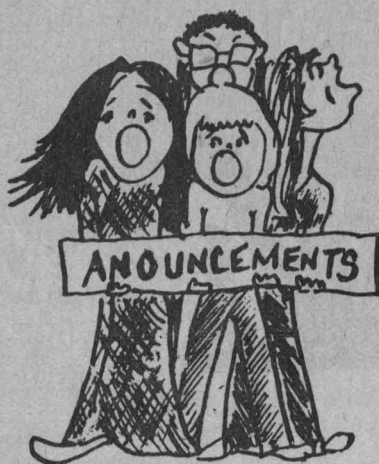
At this point, we lose a lot of women artists. Their energy gets siphoned off and their art becomes a secondary consideration.

A woman who decides to take her art seriously as work before all other jobs is in the same position as a woman who leaves a destructive marriage. All the same decisions have to be made; many of the same emotions are operative - fears of leaving a destructive situation for one that is unfamiliar, learning new ways of supporting herself financially, overthrowing the myth that her personal fulfillment is dependent on being a helpmate to somebody else. It means taking up a way of life where there are no guarantees.

Anyone seriously in the field of art is not there because it is fun. It is frightening, frustrating, exciting, provoking, and the most intensely satisfying thing going. For me it is as much a function of my "self" as my body is. I paint because I have to.

Women have been artists for thousands of years. Our recognition as such is much belated. However, women now have access to power. It comes from being self-directing and investing in ourselves with the two things most necessary to wield it - knowledge and courage. In the latter we are not lacking - the survival of women period - as thinking human beings - attests to that. Our present goal is to increase our knowledge.

It is power that gives recognition. This how we will succeed.



WORKSHOP FOR COMMUNITY LEADERS ON COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN CAREER COUNSELLING OF HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS

OBJECTIVES: To involve parents and interested groups in the community in helping young women become aware of broadening horizons, and the many careers, including homemaking, that are open to them.

WHEN: Friday, June 6th, 1:30 - 5 p.m.
WHERE: Athabasca Hall, University of Sask., Saskatoon

REGISTRATION: Free but contact Mary Helen Richards, 1128 Elliott Street, Saskatoon (ph. 652-1623)

STATUS OF WOMEN MEETING
 on Thursday, May 29, Public Library at 8 p.m. to elect executive. Membership is \$2.00. Ideas for meetings are welcomed.

PROVINCIAL CANDIDATES MEETING

Saskatoon Women's Liberation have sent invitations to all Saskatoon urban candidates for the 1975 provincial election to present their platforms and to focus attention and response on issues of special concern to women.

TIME: 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 21, 1975
PLACE: Victoria School gymnasium, Broadway and 12th St.

We are preparing a pamphlet to point our areas of concern as a guideline for the public attending this meeting.

Women Together

SASKATCHEWAN CONFERENCE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Friday, June 6

- 5-8 p.m. Registration
- 8:30 p.m. Red Light Theatre, "What Glorious Times They Had" Reception

Saturday, June 7

- 9 a.m. Opening and singing
- 9:30 a.m. Address by JUNE CALLWOOD
- 10:30 a.m. Questions & discussion
- Noon Luncheon
- 1:45 p.m. Action Groups (policy makers present)

ACTION GROUPS: Child Care, Health Care, Women and the Law, Women and Education, Women Working, Women and the Economy, Women and the Rural Economy,

- 6 p.m. Supper
 Speaker, MARGARET HARRIS
 RITA McNEIL, singer
- 9 p.m.

Sunday, June 8

- 9 a.m. Singing
- 9:15 a.m. Regional meetings
- 10:15 a.m. Coffee
- 10:30 a.m. Business meetings and Elections
- 12:30 p.m. Luncheon
 Speaker, JUNE MENZIES

This conference, sponsored by the Sask. Action Committee, Status of Women, will be held at the Arts Building, University of Sask., Saskatoon.

A registration fee of \$5.00 can be sent to Adelle Smillie, 2005 Hanover Avenue, Saskatoon no later than May 7th.

SUPPORT GROUP

Women who are integrating Women's Liberation into their own life and seek support from other feminists and are interested in joining a feminist support group phone the Women's Centre (242-5830)



FEMINIST NEWS SERVICE

If you've been hanging around the Women's Centre lately you've probably heard stirrings concerning a feminist News Service. Well its all coming together and it won't be long before you experience its benefits through this newsletter.

The purpose of a feminist news service is to facilitate communication between women's organizations and publications. The idea, the original brainchild of Rita Moir and Ann Harvey of Alberta, was discussed and ratified at a Women's Press Meeting in Saskatoon at the end of December. Another conference held in Winnipeg March 28-31 discussed

the formation of the news service in less abstract terms.

With Secretary of State financing travel expenses, delegates from across Canada participated in the conference. Two representatives from this newsletter were able to attend.

The need for a feminist communications network was emphasized in Saskatoon. Not only are we kept ignorant of happenings with the women's movement elsewhere in Canada, but what information we do receive is often unreliable and outdated, if gleaned from establishment press or newsletters mailed late and then lost in the paper shuffle.

It was envisaged that FNS would be a news and information network, exchanging news stories, features, reviews, graphics and photographs, as well as sharing the knowledge and experience of different women's organizations. The value of a news service thus would not be limited to improving and broadening our own publications, but would perhaps more importantly be a vital communication between women's groups.

With this understanding of FNS, the delegates from women's publications came together in Winnipeg. The task over the four days was to establish a policy and structure for FNS.

It was unanimously decided that FNS would be a bilingual service at the outset.

After much discussion, the conference decided that FNS will carry only Canadian material, written by and about Canadian/Quebecoise/Native women.

Further the policy of the Feminist News Service was defined on the basic pro-feminist tenets. These are

confirmations of the issues for which the women's movement has always struggled, such as the right to abortion and daycare. One of the more interesting clauses passed at the convention follows:

"We recognize that all capitalist economics are sustained by the systematic exploitation of women as either unpaid or cheap labour and that the liberation of women and people hinges upon the destruction of capitalism and its inherent patriarchal culture. Furthermore, we support women organizing into democratic unions. We will struggle for a non-sexist division of labour inside and outside the home. Further to that struggle, we condemn imperialism, racism, and sexism as economic and cultural tools used to perpetuate the capitalist structure and the oppression of all peoples."

Using these clauses to define the philosophy of FNS, decisions can hopefully be made whether or not to carry a particular item through the news service.

No less important than defining a policy is formulating a workable, feasible and efficient structure for FNS.

It was agreed that two head offices, one in the West and one in the East, would be set up, to share responsibilities and to be more responsive to regional needs.

The duties and functions of the head office were defined as guidelines. These functions included compiling and analyzing the news, printing and distribution, official correspondence and translation. These two positions were seen as full time, and will be paid

Besides the head offices, FNS will have seven regional representatives, from BC and Yukon, Alberta and NWT, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic. Among the responsibilities and functions of the regional representatives are to contact member groups in the region and soliciting subscribers and stories.

It was decided that the membership of FNS will consist of independent working Canadian feminist press, such as newsletters, newspapers, presses and publishing and distribution companies. Membership applications must be ratified at an annual general meeting. The membership of FNS will be responsible for determining policy of the news service.

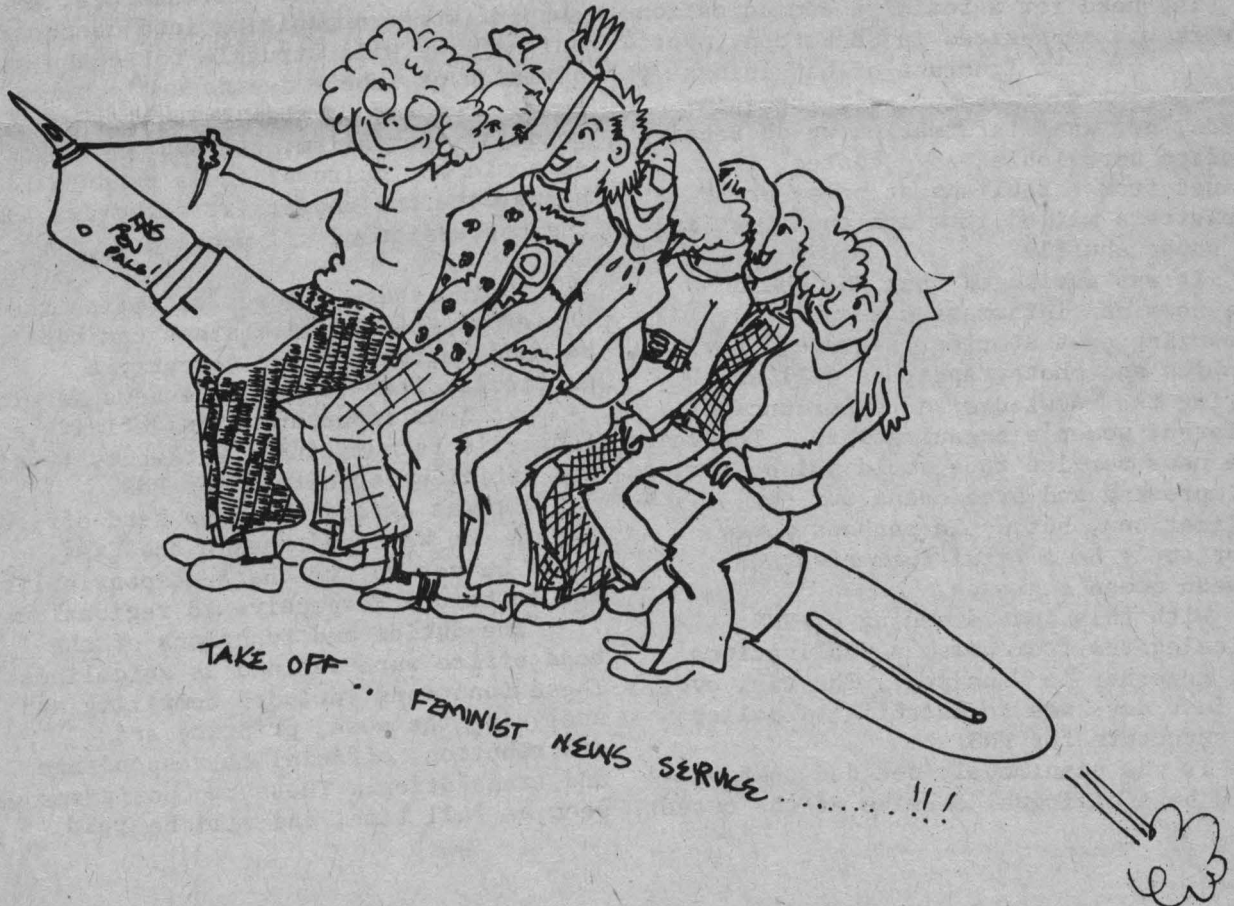
Subscribers, on the other hand, can be any individual or group that pays a subscription fee, which entitles them to the monthly newspacket to be mailed out by FNS. A scale of fees establishing priority of thirteen types of groups from contributing members to RCMP was established.

Only the Eastern Office with Kati Middleton in the head office position was set up at the conference for the time being. Western Regional Representatives are responsible for establishing a Western Head Office. It was suggested that Saskatoon, because of location, be the site of Western Head Office.

Some interest has been expressed by a few women in the positions, but as of yet neither the Saskatchewan regional representative nor Head Office administrator have been appointed.

However, FNS is now functioning. Any news information or other material any reader may have which should receive national exposure, should be forwarded through the regional rep to the Eastern Head Office. Until such a person is found, this may be done through the newsletter.

If anyone is interested in helping set up a Western office in Saskatoon, please contact the Women's Center.



the new woman

in another life
i was a woman
with black waved hair
tied back in
daguerreo stiffness
i wore a high white collar and a dot pearl
on a chain
and drank my tea
from a royal worcester cup

this life i blended into you
you flowed into me
like green into a light bulb
new-lit, all you
i naked danced
like long field grass
you wove a basket from me

you molded tea cups for me
then faded through the wall
the last i saw of you
your bristly beard
was bleeding in the plasterboard
perhaps you live inside there
somewhere drinking tea



SKETCH by JAN JONSSON



Mary Fraser Brown

Abortion: A to Choose



Photos by Sheila Jones-Steele

On Saturday April 12th, a March and Rally in defense of Dr. Morgenthaler and in protest of abortion laws was held in Saskatoon. Organized by Saskatoon Women for Abortion Law Repeal, the demonstration was attended by approximately one hundred and fifty women and men. Following a march through downtown, the protesters met in front of City Hall for the rally. Speakers, including Dr. Margaret Mahood, Audrey Hall, Anne Boulton, Dave Newsham, Sheila Jones-Steele, among others, addressed the people on various aspects of the abortion issue as well as the facts of Dr. Morgenthaler's case.

The protest was triggered by the recent decision of the Supreme Court of Canada to uphold the conviction of Dr. Henry Morgenthaler by the Quebec Court of Appeal. This overturned an earlier jury decision which found Dr. Morgenthaler not guilty of performing illegal abortions. This represents not only a threat to the jury system of justice, but also the injustice of the laws pertaining to abortion. But the demonstration also focused on the repeal of all abortion laws and the right of every woman to access to free medically safe and legal abortions if she chooses not to have a child.

Woman's Right



An excerpt from a leaflet prepared by The Regina Committee for Abortion Law Repeal, c/o Women's Centre, University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan.

The policy of the federal New Democratic Party supports safe, legal abortion as a right for women, and the removal of abortion from the Criminal Code. It is incumbent upon the provincial government to publicly support Dr. Morgenthauer in his attempts to achieve these, and to urge the Federal Cabinet to exercise clemency in his case.

Further, the provincial government must commit itself to actively carry out its own party policy by making abortion as available as possible in Saskatchewan, within the limits of federal law. This can be done by immediately pursuing the following measures:

*Accepting the World Health organization definition of health as operative in Saskatchewan. This definition includes social and economic factors in its concept of health.

*Establishing simple, standard abortion procedures to be followed by all hospitals in Saskatchewan.

*Establishing outpatient facilities in the larger cities.

*Making it incumbent upon publicly-financed hospitals to establish therapeutic abortion committees which will operate according to the provincially-established concept of health, and by refusing to accept geographic restrictions or lack of resources as valid reasons for rejecting abortion cases.

*Establishing a board of appeal for women who have been refused an abortion.

*Including information about abortion in the provincial family planning program, where it properly belongs as an alternate birth control measure.

*Actively investigating complaints about unethical practises by doctors, such as charging excess fees, or pressuring women to agree to be sterilized in exchange for an abortion.

*Actively pressuring the federal government to repeal the abortion laws.

Such measures are all fully within provincial jurisdiction and require only a commitment by the provincial government to provide a system of health care which adequately satisfies the needs of women in Saskatchewan.

Sketch by Jan Jonsson



That woman
I could see and tighten my hands about her neck
and casually crush that woman's life. Her zone of
blind fury slaps my hands down and screams at me.
Those hands that together moisten thick lips
layered and darken flowers together reach to cover my ears,
turn my head.

My woman
hands on neck joining fingers and nails piercing my skin and I
have fear and anger showing on my face. My eyes
large watery studs
look at you
standing dampened and locked in place
a bloom trapped between trees
then falling, wrapping my knuckles on you back
You woman
I'd sent you the flower and planted the spines
press
into my arms now
as you fall and kept falling
in my eyes.
Woman.

Anne Benan

the defense rests

i close the door

my dish-thrown fury melts
into the magic moving wall
of forward tar dots
and waving green things
 a floating cube
 a spinning top
 a T.V. vegetable

i crouch beneath the sink

inside the cell room
prison
the dirt smears fade into a boat
i float beneath the street
a sewer waves its growth
a weed mass tosses tangled
kites in pink and green
across my river-sky

he can not get me here

Mary Fraser Brown

General meeting

The monthly general meeting of Saskatoon Women's Liberation was held April 5 at the Gay Community Centre.

PUBLIC MEETING OF PROVINCIAL CANDIDATES

Connie Gerwing outlined plans made for a proposed meeting of Saskatoon provincial candidates. It is hoped that a short introduction by a Women's Liberationist will focus the meeting on issues of special concern to women and that the meeting would then break up into constituency groups to question the candidates on their party positions.

The meeting is scheduled for 8 p.m. on May 21st. The Victoria School gymnasium (5 corners) has been booked but if a more suitable location is found, the meeting will be moved.

STAFF CHANGES

Nadia Greschuk and Lawana Kosedy will be leaving the Women's Centre staff in May. Connie Gerwing will be leaving at the end of April. Nadia will be entrenched in political campaigning and Lawana will be working on an OFY project. Connie has accepted a summer job with the Secretariat to promote IWY. (Marie Perron will be working with Connie.)

SELF-HELP KIT

The need to complete and revise the Self-Help kit begun by an OFY project last summer was discussed. Eleanor Fraser was approached to handle the task. (At a later meeting, it was decided that Eleanor and Lucie, and possibly Lily Woo and Audrey Hall, would work together to organize the kit.)

WOMEN TODAY: PLANNING FOR CREATIVE CHANGE

Anne Smart announced a series on politics will be held at the main Library during April and May.

FEMINIST NEWS SERVICE

A meeting of Feminist newspapers and newsletters in Winnipeg, Easter weekend, solidified plans for a FNS. The proposed structure is a central clearinghouse - probably in the East - and regional offices to gather information from members and to send it to this central clearinghouse for distribution. Saskatoon has been proposed as a location for the regional office. A discussion of our responsibilities with regard to FNS followed. There was general consensus that it would be good to have a regional office here. Two staff people would be needed and concern was expressed that they bear most of the responsibility for establishing a regional office. Lynda Holland expressed the reluctance of some members of the Newsletter Collective to commit itself to FNS. Money and energy being in short supply, the Collective would rather the Women's Centre accept the responsibility of membership.

STEERING COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

A discussion of the purposes and functions of the Steering Committee was held. The staff felt the input and support was necessary on a weekly basis. These meetings not only diversify the decision-making, but also increase communication and involvement. The Steering Committee must be maintained to support the Women's Centre when the staff leaves.

A periodic changeover in the Steering Committee was proposed to involve more women in the running of the Centre. This will be discussed further at a later date. An evaluation of the Steering Committee and discussion of future directions was also postponed until a later meeting.

Lucie De Blois agreed to write a working paper on alternatives to the Steering Committee structure.

COMMUNITY CLINIC

We have a strong relationship with the Clinic on the abortion issue. They refer women to us for counselling which is good but this often involves long distance calls that the Clinic is not prepared to pay for. The time spent on counselling is also not supported financially. It was agreed that we should formalize our relationship with the Clinic and ensure that they are equipped to do their own counselling. Sue Smee, Eleanor Fraser and Lucie De Blois agreed to work on this. It was the decision of the Steering Committee that no more long distance phone calls be made for the Clinic.

COMMUNITY CLINIC ANNUAL MEETING

Nadia Greschuk briefly reported on the Community Clinic meeting. Of 12 candidates, 7 individuals are to be elected to the Community Clinic board. The function of the Westside Clinic had been discussed - it was decided that it not impose a geographic boundary for membership. A motion in favour of repealing abortion laws from the Criminal Code was passed.

Eleanor Fraser was elected to serve a one year term on the Community Clinic board. Congratulations Eleanor!

ABORTION LAW REPEAL

Linda Stowell from Abortion Law Repeal announced the April 12th March in support of Dr. Henry Morgentaler and the April 11th picketing of the Regina Legislature by Regina women. The provincial government has the power to allow the Community Clinic to perform abortions.

She also announced a mock parliament to be held in Vancouver, April 17th or 19th and a cross Canada multi-issue demonstration on May 10th. She outlined the history of Morgentaler's case and mentioned Marc Lalonde's statements on the responsibilities of hospitals to set up therapeutic abortion committees. Linda also suggested the possibility of a one day educational on abortion to bring people up to date on the abortion issue.

PRINCE ALBERT WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Audrey Hall reported that the women in Prince Albert are not prepared to organize at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.



LOUIS RIEL RELAY RACE

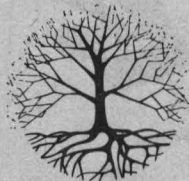
Would it be possible to contact seven healthy, strong, competitive, ambitious, hard-working, determined women for an eight woman entry team for the Louis Riel Relay? It will probably be held July 6th. We need to get off our asses and start work immediately. We need eight competitors,

- 4 canoeists
- 3 runners
- 1 rider
- 1 mare (presently on maternity leave), supplied

We also need:

- a canoe large enough for four paddlers
- a 50 pound woodsman pack
- 10 pounds of sweat
- a sponsor

There were 28 teams last year - all predominantly male. Current champs, Al's Dude Ranch of Clavet. Our women's team will probably wipe everybody in '75. Contact Colleen Gerwing, Box 265, Hafford.



"There is only one of everything"

by Lynda Holland

A rich brew of agony and ecstasy, triumph and defeat, Margaret Atwood has again given us an intoxicating book of poems - *You Are Happy*. Her writing is a queer mix of tenderness and brutality. A very personal poet, she reeks of power and is always the victor.

Although very much a central figure in all of her writing, she compels us to lend our emotions to her often bitter episodes. At times we exalt in her victories, at times we are destroyed, and more often than not, repelled.

*"Last year I abstained
this year I devour*

*without guilt
which is also an art."*

She commands attention, slicing open life - hers, ours, everyone's - and spearing the pieces with the tines of her words. It's a rich meal, meant for us to spit out or swallow in great gulps like some dreadful medicine - hard to take but good for us.

This power, this impact, gains its strength from the honesty of Atwood's writing. She has never been one to be gentle with us, and her latest book is perhaps even more demanding of her audience. She has something to tell us, something about feeling and being and dealing with yourself, as an individual, coming to terms with your own needs and fears before they are bent to someone else.

She begins with doubts, of saying goodbye:

*"Our shattered faces retreat, we might be
happy, who can interpret
the semaphore of our bending
bodies, from a distance we could be dancing."*

of being alone and hating it, of mournful Novembers and repentance, dreams of reconciliation and the ultimate arrival through this mosaic of emotions to feelings,

"the images

*hitting into your eyes
like needles, crystals, you are happy."*

The second section of the book has been titled, "Songs of the Transformed". Through these poems Atwood speaks through a creature persona - a pig, a fox, an owl, the hen's head, and even the worms, taunt and accuse. Her words create visual images so powerful that we either see or play a part in this dramatic visitation.

From the "Rat Song":

*"You thing: That one's too clever,
She's dangerous, because
I don't stick around to be slaughtered
and you think I'm ugly too
despite my fur and pretty teeth
and my six nipples and snake tail.
All I want is love, you stupid
humanist. See if you can."*



Eileen Whalen

In "Circe/Mud Poems", the transformation complete, Atwood creates an island that is both a fortress and a oneness of self. These are poems of discovery:

*"I spend my days with my head
pressed to the earth, to stones,
to shrubs, collecting the few
muted syllables left over;"*

and growing strength. They spill with questions, tremble with demands and violence. She weaves her spell of terrible growth well, sharing with us through myth and reality, the experience of becoming. She is the mythological temptress - but also a benevolent guide rather than a wicked sorceress. Where we before assumed willingly the shape of animals, we now embark on our own personal search on the island she has lured us to.

The book ends with a series of welcome revelations. Our journey through chaos, animal theatre, and myth, has left us longing to bring our new knowledge back to reality. These poems are bundles of simple practicality:

*"Where there is nothing spectacular
to see and the weather is ordinary*

*where love occurs in its pure form only
on the cheaper of the souvenirs...*

*where we keep going,
fighting our ways, our way
not out but through".*

To read Atwood you must shrug off what is yours and plunge into a world that is horrible and familiar. She demands our immersion and in return for this drug-like trip inside ourselves leaves us a message -

*"open yourself like this and
become whole".*

You Are Happy, Margaret Atwood
Oxford University Press, 1974
- \$3.25, 96 pages



The Saskatoon Women's Liberation Newsletter is published monthly. The grant for the Women's Centre has in no way affected the Newsletter which is financially independent. So please, we would appreciate a subscription if you can afford it, or a donation if you can manage it. Please make cheques payable to Saskatoon Women's Liberation. The deadline for all material is May 20th. Submissions are welcomed.

The Editorial Committee for this issue

Nadia Greschuk
Lynda Holland
Rosemarie Rupps
Nadine Scott
Maylynn Woo
Marie Perron

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