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breaking the SILENCE

a feminist newsmagazine on social issues



in this issue ...

Women Learning

Breaking down the barriers of illiteracy and sexism in literature.

Women at Work

Two articles: one on the hidden world of women's contract work, another on the international network of women and microtechnology.

A Winter Solstice Gift List

What to give (and expect from) the discriminatory feminist this season.

plus ...

articles on justice for native women, current trends in welfare, report on the NDP Equality Conference, poetry, upcoming events, resources, plumes de femmes ...

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The views expressed in articles are those of the author's alone, and are not necessarily shared by the collective, even if the byline belongs to a collective member. Views of the collective are expressed only in editorials and articles signed by the collective.

About Breaking the Silence

For too long women's voices—our struggles, suffering and joy—have been silenced. Living in a patriarchal world, we have been separated from one another and from the mainstream of society.

The *Breaking the Silence* collective is committed to giving women a voice. In particular, we provide a forum for discussion of the social welfare needs of women—needs such as support services for survivors of violence, affordable housing, sufficient and good daycare, adequate pensions and employment.

We are committed to moving toward a world absent of oppression: be it sexism, racism, classism, homophobia or ageism. We are committed to helping to build a peaceful and humane world: a world where women's ideas, experiences and activities are heard and made visible.

Integrating Welfare Services: *What does it mean for single mothers?*

by Nancy Beauchamp and Diane Chalmessin

Imagine yourself as a single mother with two children subsisting on \$575.00 a month on Mother's Allowance (FBA). Imagine yourself as a single mother with two children subsisting on \$488.00 a month on General Welfare (GWA). In 1981, 82% (or 207,210) of single-parent families in Ontario were female-headed. Thirty-two percent (or 67,906) were on welfare.

The Family Benefits Act (FBA) is a provincial act which provides long-term social assistance benefits to the elderly, the handicapped and single parents. Single mothers make up the majority of the caseload. The General Welfare Act (GWA) is a municipal act which provides short-term benefits to those who are temporarily unemployed.

Integration of GWA and FBA is a move initiated by the Ontario Government whereby the administration of Family Benefits to single parents will be transferred from the provincial to the municipal level of government, to be integrated with General Welfare. Benefits for the "popular poor" - senior citizens and disabled people - will remain the responsibility of the Province.

Family Benefits Allowances Act:

- * intended as the vehicle to deliver long-term support, especially to the unemployable
- * administered by the province

- * funding is split 50/50 between the federal government and the provincial government
- * the disabled are supported through this programme after they have been certified by the Medical Advisory Board

General Welfare Assistance (GWA)

- * intended as short-term, emergency assistance
- * administered by the municipalities (and Indian bands)
- * benefit levels are set by the province after consultation with local governments
- * cost-sharing:

Federal:	50%
Provincial:	30%
Municipal:	20%

- * administration costs are split 50/50 between the province and the municipal governments

Integration - Saving money at the expense of sole-support mothers

Frank Drea, Ontario Minister of Community and Social Services, stated in June of 1981 that it is "necessary to encourage applicants and recipients to seek alternatives to the welfare cheque... In other words, welfare should not be, and will no longer be accepted as a way of life."

For Frank Drea and others like him, sole-support parents (read mothers), are lazy and living a life of leisure off the public purse. This shows Frank's ignorance of the important work of raising one's own

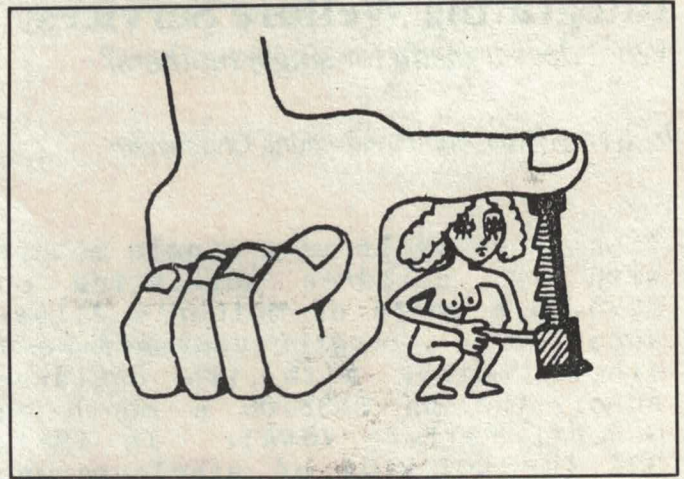
children. We are afraid that once single mothers are deemed "able-bodied" and "employable" they will be treated as any temporarily unemployed individual looking for work. No allowance will be made for the lack of support services such as day care, and the lack of jobs offering a decent living wage. This would mean a cut in income for single mothers. When not in the labour force, they would have to live on General Welfare which is approximately \$100.00 a month less than Family Benefits.

In the current economic situation more and more people are unemployed, and employable people are being forced onto the welfare roles as their unemployment insurance benefits run out. Both the federal and provincial governments are incurring huge deficits. The federal government shifts costs to the provinces by reducing federal participation in cost-sharing programs. The province of Ontario, in turn, attempts to pass on the costs to the municipalities, in order to restrain its own deficit.

The integration plan is an example of one attempt by the province to shift its own costs to the municipalities. The shift in financial burden and the possible reduction in income to sole-support mothers is not immediately apparent. Even though the terms "able-bodied" and "employable" are being heard, single parents, for the time being, are still eligible for FBA.

In fact, pilot projects reveal that sole-support parents are put on the FBA roles faster, thus saving the municipal government money and also increasing the income of sole-support parents. The additional "candy" is the Employment Support Initiative Program (in Ottawa, it's called Action for Careers and

Training) which prepares single mothers for employment. Where? At what wages? Where are the "free" day care services?



What happens after Integration is entrenched at the Municipal government level?

There is certainly no guarantee of 100% funding for the Employment Support Initiative Program once the pilot project is completed. And if we keep in mind that the Provincial government intends to cut its deficit, we can only conclude - as did those municipalities (politicians) voting against the transfer - that "successful" pilot projects would lead to sole-support parents then being considered "employable", and thus eligible for General Welfare, a savings for the Province of 20%. When these sole-support parents remain on welfare because they can't find work, the municipality will have to pay that 20%.

But even if Ontario were to continue providing its current 50%, it seems likely the Province would reduce the amounts available to recipients from the higher FBA rate to the GWA rate, for how else can the province save on income maintenance?

Whose responsibility is welfare?

Provincial governments, like the federal government, are in fact redistributing income. When these governments contribute to welfare payments, they are redistributing monies which they accumulate from peoples' incomes, spendings, earnings, and sources of this nature. Municipal governments, on the other hand, redistribute monies from a property tax base.

When the provincial government reassesses properties, property taxes in many cases will be rising. If you add the cost of having to pay more for welfare, municipal taxes will rise again. In the short-term, the shifting of a portion of the cost of welfare to municipalities could raise annual property tax bills by \$25-50.

In conclusion we are convinced that integration at the Municipal level is financially dangerous for both recipients and property tax payers. Municipal politicians must vote against Integration at the municipal level.

To do this we suggest that you make your concerns known to:

- your Alderperson
- your Regional Council (who will vote on this issue soon)
- Art Pope (Ottawa Commissioner of Social Services - he's supporting Integration)
- Frank Drea,
Minister of Community and Social Services,
Queen's Park,
Toronto, Ontario.

For more information contact:

OCLISS
95A Beech Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1S 3J7
232-2677



Justice for Native Women

by Marymay Downing

I have a suggestion for anyone wanting to support native women. Contact David Crombie, the new Minister responsible for Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Encourage him to fulfill his promise now to the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC). He promised NWAC a voice in drafting new legislation to repeal from the Indian Act the section which discriminates against women, section 12(1)b, and to provide reinstatement for women and their descendants who unjustly lost their Indian status. Send a copy of your letter to the Minister of Justice also.

Now is the time to prepare this long overdue legislation, and NWAC should be integrally involved in its preparation.

Last June the former Liberal government made the mistake of drafting Bill C-47, an Act to amend the Indian Act, without any consultation with native people, women or men. The result was bad legislation. It gave with one hand and took away with another. It repealed section 12(1)b, but the provisions for reinstatement were at the same time both incomplete and a violation of aboriginal rights to self-determination.

When Bill C-47 went to committee before final reading, NWAC and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) jointly presented amendments that would have made the bill acceptable to almost all native groups (except some bands in Alberta opposed reconstitution of their membership fearing exploitation by self-seeking opportunists). Indian Rights for Indian Women, which has been lobbying for repeal of section 12(1)b for the past fifteen years, supported the joint NWAC-AFN

proposal. As a non-native, it gratified me that even the parliamentarians on the committee acknowledged not only the wisdom and justice but the necessity of the proposed amendments. The near-complete consensus that was reached in those committee hearings is proof that native and non-native women and men can co-operate effectively to produce good legislation.

However, the Liberal government did not make the amendments. On the last day of the session, Bill C-47, without the amendments, was given final reading and passed in the House of Commons. The event was mistakenly hailed as a victory by several feminist politicians who apparently were unaware of native women's opposition to the unamended version of the bill. Fortunately, due to eleventh-hour lobbying by native people, including NWAC, Bill C-47 was stopped in the Senate on aboriginal grounds.

Let's urge the new government to do it right this time. And do it now. Involve NWAC right from the beginning in drafting a new bill. Don't ask them for their suggested amendments later, when they're obviously so easy to ignore. And don't simply wait for the Charter to take effect in April, 1985 either. Sure, it will strike down section 12(1)b; but it will do nothing for reinstatement.

A consensus was reached. The joint NWAC-AFN proposal still stands. There is no need for yet further delay in rectifying the present injustice, and no excuse for introducing new injustice.



Author's Update

AT NWAC's 10th annual assembly on Nov. 16, 17 and 18 in Ottawa, the majority of the delegates endorsed NWAC's decision to oppose Bill C-47 as it was originally presented. They passed a resolution to lobby for a more satisfactory bill.

It was a position shared by the majority, however, not a consensus of the whole group. Some native women who have lost their status, especially in Alberta, Quebec and New Brunswick, do support the bill. They deeply fear that without legislation forcing the bands to accept them back, such as Bill C-47 would provide in its present form, their bands would refuse to reinstate them. Supporters of the joint NWAC-AFN position view such legislation as a violation of native rights to self-determination.

Looking to the long-term, I think anyone interested in giving assistance to native women could do two things:

- 1) lobby appropriate sources (e.g. Secretary of State, Indian Affairs and MPs) to fund NWAC better. Native women need more money to come together for dialogue more often. Reaching consensus takes more time than achieving a majority vote, and time costs money.
- 2) work to strengthen the support base locally. As aboriginal self-government comes into being, the type of support native women will need will differ in each nation, possibly in each band. We must begin to build that local support base now.

The author will explore the complexities of the reinstatement issue in a future edition of Breaking the Silence.

women at work

Women and Contract Work

by Marie O'Shea

This article initiates a dialogue on women and contract work by relating some of the general political/economic issues of women and work to the experience of some women in the Ottawa area. It has been well documented (e.g. "A Working Majority", by Pat and Hugh Armstrong, 1983) that despite the increasing visibility of women outside the home and the emphasis on female attainment of top jobs (at the top of the ladder), there has been practically no real change in women's work. In actual fact, the division of labour by sex has changed little over the past thirty years. Women continue to be segregated in the home where they perform household chores. Most women working outside the home still do so out of economic need. Since women's work in the labour force is often dull, repetitious, low-paid and unattractive, contract work is seen by some as a way out of the female job ghetto.

The Public Service Alliance of Canada and organized labour appear to be suspicious of contracts which may leave much to be desired in terms of wages and benefits. The PSAC resolved in 1979 that every possible step be taken "to prevent further contracting out by employers". Contract work also has the effect of creating insecurity for the worker and undermining union strength. On the other hand, the federal Progressive Conservative party appears to be a strong proponent of "contracting out". In contrast with PSAC, whose major concern lies with contracting out to large private firms, this article will focus on the situation of individual women contracting directly with a client.

It is not surprising that those interviewed had a wide range of views on the relative merits of contract employment. Women in the Ottawa region whom I talked to had a number of positive things to say about contract work. Theoretically you are your own boss and you do not owe your allegiance to an organization. The work is varied thus making it more interesting. It also gives a wide variety of experience and a chance to work in many fields. Moreover, some of the women felt that they were assigned important tasks and responsibilities that might not ordinarily be obtained with a regular job. Many women said it was an excellent way to enter or re-enter the work environment, particularly if interesting and varied work experience is obtained. This was important for students who often find it hard to penetrate the job market.

Other advantages include flexible hours which allows women with children to work at home or otherwise fit family responsibilities around their work. Students also like the idea of flexible hours. Contract work may provide an opportunity to regain or develop confidence. For other women it encourages good work habits such as setting goals and meeting deadlines. Some women commented that contract work provides an opportunity for women to become more assertive and to establish their own credibility. Contract work requires that women take responsibility for the financial segment of their lives, including long-term planning. For example, benefits such as UIC, sick leave, Pension Plan, holiday pay, dental plan, hospital plan, severance pay, overtime pay are usually not included in a contract. Therefore, you should ensure that the contract price is adequate to compensate for this. There are also tax implica-

tions following from whether you are considered to be either an "employee" or "self-employed" pursuant to a contract. In the former case, the number of items which you can claim as a valid expense to reduce your taxable income are far more restricted.

Contract work gives women power - the power to say no, the power to take responsibility for one's actions. The importance of this is self-evident as we discover the nature of our own power, the strength we all have but have repressed, we learn something about the nature of power itself. Power can be used to build or destroy. Some of the women I interviewed felt that contract work helped them to assert their power such that it benefited those around them, and also became a positive learning experience.

Unfortunately, there are often disadvantages to contract work which may offset potential benefits. Clients often see contract work as a method for getting around statutory protections available to full-time employees. With no union or association to fight for you a lot of exploitation can occur. It is particularly easy to be taken advantage of when negotiating a contract. While the common law of contract presumes a relative degree of equality between the parties in terms of bargaining strength and knowledge, such is usually not the case. It is unusual for an individual woman to have access to the same level of legal expertise as the organization with whom she is contracting. If there is a breach of contract by the client, usually the only available remedy is a costly court action. Several women commented that the terms of the contract were often unilaterally changed at various points leaving them with no practical alternative but to accept the changes.

A woman contemplating contract work should also keep the following points in mind. She has no recourse to grievance procedures if she feels she is exploited. Contract work at home can be isolating, with nobody to support you or talk with you. Stress is a major problem because you are totally responsible for the end product.

You can be blamed for outcomes or situations over which you had no control. Although contract workers may occasionally have some power in an informal sense usually they are not part of the management decision making process. In fact, contract workers are continually reminded that they are not part of the organization. It is easy to be in the dark about the politics of the organization or the sensitivities of a particular group or individual. This further increases your vulnerability.

Problems may also arise when employers are not used to hiring contract workers and are confused about what their relationship with the worker should be. The result is often a very vague contract. One is left guessing what the client really wants, often because they do not know themselves.

The most serious problem with contract work identified by the women I interviewed is that it is a very insecure way of making a living. There is no continuity of work life which most people take for granted. For example, you usually don't know when your next job will be. In addition, the extensive work that goes into contract proposals is no guarantee that a contract will be obtained in the end. Since payments often follow successful completion of a contract, pay day is sometimes unpredictable.



The financial insecurity is heightened further by the loss of opportunity to build up unemployment insurance, Canada Pension Plan and other benefits. Unless you have established your own private pension plan, the financial realities for a woman wishing to retire at 65 are not encouraging. Government benefits per month as of October 1984 are as follows:

1. Old Age Security \$272.17
2. Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)
Married Rate
(spouse also pensioned) 210.67 (Max.)
3. GIS Single Rate 298.47 (Max.)
4. Canada/Quebec Pension 387.50 (Max.)

Married women with no CPP/QPP or other income, qualifying for the full GIS, might only receive \$482.84 a month or about \$5,794 a year. An unmarried woman would receive \$6,848.00. A woman who has worked long enough and at a high enough wage to get full CPP/QPP benefits (which would disqualify her from GIS) would receive \$659.67 or about \$7,916.00 a year.

Statistics Canada's definition (1983) of the poverty line puts these numbers in perspective: \$9,429 for singles living in a large centre, \$12,440 for couples.

Musicians, actors and other artists have demonstrated that it is possible for self-employed persons working under short term contracts to organize for their own protection. It's time for women contract workers to also protect themselves. Since there has been little consideration given to the impact of contract work on women, we would like to thank all the women I interviewed for helping me to develop this article.

Information Sources

Despite the fact that provincial employment standards legislation does not apply to contract workers, an awareness of items covered under such legislation would be useful. For example, a brochure entitled "Employment Standards, A Guide to the Employment Standards Act", can be ordered free of charge from Ontario Ministry of Labour, Employment Standards Branch, Phone No. (416) 965-5251. Other useful brochures available from the Women's Bureau at the same address are "Your Rights as a Worker in Ontario" and "Sex Discrimination in Employment".

An authority on more aspects of contract employment in Canada is Professor Inness Christie's "The Law of Employment in Canada".

Other useful References include:

1. Contracting for Services - A Manager's Guide, prepared by the Administrative Policy Branch, Treasury Board of Canada, September 1981, and
2. The Guidelines for Personal Services Contracts (T.B. 1971-64, May 17, 1979 and T.B. 1971-168, October 5, 1981).

Taking Control of Microtechnology:

Women and Multinationals

Part I

by Jean Fairholm

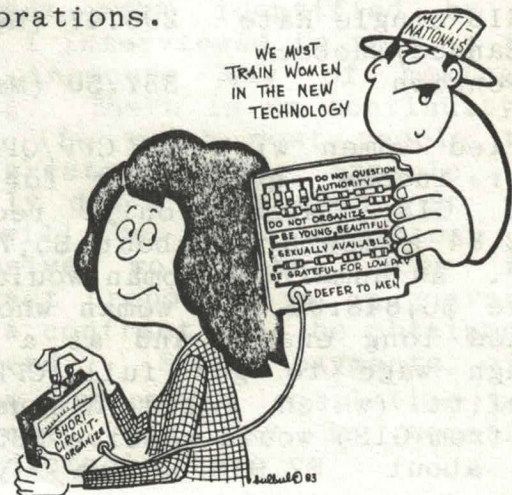
'The actors may be different, the setting may change, but the story of the worldwide growth in wealth and power of corporations today is a familiar tale to most of the world's people. Born in the burst of technology and productive capacity of the Industrial Revolution, the corporate system has never stopped expanding. Corporate growth in the past 200 years has increasingly encompassed not only economic but also political and military involvement in nations around the globe. The means of corporate expansion have included the creation of dependent economies, the exploitation of raw materials and human labour, and the support of unpopular totalitarian governments.

(Corporate Action Guide, 1974, p. 17 Corporate Action Project, Interaction Center, Washington, D.C.)

In the past decade a new age has dawned, bringing a new industrial revolution into being, that of the age of High Technology. The Microtech Revolution is touching all of our lives in Canada but in particular is having an impact on our lives as women and the lives of the women around us.

When we think of women workers affected by New Technology, we think of office workers, cashiers, sales clerks, and bank tellers. In Canada, two-thirds of women in the paid work-force are employed in offices, banks, retail stores and restaurants. Over 36%, a total of 1.7 million, are in the clerical secretarial field.

But if we really want to understand what is happening we must look at the broader picture. The factory worker in Ottawa or Toronto or California, doing assembly for High Tech companies are part of the same Global Assembly Line as women workers in Mexico or South Korea or the Philippines. In looking at the Microelectronics Revolution we must recognize and pay attention to this reality, that now as never before, there exists a truly international workforce and that this workforce is increasingly a female one. We in Canada are part of the worldwide New International and Sexual Division of Labour. To quote two Ottawa based companies, who have in the last year or so laid off workers: "We do 95 percent of our assembly work in Asia" said Marcel Villeneuve, director of semiconductor operations for Kanata's Mitel Corp. in an interview with the Citizen in Aug./83. While NABU's objective in June/83 was "...to locate as much of its manufacturing as possible off-shore in lower-wage countries." As John Kelley, chairperson of NABU said, "Over the past two years, every competitor in the consumer microcomputer industry has gone off shore." This movement of different parts of production to many different countries in the world is what the new international division of labour is all about and it is part of the making of companies into Multinational or Transnational Corporations.



How are the lives of assembly workers working for multinationals in South East Asia linked with the lives of secretaries and clerks here at home? In Canada one of the miracles of the micro-chip technology has been to promise to revolutionize office work. The office of the future will be a paperless one. The manufacturers who control this technology promise that boring and repetitive tasks will be taken over by machines.



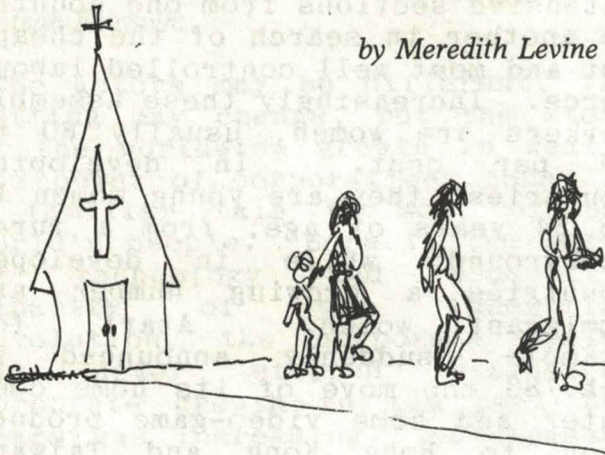
However, it is one thing to have the boring parts eliminated from your job, and another to find your job deskilled or eliminated entirely. The Financial Post, in a special edition on "The Office of the Future", several years ago, stated that, "...routine typing and clerical chores now performed by secretaries will be taken over by the new technology. An estimated one and a half million jobs in Canada may eventually disappear ...clerks will begin to be thinned out as interactive terminals are used for data entry..." The machinery needed to achieve the kind of future described is not cheap. A business microcomputer can cost well over five thousand dollars, and needs a trained operator to run it. However the initial investment in equipment can quickly be recovered by a reduction in labour costs. Three or four people working on microcomputers can replace eight or more secretarial-clerical workers. Women will have to compete with each other to receive the training necessary to keep their job while their co-workers lose theirs.

But lack of job security and protection is a global issue. For assemblers in the High Tech industry both in developed and developing countries, lay-offs are a growing threat as companies relocate part or all of the labour intensive sections from one country to another in search of the cheapest and most well controlled labour force. Increasingly these assembly workers are women, usually 80 to 90 per cent. In developing countries, they are young women 16 to 24 years of age, from a rural background; while in developed countries a growing number are immigrant women. Atari, for example, suddenly announced in Feb./83 the move of its home computer and home video-game production to Hong Kong and Taiwan, laying off over 1,700 of their California employees in the so-called Silicon Valley. "...Perhaps to ease the fears of white native-born Americans," Atari spokesmen noted that most of those laid off were immigrants or refugees from Mexico, Indochina, and the Philippines. (Global Electronics Information Newsletter, #29, Feb./83). Meanwhile in South-East Asian countries, whenever there is a real or imagined downturn in the international market, massive lay-offs result. In Malaysia in the recession of 1974-75 over 6,300 electronics operators (mostly women workers) were retrenched. Later in 1977, companies let more workers go, with the excuse that market sales were low. But the same companies hired a larger number of new workers just two months later. This way the companies would be paying starting wages instead of the higher wages of their former employees. (P.50 *Struggling to Survive, Women Workers in Asia, CCA-URM, Hong Kong*).

To be continued next issue
See Taking Control of Technology Part II

Women in the Catholic Church

by Meredith Levine



While the hierarchy of the Catholic church managed to gain the silence of its women during the Papal visit, the Conference of Canadian Bishops held in Ottawa immediately following, revealed the tentativeness of the women's compliance.

Two years ago, the conference established a committee of 2 bishops and 11 women (both ecumenical and lay) to investigate the role of women in the church. The committee tabled its recommendations at this year's conference, after hearing from over a thousand women. Women who expressed "feeling a lot of pain; that with respect to sexual equality the church is lagging behind secular society: that women resent being told not to practice artificial birth control, without having any part in the government of the church."

The recommendations, a study kit with twelve themes for discussion, were to be given to dioceses across the country. Aiming to stimulate awareness at all levels, of the need for "fundamental equality for women in the church", the kit stressed these points:

- * To avoid the use of sexist terminology in references to the congregation as "brothers", "fathers", and "sons" in prayer, in hymns, and eucharistic celebration.

- * To ensure in family, education programs and marriage preparation courses that married women be recognized as equal partners with men both at home and in the work place.

- * To set up bursary scholarship funds, administered by local dioceses to help lay women get the training needed to fill leadership roles in the church.

- * To ensure that there are equal numbers of men and women at all levels of the churches' administration.

These statements, though falling far short of denunciation, do mark a radical departure from the Pope's positions on women, outlined in the following quotes from a pamphlet written by a group of Ottawa feminists for the Pope's visit:

*** On women in the workforce:**

"Society must be structured so that wives and mothers are not in practice compelled to work outside the home."

*** On women's role in the church:**

"The church does not support groups of individuals who in the name of progress, justice, and compassion, or for any other alleged reason, promote ordination of women to the priesthood."

*** On birth control:**

"(it) is only possible if the virtue of married chastity is seriously practised."

Many bishops, uncomfortable with the irony of lauding the Pope's positions on the one hand, and accepting their committee's kit on the other, chose to attack the latter. The kit was pronounced by some to be "pregnant with bias" and bereft of "dissenting points of view." The vehemence of those who rejected the kit, belies an uneasiness that penetrates much deeper than straying from the teachings of the Pope. Pronouncements from the Canadian Council of Bishops have done this before, such as the one following the 1968 Vatican statement against artificial birth control, when the Bishops stood up and claimed that in the final analysis, one's own conscience was the arbiter of right and wrong.

What is at work here today, is a half conscious knowledge on the part of many Bishops that sexism and mysogeny are so deeply engrained in their, and all religions, that its uprooting necessitates a complete transformation of religious institutions. They are afraid of beginning anywhere, afraid of where efforts towards real equality will lead.

It is true that even if religious terms are demasculinized, it does not alter the sexism inherent in the precepts they define. Whether or not God is he, she, or it, the idea of God will still embody oppressive hierarchal relationships, the cornerstone of all patriarchal societies. God is supreme. We are children, sheep, humble. Whether or not women are given leadership roles, or eventually become Popes or priests; it will not equalize things; but merely reinforce the idea that those at the top of the hierarchy are all powerful, and the rest, its servants.

It is the reality of this which makes the Bishops feel threatened, and so they fight back with subtle but effective weapons. By pledging to continue to study ways to promote sexual equality in the church, and to accept the kit only after it has been re-analyzed and altered, the bishops have kept the debate on a rhetorical level and have avoided implementing concrete programs. Through this skillful manipulation of rhetoric, the bishops succeeded in reaping accolades of "progressiveness" from the public, while they, in reality, changed nothing. Nothing that is, except for once again achieving the silence of many women, deceived by the propaganda of the powerful into believing something is getting done.

*What kind of woman
uses the rhythm method?*



women learning

Breaking the Silence: Illiteracy and Women

by Louis Belair, Louise Ford, Virginia Hogg,
Colette Mitchell and Suzanne Pilon



from left to right: Colette, Virginia, Suzanne, Louise F., and Louise B.

The idea for an article on women and illiteracy developed out of some work a member of the Breaking the Silence collective was doing with ALSO (Alternative Learning Styles and Outlooks). As the article took shape and as the other women from ALSO became involved, the focus of the article changed. Instead of a somewhat academic look at women and literacy, we decided to have two women tell their stories.

Said 25-year-old Rosemary:

"I was always in a special class. I was a slow learner, but slow learners are just like everyone also. I was transferred to different schools seven times -- I don't know why. I felt awful. I didn't learn anything good. I always had problems. I was stuck in the corner - I sat there quietly. I always felt out of place.

I went to work at the Adult Training Centre. I liked it there -- it was great. After a six week assessment, I worked there for two years. I got paid \$4.50 every two weeks.

My two years were up so I went to a workshop at Breezehill. I didn't like working there. I quit and then didn't do anything.

I found out about ALSO through a very good worker. He told me about the program. I've been here two years now. I'm learning reading, writing, how to get along with people. I've learned to answer the phone and to type.

Before I came to ALSO, I was physically in bad shape. I got help to get my new glasses and get to a dentist for a whole new mouth!

I used to be down all the time -- not happy. I didn't talk. I learned to talk to people. I learned to go to the doctor by myself and ask them questions about my body. I had a couple of operations and I understood what was happening for the first time. I don't take as many pills and junk as I used to. I learned how bad it is for me. I cleaned myself up -- before I didn't care.

I am living a lot better. Before I lived in a dump and a friend of mine looked after my money. I have learned how to budget and save money. I even saved up and went for a trip to New York City.

I am living with seven other women in a nice house and I cook all by myself sometimes. I can shop and follow a recipe. I feel much better about myself now.

Literacy means learning how to read and write. You learn how to work, you learn to make decisions and choices that are good for you. I am starting to have more control over my life!

People like me should have more chances to work in normal places. At ALSO, I feel like I can work like anyone else and I do. The people that work at ALSO trust me to do a good job. They treat me like a good person. They depend on me -- I help them a lot. They help me -- we help each other. That's the way it should be."

Cecile, 32, speaks:

"I had no schooling at all. We lived in the country so no one bothered us about that. My brothers went to school. My parents wanted them to have a good education. They didn't send me to school because they thought I was 'slow'.

I never worked. All the time I've been on mother's allowance and living in public housing, no one suggested I go to school. I tried to keep my illiteracy a secret. That was awful. It's a hard secret to keep.

Then I went to ACT (Action for Careers and Training) and someone suggested I go to school. It was a big scary step for me. I was 31.

Now I'm learning at ALSO. I'm writing things down. I'm reading better. Before, I couldn't read stuff from my daughter's school. Now this is a little easier and if I don't understand, I bring it to my teacher to help me.

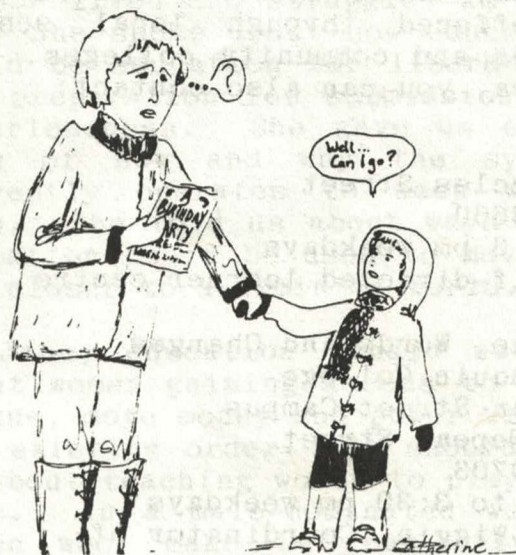
Literacy means controlling your temper and not being frustrated. I don't get so uptight now. I can talk to my lawyer and my workers. I understand what people are saying to me now.

Literacy also means feeling better about who I am. I'm more open now. I don't keep things in any more because I can communicate how I feel. I feel more like a woman now, not like a kid.

I feel like people are supporting me. My daughter is glad I'm learning to read. I don't want my daughter to be like me. I want her to support herself!"

Those of us who have been able to read and write for almost as long as we can remember probably take these skills for granted. Imagine for a moment how different your life would be if you couldn't read:

- a bus schedule
- street signs
- a map
- banking forms
- a lease
- labels
- a birthday card
- a letter from your child's school



But as Rosemary and Cecile point out so well, literacy means much more than being able to read and write. And illiteracy often results in isolation, dependence, frustration, powerlessness and shame.

All too often illiteracy also means poverty. Women like Cecile and Rosemary are likely to be unemployed. If they do manage to find work, it is usually in low-paying, dead-end service or assembly jobs. For every dollar the average woman earns, illiterate women earn only

80 cents. (On average, women earn about half of what men earn).

Rosemary and Cecile are just two of some four million functionally illiterate adults in Canada. People are generally considered functionally illiterate if they lack the communication and other skills needed to deal adequately with everyday life. In Canada, this is taken to mean a person with less than a grade 9 education. And although half of Canada's functionally illiterate adults are women, women are still less likely than men to be attending school.

Slowly, governments and individuals are becoming more aware of the problem of adult illiteracy. Across Canada, adult literacy instruction is offered through local school boards and community colleges. In Ottawa, you can also contact:

ALSO
42 Eccles Street
233-8660
9 to 3 pm weekdays
A self-directed learner centre

People, Words and Changes
Algonquin College
Nepean Street Campus
290 Nepean Street
235-0703
9:15 to 3:30 pm weekdays
Mary Wiggin, Coordinator of
Volunteers
Individual tutoring by volunteers

Bibliography

Murphy, B., Baldwin, R1, and Kelly, M. "Literacy, Poverty and Participation", Perception, February 1982.

Thomas, A.M. Adult Illiteracy in Canada - A Challenge, Occasional Paper No. 42, Canadian Commission for UNESCO, 1983.

Work Literacy of Canada, "Women Name Their World", Worldlit, Issue No. 67, Autumn 1982.

Learning Liberation:

Jane Thompson speaks Part I

by Sherry Galey

Adult education is a hard issue to get feminists riled up about. As a focus for political work it takes a backseat to other struggles. And with women still subject to sexual violence in their homes, on the streets and in their workplaces with large groups of women still living in poverty, with women still forced to bear children against their will, I can well understand why feminists feel that there are more urgent issues demanding their attention.

But when I heard Jane Thompson speak at the annual meeting of the Canadian Congress on Learning Opportunities for Women (CCLOW) in Toronto this summer, I became convinced that working to change education and our concept of learning for adult women is a crucial task for the feminist movement. Her eloquent, and often emotional, presentation stressed that women need control over our own education in order to release the grip that patriarchy has on our minds, to build the strength and knowledge needed for resistance and to create the new visions and alternatives that we need for a new world.

Jane Thompson is a feminist who teaches women's studies at the University of Southampton, England who has a long history of involvement with radical movements. Currently, she also works with a women's education centre in a racially-mixed, working-class area of Southampton.

In her excellent book, Learning Liberation: Women's Response to Men's Education, she asserts that:

The essence of education is not neutral, narrowly instrumental, separate from life activity - though some would persuade us that it should be - but a powerful political weapon which serves either to reinforce and bolster the logic of the present system or help us to engage in the pursuit of freedom.

In her talk, she called upon us to recognize this, seize this powerful tool, and use it to transform the world for women.

Listening to Jane moved me to reflect on my own experience of education. I started remembering the methods that were used to push me into silent compliance with values I didn't share and acceptance of others I never thought to question. I learned to be a "good girl", not to talk back, not to challenge authority. I realize how being taught about the heroics of men, the discoveries of men, and the theories of men affectively separated me from my reality as a female. I learned how to doubt my abilities, my intuition and my convictions. I know now that I was educated to identify with men, and to want to emulate the way men thought, wrote and spoke. I thought this was the way to be valued as a human being.

Learning feminism challenged all this in a very fundamental way. Now I understand the power of the dominant ideology when presented as undisputable fact-"the way things are". And I still feel how deep the indoctrination was. It's a long struggle to unlearn and relearn; it means constant evaluation and reflection. But it is empowering and potentially revolutionary.

I now know important things about my own learning process. I know that my most exciting and satis-

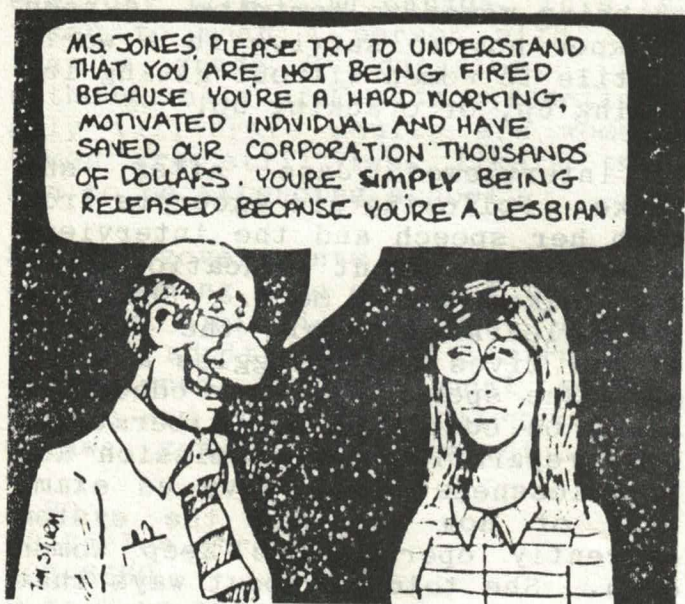
fying learning comes through a combination of emotional and intellectual engagement. Learning with my heart as well as my head. I now know the kinds of things I want to learn - things that will help to change the world for women, not how to advance myself in a world run by men. I want to learn ways - as well as facts and theories - to support and work with women, ways to bring women to feminism. I need to know how to survive in a world hostile to women without giving in, giving up, or cracking up.

I interviewed Jane after she spoke. Following are excerpts from both her speech and the interview. Jane talked about education, but she talked about more. She situated learning within the context of our lives and struggles as women. She spoke about how education could be education for liberation, not preparation for submission and powerlessness. She gave us examples of how and why the system currently operates to keep women down. She told us about ways that education could be used to move us all closer to a feminist world.

To Jane, education should not be about women gaining access to more status, more money and power within the existing order. It should not be about teaching women to play the game. In a male-dominated world, women who "make it" can only be tokens. Jane sees this as downright dangerous. While serving to reinforce an appearance of equal opportunity for all women, it actually increases inequalities between women. And for Jane, "until all of us are free, none of us are free".

Prime Minister Thatcher, according to Jane, is an example of a woman who has played by men's rules to attain power and who keeps it only by virtue of their permission. Jane detests what Thatcher's policies are doing to the British people and how they're hurting wom-

en. She calls Margaret Thatcher "a testimony to the miracles of modern science - the mind and values of a man in the body of a woman". She cautions us to see Thatcher "not as a victory for feminism but as a warning of the dangers of emulating men and empowering token women".



JANE THOMPSON...

ON FORMAL EDUCATION AND ADULT EDUCATION...

Formal education has been created by men, for men and is about men in content and method. The control it exercises, the knowledge it creates and distributes, the practices it employs and the values it perpetuates are intended to advantage white middle class men.

But in the celebration of experience and distribution of life chances it offers, we should be under no illusion that a man-made educational system controlled by men to reproduce male authority and power, will ever validate the knowledge and experience of women.

Adult education in Britain is a dismal business. At the university level, it specializes in anti-deluvian, esoteric superficialia, mostly about the preoccupations and distractions of the leisured classes. At the local authority level, it provides recreational and non-vocational courses in massive doses of indoctrination for women, whom it defines almost exclusively as appendages to homes, husband and children.

The majority of students in adult education are women. The majority of part-time tutors, volunteers and field workers are women, but the centre principals, the district and regional organizers, the university lecturers are invariably men. Their influence is reflected in the structures and curriculum and is a major reason that feminist education has found it difficult to survive.

ON FEMINISM IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM...

Adult educators don't have any recognition of the fact that the women's movement has arrived and is a grassroots movement that is a tremendous concern to hundreds of thousands of women. Adult education is grudging about allowing women's studies or feminist education to exist.

For we women the key issues in education are not about academic excellence or in denying our access to institutions created and controlled by men, but about securing our place in an education system which takes our concerns, our questions, our needs and our strengths as women completely seriously. And this will mean a very different kind of system.

ON SURVIVING AS A FEMINIST IN AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION DESIGNED TO PERPETUATE MALE POWER AND CLASS PRIVILEGE...

When I first went there (to the University of Southampton) I imagined that if I was as articulate, as proficient, as coherent, as well-written as any man, I would be taken seriously. I soon realized that the only way I would be taken seriously as one of the boys was to become one of the boys. I certainly didn't want to learn how to be that kind of person in order to get some token recognition from them.

What I do now is realize that I have nothing to lose. The benefits that women can achieve by trying to please the fathers, by smiling pleasantly, wearing a dress, by being almost as nice as Daddy wants you to be - those kind of privileges are very tokenistic and very shortlived and don't do a whit of good for the thousands of other women who still hold up half the sky and aren't being acknowledged for the work they're doing.

ON THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION FOR WOMEN...

Women have to change things for ourselves. We have to expect equality. We have to expect our freedom and integrity. We have to transform ourselves and transform our relationships with men from a position of autonomy rather than dependency. Autonomy given by the knowledge of our own worth and value and beauty and energy and right to inherit an all together fine future. We have to teach our children well and be prepared to practice our freedom, some of us on our own, some of us with other women, some of us in relationships with men.

ON THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE OF THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT...

The task of the women's movement now, as perhaps it has always been, is to understand and explain the circumstances in which women have been systematically subjected to male authority, to check with each other about the experiences and conditions of this subjection; and to generate the knowledge, the creative anger, and the energy that can transform our relationships with one another and with men, which can resist patriarchal power and which can bring about change.

ON OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE FEMINISM ACCESSIBLE. TO BUILD BRIDGES AND LOWER BARRIERS BETWEEN WOMEN...

While my major concern is that feminist education gains the right to be much more central in adult education, I also feel that we as feminists have a lot of work to do in making sure that what we're about and what we represent is accessible to all women.

The reality of our lives (as professional feminists) is very different from the reality of a lot of other women's lives. I can't bear to believe that the divisions that divide us women under capitalism or socialism will continue to divide us under feminism.

What I mean is that some of us are poor, some of us are black and some of us are lesbian. We can't go on pretending that there will be a brave new world full of white heterosexual middle class, anglo-american cultured women into which everybody will happily slot and feel enobled.

I think we have to recognize that oppression hits us differently if we are poor, if we're the victims

continued on page 23

A Winter Solstice Gift List

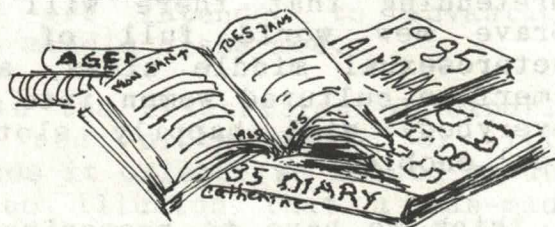
by Joan Riggs

We know it is politically incorrect to celebrate patriarchal holidays. We know, too, that it is politically incorrect to exchange gifts and openly endorse a capitalist system that commercializes everything.

BUT, some of us do celebrate Winter holidays out of sentimental reasons or family responsibilities. And some of us do like to exchange gifts (especially when we get something). This article is for us.

Celebrate Winter Solstice. Take the opportunity to acknowledge the important people in your life, to thank them for being there. Give gifts, but this time give items that further our development as feminists and all round wonderful women. Here are some ideas:

- * Have you ever seen a feminist in a meeting without her agenda book? Pathetic, isn't it? Pretty soon we'll have to start booking in the number of hours we can sleep. With the demands in our lives every woman needs an agenda book and this year there are plenty to pick from. There is the reliable Everywoman's Almanac (with our own Helen Durie in it) and Herstory, Contemporary Women's Artists, Tracking Our Way through Time: A Lesbian Herstory, and the Sparerib 1985 Diary.



- * Women play sports!! All kinds and with all sorts of equipment needs.



- * Books, Books and More Books. The list is endless but here are a few:

- A Room of One's Own by Virginia Woolfe. A classic we should read again and again.
- The Color Purple by Alice Walker. Too painful, too powerful not to read.
- The Bleeding Heart by Marilyn French. Recommended reading for any woman in a heterosexual relationship.
- The Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets by Barbara Walker. Great for those with a lot of extra cash.
- Wander Ground by Sally Gearhart. A vision of a women's community. It is possible!
- For the mystery buff some feminist writers are: Amanda Cross, P.D. James, and Sarah Praetsky.
- For the science-fiction fans look for Ursula LeGuin, Marion Zimmer Bradley and Ann McCaffrey.

- * Everywoman should have a diary. To write in for her own piece of mind and to record herstory.
- * Subscriptions to wonderful women's periodicals. Pick from Broadside, Women's Review of Books, Kinesis, and the ever reliable Breaking the Silence.

FOR OUR FUTURE FEMINISTS

* Wonderful books that empower:

- Lots of Mommies by Jane Severance. Emily and her mom share a house with three other women. Emily's friends come to recognize the benefits of this alternative family. (Ages 3-8)
- The Paper Bag Princess by Michael Martchinks. Princess rescues the Prince but finds she doesn't like his sexist attitudes so she dumps him. (all ages)
- The Day the Fairies Went on Strike by Linda Briskin and Maureen Fitzgerald. A positive introduction to the idea of the unions. (Ages 4-8)
- William's Doll by Charlotte Zolotow. William wanted a doll but no one would get him one until his grandfather recognized that every child has various needs.
- Girls are Powerful: Young Women Write in Sparkerib, Susan Hemmings (ed.) (13 up)

* Belly Button by Heather Bishop. A record of songs about fun, love and caring.

* Reverse the sex-stereotyped toy lists. Girls need tools, trucks and wooden blocks. Boys need dolls and stuffed toys.

THE PERSONAL TOUCH

* Give your time. Many women rarely have time to stop, especially if they are mothers. Send a voucher guaranteeing anything from a number of hours for babysitting, or if you're really brave - an entire weekend - to a home cooked meal for the whole family.

* Give your money. Acknowledge the unfairness of our economic system. Money counts, especially to those who don't have much -

- Give to a women's organization. They are always underfunded and inevitably in need.

- Give to a woman in need. Call OCLISS or a women's organization. The list is endless.

* Give your name. Recognize your power. If you are in a position to give a job or a reference, don't hesitate.

* Something special just for her. A voucher for a massage or whatever your imagination can conjure up!

PLUS

As I walked through the Women's Bookstore I was inspired to add a few more things.

* Tarot Cards - the Mother Peace set and the Amazon Tarot set. For those of us who aren't satisfied with only a pragmatic vision.

* Women Symbol Cookie Cutters - for the "cute" in all of us.

* Pins, Posters and Bumper Stickers that shout to the world our ideas and convictions.

* Celebrate Women's Culture with records, tapes and beautiful art work.

FINALLY

Give the best gift of all... a little bit of yourself: a kiss, a hug, some time or any reminder that you appreciate someone. Remember gifts can be given anytime! Have a wonderful sisterly holiday season from the collective of BTS.

SOLSTICE SONG*

She comes from a garden they call the sea
She lives in the mountains sailing in trees
She roams the sky
With her body she can fly

Spinning

Soaring

Circling the breeze

Free on the wind

She comes from the light within us all
She comes to be rising after the fall
She holds the earth
With her hand she can heal

Spinning

Soaring

Circling the breeze

Free on the wind

Chorus: She dives into a cold winter night
She's born again to be light
Queen of the moon
Queen of the stars
From loving nature
Our mother of change
She has come

Winter's Solstice has come again

She comes from a fire inside every heart
She comes from our tears, our pain through the year
She is our laughter
She is our rage
She is our spirit reborn again

Spinning

Soaring

Circling the breeze

Free on the wind

Deborah Gordon

*The musical score for this song can be obtained by writing to:

Deborah Gordon
50 Park Avenue
OTTAWA, Ontario
K2P 1B2

of racism, if we're the victims of homophobia. We have to acknowledge those differences between us, not pretend they don't exist, not consolidate them but find ways that these differences can empower us.

ON RECOGNIZING PRIVILEGE AND THE PROTECTION IT AFFORDS...

I know that being a white middle class academic with a good income gives me an enormous number of privileges. I believe that those privileges protect me from a lot of things that other women experience. But I know that they protect me only so long as I stay within the boundaries that the patriarchy has defined for me.

When I came out as a lesbian, it really brought home to me how vulnerable I am in terms of what the law will do, what little job security I have, and what happens to children in the custody of lesbian women. I want heterosexual women to understand the penalties imposed upon those of us who have chosen differently.

ON LEARNING FOR LIBERATION...

For those of us engaged in learning, it means being strong, taking control of our own education and our lives and being determined to do things that others have determined should not be done. It means becoming stronger together and using our energies to give each other courage. It means the refusal to sell our talents and aspirations short simply to avoid conflict and confrontation, to practise disobedience to the rules and regulations devised by men who define our subordination and to begin thinking, speaking and acting for ourselves as women accountable to women, and sustained by the responsibility we have to each other to keep on fighting as long as any of us remains unfree.

In Learning Liberation Part II the author explores the practical implications of these ideas. She'll look at feminist education within existing structures and the role of the feminist community in offering learning opportunities for women. She'd like to hear your thoughts and opinions. Please write c/o Breaking the Silence.

reports

The Ontario NDP Equality Conference:

a personal view

by Ruth Latta

There was an overflow crowd of women at the New Democratic Party's conference on equality; the University of Toronto Medical Sciences auditorium was filled to capacity and the rest of the group had to be accommodated in an adjoining building, watching the keynote address on television.

It had been some time since I had been part of such a large group of women. Back in the early days of what was then called "the women's

liberation movement" I had joined others in the exciting experience of re-examining everything and anything to do with our traditional role. But over the past few years I had been definitely feeling out of step. The chic young career woman in her dress-for-success suit, bent on chairmanship of the board seems the new ideal, the media ideal, and it leaves me cold.

But my programme did not list any of the new chic things; there was no workshop on getting your colours done, or building a professional's

wardrobe, or aerobics. Rather, the workshops ranged in theme from "Child Care" to "Family Law". I toyed with the idea of attending "Women and Peace" and "Women and Health Care" but finally selected "Economic Equality" for the morning session and "Women, the Arts and Media" for the afternoon.

Bob Rae's keynote address, one of the few partisan political aspects of the day, was well received by the group. He began by telling us that he felt as if he had put in a full day already, though it was only 9:00 a.m.; he had gotten his two preschool daughters ready and off to day care. Though he is probably more fortunate in his child care options than many members of the audience, his remarks produced laughter and applause.

Rae spoke of the immediate need for provincial government action in the fields of family law reform and in equal pay for work of equal value. Referring to the fact that many women at the conference were intentionally unaffiliated with any political party, he said, "In all sincerity I say that this is a luxury you can no longer afford. Things are too serious for that."

The Workshops

1) Economic Equality

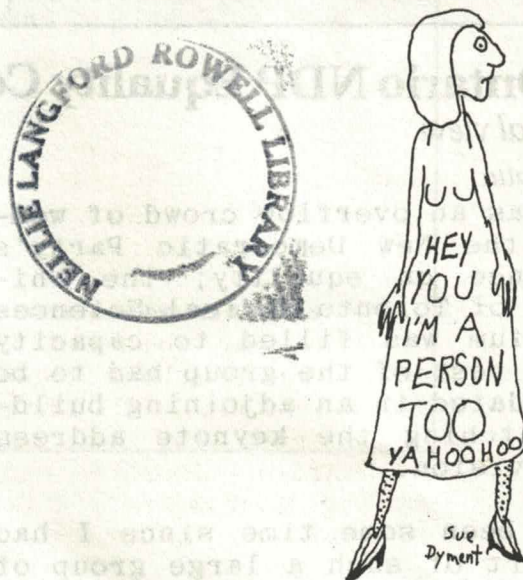
Quick! Define "equal pay for equal work", "equal pay for work of equal value", "affirmative action." Yes, it is a test--of survival. After attending the "economic equality" workshop I can not only differentiate between the terms, but also have a sobering realization of how badly I need the latter two.

Currently in Ontario the law allows the comparison of "substantially similar" jobs for purposes of ending wage discrimination against women. This is equal pay for equal work. Recently a switchboard operator at Queen's Park failed in her

attempt to have her job compared with that of parking attendant for purposes of ending wage discrimination.

The second Gunderson Report, commissioned by the Ministry of Labour, found that "Conventional 'equal pay for substantially similar work' can deal with wage discrimination within the same narrow occupation within the same establishment; it cannot deal with occupational segregation or the segregation of females into low-wage establishments or industries." Yet Bill 141, currently before the Ontario Legislature, still leaves in the stipulation that the jobs compared must be "substantially the same kind of work."

The workshop leaders felt that women should lobby both for equal-pay-for-work-of-equal-value and for affirmative action; both are necessary if women are to have economic equality. Affirmative action programs aim to increase the representation of women and minorities across all jobs in proportion to their representation in the labour force. Carol Anne Sceviour,



one of the workshop leaders, now vice president of the Ontario Federation of Labour, got her job through the affirmative action policy of her union, the United Steelworkers of America.

"Women are not asking for any freebies here," Carol Anne Sceviour told the group. "We're asking for a chance to earn a living." And, in fact, by working for 63 per cent of men's earnings, "we are helping companies to make major profits."

2) Women, the Arts and the Media

The afternoon workshop I attended had to do with work as well, poorly paid, unrecognized work which can leave you after twenty-five years with no pension plan. The arts world, like the ordinary working world, is a jungle. Participants in the Women, the Arts and Media workshop spoke of the rapid demise of feminist and left of centre 'little' magazines, one-time home of beginning progressive writers. They told of Canada Council Grants applied for, rejected by form letters. Singer/songwriter/activist Arlene Mantle spoke of the seeming reluctance of left-of-centre people to come out and support the arts; she likes to perform, but also likes to be paid for her work. As a volunteer giving freely of her time and talent to sing at a demonstration or convention, she has had the experience of waiting around for hours to perform, only to be told in the end that she has been cut from the programme because the speeches took too long.

Strategies for improving this state of affairs were more nebulous than in the morning workshop, but focused on group efforts. At the end of the workshop Arlene Mantle led in singing "Moving Mountains". As one of the conference organizers snapped pictures, many of us felt that in the arts field, mountains were indeed what confronted us.

Who goes to an NDP conference?

The experience of being with so many like-minded women, and the general spirit of cheerfulness and determination throughout most of the conference is with me still. The sheer diversity of the participants, who were nevertheless attracted to a common cause, was notable. In the lunch line-up I stood behind a woman who was saying to her companion, "I just finished up in law.." and I thought--' Oh, boy, you're in with the dress-for-success crowd again. Then I introduced myself to the woman beside me, who had travelled several hundred miles to be there. She was a hairdresser in a chronic care hospital. At lunch I sat opposite a clerical worker, a divorced mother who is no longer getting child support payments because her ex-husband has exhausted his unemployment insurance benefits. "You're young yet," she told me, "and there are endless possibilities in store for you."

A Success for the Party?

The New Democrats had expected greater support from women than they received in the past election. They are puzzled as to why women do not see that their cause and the party's cause are one and the same. This conference was obviously an attempt to get more support and to get grassroots feedback to influence policy.

I've been thinking about this problem since coming back to Ottawa. My theory is that women support the two other parties because they feel they are more likely to get into office, hence more likely to make changes. Or maybe most women have bought the myth of individual success. Maybe we all secretly dream of winning a million in a lottery, thereby changing our lives. Or maybe we hope, magically, to be promoted, dress-for-success suit and all, to the chairwomanship of the board.

upcoming events

Taking Control: Our Lives, Our Choices **International Women's Week 1985**

While 1985 marks the end of the United Nation's Decade for Women, for Ottawa feminists, 1985 marks but another milestone for the rising strength of women. A medium for the exploration and celebration of this strength, International Women's Week (IWW) will take place March 3-9. Taking Control: Our Lives, Our Choices will be the Week's theme.

Recent meetings of the local IWW coordinating and advisory committees have promised that the same levels of energy that have gone into the IWW celebration, march and fair in the past is going into the '85 versions of these events. In addition, the wide range of groups becoming involved in the upcoming IWW are bringing new ideas to the week's annual fare of workshops, films, and speakers. Examples of ideas for the week which have come forward are: workshops on video as a consciousness-raising tool, popular education and women, song-writing, and a show of posters from international women's organizations.

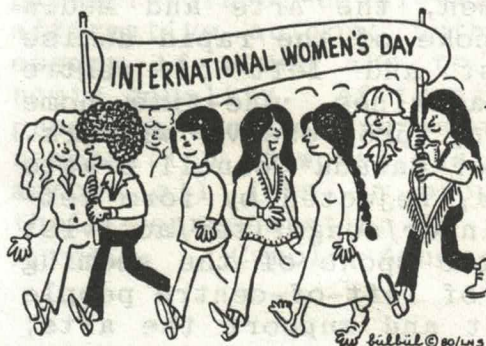
If you or your organization would like to develop an event for IWW, you can call Joan Riggs at 234-8532 or Monique Pasquali at 238-4659 to find out when the next advisory committee meeting is being held. The advisory committee is made up of members of local women's groups and other interested individuals. The committee's meetings serve as forums for idea-exchange and planning toward the week.

If you're interested in getting involved in organizing the week's

central events - the fair, the march, and the celebration - then the coordinating committee is the group to contact. Patti Delaney (592-6375) or Lynne Tyler (238-5466) will have the date of the next coordinating committee meeting.

You don't have to become involved in the organizing of IWW to appreciate it. In early February, schedules of the week's events will be available at the Ottawa Women's Bookstore, the offices of community women's organizations, and several other outlets. Taking it all in should be the best part.

by Sarah Wood



Women's Centennial at McGill **1884/1984**

Many activities and events have been scheduled from Sept. 84 to May 85 to mark the centennial. This is the year to celebrate the past and present achievements of women at McGill and at universities everywhere and to ensure the opportunities of university women yet to come. For further information, contact the Women's Centennial Committee Office:

Rm. 10
3450 McTavish St.
Montreal, PQ.
H3A 1X9
(514) 392-8048

Conferences

Women and the Invisible Economy is an interdisciplinary feminist conference on women's unpaid labour to be held Feb. 23-25, 1985 in Montreal at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute. The workshops will focus on: Framing the debate on the value of women's unpaid work, What women do and Re-assessing women's unpaid work.

For more information write Women and the Invisible Economy, Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve Bld. W., Montreal, H3G 1M8.

Who's in Control?

Legal Implications of Reproduction and Technology

The National Association of Women and Law are holding their bi-annual conference on Feb. 20-24, 1985. The main headings under which workshops will be done are: Medical Control, Consumer Control and State Control. There will be two main panel discussions on merging medical, legal and feminist ethics and the Charter. For more information call Camylle Trembley-Choquette at 594-8002.

Women's Alternatives for Negotiating Peace

An International conference for women all over the world who are concerned about peace and human survival will be held in Halifax, N.S. between June 5-9, 1985. The International conference will invite 50 women from Canada and 50 women from abroad, and another 200 women will have the opportunity to be involved in some capacity with these women.

The criteria for invitees are:

1. Women who have demonstrated an interest and commitment to the international peace and security issues.

2. Women who have shown innovative and creative approaches to resolving global conflict and situations of confrontation.
3. Women who have knowledge and/or experience in achieving non-violent solutions to situations of confrontation.
4. Women who have an ability to communicate publicly.

For more information write:

Women's International Peace Conference,
Coalition of Canadian Women's Groups,
166 Bedford Highway, Rm.9,
Seton Annex,
Halifax, Nova Scotia,
B3M 2J6
or call (902) 443-4450 ext. 313.



Nairobi Conference

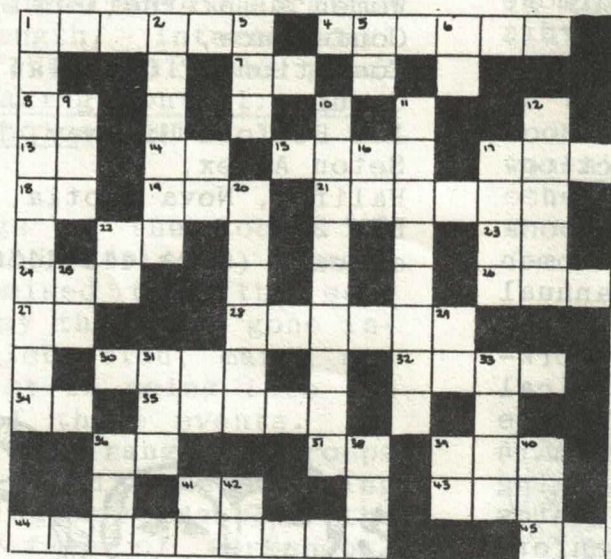
In July, 1985, women from around the world will meet in Nairobi, Kenya to discuss issues of importance to them. It will be a wonderful chance to share experiences, exchange information and ideas, and plan action strategies. This non-governmental Forum will take place just before the UN government conference to review progress during the 1975-85 UN Decade for Women.

The Canadian government (mostly through the Women's Program of Secretary of State) has agreed to provide funds to send about 20 women to the Forum. At a recent meeting of national women's groups held by the federal government, a committee of three women was elected to select these 20 Forum delegates. (Actually, the committee will recommend delegates -- the final decision rests with the government.)

The selection criteria and process will be described in a mailing going out in early December to national women's groups and other organizations working on women's issues. If you don't get yours, or you need more information, contact the selection committee through the Women's Program, Secretary of State, Ottawa, K1A 0M5

Feminist Crossword

by Debbie Gordon



ACROSS

1. Canada's first woman judge
4. Augusta Stowe-Gullen's profession
7. Descent of Woman author (initials)
8. Last two initials of Canadian pro-choice organization
13. Italian feminist filmmaker who got Swept Away
14. French article on the female side
15. Charlotte Bronte did not err when she created this character
17. A woman's juts out while a man's is always aligned
18. Canadian feminist singer rising up
19. He'd never be invited to a feminist's penthouse
21. Evolved from Vancouver's Working Women's Association
22. Holly Near's "Imagine _____ Surprise"
23. 19th century woman pioneer with middle name Binnie (first and last initials)
24. Your feminist friend (abbrev.)

26. One of Mary Daly's favorite kinds of people
27. Author of quotation: "And ain't I a woman" (reversed initials)
28. Ronald Regan's true profession
30. United Nations "Decade for Women"'s present age
32. Canadian feminist author Jane
34. Author of quotation: "There's something contagious about demanding freedom" (initials)
35. Women's self-defence technique
36. Feminist mystery writer James (first two initials)
37. Creator of cartoon character Sylvia (initials)
39. Birth control's petit chapeau
43. Feminists often refer to God as
44. The world's oldest helping profession
45. Author of Changing of the Gods (initials)

DOWN

1. Author of Reweaving the Web of Life
2. One of the Famous Five
3. Steinem's vote for ERA
5. First two initials of Canadian pro-choice organization
6. Favorite pastime of cartoon character Sylvia (abbrev.)
9. Canadian feminist quarterly
10. Canadian feminist filmmaker Lorna
11. Canadian women's calendar
12. Old English word used to describe a "wise woman"
16. When a woman says "no" she means
17. His picture lies at the heart of every feminist's dartboard
20. "Born in Flames" filmmaker
22. Home of the infamous "No Comment"
25. Sisterhood _____ powerful
29. En français a feminist refers to her sister in the familiar
31. Women's annual celebration
33. Co-author of The Secret Oppression
36. The tampon's rival
38. Holly Near's "_____ Una Mujer Desaparecida"
39. She rewrote the Bible (last two initials)
40. Virginia Woolf's professional tool
41. Germaine Greer and this Lady occupy the same country but not the same politics (abbrev.)
42. Adrienne Rich's _____ Woman Born

help

Valium ...Researcher/writer is looking for information from patients and concerned others - social workers, psychologists, friends, relatives who have seen or are having adverse effects from Valium and its cousins. Also sold under their generic names: diazepam, oxazepam and so on.

These group of drugs are called benzodiazepines and some of the adverse effects to look for are: nervousness, anxiety, depression, memory/learning impairment, confusion, hallucination and paradoxical rage. There are 400 recorded symptoms of withdrawal and addiction.

For more information write to:

Research Association for
Prescription Pills
Box 4477, Station E
Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B4.

Please send your personal stories (anonymous) to the same address to be included in the forthcoming book **ADDICTION BY PRESCRIPTION**. A free copy of the book to those who write their personal stories.

Sexual Harassment: Fighting For A Legal Precedent

Bonnie Robichaud, a cleaner at the armed forces base in North Bay, appeared in the Federal Court of Appeal in Ottawa on November 7, 1984 for an appeal hearing of sexual harassment charges against her former foreman. At the time of writing, no decision regarding the case has been announced.

This could be a precedent-setting case regarding the grounds for establishing sexual harassment, and the obligations of an employer if an employee is found guilty.

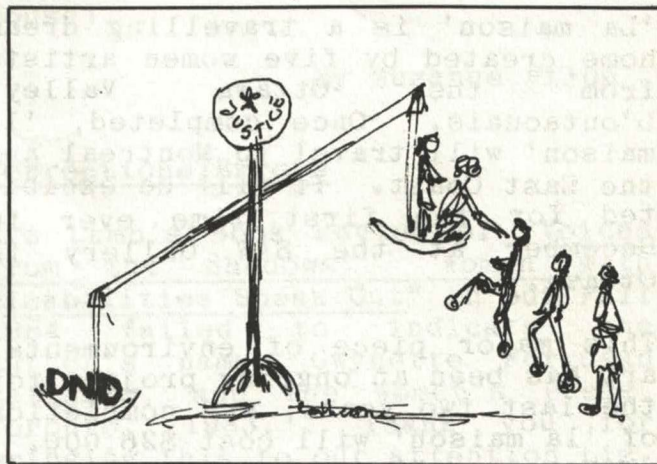
Ms. Robichaud first launched a grievance of sexual harassment in 1979, and took her complaint to the Canadian Human Rights Commission. Her complaint was substantiated in February of 1983, when an independent human rights review tribunal, appointed by the Commission, ruled in her favour.

Instead of settling the complaint, her employer, the Department of National Defence, represented by the Treasury Board of Canada, announced it would appeal the decision to the Federal Court. Hence the recent hearing. The Public Service Alliance of Canada, Ms. Robichaud's union, is covering the legal costs of the appeal. However, Ms. Robichaud is left to cover other personal costs of the procedure on her own. She needs and deserves support from all of us.

In the next issue of **Breaking The Silence**, an article describing the case in detail will be printed. For now, support Bonnie Robichaud by sending money and/or words of encouragement to:

Bonnie Robichaud
c/o Women's Committee
Ottawa-Hull Area
Council of the PSAC
233 Gilmour Street
OTTAWA, Ontario

by Ellen Adelberg



**Resources of Feminist Research/
Documentation sur la recherche**

féministe is soliciting short articles (1500-2000 words), reports of work in progress, book reviews, abstracts and photographs for an issue concerning disabled women. For more information or to submit material, contact:

Frances Rooney,
RFR/DRF, 252 Bloor St. West
Toronto, Ont., M5S 1V6
(416) 923-6641, ext. 278

Deadline: January 15, 1985.

CARAL, The Canadian Abortion Rights Action League is an organization committed to winning the right for all women to have access to a legal safe abortion. They are presently looking for money to continue their work. Send your donations to:

CARAL
P.O. Box 935
310-40 St. Claire Ave. E.,
Toronto, ONT.
M4T 9Z9

To receive an income tax receipt allowing for the donation to be tax deductible you must make the cheque out to the Childbirth by Choice Trust.

La Maison

Be part of a unique home - buy a square foot of 'la maison'.

'La maison' is a travelling dream home created by five women artists from the Ottawa Valley/L'outaouais. Once completed, 'la maison' will travel to Montreal and the East Coast. It will be exhibited for the first time ever in December at the SAW Gallery in Ottawa.

This major piece of environmental art has been an ongoing project for the last two years, and completion of 'la maison' will cost \$26,000.

Thirteen hundred square feet of floor space has been made available to investors for \$20 a square foot. As an investor, your name will be permanently inscribed on the outer foundation of 'la maison'. You will also have the satisfaction of knowing you have contributed to the continuation of traditional feminist art in Canada.

Order forms are available at the Ottawa Women's Bookstore, (380 Elgin Street), where a small model of 'la maison' is also on display. Or supporters of 'la maison' can send contributions to:

'La maison'
c/o S. G. Taylor
170 Hickory Street
OTTAWA, Ontario
K1Y 3T6

(Make cheques or money orders payable to 'la maison'.)

Queen's Women's Centre would like to encourage feminists currently doing research on pornography - be it theory, effects data, or legal reform - to send them papers on this subject. They are planning to create and distribute a series of discussion video tapes along with comment papers and an extensive bibliography. A wide range of issues will be covered including a critique of current legal and psychological analysis. The centre particularly wishes to obtain feminist references and to make contact with action groups which would be included in a list of feminist groups struggling against pornography at the community level.

Please write to:

Pornography Project Collective
Queen's Women's Centre
51 Queen's Crescent
KINGSTON, Ontario
K7L 3N6
or call (613) 547-6970.

bits and pieces

Information... Sharon Batt's article "Using the Civil Courts to Prosecute Rapists," which was in the last issue of BTS, is a condensed version of a paper presented at a CRIAW conference. The entire version of the article can be found in "Feminism Applied: Four Papers," #7 CRIAW paper series. \$4 for CRIAW members, \$5.50 for non-CRIAW members plus \$1 per copy for postage and handling. For the paper write:

CRIAW National Office
Suite 1415
151 Slater Street
Ottawa, ONT.
K1P 3H3

The Canadian Home Economics Association

Since 1976, the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada (PIPS) has been negotiating on behalf of the home economics group in the federal public service alleging salary disparity due to sex discrimination.

The complaint was put before the Canadian Human Rights Commission in 1979. The Forestry group was chosen as the comparison group, having similar educational qualifications, responsibilities and functions of equal value. The Aiken plan, a job rating plan provided by the employer, and accepted by the Human Rights Commission was used to compare the jobs.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission has completed the investigation and found that there is a case of sex discrimination in pay practices. However, there is reason to believe that the final resolution of the complaint is being delayed.

This case is a precedent setting one which challenges the "tradition" of female dominated professions being paid lower salaries than traditionally male dominated ones. The case has been in negotiation for eight years, five at the Human Rights Commission. The small group within the public service is frustrated, isolated, and has a sense of the system failing them. We thank them for their commitment and dedication.

De'grade - v.t.

1. to reduce (someone) to a lower rank, degree, etc.; deprive of office, rank, degree or title, esp. as a punishment.
2. to lower in character or quality; debase; deprave.
3. to lower in dignity or estimation; bring into contempt:
He felt they were degrading him by making him wash the dishes.

From: The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, College Edition, 1969. (New York: Random House).

by Suzanne Pilon

Corrections/Errors

Liz Lamb's Book Review of "Voices from the Shadows: Women with Disabilities Speak Out" in our Fall 1984 failed to indicate the author's name, Gwynette Ferguson Matthews, and the Women's Press, Toronto, 1983. Thank you for bringing this to our attention Liz.

rants and raves

APPLAUSE TO:

The National Coalition of American Nuns in Chicago who have urged resistance to the Roman Catholic hierarchy's campaign to make abortions illegal. The activist nuns said in a statement, "We reject any solution which would re-impose the criminalization of abortion, in as much as such a situation in no way does away with abortion but results in making safe abortions available only to the rich, leaving poor people at the mercy of amateurs."



HURRAH TO:

A San Diego Superior Court judge who sentenced a man to 12 years in prison for raping and sexually abusing his wife. He described the offence as "...an act of hate. It's not out of love or lust."

ANOTHER ROUND OF APPLAUSE TO:

The 6 men and 6 women jury for acquitting Dr. Henry Morgentaler and 2 other physicians of conspiring to procure an abortion. Morgentaler's acquittal and the rising number of Canadian women undergoing abortions (70,000 in 1982) is making it obviously difficult to enforce a law that is becoming increasingly less enforceable and antiquated.

by Elaine Whittaker

SIX HUNDRED AND TEN WOMEN

610 women were killed in New Delhi, India last year in a practice known as bride-burning. The government has failed to stop or curb this centuries - old custom of husbands killing a wife who failed to bring to them an adequate dowry. The law recognizes bride burning as murder but few cases are proven (many deaths are labelled as cooking accidents, where the wife's sari just happened to be set afire by a kerosene stove). Those cases that are brought to court and proven end with the guilty only being fined a few hundred dollars.

THUMBS DOWN TO:

CBC-TV for rejecting Gail Singers' film "Abortion: Stories from North and South". This film, named best film at a festival in Switzerland and praised when it premiered in Toronto's film festival, was felt, by CBC, to be too controversial. They also turned down "Democracy on Trial: The Morgentaler Affair" stating that it also required "balance". Balance weighed in CBC's favour obviously!!

©1982

DO YOU
SUPPORT
ABORTION
ON DEMAND,
GLORIA?

FRANKLY,
A POLITE REQUEST
SHOULD BE ALL
THAT'S
NECESSARY!

Carol
Simpson



A RAVE FROM A READER

Thanks to Natasha Lyndon from Vancouver, B.C. who sent us this rave.

B.C. Supreme Court Justice Rod Lander sentenced James McCann, a drummer with the Jerry Doucette band to thirty years. McCann stated he was accustomed to being approached by unknown females, better known as 'groupies' and was just playing a "bondage game." Justice Lander, when sentencing, added a warning to men, "that when a woman says 'no', she means it."



Another Rant from a Reader:

"Bondage is the theme of a ten page exposé in the December Penthouse. This has inspired outrage from women's groups both locally and nationally. These groups want the publication banned in Canada."

Click. Reaching my still tired arm out of my bed, my refuge, I stifled the announcer's voice. "First fucking thing in the morning," I thought, now thoroughly awake and thoroughly disgusted.

The adrenalin rushing to my temples as I jumped to my feet, I felt like a fighter going into the ring. "What do they do to you after they tie you up? Side or fleshy parts? Which are slaughtered first? Or do they bite at your flesh working their way inside to the entails? Like worms with teeth," I thought as I brushed my teeth and hair and washed my face.

I was getting ready for school. Soon I'd be waking my two daughters, Nat and Tina, aged four and five. A queasy pain slithered heavily through my heart and came to rest in my womb as I gazed at the sleeping girls. "What kind of insane world do they have to look forward to. There's nothing in it for them," I thought. Living... was it life or just surviving... enraged and terrified! Or blind, a silent partner in their own victimization; was this going to be their future?

Penthouse has been banned in Canada this month! Thank you Canada, I love you! Maybe next month it will be banned again or something else will happen.

Today, I heard Bob Guccione the publisher of the magazine in question, on a talk show. He proclaimed and I quote, "Canada is going to the dogs." In response to this and I quote, "this is one bitch who sure is glad her kennel isn't anywhere near an erection south of the border."

Kimberly Keene
from the Prisoners of Welfare
committee, OCLISS.

Signed also by:

Ann McCormich
Pauline McNeil
Bernice Lewis
Nancy Beauchamp



resources

News from the Women's Bookstore

After celebrating its second anniversary in September, with an overwhelming turn-out during the day at the store and a great dance the same evening the bookstore is settling into a steady period of growth and change. The first struggling, tentative years are over. It seems we are a solid entity. This month we've hired 3 new part-time staff: Julie Gagnon, Anne Dawson and Kim Nash. As well, we've added a big new bookcase and intend to expand our children's section. We are anticipating a very busy holiday season. Thanks again for the support and encouragement shown.

by Lee & Peggy

Connexions, A Digest of Resources and Groups for Social Change.

Connexions is a quarterly publication through which people working for peace, justice and liberation learn about and communicate with each other. The most recent edition of Connexions, contains theme sections on Rights and Liberties and on Housing, as well as their regular sections surveying new resources for social change and Canadian social change.

Connexions can be used as an educational resource in libraries, meetings, conferences and the like. Other available theme issues are Energy; Native People; Toward A New Economy; Women and Men; Canada-Latin America; Children; Unorganized Workers. Annual subscriptions are \$10 individuals and \$20 institutions. More information can be obtained by writing to:

Connexions,
427 Bloor St. West,
Toronto M5S 1X7

Mothers Are Women is a program for mothers at home with small children that has been organized by the Parent Preschool Resource Centre. (PPRC) This program, funded by the Women's Program of Secretary of State, has two components. The first is a series of evening workshops on such things as assertiveness, communication skills and time management. The second component is the formation of small community groups made up of mothers. The groups are to give women the opportunity to talk together and identify their greatest needs as women at home. It is hoped that the support of the groups will encourage the women to develop strategies and action to meet their own needs. There are presently 5 groups operating in the Ottawa area. For more information call 238-7561.

The Women's Program of Algonquin

College provides courses for women at reasonable prices...no course is more than \$35! This winter most workshops will be starting the week of Jan. 14th, 1985 with other workshops beginning throughout January and February. Some of the courses being offered include: Assertiveness Training, Carpentry for Women, Money Management, Self Defence, Computer Awareness and Women and the Nature of Technology. For more information call 598-4518.

Women in the Work World is a new publication to come out of Statistics Canada describing the many characteristics of the 4.5 million women who were found to be part of the Labour Force in the last Census.

To buy a copy of this book write a cheque or money order out to The Receiver General for Canada, send to: Publication Sales and Services, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Ont., K1A 0T6.

Pornography/Rape/War

by Helen Durie

A small circle of women from Women's Action for Peace have put together a collection of articles - some borrowed, some they wrote themselves - in a handbook entitled Pornography/Rape/War - Making the Links.

A wide range of issues is covered under a number of themes. Among these are Making the Links (Power of the Patriarchy, Memories of an American in Vietnam, Pornography, Censorship and Women's Rights); Why Are We Called to Act? (Feminist Non-Violence, Male Anti-Sexist Activism); Guidelines to Action (Why Civil Disobedience? Non-Violent Solidarity with Liberation Struggles, Property Destruction); and Styles of Action (Affinity Groups, Zap Actions and Guerilla Theatre, Suggested Group Activities, Protesters and the Law).

The handbook was prepared as part of an ongoing campaign to develop awareness of how rape, wife battering and all violence are related to the values and mentality cultivated through pornography and other mediums such as war toys, aggressive team sports, video games, TV violence, etc. With these as part of everyday experience, young men are socially encouraged to be aggressive and competitive, and to identify their manliness and sexuality with the objectification, possession, degradation and abuse of women and children and all 'others', rather than caring, sharing and cooperation.

There's far more to be said on the subject than could be included in the handbook, and feedback, comments and suggestions are warmly invited. The handbook is available for \$2 (60 pages), in the Ottawa Women's Bookstore, Octopus, the Women's Centres at Carleton and Ottawa University, or from Helen Durie, 436 Lisgar Street, Ottawa, K1R 5H1.

plumes de femmes



To Breaking the Silence:

Here is a letter we sent to the organizers of the National Capital Women's Groups meeting: Secretary of State, Status of Women Canada, Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. We thought you might be interested.

Dear Ms. Blanchard:

We are outraged at the process that occurred at the National Women's Groups meetings on October 16-19. The meetings were to be a consultation between women's groups and the Federal government yet in no way could it be viewed as such. Our particular concern, however, in this letter is the selection process of the Nairobi committee. The committee will be selecting the approximately 20 Canadian delegates who will attend the Nairobi NGO conference. We feel that the process of the selection was a sham and does a disservice to the women's community.

First, we would like to mention that the setting for the meetings did nothing to facilitate real communication between the group's representatives. We often couldn't see one another when we spoke and none of the organizers felt it necessary to facilitate introductions between us. We found it an extremely alienating environment in which to work. The meetings often felt staged and like tokenism. It felt particularly inappropriate that after 2½ days of dissatisfying "consultation" with the Canadian government we were left with the monumental task of selecting the Nairobi committee.

Let us describe to you how it felt for our representative sitting in the meetings. First, a representative from your department, Secretary of State, outlined our options which were to either follow your criteria or leave it up to you. There was no allowance made for creative discussion on how women should be selected and whether the women in the room were the appropriate people. It was simply assumed.

It was stated that the committee had to be selected by the women in the room. As we had been given no preliminary information we were unable to nominate women outside the room as we would have not known their wishes. So we were stuck with the women in the room. And who were those women? They were appointed delegates, there to represent organizations that were selected by the Status of Women on the basis of their being "National." In our opinion there were some obvious omissions: the Midwifery Task Force, The grass-roots, The Coalition Against Media Pornography, CARAL, the Country Wide Poor People's Lobby representing low-income women, and the women's press (except for Health-sharing and RFR) to name a few.

Some of the women who attended, including the representative from our organization, were selected by default because everyone else was too busy to go. Many women had already left the meetings by Friday afternoon out of frustration or time constraints. Our representative spoke to one woman who came in specifically to get on the committee. She hadn't attended any other part of the meetings. That's who we saw we had to choose from.

We were told the criteria to adhere to for selection was:

- have had experience in International Conferences (who knows why as these women aren't organizing the conference);
- live near Ottawa;
- be bilingual;
- can take time off in the next couple of months.

The criteria did not include a basic understanding of some of the major issues in the women's movement today. There was no acknowledgement of the discrimination practised within the women's movement (often unintentionally and out of ignorance) and the fact that the majority of the women in the room were white and middle-class.

The process of going around the room and women interested in sitting on the committee putting their names forward fabricated a feeling of urgency. That there was no time for discussion. Except for one immigrant woman, one black woman and one aboriginal woman it appeared that all the other contenders were white, middle-class women. Each woman then had to speak to the "criteria." The fact that the setting was unfriendly and intimidating was ignored or viewed as irrelevant to the woman controlling the process.

And I'm sure you know who "won". Three middle-class women who are all based in Ontario. How convenient for the Federal government.

This is not an attack against these women but it is a statement that we start being accountable to ourselves. Our movement is at many times ignorant of many cultures and colors. It was disappointing that there was no room or time to acknowledge that.

The feeling in the air was that we didn't have any choice. We had to make this decision immediately and based on Secretary of State criteria. It was coercive but worse it again forced women to make the appearance of having chosen when in fact we had no options.

The selection of the Nairobi committee should have been treated with much more respect. We strongly feel that given the time and appropriate facilitation the group of women present would have been more thoughtful of their choices, more conscious that one criteria had to be a basic knowledge of issues and priorities within the women's movement and more consideration in ensuring that there was fair representation from various parts of the women's community.

Instead we have to ask how will those women who sit on the Nairobi selection committee decide on who should represent our country. Do they know what is going on with immigrant women, Indian women, Inuit women, black women and low-income women? Do they know the health, cultural, social, economic and educational concerns that affect us? For example, how will they understand the importance for Inuit women (and other groups in this country) that our representatives explain the importance of the seal hunt for our basic economic survival? If they don't understand these issues then they

rob Canadian women of being really represented at this International Conference.

We are disappointed and in many ways feel betrayed. It is not a positive comment on government departments that work with women.

Jeela Moss-Davies
President
Inuit Women's
Association

Dear Madam,

Since your magazine has excellent articles in it, I will pay for another year. As I am living on an allowance and do not have much income. Next year may get my old age pension, I probably have to ask to get it free.

Since I am trying to upgrade my education and have to keep working one way and another, I find the articles in your magazine very interesting and helpful. I also have 2 daughters who are feminists and working, so I would like to keep up on what is going on. Therefore I have decided to pay for another year. I am also interested in being involved in a group in the Hull area. Since I do housework I do not have many contacts.

by G.C. Lokhorst
Hull, Quebec

Dear B.T.S.

I read every issue of B.T.S. with fascination - you do an excellent job. I am enclosing a cheque for a year's subscription.

Also find enclosed an article from The Vancouver Sun newspaper (some-time in July). Please consider this as material for the "Raves" section - I think it's worthy.

With thanks, and best luck for your continued success --

Natasha Lyndon

RENDEZVOUS (for Cindy)

He came to you last night,
Disconnected from all things,
Trying to separate you.
Either heart or cunt.
Either brains or cunt.
Either mother or cunt.

This constriction,
Like a snake winding itself round
The body,
Squeezing your life, your breath,
Your blood riddle,
Wanting just one rational response:

Death.

Tonight we rendezvous
Beneath the full and glistening sky.
Hand of midwife in hand
Of mother in hand
Of daughter in hand
Of sister in hand
Of lover,
Creating the circle.

It is the space between us which forms
The gateway to our darkness.
Our darkness is our life.

Here is the map.

You must go there alone.

Beth Follett (1984)

